

## REAYERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 02/27/2011

The heroes are on Devil's Elbow, an island infested with tentacle-dogs that infect people with zombie-tongues. 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)
- *Hatshepsut*, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common and her cobra *Naja* (NPC)
- *Samaritha*, the book-readin' serpentfolk-posing-as-half-elf Cyphermage who's sweet on Serpent (NPC)

Also in tow, we have:

- *Eli*, the twelve year old Cyphermage prodigy (NPC)
- *Fustinius the Balding*, as advertised a fussy, balding Cyphermage (NPC)

### *In The Drink Again*

After the Witchlight tower we were in fell off a cliff and into the sea, we discovered that seawater kills the tentacle-dogs that were so effectively attacking us. As we cling to a rocky beach pounded by the surf, we try to figure out if we have any spare waterskins to take some seawater with us.

Wogan reminds us, "The tide is coming in - we should get to higher ground soon."

Then we spot some heads peering out over the top of the cliff above. They appear to be humans, and they call down to us. After confirming that we are alive and not tongue zombies, they lower a rope to us. Tommy and Sindawe clamber up the rope. At the top are four men, they appear to be standard Riddleport issue dudes.

"I can't believe you guys lived through that."

"We're just that good. So who are you guys with?"

“We work for Clegg Zincher.”

Tommy is immediately tempted to throw all four of them off the cliff. Clegg Zincher, Riddleport crime lord, has sworn to kill Tommy’s tiefling hooker girlfriend Lavender Lil, among other points of conflict with us.

The rest of us all arrange to climb or be carried up the bluff. Festinius the Balding demands to be taken up first as he “has seniority” in the Cypher Lodge. Rather than argue, Serpent helps Festinius up and goes back down to help Samaritha.

After climbing about eighty feet back up with Samaritha, Serpent's hand slips on the water-slick rope and he loses his grip. Samaritha utters arcane words of power and the rope writhes like a snake and grabs on to Serpent. Serpent lashes out and reaches for Samaritha’s hand. Unfortunately his she slips out of his grasp again and falls.

Wogan is being hoisted up on a second rope below and tries to swing over and grab Samaritha. He misses her but she grabs onto him, bruising him in the process. She clings to him for life and the rest of the characters pull them both up.

### *Chez Zincher*

At the top of the cliff, we start figuring out how to get shelter and warmth. Zincher's men invite us back to their camp since it’s getting dark and we head off to the east along a trail on the top ridge of the island. The camp is well-lit by a large bonfire and several continual flame torches. The camp is surrounded by a rough wooden palisade.

“Wow. How long have you been here?” asks Sindawe.

“Less than a week,” answer Zincher's men.

Serpent looks at the palisade, “You must have spent all your time building that.”

“You aren't kidding! Zincher made it a priority after we started getting attacked by tongue zombies.”

The camp guards call out a challenge as we approach. “What do you eat?”

The call-back is, “Nothing but pussy!” The gate opens amidst much chortling. We roll our eyes. They don’t let us in yet. While the guards go back to talk to their boss about their new visitors, Serpent and Wogan debate whether it’s possible to survive on that diet.

The guards return and let us in, but only after we surrender our weapons. The camp guards are accompanied by Akron Erix, a monk that we had met back at the crime lord meeting some time ago.

Sindawe asks, "There's something I was supposed to remember about that guy. Were we supposed to kill him?"

Serpent answers, "We were supposed to NOT kill him."

"Oh. You expect me to remember all the people we're not supposed to kill?"

"It's a pretty short list."

As we go in, Tommy starts to show signs of sickness and fever. Wogan notices and tries to help him, but we try to conceal it from Zincher's men. We don't want them to know if he's infected with tongue zombie disease.

As we pass through the tent, we notice a wooden pen of large flightless birds. Serpent identifies them as axe-beaks, and claims that you can make axes out of their beaks.

We are led into the largest and most opulent tent. Inside, we are met by Clegg Zincher.

"Look who it is, Saul's boys! What brings you here?"

"Independent contracting. We're looking for loot," says Sindawe.

"We're looking for pirate booty!" adds Wogan.

"The best kind of booty," allows Zincher.

We discuss our adventures so far. We find out that some of Zincher's men have also come down with the tongue zombie disease. Wogan offers to try to doctor them in exchange for letting us stay here for the night. We go to get settled in and agree to meet Zincher in an hour for dinner.

In the infirmary tent they have two moaning and feverish men strapped down to cots. Wogan examines Tommy and determines that his symptoms indeed match the zombie disease. Tommy nauseates himself by drinking a skin full of seawater in an attempt to kill whatever's afflicting him, but it doesn't seem to help his condition.

We get shown to two empty tents to put our stuff in. After an hour we go to dinner with Zincher, bringing along the Cyphermites. Akron Erix is ladling out some kind of stew. We banter with Zincher for a bit then get down to eating. Most of the dinner

conversation is about Riddleport politics. Eventually he shoos out the Cyphermites and talks to us alone.

“You guys have initiative. I like that. I know we’ve had our differences, but I’m not a man who holds a grudge.”

“Really?” says Tommy, giving Zincher the hairy eyeball. “Really?”

“Ayyyyy,” he responds eloquently.

Seems to me we gotta work together to get out of here. Especially if we want a payday out of this. What do you think about working for me on a trial basis?”

“What are you paying?” Sindawe asks.

“I can put you on the payroll or I can cut you in on the stuff we get here. Time will tell what it's worth but according to the dwarves, it should pay a pretty penny if we can get it back to Riddleport and smelt it down in the gas forges.”

Zincher tells us the metal is a copper-gold color with a red-pink tint to it, and generally has been found in the form of plaques with strange writing on them. Zincher is evasive about whether they’ve found any yet, but his men saw some of them in Roderick's Cove. Zincher's men aren't up to some of the tasks he wants done, so he wants us to do some of the more dangerous missions. We leave the specifics of the bargaining to Wogan, who seems unusually adept at it suddenly. We agree to work with Zincher for now, and we get our weapons back.

After strapping Tommy down to a cot in the infirmary tent with the two other afflicted men, Akron Erix invites the characters out for a smoke. Sindawe, Wogan, and Hatshepsut go smoke giant Korvosan cigars with Erix and talk martial arts with him. It is amiable but without much conversation.

## **Night Terrors**

Sindawe slips into the infirmary tent to sleep, wanting to be in the middle of the action if something happens. Sometime about midnight he is awoken by slurping noises. The two men strapped in the cots seem to have succumbed to the zombie disease and big tentacle tongues are lashing out of their mouths.

Sindawe immediately begins unstrapping Tommy. Tommy is feeling worse than before and has become weaker during the night. The zombies thrash against their bonds. After Tommy is released, Sindawe slams the tongue on one of the zombies and destroys it in a volcano of blood.

Meanwhile, the second zombie rips free from its bonds and tries to go for Sindawe but he dodges it and punches it in the sternum. Tommy digs a dagger into its eye but it doesn't seem to care. The zombie slams Sindawe, bruising him, but Tommy sticks his sword in at the base of the tongue and slices it in half lengthwise. The zombie falls lifeless.

Tommy slumps back down on his cot while Sindawe drags the bodies to the bonfire. The smell of burning human flesh and hair fills the air. He steals nineteen silver off one of the corpses. Sindawe is fatigued from his earlier exhaustion and so he falls asleep, but first he sets the young Cyphermage Eli to watch over Tommy. "If he does anything zombie-like, scream like a girl and run."

The boy sits silently and watches Tommy. Tommy quips, "Don't worry, I don't usually kill children." He then tries to sleep under the boy's baleful gaze.

At about 2 AM the gate guards start screaming. "They're coming!" All the player characters jump up and run out into the open, Serpent wearing nothing but his staff. Seven zombies are attacking the front gates. Tommy leaps up and runs out of the tent. Eli thinks that Tommy has become a zombie and splashes him with magically-summoned acid. Everyone else sees Tommy running out of the tent, gibbering madly and waving his arms while spraying goo about. "He's turned! Light him up!"

While we line up, the zombies clamber over the palisade wall. Tommy shoves a torch into one zombie. The smell of burning human flesh and hair fills the air. Serpent uses his staff to knock another zombie off the wall. Wogan shoots one, knocking the top of its skull off. It keeps coming.

Some of the zombies come over the wall. One of them slams Sindawe while another latches its bloated tongue onto Hatshepsut and starts draining her blood.

One of the guards tries to run. Akron Erix sweeps his legs out from under him and dumps him to the ground. "No running!" he says.

Hatshepsut rips the pulsing tongue out of the zombie attacking her. It falls like a marionette with its strings cut. Sindawe rips the tongue from another one. Akron Erix steps up and knocks the head off of one and all the way back over the palisade with his cold iron hammer.

One zombie sticks his head above the wall and Wogan blows it off with his musket.

Hatshepsut takes out the next one, serpent striking its tongue and spraying black bile everywhere. Tommy and Sindawe double-team another zombie, destroying it as well. Hatshepsut gets the last one. We suffer only minor wounds from the altercation.

We examine the zombies afterwards and discover that they were a mix of dead Riddleport thugs, gendarmes, and cyphermages. Zincher's men look at their fallen comrades and say, "Working together with the gendarmes? That's just unnatural!" They use gaff hooks to pull the corpses into the bonfire, not even touching them for fear of contracting the unnatural affliction.

### *Another Lighthouse*

In the morning, we take some time to heal and restore our weakened bodies. Wogan casts *remove disease* on Tommy and Tommy instantly recovers from the Void Death disease.

Zincher shows us the one piece of the metal he has recovered. He has it locked in a hidden trunk. It is a metal plaque the size of a plate. It has a big raised glyph on it, but one we don't recognize. Samaritha takes a look at it and decides it is from the same set of glyphs as the Cyphergate but she doesn't know what it means or signifies.

Zincher wants to find more of the plaques, or metal, or figure out if the metal is mined here. His men won't go to the lighthouse nearby because they believe it's haunted. We decide to head out to the lighthouse and see what there is to see.

As we walk, Tommy recalls a tale of the Devil's Elbow. The man who started the Witchlight colony here was an exiled Chelish merchant called Yaris Neraken. There was some kind of unpleasantness and Yaris hung himself from the lighthouse we are headed to. After he hung himself the colony failed and everyone dispersed.

As we approach the lighthouse we note that the walls are encrusted with salt and grime. It sits on the edge of a sheer seventy foot cliff to a rocky beach below.

We decide that we should go down to the beach to get some more seawater. Serpent notices a complete lack of animal activity around the lighthouse, and Saluthra becomes very agitated. Serpent thinks that this may indicate the tentacle dogs are nearby, and he believes they are to the east. We start running down the slope and then a fiery pain stabs into our glyph-marks on our bodies; now we're sure they are approaching.

We go ahead and get down to the beach, just as the tentacle dogs burst upon us. Serpent uses a wand to pop a *flame blade*. They charge at us and one of them bites Serpent on the elbow. Hatshepsut steps up to one of them and criticals it with a serpent strike, causing it to implode on itself and wink out of existence. The other dogs surge forward but don't manage to hit us.

Serpent, Wogan, Tommy, and Saluthra break for the water. Sindawe and Hatshepsut quickly follow, bobbing and weaving away from the jaws of the creatures. The seawater comes in and hits one of the creatures, instantly dissolving it. Tommy flings water at another, burning it like it's acid.

Sindawe grabs out a mug and fills it with saltwater as well. The wave recedes and the tentacle dogs rush forward, but the two monks evade them. Hatshepsut grapples one with her thighs. Serpent runs up to dump water on one of the dogs, but the water drains out of his helmet before he gets there, leaving him to turn an empty helmet upon the dog.

Then the water comes in, rushing over the paws of the silent tentacle beasts. Three of them dodge back, but the fourth is held firmly by Hatshepsut and gets dissolved by the water. We stay in the water, and the remaining three eventually run off.

We clamber back up to the lighthouse. The door has rotted away, and Wogan casts a *light* spell inside and we look in. Although the tower stands firm, the inside levels have rotted away. Sindawe looks around the outside, he sees a protrusion on the outside where Yaris might have hung himself.

As Wogan explores inside, he suddenly feels unnaturally cold. He continues to search the area. He feels a presence here which is not at rest, but the spirit is lying dormant at the moment.

We tie a rope to Tommy and have him explore around the side of the crumbling cliff. He reports back that he found some bones. We make a complicated line of ropes and people to lower him down so he can get them. Tommy picks his way down carefully to where some tangled undergrowth clings to the cliff where he finds an entire human skeleton. We assume this must be the body of Yaris Neraken. Tommy gathers the bones and hauls them back up. Clutched in one skeletal hand is a glowing sword. Intent on the sword, no one notices the old coin pouch the halfling has appropriated.

We keep the sword, a +1 cold iron longsword, and give the body a burial. Wogan gives a eulogy and we head back to the camp. On the way we run into Akron Erix leading a group of men sweeping the area in a search. Akron says they're tracking the tracks from where they found the strange metal plaque. Serpent looks around but is also unable to follow the tracks. Serpent suggests they search the area.

Everyone spreads out to look for clues. Tommy and Sindawe spot a narrow, hidden path that looks like it leads through a cut down the cliff. We begin to follow the path down the cliff.