**Oghma’s Faithful**

**by Alexis Álvarez and Microsoft Copilot**

**Chapter 3: The High Forest**

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| ***Oghma’s Faithful: 1371*** |  |  |  | x |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Event*** | º | R |  |  |
| Eldrin and Narnak discuss the prospect of an expedition to Dragonspear Castle to search for the Legendmaker | Morning | 15 | Flamerule |  |
| Eldrin and Barge encounter a bugbear vendor, and trade some books for potions | Highsun | 17 | Flamerule |  |
| Eldrin encounters a caravan ferrying shipments of metal from the Troll Claws to Baldur’s Gate | Afternoon | 19 | Flamerule |  |
| Eldrin encounters a blink dog who is pursuing a displacer beast that stole and possibly killed her cubs | Afternoon | 21 | Flamerule |  |
| Eldrin reaches Dragonspear Castle, and meets a party trying to oust the diabolists from the castle | Highsun | 23 | Flamerule |  |
| The party vanquishes the diabolists, rescues Magpie and two other captives, and retrieves the Legendmaker | Afternoon | 23 | Flamerule |  |
| The party splits up to (a) pursue the fleeing diabolists, and (b) get the captives to a village nearby | Afternoon | 24 | Flamerule |  |
| The party traveled south along the Trade Way | \* | 25 | Flamerule |  |
| The party traveled southwest along the Trade Way | \* | 26 | Flamerule |  |
| The party traveled west along the Trade Way | \* | 27 | Flamerule |  |
| The party arrived in Baldur’s Gate, and went to Narnak, who paid Eldrin the gold for the book, and commended him on rescuing Magpie | \* | 28 | Flamerule |  |
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Eldrin Thistlebrook, the whisper gnome archivist, reflected on his last few journal entries as he closed a book detailing the magical properties of the Tome of Clear Thought. Having triumphed over the perils of Dragonspear Castle, he now found himself drawn to the whispers of ancient secrets and lost knowledge that spoke to his scholarly heart. His next adventure beckoned him to research other items that were of use to an archivist.

As Eldrin reviewed old tomes and scrolls in his quiet study, he stumbled upon a fragment of an ancient map hinting at the location of a long-lost library. This library is rumored to contain forgotten lore and powerful artifacts that could reshape the understanding of magic and history in Faerûn. Eldrin’s curiosity and dedication to Oghma, the god of knowledge, compel him to seek out this hidden treasure trove.

Eldrin considered a few of his associates who were looking to freelance their specializations for some gold. He collected ₲800 (gold pieces), and offered ₲400 each to Sultry as-Saif (acid genasi (1) barbarian (3)) and Copper BeNève (human rogue (1) diviner (3)).

This was about twice the going rate for a journey and job of this scope, so both the human and the genasi were happy to accept. They booked passage for a 20-day trip that would take them through the Unicorn Run, the Star Mounts, the High Forest, the Lost Peaks, the Grandfather Tree (kind of close), Everlund, and the Nether Mountains. They would make three stops along the way, specifically at the Unicorn Run, the Lost Peaks, and the Nether Mountains.

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The hot air balloon soared gracefully into the sky, lifting Eldrin, Sultry as-Saif, and Copper BeNève away from Secomber. The gentle breeze carried them northward, and the expansive landscape of Faerûn unfolded below them. The azure sky remained clear, and the sun cast a warm glow over the rolling hills and dense forests. The trio marveled at the scenery, feeling the exhilaration of their airborne journey.

As the day progressed, the landscape beneath them transformed from verdant fields to the lush greenery of the High Forest. The balloon drifted effortlessly, guided by the skilled conductor, who ensured a smooth and pleasant flight. Eldrin, ever the scholar, took notes and sketched the magnificent views, while Sultry and Copper engaged in lighthearted banter, their spirits lifted by the adventure.

By late afternoon, the balloon approached the preselected landing spot near the Unicorn Run. The conductor expertly maneuvered the balloon, descending gently onto a flat area overlooking the river to the east. The trio disembarked, their hearts filled with anticipation and wonder.

The landing site was a picturesque meadow adorned with vibrant wildflowers, and the soothing sound of the Unicorn Run flowed nearby. The sun began to set, casting a golden hue over the serene landscape. Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper spread out a blanket and unpacked their picnic provisions, provided by the conductor’s “Create Food & Water” spells.

As they enjoyed their meal, the companions took in the breathtaking scenery around them. Eldrin shared stories of ancient lore and magical secrets, while Sultry and Copper listened intently, occasionally adding their own insights. The peaceful ambiance of the Unicorn Run provided a perfect backdrop for their camaraderie.

After their meal, the trio explored the area, discovering hidden nooks and enchanting spots along the riverbank. Eldrin collected samples of unique flora, Sultry practiced her combat maneuvers, and Copper observed the surroundings with a keen eye, noting potential hiding spots and vantage points.

As twilight descended, the companions gathered around a small campfire, sharing tales and laughter under the starry sky. The tranquility of the Unicorn Run and the bond they shared filled them with a sense of purpose and determination for the journey ahead.

Their brief stay at the Unicorn Run came to an end, but the memories and experiences they gained would fuel their spirits as they continued their adventure toward Silverymoon.

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The hot air balloon ascended gracefully once more, carrying Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper away from the serene Unicorn Run. The warm summer breeze guided them northward, and the lush expanse of the High Forest spread out beneath them like an emerald tapestry.

As they soared higher, the majestic Star Mounts came into view, their peaks piercing the sky like ancient sentinels. The trio marveled at the rugged beauty of the mountains, their spirits lifted by the sense of adventure. Eldrin couldn’t help but feel a deep connection to the land below, his heart swelling with curiosity and wonder.

The balloon drifted effortlessly, crossing the dense canopy of the High Forest. The vibrant greens and dappled sunlight painted a picturesque scene below. Sultry and Copper exchanged stories of their past adventures, their laughter mingling with the gentle rustling of the leaves.

By late afternoon, the Lost Peaks emerged on the horizon, their twin summits standing tall and proud. The balloon conductor skillfully maneuvered the balloon to a mountaintop platform that offered a breathtaking view of the valleys on either side. The landing was smooth, and the companions disembarked, taking in the awe-inspiring scenery.

The mountaintop platform was a natural clearing, surrounded by ancient trees and adorned with wildflowers. From this vantage point, they could see the northern and southern slopes of the range’s eastern half, the landscape stretching out in all its glory. Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper set up a small camp, their excitement palpable.

They spent the evening exploring the area, discovering hidden nooks and enchanting vistas. Eldrin collected samples of unique plants, while Sultry honed her combat skills and Copper observed the terrain with a keen eye.

Once the sun had set, they gathered for a picnic on the grass, enjoying a hearty meal and sharing tales under the starry sky. The warm glow of the fire illuminated their faces, casting flickering shadows on the surrounding trees. The gentle night breeze carried the scent of wildflowers and the distant murmur of the forest.

Eldrin leaned forward, his eyes alight with excitement as he recounted an ancient legend. “And so, the great wizard sealed the portal, saving the realm from the encroaching darkness...”

Before he could finish his tale, a rustling sound from the underbrush caught their attention. Sultry’s instincts kicked in, and she leaped to her feet, her hand gripping her weapon. Copper’s keen eyes scanned the shadows, sensing movement.

Suddenly, a chorus of guttural voices erupted from the darkness, and ten goblins burst forth, weapons drawn. Their leader, a snarling brute with a jagged scar across his face, led the charge.

The companions sprang into action, weapons ready. Sultry met the first wave with a fierce battle cry, her axe cleaving through goblin flesh. Copper darted through the chaos, her daggers finding their marks with deadly precision. Eldrin stood back, casting spells to support his friends.

The battle was intense and chaotic. The goblin leader lunged at Sultry, but she deftly parried his blow and struck back with a powerful swing, felling him in a single stroke. Copper’s agility and precision allowed her to take down multiple goblins, her movements a blur of deadly grace.

Eldrin chanted incantations, sending bolts of divine energy to smite the goblins. Despite their valiant efforts, the party suffered injuries as the goblins fought ferociously. The balloon conductor, caught off guard, was badly wounded and fell to the ground.

As the last goblin fell, Eldrin saw two of them fleeing into the night, their cries of fear echoing through the trees. The companions stood victorious but weary, their breaths ragged from the exertion.

Eldrin quickly moved to the conductor’s side, his hands glowing with healing magic. “Hold on, my friend,” he murmured, casting Cure Light Wounds. The conductor’s wounds began to close, and his breathing steadied.

Next, Eldrin turned his attention to Sultry and Copper, channeling his healing spells to mend their injuries. As the warm, soothing light enveloped them, their pain eased, and their wounds closed.

With the danger passed and everyone healed, the companions took a moment to catch their breath and assess the situation. The campfire’s glow provided a sense of comfort, a reminder of their resilience and determination.

The conductor was grateful for the healing. “It’s not the first time I’ve been ambushed here, but word had it that this rabble had been run out of these lands,” he huffed. His name was Pajúo, and he was a cleric of Fharlanghn, a patron deity of traveling, among other things, and after he’d lost his family in a tragic fire, he’d decided to see the world and fund his way by taking others with him.

“Tell me, friends, what are your stories?” he asked them as they packed up the balloon cabin once again.

**Eldrin** spoke first, his voice carrying a mix of sorrow and determination. “I hail from Waterdeep, where I was raised in one of its small gnome boroughs. My natural curiosity led me to the vast Oghmaite library, where the endless scrolls and tomes ignited my passion for knowledge. I became an archivist of Oghma, devoted to preserving and discovering the secrets of the Realms. My journey is driven by a desire to uncover ancient lore and forgotten artifacts, believing that knowledge can shape the future.”

He paused, his eyes reflecting his resolve. “I recently discovered that the Brotherhood of the Secret Quill has been grooming me for a special calling. They suspect I possess a unique destiny, and while I don’t fully understand it yet, I am determined to continue my work and prove myself worthy. This quest for the Tome of Clear Thought is just the beginning of what I hope will be a lifetime of discovery and enlightenment.”

**Sultry**’s voice carried a different tone, one of fierceness and resilience. “I was born in the North, where the harsh lands and rugged terrain molded me into a warrior. As an acid genasi, I faced prejudice and isolation, but I turned that into strength. Embracing the path of a barbarian, I honed my combat skills and learned to channel my inner rage into a force of destruction. My strength and resilience have carried me through countless battles, and I live for the thrill of combat.”

Her gaze turned steely as she continued. “I seek to challenge myself and push my limits. Eldrin’s quest intrigued me, not just for the potential rewards but for the opportunity to prove my worth. I’ve lost friends and allies to the dangers of this world, but I am determined to face whatever comes our way with unwavering resolve. This journey is just another test, and I will face it head-on.”

**Copper**’s voice was softer, tinged with a mix of cunning and curiosity. “I come from Ertolchul, where I was raised in a family of rogues and diviners. My mother taught me the art of divination, while my father trained me in the ways of stealth and deception. I learned to blend these skills, using my divinations to guide my actions and stay one step ahead of my enemies. As a rogue-diviner, I navigate the shadows and uncover secrets that others wish to keep hidden.”

She smiled, a glint of mischief in her eyes. “My path has always been one of survival and cunning, but I also crave knowledge and discovery. Joining Eldrin on this quest offers me a chance to uncover ancient secrets and perhaps find something truly extraordinary. I believe that fortune favors the bold, and I am ready to face whatever challenges lie ahead. This journey is just another adventure, and I intend to make the most of it.”

“I’m glad we’ve met, heroes,” Pajúo nodded as he got the craft secured and off the ground. They were already at a higher altitude than anything else around them, and so they coasted through the night. Pajúo had a pair of Darkvision and Low Light Vision glasses that made the flight as easy by night as it was by day.

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The hot air balloon glided silently through the night, the dark canvas of the sky adorned with countless stars. Pajúo expertly navigated the craft, his Darkvision and Low Light Vision glasses allowing him to see as clearly as if it were daylight. Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper settled into the gentle sway of the balloon, the serene atmosphere offering a moment of tranquility.

As midnight approached, the silhouette of the Nether Mountains began to take shape against the horizon. The jagged peaks and rugged terrain hinted at the challenges that lay ahead. The balloon descended gracefully, guided by Pajúo’s skilled hands, toward the grassy plateau of Moon Pass.

The landing was smooth, the balloon settling gently on the soft grass. Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper disembarked, their breaths visible in the cool mountain air. The plateau offered a breathtaking view of the western slope of the Nether Mountains, with the faint lights of Everlund flickering in the distance to the southwest. The moonless night sky added to the ethereal beauty of the scene.

As they set up a small camp, a rustling sound in the nearby bushes caught their attention. Sultry’s hand instinctively went to her weapon, but Eldrin raised a hand, signaling caution. From the shadows emerged a small, harmless creature—a moonlight butterfly, its wings shimmering with an otherworldly glow.

The delicate creature fluttered around the camp, its luminescent wings casting a gentle light over the companions. Eldrin smiled, recognizing the rare sight as a sign of good fortune. Sultry relaxed, and Copper watched the butterfly with a sense of wonder.

The peaceful encounter with the moonlight butterfly added a touch of magic to their midnight arrival at Moon Pass. The companions took a moment to appreciate the beauty of the creature and the serene surroundings, their spirits lifted by the experience. With their camp set and the balloon secured, they settled in for the night, ready to face whatever the dawn would bring.

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The hot air balloon lifted gently from Moon Pass, carrying Eldrin, Sultry, Copper, and Pajúo toward their final destination: Silverymoon. The journey was filled with anticipation and excitement, as the companions marveled at the breathtaking landscapes of Faerûn passing below them.

The first day took them over the rugged peaks of the Nether Mountains, their jagged silhouettes standing in stark contrast against the clear summer sky. Eldrin documented the scenery with great interest, sketching the unique formations and jotting down notes. Sultry and Copper kept a vigilant watch, knowing the mountains harbored both beauty and danger.

On the second day, the terrain began to level out, transitioning from the high mountains to the rolling hills of the Silver Marches. The lush greenery and vibrant flora painted a picturesque scene, and the companions enjoyed the serene flight. Pajúo’s skillful navigation ensured a smooth journey, and the warm, gentle breeze made the experience even more delightful.

The third day brought them closer to their destination. The landscape became more populated, with small villages and farmlands dotting the countryside. The companions could see the River Rauvin winding its way through the land, its waters shimmering in the sunlight. Eldrin’s excitement grew as they neared Silverymoon, a city known for its rich history and cultural heritage.

On the fourth day, the majestic city of Silverymoon finally came into view. The sight of its gleaming spires, elegant architecture, and lush parks filled the companions with awe. Pajúo guided the balloon toward the Northbank, where Eldrin had chosen to land, eager to explore the historical significance of the area.

As they descended, the grassy banks of the River Rauvin stretched out before them, and they spotted a maypole where children were joyfully playing. The balloon landed smoothly on the Northbank, the soft grass cushioning their descent. The children paused their play to watch the balloon with wide eyes, their laughter and chatter adding to the cheerful atmosphere.



Eldrin, Sultry, Copper, and Pajúo disembarked, their hearts filled with a sense of accomplishment and wonder. The vibrant energy of Silverymoon welcomed them, and they knew that their adventures in the city had only just begun.

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Eldrin paid the final portion of the fee upon their safe delivery to their destination, and they thanked the cleric of Fharlanghn before parting ways. After a hearty meal and some refreshing drinks at a local tavern, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper set out to explore the historical district of Northbank. The air was filled with the lively chatter of townsfolk and the melodic sounds of street musicians. Eldrin’s eyes sparkled with excitement as he led the way, determined to gather valuable information for their quest.

Their first stop was the renowned Northbank Library, a grand building adorned with intricate carvings and tall, arched windows. Eldrin marveled at the sight, his heart racing with anticipation. As they entered, the scent of old parchment and ink enveloped them. Eldrin approached the librarian, a kindly elf with silver hair, and inquired about any records or references to the Tome of Clear Thought. The librarian provided him with several tomes and scrolls, detailing the library’s history and the significant artifacts it housed. Eldrin thanked the librarian and spent the next few hours poring over the materials, absorbing every bit of knowledge he could find.

Next, they made their way to the Temple of Oghma, a beautiful structure dedicated to the god of knowledge. The temple was adorned with intricate mosaics depicting scenes of discovery and wisdom. Eldrin felt a deep sense of reverence as he entered the sacred space. He approached one of the clerics and introduced himself as a fellow devotee of Oghma. The cleric welcomed him warmly and shared information about the temple’s extensive archives and the Order of the Secret Quill. Eldrin learned that the temple frequently hosted lectures and gatherings for scholars, offering a valuable opportunity to network and gather information about the Tome.

With newfound knowledge and a plan in mind, the trio headed to a popular local tavern known for its lively atmosphere and eclectic patrons. The Sage and Scroll was a bustling hub of activity, with adventurers, scholars, and traders mingling and exchanging stories. Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper found a table and ordered drinks, their ears attuned to the conversations around them. Eldrin struck up a conversation with a group of seasoned adventurers, subtly steering the discussion towards ancient tomes and artifacts. This yielded several promising leads about the potential whereabouts of the Tome of Clear Thought, including a mention of a hidden repository within Silverymoon’s arcane district.

The companions raised their glasses in a silent toast, ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead in their pursuit of knowledge.

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**Synopsis 1**

The journey began on the 1st of Flamerule, Highsun, as Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper embarked on their adventure aboard the hot air balloon, departing from Secomber. The excitement of their quest filled the air as they soared northward, their spirits high.

After six days of travel, they reached the serene Unicorn Run on the afternoon of the 7th of Flamerule. The balloon landed in a picturesque field overlooking the river. The companions enjoyed a delightful picnic, taking in the tranquil surroundings before continuing their journey.

Four days later, on the 11th of Flamerule, they arrived at a mountaintop in the Lost Peaks. As they set up camp, they were ambushed by ten goblins. The companions fought valiantly, slaying eight of the goblins, including their leader, while the remaining two fled. Eldrin used his Cure Light Wounds spells to heal their injuries and the badly wounded conductor, Pajúo.

On the midnight of the 18th of Flamerule, the balloon reached Moon Pass in the Nether Mountains. They landed on a grassy plateau overlooking the western slope, where they encountered a harmless moonlight butterfly, adding a touch of magic to their arrival.

Finally, after another four days of travel, they descended onto the Northbank of Silverymoon on the 22nd of Flamerule. The balloon landed near a maypole where children were playing, their arrival welcomed by the vibrant energy of the city.

With excitement and anticipation, Eldrin led the group to explore the historical district of Northbank. They visited the renowned Northbank Library, where Eldrin sought information about the Tome of Clear Thought. The library was a grand building adorned with intricate carvings and tall, arched windows. Eldrin approached the librarian and was provided with several tomes and scrolls detailing the library’s history and significant artifacts. Eldrin spent hours poring over the materials, absorbing every bit of knowledge he could find.

Next, they made their way to the Temple of Oghma, a beautiful structure dedicated to the god of knowledge. Eldrin felt a deep sense of reverence as he entered the sacred space. He approached one of the clerics and introduced himself as a fellow devotee of Oghma. The cleric shared information about the temple’s extensive archives and the Order of the Secret Quill, providing valuable opportunities for networking and gathering information about the Tome.

With newfound knowledge, the trio headed to a popular local tavern known for its lively atmosphere. The Sage and Scroll was a bustling hub of activity, with adventurers, scholars, and traders mingling and exchanging stories. Eldrin struck up a conversation with a group of seasoned adventurers, gathering valuable information about the potential whereabouts of the Tome of Clear Thought. He learned of a hidden repository within Silverymoon’s arcane district that held great promise.

As the night drew on, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper felt a renewed sense of purpose and determination. They had made significant progress in their quest, and the city of Silverymoon held the promise of even greater discoveries. With raised glasses and hearts filled with hope, they prepared to delve deeper into their adventure.

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23 Flamerule, 1372

They had booked three rooms—paid by Eldrin—at the Wingless Unicorn, an inn next door to the Sage & Scroll, and awoke at Dawn to the sounds of migratory birds keowing outside. Sultry had awoken earlier, and now looked out the window to see the flock making their way northward.

Before too long, all three had met up at the Sage & Scroll again as agreed, and were now about to breakfast. “So where to today, boss?” the barbarian asked.

“The Arcane District is reputed to be the place where the Tome is now. I figure it’s the best place to start the hunt,” answered Eldrin.

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The Arcane Sanctuary was an exclusive chamber nestled within the heart of Silverymoon’s Arcane District. Its entrance, marked by a discreetly carved archway, led to a place where the city’s most esteemed wizards and scholars could convene in absolute privacy. As one stepped into the room, the rich tapestries depicting ancient magical feats immediately caught the eye, their intricate patterns woven with threads that seemed to shimmer in the ambient magical light.

The interior was a harmonious blend of elegance and function. Comfortable, plush seating was arranged around a large, intricately carved table, inviting meaningful discussions and deliberations. The room exuded an air of serene focus, the soft glow of the enchanted lights casting gentle shadows that danced along the walls.

Tall windows, enchanted to prevent any scrying attempts, offered a breathtaking view of Silverymoon and its surrounding landscapes. The glass panes seemed to sparkle with an otherworldly clarity, providing a sense of openness while maintaining complete security. In one corner of the room, a small, enchanted fountain quietly trickled, its soothing sound adding to the tranquil ambiance.

Taern Hornblade and Eltro Miresk stood by the table, their conversation blending the respect of longtime colleagues with the intensity of differing perspectives. Taern, ever the stalwart defender of law and order, listened intently as Eltro passionately argued for greater academic freedom in magical research. The tapestries on the walls seemed to echo the weight of their discussion, each woven scene a silent testament to the storied history of magical scholarship.

Taern Hornblade and Eltro Miresk stood in Taern’s grand office, the morning light filtering through the tall, arched windows. The atmosphere was charged with the weight of their discussion, but there was a mutual respect between them.

“Taern,” Eltro began, his tone earnest, “we must acknowledge that true progress in magical research requires academic freedom. Restricting access to instruments, scrolls, and other resources stifles innovation and limits the potential for discovery. Scholars and mages must be allowed to explore the unknown, even if it involves risks. Without such freedom, we hinder our own advancement.”

Taern listened intently, his expression thoughtful. “You make a valid point, Eltro. I understand that the pursuit of knowledge requires access to necessary resources. It is essential to balance regulations with the freedom to explore and innovate. I concede that we may need to loosen some restrictions to foster an environment conducive to academic growth.”

Eltro’s face brightened with a smile. “I’m glad to hear that, Taern. However, there is another matter I wish to discuss—the handling of forbidden knowledge. I believe that all information, no matter how dangerous, has value and should be studied and understood. We cannot fear knowledge itself; instead, we must learn to harness and control it.”

Taern’s brow furrowed with concern. “Eltro, while I respect your dedication to knowledge, I must caution against an unregulated approach to forbidden knowledge. Some information is inherently dangerous and can lead to catastrophic consequences if misused. It is our duty to ensure that such knowledge remains under strict control to protect our city and its inhabitants. The risks of unregulated access are simply too great.”

Eltro sighed, recognizing the validity of Taern’s concerns. “Perhaps I was too idealistic in my approach. We must find a balance between understanding forbidden knowledge and ensuring it does not fall into the wrong hands.”

Taern nodded in agreement. “Indeed. Our primary responsibility is to safeguard Silverymoon and its people. By maintaining strict control over forbidden knowledge, we can prevent potential disasters while still allowing for responsible study.”

Eltro’s smile returned, and he continued, “On the matter of punishment for magical crimes, I believe we are mostly aligned. While strict punishment is necessary to maintain order, I also advocate for rehabilitative approaches that focus on education and understanding.”

Taern’s eyes softened with agreement. “I wholeheartedly agree. We must uphold the law, but also provide opportunities for individuals to learn from their mistakes and contribute positively to society. It is a delicate balance, but one we must strive to achieve.”

Finally, Eltro addressed the issue of foreign mages. “Regarding foreign mages, I believe that mistrust based solely on location is outdated. Trustworthiness is determined by character, not geography. We should be open to collaborating with foreign mages, provided they are thoroughly vetted and demonstrate good intentions.”

Taern smiled, appreciating the wisdom in Eltro’s words. “I concur, Eltro. Building international academic and magical partnerships can lead to greater advancements and shared knowledge. By focusing on the character of individuals, rather than their origin, we can create a more inclusive and innovative community.”

The two mages shared a mutual understanding, their differing perspectives converging on the importance of balance and responsibility in their roles. Their agreement set the stage for continued collaboration and progress in Silverymoon’s magical community.

The conversation had been more of a structured set of points that the two had agreed to discuss briefly before turning to their respective Cabinets and conveying the mutual sentiment, or range of sentiment, between the two leaders. This would further inform everyone’s work moving forward.

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Eldrin had done his research well. From his diligent studies at the Northbank Library and the Temple of Oghma, he had learned about the Arcane Sanctuary, the private and secure meeting place within Silverymoon’s Arcane District. However, access to such an exclusive chamber was typically reserved for the city’s most esteemed wizards and scholars.

As a burgeoning archivist, Eldrin understood that gaining entry to the Arcane Sanctuary and securing an audience with influential figures like Taern Hornblade or Eltro Miresk would be a challenge. The Sanctuary was guarded by powerful magical protections, and entry required special permission or a direct invitation.

With no established connections in Silverymoon, Eldrin decided to take a direct but respectful approach. He composed a formal letter, detailing his quest for the Tome of Clear Thought and his dedication to the pursuit of knowledge. With a humble tone, he explained the significance of his mission and requested an audience with Eltro Miresk or Taern Hornblade. Eldrin hoped that his scholarly reputation and the importance of his endeavor would resonate with the recipients.

Eldrin delivered the letter to the Arcane Sanctuary’s administrative office, where it would be reviewed and passed on to the appropriate individuals. He was told it would be two days before he received a response, so he focused on making the most of his time in Silverymoon.

**24 Flamerule**

Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper decided to further explore the Northbank. Eldrin’s primary goal was to gather additional information about the Tome of Clear Thought and potential leads on its whereabouts. They visited various bookshops, scroll traders, and smaller libraries, where Eldrin sifted through rare manuscripts and engaged in conversations with knowledgeable locals.

Sultry and Copper, while accompanying Eldrin, also took the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the city’s layout and its people. Sultry visited the local blacksmith to check and maintain their weapons, ensuring they were in top condition for any challenges ahead. Copper, ever the cunning rogue-diviner, took the chance to scout for potential contacts and useful information in the bustling markets and taverns.

**25 Flamerule**

On the second day, Eldrin decided to deepen his research at the Temple of Oghma. He sought out the wisdom of the clerics, discussing his quest and seeking their insights. The clerics provided additional guidance on the arcane and divine aspects of the Tome, as well as potential historical records that might contain clues. Eldrin spent hours delving into the temple’s archives, documenting any relevant findings.

Sultry and Copper, meanwhile, continued to explore Silverymoon. Sultry attended a local training ground where she sparred with other warriors, honing her combat skills and gaining respect among the city’s fighters. Copper visited a few more taverns and social hotspots, using her charm and wit to gather rumors and information that might prove useful to their quest.

Throughout these two days, the trio reconvened regularly to share their findings and strategize their next steps. They remained hopeful and determined, knowing that their efforts would bring them closer to uncovering the secrets of the Tome of Clear Thought.

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On the morning of the 26th of Flamerule, Eldrin returned to the Arcane Sanctuary, eager to receive an audience with Eltro Miresk at the Arcane Sanctuary. Eltro greeted the whisper gnome, and they sat down to talk. The archmage had been intrigued by Eldrin’s dedication and the scholarly nature of his quest. Sultry and Copper had remained outside for the moment, and Eldrin outlined some of the major points around the Tome, pointing out that it had last been known to be in Silverymoon.

Eltro listened carefully before revealing, “The Tome was stolen from my library—along with other tomes—earlier this year. We have exhausted the municipal resources normally allotted for an investigation of this scope. In short, after tendays spent investigating the case, the High Lady Alustriel Silverhand’s legislators decreed that the tomes must be considered a loss to the archives.”

Eltro’s eyes narrowed as he continued, “However, I believe I know who stole the Tome. I have reason to believe that a powerful doppelganger or other shapeshifter has taken on the guise of Jorus Azuremantle, the half-elven wizard who leads the Spellguard, and has compromised its security. This impostor, whose disguise is good enough to resist my divination magic, has likely implanted less powerful lackeys within the ranks of the Spellguard. I sent agents to infiltrate these ranks and root out any malfeasance, but they were to report days ago and have not made contact.”

Eltro invited Sultry and Copper inside to meet them, and after introductions and pleasantries, the archmage took a deep breath before adding, “Eldrin, being an outlander makes you an ideal candidate for a covert operation. I would like to offer you a job: to conduct reconnaissance on Spellguard personnel and convey the information back to me via *Sending* spell. I can provide you with six scrolls for this purpose. Additionally, I can arrange for false identification badges, but we need to come up with cover identities and motives.”

Eltro then noted the foreign accents in their speech, and suggested some potential false identities and pretenses for them to access at least some parts of the Spellguard:

**Eldrin - Scholar from Waterdeep**:

* **Cover Identity**: Eldrin could pose as a visiting scholar from Waterdeep, renowned for his expertise in ancient tomes and magical artifacts. His primary motive could be to study the unique magical defenses and practices of the Spellguard for a comprehensive research project.
* **Pretense**: Eldrin’s reputation as a scholar would grant him access to the libraries and arcane repositories within the Spellguard, allowing him to observe and gather information discreetly.

**Sultry - Mercenary Bodyguard**:

* **Cover Identity**: Sultry could pose as a highly skilled mercenary bodyguard hired to protect Eldrin during his research. Her primary motive could be to ensure the scholar’s safety in a potentially dangerous environment.
* **Pretense**: Sultry’s role as a bodyguard would grant her access to various training grounds and secure areas within the Spellguard, where she could observe personnel and detect any unusual behavior.

**Copper - Diviner from Amn**:

* **Cover Identity**: Copper could pose as a diviner from Amn, known for her talents in scrying and information gathering. Her primary motive could be to exchange divination techniques with the Spellguard and learn from their practices.
* **Pretense**: Copper’s expertise in divination would grant her access to areas where magical surveillance and intelligence operations are conducted, allowing her to gather critical information on the impostor and their lackeys.

Eltro cast a modified Amanuensis spell upon three lanyard-enclosed badges, and handed them to Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper. “Remember, your cover identities must be convincing, and your motives should align with your roles. Good luck, and may your mission be successful.”

They were told that they would be scheduled to report to the main lobby downstairs tomorrow at the ninth bell, and an agent would walk them from Eltro’s office in the Conclave of Silverymoon to the Spellguard just a few blocks down.

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They spent the last few business hours getting outfitted with new armor, weapons, potions, and the like, and at night, they returned to the Wingless Pegasus to relieve themselves of their gear, and take an inventory of what all they had. Each of them cleaned their gear a bit before putting their armor on a chair to wear the next day, and they then put on their fancier outfits. None of them were that fancy, but nicer than their usual outdoor clothes.

Stepping next door into the Sage & Scroll, they partook in beverages and watched others dance as they discussed tomorrow’s challenges.

As they enjoyed their beverages at the Sage & Scroll, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper discussed potential contingencies for the mission, knowing that their limited skills in deception could make things challenging. They brainstormed various scenarios and planned their responses to ensure they were prepared for any situation.

**Discovered at the Front Entrance:**

* **Plan**: If they were accused of impersonating officers at the entrance, Eldrin took the lead, leveraging his actual background as a scholar from Waterdeep. He explained that they were visiting researchers who were granted special access by Eltro Miresk himself.
* **Backup**: They presented their false identification badges and calmly requested to speak with Eltro or another senior official to clear up any misunderstandings.
* **Escape**: If things escalated, Sultry used her strength and combat skills to create a diversion, allowing Eldrin and Copper to retreat and regroup.

**Discovered Deep Inside the Compound:**

* **Plan**: If they were discovered an hour into their investigation, Eldrin quickly used his Scroll of Sanctuary to make it harder for opponents to attack him directly, buying them time to explain their presence.
* **Backup**: Copper cast a Scroll of Invisibility on herself or a teammate to escape detection and gather crucial information undetected.
* **Escape**: Sultry created a path for retreat, using Tanglefoot Bags and Thunderstones to hinder pursuers and give the team a chance to flee.

**Discovered While Communicating via Sending Spell:**

* **Plan**: If they were discovered while sending information to Eltro, Eldrin used his Scroll of Shield of Faith to enhance his defenses and buy time to complete the Sending spell.
* **Backup**: Copper cast a distraction spell, such as Sleep Smoke, to incapacitate nearby guards temporarily.
* **Escape**: Sultry used her combat prowess to protect Eldrin and Copper, ensuring they had enough time to send the message and escape.

**Discovered While Leaving the Compound:**

* **Plan**: If they were discovered while trying to leave, Eldrin used his Scroll of Entangle to slow down any pursuers and create an opportunity for escape.
* **Backup**: Copper used her Anklet of Translocation to quickly teleport herself out of danger, allowing her to regroup with the others outside.
* **Escape**: Sultry took the lead in fighting off any immediate threats, using her Potions of Cure Light Wounds to stay in the fight as needed.

By discussing and planning these contingencies, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper felt more confident and prepared for the challenges ahead. They knew that their combined skills and quick thinking would be essential in navigating the complexities of their covert mission within the Spellguard HQ.

The Scroll & Sage was bustling with energy as patrons gathered for an evening of dining, dancing, and lively conversation. Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper found a cozy corner to settle in, enjoying the warm, inviting atmosphere. The air was filled with the sounds of laughter and clinking glasses, as well as the soft melodies played by a talented bard strumming a lute on the small stage.

As they sipped their beverages, they watched as a group of dancers took to the floor. The dancers moved gracefully, their steps in perfect harmony with the music. Sultry, ever the warrior, couldn’t help but admire their agility and precision, while Copper, the cunning rogue, took note of the dancers’ fluid movements, always looking for inspiration in the art of misdirection. Eldrin, the scholar, appreciated the cultural richness of the performance, allowing himself a moment of respite from the weighty matters on his mind.

As the night progressed, the trio enjoyed a hearty meal of roasted meats, fresh bread, and spiced vegetables. The food was simple yet delicious, providing much-needed sustenance for the challenges ahead. They discussed their plans for the next day in hushed tones, ensuring their conversation remained private amidst the din of the tavern. The camaraderie and shared purpose among them strengthened their resolve, as they prepared to face whatever obstacles lay in their path.

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**Eldrin:** In his room, Eldrin carefully laid out his scrolls and tomes on the small desk by the window. The flickering candlelight cast gentle shadows on the pages as he reviewed his notes and prepared his archivist prayers. Eldrin whispered each prayer with reverence, seeking guidance and wisdom for the challenges to come. His revised daily prayer list included Detect Magic, Guidance, Light, Read Magic, Cure Light Wounds, Disguise Self, Protection from Evil, Obscuring Mist, Comprehend Languages, Cure Moderate Wounds, Hold Person, Invisibility, Spiritual Weapon, Call Lightning, Dispel Magic, and Nondetection. He meticulously organized his equipment, ensuring that every item was in its proper place. With a sense of calm and purpose, Eldrin finally allowed himself to rest, knowing that his preparations would serve him well.

**Sultry:** Sultry’s room was filled with the soft glow of the moonlight filtering through the window. She removed her armor piece by piece, cleaning and maintaining each part with practiced efficiency. Her Corrosive Greatsword gleamed as she honed its edge, a symbol of her readiness for battle. After ensuring her weapons and gear were in top condition, Sultry donned her fancier outfit, a rare indulgence that made her feel more connected to her mercenary roots. She took a few moments to stretch and meditate, calming her mind and focusing her thoughts. Satisfied with her preparations, she finally lay down to rest, confident in her ability to protect her companions.

**Copper:** In the quiet of her room, Copper carefully arranged her divination tools and spell components. She took a deep breath, allowing her mind to clear before beginning her preparations. With deliberate movements, she inscribed the necessary runes and symbols, focusing her energy on each spell. Her revised daily spell list included Ghost Sound, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Message, Mage Armor, Obscuring Mist, and Detect Secret Doors. As she prepared these spells anew, Copper felt a surge of determination. She knew that her divination abilities would be crucial in uncovering the secrets of the Spellguard. After completing her rituals, Copper took a moment to reflect on the day’s events before finally settling into bed.

With their preparations complete, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper each drifted into a restful sleep, ready to face the challenges that awaited them on the morrow.



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IC: 27 Flamerule

They reported just before the city bell’s ninth toll, and a plainclothes half-elf agent met them in the lobby at the stroke of the bell. He was neither curt nor overly talkative, and explained that for security reasons, he was not introducing himself. The half-elf agent led them along a few city blocks, passing a square with a playground bustling with a hive of kids.

Rounds 1 – 6

Eldrin cast *disguise self [expired on Round 501]*, enhancing his scholarly persona with a bit of salt-and-pepper hair and a more distinguished frown of tacit agreement.

Copper cast *mage armor [expired in 3 hours]* just before entering the building.

Rounds 7 – 15

A block later, they were at Spellguard Headquarters, and the man led them to the front doors, spoke a few cryptic words to the doorwoman, and they were ushered from one person to another, now being led by the dwarven woman with Spellguard insignia displaying her rank and function.

Eldrin cast *protection from evil [expired on Round 52]* upon entering the building to safeguard against potential magical influences. The dwarf looked at him sideways, and he explained, “Can never be too careful.”

Entering the large and imposing structure whose main function in Silverymoon was to provide sanctuary and protection via arcane magic to those in need, they beheld the grandiose museum of artifacts that held historical significance and practical powers beyond his body of knowledge.

Copper cast *detect magic* discreetly to sense any magical auras or traps within the main hall.

They passed a portrait of Jorus Azuremantle along the wall, not recognizing him, though they might soon see him in the flesh. They then passed a mighty statue of a Chosen of Mystra, decorated with the emblems of the League of Silver Marches and the Conclave of Silverymoon.

They arrived at a wooden door tall enough for a goliath, and the dwarven woman opened it and announced, “Custodian Esmer, your appointment has arrived.”

A human of about 50 years looked up from her desk and invited Eldrin and his two companions inside. There was an armed guard inside the room, which was outfitted as both a reading room and a map room. As a cartographer, Eldrin could really appreciate the décor and the maps that covered an entire wall each. One depicted Silverymoon, another the Silver Marches, and the third showed all of Toril’s known landmasses.

A few globes orbiting around one another in the center of the room also represented the Inner and Outer Planes, as well as the other major components of the cosmos.

The woman’s desk was positioned facing these globes and as the heroes entered and each took a comfortable, padded seat, she introduced herself. “I am Dr. Esmer, Custodian of Arcane Archives. The Arcane Sanctuary has sent over your portfolio... quite an impressive vita, Dr. Thistlebrook. We’ll be happy to extend access to you during your stay in the City. How long to you intend to be here?”

“I don’t have long, actually,” he told the truth, “and should be here no more than a tenday... even that is stretching it.”

“And what sort of research are you doing? What subject?”

Eldrin discussed his Magister’ s Thesis topic, “The Interplay between Arcane and Divine magic. It’s an examination of Oghma’s and Mystra’s comparative influences on Silverymoon’s development as a magic-dominant polity.” He used the high vernacular of his field to add authenticity to the claim, steering away from a dishonest embellishment.

Custodian Esmer’s eyes sparkled with interest. “Ah, a fascinating topic indeed, Dr. Thistlebrook. Silverymoon has long been a nexus of both arcane and divine magic, thanks to the influences of Oghma and Mystra.” Esmer continued, “Mystra’s impact on Silverymoon is well-documented. The founding of the temple of Mystra dates back to the early days of the city when High Lady Alustriel Silverhand, a Chosen of Mystra, established Silverymoon as a bastion of magical learning and practice. Her vision was to create a harmonious community where magic could flourish and be used for the betterment of all.”



Eldrin nodded, “Indeed, and Oghma’s followers have also played a crucial role in the city’s development. The temple of Oghma was established to promote the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom. Oghma’s teachings emphasize the importance of learning and understanding, which has significantly influenced the educational institutions and libraries of Silverymoon.”

Esmer interjected, “However, there have been times when the dogmas of Oghma and Mystra have clashed. Mystra’s focus on the Weave and the control of magic can sometimes conflict with Oghma’s emphasis on the free dissemination of knowledge. Mystra’s followers believe that certain magical knowledge should be restricted to prevent misuse, while Oghma’s followers advocate for the open sharing of all knowledge.”

Eldrin thoughtfully replied, “True, there have been philosophical conflicts, but I believe that both faiths ultimately seek to improve the world through their respective approaches. Mystra’s followers protect the integrity of the Weave, ensuring that magic remains a force for good, while Oghma’s followers encourage the growth of knowledge and wisdom, which benefits society as a whole.”

Esmer smiled, “I agree. Despite their differences, there is common ground between the two faiths. Both Oghma and Mystra value the pursuit of knowledge and the responsible use of magic. Silverymoon has thrived because it embraces the strengths of both perspectives. Our city’s ability to balance arcane and divine influences has made it a beacon of enlightenment and magical prowess.”

With this point of agreement, both Eldrin and Custodian Esmer felt a sense of camaraderie and mutual respect. Their shared appreciation for the intricate dance between arcane and divine magic in Silverymoon’s history strengthened their connection, setting the stage for further productive discussions.

IC: They spoke at great length while Sultry and Copper studied the titles of the books ordered on shelves behind the Custodian, and after a while, Esmer led them all into an area with five aisles, instructing them in the organization of the documents, and in how to use the arcane file system to find documents. Eldrin understood quite well, and thanked the woman before she left them to search the archives.

He went through aisle 1 first, consulting the arcane file system’s console and noting a few call numbers. Taking a minute to grab a handful of documents, he began perusing historical documents that mentioned the Tome. The women stood by the corner discussing other topics when Eldrin happened upon a good lead. A few paragraphs later, he was nodding to himself before jotting down information in his notebook for later use.

The clock was ticking, and they knew they had to make the most of the time they had before anyone came to check on them. The whisper gnome placed the docs in the to-be-filed cart by the corner as he made his way to aisle 3, where he spent the better part of an hour looking for documents pertinent to internal corruption within Spellguard’s ranks, and came up emptyhanded.

He opted to stay a bit longer and browse aisle 5 before leaving, looking through a plethora of miscellany ranging from children born with the innate arcane abilities of archmages to the favored souls of Mystra and their corruption at the hands of Cyric years ago. As to any illicit behavior on the part of Spellguard staff, he had no solid evidence of any kind, but the day was not yet through.

They went back to the adjacent office where they’d spoken with Custodian Esmer, and the Custodian was now speaking with the dwarven doorwoman who’d led them in. “Please, enter,” Esmer bid the archivist, barbarian, and rogue-diviner.

Copper, Sultry, and Eldrin entered and sat again in the same chairs as before.

The dwarven woman closed the door behind them, and stood in front of it, barring the only exit as the Custodian of Arcane Archives looked Eldrin and his hirelings in the eyes, and said, “I will only ask once: who are you really, and what is your true purpose here?”

Eldrin’s heart raced as Custodian Esmer’s piercing gaze bore into him. He glanced at Sultry and Copper, their expressions mirroring his own tension. Taking a deep breath, Eldrin composed himself, knowing that a false step here could spell disaster for their mission.

“We are who we say we are, Custodian,” Eldrin began, his voice steady but respectful. “Dr. Eldrin Thistlebrook, and these are my assistants, Sultry and Copper. Our purpose is genuine—researching the interplay between arcane and divine magic with a focus on Oghma’s and Mystra’s influence on Silverymoon. However, we do have an additional motive, one that we hoped to handle discreetly.”

He paused, allowing Esmer to process his words. “We’ve been sent by Eltro Miresk to investigate potential malfeasance within the Spellguard. There have been concerns raised about certain activities and the whereabouts of the Tome of Clear Thought. Our intention is not to disrupt or undermine the Spellguard, but to ensure that any issues are addressed and that the integrity of this esteemed institution remains intact.”

Eldrin met Esmer’s gaze head-on, hoping that his forthrightness would earn some measure of trust. “We understand the sensitivity of this matter, and we are prepared to work collaboratively with you to uncover the truth. All we ask is for your cooperation and support in navigating these delicate inquiries.”

It seemed to Eldrin almost as if she’d known what he would say all along, and he didn’t put it past her to have that level of Divination mastered by now. The whisper gnome blushed a bit as he sought his next words.

The Custodian spoke first, looking at all three of them. “I have discerned that you are who you say, and can appreciate why you entered here under false pretense.”

They spoke for a few minutes, confiding in one another cautiously, and though the Custodian had not been aware that Eltro had also come to suspect foul play, it stood to reason that he saw the picture as clearly as she did from their relatively lofty vantages to the mutual work of the Spellguard and the Arcane Sanctuary. They had also both suspected a doppelganger, though it could have been any other type of self-masking creature.

And so it came to pass that upon Eldrin was bestowed yet another imposition complementary to his current quest. “I will grant you access to the vault you actually need to review,” the Custodian said. “My presence there will alert any of the agents of the doppelganger who are patrolling that archive, which is where—it has been revealed by Mystra—records of informal transactions are being kept in order to account for the funneling of national treasures from our vaults and museums.”

Sultry and Copper remained attentive and quiet for the moment.

“I can appreciate the gravity of the matter, Custodian Esmer,” Eldrin cleared his throat and continued, “What can I do once I find said evidence?”

“Constable Merlina,” the Custodian motioned to the dwarf. “See that these good people reach the basement.” She turned back to the archivist. “Use this key to access room B-23. Go directly there, and try to avoid eye contact with anyone down there.”

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Agreeing, and with little hesitation, the fully armed trio hailed the graying haired human and followed the younger dwarven woman out and along a corridor that led to a spiral, downward staircase. Down they went about 20’ vertical feet, though it seemed longer, and further along a torchlit corridor with doors on the right marked B- followed by an odd number on the left, and B- plus an even number to their right.

Constable Merlina left them alone, and walked to the far end of the corridor, standing guard at the base of the spiral staircase.

“B-23,” Sultry murmured.

Eldrin shook his head as if to say, “Not a time to speak.”

Most of their spells had expired by now, but *detect magic* had not, and thus Eldrin could still sense auras around magic items and spell effects. Inserting the key he’d been handed into the keyhole, he noted that the door knob emitted a slightly magical glow, and upon inspection, identified it as a type of magic lock that would damage or destroy a key placed in the keyhole that wasn’t the correct key.

Fortunately, this *was* the correct key, and as soon as the door was opened, he withdrew it, and placed it in his primary pocket to return to Constable Merlina when they were through.

Eldrin went inside the room lit by a Permanent *light* spell, and Copper followed. Sultry entered and shut the door as she barely made eye contact with someone else walking by the hall from or to another B-room. They were in a much smaller room, probably 20’ x 25’ with a single vent upward towards the ground surface, and there was a single table in the center of the room, which was lined with bookshelves on every wall. However, there might have been at most 100 books, though there was space for hundreds more. Instead, crates and uncrated artifacts lined the shelved walls.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Copper, Spot** | 8 | **Wis (+0)** | 2 | 10 | 12 | 22 |
| **Eldrin, Spot** | 0 | **Wis (+2)** | 0 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| **Sultry, Spot** | 0 | **Wis (+0)** | 2 | 2 | 9 | 11 |

*Success, fail, fail.*

Copper spotted an item that matched a description that Eldrin had read aloud to her a few days earlier. It was a mask that had allegedly been worn by an intruder spotted on the night that the Tome was last seen. The narrative was that the masked figure had broken into the Spellguard Headquarters, shattered the Tome’s exhibit, bypassed the multitude of wards and alarms, and escaped after a brief pursuit, losing its mask in the process.

Regardless of the passage’s fidelity to truth, here was the mask that bore a striking resemblance to the description that the gnome had read days earlier, and if it was the same mask, it was an evil-infused item that took a toll on its user far greater than any boon it granted.

She pointed it out to the others and upon recognizing it, Eldrin warned, “Best not to touch it.” He remembered best all the warnings he’d read regarding the item, and instead looked around for a good long while, handling most of the items and staying clear of the mask.

Using *detect magic*, Eldrin focused his search on items and documents that emitted auras of Divination, Abjuration, and Enchantment. His eyes scanned the room, seeking out the telltale glows of these magical schools, hoping to find the clues that would lead them to the truth.

In this study and exposure to the arcane knowledge he was gleaning, the Academic Priest began to absentmindedly murmur some of the words he was reading, and triggered cantrip-like Divination energies that augmented his perception momentarily. His eyes became enhanced enough in the presence of so many strong magical auras that he could now discern the bulk of the details in the patchwork of magical schools represented by this hodgepodge collection of documents and other artifacts.

He spent the next 30 minutes—and Copper helped this time—looking through transaction records, and cast *amanuensis* to transcribe a good portion of these into his case journal. There were no documents directly tying anyone to any theft, but a great deal of invoices were addressed to a curio shop called The Fence, located on Scroll Street in the Scholars’ Quarter. “I think I know where we need to go next to get to the bottom of this,” announced Eldrin.

“This really is turning out to be a helluva day,” Sultry exclaimed after Eldrin reported his finding.

Eldrin’s revelation about The Fence seemed to light a fire under the trio. Copper, ever the cunning rogue-diviner, grinned. “The Fence, huh? That sounds like our next stop.”

Sultry, with her warrior’s instincts already alert, tightened the straps on her gear. “Lead the way, Eldrin. Let’s see what the Scholars’ Quarter has in store for us.”

The team made their way back to Constable Merlina, who stood guard at the base of the spiral staircase. Eldrin handed the key back to her, nodding in thanks. “We’ve found a lead. We’ll follow up on it.”

Constable Merlina’s eyes showed a hint of curiosity but she simply nodded and led them out to the front of the imposing building. “Be safe,” she then cautioned without making much ado, and relieved the doorman for his break, taking position outside once more.

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It took them an hour to find The Fence, and now that they’d finally come upon it, they stayed a good 500’ away discussing their plan as they stood by a line of people waiting to order kabobs.

Eldrin glanced at his companions, his mind working swiftly. “The Fence may hold the key to uncovering the smuggling racket and the whereabouts of the Tome. We need to approach this carefully. My primary concern is finding concrete evidence that links the shop to the stolen treasures. We must tread lightly and avoid raising suspicion.”

Copper nodded, her eyes scanning the shop from a distance. “Agreed. I’ll use my skills to look for hidden compartments and keep an eye on anyone acting suspiciously. My biggest fear is that if we get caught poking around, they’ll know we’re onto them. We need a solid contingency plan in case things go south.”

Sultry tightened the straps on her gear, her warrior instincts already alert. “I’m ready to handle any aggressive reactions. If someone gets hostile, I’ll create a distraction and give us time to regroup. My hope is that we find the evidence quickly and get out without a fight. But if it comes to it, I’m prepared to protect us.”

Eldrin took a deep breath, formulating the plan. “Let’s enter the shop separately to avoid drawing attention. Copper, you go in first and start looking for any clues. Sultry and I will follow a few minutes later. If anything goes wrong, we’ll use our signal to regroup outside. Remember, we’re here to gather information, not to provoke a confrontation.”

Copper grinned, her confidence evident. “Got it. I’ll use my charm to blend in and gather intel. If I find anything suspicious, I’ll give you the signal.”

“I just want to remind you both that I’m your typical barbarian, meaning illiterate. I so much as walk in there, and I’ll stick out like a sore big toe. Why don’t I wait outside and pretend to care about those flowers?” Surly asked.

Eldrin considered Sultry’s point and nodded. “Good idea, Sultry. Keeping an eye on the surroundings from outside will be just as important. If anything looks suspicious or if you see someone approaching the shop, give us the signal.”

Sultry smirked, “You got it. I’ll be the lookout. Just make sure you two stay safe in there.”

With their plan set, Copper took a deep breath and adjusted her attire, blending in with the Scholars’ Quarter’s diverse crowd. She walked confidently towards The Fence, her keen eyes scanning the curio shop’s entrance. She descended the rickety steps and pushed open the door, the bell above it jingling softly as she entered.

A few minutes later, Eldrin followed, keeping a casual pace as he approached the shop. He glanced back at Sultry, who was now inspecting a flower stall nearby, maintaining her role as lookout. Eldrin entered The Fence, his scholarly demeanor helping him blend in with the clientele browsing the various curiosities.

Inside, the shop was dimly lit, filled with shelves of trinkets, artifacts, and oddities. Copper was already at work, subtly examining the items and noting anything unusual. Eldrin began to browse as well, keeping an eye on Copper while also searching for any clues.

The air was thick with the scent of old parchment and incense, and the shopkeeper, an elderly gnome with a shrewd expression, watched them with interest. Eldrin nodded politely at the shopkeeper, who returned the gesture before resuming his work.

Copper moved towards a display case filled with intricate jewelry, her fingers lightly brushing against the glass as she examined the items. She discreetly checked for any hidden compartments or concealed items, her mind sharp and focused on the task at hand.

Eldrin, meanwhile, gravitated towards a shelf of ancient tomes and scrolls. He carefully opened one of the books, pretending to be engrossed in its contents while keeping an eye on the shopkeeper and other patrons.

Outside, Sultry kept watch, her warrior’s instincts alert for any signs of trouble. She casually browsed the flower stall, her eyes darting towards the shop’s entrance every now and then.

The trio knew they had to stay sharp and work together to uncover the truth within The Fence. The stakes were high, and the secrets they sought could lead them to the heart of the smuggling operation and the missing Tome of Clear Thought.

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**Synopsis 2**

In the early morning of 23 Flamerule, 1372, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper awoke at the Wingless Unicorn, an inn they had booked next to the Sage & Scroll. After a brief discussion over breakfast, they decided to begin their search for the Tome of Clear Thought in the Arcane District of Silverymoon. Eldrin, as the leader, suggested this district as it was reputed to hold the Tome they sought.

Meanwhile, Taern Hornblade and Eltro Miresk engaged in a critical conversation within the Arcane Sanctuary, an exclusive meeting place for Silverymoon’s most esteemed wizards. They debated the balance between academic freedom and the regulation of forbidden knowledge, as well as approaches to punishment for magical crimes and the inclusion of foreign mages in their community. Their dialogue reflected mutual respect and a shared commitment to advancing magical scholarship while safeguarding their city.

In the following days, Eldrin continued his research at the Northbank Library and the Temple of Oghma, seeking information about the Arcane Sanctuary and the Tome of Clear Thought. He composed a formal letter requesting an audience with Taern or Eltro, hoping to gain access to the Sanctuary. During this time, Sultry and Copper explored Silverymoon, honing their skills and gathering information that might aid their quest. The trio remained determined and hopeful, knowing their efforts would bring them closer to uncovering the Tome’s secrets.

On the morning of the 26th of Flamerule, Eldrin returned to the Arcane Sanctuary for an audience with Eltro Miresk. Eltro revealed that the Tome of Clear Thought was stolen from his library earlier that year and that he suspected a shapeshifter impersonating Jorus Azuremantle had compromised the Spellguard’s security. Eltro proposed a covert operation to Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper, offering them false identities and scrolls for communication.

Eltro suggested cover identities for the trio: Eldrin as a scholar from Waterdeep, Sultry as a mercenary bodyguard, and Copper as a diviner from Amn. These identities would grant them access to various areas within the Spellguard to gather information on the impostor. They spent the day preparing for their mission, outfitting themselves with new armor, weapons, and potions, and discussing contingencies for various scenarios they might encounter during their infiltration.

That evening, they visited the Sage & Scroll to relax and strategize. Amidst the lively atmosphere of the tavern, they watched dancers, enjoyed a hearty meal, and fine-tuned their plans for the covert operation. Their camaraderie and shared purpose strengthened their resolve as they prepared to face the challenges ahead within the Spellguard HQ.

On the morning of 27 Flamerule, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper reported to Spellguard Headquarters. Eldrin cast “Disguise Self” to enhance his scholarly persona, while Copper cast “Mage Armor” for protection. They were led to a grand building and introduced to Dr. Esmer, the Custodian of Arcane Archives, who granted them access to the archives for their research. Eldrin explained his thesis on the interplay between arcane and divine magic, impressing Dr. Esmer with his knowledge.

Once inside the archives, Eldrin consulted the arcane file system to search for documents related to the Tome of Clear Thought. He gathered historical documents and noted any relevant information while Sultry and Copper kept watch. They discovered some leads but found no solid evidence of internal corruption within the Spellguard’s ranks. The team remained determined and continued their search, aware of the limited time they had before anyone checked on them.

With their preparations complete and a sense of camaraderie, Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper reviewed the titles on the shelves, explored the archives, and discussed their findings. They knew that their combined skills and quick thinking would be essential in navigating the complexities of their covert mission within the Spellguard HQ, as they sought to uncover the secrets of the Tome and expose any potential corruption.

Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper returned to Custodian Esmer’s office, where they faced a tense moment as the custodian demanded to know their true identities and purpose. Eldrin explained their genuine research and revealed their additional mission to investigate potential malfeasance within the Spellguard, sent by Eltro Miresk. Esmer, discerning their honesty, offered them access to a vault where records of informal transactions were kept, believed to be involved in the theft of national treasures.

The trio, guided by Constable Merlina, descended to the basement and entered room B-23 with a special key provided by Esmer. Inside the room filled with artifacts and documents, they utilized their magical abilities to search for clues. Copper identified a sinister mask related to the Tome’s theft, and Eldrin discovered transaction records pointing to a curio shop called The Fence in the Scholars’ Quarter. This lead prompted them to plan their next steps.

Armed with newfound information, the team prepared to visit The Fence to further their investigation. With confidence in their abilities and cooperation with Custodian Esmer, they were determined to uncover the truth behind the missing Tome and any corruption within the Spellguard. The trio’s camaraderie and shared resolve propelled them forward as they faced the challenges of their covert mission.

Eldrin, Sultry, and Copper arrived at The Fence after an hour of searching, and quickly formulated a plan to uncover any links between the curio shop and the stolen Tome of Clear Thought. They decided to enter separately, with Copper going in first to search for clues, Eldrin following a few minutes later, and Sultry remaining outside as a lookout due to her lack of literacy. The trio aimed to gather information discreetly while avoiding suspicion or confrontation.

As Copper entered the shop, she began examining the items for hidden compartments or signs of smuggling. Eldrin soon joined her, browsing the shelves and keeping an eye on Copper’s progress. The shopkeeper, an elderly gnome, watched them with interest but did not interfere. Copper and Eldrin focused on gathering intel, while Sultry kept watch outside, ready to signal if anything suspicious happened.

Inside The Fence, the atmosphere was thick with the scent of old parchment and incense, and the shop was filled with various artifacts and trinkets. Copper and Eldrin carefully searched for evidence, while Sultry remained vigilant outside. The trio worked together seamlessly, each playing their role to uncover the truth behind the smuggling operation and the missing Tome. Their determination and careful planning gave them confidence as they faced the challenges ahead.