

Bruce Turner Memorial Session Summary

Rise of the Runelords 12/30/2007

Attendance

Bruce uses some lame excuse about being on a plane to skip out on his usual session summarizing duties, leaving your brave scribe Ernest to take over.

Participants today:

- *Paul*, aka “The DM”
- *Chuck*, aka Ravno the scarf guy
- *Chris*, aka Roscoe the cleric
- *Matt*, aka Apollo Eternium the fighter
- *Patrick*, aka Maru Maru the monk
- *Ernest*, aka Valgrim the dwarf
- *Tim* also attends, briefly if fuzzily, to participate in the present exchange!

A successful war on the war on Xmas is waged with the exchange of presents. Gifts include a Family Guy monopoly set, Hellboy figurines, a graphic novel, a mug with convenient attached pocket, a poseable dog, a Simpsons movie, and a crazy cat lady figure. Now, to adventure!

The Hills Have Eyes II

The party finds themselves in the partially cleared mutant hillbilly farmhouse. The unfortunate facts start to come back to them about how jacked up the place was, how they're out of spells and hit points and strength, and how everything in the house was trapped. *Valgrim* reminds everyone he's out of trap monkeys to summon. *Roscoe* remarks, “Oh yeah, I remember your porch monkey from last time. Uh, wait, I didn't

mean that!” Everyone else hovers nervously over the NAACP speed-dial button on their cell phones.

They find a door to stairs down into the cellar from the kitchen. Hastily, they push large furniture in front of it for containment. Then as the players’ memories begin to refresh, they realize there’s like 4 NPCs and a bear around too. Or, as Valgrim categorizes them, “The ranger, the chick, the black guy, the traitor, and the bear.” More formally, they are *Jakardros* the Black Arrow captain, *Shalelu* the elven ranger, *Vale* the Black Arrow, *Kaven* the Black Arrow with a Sahadrin tattoo, and Jakardros’ bear companion. “GET BACK OUT INTO THE YARD!!!” Roscoe commands. The NPCs slink offstage.

A couple rooms of searching reveal nothing more than that hillbilly half-ogres store their waste in a variety of interesting ways, until we get to a room where they must do the pictorials for Half-Ogre Hillbilly Playboy, furnished with a fireplace and ratty dire bear rug. And more human-skin upholstered furniture. The characters’ low Search checks ensure that they find nothing but more traps.

The last room on the first floor reveals *Mammy Graal!* Her three dead husbands are propped up in coffins, and her hugely obese form is painting with organ leavin’s. Her prominently wielded poo-scrapin’ stick generates much commentary from the PCs. Roscoe proclaims “Don’t worry guys, I’ll take care of the undead!” *Apollo* considers charging Mammy but then the phrase “swallowed by her gaping vagina” makes him reconsider. She apparently has already cast (at least) *Mirror Image*.

Apollo re-reconsiders and charges, dispelling an image. *Ravno* swirls his scarf and hits Mammy, but fails to penetrate her rancid blubber. *Maru Maru* heads for the zombies, but the party yells “No! No!” and he goes over to account for another image. Valgrim, down to pretty much no spells from last time, sends an acid splash over to get rid of the last image but actually hits Mammy for a little damage. Roscoe blasts the zombies into dust, provoking a scream of “Mah Booyfriends!!!” from Mammy. The heroes shudder. She levitates above the bed Baron Harkonnen style and starts summoning a monster. *Apollo* removes the last image and *Ravno* scarf-crits Mammy, who makes her DC 34 Concentration check to hold onto her spell, much to his dismay.

A fiendish dire bat appears and gets in everyone's hair! Mammy fails a defensive cast roll and the party spends some time Rodney Kinging her. Valgrim cries out, "Behold the burning power of HYGIENE!" and casts Prestidigitation to clean the room. Maru Maru KO's Mammy with his Brawler's Gauntlets and then everyone takes a couple rounds of screwing around with the bat until Maru Maru punches it to death, the question of "do your hands count as magical?" provoking no off-color response for some reason.

On Mammy, the party finds, while choking back their vomit:

- Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds (Valgrim)
- Scroll of Animate Dead (Valgrim)
- Wand of Magic Missile L3 (44) (Ravno)
- Wand of Ray of Enfeeblement (28) (Ravno)
- Wand of Vampiric Touch (33) (Ravno)
- Mammy's spellbook (Valgrim)
 - L0 – all
 - L1 – chill touch, grease, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, reduce person, true strike
 - L2 – blindness, deafness, false life, ghoul touch, mirror image, summon monster II
 - L3 – displacement, fly, summon monster III, vampiric touch
 - L4 - bestow curse, contagion, dimension door
- Amulet of Health (Con +2) (Valgrim)
- 2 Varisian idols (Valgrim)

They decide to tie Mammy up and then clear the attic before resting. They find another degenerate bunkroom with a cedar chest, which the fighter-types take turns trying to open, and are aggrieved that "scarf boy" is the one that manages to pry it open. But they cheer as he triggers the pressure plate hand-cutter trap – Ravno manages to pull out just in time! They find:

- Trapped cedar chest (Apollo)
- Sack of coins with

- 121 copper
- 110 silver
- 23 gold
- 17 fingers

The last attic room is a trapmaking lab. With the area somewhat clear, nappies occur. The next morning, the party tries to interrogate Mammy but she tries to cast Dimension Door and they kill her. To the cellar! The cellar is full of goo'n'leavin's, which immediately heaves itself up into a mound and attacks. It's a Huge tendriculous! Ravno cries out, "Only acid and bludgeoning can kill it!" Valgrim and Roscoe look at each other dubiously. Roscoe says "Hey man, I'm not the bludgeoning kind of cleric." Valgrim sighs.

Valgrim hits it with an acid orb and Roscoe hits everyone with a Prayer. All the fighter-types try to maneuver close to it, and Maru Maru bitches at Ravno about how every square he tries to move into funks his groove somehow, but the complaints are cut short by an attack and grapple of Maru from the tendriculous. Being trained by Grapplor the Grapplarian, Maru actually shrugs that off. The tendriculous decides to overrun Maru and Apollo to get to Valgrim and his hated acid attacks. They scurry out of its way in an especially cowardly manner, and it seizes up the dwarf and prepares to gobble him!

Valgrim, down to 2 hit points, manages to get off a Benign Transposition while grappled and swaps places with the much nimbler monk before he can be swallowed! Ravno scarfs it till it falls down, and everyone pours on damage to keep its regeneration in check as Valgrim Acidic Splatters it into goo. Maru Maru puts on the final blow with an atomic elbow drop.

They open a door leading to a simple room with a simple chest in it. "Oh my God!" the players exclaim. They check for traps, throw in branches, et cetera.

- Agate studded gold ring (50 gp)
- Necklace of emerald and silver (350 gp)
- Pair of small leather gloves studded with pearls (150 gp) – Gloves of Dexterity +2 (Ravno)

- Large sack of coins
 - 210 gp
 - 452 sp
 - 108 cp
- Ruby inlaid red dragonscale cloak clasp (600 gp)
- Finely elvish made longbow (Jakardos says it's his, to the indifferent glare of the party) - +1 shocking longbow

Finishing up, they then find the ogrekins' skin-shucking room. Human skin suits for everyone! And in the last room – one last ogrekin, with a deformed vestigial twin growing from his neck! And two pet 'donkey rats.' Roscoe asks, "Are you the trapmaker?" The party says as one, "Because if you are, he's the gatekeeper!!!" Upon learning that he is indeed the trapmaker, Maru says "Hey! We like your work. Come work for us. You get a silver a day!" Roscoe adds "And no eating people, and we have hygiene requirements!" The vestigial twin responds "Grunt! Scrrrch. Spit!" Roscoe plaintively cries, "Someone talk me out of this!!!" *Hucker Graal* accepts a 3 sp/day offer to become the party's resident trapsmith, furnituremaker, and donkey rat wrangler. His two donkey rats are named *Chuckles* and *Drooler*. And with that the farmhouse is officially pacified.

Traitors Can't Hide

Roscoe casts *Zone of Truth* to interrogate Kaven, after a pep talk from Valgrim about how refusal to answer any questions would have ill effects on his intestines. He admits that he betrayed the keep, and became *Lucretia's* lover on the gambling riverboat. He delayed the southern patrol at her request and the ogres used that opening to take over the keep. He was supposed to meet her at Turtleback Ferry two days ago. The party discusses and asks Jakardos as the Black Arrow captain to decide his punishment – death is the decision. Upon Kaven's execution, a wispy soul-like thing comes out of this body and whooshes into the air! Commotion ensues. Roscoe determines that the Sahadrin tattoo means that when you die they get your soul! A mandatory full body tattoo check

for all PCs and NPCs ensues, though they do let Shalelu be checked by Jakardros – none are found. Ravno realizes that our new hireling is quite skilled in skinning humans, and puts together a plan where Hucker skins captives with tattoos before we kill them. No one else likes that plan.

Valgrim determines that the Erase spell would take the tattoos off. Ravno and Roscoe inquire in depth of Jakardros and Vale about Black Arrow recruiting practices (prisoners!) and try to modernize them. The party heads back to Turtleback Ferry to regroup and look for Lucretia. They buy 2 pearls so that Valgrim can Identify two of the wands, and the Erase spell for tattoo removal purposes. (-225 party gp, -100 Valgrim gp). Jakardros gets his bow back.

The two R's hire a bard in town to sing the praises of the Black Arrows to get some recruits. This plan starts to fragment when Ravno starts specifically asking for “lonely farmboys” and Roscoe complains that is “totally gay”. No one's seen Lucretia. Paul happily rolls up a townful of classed NPCs for the PCs to recruit as cannon fodder, I mean, Black Arrows. The 9th level commoner tickles the players' fancy. Valgrim gets the priest/mayor on board with the tattoo removal program.

The PCs divvy up cash. Maru Maru buys the necklace and Apollo buys the clasp. Shares are 215.23 gp each, and one share is split between the three NPCs and recruitment bonuses for newbies.

Strike Force Five!

Jakardros sketches out a complete plan of the keep. Ernest refuses to try to reproduce it electronically for the session summary. The important takeaway is the cave under a waterfall that, though infested with shocker lizards, leads to some secret doors into the keep itself. The plan looks to be to insert into the basement, free any prisoners in the cells, and sweep and clear the keep. 10 mostly first-level recruits, including a L2 fighter and a L2 ranger, sign up for the Black Arrows. Time for on the job training!!! The party chips in for chain shirts for the two new guys, and a plan emerges.

Insertion Team (from the south)

PCs: Maru Maru, Roscoe, Ravno, Valgrim, Apollo

Tier 1 NPCs: Shalelu (R3/F2), Jakardros (R8) [the bear stays in the forest]

Decoy Assault (from the east)

Tier 1 NPCs: Vale (R2/F4)

Tier 2 NPCs: Faranach (F2), Jaal (R2)

Tier 3 NPCs: 8 L1 human warriors- Melchiorre, Gaspare, Ressa, Daniele, Pietro, Fabian, Nohelis, Quivian

Fort Ranek is a grey stone affair huddled at the base of two cliffsides, showing lots of ogre battle damage. The decoy assault team rides up on the keep and starts shooting at it and making a general commotion. The insertion team sneaks up and gets into the cave without event, and Valgrim uses Message to tell the decoy assault team to withdraw. Apollo approaches an armory cache but two agitated shocker lizards are there – he decides he didn't really need anything from it anyway.

Coming to the secret door leading into the dungeon, Maru hears lilting music through the door. The team sweeps in to see Lucretia in human form, with her red hair, purty eyebrows, and dirty pillows all aglow! Valgrim tosses a haste and everyone immediately surrounds her in the surprise round. Everyone starts smacking, only hitting her due to her flat-footedness. Valgrim summons a celestial bison for smacking too. Lucretia lays into Apollo with a rapier and dagger, hitting him 4 times and draining 4 wisdom. Due to her weapon loadout, the party realizes that Lucretia isn't the same person as *Xanasha* – how many of these crazy lamia noble bitches are around anyway?!?

Roscoe hits Lucretia with a Dispel Magic, getting rid of both her False Life and Mage Armor. Apollo is so badly wounded that he quits the room. Valgrim summons a monstrous crab – it misses but the bison hits her again, as does Ravno. Lucretia lets loose with a Lightning Bolt! It kills the crab, but Valgrim, Jakardros, Shalelu, and the bison live through it despite all failing their saves. Maru Maru whiffs at her. The NPC crew fires a barrage of arrows to little effect. Roscoe gets a sword shot in, and she's

looking very bad. Apollo charges back in hoping for the kill... but missing. And then the celestial bison tramples her into oblivion! Everyone cheers. She has:

- Wand (Valgrim)
- Keen Rapier (Apollo)
- Masterwork Dagger (Ravno)
- Sahadrin Medallion (+1 saves, false life, but they can watch you)
- Silk curtains and pillows (Roscoe)

For some bizarre reason Roscoe keeps wearing the amulet even now that he knows they can watch him through it (this information was unclear before). The cells are all empty. Moving up to the ground level, the team slips into the infirmary, which has been inhabited by the villain from the movie Seven in ogre form. Valgrim is pleased to discover its touch AC is worse than 10 when he acidic splatters it. Ravno and the ogre exchange blows. Jakardros pounds a shock arrow into the ogre, his favored enemy! Roscoe gives everyone fast healing 3. Apollo crits the thing with the magical keen rapier. Ravno scarfs it violently and the ogre dies. He has:

- Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds (Ravno)
- Masterwork Composite Longbow (Large)

And into the library they go! The ogres have mangled the books, pissing off Valgrim. The mess hall is empty. The kitchen is empty. Every smallest bit of item everywhere has been smashed, crushed, or bent. They finally find 4 ogres in the barracks arguing over “who gets to wear the horsie head” and unload on them in a pincer movement. Ravno wounds the closest one. Valgrim lays in a Glitterdust, blinding two of them. Jakardros pumps three shock arrows into an ogre for 58 points of damage, obliterating it. Roscoe hits us all with a Prayer. Then an ogre crits Jakardros for a measly 29 points and another bashes Apollo. Maru Maru hits twice, for perhaps the first time in his life. A Shadow Blade Technique from Ravno kills a second ogre. Apollo goes for a blinded ogre, critting with his new rapier. Valgrim takes the third down with

an acidic splatter, and then Jakardros and Shalelu open up on the last ogre, feathering it with a mess of arrows. Victory! They have:

- A horsie head (Hulmar)

Dénouement

And then the session comes to an end. Fifth level characters get 3540 XP and sixth level characters get 2970. “Ding” sounds are heard all around! More in two weeks, and a happy new year!