

Reavers on the Seas of Fate - Session Summary 01/30/2011

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. The heroes are trying to kill the last Keeper now, Keeper Crove. Keeper Crove runs an asylum on the ridge above Riddleport. 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 is:

- *Hatshepsut*, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common (NPC)

The Stink

At the end of last session, we had finished off Keeper Hiram Crooge, who turned out to be the serial killer known as the Rotgut Ripper, but we were all badly damaged, diseased, and out of resources. Leaving the ill Salvadora Beckett to guard some other plague victims on the outskirts of town, we first head back into the city instead of going straight after Keeper Crove.

The Green Goblin

Our first stop is the Gold Goblin. The goblin statue out front, which is actually brass, has been badly tarnished by the tsunami and flooding and is now partly green. Hans and Beyar, the Gold Goblin's bouncers, are guarding the front door and turning away homeless refugees and other undesirables.

Hans and Beyar take a look at our bedraggled and bloody forms, covered with waste and diseased mud. They also get a whiff of our scent and start gagging. “Where the hell have you guys been?” “You smell like a turd wrapped in burning hair and coated in centipede venom!”

Sindawe shrugs. “Slime monster. We're going upstairs. Ignore any screaming.”

As we get into the main casino, we see the employees still cleaning the place and trying to get the last traces of water out. Saul has set up at one table though, and is actually running some games for patrons of the Goblin. We wave and head for the stairs.

On the way, we run into the Goblin's beastmaster, Bojask. Wogan hands Bojask a bag of dire rat babies he got out of Crooge's place. “I thought you might want these.”

Bojask cautiously takes the wiggling bag and looks inside. When he see the dire rats, his face lights up, “Oh good, I won't have to deal with that soggy bear carcass in the basement after all!” He sprints off down the stairs toward the Octagon. We give each other doubt-filled looks.

We go in to see Tommy. He smells like compost, is covered in wet, slimy green growths, and can barely move from his disease. We are relieved to see that he's not crawling on the ceiling and shooting tendrils at us. Wogan gives him a *remove disease* potion, and all the green goo sloughs off. He is still weak from his ordeal, but is no longer ill.

Wogan and Sindawe then check on the progress of the lad Durt and his army of moppets, who were asked to haul books back to the Goblin from the lair of Keeper Hyve. They have managed not to get shot as looters and have brought back huge stacks of pilfered books. Sindawe gives them forty pieces of gold as a reward.

Wogan strips down, burns his clothes, and bathes. This sounds like a good idea to Sindawe as well. Serpent refuses to burn all his clothes - “This mantle is pure girallon hide! And my hide armor is magical!” But all the characters bathe to get the stink of the Boneyard off of them. Serpent uses *create water* and bathes in cold water, because as an Ulfen from the frozen north he's convinced that hot water gives off dangerous fumes that sap a man's strength and make him sick.

Iesha the scullery maid comes into the bathroom where Sindawe is bathing. She pours in some hot water to top off his bath. "You've been doing some dangerous things." She seems very turned on.

"Aren't you with Bojask?" he asks.

Iesha takes a look under the water. "He's not half the man that you are. Isn't there anything I can... Do for you?"

Sindawe tries to let her down gently. She doesn't take it too well, and flings the jug at his head, screaming "You Mwangi bastard!" Sindawe bats the metal pitcher away and Iesha storms out.

As she leaves, Sindawe shouts, "Hey guys, watch out for some crazy bitch coming into your bath room and telling you you're twice the man Bojask is!" We're not sure if Bojask hears this.

Tainted Love

After bathing, we decide to seek healing and respite at the House of the Silken Veil, Riddleport's local brothel/temple of Calistria, goddess of lust and revenge.

Sindawe goes to get Hatshepsut from her room. He can feel heat coming from her door, and when she opens the door, he sees that she has installed magical heat rocks in her room. She is also topless. Sindawe tells her we are ready to go, and she is amused by his discomfort at her state of undress. "I forgot your people are so prudish about this sort of thing." Back in her native land, this was considered perfectly acceptable.

On the way out, we pass back through the casino where Saul is running a poker game for some degenerate gamblers who can't go a day without gambling regardless of natural disasters. "Where you guys heading?"

Wogan answers, "The Silken Veil."

The gamblers guffaw. "Don't let any natural disasters keep you from getting yours!"

"And then afterwards we're going to the asylum."

Bojask asks, "You finally having that halfling committed?"

Tommy responds with a string of threats and profanity at Bojask, threatening to slit him from balls to breathing-hole. Bojask is taken aback and the rest of us are impressed.

On the way through the flood-ravaged city, there are checkpoints set up to stop people from bringing more goods out than they can carry to prevent looting. Squads of gendarmes smack refugees with musket butts to separate them from their household goods. “Ah, law and order,” muses Sindawe approvingly. He gets the attention of the commanding sergeant and hands him a note from Salvadora Beckett. “This is from a fellow gendarme that needs healing and reinforcements.” “Yeah, who doesn’t nowadays...” He reads the note anyway, and frowns in concern. The gendarme orders his subordinates to go off to Maskyr's Island and get Salvadora some reinforcements.

We get to the Silken Veil. The normally welcoming establishment is closed for regular business and has squads of goons standing around. We ask to speak to the head priestess/madame, Shorafa Pamodae, and Lavender Lil. A guard goes inside for a bit while the others eye us warily, then he comes back and invites us in. He also hands a lavender-scented letter to Tommy. Tommy pockets it for the moment.

Shorafa Pamodae lounges in her office. “Gentlemen, to what do I owe the pleasure?” She is a horned tiefling woman with huge assets. Her air of sensuality always leaves us somewhat off balance.

We all answer as one, “Healing, we need healing!”

“Healing magic is in great demand right now...” she says coquettishly.

Wogan and Sindawe give her a run-down of what we need. She brings in a chest of items. “This is all I can part with right now.” The chest has 3 scrolls of *restoration*, 8 potions of *cure light wounds*, and 1 wand of *cure light wounds*. Serpent asks if we can examine the goods, and we determine the wand is fully charged. She wants 5000 gp for the lot. “Healing magic is in great demand lately, what with the tidal wave and all.” We try to make a deal to trade some of our accumulated treasure. Apparently she has heard that we were seen carrying about a big chest of treasure lately, and is eager for a cut of it.

After we protest a while, she agrees to cut the price in half if we also agree to give her one favor each at some point in the future. “I can't promise that the favors won't be violent or... sexual,” she says, eating a berry and eyeing Wogan sensually.

“Or both!” Tommy offers. Wogan gulps.

We make the deal, giving her some of the treasure we're carrying, and have some other treasures picked up by courier.

Tommy reads the lavender-scented letter. It says, “Dear Tommy, I can't see you anymore. I've met someone else, and they're everything I could ever want. Sorry, and farewell. Lavender Lil.”

Tommy writes a letter back to her and asks a guard to deliver it. “This is unfortunate. This is something I'd rather hear face-to-face. I'm in the lobby.” The guard takes the letter but Tommy gets no response from Lil.

While the rest of us dicker with Shorafa, Tommy sneaks off to see Lavender Lil. He slips stealthily through a back passage and peeks into her room through the peephole to see her going down enthusiastically on another woman. The woman looks over and meets Tommy's eyes through the peephole. “Oh Tommy, why don't you come in and join us?”

Tommy is still pissed but decides to go in. He recognizes the woman, she was here in the lobby looking to join the brothel when he last visited a day ago.

The woman taunts the halfling, “You'll excuse Lil for not greeting you, she's otherwise occupied.” She caresses her breasts and spreads her legs wider to accommodate Lil's affections, and Tommy stares.

“Oh, you don't recognize me? Maybe if I looked more like this.” She changes form, growing horns and a tail, and Tommy recognizes the demon succubus Seyanna from the Riddleport Light. She grins cruelly and caresses Lil's hair as she pleases the demoness.

“I've been very impressed with you, Tommy.”

“For what? And can you get my girlfriend's face out of your twat please?”

“Oh you're no fun.” she pouts, but she draws Lil's face away from her crotch. Lil lies down submissively next to her, clinging to her leg. The succubus tells him, “Someone of your talents is of great interest to my mistress.”

“Your mistress,” Tommy repeats.

“I think you might have a bright future ahead of you. There is a certain queen of my kind that has a great affinity for assassins such as yourself. I would be willing to endow you with her blessing.”

“And?” Tommy asks.

“And what?”

“You'll take the enchantment off my girlfriend?”

“If you would accept my mistress's blessing, I would be happy to make her yours again. No one's hurt her. She's just been having a little fun.” She reaches down and fondles Lil obscenely, who wriggles and moans in response.

Tommy sighs, “Set up a meeting with your mistress.”

“It doesn't work that way?”

“How does it work?”

“Come over here and I'll bestow her blessing on you.”

“I've already got one.” Tommy opens his shirt and shows her the bullet scars from the pirate Black Dog's ghost.

“Ooh, you've been busy. But that's fine. Come over here. I feel confident that your agenda and my mistress' are well-aligned. Accept my dark blessing. You'll become stronger...”

“What does this blessing give me exactly?”

“Well, it will enhance you in a way of your choosing. And I'll be able to talk to you wherever you are.” She says in a patronizing tone, “Don't be grumpy, little Tommy. I don't want to interfere with what you've got going on here. I approve. In fact, I want to help.”

He walks over to her. “Do it.”

She smiles and reaches down to finger herself. “You won't be needing those pants.”

“Oh, it's one of those kind of blessings.” He takes off his pants and steps up to the succubus, who pulls him to her.

Seyanna makes sweet demonic love to Tommy, with Lavender Lil vigorously assisting. She whispers the name “Nocticula” in his ear as he climaxes. An odd pincer-shaped tattoo appears on his hip.

The succubus says, “I’m so drained after that. I need to feed on a little bit of energy from one of you mortals. Should I take it from you or from Lil?”

Tommy considers this seriously. He’s pretty sure “neither of us” isn’t an option. “Don’t worry, it won’t hurt, and you’ll be good as new in a couple days.” She licks her lips, showing her little fangs.

“I need my energy right now. Take it from her.”

The succubus chuckles and flips Lil over. Obviously trying to get a rise out of Tommy, the demoness grows some man-parts, and begins to take Lil from behind, draining some of her energy in a vigorous and unusual way. Lil cries out in ecstasy, and is left a little peaked after the experience. Seyanna tousles Tommy’s hair and says, “I’ll be seeing you, lover.” She sashays out the door into the rest of the whorehouse.

After Seyanna leaves, Lavender Lil comes back to her right mind. Tommy is worried about how she’s going to react. She remembers the whole experience, and she reacts somewhat unexpectedly by begging his forgiveness. “I’m so sorry, Tommy! She made me do those things!” She apologizes for the whole business, and thinks Tommy’s taking on a dark pact for her sake as a real sign of love. Tommy tells her, “I’ll fix this. I’ll fix this.” After they both calm down a little, she retrieves a packet of poison Tommy had asked her to procure for him. She kisses Tommy, who pulls back a little. He can still smell the scent of the succubus on her. He makes his excuses and leaves to rejoin the group.

To the Madhouse

We end up getting the items and some extra healing on the house from Shorafa; she finds our response to her erotic teasing very entertaining. Then we put our minds to our cover story for getting into Crove's asylum. We dress Wogan up in noble's clothes

and use disguise skills to make him seem diseased. Our story is that Wogan is Oleg Waldenkirsch, a nobleman with syphilis-induced madness, and we have been hired by his family to get him quietly and not entirely willingly committed to the asylum.

When we get to the asylum, the front door is unlocked and ajar. We open it cautiously, looking into a large room with stone floors and bare green-painted walls. Three figures lie on the floor, bound in straight jackets. When they see us they screech wordlessly and writhe.

One jacketed man tries to writhe toward Sindawe. Sindawe gives him a kick in the head, and we go to look around the room. Tommy checks the desk, but sees no bodies stuffed into it.

Sindawe checks a room to the north, and find a chair with straps, and a big blackboard in front of it. The lunatics continue to shriek and gibber.

BAM! The double doors to the east slam open and 4 asylum orderlies come out, carrying huge clubs wrapped in barbed wire. They have iron cages over their heads. They come straight for us with their clubs. One hits Wogan and two of them club Sindawe viciously.

Sindawe strikes one of the orderlies besetting him and Wogan responds by shooting the same orderly in the chest with his pistol. The orderly goes down. Hatshepsut and Tommy double-team a second one, also toppling him to the floor. Serpent slams orderly number three twice in the head with his staff, dazing him

The remaining orderlies swing at us but miss, and Sindawe uses his martial arts to badly wound one orderly. Hatshepsut flips over him, grabbing his head cage and snapping his neck. Tommy dives behind the remaining orderly and backstabs him, killing him instantly. The inmates hoot loudly.

Wogan takes the head cage off one of the orderlies and checks him for abnormalities. There is a scar on his head as if he's undergone a crude lobotomy. Wogan concludes that some sort of genius must have been operating on this man.

We decide to check the small office, and then stash the crazy people in there. One bites at Serpent and another rubs himself naughtily against the floor. Tommy checks the desk, finding a ledger and a treatment record book. It is difficult to decipher and gives us no clues.

We go into the main hall of the asylum. Two doors hang open. Sindawe moves to one door and a lunatic chained to the top of a stair landing screams at him. The other door leads to a similar stairwell with a similar crazy. Sindawe punches them out because their screams are getting on his nerves.

We look in another door and find a small foyer with valuable looking vases. We find a small leather ball that, when squeezed, reveals itself to be a beholder stress toy. Tommy pockets it cheerfully.

Serpent hears something from down the stairs. It sounds like some kind of wailing. Before we descend, Sindawe goes to the front door of the asylum. They are big and iron, and have a locking bar that can be thrown, but will require opening a lock to open again. Sindawe uses the bar, thinking that this might hold off the Lurker at the Threshold for a little while.

The Case of Waldur Crove

We decide to have Tommy sneak down and take a look at what's happening down the stairs. Maniacal laughter, cries of pain, and other sounds assail him, and he sees two gibbering lunatics chained at the bottom of the stairs. We all go down the stairs and avoid the lunatics. They lead onto a long, green-tiled hall leading east and west.

Sindawe opens some iron doors on the western end of the hall into a big room that looks like a grisly torture chamber with a rack, iron maiden, and flaming braziers. A strange small blue man with white hair and white bulging eyes is elbows-deep in a dead man, playing with his guts. Two lunatics are here in dangling cages. The lunatics hoot at us but the creature doesn't look up. "Keep it down!" the blue gnomish-looking derro shouts, "I'm trying to see what he ate!"

We sneak into the room. The derro is so intent on his autopsy that he doesn't notice our entry. Tommy sneaks up behind the derro and studies him, readying his instant death attack. The derro has no time to make a single sound as Tommy grabs his hair and slits his throat. We do not weep for him.

We examine the rest of the room and find that the derro has been performing horrible skin-grafting experiments on the inmates, perhaps working himself up to Human Centipede level. He also had a neat little poisoned repeating crossbow that Tommy grabs.

We go into the next room, which seems to be the derro's bedroom. He has a chest full of grisly bone trophies carved with weird derro runes. It seems to be worthless, so we leave it alone. Sindawe kicks over his mattress, revealing a big knot of bedbugs, which causes him and Serpent to dance around nervously. We also find the derro's filthy bathroom, and leave that alone too.

We backtrack and go into an open room on the east end of the hall. It has a door in its south wall left hanging invitingly open. Several lunatics with shivs made from broken furniture charge forward and mob Sindawe, but he easily avoids their attacks. Sindawe delivers a numbing blow to an inmate, causing him to drop his shiv and fall over unconscious. Sindawe quickly disarms a second inmate.

Seeing that Sindawe seems to have this in hand, the rest of us sit back and start betting on how long it will take Sindawe to take them out. Tommy muddies the issue by experimentally shooting the derro's crossbow at the unarmed inmate and taking him down.

Sindawe takes the last two inmates out instantly, knocking them unconscious instead of killing them. Serpent refuses to pay out on his bet to Wogan since Tommy interfered. We debate the fine points of combat betting for a while.

Wogan thinks something feels wrong in the room. He casts *detect magic* and takes a look around. He believes this area has been consecrated by evil forces and warded versus invisibility. We agree that if the Lurker at the Threshold was after you, an *invisibility purge* seems to be a reasonable precaution. We go through the next door into a hallway. We see what appears to be a secret door, but has been left hanging open.

We go down the secret corridor. We hear a noise as something bangs against an iron door far away. We guess it's the Lurker at the front door.

In the next room we come into Keeper Crove's office. The Keeper is a balding older man with stringy hair and a work apron full of various cutting tools. He has a variety of occult papers laid out on a table in front of him. "Fools, this is the wrong time to meddle. The creature approaches. But I know how to trap it!"

We don't really believe this. "How?"

“I can bind it. And we can learn the secrets of the universe from it. Together!”

We try to placate him while moving into position to kill him.

Sindawe says, “Yes, tell me more...” and in Aklo he says, “We gotta kill this guy.”

Unfortunately, Crove speaks Aklo as well. “Kill them!” he yells.

A gibbering demonic creature bursts forth from a door at his command. There are also pig-sized spiders hiding on the ceiling that begin spitting webs at us. Wogan gets coated in entangling webs.

Wogan fires his gun at Crove. The bullet gets deflected by the keeper's magical shield, but still manages to clip him. Sindawe punches the demon. Its rubbery flesh reverberates at his punch. Serpent runs toward Crove and whacks him with his staff.

“Fool!!!!” Crove cries. Crove blows a handful of ground mica at the group, creating a blinding cloud. We blink furiously and manage to avoid being blinded by the *glitterdust*.

Tommy runs up to Crove and stabs him. Hatshepsut runs to help Sindawe with the demon. She tears a chunk out of it with her hand. The demon belches a stinking cloud at us. Wogan and Tommy are nauseated by the cloud. The spiders spray webs at Serpent and entangle him.

Sindawe hits the dretch demon with his spear. It takes some stabbing damage but is immune to the electricity. Serpent stumbles forward, covered in webs, and clubs Crove again with his staff.

Crove says, “Meddlers, I will kill you and the secrets of the universe will be mine!” He takes a step and suddenly disappears from sight.

Tommy spots Crove through an open door; he’s all the way across the ensorcelled room in the passageway leading south out of it. Apparently Crove teleported there. Tommy yells, “He's in the room with the brawling inmates!” and heads towards Crove.

Hatshepsut continues attacking the demon. The demon attempts to use its eldritch fear powers on Sindawe but Sindawe resists. Sindawe seems to remember that his cold iron elf-puncher knuckles are good against demons. He punches it with his cold iron knuckles and takes it out. It disappears in a puff of smoke.

The spiders throw webs all over Hatshepsut. Wogan uses his rum to dissolve the webs covering him and gets out of them. Serpent spends his round getting out of the webs that cover him as well.

Tommy takes a Hail Mary shot at the fleeing Crove some hundred plus feet distant and, amazingly, hits him right in the back between two ribs. The critical hit gives the Keeper a sucking chest wound! The poison on the bolts courses through Crove's body, weakening him further. He can only stagger away down the passageway.

Hatshepsut rips the web off of her, and avoids the further webs that the spiders shoot at her. Everyone chases after the Keeper, but he has a long lead on us. Crove opens a door at the end of the passage and staggers off to the west.

As Sindawe rounds the corner, he sees Crove opening a big iron door. Sindawe tries to make it through the door before it closes. He hears Crove shout, "You must obey me. Destroy the interlopers!" Sindawe spots some sort of creature coming out of a subterranean sinkhole towards Crove. It is a horrible monstrosity, all tentacles and mouths. Its tentacles are covered with orange cat-like eyes.

Wogan spots a black tar-like substance flowing down the stairwell as he crosses the unhallowed room. "Oh shit," he calls, "The Lurker is here!" He keeps running.

Sindawe rushes up to Crove, sees the crossbow bolt protruding from his back, and shoves it through his body with a palm strike, killing him. An unearthly howl comes from up the stairs as the Keeper breathes his last.

In the puddle of black oil-like goo coming down the stairs, a big round elephantine footprint appears. Serpent, following closely after Wogan, spots it and realizes the Lurker is headed right toward him.

Hatshepsut, running into the room with Sindawe, attacks the tentacle monster. The tentacle monster attacks her back and strikes her with its coils. She shrieks as her body begins to melt, writhe, and boil. Sindawe grabs her and drags her out of the room. Her bones sag in his arms.

Serpent realizes he is directly between the two tentacle monsters and reverses direction and runs away from the hallways and to the other side of the central room. Hatshepsut focuses and manages to partially recover her form.

Serpent witnesses the dead body of an inmate being used to paint a bloody spiral onto the wall by the invisible Lurker. He screams, “It's right here! It's doing an arts-and-crafts project!”

Sindawe, dragging Hatshepsut, yells, “Throw it some chalk!”

The smaller tentacle beast hits Sindawe as he retreats, but he manages to resist turning into a puddle of goo.

Wogan bravely shrieks, “Eeeek!” and shoots the beast with his musket. Wogan, Sindawe, and Hatshepsut run for it. Wogan is quickly in the rear.

The Lurker reaches the entryway to the unhallowed room and stops to pick up a couple of the unconscious inmates and shake them like an English nanny. One regains consciousness at this and begins screaming hideously. Serpent moves back and buffs his strength, while Sindawe, Hatshepsut, and Wogan try to get out from between the two monsters.

The Lurker crushes the inmates and thumps forward into the central room. It is now in the *invisibility purge*, and we see it. The Lurker has six stumpy legs, at least four fanged mouths, half a dozen or so tentacles, and its strangely human-like face perched on the top has long white hair. It reaches out and grabs the fleeing Wogan with a tentacle. Mouths open along the length of the tentacle and begin draining his blood.

Sindawe rushes forward and grabs hold of Wogan, ripping him out of the grip of the Lurker. Sindawe, Wogan, and Hatshepsut withdraw away from the monster.

The lurker lashes about, destroying the walls. Masonry is falling and tiles are popping out. Most of the group hauls ass, but Serpent is too curious. Serpent stays behind to see what happens when the two tentacle beasts meet.

As the two tentacle beasts meet, they let out a horrible shrieking. Serpent's mind breaks. He doesn't remember what happens next.

The group escapes from the asylum. As they get outside, they smell gas. They realize the lurker must have ruptured a gas line. Given that there are open flames in the asylum, it seems wise to run. Serpent comes fleeing out of the building, blubbering and gibbering. The asylum explodes in a Michael Bay-esque display of pyrotechnics and a shrieking of immolated inmates echoes down from the hills.

Hatshepsut screams and doubles over. Her form is changing again and she seems to be turning into a tentacle monster. Wogan takes a look at her but is not sure how to help her.

“Kill me...” she says. Tommy gets out his sword to oblige.

Wogan says, “Wait!” He tries casting one of the party's scrolls of *restoration*. It works! The corrupting influence is purged from her system. Hatshepsut's life is saved, and we rejoice. We hightail it from the burning ruins of the asylum.

That night at the Gold Goblin we sleep the sleep of the dead. Serpent recovers from his craziness at some point and wakes up feeling fine, but can't remember what happened at the asylum the night before. Odd forms haunt his dreams.

Monkey Love

Some gendarmes show up at the Gold Goblin the next day looking for us. We peer out the windows and consider flight from prosecution. Hans and Beyar loyally deny that the characters live there. The gendarme says that Salvadora Beckett wants to see us. “Hmm, maybe we should tell them we’re here.” Wogan and Tommy go out to talk to the gendarmes.

Sindawe goes to get Hatshepsut. He knocks on her door and she answers, topless again in the artificial heat. She looks drawn and pale after her experience.

“Spar with me,” she tells him.

“Well, we have to go see Salvadora. But I guess so.” He walks into her chambers; she has a practice ring laid out in the floor.

Sindawe and Hatshepsut spar. She circles and tries some kind of snake-like hypnotism on him but he doesn't fall for her trick and punches her viciously. She tags him with a serpent strike, causing him to weaken. They continue to spar, dealing powerful blows with their martial arts to each other, until finally Sindawe knocks her unconscious with a solid set of strikes. Sindawe wakes her up gently and she looks up and whispers to him in Aklo, “Make love to me.”

Sindawe calls down to the others, “Go on without us. We're... uh, sparring!” He thinks briefly about the warning the voodoo Mama Watanna gave him, that he was hers and must forgo other women to keep her favor. Then he looks down at the powerful but

oddly vulnerable priestess of a lost civilization and kisses her. They make athletic love within the sparring circle.

Secret Headquarters!

The rest of us go to see Salvadora in the Overlord's citadel on Maskyr Island. She has quarters and an office in an area that is roped off and marked with skull and crossbones "danger" signs. Apparently that's where the clandestine branch of the gendarmerie that scuttlebutt refers to as "the God Squad" has its headquarters. She is still reasonably ill with a horrible disease that gives her gibbering mouther-like symptoms of little eyes and mouths appearing on her joints and spine. Wogan casts *remove disease* on her and cures her of the taint of Urgathoa. Salvadora thanks us for taking care of the cultists and tells us the city of Riddleport owes us a favor. But we can never tell anyone what happened. Some citizens saw us fleeing the asylum, but she says "Don't worry," she has spread a story that we were hired to burn the asylum down as part of some extortion racket. There are no witnesses willing to testify against us and so we're safe from prosecution.

"Uh, thanks?" we offer somewhat dubiously.

Suddenly a gendarme comes breezing into Salvadora's office. "Hey, Salvadora, you need to hear this!" We look at the man and recognize him with a shock – it's Beltias Kreun, who we know as the elusive criminal the Splithog Pauper! He grins at us.

Next Time

What the heck is going on now? When will the danger let up? When will we be able to sell our hard earned loot! Why do all these women want our precious bodily fluids? We want answers!