

Excerpts From The Personal Journal of Speaks With Wind

Grass Moon - 3rd day

Before he left, Hsht requested that I keep a journal of my travels, so that upon such time as it and I would be reunited, it would have a reliable record of my journey. This is the first such entry.

After the leaving ceremony, Three Feathers called me to his lodge. He had received a message from an old friend, an elder of the Great Tribe to the far south who had visited when I was nine summers old. Senator Belarius (the old friend) requested that Three Feathers look for for certain individuals with unusual abilities for an equally unusual mission. Three Feathers did not know the specifics of the mission, but he said that he thought that I, of all the tribe, best fit the requirements of his friend.

Three Feathers provided me a scroll, written in Seperan (called Common by lowlanders) that would provide the bearer with safe conduct through the Empire to the city of Palnu and provide an introduction to Senator Belarius. After ascertaining that I was willing to go on this mission, he took my right thumb and dipped it into a dye made of the Black Bark Beetle and the Chestnut Oak and affixed it to the scroll.

Three Feathers did not have direct directions to the lands of the Great Tribe. He said that I should travel east for 8 days to the trade road there and then follow the trade road south until I reached the Empire.

Grass Moon - 4th day

As I prepared to leave this morning, I was accosted by Dawn Flower and Big Hill, who were also dressed for travel. There was an argument over whether or not they would accompany me. I thought I won, but I apparently lost as I now have two traveling companions. Dawn Flower revealed to me that the Spirits of the Mountain have blessed her with Healing Magics out of the old tales.

Grass Moon - 11th day

Met Morlen Quickhands in the village of Questra. An old acquaintance of mine, he has joined us on our trip south.

Grass Moon - 13th day

Reached a road marked with stone distance markers that goes north and south. According to what various people we have encountered this should be the trade road south to the Empire.

Flower Moon - 4th Day

We have reached the Great Salt Lake. According to my reckoning we are 480 or so miles the south and east of the Thunder Mountain. We are proceeding south.

Flower Moon - 5th Day

The road has come to an abrupt end in a swampy marsh. The rock and sand here has a blood-red hue to it – it looks like it contains a lot of rusty metal. After some consultation with my companions, we have decided to head south into the swamp.

Flower Moon - 7th day

Second day in the Blood Swamp. A red-speckled snake snuck into my bedroll last night. I used my spells to Shock it and Dawn Flower whacked it twice with her morningstar. When it was unconscious, Dawn Flower used her magics to save its life and I tossed it into the swamp. I have no quarrel with snakes.

Big Hill was nearly killed today by a Fanged Swamp Lizard¹. It was twice the length of a man and by my estimated weighed as much as a horse. The Frenzy gripped Big Hill and he nearly killed it when it knocked him into insensibility with its tail. I managed to kill it with a touch filled with lightning. Dawn Flower then used the powers granted her by the spirits to heal Big Hill.

I took its teeth as a trophy and skinned it. We also kept the hide – it will make excellent moccasins.

Note: Fanged Swamp Lizard is good eating.

Flower Moon - 8th day

This swamp is unnatural. We we attacked again this morning, this time by two winged creatures that looked like a cross between a bats and blood-drinking insects². They were nearly a foot long each. Fortunately, they were easy to dispatch.



1 An alligator.

2 2 Stirges.

About noon, we came across four bodies in the swamp, clad in rusty chain-mail and shields. Considering the tales I had heard about dead warriors fighting, I called upon the powers of the Life World³ and cast a bolt of energy⁴ that would only harm those animated by the power of the Death World⁵. I was wise to do so for the four skeletal warriors rose and did battle. Still, they were easy to dispatch and we took their curved swords and shields as spoils of battle. While too rusty for real use, we will keep them as trophies.

Flower Moon - 9th day

For once, nothing eventful happened during the night. Early in the morning, we came across a stone lodge. Dawn Flower said it looked like a hut where low-landers interred their dead, instead of burning their bodies and sending their souls to the Great Mountain Spirit as is proper. Morlen, who is by far the stealthiest of us, investigated the outside of the lodge. He heard a hissing noise and noticed the trail of a great snake leading into the lodge (Dawn Flower called it a tomb).

I have no quarrel with snakes, especially those that are the size of a man. We let the lodge be and went around it⁶.

Around noon, we came across another such lodge. Its door was ajar and when Morlen investigated it, he noticed a large glowing-green gem in the back. I approached it and cast a spells to reveal enchantments. The gem was indeed magical, but appeared to be guard by two more creatures of the Death World. While man-like, they had shadowy wraith-like and flickering pits of yellow flame for eyes⁷.

I knew these foes were beyond our abilities. Also, we had not come here to loot the remains of the dead, although I have no quarrel with that if their riches belong to us, but to merely go to the lands of the Great Tribe to the south. We bypassed the stone lodge and moved as far away to the south as possible before camping for the night. I have instructed my companions to be especially watchful tonight.

3 Positive Energy Plane

4 Disrupt Undead

5 Negative Energy Plane

6 A wise decision. The DM said there was a Spirit Naga inside

7 Wraiths

Flower Moon - 10th day

This swamp is accursed. The wraiths-like creatures did not attack us during the night, but two other creatures of the Death World did.

While on watch last night, Big Hill was attacked by two humanoid creatures that looked vaguely like pale grey men⁸. They had long, sharp teeth and their hands had yellowish fingernails at least 3 inches long and sharpened to a point. The Frenzy overtook Big Hill and he slew one and the other, but not until after their touch removed all power of motion from Big Hill's limbs. Fortunately, the paralysis passed after 20 or so heart-beats.

One of the ghouls had a copper bracelet on its wrist, with a couple of purplish stones. According to Morlen, this should be worth about 300 gold aurei.

Flower Moon - 11th day

We left the swamp early in the morning and found the trade road. We followed it south. Around noon we encountered a tinker who confirmed that we were in the outskirts of the lands of the Big Tribe, the Sempran Empire.

Strangely, he had never heard of the Blood Swamp to the north. Several of the other people we encountered today had never heard of it either.

This and my other game recaps may be found at www.launchpadzero.net.

⁸ 2 Ghouls