

Journal of Tathal Spellblade

Day 1

After several days of journeying through this vast, underground filth, Finkle, Tiberius and I have finally made contact with a party of... adventurers... with whom we seem to be able - to a degree - travel with.

At first we were greeted by what would commonly be described as a Hound Archon (presumably because it is one), called Sanjit, who conveyed us to the hapless group we were so destined to join.

Here I was expecting hardened adventurers bearing the awe-inspiring appearance of adventurers that were... hardened...

There was only one time in my life I had been more wrong... luckily the cow survived.

Let me relate my experience. First there was Gareth, a frightfully under-bearing stature of a man with a rather alarming desire to document everything that

happens within a 60' arc in all directions. Finkle suggested we set a flame to his work at the earliest convenience...

Manama.... Funny! Yeah....manama

Ah... sorry about that. I forgot to mention, due to this damnable empathic link that Finkle and I have, he will often influence this journal. I leave these little snippets in because when I went to edit them out he threatened to urinate in my scroll cases... after the last incident concerning the High Mage's cup of Druidic Herbal Tea I'm inclined to let this one slide.

Then there was Karbine, who rumour has it... is one. I haven't quite worked him out yet... perhaps in the same way as one might ponder the existence of a peanut. Though I will say this in his favour... no, on second thoughts...

Thirdly, there was what I first thought was a rather physically attractive inflated mannequin strapped to a horse... then I realised I was right. It was only when it

spoke to me that I realised that I was still right... I had merely overlooked one minor detail... it was alive.

Her name was Lady Catherine, or Catheter as Finkle likes to call her, who on second inspection I realised looked much like a Nymph. However, I suspected that perhaps many of the features were cosmetic and that the family of Nymphs I stayed with three years ago probably would have ostracised her to a place they often referred to as Queanbeyan?

And finally there was Tiberius (who had already been travelling with us), umm... picture a Dwarf with armour, weapons, and a recently discovered passion for fiddling with knobs... oh, and he's handy around a door.

So, as the ice had broken Tiberius and I were about to join the party when suddenly Gareth muttered under his breath something about allegiances and hard group... something, which promptly offended Tiberius. Well, Tiberius didn't like that and made cries of performing taxidermy on Gareth's person.

In the end I calmed him down, and convinced him that we should go along with the party regardless, and if they seem unworthy of our presence, or are holding us back, then we can just leave.

Manama... Yeah, we can light their toes and pee on their breast plates before we go...
Finkle said.

So, ignoring this, we joined the party and off we went.

*First order of the day was to take a further step in ridding this place of something called 'Madness.'
Apparently he is one of those things that just keeps coming back... I had an infection like that once...*

Soon we find that to do this we must go talk to a statue...

Hmm... these people are weird... let me bite them... *Finkle said.*

*Never-the-less, we ventured off, looking for this statue.
But apparently the statue doesn't speak common*

(makes sense to me). So, given that I have some appropriate scrolls, I asked them if it spoke Hedgehog. I got a strange look, followed by a no. So I asked them if they spoke South American Llama? (There's no such place as South America but it helped me appear travelled)... no... and the look...

Off we went, North... ish. We went through several interesting rooms, everyone appeared to know where they were going. We came across a hallway though, a long one. It must have been too long because Tiberius and Catherine decided that they couldn't do it.

They stopped. I watched. They stopped again in case I'd missed it the first time, but then Tiberius gained a second wind and Catherine's horse eventually decided to do the walking for her... Catherine seemed to protest, but she was strapped on... with leather...

Interestingly it was then that I realised a great big bloody horn sticking out of the horse's head. Finkle seemed to think it impressive... I seemed to think it bloody horn-like. The horn. The Leather. There's a

connection there that I... just... can't... put my finger...

Moving right along...

We came to a large fleshy passage... (I thought we'd moved on?)

Eventually, we arrived at the fabled statue. It was a Drow. I dislike Drow. I mean, white hair and black skin? What were they thinking?

It spoke. Tiberius and I followed its speech quite comfortably but the others just stood there imitating guppy-fish at feeding time. I first thought it was something they did for fun...

Alas, the statue spoke:

Who is the Master of this place?

How many of the Master's brood survived his death?

Tiberius and I were intrigued, and after sufficient anticipation had gathered we told the others. None of us knew the answers.

The statue asked us again, impatiently. We were about to ask the statue if we could get back to him in a day or two when the walls suddenly began screaming.

I kind of blacked out for a second, and became pretty shaken after that.

When we got out of there we decided it would be best to go back and ask Sanjit. Smashing idea, so we did it.

Sanjit was able to tell us that the answer to the first question was Mahir.

We had scored a victory!

He then told us he didn't know the rest.

We had lost the battle!

But he told us that the librarian would know, so we went and asked him.

In the end we found out that Mahir had a brood of 12 but we didn't know how many survived his death.

Armed with that knowledge and little wisdom, we ventured off to find a Naga who would apparently know the answer.

As we pondered our situation it was becoming increasingly clear that the likely hood that the party had actually slain said Naga was clearly increasing.

So much so that we found its head.

But before that happened, this happened...

We walked along a few corridors etc. and came to a room that stank like Finkle dressed in his finest water closet. Tiberius hung around long enough to fiddle with a knob and poke at a hole, but having already been unsuccessful in opening a secret door he found, we decided to leave.

We then came to another room, and peered in side. The room had a lot of vegetation. I could have swore some of it was moving... in fact it was... and I did...

My first fight with the party had begun, and Finkle was chomping at the bit to watch me carve up.

What looked like a Neo Otyugh and a smaller one shambled towards us.

I was first and decided to bide my time, and test out the strength of the beasts. I loosed one of my arrows into the meat-eating vegetable, clearly carving up a nice Caesar salad. But there was an entire buffet left behind.

The fighters all rushed in, including the nymphatic horse. They hacked and they slashed. Hacked some more, and got hacked back.

It was then I knew we were dealing with something serious. So I Fireballed it...

Bull-stools!!!

Well, ok, so when I say I Fireballed it, what I REALLY mean is that in my haste to show the party my worth I kind of... fumbled the spell...

But let's move one...

There was more hacking on both sides, but what impressed me was the swallowing technique of the Neo Otyugh. It fully ate Gareth and Catherine both.

Anyway, I got the Fireball off eventually. The fight ended shortly after Karbine's impressive fairy-light display and my raging rays of fire, and all the fighters were happily regurgitated there after.

Man Gareth had a shine to him!

Shortly after the battle Finkle taunted me. Frustrated with my failure I threatened him with images of a scorching ray where rays don't go.

We moved on.

As I must go, dungeons await, I will give an abridged version of the rest:

Soon after we came to a large room with murky liquid. Something happened, we heard something, and a strange effect enveloped us in an enveloping manner.

Finkle started babbling. At first I didn't mind but before I knew it he just wouldn't shut up! I tried to get him to stop by hurling him to the floor and lopping his head off (sensible move at the time), but the bugger scarpered.

Shortly after I had an overwhelming compulsion to runaway. As I did my best Brave Sir Robin impersonation Finkle decided that he had had enough of me, well, existing, and attempted to stop it from happening.

He did this by striking my jugular vein. I taught him well...

In the end we got out of the room and the effect wore off. Finkle and I vowed not to speak of it again... except now.

We decided to go back to Sanjit and rest. We did, and woke refreshed.

Day 2

Woke to the sound of Karbine talking to a dead snake head, I figured I was dreaming.

Nope.

The snakeless head told us some excellent information though. It gave us the answers to our riddles.

We got back to the statue and answered the questions; Mahir and 2.

A door opened, a piano somewhere went "Bum Bum... BUM!", and we went in.

We went into a dark room and couldn't see. I said "Flame on" and my Ranseur ignited into billowing flame. This would have been impressive if someone could have seen it, but it just goes to show that combustion is futile.

So I turned my flame off, but then shortly after the lights came on.

There was a pillar, and the pillar was cold.

There were 3 other doors and each had a riddle. The first was in undercommon, the answer was Darkness (after much debate). Second was in some language I didn't understand, but Hedgehogs did, and the answer, which I immediately knew because I excel where others lack, was Fire.

The 3rd was a puzzle. I worked out that it was Elvin, but we don't know the answer. I suggested it may be "Night", but everyone dismissed off-hand the fact that I was clearly correct.

We went North first, small room, secret door, people got fried by a fireball coming from an empty room.

Gave up on secret door as Tiberius' fiddling didn't seem so successful this time, and headed through the East door.

There was a long corridor, two doors, north and south. North there was a river of lava dividing the room with an exit on the other side.

Catherine was eager to jump her horny horsy across the river with party members on board. Finkle suggested that I cast Grease as she approaches the jump... for a bit of a laugh.

It was funny. I giggled.

We gave up in the end and went south. Another room, but this one was filled with water up to an inch or so deep. Catherine, forever the enthusiastic, enthusiastically got herself electrocuted while exploring the room with all the horsy's electro conductive limbs.

Catherine got up and came back.

I giggled some more.

Moments later however, I stopped giggling, for something rather strange happened. Before our very eyes, Lady Catherine, and her rather unique horse vanished in a puff of illogic. Then, immediately afterwards, Karbine appeared, to disappear.

After a moment of pondering this, yet another strange occurrence, in another puff of smoke Vikrym, with a confused look on his face, appeared before us.

Finkle suggested that it was about time. He also suggested something else, but I don't think it's combustible.

After pleasantries were explored we continued forward, back to the riddle room. We tried mostly in vane to get the south door to open. Vikrym kept muttering something about the answer being 'Wind'. I wasn't so

sure, but eventually Tiberius spoke it in undercommon, and much to the surprise of the door, it opened.

Inside we found a small chamber, filled with alchemy equipment. Well, my eyes light up, after dabbling in the art I found it fascinating and potentially profitable. There was only one problem, a Drow lived there... and he was home at the time...

Beyond him though was a door, and Vikrym muttered something about a secret door.

The Drow, although rude enough not to let on his name, did not seem overly hostile. In fact, the nice man agreed to help us. Something in my mind told me not to trust him, but try as I did, I didn't seem to find fault.

We told him what we were looking for and he asked us to make ourselves at home and he would be right back. The problem is he never left...

...well, not before turning into a spider and climbing the wall.

It was at this point that we figured that he had a change of mood.

While up there inspecting the ceiling of the chamber he must have decided that he was through with his current chemical experiments because he destroyed them explosively, with us in the room. Well, not me, because I was smart enough to stay outside.

The chamber quickly filled with billowing, blinding smoke. I decided to Fireball the room.

As Tiberius was in the room at the time I chose my shot carefully, and I must say, perfectly. The Fireball leapt into the room, igniting most of its contents.

Some more time went by as the Gareth left the room gagging and Tiberius pushed on. So I decided to nuke the room again. This time, Tiberius later related, was when he felt a nice, warm toasty breeze.

The battle continued on, the smoke clearing the room and pouring out into the pillar chamber. At one stage I

got caught in the smoke and was damaged by its effect; Although I wasn't aware of it at the time.

In the end all of us found ourselves backed up against the north wall of the riddle room trying to escape the smoke, while Tiberius had gone through the door in the lab.

I managed to hear the West door of the riddle room open and close. My suspicions that this was our friend, who incidentally turned into some kind of blob, was leaving, were later confirmed when we saw that he had in fact, left.

Eventually the smoke cleared and we could breath a little easier, although I was still not aware of this. We found Tiberius in the next room from the lab, bouncing up and down on a plush bed. We looked at him, and each other. An explanation eluded us.

We decided to go back in the lab and explore this secret door of Vikrym's. Vikrym fiddled around and got it open, and inside was a store room. I found some very nice spell components, and some nice pearls that will be

perfect for Identify when I learn how to cast it. Finkle insisted we do something else with the pearls, but I reminded him that Lady Catherine wasn't with us anymore.

After I stocked up we proceeded north again to the fireballed room where Tiberius previously could not find the latch for the secret door that resided there.

This time Tiberius was armed with Vikrym. Vikrym took one look and pointed to the ceiling. Sure enough, among said ceiling was a keyhole. But the problem was that we were down here and it was up there.

While the others devised a way of getting up there I cast a spell that would allow me to open and close things from a distance. But somehow, even though I was looking right at it, I never the less didn't realise that it was a 'keyhole' and not a 'latch or lever', and therefore the spell had no affect. Well, of course it didn't. It was a keyhole, not a latch.

While I was scratching my head Tiberius leapt into action after coming up with a cunning plan. Off he raced to the south.

Many moments, and an equal number of grunts and bangs, Tiberius came back with the bed frame from the alchemist's bed chamber.

After making a rather rudimentary, yet effective ladder, Vikrym climbed up to the lock to attempt to get it open.

Then something strange happened, almost as if the lock had come alive and was attacking Vikrym. I say almost... because it was...

After several futile attempts at slashing it with weapons, I was called upon to target it with my magical missiles.

Bravely saving the day I did so, although the resilient bugger took two castings to be defeated.

As the smoke cleared, Tiberius could be heard... “Now that’s a dead lock”

Somewhere in the distance I swear I heard a short drum roll, followed by a cymbal, but have since assumed otherwise.

The door opened anyway, and inside was a small room with apparently 2 secreted doors, although I couldn’t see anything immediately, but I have learnt to trust the somewhat keener senses of the rest of the party. Besides, I was still unaware of my lack of awareness.

The Gareth boldly stepped forth this time, and appeared to act strangely in a way, as if he was looking for something.

Tiberius followed, and he also began looking around.

But, not seeming anything to worry about I followed. As I entered the room I felt a strange disorienting sensation (or, I would have if I had been aware of it), and I realised what they were doing. As I had also

looked around to find that none of the doors that were there previously had gone missing.

Vikrym followed shortly after, and had the same effect.

We all decided in the end that it might be an idea to spend some time on each wall separately looking for a door each. I picked a wall, as did the others and we all managed to find exits.

There was a brief moment there where I struggled to grasp the physics of a room that was rectangular in shape, yet the location of the doors had changed... but let it be.

We tried one of the doors and discovered another keyhole that was living. I called it a war-lock.

Tiberius ignored me and bashed it with his warhammer. It died. A door opened.

Beyond the door was some sort of temple or public bath or something. We passed on that for the moment and

tried the other door. Again, a warlock had to be hacked.

As we looked on Finkle mentioned something about Tiberius going about rudely hammering people's holes, but I was not quite sure of his meaning.

Beyond the door that opened this time was a short passage opening up into a large pit with a 1 foot ledge running around it. It was sweaty and smelly and a large collection of acidic-like goo resided at the bottom. Much like a giant stomach. But with something lurking in the shadows.

I suggested that I could have fireballed it, giving it bad heartburn, but no one seemed interested in the idea.

As we were about to leave though we noticed some runes by the door. None of us could read it. I tried, but could not decipher it. So I decided to cast a spell that would allow me to read it easily. It was easy.

It read that there was a magic circle warding the area against chaos.

Vikrym wasn't keen to go in.

So we left and went back to the spa chamber. On the other side was a door with more runes. As my spell was still in effect I was able to read it easily. This time it told me that the door was warded against evil creatures and magical effects.

As this included my Ranseur, not to mention other items I carried, I refused to enter the portal. Pretty much everyone else did the same, except for Vikrym, who stripped off his magic bits and went through.

On the other side was a small passage, small enough that he had to climb up it.

He disappeared from sight for a while, but we could hear him still. Apparently there was some sort of column at the top of which he retrieved a spell book, unopened.

He said there was not traps, but I have seen these Rogue types unsuspectingly miss traps before, and I wasn't taking any chances.

I cleared the room of all valuable people, and then got the rest of the party to also leave. I placed the spellbook in the middle of the room, stood back and again cast the spell that allowed me to open it from a distance. Nothing happened, the others were clear to return.

The book contained many arcane spells. This was of little use to me as I do not require the study of spells as does a Wizard.

However I was able to identify that one of the spells contained therein was the ritual of unmaking, the very spell we had been looking for. There was much rejoicing, until I mentioned that I couldn't cast it yet.

I also determined however, that it was part divine also, and that a divine spellcaster may also be able to cast it.

So, given the importance of this tome, we decided it would be best kept under the protection of the celestials.

*We ventured back to them and they accommodated us.
We rested.*

Day 3

*When we awoke the plan was to go and destroy
Madness some more and explore around there some
more.*

*We went through many strange rooms, the Gareth
often consulting the many maps and charts that he had
so painstakingly compiled.*

*Eventually we arrived, and Tiberius splattered Madness
some more.*

*We went through a door that apparently was
previously locked, it wasn't now.*

*In the room, we found some company, in the form of
some Drow. Two nice looking Drow stood on the far
side of the room, cross bows ready, but pointing at the
floor. Two more stood to our east, with rapiers.*

As we stepped into the room we noticed, after not noticing before, a large black coat-looking thing in the south western corner of the room. It kindly attacked us after the Gareth walked up to one of the eastern Drow and politely swung at him.

I immediately took unkindly to this kind of hostility and thought the cloaker needed some curing by fire. I cast a spell that sent forth two scorching rays of fire, and burnt it to a crisp. Unfortunately, it was a crisp that was still moving.

There was some hacking and slashing by the fighter types, one of which killed my cloaker, although weakened he was.

Meanwhile one Drow with a crossbow aimed at us, but the ground got in the way, while the other ran to the doorway in the western wall and shouted down the hall for help.

I didn't think that was very sporting and attempted to even the odds by toasting him too. I aimed the same spell at him, but somehow, and I still can't work out

how, managed to hit the ground also. I was beginning to think there were forces here at work other than gravity.

More hacking and slashing continued. Tiberius landing an excellent blow, cleaving a Drow clear in half and following through into another and splattering the Gareth with blood.

Shortly afterwards a second wave of Drow entered, called forth by the target of my fumbling. I still had the opinion that this was unfair, and still thought they would look better toasted, and fireballed them.

It exploded, they got toasted, but alas, they still came.

Funnily enough they must have preferred to be cold as they rushed over very angrily and attacked me. But I managed to get in an attack on one before he made it to me, but realised that I had not yet ignited my Ranseur yet, limiting its effectiveness.

One of them struggled to hit me and managed to get his puny rapier caught in amongst my garments. I now had an opportunity to seize.

When I was able to act again I stepped forcefully back. Personally I think I could have done much better, but I managed to yank free, taking the rapier with me.

After I stepped back I chuckled at them in defiance, and cast a covering of magical grease under their feet. They slipped, slid and promptly fell prone to the floor.

More slashing and hacking went on, and soon the two in front of me attempted to climb up out of the greasy surface. One of them I managed to hit, this time with my 'flame on' Ranseur. He managed to take the damage though, and move off around the corner. The other one slipped back to the ground.

Soon after Tiberius crushed his skull with his warhammer.

The only foe to remain was the one I had hit getting up out of my grease. He made a bolt for the door and swiftly exited the room.

Swiftly, almost undetected, Vikrym was there, peering down the hall after the fleeing Drow.

Quickly his bow was drawn, carefully he took aim, and time almost stood still for a moment...

A nice crisp twang erupted as he loosed the missile. I could see nothing, but I heard the whistle in the air. The thud. The Drow. The death.

It was truly an inspiring sight.
