

Reavers on the Seas of Fate - Session Summary 01/16/2011

In the wake of a tsunami hitting Riddleport, the heroes have been recruited by Salvadora Beckett to investigate the deaths of several townsfolk and some gendarmes by an invisible monster. We are trying to kill the six Keepers that summoned the Lurker at the Threshold to prevent it from killing them itself and gaining their power. Our heroes are:

- *Wogan*, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick)
- *Tommy Blacktoes*, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue (Kevin)
- *Sindawe H'kilata Narr*, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris)
- *Ref "Serpent" Jorensen*, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake *Saluthra* (Paul)

With us are:

- *Hatshepsut*, high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common (NPC)
- *Salvadora Beckett*, the half-orc member of the God Squad (NPC)

Since Tommy is sick with a weird plague and is incapacitated in the Gold Goblin, Kevin plays Salvadora Beckett for the session.

Under the Junk

At the end of last session, we were in the trash-filled tunnels in the Boneyard that make up the lair of Keeper Hiram Crooge. We had just found out that Keeper Crooge is in fact the serial killer known as the Rotgut Ripper. We continue exploring the trash-tunnels by the light of the *light* spell that Wogan cast on Sindawe's head.

Salvadora looks around and finds tracks that she thinks are Hiram Crooge's. Serpent looks at the tracks too, but is unable to tell much besides that Crooge is very big. Serpent also finds a bunch of skeletons, mostly of large rats but at least one human skeleton. He thinks that this is remains left by the ochre jelly we killed. We move on. It looks like the passage is blocked in this direction by burned timbers and junk, so we double back and go down a different passage.

Saluthra the snake is looking quite bad and is now developing boils in addition to the mold that started growing on her last session. Wogan and Serpent stop to treat her, with Salvadora assisting. We manage to give her some help (she gets +4 on her next disease save).

We find a place where part of the tunnel's side has collapsed, revealing a room. In the room we find an old sarcophagus with some crumbled old bones in it. The collapse and looting of the tomb seems to have happened recently. Salvadora decides to sneak off in order to try to catch Crooge unawares. Although she is very stealthy, she sees no one.

Hit and Run

Moving into the next room, we see big pools of mud. We look around for tracks to see if anything lives here. Serpent sees some slithery tracks as if something perhaps lives in the mud pools. Salvadora in the meantime checks out the north passageway.

Salvadora sees a big hulking creature that is probably Hiram Crooge move from concealment down the passageway. She quickly pops off two bowshots at him but he dodges them both. Crooge pulls out a big spiked morningstar and brandishes it, revealing his inhuman fanged maw and pupilless eyes. He scares Salvadora so badly she turns and runs from him. "It's the Ripper!" she cries. Sindawe bravely and stupidly runs down the passage toward the Ripper (aka Crooge).

Serpent goes to Salvadora to try to calm her and protect her from mud monsters while Hatshepsut runs to help Sindawe.

Sindawe goes through into the next room. A large tide pool dominates the room, it's churning with stinking garbage. Wogan follows him and lights up a sunrod to look around. Sindawe says, "I don't see him. Everybody pick a corner and start looking."

Hiram Crooge suddenly comes looming out of the trash that makes up the walls right behind Wogan and brings down a huge spiked morningstar on the priest! The murderer takes him completely out in one hit. Wogan collapses into a heap. We see him clearly for the first time and are astonished to see that Hiram Crooge, the Rotgut Ripper, is actually a huge hulking bugbear!

Sindawe runs toward Crooge, dodges past his morningstar, and grabs him in a Nut Alley Crusher hold. Salvadora takes advantage of the hold and shoots an arrow into Crooge, enhancing it with bane. Serpent runs toward the combat.

Hatshepsut makes a leaping attack at Crooge's neck, hurting him and causing him to bleed uncontrollably. Crooge tries to belt Sindawe with his morningstar but misses. Sindawe responds by hitting him in the face. Salvadora shoots Crooge in the back and Serpent rages and hits him with a staff. Hatshepsut leans down and administers some healing magic to Wogan, bringing him back to the land of the living.

Hiram Crooge croons, "My next victim..." and tries to drool on Sindawe's face, shaking Sindawe's resolve, and dragging him towards the mud pits. Sindawe and Serpent continue whaling on him.

Salvadora moves behind Crooge and crouches behind him so he will stumble, and Hatshepsut rushes him to push him over. She leaps and gives him a massive kick and he falls over the inquisitor into the mud. The disturbance in the mud stirs up two slurping angry muck elementals. The elementals pull Crooge under the surface.

After a short but tense pause, Serpent spots Crooge crawling out of the far end of the pool of mud with the elementals on his tail. Serpent points it out to Salvadora who shoots an arrow at him and calls out in her best Voice of Authority, "Hiram Crooge, stay where you are! You are under arrest!" Her Voice of Authority is very good, and causes him to feel fear. This doesn't stop him from crawling off. The elementals halt at the edge of the mud. All of us chase after him, but everybody but Serpent loses track of him as he melts into the darkness of the cave complex. Serpent shouts, "He's right there!" but is too slow to keep up with the group.

Sindawe puts on a burst of speed and runs past to block Crooge's path. He sees a fork in the tunnel beyond. One branch of the tunnel has a big grate in it. He runs down the other passage. Salvadora follows him. Serpent runs after them calling out, "He went to the left!"

The elementals that refused to follow Crooge surge out of the mud area to attack Serpent and Hatshepsut. Hatshepsut punches one of the monsters and takes acid damage from contacting it. Serpent flees from the oozes around him, using his magical elven boots to escape. Wogan turns and blasts the ooze attacking Hatshepsut with his musket,

destroying it utterly. Hatshepsut goes after the other ooze, taking acid damage for her trouble, and then getting smacked by the ooze elemental.

Sindawe spots Crooge and follows him into an ooze vortex cavern. The cavern is mostly full of water, but it is thick, foamy, and filled with brown sediment. The water pulses up and down as if it is breathing. He thinks Crooge headed south, and he heads after him.

Salvadora follows into the ooze vortex room. She tries to make the turn and immediately slips and slides directly into the ooze. Two more ooze elementals arise from the muck around her. The two new elementals attack Salvadora but she avoids their stinking embrace.

Crooge makes disturbing serial killer comments to Sindawe and shakes him again. Sindawe tries to knee him but fails. Crooge runs again but Sindawe stops to help Salvadora out of the goop. Serpent comes into the ooze room and also helps Salvadora out.

Wogan shoots the ooze elemental attacking Hatshepsut and finishes it off. She heads into the ooze room and helps fish Salvadora out as we all retreat from the ooze and hurriedly try to track Crooge down.

Wogan is unwilling and unable to get through the narrow, slick walkway in the ooze area. He stays back and examines a woman's corpse that he finds near the ooze pool. Saluthra stays with him. The woman's body is covered with runny green sores that smell like compost and her wrists and ankles are chafed. She appears to have died from a piercing weapon to the back no more than a day or two ago.

Seek and Destroy

We come to a T-intersection and check for tracks. Serpent thinks Crooge went right, so we go right. At the next intersection, Serpent checks for tracks again and we go the way he indicates. A stagnant pool fills most of the next cavern, and bones of various humanoids litter the shores of the pool.

At this point Sindawe decides we've lost him for the time being. Sindawe and Hatshepsut go back to get Wogan while Serpent and Salvadora continue to search for Crooge.

Serpent and Salvadora spot a squared-off tunnel with some kind of writing carved into it. Salvadora gets the idea that these carvings were done recently by something with claws. The scratchings seem to be some kind of Urgathoa cult writings. As Serpent and Salvadora pass the threshold they are targeted by a sonic explosion. Serpent takes the full brunt of it and is stunned by the explosion. The sound alarms Wogan and the two monks, who are inching along the side of the big ooze pool some way back.

Serpent and Salvadora don't hesitate, but press onward. The next room seems to be a sewer junction. Muddy water and bits of refuse come out of pipes in the wall. As we circle around the pool, a huge blob of gibbering mouths and eyes with multiple thrashing tongues comes out of the pool: a gibbering moulder! Serpent and Salvadora manage to resist the maddening gibbering and Salvadora fires an arrow at it, shooting wide.

The moulder moves onto both Salvadora and Serpent and begins biting at them. It bites Serpent once and Salvadora three times, and engulfs Salvadora. Its jaws lock onto her. Serpent starts to beat the thing with his staff while screaming for the others.

Wogan, Sindawe, and Hatshepsut hear the gibbering from ahead and run toward the moulder fight. Saluthra travels with them.

Salvadora gets sucked fully into the moulder's bulk and it begins to drain her blood, suckling at her wounds as it squeezes her with its fleshy body. She is unable to escape and is beginning to lose consciousness. Serpent thumps the moulder again as it spits acid into his eyes. Serpent wipes the spittle from his eyes as he notes that the ground is starting to get soft beneath him.

Sindawe runs up. Ignoring the gibbering of the monster, he grabs Salvadora and (using an Infamy Point) hauls her bodily out of the mass of seething mouths and eyes. She gets her shoulder wrenched but is out of immediate danger of death.

The moulder bites Serpent twice but he manages to resist being sucked into its love pump. Wogan shoots the beast right between two of its eyes. Salvadora casts healing magic on herself and Hatshepsut puts some protection magic on her.

Serpent and Sindawe stand and pummel the moulder, which is now bleeding pus-like fluid. The moulder manages to get a good hold on Serpent and begins to suck his blood.

Wogan shoots the mouther between two more eyes and Hatshepsut flips over the group to attack but misses. Salvadora casts a *divine favor*, enhancing Serpent's combat abilities, and Serpent frantically slams the mouther twice more, killing it.

The Bone Collector

At this point we are hurt, some of us have wounds that can't heal, we're almost completely out of spells, abilities, and any kind of healing magic, several of us are suffering from diseases that sap our abilities, and we have no clue where the enemy is. Morale is low. Serpent starts to eat his belt. The other characters demand pieces of the belt.

Salvadora, meanwhile, begins to get sick. Small mouths and eyes sprout on her joints. She conceals this from the rest of the group, as some amount of dementia begins to hit her as well.

Then we walk into the Rotgut Ripper's lair. Around a crude altar surrounded by disgusting carvings, there are body parts of women and half-skinned women hanging on hooks. The altar has offerings of gold, weapons, and other treasure on it. The total treasure on the altar includes 170 gp, 2 gold rings (400 gp each), a necklace (200 gp), masterwork bastard sword, masterwork chain mail. They look antique and dusty. Wogan surmises that they were looted from the collapsed crypt a ways back. Looking around for serial killers, we see muddy bloody tracks heading south.

We go down a slimy hall pocked with pits that have sharp rocks set around their rims. Baskets with lotion in them sit by each pit. The room stinks of sickness and death. Slimy sheets of goo hanging throughout the cavern obscure our vision. Wogan calls out, "Anyone here who needs rescue?"

A weak voice calls, "Help! Who's there?"

We try to clear out some of the slime and Wogan checks out the pit. In the pit is a man with big crusty warts the size of raspberries. He appears quite sick.

Wogan calls, "Did you see a bugbear go by here?"

"Yes, it's Hiram Crooge, he's crazy."

Salvadora giggles and says, "Hey, you're ugly!"

The rest of us look at Salvadora in shock.

"That's not helping," says Sindawe.

Wogan thinks it's too dangerous to bring him with us, but Sindawe thinks maybe Crooge will kill him instead of us, so he helps the guy out of the pit.

The victim tells us his name is Rastifus, and that he has heard other victims in here. Salvadora claims that she hears them now. Something is clearly wrong with her.

In one of the other pits we see a woman with little eyeballs growing on her spine. She is huddled into a ball and nonresponsive, but her little eyes peer at us. Salvadora suddenly freaks out and shoots the woman in the back. The woman is shocked out of her comatose state and begins wriggling around.

“She looked at me cross-eyed,” says Salvadora, and titters. Wogan casts *detect magic* but is unable to determine if Salvadora is enchanted.

As we progress to the next pit where a man's skin is running like melted wax, Sindawe spots Hiram Crooge coming out from behind a sheet of slime right behind Salvadora. He is unable to react in time, but it turns out to be OK because Crooge's weapon catches on some slime and Salvadora leaps out of the way just in time.

Salvadora says, “You made the voices come!” and turns to attack Crooge with her sword but misses. Crooge slips away.

Salvadora casts *detect invisibility* but still can't see him. He suddenly pops out to attack Wogan but Wogan takes it on the armor. He tries to dodge away and hide again, but Serpent leaps forward and strikes him solidly with a double-handed staff blow. “The goddess will prevail,” whispers Crooge.

Sindawe, Hatshepsut, and Salvadora rush in to attack the killer but miss.

Crooge slips from between us once again, hiding amidst the sheets of slime hanging down in ribbons from the ceiling. We spread out to search. Sindawe spots Crooge running away and goes after him. He goes into another abattoir room where a dozen more carved up women are arranged in disturbing poses all along the walls. One of them appears to be at least twelve feet tall, and all flesh has been stripped off her legs. She is sitting on a throne made from two of the dead women's corpses.

Sindawe delivers one last blow to Crooge, beating him down to the ground. As he falls he reaches out to the giant Urgathoa corpse and says, “My love...” Sindawe snaps his neck.

The giant corpse's eyes snap open and glow orange.

Sindawe tries to bluff the corpse, “There's some invaders out in the halls. We should go kill them. Go Robadug?” The corpse seems to buy it.

Wogan charges into the abattoir room after Sindawe. The corpse's torso begins pouring out entrails that form into a giant tentacle. It casts *animate dead*, and the eyes of the other dozen women's corpses in the room snap open and glow orange as well. “Eeeeeeee!” notes Wogan at this development. Then Hyrum Crooge sits back up and flails at Sindawe, who backs off cautiously.

Salvadora and Hatshepsut rush in and take in the horrific scene. Salvadora snaps off a shot at the big one but misses. Serpent comes to join the party and they form a line in the door of the room.

The zombies lurch forward to surround the party, all hideously desecrated naked women with the skin flayed from their lower halves resembling the dark goddess Urgathoa. The huge corpse summons a giant black scythe. Salvadora tries to get back to the party but gets slammed hard by a zombie.

Serpent draws his silver scimitar and slices Crooge's head off. This doesn't actually put him down, though. Sindawe finishes him off with a kick.

The zombies press forward but do no damage. The big corpse's tentacle of entrails drags it forward. She casts a spell on Sindawe which holds him in place. Hatshepsut takes out one of the zombies threatening Sindawe and Serpent takes out the other. Salvadora casts *protection from evil* on herself and Wogan icicle bursts a zombie.

The daughter of Urgathoa tries to paralyze Hatshepsut but fails. Hatshepsut responds by beating one zombie down and wounding another. There is some commotion from back the way we came, some kind of deep rumbling far back in the caves.

Salvadora smacks a zombie with a long sword. Serpent misses but Sindawe takes out a wounded one.

The daughter of Urgathoa slimes forward and swings the crackling black scythe. It misses, but two of its zombie minions slam Serpent and one slams Salvadora.

Serpent's sword gets in the way of one of Wogan's icicle blasts and he drops his silver scimitar as it freezes over. The other characters continue to take out zombies, but there are still half a dozen left.

The daughter of Urgathoa attacks with scythe and tail, hitting Sindawe and Hatshepsut and wounding them with its dark energy. Luckily they are both immune to the diseases of Urgathoa.

Hatshepsut hits the daughter hard. Salvadora goes into a battle rage and hits the daughter two-handed with a long sword. Serpent orders Saluthra to attack and she crushes a zombie. Serpent backs away from the zombies and manages to recover his scimitar. Sindawe takes down another zombie and then hits the daughter of Urgathoa.

In an unprecedented show of bravery, Wogan moves to attack the zombies with his trident, despite the fact that he has no effective weapon against them, and he has a current strength of 5 due to disease. Unsurprisingly, he does no damage and then gets chewed on by zombies.

The daughter of Urgathoa hits Hatshepsut, Sindawe, and Salvadora with its scythe and tentacles. Hatshepsut responds by hitting it twice, bloodying it.

Salvadora hits the daughter with rage. And a sword. Then Sindawe hits it three times. Serpent badly wounds a zombie attacking Wogan. Wogan backs off and icicles the daughter.

The daughter of Urgathoa delivers a massive scythe blow to Sindawe.

Serpent and Saluthra put down two more zombies, leaving only one. Sindawe misses the daughter of Urgathoa. Wogan throws his trident at the daughter, hitting but doing only 1 point of damage due to his diseased weakness.

The daughter of Urgathoa delivers a last scythe blow to Sindawe and the Mwangi falls bleeding. The Daughter also hits Salvadora, taking her out too. Only Hatshepsut is still standing in melee with her, and she delivers the last blow to the daughter and it is finally destroyed. The last remaining zombie collapses as the foul beast does. Wogan and Serpent rush in to help their fallen comrades; Wogan uses the two last charges from his healing wand to get the two mobile.

The monstrous grumbling behind us fades away. Later we find out that apparently the Lurker had been burrowing down behind us into the garbage hole and had collapsed the entrance; luckily we had already found some other ways out.

It's The End Of The World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)

We loot Crooge's corpse and find his treasure stash, including several masterwork items and a few magic items, including a periapt that makes you immune to disease and a wand of *gentle repose* that he used frequently for his demented work. We also find two potions of *remove disease*, which are much needed. Wogan, starting to show signs of the green mold disease, drinks one of the two down. "Hey man, you have to keep your cleric healthy!" he declares.

We take some time getting out of the tunnels, and also getting the three diseased people out of the pits and out with us. One's skin is flowing and dripping off him like candle wax and the other has yellow pustules that slowly move across his body leaving angry red tracks. Salvadora, still sick herself, says that it's not safe to take the three plague-ridden people into Riddleport and says she'll stay out in the Boneyard with them and asks the rest of the group to tell the gendarmes to come help her, but urges us to go take out the last Keeper, Keeper Crove, in Crove Asylum before it's too late. "Go take that dirtbag down!"

We agree grimly, but as we are beat to shit we decide that we desperately need healing before going to the asylum. We plan to go back to the Gold Goblin to retrieve Tommy, feed him the other potion to cure his green-slime disease, and head to the bordello-temple of the House of the Silken Veil to get additional healing and aid.