

## **Solstice Mission**

### **Fireday Eve**

Now my name's Bill Jingle, a priest of the Hospital, and this here's my tale. I done get told that I was to go out of the Tower with a group of adventurey-types to go and sort out the security of some or other meetings that were important.

I met up with the leader of our mission, Lady Kevralyn Soulfire, a great and powerful sorceress of wide renown. ( She's a helluva lot smaller than I thought she'd be, I thought she'd be ten foot tall with magic smoking out of her ears, but she was really nice) A cryptic and haughty Drow was talking to some people inside the building we used as a tavern, and confusing them. (No surprise there) and it turns out all you need to do is ask the right questions. So he told me his name was 'Master' Harlequin. Didn't take him much time (or beer) to thaw out though, and he turned out to be a really nice chap. Ambassador Kudos was also with us, modelling his latest court wear line from his shop, shabby-sheik I believe. (I mean at one point he was wearing a sack...really avant-garde) The great and powerful Michelinier Knight Aspirant Tarndeth was one of us, and his two new adventurer novices were at all times learning from him, Dramweld and Draksus they were, as alike as peas in a pod. One of them was not even old enough to shave yet, but I cannot remember which one that was. Having said that, they acquitted themselves well for the whole debacle adventure. The comedy duo of Anthrax and Sutnac were skulking around offending the Michelinier whenever possible, and trying to do the same to me. They were accompanied by Mr Backstabber himself, little puppy Skortch, now with improved blow piping skills. Skulking behind them was a quiet creature called they called Shade. So shy and retiring, she never spoke to me except to say a quiet 'thank you' after being fixed up. Our reapers were well-represented by High Priests Vallen and Kylar, and a good murdering was had by all. Aply supporting them was the inimitable Kakarot (Goblin 'Orde!!) and Snorri. Making an enthusiastic return to adventuring life, the irrepressible pair of Robin and Misha (well she had many other names given to her over the event, but we will introduce her as Misha) charged in and out of bushes at all times of day or night with no fear. Trying to keep all the scouts in check was Captive Jack. This time he was in charge of the scouts, would that make him Captain Jack? I don't know. Oh yes, there was a quiet unassuming half-orc, a gentle soul, called Rask, who wandered around giving quiet advice on everything. As you can see, a party of many, many parts. So many in fact, that if I have left you out of my introduction, or if you do not get mentioned later on, I can but apologise.

We met up, as all adventuring parties do, in a bar. This was being run by someone who looked a lot like Bob, but who wasn't Bob. Indeed no, for all Bob's 'rough charm' (grumpiness), this new barman/innkeeper/host raised the bar. Tommy from the Forge, Tian's man, what a grumpy git. More about this later.

Some Humacti came to see us, and handed over an Aldonar artefact, supposedly of immense Good power, that we were to give over to the Halmadonians when we met them to be carried by a good sphere caster, either myself or Kudos. Quite coincidentally, this seemed to have an unfortunate shape, as though it had be designed for insertion in certain orifices. And when you consider we were definitely going to attract unwelcome attention carrying an artefact of such power, I felt it would probably BE inserted in said orifice. So Kudos carried it. Ha haha.

Off we went to visit the Halmadonians, because that is just what a party that is predominantly evil wants to do.

Along the way, we encountered a bunch of elementals. Master Harlequin blew several into

motes, apart from the Grey elemental who needed to be destroyed with wood. Surrounded as we were by forest, only Snorri had a wooden beating stick.... He moved so fast he was a veritable blur, and a thousand blows later, the Grey elemental was no more. Yay. Anthrax and Sutnac saw all these magic creatures and professed no interest. Indeed, they felt their blood alcohol levels were dangerously low, and as any good pirate would, proceeded to imbibe copious quantities of questionable brandy. As it was my duty as a Hospitaller, I had to check this beverage for the presence of poison, which required a hefty glug. Mass Cure Mortal and off we go.

Then a sneaky bunch of assassins had at us, as well as some more elementals. Everyone got stuck in then. One of the sneaks managed to get a Fatal Disease onto Lady Kevralyn in the dark, and before I could get to her to help, she had used of her items to cure herself (did I mention that for a tiny person she is absolutely COVERED in bling?). Robin and Misha were charging around in the dark forest murdering anything they could get their hands on, with short intermissions for running back to me to be cured, before shooting off again. The shield wall was swirling (i.e. NOT a wall) and the priests were running all over the place causing all manner of hideous wounds. Kudos took a malleting from an exceptionally tall, hard-hitting assassin. And then as quickly as it started it was all over bar the Mass Cure Mortal. Off we go.

Making a break from all this violence, we met a few Green Wizardy people. They said they have some Mana Traps. This was to collect the mana released during sorcery, and they were going to use it when they attempted to make a hole in the barrier that keeps us on this plane. Well they said it would give them more 'punch'. Expert at messing with magic, Harlequin volunteered to carry one.

After leaving them, we wandered further, and encountered some Dymwan. I don't know why but we entertained an argument with a stropmy moo of a Priestess, and as usual, a fight ensued.

Now I don't profess to be an expert at fighting in a shield wall, but I am pretty sure the shields stay together and the naughty people belong on the OTHER SIDE OF IT!!! This didn't happen. Pain ensued. Lots of pain. And then they were killed. Mass Cure Mortal and off we go.

We wandered up to a large hill fort. Here we found the Halmadonians, represented by Sir Steven the Brave, or was it Brave BraveBrave Sir Steven, I can't remember. Anyway, there was an apparition in the second floor of the fort that berated us while people were trying to have a civil conversation with Sir Steven. The apparition purported to be Baron Kiara, and whinged at Kylar. For some reason he paid attention to this shrill harpy, until Vallen told her that we knew it wasn't her, cos her body was back at our Tower while the Halmadonians had her soul. So there. She begged pitifully, but was ignored by pretty much all of us bar Kylar. He got a tad grumpy because we would not assail a Knight and his retinue in prepared positioned behind multiple wards. Go figure. Anyhoo, it was raining, had been raining for a long time. Did I not mention this before? Sorry. We were wet. As we got progressively more wet, and then was a forecast of increasing wet, I got my personal forecast of grumpy, with increasing chances of grumpy as the night progresses. Talking to Anthrax and Sutnac, it was apparent that this forecast was shared by several of us. We stood under trees for several spell durations while Lady Kevralyn and Kudos spoke to the Halmadonians. I do not know what they said, because I was standing under a tree. Because I was wet. And the tree leaked. So resolving nothing, we walked back to the Waystation. Or tavern. Or bar. I cannot remember. Frankly I didn't care, because it WASN'T wet.

We were warmly greeted by Tommy the Tian's man. Well that's a lie. He was bellowing that he hated all Valley people, and that he had put special sauce in our food. We were all bastards,

and he hated all of us. I did continuously check for poison, but could only detect a certain saltiness to the gruel. Ten minutes later, the Druidy person Arbor turned up. Now there's a nice chap. In a rare moment of lucidity, Tommy got all civil, offered him tea and then lapsed back into his, by now, customary cursing and grumbling.

Lord Niam (Nean? Mehan?) Gravestealer of the Dymwan came to 'collect payment'. I have no idea what he was talking about and stayed well away from him. Why? Cos he's a Lord (powerful) and a Dymwan (evil necromancy) and he has a SKULL on his FACE. That's why. Arbor took the young boy Skortch outside into the dark. After a bit Skortch came back in and announced that he was one of Arbor's favourites. This meant he got a title of Talon, of some or other Path. Okay then. Lord Vetzlar came in all quiet –like with one Ashnazi. Let's face it, you only really ever need one Ashnazi. While Vetzlar was talking the Ashnazi grew restless and wandered around bullying people. I don't think Vallen had ever met an Ashnazi before, because he was about to try to hurt it. Luckily for Vallen I stopped him. What's the black stuff between an Ashnazi's toes? Slow reapers.

Coming in with the Lord Gravestealer person was a thing. It was apparently some form of construct and Kudos and I surmised it was being controlled from afar. It was asking all and sundry if we were enemies of the Dymwan. It asked some weird questions and then decided I was an enemy and should go on the list. It indicated Jack was on the list too, but explained it couldn't actually put him on the list because he hadn't given his name to the apparition. Sutnac then said, 'Don't tell him Jack'.

Oh yes, I forgot, before the adventure even began, I was accosted by Sasha, High Priestess of the White Path. She told me that I was naughty. (Last adventure I had spoken to Lord Jananos, Guildleader of the Hospital and asked if I could do a tiny ickle PowerHammer on a caster to prevent him from casting in order to protect my friends. He had indicated previously that Hospital people should not kill when harming is enough, not cause mortal wounds when simply striking is enough. He told me that a tiny PowerHammer would be virtually no damage at all and was within my capabilities, so I should be able to do it. So I did it. Once. Okay, maybe twice, but who's counting.) Anyway, she said I was naughty and wrong and that Hospital people couldn't do that. She then said I should join the White Path. I asked why I would want to become a rubbish Healer when I am already a damn good one. She didn't have a good answer for that. I said that Lord Jananos had said I could. She said he hadn't, which is amazing because she was nowhere near at the time and I am pretty sure that there are no Seer skills in the White Path. I told her again what he had said and she said that he was wrong. Now that's brave isn't it? A High Priestess of a different guild telling a guildmember that his Lord is wrong? Well I guess I'll just have to cross-check every announcement Lord Jananos ever makes with High Priestess Sasha from now on. What was pretty amazing then was that my PowerHammer finger was disabled and not even a spell's duration later she made me a High Priest! Wow. You're a bad man, very naughty, here, let's make you a High Priest. Oh well, I guess they're desperate for High Priests in the Hospital now, what with the Guildleader being wrong and all.

## **Steelday**

What a night. Soaking it was. Lots of talking. Hope today is less full of big nobs. Wishful thinking Bill.

That Humacti, Alan Bran, learning acolyte (still with training wheels) was here again this morning. As he sat down to breakfast with us, he said he felt sorry for the Dyman, Lord Gravestealer last night so he didn't follow him and murder him in the dark. I know this was true because he didn't have his training wheel stuck where the sun doesn't reach. Wuss.

The Wizards Concillium representative popped around for a fry-up and to deliver a mana trap for Master Harlequin. As with everything else about Harlequin, the mana trap was sleek, elegant, tastefully understated and functional. Let's hope it works.

Some Halmadonians came along and delivered a very young lady called Kiara. This little girl told me she was a Baron. Wow. She must be powerful. In return for giving her back to us, Kudos gave the Aldonar butt-plug artefact over to the Halmadonians. I dunno what they're gonna do with it.

Well now that brekkie is done, I've been told that we've got some work to do. We've got to release Arbor's Green (whu?) and then fiddle with a Brown Node (something about an elemental problem or a Crystal Golem). With no more incentive than the opportunity to stick my nose into someone else's business, we all grabbed our stuff and wandered off.

Well to start with, there was a concerted effort of trying to get themselves killed. By that I mean, going charging off into fights without letting the Hospitaller INVOKE!!! Luckily, as the day progressed, I got more vocal and more grumpy, which had the desired effect.

We were assailed by some brown sprites and some Crystal Shards which destroyed mundane weaponry. Only weapons that were permanently ensorcelled or empowered were safe from their effects. If these things ever teamed up with grimlocks, then things would be amusing.

Mass Cure Mortal and off we go...

We wandered further to find a large clearing with some large brown smelly things with swirly marks on their faces. These repeatedly destroyed shields, giving Lady Kevralyn lots of business, and delivered humongous blows. Accompanying them was the Crystal Golem itself. I am happy to report it is now a pile of Crystal Dust. No-one sniff it please. Huzzah.

We went back to the Waystation for tea and bandages.

While we were eating and being vilified by Tommy, LensilBlackbone, ex-leader of the Reaper Guild came from Dreadlord Arrakis to speak to Lady Kevralyn. He's really short to be a Guildleader, and his robe is really long. It's almost as though he shrank in the wash. Still, he's obviously dangerous and all. They sat speaking in hushed tones, with lots of chin-rubbing and 'intriguing' being overheard. No-one else important came at lunchtime. The little Baron girl was talking to Kylar. I think she was irritating him, cos he got an expression on his face.

A weirdo did come in for lunch, a chap called Phalange Fuq-Noze, a trader from the Marketplace. He said He had a brother called Phalange Innabottom. Apparently in his family, surnames come first. He said he was looking for dancing girls, and wondered if Kiara would audition for him. Strange chap. Twitched when shown a spoon.

There was a really friendly half-orc sorcerer/mage/wizard there as well called Gurthric. He had a long grey cloak trimmed excessively with selected Yhetee hair... He said that the Goblin King wants all the Barren nancies under him. (understand I am trying to translate half-orc into normal speech here) The Warrens are having elections, Gurthric says that if you're big and scary then stand up and say pick me. All the Warrens will pick the scariest person. He later amended this to include possibly the funniest person, because they all like a laugh. More half-orc babble followed. Fuq-Nozetranslated this and said that the Goblin King has actually asked for advisors for a council like the Barrens. I think the smell of the selected Yhetee fluff had affected Gurthric's 'brain'.

To more serious business: Master Delta came along, with other notable Valley people. He made Dreams boss of the Temple of the Four Winds, for this season, (Summer – you would be forgiven for not noticing this because of the RAIN!!!). Shard Farsight was referred to a Winter Queen, but we are not sure which season he might actually be chosen for. He is one of the

Oracles though, that's a definite.

There was some waffle, I mean some serious conversation, about whether adventurers in the field should make uninformed decisions. Obviously it was made by Lady Kevralyn and Kudos, who I think believed they were the only ones qualified to make decisions. (I think I've heard of them making mistakes in the past, especially Kudos, but heck, I'm a nobody, so who cares what I write) Anyway, this bantered back and forth for a while until there was sufficient derision and sarcasm built up by the audience, culminating the Valley mantra being chorused 'Fix one thing, break two!' Ah yes, our Raison d'etre...

Shard Farsight remains with us now, because he is 'interested in the green'. Not sure what this is a euphemism for, but I'll go with it, he seems like a very nice chap. (\*whispers\* he doesn't have an axe on his face) Anyway, he says the Green is either a person or a place, possibly related to the Land of the 4 + 1. It can be pictured as a wise man, but is also known as the space through which a druid will move when he tree-shifts... It may also be a representation of life on our plane, and somehow be tied to the fey. He said that the Green is now weak, or completely removed from Orin Rakatha. Arbor is very keen to have it renewed.

So, all food consumed, all people talked to, all arguments in temporary abeyance, we went looking for the Green. We encountered some Dymwan. During the course of our Dymwan eradication exercise, Vallen showed his bravery by repeatedly Cause Mortal-ing an embodied skeletal warrior. Mass Cure Mortal and off we go.

We encountered some Shadowsfall who were looking for Valdemar, and then some more Dymwan. Cue slaughter, while tightly packed into a narrow gorse corridor. Pretty soon there will be no Dymwan for the Halmadonians to have a Crusade against! We don't want to take all their toys do we?

Anyway, we moved off into the forest, and met a chap called Tricky Greenwillow. He spoke to us, and gave us instruction in how to call the Green. We had to enact a ritual, where three casters performed ritual power, one from each Sphere, on a dying tree. Kylar TOD-ed the fungus infecting the tree, Vallen enhanced the wiggling roots trying to grow, and I Healed the damage done to the tree. While this was going on, the rest of the party were to chant in a round, each group doing one line of a four line chant. When we practised this, they seemed very dispirited and not entirely up for it. Tricky spoke some more, but I missed what he was saying because Shard attacked me with PUNS!!! The swine.

After the ritual they all seemed to be in good spirits. Maybe they got into a rhythm somehow. Anyway, this had called the Green, who appeared as a green-faced bearded man. He spoke really quietly, which was irritating, because there were half-orcs in our party... Straining to hear, Kevralyn and I questioned him repeatedly, trying to glean whatever information we could before he left us. What follows is rather chaotic as I madly scrawled whatever notes I could.

Green said, 'I should have known it would be you meddlers who called me.' (apparently we have a reputation)

We asked why he had not been here before and he responded 'Two more to follow, you have brought it on yourselves.' (uh-oh) 'The Wanderer and He Who Is Trapped will be here, they will be gathered and they will judge the Land.' (Who are these mysterious 'they'?)

He does not know Arbor, and the Fey could not summon the Green. Who is this Greatest Enemy? Have we found it/decided yet?

Our concern is the next Cataclysm... (now it becomes really chaotic, as my pencil flew liked a demented thing across my notebook, I do my best to decipher my crazed notes, but if you were there, dear reader, I am sure you would fare no better).

The first cataclysm brought for the Towers

The second cataclysm brought forth the Mists

The third depends upon the judgement that will be delivered. (How will this judgement be formed?) Answer: do your people bicker amongst themselves or are they lawful?

(Here a bunch of Dark Druids, led by Tongue Foxfire, followers of AmonTep turned up, Kudos kept them busy while Lady Kevralyn and myself continued our frantic questioning, realising time was definitely of an essence now)

Regarding the Shadowsfall confusion, all will become clear in time. Something about the Shadowsfall no longer being the Voice of the Mystics, and that the mystics would speak from the Oracles of the Temple of the Four Winds. (Great, someone better follow Dreams around now with a scribe just in case...) That bombshell was dropped and left, as he went on to a new idea. (He is really confusing)

Apparently the Green, the Wanderer and He Who Is Trapped are summoned to the land, and used to collect evidence which is then delivered to the judges. (still no mention of who these judges are)

We asked if these judgements are in place to reduce bloodshed between the people of Orin Rakatha?Perhaps. (I asked this because the Towers and Mists seemed to be control mechanisms to make Orin Rakatha a more orderly place and reduce war) Perhaps to prolong what they have set in motion (again with the 'they'!!! Who is 'they'?)

Now some details:

The Green collects evidence of the land.

The Wanderer looks to the people.

He Who Is Trapped looks into the people's hearts.

All evidence is given over to the judges and they will render their verdict.

The Green is not pleased as the land has not been treated well. (Lady Kevralyn suggested this might be a reference to Cardonaris????)

My mind was filled with a million thoughts, and I wandered at the back of the party as we returned to the Waystation for food. I have no recollection of anything from that moment until a cup of tea was in my hand and Tommy was snarling over the counter at me.

Morefac Storm, ex-Guildleader of the Brethren visited the Baroness' for tea. They snuck off inside for tea and crumpets. They might have had a conversation, something momentous might have been said, it was never disseminated, so who cares.

Much more entertaining, Gurthric came back for tea, and offered Misha a position as his consort. She blew him off gracefully. He then tried to attract the attention of Lady Aruna, but she threatened to singe his (fur-trim) cloak. Much hilarity ensued between us, and the incompetent Humacti Al Bran. A lot of it does not bear mentioning in polite company, but it was the relief I needed.

Phalange Fuq-Noze was outed as a pimp after offering the 'services' of some ladies he employed to several people. He protested this, but it was too late, I had spotted the silver buttons on the soles of his boots. Special shoes = procurer.

After tea, we were visited by a high-ranking Halmadonian group. The Knight Preceptor of the Knights of Purity of Halmadons Heights, Sir Danus, the big bossman of all the Halmadonians came for tea and a chat. Meeting him here was Sir Clavados of the Micheliners. Lady Kevralyn asked me to let him know what the Green had told us, hoping he might be swayed by a Good Sphere user. Didn't work, and even though I told him that the Green had said the evidence gathering is underway, and the judgement will be forthcoming, he was convinced he could make

them go away. A bit arrogant... He said he was going to stop the Cataclysm by stopping the Evil Sphere gaining the ascendancy in the next conjunction in 14 moons time.

He said that while our Evil Sphere casters were of some minor concern to the Heights, it was the Dreadlord who concerned them greatly. There were three anchors for the Evil Sphere in Orin Rakatha, Carfleen, Cardonaris and Arrakis. Carfleen is done, Cardonaris is next and when they finish with him, they will be coming for Arrakis.

Halmadonians brought Morghar's Inheritance for the ceremony of the Solstice. Two High Priests took it away to the site for the ceremony, and we continued our discussions. Arrakis has come to their attention as he has been absorbing into himself Evil Shrines, or Shrines dedicated to the Evil Sphere. This has been making him more powerful, and more significant as an anchor for the Evil Sphere. Halmadonians look for these shrines all across Orin Rakatha, and destroy them to prevent the Ascendancy of the Evil Sphere at the Conjunction. They suggested that a way to avoid the focus of the Heights upon the Valley during this crusade would be to have Arrakis voluntarily leave the Valley and reside with them in the Heights for 14 moons, until the conjunction. This caused Lady Kevralyn to raise her eyebrows.

We got no further as a panting priest ran into the meeting and spoke to Sir Danus. A group of Dymwan and Micheliners had attacked the Halmadons with Morghar's Inheritance. Of course he challenged Sir Clavados, who tasked us to go to the site of the attack and glean whatever information we could. He went back to the Tower to find out what had gone on, and to start the investigation. We said we had been attacked by a Hephath-like creature who had been able to dominate individuals and had as an entourage members of many disparate Towers all under his sway. Possibly these Micheliners had been possessed. After offering this information, we left for the attack site.

On the way we were assailed by two groups of Dymwan who drained us badly. Several of us hit the floor, drained of spirit, including myself. Kakarot seemed to be hitting the ground frequently from these drains, but each time he was Power-Gifted he bounced up with a cry of 'Goblin 'Ordel!' and charged back into the fray. His mummy would be proud. After a lot of pain, the Dymwan were finally defeated.

We then got everybody cured up, and moved on to the attack site. On the way we encountered some Halmadonian Knights of Purity. They said they had been charged to attack a group of Evil Sphere users who were consorting with Micheliners. Because the Evil Priests and Tarndeth were at the front, guess who they thought we were? Rask now announced himself to be Sir Rask of the Searing Flame, and challenged these knights to announce themselves. They chose not to, and carried on hitting us. An amazing display then followed, Sir Rask threw down his weapons and berated the Knights, calling them cowards and dishonourable, while being beaten by the Knights of Purity. He finally turned his back and offered his back to the blows and his throat to be cut, before the Knights finally turned and walked away in shame. Aren't they just a fine example of martial honour and prowess... Well Sir Rask certainly was.

Then we got told by a Micheline cadet that an angel had come and taken the inheritance away. What a disaster! We marched post-haste back to the Waystation to inform the powers that be. Sir Clavados came back to us and told us that Brother Anthony of the Citadel had got his sister to go into the vault, and retrieve an artefact. We believe this was the item that Legend Gomic had been given to summon the Angel Fairfax. This had been given to Brother Anthony who had taken it to the site of the ambush and ordered Fairfax to carry it for him as he left.

Clavados said that he had no choice now but to join the Crusade against Lord Cardonaris. He asked if we would go too, and Tarndeth barely let him finish speaking before offering his sword.

The rest of us were more ambivalent.

That night the Aldonar Lich, Marcus Armitage, came to get his phylactery back, as per the agreement we made last month. He refused to speak to Kudos or Lady Kevralyn, wanting only to speak with someone from our last encounter. He mentioned Snorri and Tarndeth. I had obviously escaped his attention as I am a mere sylph of a man. Well Snorri had already got his teddy bear and gone to bed, and Tarndeth suffered a fit of the superior attitude and refused to speak to the Lich because he is evil, leaving the unarmed helpless Hospitaller to talk to him instead. I listened to what he said, and took him at this his Word, which he gave willingly, and gave him his phylactery. He was overjoyed and promised much. Now we see if he delivers. Let us not pre-judge him.

## **Sunday**

Bacon-Egg Bap! The day is looking good.

Sir Lannusof the Cruciform Sword, former Knight of Virtue of Halmadons Heights, now sworn to the Evil Sphere, came to visit along with Dreadlord Arrakis. I didn't get a lot of the introductions first-hand as the Dreadlord terrifies me and I was hiding behind a tree, then a door. (He has an AXE on his FACE!!! Why does no-one but me see this?) Well there some private conversations then he announced that Master Harlequin was to be his seneschal. He then spoke of the Grand Conjunction in 14 moons. Naturally he wants the Dark Sphere to be ascendant then.

He also said he wants to forge change in the people of the Valley, and elsewhere, and he wants to assert LAW. How can a powerful man who wants to assert lawfulness inspire such terror in me? Maybe the AXE on his FACE, or the Dark Sphere he casts around with such abandon....

(months ago, I saw him fatally disease Sergeant Smudge. Not an act to develop respect, just fear...) Anyway, I digress; the Sector Lords response to the incident is that they will all join the Crusade against Lord Cardonaris. This all suits the aims of Arrakis, as it will leave him as the only anchor. (So he is virtually unkillable, he came in with a knight called Immortal, and he says there can only be one.... Where is this all leading?) He says he is going to leave the Tower for 14 moons, to remove the attention of the Halmadonians, and is going to have a 14 moon sleepover with the Knights of Our Dark Lady. Lady Ellen Du Grease came with an entourage to collect him. And off they went. Kinda left all of us looking at each other with dazed expressions.

A few spell durations later, a hyperventilating Concillium member came along. He had been collecting and storing the mana traps in the area, and was running from some Melnoboneans who were after him for all the mana. He offered us a few Gests to protect him from outside influence while he transferred the mana via ritual to the Wizard's Concillium. Sutnac showed his superior haggling skills and got all his cash off him. We went to a nearby stockade and defended his ritual against repeated waves of Hepaths and their mind-bent creatures. At the end, the wizard died over his ritual, as the mana released through him and damaged his body. We tried curing him, to no avail, even attempted reforming his body (which really hurt Lady Kevralyn).

And that was that. We all went home for tea and medals. Huzzah!