

## Legends of Steel Session Summary 08/16/2009

### *Attendance*

*Chuck* edges towards the shredder. He explains, "I just found some old Yaggo's Second rumors that I need to get rid of."

*Chris* (Singh) points out, "Oh yeah, you don't want those to sit around where just anybody could find them. Say, here's one saying that some bastard is selling fish stew."

*Paul* (Oka and Kura) suddenly chirps out, "I can talk to birds! And I feed upon them too! Crunch crunch crunch!" The others try to not notice the feathers sticking out of the corner of his mouth.

*Bruce* (Baba Ali) should be reflecting upon the evils he has levied upon the Earth by creating so many Yierdo's Second rumors. But he isn't. He's lost in his own little fantasy world, complete with soundtrack. None of the others want to know what he thinks he's listening to.

*Ernest* (Manoj) asks, "What can I do to improve my defenses in this game? Aren't there some edges that let you gain armor because you're attractive? I mean, I'm not attractive now but I could be."

Paul reassures Ernest, "You should just give up that ambition right now. Nobody has ever become more attractive by getting older or more experienced."

Bruce contributes, "Except Bob Dylan! He gets better looking every year! I can't get enough of the cragginess!" Everyone suspects that they've just learned another tidbit about him that they would have been better off not knowing. Chris actually visibly shudders. Perhaps he just isn't that fond of cragginess.

Ernest bursts out with, "The real housewives of Lancaster County!" Nobody understands why he's making Amish references, but nobody really wants to hear his explanation either. The group's collective sanity has already taken far too many hits. Then he sees what Chris is doing and demands, "Pour me a shot of egg starter!" Chris briefly reflects that if he accedes he might not need to worry about Ernest saying anything else for the rest of the session.

Paul refocuses the discussion by explaining that he is taking the Brute Warrior edge: his character gets +2 damage and +2 toughness at the cost of -1 parry. He never worries about parrying anyway, so this is just an overall win for him.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Concept and Notes</i>
Oka	Paul	Tarzan-like native, accompanied by his panther Kura. He's so brutish!
Singh	Chris	Thuggee assassin
Manoj	Ernest	Sikh warrior, "Rabid Cub"
Kaitamo	Tim	Mongol archer who loves My Little Pony
Max Harkness	Matt	Escaped pleasure slave, along with his love slave Yanto
Baba Ali	Bruce	The bumbling Sufi monk

### *Welcome to Belsa*

After a few minutes of disorientation the characters realize that they have marched to within a mile of the gates of Belsa. *Singh* mourns, "A whole mile! Awww..."

A flight of three wyvern riders passes over the characters' heads, vectoring straight in on the city. *Oka* proclaims, "We must redouble our efforts to reach the city! They might be in trouble, and I am heroic!"

*Manoj* reminds the others, "The only folks who ride wyverns are from the city-state of Radu, whom we all know are inherently evil. Now, we all need to come up with new names before we reach the city. And Baba Ali needs to disguise himself as a woman."

*Baba Ali* complains, "Why do I always have to be the one who dresses up as a woman?"

*Manoj* points out, "You know you love it."

*Oka* is confused, "I don't remember ever asking you to disguise yourself as a woman."

*Baba Ali* offers, "But you didn't complain when I did."

Singh asks, “Have you been spending time with the former pleasure slave again?” He notes that Baba Ali doesn’t answer him right away.

### **Uncle Daiberto’s Place**

The characters head over to visit *Uncle Daiberto* while debating how long it will be before *Kaitamo* and his exiled native squeeze *Puna* found their own hillbilly Indian tribe. They tell him that all the river pirates are dead, and in return he gives them five kegs of distilled brandy-wine.

Uncle Daiberto is able to tell the characters that the three wyvern riders landed at the Common House, the center of government. The locals are worried, but they don’t know anything more.

### **Someone Wants to Talk to Us**

The characters proceed to drink themselves into a stupor on brandy-wine. Manoj challenges the others: the first to finish their keg of brandy-wine gets the fifth cask. Singh wins. He also manages to get himself in tight with a pack of dockworkers who loudly assure him, “You can call us anytime!” The others aren’t alert enough to question what Manoj might have done to earn their friendship.

Oka staggers in without any money and without his spear. He doesn’t have the faintest idea what happened to either of them.

Baba Ali wakes up, but he’s not sure where. He sees stone walls and smells something very bad. He crawls downslope, thinking that he’ll eventually reach the harbor. Two city guards confront him, asking if he is Baba Ali. He’s honestly not that sure himself, so he babbles something and breathes at the guards. They decide that drunken, badly-dressed vagrants all look alike and just let him go.

Oka wakes up under a tree. Kura is sleeping nearby. Two more city guards are prodding him with spears. He admits to being Oka, and to needing to relieve himself. The city guards haul him off for questioning.

Manoj is wandering through the market with the girlfriend he found last night. She’s looking for ingredients for breakfast. Two guards intercept him. They’re not impressed by the fact that he told his new girlfriend a wrong name. He growls at them. One guard backs off.

Manoj's new girlfriend rushes to attack the guards, swinging a basket of vegetables wildly. Recognizing that things are going to go badly, he pulls her away, tries to calm things around and decks the guards. Both of them collapse into unconsciousness. He pulls the girl away, as she seems to want to stab the unconscious guards. He thinks, "Man, this girl's a psycho! Score!"

A long distance away, Baba Ali falls off the end of a dock. Splash! Belsa harbor is exactly as filthy as he should have expected.

Another group of two guards tracks down Singh in his room at the inn. They instruct him to come with them. He persuades them to go out front while he dresses. After they leave the room he promptly flees through the back.

### **Singh and Baba Ali Are Reunited**

Singh heads down to the docks and finds Baba Ali by the smell. Baba Ali is quite happy to see him, at least once he's taken the opportunity to clear his stomach out. Twice. No, wait, three times. Singh suggests that the two of them should split up and look for the others. Baba Ali staggers down the dock road, looking for a burrito stand. Singh goes upwind.

Fresh from entertaining his new squeeze (over the table, with great enthusiasm), Manoj also locates Baba Ali. As with Singh, he does it by smell. He walks up behind the mystic as the fellow waits for his burrito. He asks, "Have you seen any of the others?" Baba Ali stares at him blearily. Manoj cuffs him and points out, "You knucklehead! Singh is standing right over there, waiting for you!" Baba Ali responds by clearing his stomach again.

### *Some Quality Time in the Halls of Justice*

Manoj asks both other characters, "Have either of you seen Oka? Or seen any signs that he's gone feral? I think we should search for him."

Their strategy is to ask everyone they can find on the street, "Have you seen a handsome naked man with a cougar walk by?"

The locals generally respond, "No, we haven't seen Ashton Kucher." Eventually, a pack of city guards shows up to interfere with the smooth functioning of their morning. The characters are escorted to the local jail, for questioning.

Manoj demands, “Who’s in charge here? We don’t have all day, we have pirates and Indians to kill!” One of the officers indicates that he is in charge. He ushers a man in the dress of a Brother of Yago in. Several more folk who look like local wealthy merchants accompany him. The characters strongly suspect that the officer isn’t actually the person in charge anymore.

The Brother of Yago crosses his dark-robed arms and glares down at the characters, “What have you done with my Sky-Stone?”

Manoj mocks him, “Ah, ha ha ha! Another of your comrades has taken it. And our comrade the archer is off shooting the remnants of your soldiers dead!”

The Brother of Yago shrieks, “Put these cretins in chains! I presume you have adequate torture facilities in this miserable burgh?”

Singh howls, “What does an untrustworthy hooker say?” And then he does his level best to strangle the Brother of Yago.

For some reason, Manoj takes a deep sniff in Baba Ali’s direction and squeals, “Smells like yeast rolls!” Baba Ali shudders.

The air fills with wyverns. Baba Ali dives for cover, but not swiftly enough to avoid a vicious claw cut. Manoj slams a wyvern on the skull, briefly stunning it. Oka proclaims, “Don’t worry! Animals won’t attack me!” A wyvern answers his confidence by attacking twice, leaving him horribly clawed.

*Brother Mardos* screams out, “Take them alive! Take them alive!” His two allies rush in and cast Lower Vigor at Baba Ali. The monk shakes off the spells.

Kura tears into the wyvern attacking Baba Ali. The wyvern screams reptilian agony to the skies as Kura’s fangs rip open its flanks. Hot blood sprays across the worn cobbles of the courtyard.

Manoj swings the *Sword of Hala* at the wyvern in front of him. The blade skitters across the creature’s bitter scales, leaving it unharmed. The wyvern rears back to howl, giving Singh an opportunity to stab it in the throat.

One of the wyverns flaps up and lands among the city elders, laying about right and left. City elders fall like ninepins. One desperate guard thrusts with his spear and draws blood from the creature’s flank. Kura attacks from the other flank, tearing through the creature’s wing and laying open its skull.

Oka transforms into the shape of a cat, roars, and pounces upon a wyvern, slaying it instantly. He roars out, "I am totally badass as a cat!"

On the other side of the courtyard a wounded wyvern slashes at Baba Ali, cutting him open like a package of hot dogs.

Brother Mardos retreats behind his acolytes and casts spells upon himself. One of the acolytes sends a *Bolt* at Singh, who spins backward smelling of burnt dog hair. The other shoots his wad at Manoj, who evades the attack and decapitates the third wyvern. Baba Ali is sprayed with wyvern blood. The others are amazed at how much this improves his smell.

A panicked guard rushes past Kura, who lazily reaches out a claw and severs the man's throat. The guard drops, gushing blood.

An acolyte launches a *Fear* burst onto the party, prompting a series of Guts checks. Singh, Oka and Kura all flee for the hills as Manoj thinks about how much this all resembles *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle*.

Manoj tries to push his way past the acolytes, but they stop him cold. He screams his frustration to the heavens. Brother Mardos turns and runs. Manoj runs after him, his blade grim and his face dark.

Oka pounces upon one of the acolytes, gripping the man's head in his forepaws and tearing away his intestines with powerful kicks of his rear claws. The acolyte's gurgling cries are short. Oka rushes after Manoj, swiftly catching up with him and Brother Mardos, clawing through the cultist's spine. Brother Mardos staggers and swings in counterattack with his blade. Oka collapses, resuming his natural form. Manoj leaps over Oka's fallen form, slashing through Mardos' neck and dropping him.

Baba Ali realizes that the Belsa city militiamen up on the walls around the courtyard are firing crossbow bolts down at him. He takes cover underneath one of the dead wyverns.

The surviving acolyte casts *Fear* again, scattering most of the Belsa militia and leaving Singh with some additional lasting mental problems to match those he already possesses. Plus he almost throws up a little bit in his mouth. Singh cuts the acolyte down.

### **Patching Wounds and Looting the Dead**

While Baba Ali stitches up Oka, the two wounded elders and himself, Manoj loots the fallen followers of Yar and presents the severed head of Brother Mardos to the city elders. One elder gasps, “You have doomed us all!”

Manoj explains to them, “You’re sure that aligning yourself with these guys against the Witch Queen is a good idea? She has personally appeared to me and indicated that she will bring her wrath upon anyone who interferes with me.” He prods at one of the dead wyverns, finding that only one of them is actually fully dead. He fixes this problem directly.

Manoj prods at the one captured acolyte, “I recommend that you ask this man what his evil plan was. I trust that you have adequate torture facilities here?”

“You’re representatives of the Witch-Queen?”

“We’re more like independent talent who gave her the old Star-Stone these guys were looking for so hard.”

### **Enter the Witch Queen**

Suddenly the air ripples with squirrels. A portal to the Realm of the Witch Queen appears in the courtyard and the dead-eyed *Messenger* steps out.

Manoj introduces the Messenger to the elders, “May I present the Messenger of the Witch Queen.”

The elders gape.

Manoj continues, “I believe these fellows wish to sign on with your program, as they’re now on the outs with the Yarites.” He indicates all the dead wyverns.

The Messenger comments, “I believe that the city will now be destroyed. There is nothing I can do. Anyone who wishes to plead for sanctuary in my mistress’ realm will be heard. I shall leave now. Enjoy your lives!” She steps back into the portal.

Oka waves after her, “Thank you, I will!”

Manoj cuffs him, “Quiet, adults are talking!”

The head elder is desperate, “We must have a council meeting! We must draft proclamations! We must ask the King for help!”

Manoj volunteers, “We’ll sign up for that task.”

The elder is amazed.

Manoj continues, “You’ll need to give us some horses and supplies. We’ll come back with the King’s Men or a wagon-load of lube to make your surrender more comfortable.”

The elder offers, “Actually, we’ll give you a boat.”

Manoj asks, “Is there water between here and the King’s Court?”

The elder answers, “Yes, both it and Belsa are on the coast.”

Singh is confused by this latest exchange. Manoj explains, “These guys are as dumb as the pirates and the tribesmen, I just wanted to make sure they weren’t giving us a boat to cross the desert with.”

Singh agrees, “Good thinking.”

### *We Don’t Want to go to the Council Meeting*

The characters realize that the city elders are heading to a council meeting to discuss their increasingly bleak options. They decide that they don’t want to go, so Singh breaks out the last keg of brandywine. The characters (and Manoj’s surprisingly obsessive new girlfriend) all get themselves nice and drunk.

In the end, the characters are very happy with their decision, even though they suspect that Manoj’s girlfriend murdered a whore who had looked at him wrong. Manoj doesn’t seem to worry about the bloodstains when he goes back home with her. After that the others debate on how likely it is that the storyteller who tells about the exploits of the Belsa City Militia will be talking about him tomorrow.

The elders don’t finish their deliberations until early in the morning. The *Elder Bekka* approaches the characters, “We have a problem. I understand that you are skilled and utterly devoid of morals.”

Baba Ali disagrees, “On the contrary, some of us have very strong senses of morality.”

Oka offers, “I believe that you are devoid of morals because you wear clothes and live in a city.”

Elder Bekka replies, “I am a fat, sweaty, balding white man. You don’t want to see me wearing a loincloth.”

Oka answers him, “You are someone’s ideal of beauty.”

Baba Ali is impressed, “That’s quite deep. Perhaps the elder would appreciate it if I were to tell some parables.”

Manoj quiets the monk, “Hush, now! Let the Elder speak.”

Elder Bekka continues, “Belsa has always been in a delicate situation, but things have become worse in the last few years. There are those who are tired of paying tribute to the Kingdom to pay for their campaigns into the Sikkar Territories and to guard against the barbarians. The Baron is also afraid of losing face and asking for help.”

Manoj interrupts, “Sounds like you’re a bunch of scared motherfuckers all the way up the chain of command. What do you need us for?”

Elder Bekka answers, “I represent a faction who yearns for a more independent Belsa.”

Manoj’s response is brief, “Let’s be frank here. I just don’t see any evidence of that happening.”

Elder Bekka answers, “I would like to simply reinforce the city against threats that could be brought by Radu, and which will eventually help in our plans to secede from Tiros. To finish the scenario, we would like to have Tiros fight Radu and take us entirely out of the picture. No matter what the contents of the letter say we want you to inspire the King in Tiros to attack Radu directly, rather than just garrisoning troops here. And if he sends troops, they need to be mercenaries who may be more amenable to our plans.”

Manoj is harsh in his response to the Elder, sending him packing. He notes in particular that taking Belsa out of the picture really seems to be the one thing that everyone can count on. It just doesn’t seem like it will happen in the specific manner Elder Bekka is hoping for. The Elder’s insistence upon wanting to turn the characters over to Radu doesn’t help his case. Manoj asks why he shouldn’t simply turn the Elder and his spineless associates over to the Baron. Elder Bekka explains that the Baron wouldn’t believe him, which Manoj accepts. Then he sends the Elder packing.

### **Manoj Talks to His Girlfriend**

After the Elder leaves, Manoj asks his apparently nameless girlfriend, “What do you do for a living?”

She answers, "I am your wife."

"Yes, but how about before that?"

"Before you there was nothing."

Oka offers, "What she's saying is that she didn't exist before the Witch Queen created her to spy on you."

Manoj moans, "Oh, that's just great."

### **The Pleas and Letters Arrive**

A couple of hours later another delegation shows up bearing a packet of papers for the characters to bring to the King in Tيروس. The leader of the delegation offers that one of the city's fastest ships is waiting for them. Manoj points out, "We're going to be attacked by wyverns, so I want a couple of ballista mounted on the ship. Also, we need to be able to make the ship fireproof."

The delegation leader seems rather taken aback, "But... but that will take hours."

Baba Ali starts to calculate, "Six hundred miles at a typical speed of three to four knots means about 125 hours of travel time... We can afford the time."

Singh tells the leader, "Do it, or I will inflict the monk's pedantry upon you."

The delegation leader heads off, promising to make the arrangements.

### *The End of the Session*

Everyone gains three experience points. Chuck promises that there will be a big battle next time, and then Ernest's Pathfinder game about two sessions out. Ernest refrains from writing any checks he's not going to be able to cash.