

### Reclaiming the Menagerie Report

#### Fools Moon, Year of PC05

My Lords and Ladies please accept this as another Mission Report from Hak Leafbiter. It is as ever in his own words and from his own viewpoint that he told to us all in my bar the other night after we got him very, very drunk. I had to remove the song of the Pixies.

Bill the Barman – Hobbits Arms PH.

Party:

Lord Giles – Guildleader of the Grey School. (Leader)

Baron Silas Von Greenback – Guildleader of The Dark Path.

Ksndra – Guildleader of the Red School of Magic.

Xernes – Guildleader of the Guild of Spiritualists.

Jux – Guildleader of the Reavers.

Dame Layla Mayfield – Guildleader of the Knights Martial.

Kyle Ompaq – Guildleader of the Sentinels.

Michael – Acting Guildleader of the White School of Magic.

Caradac Fireapple – Skirmishers.

Darrack – Assassins.

Vilk Bloodmoon – Warrior Baron of Darkhome.

Omagod – Knights Martial (The Lucky Goblin).

Igor – Hospital.

Casper Meadows – Fell Knights of Ushaz.

Hak Leafbiter – Barbarians Lodge.

This is going to be a bit random as it was a vague trawl of my memories.

Some remembers have days some don't, but I hopefully have got it in a somewhat correct order.

### Air Day

So the party all met up on the border of Darkhome and the Menagerie, Lord Giles took charge.

We set out exploring the newly Mist less place to look for survivors and recoverable treasure and war materials. We started off I remember late afternoon. The first person we met was a belligerent trader and then we were attacked by Spirits of Agony – these must have been driven mad by the Mists and hadn't been turned into Hordelings. Tough fights.

We followed the course of a large river and we managed to rescue the odd one two survivors hiding at the river bank and we gave them aid and protection from the agony spirits. As darkness fell so too did The Mists start to blanket the land hiding in the trees. It was as if the status of the party kept it at bay, but it was always there, waiting.

We were looking for a cure for the poisons that had infected the water supply of Darkhome and inducing lethargy in the population. We sought evidence left behind by the Master Alchemist of the Menagerie.

As we were searching the dark land we found a strange lady who showed us about, a guide of sorts. She had dirty long black hair and wore coarse grey sack cloth with a red tabard. She kept on saying that she was a Lady and not a Witch!

She guided us towards a strange wooden hut. We got there and the clouds cleared and the moon shone down on this black wooden hut. It was shut tight up which intrigued the sneaky thieves and scouts, how to get in without just smashing the doors down? So now the scouts got out their daggers, hooks and lock picks and the mages did their filthy words and gestures.

Eventually the Black Hut was opened and we all got inside. By torchlight we all had a search around the inside. All over the walls and ceiling were lots of keys bits of paper full of squiggly writing and numbers on them. I helped find lots of keys but the book stuff just made

my brain hurt, so I had a beer. It seemed that the keys had numbers on them that married up with certain papers which told off places to go to and treasures to be unlocked by the keys. Some of the papers had clues about rituals that hinted about cures.

So there was lots of talking and guard rosters were drawn up as we weren't at a Waystation so we had to be careful.

### Water Day

Having got up and had a hearty breakfast, we set out for more exploring.

One of the clues was about a bank full of treasure. So we set off and found this very tall wide red bank. There was a large set of double doors at the front and a small locked door at the back.

Whenever anyone entered the bank they were greeted by a golem or construct sat at a desk. He didn't move from the desk, but whenever anyone entered and sat down next to his desk he would say the same phrase "Please take a seat in the waiting area and wait for assistance" he would then stay silent. So we went and sat in the waiting area but nothing else happened. Whenever you went back to the bank manager he would utter his stupid phrase again.

Apart from the bank manager's office and the waiting room, the bank was very open but there were trap lines all over the wall and over very small doors. Well we knew that there was treasure to be had and we didn't get any assistance so it was a robbery to be done. It was a very hot day so I waited in the waiting area so that 'The Bank' would send an assistant whilst I watched the robbery happen. The traps were spirit hammers and suchlike, lots of increasingly hard darts too. Ksndra talked to another guardian in the rear safe area, whilst Vilik did a lot of low crawling. Vilik turned into his Werewolf form grabbed the safe and smashed out of the bank through the back door.

Next we followed the clues to a location hinted to be the Master Alchemist's laboratory.

Inside we found some chests containing some jars, which were investigated although some were already open anyway. As we found this members of the party and I were possessed by spirits that caused us to attack the party. Well we were eventually subdued by he party and the spirits were driven out of us.

After this we awakened a guardian Djinn who told us about the Immortal Lords and the quest for eternal life that the Master Alchemist had been pursuing. If pledged something of personal value, each of us could be set upon this path too. So I and other party members did this and we were given clues about an alchemical formula to make an Elixir of Life. We were warned that if we set down this path that we would attract the ire and attention of the Lots(4) Immortal Lords who jealously guarded the secret at the end of the long path that we ventured down.

Those of us on the path were told an Ancient Truth that would show the Immortal Lords that our stalwart intent to continue on our path. The Djinn stated that the Immortal Lords would test us!

Later that day and over the course of the next few days we would encounter the Immortal Lords. We would after avowing our knowledge meet them in battle separate with retinues and then later all together with retinues.

So there are Lots(4) Immortal Lords. They didn't tell us their names as we were so far beneath them in insignificance.

One was a powerful Barbarian clad in furs and bearing his tribal tattoo's with pride. A ferocious Bear of a man who wielded an enormous runic Greatsword. A strong fighter with intelligence.

Next was a gallant Knight armed with Sword and Shield. His armour and weapons were all of the highest quality, with filigree and inlaid metals. A dashing fighter elegant in form with no wasted moves.

The next was a Shou Lun type with a fine moustache and piercing eyes like a hawk. He was clad in fine yellow and golden silk robes and he wielded an exceedingly sharp Halberd. A pleasure to watch fight, even if you were his opponent!

The last one wore dark priestly robes and carried a wicked mace. His face bore elaborate tattoo's and face paint of red, gold and black around his eyes. A dark minded individual who was the worst to fight against.

These were all tough and long conflicts, lots of bravado, blood spilling frenetic mad moments. We certainly gave as good as we got and we were ably healed and brushed clean by noble Igor, other avenues of healing from strange places and Caradac's potions.

The days are all a blur only intense memories and trauma remain. These details need more drinking, my dreams coalesce into memory.

From the papers we had found and the information given to us by the Djinn, it was posited that a dose of the elixir of life could be distilled to make a cure for the Pentar Poison. We had to go to many other places to search for further alchemical ingredients and clues.

So where did we go, what stupid deeds did we do? We fought a Gorgon twice, two stupidly hard fights! Once to kill it and then later to banish it from the Evil One's body. Baron Silas ate of the Gorgon's dead flesh to gain its strength, although he probably bit off more than he could chew! He nearly became a new Gorgon, but for the fact that we had great priests, mages and strong fighters to beat the infection out of his body!

Other times we searched through a fly infested swampy marshland looking for a Slithereen Broodmother for her lore and to protect her from a Fell Beast. But by finding the Broodmother we had unwittingly betrayed her location to the evil beings that we were to protect her from in the first place. So another hard fight that took us from the swamp lands up in to a land of hills and gullies full of screeching bat things.

We also found out about a denizen race that protected the borders of the Menagerie – the

Ashnazi. These are a dead hard warrior folk, tougher than trolls and deadly cunning! The papers told that the Ashnazi had been fractured into many warring tribes as they had lost a religious artifact, a dagger of the night called the Heart of Darkness. If we could find the dagger and then gift it back to their Witch Doctor then we could unite the divided Ashnazi and bring these fierce warriors over to the cause of The Valley.

Did I mention that we'd searched through swamps earlier? Ha! Well the lands of the Ashnazi are wet and steaming jungles that eclipse all other swamps to the status of mere muddy puddles! It didn't help that in addition to finding an accursed dagger, that we were fought by the very place we moved through. A place of sucking mud, quicksand, biting wasps, leeches and carnivorous plant life. We also had to fend off numerous attacks by patrols of Ashnazi – a warrior race that even The Mists are afraid of!

So we did eventually find the Heart of Darkness, a cruel dagger fashioned from raw obsidian that seemed to drink light. We were a very ragged, bloody and mud drenched party. Having fought our way through and back out of that accursed jungle land, Xernes set about communing with the dagger. We set about returning it to the Ashnazi, after we'd fully healed and sewn ourselves back together.

Having previously fought a through the lands of the Ashnazi and the warring clans, we had to do it once again although guided by the dagger. Guided by the artifact enabled us to ward off some attacks but it was no easy task nonetheless. So we returned the Heart of Darkness to the Witch Doctor of the Ashnazi and we gained their respect. We didn't end up like the shrunken heads that surround their village!

So we had all been getting the alchemical ingredients for the elixir recipe and the ritual to unlock it. Caradac took to the unlocking of the recipe and the ritual, as he's a master potion maker and he's got a boring clever mind! We left him to it whilst we guarded the Black Hut where he worked it all out.

So with a big ritual being worked on the winds were a tempest. Magic and Power ripped the earth and rent the air and strange monsters were attracted to our location. We had a hard and strange fight with the Spirit of Iron himself! Our swords sung whist they twisted in our hands. Very hard and glorious fight that although won did knock us down into the earth and the muddy puddles of blood like dogs. Crom and Loki both fought alongside us!

### Fire Day

The actions of the party had brought a further area of peace to the Menagerie. On Fireday Night the Sector Lords of The Valley visited us in the field and we accommodated them in the Black Hut. Layla Mayfield was promoted to Dame by Sir Clavados. After all the politicking had been done I introduced myself and vowed to be a Kingsman! Casper Meadows did the same as did Omagod the Lucky Goblin if I recall correctly.

Whilst the Sector Lords met in session the Darkhome Baron's and Darrack went off on a secret mission to nick something.

I had a few beers that night!

### Steel Day

Well we had a very decent breakfast that prepared us for getting the ritual finished as best as possible.

Caradac was well on the way to completed the ritual to concoct the Elixir of Life.

So we must have done stuff that morning, but all I can remember is the final Big Battle!

It was hot, so very hot that afternoon! When who turned up? No, not the Shadowsfall! It was that big bastard Gabriel Chide of the Fortress of Pentar and their Hepath Lord Balor.

Gabriel Chide that oily bastard, attired like a suave pirate lord with a well-groomed beard. Armed with paired daggers and spitting spells from his damned lips.

Lord Balor – Hepath! Seven feet of infernal muscle with pointed horns curling out of its head. Wearing wizardly robes, speaking infernal lies of magic and adeptly wielding a two-handed mace with a head of molten iron and stone.

So they were as ever accompanied by a retinue of henchmen. So we all attacked them early to try and stop them getting their ward pacts off. Suffice to say this last battle was another deadly affair. The party weathered the assault like a coordinated unit, ordered chaos as a Valley party is. We gave everything to win, spells, curses were thrown about, ancestor sharks were entreated, werewolves howled and the fray was a red ruin! A steely hedgehog with sharp nasty teeth, nay a giant angry dragon! Against this the Fortress of Pentar were repeatedly crushed, sliced, pierced and diced. Though Lord Balor wielded a hammer it was he who was shattered upon the anvil of the party. In a dying blast of magics Lord Balor was banished from Orin Rakatha by the party's refusal to be beaten down. The backlash from his departure saw the rout of the remnants of the Fortress of Pentar forces. I didn't see what became of Gabriel Chide.

So next was the recipe thing. The bubbling brew of Caradac's finally became an Elixir of Life within a golden chalice.

Lord Giles had been in communication with Judge Flam of the Shadowsrise and had promised him a number of doses of the elixir to go to his guild. Judge Flam appeared when the elixir was ready and he took his promised doses and then he left. I took a drink from the chalice and I know that Lord Giles did too. Caradac bottled a dose of the elixir for the Darkhome Water Cure. Those party members who did not drink of the elixir were instead given shares of any treasures that we had found on the mission.

Later that night we were met by Master Alchemist Railin – Lord of the Menagerie. Caradac gave unto him the saved dose of the Elixir of Life and Lord Railin said that he would use it to work on a cure.

Cheers Hak Leafbiter.