

Introduction.

Scribe notes for the guild mission to find some lost Hobbit mummies. Beginning 1st Meadow 801wk.

Employer.

The Hobbit folk of Sunnynook. Their representative is Ansgar Atholson.

Party Roster.

Leader: Armand de Montfort, Gentleman Adventurer
Military: Goran Axbiter, Weapons Master
Scribe: Graaven Brightrock, Displaced Noble
Nicola Rosenstein, Displaced Gentry
Jonas Jonasson, Displaced
Gok
Albion

Notes.

Our mission is simply put. Find the mummies, return them intact. Round up the immortal guardian avatar of Anubis, stop him worrying the neighbours' cattle and see him home safely too.

We managed to organise ourselves and be on our way by the 3rd of Meadow. Most of the organisation seems to be around mealtimes and cups of tea. Although I have to say that the tea is good and the foraging techniques are ... interesting. Our path takes us South and then West of Seagate into the village of Sunnynook. It took us two days.

Sunnynook

During ancient times the world was a mite volatile. In short this village was in danger of total destruction along with the rest of the Penjar. The sun god Ra, saved his faithful by bringing them forward in time, to our Alusia. They have been thriving here for more than six years.

To look at the village is to see art living and sometimes moving around. The tidy terraced homes are masterfully decorated in tiled patterns. Ansgar tells me that the method is called Mozaic. His people are typically friendly, as hobbits tend to be. Where they differ is their appearance and culture. (Some would say that the difference is that they seem to have one, besides a religious love of food.) Ansgar's people are dark of skin with startling golden eyes. They stand as tall as any hobbit. They are however, a slender people despite their hobbitish obsession with eating.

Religion.

The good people of Sunnynook revere an interesting pantheon lead by Ra and including Anubis. Their traditions of death require them to embalm the deceased and leave them in state until their souls reach ‘the halls of judgement’ and then hopefully onto become a star in heaven. An avatar is used to guard the dead until that day.

Then things went a bit pear shaped.

The avatar (Huge, black and jackal like) took off like a mad dog to pester near by farmlands.

The bandaged corpses decided to take a tour of the countryside.

Our people assumed that The Dark Circle and those responsible for it were to blame. I will keep that one in mind. The priesthood here do not believe that their dead have joined the Necromancer’s army.

The priestly reasoning for their opinions is that they cannot sense any controlling magic or swaying in the ‘will’ of their ancestors. More on that later...

Serephina (the village Mother) explained that they found their loss when the village went to perform the springtime offering. We ascertained that the ‘robbery’ took place over the winter. <<*It is a miracle that both the Avatar and the mummies are still in the locale.*>> She also explained that the priesthood could locate the general location of the mummies (that gets explained more, in depth later).

Another ‘gift’ will be the priests’ blessing and the protection from the avatar. It would seem that Sunnynook has run out of the vital ingredient for this ritual. So we brave adventurers must sally forth into the mana enriched foothills and retrieve said plant ... named Shotia.

Greeting the Dawn

We started the sixth early (in the morning, so I’m told – although it was still dark), given a good breakfast and joined Porrent in a two hour hike to join his master on the top of a near by hill. For another hour we listened to Gerrai sing in the dawn and then pray for good travelling. His priestly songs are foreign songs to us but familiar in general temperament. – These people are delightfully peaceful.

From the hill we walked to the burial chambers – a very naturally formed cavern in the hills to the north of the village.

Of the soul and its constituent pieces.

We watched Gerrai chat to his ancestors in the middle of a circle of altar-like tables for a while. Three of the ten available berths were occupied and there was a disconcerting pile of mummified bodies off to one side. We started to poke around (respectfully) and found out some very important things.

1. The corpse that Armand looked at was by nature a deceased hobbit – not a lapsed greater undead.

2. There is a ritual performed in the rites of the dead that we can describe, loosely, as a reverse resurrection. This becomes clearer when you understand the belief system in Sunnynook.
3. Nicola could not see where the soul of her subject had gone. This raised a few questions in my head...

I asked Porrent and he explained a few things: -

The story of the dead (abridged version).

Everybody is eternal!

Our ARCK is our essence and it yearns toward the light.

The body is called KAH and it yearns towards earth and time.

Also tending toward the earth is the KAY. It is the shape of our attractions and appetites.

Hopefully the KAY will be complimented by the BAH, that reflects our structure or affinities.

I made a flippancy about shepherds having good BAH and Porrent used the joke to exercise his point. *“If a shepherd actually has the KAY of a flock minder then he will be happy – fulfilled. If not – then he will be unhappy and tend to be a ‘bad’ person. This could result in an unfavourable result when he journeys through the underworld to the halls of judgement and he would have to be reborn to try to fulfil his KAY.”*

I asked our talented crew to view Porrent’s KAY. It turns out that he is walking the correct path – that is to say – his KAY is priest shaped.

There is a complicated rite of death whereby the BAH is helped through the underworld on the path to the halls of judgement by the KAY who administrates the burial gifts – given to the deceased by his family.

I have resolved to try to question the BAH and the KAY of the missing mummies as they should still be at the site of the tomb. My best time is in the early morning when the BAH reports to the KAY of its journey and its needs.

Before I get to commune with the dead – we are off to find a plant that grows where goats can’t reach it in a sunny patch of high mana zone.

Orcs and Goblins and Wyverns Oh My....

The area around Sunnynook is a great place for a countryside ramble. Given that you are comfortable sharing the scenery with the wilde life.

Our search for our magical ingredient plant took us by a steep valley (of which we dutifully avoided as per instructions) and over rocky tundra into the foot hills.

At our first sign of water – and we needed water for high tea or was it lunch – we were beset by a grande horde of goblinoids. They were organised, skilled and aided with magic.

They had a very interesting mascot – one wyvern, suited up and ready for battle.

Apparently they did not understand my cordial greeting, maybe it was a dialect problem... I am sure that the goblin phrase “Whey ya buggers” is a polite way to start conversation. Perhaps next time I should use an extra politeness and say “Whey ya canny buggers”.

And so ... Battle commenced. Our warrior types handed out a canny walloping to the elite wing of their attack. Armande set out to engage the Wyvern and it's cohorts. He occupied them for a long time before they finally laid him out. Resurrecting our noble leader will be something of a challenge.

All too soon it became apparent that the horde outnumbered us and our fate could follow de Montfort's in short order.

Goran, bravely and ingeniously, called for a challenge of champions. This piqued the interest of the opposing commander and so he and our Dwarven Warrior fought 'mano y mano' (a Destinian phrase; I think it means 'dirty tricks allowed').

It was a fine show of physical prowess, stamina and cunning. Unfortunately Goran succumbed to the effects of the Wyvern poison on the commander's blade along with the incredible speed and skill of the goblin.

Standing at the mercy of these grey-skinned folk. Our lives are a very precious commodity right now.

We live to tell our tale.

The grey folk were more impressed with our real iron daggers than the need to slit our throats. They stripped us naked and sent us back out of the valley. At the point when we of absolutely no danger to them and a few miles away from the ambush – the Wyvern dropped off a gift from the goblin commander. We were blessed a tunic, water skin and a bronze dagger each. As it happens one of the daggers has a 'scroll type investment' on it. Part of me hopes to remember his kindness when we go back to reclaim our possessions.

And so we backtracked towards Sunnynook. I had never thought of the sun as an enemy until the day we realised how it had burned us. The fairer skinned suffered all blisters all over and it stole Gok's mind. He has become precious of nature and I look forward to the day when we can return him to his surly self.

Our travel went on and our feet became more wounded for every rock sliced step. Nicola decided to brave the wildes alone (in wolf form). She would find her way to Sunnynook and enlist their help – but most of all shoes. Our camp that night was sullen and cold. Lightened up by Jonas finding food. Of course – without a fire – the goat was only deemed edible by some of the more hardy adventurers.

Nicola tells me.

The good people of Sunnynook were most distressed to hear of our unfortunate encounter with a goblin army.

They fed her and cleaned her weary body. Within no time at all they clothed her in outsized hobbit fashion. Their attempt at footwear was ... charming. What do you expect from a culture that excludes shoes.

Another priority was to make sure that Gerai could and would preserve Armande's body if he couldn't resurrect him. Lucky for us – the rite of preservation has the same effect as our healers' magic.

The high priest did have reservations about the poor body's right to be dead and did he want to forgo his journey to the heavens. Our bright lass assured Gerai that we would have known if Armande had a death wish and that he would have plenty of opportunities to die again.

We were met at the Sunnynook tombs with beautiful clothes and wonderful food. Gok was more enchanted than health dictates with the embroidered flowers on his gift shirt. Please, if any god is listening, could we have our shadow mage back?

Of dead people.

I stayed to observe the rite of preservation. Until now I had not realised that the bandages (called grave clothes) are coloured bright yellow. We had mistaken them for yellow with age. This information may help us in our continuing search.

The next morning – extremely early in the morning – I got to play seventy two questions with the KAH and the BAH of our missing mummies. We learned this ...

- 1) They do not know where the KAY are.
- 2) The KAY are not moving at this time. That is – they are laying in a heap somewhere.
- 3) They were summoned by a necromancer. The summoning was broken every morning. (This must have annoyed and disturbed the mage. My suspicions are firmly pointed towards the dark circle.)
- 4) There was an agenda for them but there isn't now.

Of Debt

We made our way back to Seagate. Armande is now counted amongst the living. Goran has magnanimously re-fitted us and we owe him for that. Some of us are also beholden to the guild. Nicola pointed out our need for healing potions.

On the road again.

With only slightly less red noses we hit the trail again. First stop Sunnynook. We picked up a guide and Goran dropped off a gift of a breeding donkey.

Our guide is a ranger called Mirran. She is as open and friendly as any of her race and yet she is cautious enough to be alive. Her instincts keep her a good distance from our shapechangers. I thought it funny when she asked Armande what he changed to and she was happy when he said 'a courtier my dear'. She obviously doesn't know that courtier is another name for vulture. Although I must admit that our noble leader shows far more sense and decorum than any courtier I have had the 'pleasure' of meeting.

This little misadventure spanned ten days. It is now the Seventeenth of Meadow and we stand before an open plateau that troubles Mirran.

Night falls and we start our way across the plateau. Mirran insists on our stealthiest approach. I am not sure we all understood her meaning by our convincing imitation of a small herd of heffalumps. By the by we crossed the plateau unmolested.

At the far end of the plateau is a copse. By Mirran's direction we skirted it. (She says that no hobbit has returned from these woods) Of course the temptation of forbidden places captured some imaginations. We saw some glowing lights coming from the trees. Someone identified them as belonging to giant spiders. Enough curiosity – on with the paying mission.

Our camp at the end of our midnight run is wet, uncomfortable and very welcome.

Goran and I have come to an arrangement (as if it was necessary) – He will continue to make and break camp for me and I will continue to refresh the protections that I paint onto his armour.



[Turn to this page for a closer look.](#)

Collecting Shotia (19th Meadow).

Once again our weapons master proves his worth. Today we watched Goran scale some hundred foot of wet cliff face to retrieve enough Shotia for Gerai to perform his miracles.



*Symbol of protection
(Must be this way up)*

symbol of protection onto Goran's armour.

We rested until the night of the 20th to cross the plateau again.

I have learned a few pictograms, care of Mirran. Now I can actually paint a



In honour of Goran's climbing prowess – I named him Mountain Goat. (The raised foreleg is important – otherwise it would be a sheep)

[Turn to this page for a closer look.](#)

What a priest of Ra can do with Shotia.

Over the next three days we were blessed thrice over.

The first – a priest's blessing – will keep us from tiring as long as we rest in the sun.

Then – a potion of Shotia and honey (amongst other things) – giving us incredible protection from avatars and the like.

And then a ritual blessing to show us in the best possible light to avatars.

Unfortunately the ritual did not take for Jonas. I am assuming it has something to do with his feline nature.

During those preparations – I took myself back to the tombs to ask the dead some more questions. I found out that they do not know where the avatar is and don't usually socialise with it anyway. They did know that it used 'fear' as an attack.

And we're off...

We took up the trail towards the next village to the north of Sunnynook. Gok wants to fly everywhere – I think he is more himself – praise be.

In this village – Armand did the talking and we did the drinking. All went well.

It appears that stock is being moved around during the night. The prime suspect – a huge black dog. Strange – but this could be a lot worse.

<<Anubis is known as the Guardian of the Heart. Maybe his avatar has lost some of his purpose and is following some inner, canine instincts. >>

We will start our hunt in earnest on the 26th.

Chatting.

We trekked to 'Blue Farm' and saw Joe and his good wife. Joe introduced us to 'his lads' – being his farm dogs.

Nicola had a chat with the dogs they were helpful in firming up our suspicions about the culprit. They believe that the 'black dog' was practicing and that he wasn't that good.

We found out a little too much about cheese making and then took our leave for the next place of sighting.

Kel's End...

is the farm on the outskirts of this area – backing onto the hills that will eventually get you back to Sunnynook. They run both Dairy and Beef stock and have real lads (with two hands and two legs). We got to chat about the strange happenings with young Joe and his da before the earth mages took to questioning the livestock.

One night a huge black dog came to the herd in the top fields and took them away. He separated the bull out and led him to a very remote hill.

From the farmer's point of view – the strangest points of interest were that the dogs did not challenge or even respond to the invasion of a strange dog (young Joe is convinced that it's a wolf) and 'thank the heavens' no cows were lost.

The Bull at Kel's End was more informative. Jonas tells us that the 'black dog', whom the bull would call King, is very polite. The King asked the cows to go with him and did not harm them in any way.

Our sensitive types tell us that the bull had been affected by a celestial ritual of *summoning and binding*. So our avatar is a star mage – interesting.

Speaking of celestials – Gok had a chat with some local bats. They've seen the 'dog' but, funnily enough – don't have much to do with it. We did learn that *they* eat olives and greengages and strawberries if they can get their claws on them.

The morning of the 28th saw us up on the top fields with a supply basket for Kev (the son in charge of the herd at this point and time). We distracted him while Nicola made conversation with them that know.

<<It's funny how Jonas defers to Lady Rosenstein when it comes to talking to dogs. >>

The two dogs that were up here when the avatar came to play would also address him as King.

We came up with some questions for ourselves – mainly “what is it eating if it isn't eating cows?” some of us were hoping that the answer would be goblins.

<<I have been thinking and maybe the practise element has some credence. What if the cows are a practise run for some greater purpose? I will have to question Gok on celestial rituals and what other kinds of summoning and binding they are capable of.>>

When is a dog not a dog?

We have also come up with a plan. Nicola has changed into her furs and gone to sit on a hill. She will call to the King and hopefully get an audience. Somehow – I believe that this night, under a full moon, is a most salubrious time for this caper.



<< This is Armande's depiction of Nicola >>

As much fun as Nicola had, singing to the moon, there was no visitation. Later on she realised that the howling may have been mistaken for a territorial claim. Maybe this area now belongs to Nicola, in wolf terms.

With the grand result of making everyone concerned tired and irritable we moved on.

<< “At least we have it down to just three.” Quoth our noble leader when he left it to the rangers to sort out a direction to go. >>

We ended up heading for some hills. By the time we did sort out which direction to go – my head was spinning. I can tell you that we are heading towards the high manna zone but that is some twenty miles away.

Goran is a fine ranger. He managed to find the impression in a pile of rocks that ‘King’ had used, for a lookout. On the other hand - he also managed to convince us that a flat-bottomed gully was good for camping. Result: An exciting episode when heavy rain almost turned our camp into a rafting expedition. As it happens – only Armande’s tent got washed away in the flash flood.

No one got hurt – just very tired.

Nicola is a diligent earth mage. She called a fox to us for some questioning. She also mis-wove her speaking spell and it landed on me.

The vixen told me some very important things.
On the top of her list was that we were rude and noisy, oh and her kits were hungry. Half a pound of salmon later she told us that we were not looking for a dog but a fox. Yes, it turns out that jackals are the largest of fox-kin and they *do* run in Alusia.

*This is the fox poetry from our vixen teacher ...
They seek him here
They seek him there
Those farmers seek him everywhere.
Is he in heaven?
Is he in hell?
That dark and silent Jac - kel .*

The morning of the 30th sees us marching on into the hills in search of the dark and silent one.

Greengage house

We hiked a while to the south and west a bit and stopped when we came across a ruined cottage with three interesting features.

- Ripening greengages
- A Badger in the cellar
- But most importantly – half a paw print, looking very jackelish.

Unfortunately our hunt had to stop for a few days. It was very necessary to send Nicola back to the guild as we had run out of Aquillan tea and relish. While she was there we thought that she should go and have her backfire curse seen to. Gok volunteered to keep her company by virtue of needing to be fixed, himself.

During our friends’ sojourn I was blessed with a vision from my tarrot deck. I asked ‘where would we meet the Jackal of Anubis that we seek’.

By the 3rd of Heat we were on our way again.

Talking to Gods

Our travels took us to a rocky outcropping of granite (somewhat different to the sandstone of the surrounding hills). We identified the setting in my vision and lo and behold – there in the shade of the rocks – listening to us – sat the Avatar Jackal of Anubis.

Nicola yipped and ear waggled at him and I offered him a chicken dinner. Both our approaches were well received.

<< *“I could have been goofing off you know”* , King, Jackal avatar of Anubis. >>

King Jackal believes that he was released from duty and he is using his free time ‘gainfully’ – training in the arts of beastmastery and ritual summoning and binding.

That night we talked of many things – mostly about how we could get King and his hobbits back together again and our preoccupation with revenging ourselves on the goblin hordes. (Anubis is more interested in guarding things than hunting down small grey *hobbits*.)

The key issues for King are that the guarding job is boring and he has no time off for training.

We have got the feeling if not direct agreement that King will help us in our search for the lost mummies and return to Sunnynook with us for re-negotiation.

We will start our return journey on the morning of the 4th.

We mucked around...

Trying to change our patterns from day to night. I believe that Armande will tell you that it was Sunday and we rightfully should have been busy at nothing.

I left a message for Anubis (this seems to be the proper name for the avatar) for him to accompany us to Sunnynook. Unfortunately – my message was different to our actual travel route. This only caused our own confusion.

We learned that sending non-rangers on message missions is a bad move. Gok got lost and so we lost some time – waiting for him. He did find us the next day. He was a little worse for wear and meeting up with a local cat-predator.

On the 6th day of Heat three of us flew into Sunnynook and found Anubis waiting for us in the caves. By the end of lunchtime the others joined us and we helped and hindered the village in our individual ways.

More fox poetry.

We followed a parade up to the caves. Gerai the priest went to meet with Anubis. There seemed to be some sort of contest of wills. We don't know who won that one.

Then Anubis lead us (adventurers) up to a place for star gazing and so we gazed for answers to our missing mummy problem.

After half a night of chatting with the ancestors, Anubis came up with this...

He rearranged the stanzas for us;

2 Up the hill and down the dale
And round about the water
3 Past the cowslips by the line
Many once found it safer
6 Two to the left and two to the right
And do si do your partner
10 The teas made and scones risen
And hobbits getting fatter
1 The sun is high, the moon is low
The grass is getting taller
9 Through the hole and down the stair
And dance to pass the garter
4 Check the pass and tip the knave
And curtsy low thereafter
7 The head sways and the eyes droop
And soon mamma has dinner
8 Dark and deep, narrow and steep
Braver heroes go deeper
5 Quiet or watch the sandman wake
Old bones and giants flower

Why the ancestors couldn't have just said go to the old castle by the cattle run and turn left – I don't know.

Come the morning (7th) I assume we will head off in some sort of a direction.

Notes taken in my absence.

Gerai created a magical line running from the tombs to the missing mummies. The line can be seen by some with witchsight (Albion and Gok). It is pale yellow, about the thickness of an axe haft, and does not emit light. It is hard to see in sunlight but is clearer in deep shadow or darkness.

The line sloped down & northwest and disappeared into the hillside. The party picked it up again in the bottom of the next valley or two, then had to go over the last line of hills to the north. With no navigators but some cunning marking of hillsides the party managed to pick up the line as it reappeared part way down the long slope to the plain. (NB you have done several days of overland travel, camping rough - no mules to carry the luxuries).

The line is now in 'mid air' about 200ish feet above sea level, and pointing downwards to and area of uninhabited plain. It will meet the ground approximately 5 - 10 miles away.

The 'plain' is a wide grassland valley between two spurs of rough lands (and ranges between 10 and 15 miles wide). It is uninhabited and the only feature is the river (and line of trees) that meander across it and runs down to the sea.

Cunning plans:-

a) burn a fire break in the hill side to mark the direction to travel, and use it as a landmark. To this end the party has just spent a full day in hard labour (and are suffering from minor burns, scratches, sunburn and muscle ache : -)
The disadvantage is that while this mark can be seen for miles it probably won't be an accurate enough guide for more than 3 - 5 miles.

b) follow the line at night on wings. The risk is that the speed of wings means you will need to watch the line constantly and may fly straight into the ground.

Dancing with Garters.

By the 10th Heat we had made our way down the hill and across the plains to the river. In a bend in the river, seated in stagnant water is a rocky outcropping. Jonas calls it a *butte*. Here are signs of a stone building – long ruined.

We poked, prodded and interrogated the local flora until we found the remains of an underground stairway and a more natural hole in the ground.

*Through the hole and down the stair
And dance to pass the garter*

We cleared the first stair to find that the entrance had caved in and we would not be able to clear any more rubble.

Gok, restive young elf that he is, went head first into the hole. He found himself knee deep in snakes. We sat on top – discussing this and that while he ran around, burning his cloak (well singing really). Gok was the first of us to find out, the hard way, that some of these snakes were poisonous. Although one bite was not going to have much affect – enough of their poison will paralyse a limb.

The earth mages struck up conversation with a snake, our leader began to calculate the relative worth of snake venom, meat and hide, and the dwarves got hot under the collar.

Finally – we managed to get everyone underground. We joined Gok in short time and set off in the direction of the stairway through twists and turns of snake-infested sandstone.

Soon enough – we met “Mamma” – A huge dirty-white snake of approximately 80 feet. We resisted her charms (or not), had a short conversation with her, attacked her, controlled her, dithered and finally killed her. Armande’s dreams of prosperity took a step closer to reality in the form of snake goods.

Tricks and traps.

*Check the pass and tip the knave
And curtsy low thereafter*

An interesting set of traps decorate these halls.
Jonas found the pit set into a gravel path. He also found that the gravel made more than the expected level of noise. (This may be in line with the part of the poem about Being quiet or watching the sandman awake)

Our spy types sorted out a cunning boulder trap set into the hole that we eventually followed.

*Two to the left and two to the right
And do si do your partner*

We came to a fissure with a very inventive bridge – set to turn itself over if the traveller set a foot wrong.

Some of us got to show prowess and sure footedness – others just crossed the bridge with some assistance.

Hopefully we are near the mummies now.
I am looking forward to celebrating the solstice in Sunnynook and having a go at this fertility draft for the newlyweds.

*Quiet or watch the sandman wake
Old bones and giants flower*

Armande made a great show of his stealthiness while he ranged out along the tunnels before us checking for nasties. Good man!
He led us through the tunnels and down some very steep stairs that made their way back to the chasm but somewhat below the swinging bridge.
We crossed the chasm back into the sandstone catacombs via a thoughtfully placed footbridge. (Scary as hell to cross but we all made it with little bother)

Compact sandstone became cracked sandstone and we found wee alcoves with placements for gantry planks in them. They were a mystery until too late. I sense that this is a running theme in this adventuring lark.

We walked into another trap.

This is the most grisly devise that I have heard of in my short career. Some bugger had planted a holding cell full of bone-dust into the tunnel system.
When we walked into range of it, giving off vibrations from our footfall, the ghoulish chalk began to flow out of the strategically placed holes.
I almost drowned in the foul stuff and I understand that we could have lost a couple of people rescuing me. A hearty thanks to the team for pulling me out in time.

Mummies at the end of the tunnel.

We found the mummies after digging through the dusty remains.
It took us some four days to deliver these Kah back to Sunnynook just in time for
Solstice on the 15th Heat.

Business

Our duty is done and we are well paid by Duke Leto.
It took us 45 days in the field to complete this assignment.

Signed
Graaven of Brightrock