

## Reavers on the Seas of Fate - Session Summary 2010/02/21

When we last saw our faithful band of anti-heroes, they had just cleared out the Serpent Temple and left the cleanup to the gendarmes, taking off home with their beautiful new desk. They remain 3rd level for now. 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 with a giant constrictor snake (Paul)
- **Melako "Ox" Chaalu**, the ranseur-stabbin' ex-slave barbarian (Bruce, sadly absent)

### *Ox Smash!*

*Melako "Ox" Chaalu* is off spying on a warehouse holding people being held by Boss Croat's gang, who are about to be sold into slavery to the orcish crew of the pirate ship *Bloody Vengeance*. The party was supposed to meet him there to beat up the slavers but they are more than a little fatigued and damaged from the Temple of the Serpent Men. *Tommy* and *Sindawe* decide to go find Ox and let him know that the mission is being called off.

When Tommy and Sindawe find Ox he is disguised as a mountainous beggar and huddling against a dilapidated building. Tommy strikes his best tough-guy pose and tells Ox, "The mission has been aborted."

"But what about the slaves?" Ox asks with a hurt-puppy expression.

"I know you were a slave once, but you're not anymore. Get over it." Tommy spends several minutes trying to convince Ox to leave but is unable to sway the oversized lug. Sindawe simply stands there and bleeds from his many wounds. "Fine. How many of them are there?"

Ox tells Tommy there are only four slavers holed up in a nearby building guarding the slaves. Tommy sneaks off to take a look and finds that there are four half-

orcs in the building, but notes with concern that one of the half-orcs is Jasker Gant, a heavily-muscled notorious gang member, one of Boss Croat's capps. Tommy comes back to the others and tells them what he saw, and also tells them that there is no way he is going in there. Tommy argues with Ox for a while more but finally just walks off in disgust.



**JASKER GANT**

Sindawe continues trying to convince Ox for a while. Finally Sindawe gives up and decides to “help” Ox. Sindawe walks up and knocks on the door to the building. From the other side of the door, a voice in Orcish whispers, “What's the password?” Sindawe whispers back in Orcish, “You'd better keep that door locked tight and barricaded, there's

some guys in the area looking to steal your slaves!” The voice answers back, “Uhh... OK.”

Sindawe turns to Ox, “Do you speak Orcish?” Ox shakes his head. Sindawe says, “Well, they said they know you've been hanging around the neighborhood and they're waiting to ambush you. I think we should go.”

Ox looks skeptical. “You got all that from 'ook-ook'?”

Ox decides to make the decision simple. He screams with powerful rage and charges the door, easily breaking through and smashing the door guard to the floor. The surprised half-orc goons try to react, but within a moment Ox has charged Jasker Gant and pinned him to a crate with his ranseur. Jasker tries vainly to retaliate but is unable to pry himself off Ox's polearm. Sindawe follows Ox in, deflects a crossbow bolt with his hands, and delivers a crushing blow to the half-orc door guard as he staggers to his feet.

Jasker swats Ox's ranseur away and begins beating Ox with his hands, but Sindawe manages to slip behind and gets a rabbit punch in to Jasker's neck. The two

archers shoot at the melee, but their shafts don't find any good bits. Ox shouts "I'm going to kill you all!" and presses the attack, stabbing Jasker Gant in the heart. A huge spray of blood gushes out of Jasker Gant's body and the life leaves his eyes.

The door guard screams and immediately runs out the door into the dark rain-slick streets of Riddleport. Sindawe chases the runner out and throws a javelin, but unfortunately the half-orc ducks into an alley and Sindawe's javelin strikes nothing but wood. The half-orc gets away to tell the tale.

In the meantime, screams are issuing from the building as Ox continues massacring the half-orcs. The floors run red with blood and gore. In a few seconds all but one of the half-orcs are all dead. The last one tries to escape through a back door. Sindawe runs around the outside of the warehouse to head him off, but is just treated to a bloody shower as Ox impales him from behind just as he emerges. Ox grabs one of Sindawe's javelins and sticks Jasker Gant's head on a pike as a warning to the next 40 generations of slavers.

As Ox finally begins to calm from his murderous rage, Sindawe sees to the slaves. "We need to get you all out of here quickly. There's a boat waiting for you to escape." Sindawe and Ox manage to keep the slaves fairly calm and gets them to the trawler that had been previously arranged by Ox's favorite temple prostitute, Selene. Sindawe mentally speculates on the possibility that the "rescue ship" might actually be slavers themselves, but wisely keeps this speculation from Ox.

When the pair stumbles back to the Gold Goblin, it is plainly obvious that they have been in a fight from the sheer amount of gore on their armor. Ox's insane girlfriend Iesha, turned on by blood and violence, immediately offers to run a bath for Ox. Ox heads off for some personal bathing and sexual soothing while Sindawe goes to tell the boss what happened.

The PCs gain an Infamy Point to represent the spreading word of their brutal murder of a rival crime lord's capp.

### *Saul's New Plan*

Sindawe has the unenviable task of explaining to their boss *Saul Vancaskerkin* back at the Gold Goblin inn and casino that the party may have just pissed off another

crimelord. When Sindawe tells Saul that Ox has killed Boss Croat's capp, his eyes bug out. “You know, I think it may be a good time for you guys to get out of town. I've been trying to negotiate an alliance with a pirate ship called the *Wandering Dagger*. I've dealt with *Captain Clap* before and he's a pretty good sort for a pirate. He has a special mission and needs some good men. It'll get you out of town for a few weeks and it will help us cement a good relationship with a pirate captain, always a good thing in Riddleport. Oh, and take your best clothes.”

Sindawe wants to head to the docks immediately, despite the fact it is the middle of the night. Wogan and Serpent insist on waiting until the next morning. In the meantime each character pursues a few errands.

Serpent goes drinking with Gold Goblin bouncers *Hans* and *Beyar* to find out more about Saul's background. Saul was an established crimelord in Riddleport at one time, but he ran into problems when one of his sons, Orik, got into some trouble involving a love triangle, the tiefling Lavender Lil and an alchemist. The alchemist ended up dead and Orik left town. The alchemist, as it turns out, was Clegg Zincher's brother, and this started a war between Zincher and Saul. Zincher bribed the overlord to arrest Saul on trumped-up charges, but when the gendarmes went to arrest him Saul tried to escape justice by faking his own death. He burned his own house to the ground with his wife still in it. His wife was presumed dead, but Saul ended up getting caught anyway. He lost his hand and his accumulated fortune to the Overlord's justice. Saul spent some time away from Riddleport after that, but came back with enough money to buy the Gold Goblin.

Sindawe also needs a bath and intimidates the unreliable croupier Lixy Parmenter into assisting him.

Tommy Blacktoes takes off to spend one more night with his favorite prostitute, Lavender Lil (this costs him 20 gp). The next morning he plans to take a detour to pick up a masterwork weapon he had commissioned and buy a spider-climb potion.

Wogan gets one of the Goblin employees to pick up some gunpowder and supplies to bring to the *Wandering Dagger* the next morning.

## *The Wandering Dagger*

The next morning the party is awoken by gendarmes pounding on the door of the Gold Goblin. They sneak out the back and head towards the docks. On the way they run into the *Splithog Pauper*, disguised as a bum and lurking in an alley. Serpent reacts with exasperation, “Why are you still in Riddleport?” The Pauper shrugs, “I like it here. Anyway, Boss Croat's men are all over town looking to murder you guys.” The party shrugs. “Yeah, we figured as much.”

On the way out of the alley, Sindawe promises, “The next time we see that guy, we are going to kill him.”

When the party reaches the docks, they easily find the Wandering Dagger. Surprisingly, they find that Captain Clap was apparently not expecting them. When they explain that they were sent by Saul to help on the ship, the captain eyes them suspiciously, “You don't look like you got the sand for the kind of work we do.” The characters lamely try to sell themselves but are finally rescued when a familiar face appears on the ship. “I'll vouch for em, captain!” cries *Thalios Dondrel, son of Mordekai*. The party had previously rescued Thalios from a ghost ship, and he quickly talks the captain into accepting the party on board. This happens just in time for the party to get on board the ship before the gendarmes arrive on the docks. The *Dagger* gets underway immediately.

That evening, Captain Clap calls for the party to come to his cabin. Thalios Dondrel shows the party in to where the Captain is sitting in a tattered leather chair. Captain Clap is a grizzled man with a beard, a missing eye, and many scars. The captain quizzes the party on what they think of the ship, the crew, and Chelaxians. The party generally agrees that Chelaxians are devil-worshipping scum and are best if they are lightly armed and loaded down with jewels. “Good,” the captain says, “because our



**CAPTAIN CLAP**

mission is to raid a Chelish manor house on Staufendorf Island. We've got a plan. We have a small pleasure boat stashed in a secret cove off the Chelaxian coast. Some men like yourselves who aren't obviously pirates will take the yacht to the island, go ashore, gain access to the manor house, and prepare it for the rest of us to raid. The *Dagger* will have to use a circuitous route because there's some Chelish navy patrols in the area, so we'll join you in a few days. We have some information on a family member named *Helmut Staufen* who is currently in a sanitarium in Sargava, and you're going to pretend to be friends of his. We have a letter from him to his family that you can use.”

Sindawe reads the letter aloud to the rest of the party. It's loaded with sentimental well-wishing to Helmut's family. He mentions his father *Valdric Staufen*, his brothers *Erich* and *Jack*, and his sister *Rosaline*.

The party takes some time to consider their secret identities. Serpent is disappointed when the captain nixes his idea to sail into a Chelaxian town and buy some elaborate disguises. Eventually it is decided that they will wear their “nice” clothes and claim to be a Sargavan mercenary company.

### *We Can't Stop Here. This Is Bat Country.*

Several days later, the party picks up their pleasure yacht from the cove where the pirates had stashed it. The yacht has been previously looted, but it is in good shape. Thalios Dondrel and the infiltrators should friendly insults at each other in farewell. They take off towards Staufendorf. At first, the weather is clear and sunny, but it soon turns rough. Wogan takes command of the ship and manages to see the ship through the storm. Tommy and Sindawe acquit themselves well as sailors, but Serpent suffers a bad case of seasickness.

Sailing along under the steel grey sky after the storm, Sindawe suddenly spots a dragon-like monster flying silently up behind the ship. “Everyone wake up! Dragon!” Sindawe shouts. The monster has a dragon-like shape but no forelimbs, and it is coming in fast. Serpent quickly casts *shillelagh* on his staff and waits for the creature to approach. Wogan uses his wand of monster summoning to summon an eagle to attack the beast, and follows with a bless spell on the party. “It's not a dragon, it's a wyvern.” Serpent growls. “They're nasty, stupid beasts.”

The wyvern quickly kills the summoned eagle and closes in on the character's boat. Sindawe leaps forward and slams the wyvern in the head, rattling it and causing it to miss him with its sting. Wogan summons a glowing trident of Gozreh to stab into the creature, and then fires his pistol into the air, missing. Tommy slings a stone at the beast and it takes a blow to the head again, causing it to falter in the air for a few seconds before regaining control and rounding for another pass at the boat. As Tommy hits the wyvern with yet another stone, it dives straight at him and whips its stinger into his small body. The wyvern's virulent poison rips through Tommy's veins, causing massive amounts of damage to his organs. Wogan tosses Tommy an antitoxin and Tommy guzzles it down, but the poison has already done a lot of damage to his system. Serpent and Sindawe both rush over to bludgeon the wyvern viciously several times, and each receive slashes from its sharp wings in return. Wogan gets grabbed in the wyvern's mouth, but manages to club it in the head anyway with the butt of his pistol. As the wyvern takes off with Wogan in its mouth, Tommy manages to hit it once more with a stone, and Sindawe finishes it off with a javelin. The wyvern spirals into the sea.

With some effort Wogan manages to pry himself out of the jaws of the wyvern and swims back to the boat. "The poison in that thing would be nice to have," muses Sindawe. Sindawe ties a rope to the mast and begins trying to fish the wyvern out of the drink. Before he can drag the wyvern close enough, suddenly a gargantuan shadow appears below the surface of the water, coming in fast. "Cut the rope!" everyone shouts in unison. Sindawe quickly draws a dagger and cuts the rope, and the party is treated to the sight of a 60 foot shark breaking the surface and taking the wyvern in a single gulp. Luckily the shark seems to have no interest in the party's yacht.

### *Staufendorf*

At last the party reaches Staufendorf. They land at the docks just outside the village at the bottom of a bluff. The manor house of the Staufen family is visible, crouching up on the cliff above the town. The party is greeted by the town guards. Sindawe tells the guards that they are friends of Helmut Staufen, and ask them to send a message to the manor house that they are here. In the meantime the party asks where they can get something to eat and heads off toward the local tavern. On the way there

they spot several crucified bodies strung up on Chelish crosses. “Having some trouble with the locals?” Sindawe asks. The guard answers, “Oh, they're just scofflaws. That one stole a loaf of bread and the Staufen family had him rightfully punished.” Serpent shudders at this demonstration of Chelish justice. When pressed with questions, the guards nervously look around and proclaim loudly, “Staufendorf is a great place to live, and full of honest, hard-working folk! It’s a great place to raise a family!”

As Wogan examines a large statue of Amros Staufen, the village's founder, Sindawe wanders into the small shop of a gnomish alchemist, *Jona the Mixer*, and proceeds to buy half her stock. Serpent and Wogan wander in and buy the rest of her stock, plunking down several hundred gold. Jona is ecstatic at this turn of events,

The party gets to the local tavern, the Brazen Apple. It has a large sign of a bronze apple, carved in pleasing relief. Sindawe notes to himself that when the town is sacked, he totally wants to take the sign. The tavern is run by a lovely couple named *Jachom* and *Salara*. Wogan immediately orders the strongest drink in the house, and Sindawe says “Make that three. And some food.”

Serpent says, “I suppose I ought to order something too.” The special of the day is giant spider legs, and the party finds them almost as good as crab. Serpent congratulates the innkeepers on using fresh local ingredients. While eating, the party asks questions about the Staufen family, but the innkeepers seem afraid to say anything critical about the family that rules them. “Staufendorf is a town of honest, hardworking folk! Did we mention it’s a great place to raise a family?” The party then falls into a long discussion about various taverns they've eaten at and the most expensive meal they've ever had. Eventually the guards show up.

“We hear you're here to visit the Staufens.”

“That's right.” says Sindawe. He notices the guards staring at Serpent's snake. “Don't worry,” he assures them. “The snake has been fed recently.”

The guards lead the party up the road toward the manor, past fields where farmers and their goats stand in the rain, staring suspiciously at the party. They pass a turnip cart full of wet turnips sitting just outside the manor, and take a moment to look at yet another “scofflaw” crucified nearby. A crow sits there munching on one of the man's eyes. Sindawe asks about the man but the guards are unable to reveal his specific crime.





### **STAUFEN MANOR**

The house itself is heavily fortified, more like a gargoye-encrusted gothic castle than a simple manor house. The guards pound on the gate, and a pale face peeks out from a peephole before letting the guards and the party through. Inside the walled courtyard the party sees several towers, a stable, a chapel, and the entrance to the inner courtyard. Several pale boys loiter around the stable, and several hooded manor guards lurk in the shadows. The party is led through the 2 inch thick gates to the inner courtyard, where the gothic architecture looms over them. Serpent takes particular note of the well in the inner courtyard. Wogan takes notice of the everburning torches on the south wall. “Those are valuable, I’d best get them when we burn this place to the ground!” he thinks. The guards escort the party up the stairs to the main building. They are greeted at the door by a dark-haired young man wearing a dramatic red and black cloak. He shows the party into a torchlit room where a large version of the Staufen family's black boar crest looms over everything.

There the man introduces himself as *Erich Staufen*, and greets each of the party in turn and shakes their hands. All except for Tommy, who is assumed to be the party's

servant; Halflings are considered mainly a slave race in Cheliah. He staggers under the other three PCs' bags, especially as he is still feeling the after-effects of the wyvern's poison keenly. "How do you like our manor? It was built by the grateful peasantry



**ERICH STAUFEN**

centuries ago to repay my family for our bold and benevolent guidance." The party trades pleasantries with Erich for a little while before he announces that dinner is in one hour. Erich offers to show the party to guest rooms where they can freshen up. Along the way Erich points out some of the architectural features of "his" castle. Serpent catches the sound of men laughing and gambling from behind one door; he marks this as the likely location of the manor's barracks. They are shown into guest quarters and left to ready themselves for dinner.

### *Conclusion*

The session ends with the party getting ready for dinner in the guest rooms of Staufen Manor, and expressing their doubts whether they and thirty pirates can take this place, "men on the inside" or not.