

Reavers on the Seas of Fate - Session Summary 06/13/2010

The heroes are deep in a ruined castle called Viperwall, searching for the body of a lost idol. Our heroes are:

- Wogan, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick)
- Tommy Blacktoes, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue (Kevin, sadly absent)
- Sindawe H'kilata Narr, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris)
- Ref "Serpent" Jorensen, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul)
- Samaritha, the book-readin' half-elf Cypher mage who's sweet on Serpent (NPC)

Delving Into Viperwall

The heroes have just descended to the 4th level of Viperwall. At the bottom of the steps we come across a rubble-filled dead end and an armory. *Tommy* pokes at a section of collapsed rubble, but the rubble seems unstable and we avoid it.

Armory

In the armory carvings depict priests giving well-dressed men weapons. There are weapons and shields hanging from the walls. *Wogan* and *Serpent* use *detect magic* on the weapons and find that a falchion on the wall is magical. *Tommy* checks to make sure no traps will be triggered, and *Serpent* grabs the falchion, examining it and determining it is a +1 falchion. We grab the rest of the weapons and shields to sell later. *Tommy* thinks the weapons will sell for triple value to a collector of antiquities.

Coliseum

Sindawe opens the door to the next room. We see a high-ceilinged room with a floor of sand. Statues with animal heads hold up a 10-foot high walkway all around the edge of the room. *Wogan* grabs a chunk of rubble and throws it into the room but nothing happens to it. The 14 statues are a male and female of each of 7 animal heads. The 7

animals match the seven masks we found earlier (lion, crocodile, ram, jackal, hawk, ox, and snake).

As we examine the statues suddenly the door slams closed. A feeling of unease comes across us. Tommy and *Saluthra* (the most weak-willed members of our group) begin to tremble with fear. We hear the muffled sound of a gong from another room. We decide that the statues in the room might have something to do with the bronze animal masks so we all grab out animal masks and put them on, just in case. There is another gong. Serpent decides that a fight must be coming and prepares with a shillelagh spell on his staff.

Up from the sand come 5 demonic falchion-wielding creatures with red skin, long horns, and long purple tongues. Wogan has just enough time to cast *protection from evil* on Serpent to hedge out the summoned demons.

The crimson horrors charge, one goring *Saluthra* and one managing to fight through the protection to gore Serpent. *Saluthra* becomes frightened and retreats from the demons; slithering away into the corner.

Sindawe and Serpent double-team one of the demons, stunning and damaging it, but Serpent gets hit with a falchion for a nasty wound, and starts losing blood fast. Wogan wades bravely up toward the demons in order to heal Serpent. Wogan then *summons* a dog to fill in the front lines and keep Serpent from getting hit from both sides. The dog starts to harry one of the demons. The demon retaliates, almost cleaving the dog in two, but the dog manages to keep fighting.

Two of the horrors move to attack Wogan but *Samaritha* throws an *animate rope* at them, and they both get entangled. Tommy moves into the melee but misses. Serpent moves to protect *Samaritha*, hits one of the entangled ones twice, and it goes down, dissipating in a sulfurous smoke. Tommy stabs again and hits a demon, but his sword is nonmagical and does not hurt the horror. *Samaritha* telekinetically punches one of the horrors, then magic missiles the one fighting Serpent and Tommy. Serpent slams the other entangled foe twice.

Wogan uses a feather token and summons a leather whip to attack a demon. The whip grapples the demon and then pins it, rendering it nearly helpless.

Sindawe continues to work one of the horrors like a punching bag, but his strength was stolen by shadows earlier, so he is having trouble finishing the job. Serpent finishes it off.

Tommy's weapon is nonmagical, but he wades into the melee anyway, using flanking and sneak attacks to deliver several nasty slashes to the horrors. Tommy finishes off the second entangled demon, it turns into a pillar of sulfur but doesn't immediately crumble.

Wogan *storm bursts* the one demon that is still free and fighting, hampering it. Samaritha *telekinetic punches* it and Sindawe finishes it off with a neck snap. We kill the whip-entangled demon at our leisure.

After the demons are killed, the doors to the room open. Tommy and Sindawe climb to the upper level to investigate. There are frescoes showing men doing battle with beasts and demons. There is a second passageway heading east on the upper level. We all climb up to the upper level and go down the east passageway.

Mummification Room

The smell of brine comes from ahead. The next room has two stone slabs that looks like sacrificial altars. One is covered with ancient food and normal sacrifices, the other is covered with ancient blood. The walls depict the priests doing sacrifices. Tommy finds and opens a small box filled with bronze mummification tools. Wogan finds a magical coffer, 5"x10". Samaritha peers at it and tells him that the writing on it says "master of the beasts." Wogan studies and identifies the box. It produces animals, like a *bag of tricks*. Wogan pulls a weasel out of the box. He commands it to climb a wall and the weasel does so. Saluthra suddenly strikes out and eats the weasel, generating a cry of surprise from the group.

Mirror Altar

We go down steps into an antechamber with blue and green tiles. A curtain of shining glass beads is ahead. Wogan pulls another weasel and sends it across the tiles and through the curtain. We listen but hear no attacks or traps. We pass through into a domed

room. A large black altar of polished stone is here, and a purple cloth covers an object on the altar. Serpent asks Samaritha if that could be the idol we're after and she thinks it might be. Tommy checks the huge altar, he thinks it is capable of movement. Wogan takes the cloth off and sees a 1-foot by 2-foot mirror. The eyes of his reflection in the mirror flash, and he feels as if his mind and soul are being attacked. He quickly covers the mirror again. He tries to examine it with his magical sight and he thinks that someone is trapped in the mirror. Wogan has heard of *mirrors of soul trapping* which might trap the soul of anything who looks into it. He thinks that breaking the mirror might free the soul in it. Or it might trap it in a hell dimension. We decide not to break it and take the mirror with us.

We search around for secret doors. Sindawe steps on a blue tile behind the altar and the 30-ton altar swivels aside. Below the altar a set of stairs descends and twists.

We're Not In Kansas Any More

At the bottom of the rough-hewn stairs is a cavernous room with one huge jade wall. There is a huge 20 foot high stone door in the wall and many carvings of serpentmen and serpent-shaped towers and one huge carved cobra head. This is clearly of different manufacture than the human temple above, and much more ancient. Samaritha reads the writing on the wall.

“All those who would enter the temple must pass the trial of the fangs. Reach into the mouth of Ydersius and your courage will be rewarded.”

Wogan peers into the cobra's mouth, but sees nothing but a deep hole. Sindawe examines the mouth to determine if it looks like the mouth has been well-used. It appears that it has. He reaches into the hole as deeply as he can. The jaws of the serpent close on his arm causing immense pain. He yanks his arm out but he is unharmed, the closing of the jaws was an illusion. When he pulls out something comes shooting out of the mouth after him, a stream of poisonous green liquid. Sindawe lightning dodges out of the way but the stream hits Wogan full on, poisoning him. The *delay poison* spells we have on us save him from any immediate effects, but we all know he will feel that poison later.

Sindawe tries again. This time he keeps his arm in despite the pain and feels around and finds a doorknob. He twists the knob and the doors open, revealing a circular room beyond.

Statue Room

In the center of the room is a 15-foot statue of a coiled snake, and there is a ramp on the far side of the room leading down into murky water. Murals around the room show the building of the temple, but red graffiti has been scrawled over the murals. The mural is in Aklo but Samaritha can read it, it says “Beware brother, Ydersius will abandon us.”

Serpent notices Samaritha seems to be acting strangely. He asks her what's wrong, she says the temple is getting to her. He examines her with a *detect magic* spell, she has a conjuration effect on her, but it corresponds with *mage armor* and *delay poison* spells. Nothing suspicious there.

We examine the statue and then the room. We find no way forward but the water. We discuss it and Serpent and Saluthra are both good swimmers. Serpent takes a water-breathing potion and Wogan loans him the *monster summoning* wand in case he wants to summon a rape-dolphin. They also attach a rope to Serpent so they can haul him back up in a hurry if need be.

Underwater Room

The water is cold. Under the water is another circular room. There is a statue of a serpentman here, and another ramp down. There is an amulet on a golden chain on the statue's neck. It looks like two snakes intertwined. Serpent takes the amulet. He uses his magic sight on it, and it is magical. He begins to try to identify it, but before he can do so he sees a shadowy snake swimming at him. The shadow strikes and constricts around Serpent, draining his life force.

Serpent breaks free of the shadow snake and starts hauling himself up the line to the surface. The other characters help, hauling him out of the water with a shadow snaking up out of the water behind him. Saluthra also swims to the surface.

Sindawe punches the shadow. The ghostly face paint given the group by *Mama Watanna* allows him to strike the shadow and do full damage. Samaritha fires a *magic missile* into it. The shadow snake misses Serpent. Serpent grabs out his magical falchion and hits the shadow, killing it.

As soon as Serpent shows the magical amulet around, Samaritha says she knows what it is. She examines it and says it is a historically famous piece given by a wizard-king of Azlant to the high priest of this very temple.

Serpent replies, “Not to cast any aspersions on its historical significance, but what does it do?” Samaritha says it has several types of protective magic on it, but she can't be more specific. Wogan and Serpent study it with magical sight but are unable to determine exactly what it does.

Serpent dons the amulet and goes back down into the depths. This time Sindawe takes a potion of water breathing and comes down too.

Under the Underwater

On the next level down, the water suddenly ends, defying gravity to hover in the upper portion of the next circular room. The room has a marble altar carved with serpents and serpent statues with balls of light in their fangs. Ancient cushions on the floor give the room a musty smell.

Sindawe goes up to get the other characters, and while he's gone, a ghostly black outline of a serpentman appears before Serpent's eyes. The serpentman is doing a ritual, but startles when it sees Serpent. It introduces itself as the high priest of the temple. Serpent talks to it. It claims it wants to lift the curse on the temple, allowing it and the other undead priests in the temple to pass on. It needs the amulet that Serpent found and three other items, the Fangs of the Serpent, the Venom of the Serpent and the Scales of the Serpent in order to lift the curse.

Serpent is about to ask more about the items, but then the other characters come down into the room and the shadowy priest disappears. Serpent tells the others what he saw. The others interrogate Serpent at length, trying to determine if he has been charmed or made insane or replaced by a doppelganger.

Scales of the Serpent

The characters go down the next set of stairs and look around. There are three branching hallways and several doors. We open one door and are peering into a gymnasium. It is filled with various combat dummies and racks of tarnished weapons. Standing in the center of the room is a shadowy serpentman holding a spear and wearing an armored suit of serpent scales.

The serpentman says, “Come children, come for your lesson. You must be strong to fight for Ydersius.” He says it in Aklo but Serpent understands it from the magic of the amulet. The shadowy serpentine form holds out his spear and it crackles with electricity. Serpent casts *barkskin* on himself. Wogan casts *resist electricity* on Serpent.

Sindawe rushes in first and attacks, but misses. Samaritha moves in to flank the creature. Serpent rushes in and hits it as hard as he can with his staff but the creature takes no effect from it. The serpentman strikes back at Serpent, doing some damage, but Serpent is protected from the electricity damage. Wogan shoots the serpentman with his blunderbuss, but his weapon also has no effect.

Sindawe studies the serpentman and then yells out that the serpentman has a missing scale on his armor. Sindawe tries to hit the spot, but his attack is deflected by the sparking spear. Serpent spots the missing scale and manages to poke the serpentman in the missing scale with his staff. The serpentman seems to feel it this time.

Wogan takes some time and spots the gap. Tommy stabs at it once. Samaritha spots the gap and *magic missiles* it. Serpent pokes it again for a small amount of damage. The serpentman trips Serpent, spilling him to the ground.

Wogan shoots the serpentman in the missing scale with a pistol. Tommy sneak attacks it. Samaritha *magic missiles* again. Serpent stands up while Sindawe dodges the next spear attack. Tommy tries to improve his position and gets stabbed for it, but stabs his short sword through the hole and waggles it around. Wogan finally takes the serpent shadow out with an *icicle burst*.

The armor and the spear fall to the floor. We study the items and find that the green scale armor is overwhelmingly magical. We can't determine the exact nature of the

magic but assume that this is the Scales of the Serpent. The spear is a *+1 ghost touch shock spear*.

Shadow Priests

In the next room we explore, two shadowy serpent priests sit on rotted divans. They motion Serpent closer and beg to be killed. Serpent tells them that if he finds the artifacts of the serpent they will be able to pass on. They seem excited by this. They say that Vrosh has the scales of the serpent, Sseth hid the venom of the serpent, and the fangs of the serpent must be recovered from the avatar of Ydersius on the lowest level of the temple. Samaritha sees if she can make them more comfortable, but there is nothing she can do for them.

On the way out, Serpent spots a magic jar. Sindawe grabs it and Wogan identifies it. It is a *restorative salve*. Sindawe uses the ointment and gets his strength back at last.

Incense Room

The next room has unlit braziers, urns, and blocks of magical incense. Some of the incense appeals to snakes and we use Saluthra to taste-test them.

The Ramp

We approach a ramp to the next level and a pair of red glowing eyes appears in the darkness below. Serpent tries to talk to the creature with the red glowing eyes, but the only response of the dread wraith is to come screaming up to steal Serpent's life-force. Serpent is hurt badly by the drain.

Serpent hits the wraith back, but Saluthra shies away from the undead and flees the room. Sindawe hits the wraith with the electric spear and gives it an enormous shock. The wraith is furious and attacks Sindawe back, missing. Wogan tries to hit the wraith with a healing spell but misses. Sindawe lights it up again with his spear. The wraith goes after the cleric because the soul of a priest is extra tasty. Tommy sneak attacks it and takes out the wraith!

We search around the ramp and find a human skeleton, it seems not to have died from violence, but that doesn't preclude soul-drain.

Book and Mural

The next room features 4 snake-shaped piles of dust and an interesting-looking book. Wogan sees the book is magical and goes in to grab the book. Wogan picks up the book and then looks up for a moment into the eyes of a serpent statue in the room. Wogan turns around with an evil gleam in his eyes.

“Intruders!” Wogan yells, “I must protect the temple!” Wogan releases a *negative energy burst* and hurts us all.

Sindawe runs up and nonlethally punches Wogan, Samaritha TK punches him, and Serpent runs up and uses his staff to knock the book out of Wogan's hand.

Wogan yells, “The book of holy prayers!” He pulls out his blunderbuss and shoots at Serpent, missing.

Serpent says, “For once I'm glad you're such a shitty shot!”

Sindawe tries reason. “Calm down Wogan,” he says while punching him.

Samaritha continues to TK bitch-slap Wogan. Serpent accidentally catches the glance of the snake mosaic and almost loses his mind as well. He moves to attack the snake mosaic, but is unable to damage it much. He drops the staff and attacks with the magic falchion and manages to crack the mosaic's eye a little.

Sindawe lands two blows on Wogan. Wogan shoots Serpent with his pistol and Serpent hits the mosaic eye again.

Wogan heals himself of some of the damage, but Sindawe slams Wogan again, knocking him out.

Serpent keeps swinging at the mosaic. Serpent finally takes out the eye, somehow cutting the head off the mosaic. Serpent is momentarily overcome with murderous rage and rushes out of the room to attack his friends. Serpent and Sindawe try to attack each other but they exchange missed attack after missed attack. Samaritha tries to daze Serpent but fails. Finally Serpent comes back to his senses. Sindawe grabs him and holds him down for a couple minutes to make sure.

We Rest

Wogan gets tied up until we can confirm that he has recovered from being crazy. He claims that he looked at the snake's eyes and he thought we were all “interlopers.” We decide to retreat to the incense room and rest. Wogan uses the rest of his healing bursts on us and we settle down into watches. Wogan burns incense and meditates.

Serpent sits up talking with Samaritha. She looks into the book we recovered and is rather fascinated with the serpent culture.

One Last Room

We try one last room. Four dark serpent shapes come screaming at us. We beat them up but take some strength damage in the process. Afterwards, we look around and realize this serpent man temple is larger than we had suspected. We forge forth into the darkened ancient ruins in search of the serpent idol and the other artifacts the priest needs...