

## Curse of the Crimson Throne Session Summary – 04/19/2009

### *Attendance*

- Chris (Malcolm Zirkus the Korvosan Guard – Fighter 12)
- Brandie (gamer groupie)
- Ernest (Annata Vieri the priestess of Sarenrae – Cleric 12)
- Paul (the gamemaster)
- Patrick (Thorndyke the Sable Company Marine – Ranger 12)
- Bruce, who plays our long-lost sorcerer Valash, is still tending to the death throes of his employer, a semiconductor firm, in the frozen north. But we hear he may be returning for next time!

No witty intros this time; we were all way too busy recuperating from our heroically sized lunch of Indian food to mess around. It took me till halfway through the first combat to get my laptop going!

### *Theseus, Eat Your Heart Out*

When last we left off, our three heroes and their three Brotherhood of Bones hangers-on had killed a chain-ghost boss monster and determined that he was linked via lines of magical force to the four sub-bosses secreted around the haunted Castle Scarwall. We have a cute little poem (see two session summaries ago) that alludes to the four bosses. One “war spirit stands at post of old,” one is an “infernal soul up in a tower,” one is “in the kennels with a breath weapon,” and one is “a dream of death mid ash and bone.” We are pretty sure we killed the war spirit, Captain Castrothrane, last time. With magical buffs still active from the last battle, we quickly follow the one of mystic lines of force out of the room; it goes straight up and so we find the nearest stairwell up. We hustle up it, decide which of the many doors we see would be right above the chain-ghost room, and kick down a door to reveal two quite surprised spiked devils.

*Annata* casts *righteous wrath of the faithful*, crying out “For the sun and the fury!” The two warriors go surround one of the devils. *Thorndyke* crits it; *Malcolm* can’t hit it at all.

Both devils pick a warrior, rake their claws across, them, and pull them into a spiky grapple. Malcolm can't attack with his two-handed flail at all and punches at his devil to no effect. Thorndyke rakes again and again with all his weapons like a feral cat. The devils execute the "dry-hump of death" upon their captives; Malcolm avoids it but Thorndyke gets skewered. These tactics definitely don't favor our heroes.

*Shadow Count Sial* tries a Slay Living on one of the barbed devils. Turns out Slay Living sucks now, just doing damage rather than actually killing someone, and the devil's spell resistance protects it anyway. Annata rains blows on the devil holding Malcolm and channels holy energy, healing the boys and burning the devils.

Malcolm manages to break out of the devil's grasp and moves behind the one that is holding Thorndyke. Thorndyke drives his points into the devil's chest deeply. He takes a lot of damage from the devil's spikes each time he hits, and as a two-weapon guy that starts adding up fast. Annata moves in and touches the wriggling Thorndyke with a *heal*, closing the vast majority of his wounds.

Malcolm retrieves his scythe and hauls off with a devastating blow on the devil holding Thorndyke. He lops its head off like it's an ear of corn.

The other devil hits a gong hanging in the room with a backhand swipe and then grabs Annata, its spines ripping through her armor into her skin. She channels energy wildly, causing its skin to smoke. Thorndyke and Malcolm batter at it, but it ignores them as it continues to rip into Annata. Malcolm finally drives his scythe through its back and it shudders and dies. "GET THIS THING OFF ME!" demands Annata.

### *Double Dutch Devils*

Our heroes quickly regroup – we realize that the gong was probably to warn the real boss monster. Sounds like "infernal soul in a tower" time to us. We rush through a door in the room and find a short hallway concluding with a large reinforced door bearing a superior lock. Thorndyke searches the devils for keys and comes up empty. Annata suggests we use our vials of acid to burn out the lock. As Malcolm does that, she casts *guidance* and *resistance* on the group and *light of venya* on herself.

We burst through the door into a gloomy, hollow tower. There is a bed hanging from chains, a gilt gem-encrusted throne, and many alcoves bearing icons, objects d'art,

or polished skulls. An iron-skinned bat-winged creature of demonic aspect, obviously female, and a chain devil flunky loom here.

The chain devil lashes out with her chain at Annata, who buffets it aside contemptuously with her shield. Thorndyke engages the devil. “Leave it for the boner squad!” calls Malcolm.

The big bad devil lady moves to the center of the room and utters an evil word of *blasphemy*. We are all dazed and weakened – and by “we” I mean the real heroes, the Brotherhood of the Bones contingent, being evil, aren’t affected. *Laori* puts a *bull’s strength* on Malcolm. The chain devil rips into Thorndyke.

We’re dazed, so the bat lady goes again, and casts *horrid wilting* on all of us! The water extrudes from our bodies and everyone cries out in pain.

Annata uses a Harrow point to boost a channel and floods everyone with holy energy, and puts a *mantle of good* upon herself (SR against evil spells). Malcolm moves up and smacks the chain devil into nothingness as he passes to put it out of his misery, and to clear up the area to maneuver.

Bat lady lets loose a fear aura and it affects Malcolm, and then she starts a *chain lightning* on Annata which forks to the rest of the group. Thorndyke and Annata get out of it with evasion and Malcolm’s only lightly singed. The Brotherhood of the Bones is hurt, but who cares.

Annata lays a *dispel magic* down on the devil (and channels energy). Turns out the devil has no buffs active, which is lame. Why bother with the gong warning thing? So you’re not busy taking a dump when the opposing forces bust through your door? Her channeling helps heal everyone, though, which is good because Shadow Count Sial is hurting pretty bad.

Malcolm burns two Harrow points for Will save re-rolls to get rid of the fear besetting him and attacks the bat lady. Thorndyke moves to flank, but her DR is very efficacious against a two-weapon fighter, and he doesn’t even scratch her.

Annata burns another Harrow point to put divine wrath into her ray attacks from the *light of venya*. One misses, but the other burns deeply into bat lady, critically wounding her. She flips out and lays into Annata with her scythe. Annata calls down a *searing light*, but it doesn’t get through the devil’s spell resistance. Malcolm misses with

a devastating blow. Thorndyke cries out “Wha-what!” and hews at her, also missing like six times.

The bad devil lady rounds on Malcolm and tries to spike him with her scythe. Somehow, he blocks blow after blow with his own scythe! “Hot scythe on scythe action!” cries Thorndyke. Annata begins to wonder if he is hopped up on goofballs.

With everyone’s spells gone, the fight turns into a brutal slog. Annata, Malcolm, and Thorndyke beat at the devil lady but continually miss or do minimal damage. She gets some good hacks in on Malcolm.

Annata prays for the Dawnflower’s blessing, and casts *divine power* on herself. Malcolm gets in a couple good shots, but devil lady is still up. Thorndyke finally gets in a lucky crit and takes her down!!! Annata beheads the corpse.

An aura of menace lifts from the keep! The baddies and room contain:

- Gems in the gilded throne (20,000 gp)
- Hundreds of thousands of coins are in the mattress (796,800 cp, 24,200 sp, 15,500 gp, 460 pp)
- 34 of the alcoves hold polished skulls (the Shadow Count wants them)
- 41 hold random loot (15,300 gp)
- Magic light mace - +2 icy burst (Thorndyke)
- Magic rod of splendor - +4 CHA, purty clothes 1/day (12 hrs), pavilion for 100 1/week (1 day) (Annata)
- Scarab of protection (Thorndyke)
- Lantern of Revealing – invisibility purge 25’ (Annata)
- Ring of protection +2 (Malcolm, puts his +1 into kitty, Annata takes that)
- Scythe (unholy) - Malcolm chucks it off the bridge

We retreat to the gatehouse to rest, as we’re all messed up. We get *Zellara* our Varisian spirit guide to ID the magic items.

### *Nap Time*

“Well, boys, that was...” Annata trails off.

“Harrowing?” ventures Malcolm.

“Good word.”

The Shadow Count activates his bone keep. Laori comes into the gatehouse to sleep with them instead. Annata talks to her about what the heck the Shadow Count’s deal is; Laori writes him off as a stick in the mud. Annata’s definitely noticed that he’s all resentful that she’s hanging out with Laori instead of with him, the creepy freak. The two girls chatter away, with no reference being made to Laori’s “indecent proposal” of last session. We keep watch and rest up.

In the morning, we re-infiltrate the keep. A covert peek into the chain-lord’s room indicates that yes, he has respawned, and has only two skulls on chains now. We look out into the courtyard and see doors to the donjon and stables. Shadow Count Sial reminisces about how in the old days, torture victims would scream merrily in the courtyard. We all give him the hairy eyeball.

### *Mess with the bull, you get the bones*

We go down to the first floor of the keep to find our way to the courtyard. We find our way into a long hallway manned with many minotaur skeletons. “Huzzah!” cries Malcolm as he charges to the attack. “I love these guys!” We follow him in, and Thorndyke and Malcolm shatter two of them immediately. The remainder charge, and bust Malcolm up a little. With little concern, we smash the rest of their bones into fragments.

When we’re done, Thorndyke walks over and casts cure moderate wounds on Malcolm! Malcolm asks, “You have *spells*? When did that happen?”

Annata claps cheerily and says “Great job, Thorndyke!” Malcolm snickers at how unintentionally patronizing that sounds.

### *Like A Goth Mr. Ed*

We head over to the stables. Annata buffs everyone up before entering (*bless, protection from evil, resistance, guidance*). We move into the large, dark area and a voice from a stall down the way says, “Is that living human flesh I smell?”

“Sure is!” answers Thorndyke.

“It’s been a long time since I had live human,” it muses.

“It’s the other white meat!” Malcolm encourages it.

Suddenly, darkness falls across the entire area. Annata casts *light of lunia* and it pushes the darkness back. We advance carefully, and hear spellcasting. Annata casts a *silence* spell out at where it’s coming from. Thorndyke moves up and suddenly a shadowy dragon materializes in front of him! It rips into him with many, many attacks; he loses 100 of his hard-earned hit points.

Malcolm charges in to help him. Annata moves closer, illuminating the shadowy dragon with her light (but staying out of the silence) and casts *righteous wrath of the faithful* on the group. Thorndyke slashes at the wyrm.

The dragon breathes out a cone of shadows upon us. Malcolm and Thorndyke shrug it off, but Annata has six points of strength drained! She gets rid of that with a *resurgence*. Malcolm misses the dragon with a full attack routine. Thorndyke marks the dragon as his quarry. The dragon rounds on Malcolm, and miraculously every single one of its flailing claws and wings and bits misses him!

Malcolm puts forth a mighty smackdown upon the dragon with his dragonbane greatsword. Annata lashes out with a *searing light* and scorches the dragon. Thorndyke cuts into it a little as well, and it is critically wounded.

The dragon waves its claws around in an attempt to signal its surrender in the silenced area. Malcolm smites it and it dies. Annata drops the *silence*. “I think it was trying to surrender!”

“Oh, I thought it was trying to cast a spell. I guess we’ll never know what it was really trying to do.” Malcolm has suddenly remembered that he’s Chaotic Neutral. The darkness lifts.

We search. It had a large hoard, to the effect of:

- 7030 gp
- 18445 sp
- 39800 cp
- Gems (5800 gp)
- 3 masterwork greatswords
- Masterwork halberd

- Mithral breastplate
- Adamantine battleaxe
- Magic greatsword - +1 lawful outsider bane
- Magic chainmail
- Magic staff

### *Bad Doggies!*

Annata heals everyone up. There's a tower adjoining the kennels, and our doughty heroes head up it to see if there's some minions what need wasting. The first thing we notice is that it smells like someone's been lighting their farts for a century or so in here. There are soot-stained walls and three Nessian warhounds (hell hounds on 'roids) here! They start baying furiously and attack.

Annata channels holy energy, and the hounds' pelts smoke as the light hits them. Malcolm lays about and great cleaves all three dogs with his frost brand greatsword. A hound bites each one of us. We don't want to waste too much in the way of resources on the fight, so we just chop back and forth for a while. Then one of them crits Annata! She channels holy energy again. Malcolm keeps cleaving, whittling them all down and finally felling the one by Thorndyke. Annata channels again and the one near her falls, and then she leaps over and kill-steals the one in front of Malcolm with her scimitar! She dances around and waves her scimitar victoriously.

### *General Grievous!*

We go up some stairs and kick down doors. To our great surprise, we find a huge ass zombified general guy with a warhammer! He steps forward and confronts Malcolm. They smite each other mightily. Annata channels and shoots her *light of lunia* rays at the general, wounding him badly. Malcolm hits him and pulls back, and Thorndyke rips him to bits as he steps out of the doorway. In the room, there's maps and troop tokens; he's been planning his war for a long time. He has:

- Magical mithril full plate
- Magical warhammer

- Magical belt
- Magical ring

We go up to the top of the tower, but there's only rotted siege engines there. We head down and check the basement of the tower. We find some mainly uninteresting rooms – barracks, a smithy, etc.

### *Denouement*

We all level to level 13! And have loads of cash, if we ever get to anywhere we can spend it. This is the second AP where we've been cash-starved for 10+ levels and then they give us bunches, right in time for the campaign to end...