

The lads and me left the Kingdom of Deep Caves to find trade and fortune in the lands nearer hell. We came up close to a new settlement called “Kings Fort” where we struck a deal a notable Lord Vetzlar and were almost immediately sent back out north overland to meet with some Cave Nancy and bring him back to Kings Fort along with a box containing something important.

We were met by some other members of the “Alliance” that Wolfhold is apparently a part of including;

John Barleycorn – a fella closely in tune with nature who was appointed leader when Gomic got bored of doing it.

Kylar – tall chap used evil spirits in combat and posed a lot.

Tarquin – a bloke what cares about slaves and helped out with the healing

Kelvin – a trainee mage who makes for a good accountant.

Nix – a lady (as oppose to lady-boy) cave nancy but one who proved quite useful at times.

Siggurd – a weak ankled nonce according to Ivak but he seemed to do all right in a scrap for a human.

Scaffla – a duergar scout from caverns far to the north of Greyspire lands.

Gomic Greyspire – leader of our lads and patcher up of the wounded.

Ivak Duhm Greyspire – warrior with unsavoury appetites

Voktar Greyspire – berserk whippet warrior and crevice investigator

Doshan Greyspire – not at all interested in ancient runes or dark rituals.

We were told to head to a house being used by the Patriach of House Valdurim one Semnak Bloodheart. It was a dark cold night with snow on the ground so the first bunch of Cave Nancys that decided to get in our way stood out quite well as we chopped them down. We were expected a slightly warmer welcome but Nix explained that there were still a number of wild Nancys around so we just assumed that the dead ones were those rather than anything diplomatically important.

We pushed on up toward a large impressive manor house only to be met by a Slaveboss who directed us to the slave quarters which caused a bit of consternation. It was quickly explained that we weren't to become slaves just that the hob-nobbing at the house was a bit above our pay grade and that we should settle in and wait for orders.

From this point on things got a bit complicated. We were given a bunch of different jobs from various important (and not so important people) which included:

- Fetching special purple spotted Mushrooms for the Patriachs dinner on behalf of the cook there were located around a nearby lake shore.
- Finding a missing drow patrol which we did. Turned out they had been captured and turned into “vessels” by a member of the Vanishing tower (see later). They were mindless things by the point we found them so we were forced to chop them down.
- Delivering messages from the 10th Warrior of House Agraathan (a Duerger) to the 1st Assassain (called WarpTaint) and the 2nd Warrior (DoomFist).
- Jobbing the 10th Warrior of House Agraathan on behalf of Khandis from House Drannath no idea why but it was an absolute pleasure.
- Trying to find a contact who was working with a spy in House Valdurim who wanted to murder Semnak Bloodheart and kill him so that he could be replaced by Warptaint to root out the real spy. We didn't actually make much progress on this one as the only likely suspects we didn't fancy shopping.
- Hunting bandits around the area of the Dark Manor.
- Collect “Shade Essences” by stabbing them with a special sword that we were leant.
- Finding and jobbing a member of the Vanishing Tower.
- Rescuing Tristan a member of the Green School from the slavers who had captured him.
- A reader fellow named Alessandro asked us to make sure that a member of House Morefaeglin didn't have a nasty accident. We did meet a nancy from that house later and he didn't have an accident despite leading us directly into an ambush by wild drow and the most skilful but weak troll anyone has ever met.
- Collecting skulls, skeletons and body parts from a very dark and misty graveyard while being assailed by numerous undead creatures. That was fairly tricky but we managed it all right by the end.

Some of the jobs were paying cash but the ones we really needed to do were for a set of goblets to fill the box that we had to return to Kings Fort. We succeeded in collecting up all the cups apart from the one the Patriarch was going to deliver personally.

We met a member of the pathfinders guild called “Bracken” who had clearly had his brain eaten by a Mindflayer (called the Observer according to Gomic). He was wandering around the Manor acting as an Envoy (but not an envoy to us) and was ridiculously chirpy. He also throws big piles of cash at people to do jobs for him, it's recommended that you don't accept. We were going to try and bring Bracken back so someone could sort him out but by the time we'd come to a decision he'd buggered off and never came back.

While out looking for mushrooms we were attacked but a bunch of pigs (well more boars really)

which we naturally butchered. Well it turns out that this unbalanced some ancient ritual thing in the area and as a result we spent the next day being harassed by tree spirits and druidy things. We eventually located some scrolls and headed off to a big totem pole thing where after putting down some guardians John Barleycorn our resident tree-licker performed a ceremony to summon the Boar and Serpent spirits. We didn't have the rituals needed to bind and control these things so we had kind of hoped they'd kill each other while we had beer and crisps but nope they both turned on us and after a good solid beating (during which Tarquin was killed) we'd bought balance back to the forest by dint of flattening both sides.

At some point around here the 2nd High Priest of House Valdurim was doing something with some potions or such in the building we were in where he dropped dead. Someone said he had drank something he shouldn't so we left him the corner. When we came back he had gone and turned up later looking very much alive. I have no idea what was going on.

There was also lots of activity with little chaos beasties plaguing the area. It turned out that Maris FairRune 4th Sorcerer of House Valdurim was doing some ritual in a small warded hut. When we went to investigate (in a thoroughly professional manner with no pillocking about or needless hurling of people through warded doors!) we recovered a deck of "Choas Cards" which seemed to attract the beasties even more. These attacks culminated in a tall skinny figure in a riot of multi-coloured finery to turn up and demand that we return the cards or entertain him. As it turned out some of what we did was quite entertaining (Nix chasing Kylar up a tree while they were cursed into thinking they were a dog and cat for example) but as it turned out we were better and just beating him up so we tried that instead. Someone said it was a chaos jester that we had just finished off and that we were all fooked now as those things always come back to plague you. When we discussed it later someone reckoned that the cards might be used to help control the Chaos Vortex but frankly it seems bit unlikely. Kylar hung on to the cards until we could get back to Kings Fort.

Patriarch Bloodheart got himself poisoned at some point and we were blamed (despite never getting near the manor house!). We were given permission to torture some slaves in order to identify the culprit. Doing so we learnt that it was one of the slaves that did it and that they had gathered poison from the fields. When we went out to meet another one of the slave conspirators at a pre-arranged rendezvous all of this was helpfully confirmed by the 16th Assassin of House Drannath who was in the area doing nothing of interest and had no contact what-so-ever with any slaves.

There's clearly something going on within House Valdurim. I have to say that the politics of the houses don't really interest me but the main players seem to be;

Agraathan – In league with some higher ranking members of the house. I suspect supporting/allied with Bloodheart and trying to keep the status quo intact.

Drannath – Cleary against Valdurim and trying to bring them down probably for a quick leg up

the ladder since they are currently last.

Durilach – were mentioned as being around and causing trouble for Valdurim.

Valdurim – Going through a power struggle. The 1st assassin claims that a change of leadership at the moment would be a problem and is therefore trying to help the Patriarch. There was various other notables about but they weren't really talking to me (or rather I wasn't that interested in talking to them) so it wasn't really possible to work out the myriad of alliances and betrayals that no doubt exist.

As we packed up to leave we cleared the area of roving drow patrols and set off at a quick march back to Kings Fort to go back through to the land of Orin Rakatha and more cash.

Brieus Nil Lubricadum,