Chronicle, game 60

Ëlinyr sat at the desk in the corner of the room that would eventually become her home’s library, leaning back in her well-worn desk chair, thinking to herself for a moment. The past few days had been so busy, with everything going on at the Adventurer’s Guild, that she hadn’t really had much time to set the library to order. The room wasn’t quite as organized as it could be – there were still piles of boxes everywhere, and the bookshelves were still mostly empty. She and Alair and Ithuryn were still in the process of moving into their new home in the Green District, and given how busy the three of them had been of late, the disarray was understandable. The only place in the house that was in any sort of order at the moment was the basement – Alair’s printing press and other newspaper needs were set up almost immediately once they’d purchased the house, as he needed to get the first issue of The Diamond City Times published. Ëlinyr could hear the faint noises of the printing press at work downstairs – it seemed that the first issue of the newspaper was a success, so much so that Alair was downstairs printing out a second run of the first issue to hand out in Victory Square tomorrow.

While Alair was busy working on the newspaper downstairs, Ithuryn was busy with his own work. He sat in a plush armchair shoved haphazardly into another corner of the library, a small pile of papers resting in his lap with another pile sitting on a stack of boxes being used as an impromptu table. Ëlinyr guessed they might be notes from the murder investigation they’d been working on – he occasionally paused his reading to scribble notes down in his notebook, or to take a sip of coffee from the mug he’d set down on the stack of boxes, but otherwise he seemed entirely wrapped up in his reading.

Thankfully, Elinyr’s desk was clear of clutter for the moment; her red journal was opened to a blank page, and she’d unearthed her favorite pen from one of the drawers of her desk. Picking up her pen, she thought for a moment about where to begin her chronicle, then started to write.

Shah-Auran 6, Eismana 3

Oh goodness, I nearly forgot how exciting it can be to go out adventuring. (And exhausting.) I’ve been so very busy lately, splitting my time between teaching experimental magic at the Academy of Innovation, researching at the library (more experimental magic), and keeping an eye on things at Lin’s Study; I simply haven’t had much time to spend with the Guild. However, a number of old friends were in the Diamond City recently – as well as many new guild members – so I felt I should carve out some time to spend with the Adventurer’s Guild. I wasn’t entirely able to keep up with everything that was going on – with there being so many new adventurers and so many things going on in the city, and there being only one of me, I could only do so much. I only hope that other members of the Guild will share information on what they’ve done, so I can keep track of things. (It was so much easier to be the unofficial guild scribe when there were fewer of us, and when I didn’t have so much going on in my life… I feel that my note-taking was not up to its usual standards this time around)

As I mentioned earlier, there were many old friends in the Diamond City over the past few days; Flint was one of those who I hadn’t seen in quite some time. The state he is in worries me – his health seems to have deteriorated quite a bit since I’d last seen him, and he actually wore armor while adventuring. I don’t think I’d ever seen Flint in armor before. I wish I knew what was causing his increasingly fragile state – I worry about him. Without him, I think I am the most senior member of the Adventurer’s Guild, and I’m not sure I’m ready for the kind of responsibility that he ends up with – not with everything else going on in my life.

On a lighter note, I briefly got to see Orcus when he could get away from the Diamond Assembly for a few minutes – it was good to see him, even for such a brief time. I hope we don’t end up drifting out of touch… I have so few close friends as it is. I also spent some time with Hisao, who had recently returned from his travels. It is good to see him doing so well; however, it is also strange to see him as he is now. I grew so used to knowing him as Mukhif, and while I am happy he regained his memories, I’m still adjusting to the change in his personality. (And to the fact that he has a daughter who is older than he is.)

Oh! I almost forgot! I mentioned that there were new guild members, quite a few of them in fact – and Ithuryn is one of them! He joined the Guild recently, and while he’s still finding his footing here, I feel he’s a good fit for the Guild. It is quite wonderful to have an adventuring partner, I must admit.

In other news (no pun intended), Alair released the first issue of the newspaper he’s been working on the other day, the Diamond City Times. As he was passing out issues to members of the Adventurer’s Guild, he kept talking about how the newspaper would cover even the news the Diamond Assembly doesn’t want people knowing about – I certainly hope he doesn’t land himself in trouble with the Assembly. Or with anyone else. My poet does have a proclivity for writing things that sometimes get him the wrong sorts of attention… Oh well. If anything happens, I at least have Ithuryn to help me rescue Alair. (Gods help me if I have to rescue them both at some point, though.)

Anyhow. I could sit and write about my fellow adventurers and my dear fiancés for hours if I let myself – however, I want to document the happenings of the past few days while everything is still fresh in my mind.

The biggest thing I was involved with was a murder investigation that started out in the Temple District. A woman by the name of Nori Smith had been murdered in front of the main temple, and her left hand was removed – possibly while she was still alive. The acolytes we interviewed hadn’t seen much, nor had they known the deceased, but they did say they heard singing outside the temple that was suddenly silenced at one point. Thanks to a magical item of Tzu’la’s and a ritual performed by another member of the Guild, we were able to summon Nori’s spirit and ask her what she remembered from that night. We learned that she was going to the temple to make an offering to Nivone, and was singing a song from a play she enjoyed as she waited outside the temple for the bells to toll the hour. As the bells began to ring out, suddenly everything fell silent – including herself, as she found herself unable to make any noise. The last thing she remembered before she died was “sharp shadows” holding her down. Ithuryn was able to use one of his rituals to find more information about these sharp shadows; the ritual revealed a story of an evil force that hated song

Ëlinyr let out a mild curse as the writing on the page trailed off, her pen out of ink. “I swear, I have gone through more ink over the past few days with the Guild than I have in months,” she muttered to herself. She set her pen down and sighed, then went to rummage through the desk drawers to find the bottle of her favorite shade of red ink.

“Is everything alright, love?” Ithuryn looked up at Ëlinyr over the top of the sheet of notes he was reading.

“Oh, I’m fine. Ran out of ink again,” she said, picking up her pen and waving it at him. “I don’t know if I’m out of practice when it comes to adventuring, or if things are just a little… I don’t know, a little stranger up here in the Diamond City.” She shook her head, then went back to digging around in the open drawer. “It feels like there’s so much more going on lately than there was the last time I adventured regularly.”

“I’m not sure if I can really provide much in the way of perspective, love – I’ve only been an adventurer for three days,” Ithuryn said. “It does seem like there’s a lot for us adventurers to do, though. Are you worried that it’s too much for everyone to take care of?”

“Oh, no, it’s fine,” she said as she pulled the bottle of ink she was looking for out of the back of the drawer. “I’m just rambling. I should get back to writing this chronicle.” She refilled her pen, then wiped the excess ink off the nib with an ink-stained rag and went back to her writing.

The ritual revealed a story of an evil force that hated song; it would bring silence to all noise, and seek out and maim or kill the source of a song. It has no name but silence, according to the lore Ithuryn consulted. The story was old, very old – we were unable to determine just how old it is, but with what happened to Nori, the story sent chills down my spine. (Possibly related: the play Nori enjoyed so much had recently stopped running, and Ithuryn and I are wondering if it’s connected to Nori’s murder somehow. Did this Silence attack those putting on the play? We should look into this.)

The investigation didn’t end there, however. Ithuryn came up with the idea of using his Locate Object ritual to find Nori’s missing hand, as he thought that might lead us to who murdered her. The ritual did help – however, it led us into the sewers. I hate the sewers. Ithuryn is lucky I love him, I otherwise would not have accompanied him and the others into the sewers to find out what was happening. (He owes me a new dress, too – the sewer has ruined yet another of my dresses.) Anyhow, the ritual led us to a mountain of bones and the aura of dark magic. Amid the bones, we found what we think was Nori’s missing hand, as it had a wedding ring on it – the bones were picked clean, which is scary given how very recently she died – and Ithuryn is going to return her wedding ring to her husband. Our next step in the sewers is to come back with more adventurers, to see if we can discover more about what’s going on down there and what sort of creature or entity we’re dealing with.

After returning from the sewers, Alair brought something important to our attention: the Nocturnal Empire had captured a resistance leader in the Pearl City; however, the leader’s identity is unknown, and Alair was looking for people with connections in Isildar who might help him determine their identity. While my only connection to Isildar seems to have disappeared off to Prinya for all I know, and with not exactly being on speaking terms with her in the first place, we had to find another way of potentially getting information from the Pearl City – and we did, in a most unexpected place.

Let me provide a little bit of backstory for this next part. A few years ago, shortly after the War of Flames ended, some of the adventurers stumbled into the Night Market and purchased a mysterious key. No-one had any idea what it went to, but clearly a random key found at the Night Market must do something spectacular, right? (okay, maybe the sarcasm was a little much, not everyone feels the same way I do about the Night Market – then again, not everyone has had the same experiences I have had with the Night Market.)

Anyhow, in this case, it actually did. A number of us adventurers were summoned to the library, and there we were met by a shadowy figure I’d never seen before. (Strangely, the library staff acted as if we weren’t there – and I know for a fact that all of them know me, due to how often I am in the library – however, they bowed to this shadowy figure. Most peculiar.) The figure introduced themselves as The Eternal Librarian, and told us that the key that the Adventurer’s Guild had acquired from the Night Market unlocked a special room at the top of the tower. After climbing a seemingly endless flight of stairs, we entered the room and found out that it allows us to travel to each of the Jeweled Cities! We tested out the door that led to the Pearl City – we walked along a pathway through a strangely dark area, and the pathway ultimately led to the back rooms of a tea shop in the Pearl City that I’d never been to before, The Cherry Blossom. This room may give us a way to safely help the Resistance in Isildar. I am curious to learn about where specifically each of the other doors go, but for right now, I feel that using this room to help aid those in Isildar is a more worthy use. After all, Isildar is where I was born, and where I spent much of my life until I went to the Royal Academy, and I do have some attachment to the city. (As do Alair and Ithuryn, I would expect, given that they were born and raised in the Pearl City as well.) Removing the Nocturnal Empire from Isildar and helping the Resistance is an important task, a daunting one, but I think this room will help.

Ithuryn used his Consult Lore ritual to learn more about the room, and we learned that it does have some limitations. The doors are usable once in each direction (so, for example, to the Pearl City and back) per turning of the moon. The city’s engines recharge the room’s powers, but apparently it takes time for it to reach full power. If one strays from the pathways and falls off the edge, they’ll fall forever into nothingness. The doors stay open “as long as it takes for all members of your organization to get through” – we may need to carefully experiment to see exactly what this means. Additionally, the doors on either side will only open to keyholders; I’m guessing that we may not be the only ones who hold keys to this room. Strangely enough, when one of the Adventurer’s Guild is standing inside that room and thinks of the key, it will appear in the person’s hand. While I guess this means we don’t have to worry about losing the key, or key falling into the wrong hands, I do find the fact that it simply appeared in my hand after thinking about it quite unsettling.

Aside from the murder investigation and discovering the room of teleportation at the top of the library tower, I don’t have much else to write about. A number of potential students asked me about admission to the Academy of Innovation, which was exciting; however, I was woefully underprepared to talk about the Academy – I have since written up some notes to share with interested adventurers when they ask. I am also considering moving Lin’s Study up to the Diamond City – I feel like the Free District might be the best place for it, as that means it will be close to both the Academy and the Guild hall. It would be nice to not have to keep splitting my time between Samazar and Kishar…

Anyhow, my wrist is aching quite a bit, so I should stop writing and rest it – I get the feeling I will be scribbling down a lot more notes on the Guild’s adventures in the coming months, and as such it would be a good idea to avoid injuring my writing hand…