

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 08/14/2011

Our heroes are on Shatterhull Island, eager to clear out the last nooks and crannies of the Hag Sisters' lair (known to us as Granny, ugly-Ambraga/hot-Amber, and "the feral one") and load their cave full of shipwreck-salvaged goods onto the *Teeth of Araska*. Of course, the original plan had been to loot the shipwrecked *Sandspider* and its many fabled treasures. But typical of our heroes luck the island, the map, the wreck, and probably the ocean were all part of an elaborate trap laid by the Hag Sisters, designed to destroy ships, funneling their cargoes to some bizarre, evil, black market and the sailors into the stew pot. The cast of heroes is:

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

Just Sit Right Back And You'll Hear A Tale...

On the island with our pirate heroes are three crew members from the *Teeth of Araska's*: Tanned Hank, Gareb, and Olhas. We have just slain the three hags and poked through their lair, discovering both understandable weirdness (maps to lure people to the island) and incomprehensible weirdness (skeleton troops waiting on a submerged stone pier).

We turn our minds to getting our ship clear of the rock shards of ship killing epic size that surround all but the western side of the island. Through blind luck and Wogan's sharp sailing skills, the crew narrowly managed to not hole their ship that morning; the Hags had illusioned the jagged rocks to look like safe, deep ocean. Wogan, Serpent, and Sindawe discuss several options but ultimately settle on a scheme where we use the ship's two longboats to pull the *Araska* clear of the shards. This offers more control than trying to sail the ship out, which would be virtually impossible given the vicious, churning

ocean amongst the shards. The plan will be launched in the morning to take advantage of high tide when the ocean is safely covering more of the rocky outcroppings' surface.

Pirate Booty

Bored by all the planning, Wogan and Serpent discuss the chests, surely full of treasure, taken from the Hag lair. They opt to return to the ship where Tommy is present to safely open them; we have accepted as gospel that the Hags have trapped chests to guard their valuables and diaries. ("Dear Diary, I lured a ship onto the shards today, and then I slept with the shipwrecked sailors before eating them. P.S. I hate my sisters; they are B-I-T-C-H-E-S bitches!") Elaborate measures are taken to safeguard our lives and the loot before attempting the return trip to the ToA. A ship's rope is used to pull us back in, delivered by a silk line tied to an arrow. Meanwhile, Tanned Hank and Gareb nearly come to blows arguing about the safest method to get the treasure onto the ship. Wogan threatens them with a whip to the extent that they back off and mouth obscenities at each other.

We return safely and uneventfully to the ship. Tommy offers to open the chests in the safety and privacy of his cabin. The rest of the crew opt for the honesty of the open deck. The first chest is not trapped and opens easily under Tommy's skilled fingers. It contains:

- A large variety of nautical maps from the plethora of ship wrecks.
- Neatly stacked coins (120 gold, 900 silver). Some of the coins have a foreign design, which reminds Sindawe of his father's nautical map.
- A matched set of silver necklace and ring (500gp and 350gp) with an odd gear-and-sunburst design.

Chest #2, from the storage room, is trapped, which Tommy's roguish skills miss but Wogan finds when he opens the chest; a poisonous needle shoots into his neck. Wogan feels his life begin to slip away. Serpent leaps to help with the Heal skill, but Wogan's heart continues to merrily pump the poison about; he loses 3 CON and 1 CHA (thanks to the unattractive rash that accompanies the CON loss). Eventually, the poison ceases its activity; the crew stare in awe at Wogan. Tommy plucks out the needle and declares it, "Greenblood oil!". The chest contains:

- 550 gp and 80 pp, mostly of Chelaxian and Korvosan origin.

- A lacquered, water proof scroll case - it contains 3 scrolls: *protection from chaos*, *remove fear*, and *magic aura*. Wogan and Serpent declare that they are bardic scrolls, which require the user to sing them out loud. (They're not!)

Chest #3: Tommy believes it has the same trap as Chest #2. It is! He disarms it. It contains:

- 300gp and 60pp
- A semi-rigid case containing a rare glass decanter covered in silver filigree mounting three moonstones. Worth 300gp, maybe 500gp.

Chest #4: Tommy declares, "No traps". Serpent gets needled immediately upon opening it. Luckily, northerners of his ilk are raised on poison and it does him no harm, yet he complains bitterly, "Sindawe should have opened this chest! He has a higher AC and better reflex save. And he's not me!" Sindawe counters, "I tripped the worst trap... the hag on the beach. With my penis." Serpent replies, "That wasn't a trap."

- 420gp and 40pp
- A thin wand with animal prints burnt into the wood. It is a wand of *summon nature's ally I* with 32 charges.

There is talk of rum to celebrate these pretty baubles, but Sindawe declares a night of sobriety to prepare the crew for tomorrow morning's "Operation Extract the Ship from the Shards". The crew grumbles after hearing tomorrow's game plan, given the violence of the ocean around this island and the vagaries of the plan. The night is not so restful with the ship's rocking as the waves hit it square in the side.

Operation Extract the Ship from the Shards

Operation EtSftS starts off with asking for volunteers for the long boats. A few have to be volunteered, but we put ten crew in the two long boats, one commanded by Serpent (Boat 1), the other by Sindawe (Boat 2). Wogan stays behind with nine crewmen (including Tommy, but minus a sick crewman) to man the ship. The winds are stiff, measuring 22 knots out of the NNE.

The GM plots out a 2 by 6 grid representing the twelve hull sections of the *Teeth of Araska*, each grid segment having 60 hp and hardness 5. The ship's boats only have one section of 30 hp and hardness 5. The maneuvers are:

- Load and launch the long boats – this goes well for boat 2. Boat 1 takes some damage against the ToA's hull.
- Tie ship's lines to two shards further out to help centralize the ship thru the hazards - goes well.
- Swinging the ship's prow to point away from the island - goes well with some mast shaking thrown in.
- Stabilize the ship on its new heading - Boat 1 takes some shearing damage and the ToA grinds against some rocks.
- The long boats begin pulling FOR THEIR LIVES. More damage hits Boat 1 as it bangs against a submerged obsidian outcropping (down from 30 to 15 hp). Boat 2 goes from 30 to 28 hp. The ToA takes damage to a second section.
- We continue to straighten the ToA out. Success!!! All three crews perform well or passably enough to put ToA's prow on course. The first major hurdle has been completed without disaster.
- And then Sindawe spots a green-scaled sea giant, chewing thru the north-western most cable. He relays that info to Wogan in Aklo, so as not to tip off the monster.
- The monster chews thru the cable. The *Teeth of Araska* slews around dangerously among the rocks.
- Wogan and some of the ship's crew leap into action and begin loading a culverin. Other crew members attend to the ship and Ori falls overboard when green water washes over the deck as the ship lists sharply.
- Sindawe and Serpent's boats row madly to compensate for the lost cable.
- The monster flings an obsidian tipped spear at the Bel the Eunuch, crunching through his chainmail and wounding him sorely. Wogan blows a small hole in the first monster with his pistol. It approaches the ship. "Prepare to repel boarders!" shouts Wogan, and the crew arms themselves.
- A second sea monster rises from the water to attack Serpent's boat. It's a good twenty feet tall; even in water up to its waist it towers over the Ulfen. Serpent

counter-attacks with a fire spell but the monster shrugs it off. The monster reaches out and grabs his head with its webbed, clawed hand and critically hits him, costing 12 hp, 2 WIS, 2 INT, and dragging him out of the boat and down below. Saluthra sees her master go overboard and swims to the rescue. Dum-dum screams "BAD FISH!" as he and Little Mike hack at the monster. Serpent draws and stabs at it with his scimitar as he is pulled underwater. Monster #2 laughs, "Oh, what fun!"

- Sindawe continues having his crew row to compensate for the other two crews' lollygagging.
- Wogan shoots and misses at monster #1, who is now climbing aboard the ToA. The deck lurches under its two-ton weight. Bel and Sevgi throw a line to Ori as the cook struggles to stay above water and clear of the rocks. Another crew member hacks thru the last mooring line, which will allow the long boats to drag the ToA free of the shards.
- Monster #3 emerges aft of Sindawe's long boat and hits Slasher Jim with a vital strike for 10 hp. Jim whips out his dagger and screams, "I WILL CUT A BITCH!" as he attacks the seaweed-shrouded giant. Sindawe joins in the attack and hits once. Serpent slashes successfully at monster #2 as it clutches him underwater; his boat's crew decides he's lost and try to flee but a total lack of coordination has half of them paddling on one direction and the other half in another.
- Aboard ship, Wogan shoots a third time for some damage; Bel and Sevgi continue hauling Ori out of the water; Stoke begins loading a swivel gun; the rest of the crew pulls hand weapons and stands together far away from Monster #1.
- Monster #3 slashes and misses Sindawe. Monster #2 releases Serpent and attacks his snake Saluthra for 9 hp. Monster #1 hits and grabs both Tanned Hank and Mano around their respective rib cages; both men scream dramatically. Sindawe flurry of misses while his crew delivers several hits on monster #3. Serpent and Saluthra manage more damage against monster #2. Wogan reloads, Stoke finishes loading the swivel gun, and Big Mike engages and attacks Monster #1 for 9 hp. Ori is hauled aboard.

- Monster #1 crushes Mano to death and drops him to the deck. Monster #2 slashes Serpent for 9 hp and grapples him again. Monster #3 attacks Slasher Jim and Sindawe delivering 14 hp to both! Slasher Jim falls back into the boat, adding his blood fountain to the ocean froth. Sindawe hits once for 12 hp. Stoke swivel guns monster #1 for 15 hp; the rest of the crew musters their courage to attack, but ultimately all miss.
- Monster #1 kills Tanned Hank. Sindawe flurry of blows delivering one hit for 8 hp. Serpent crits monster #2 while Saluthra misses - the crit delivers 7 hp and -4 to all attacks/skills/abilities for 4 rds. Wogan finishes loading his blunderbuss but misses. Big Mike hits monster #1 twice - monster #1 counters with 17 hp of slashing and grabs him. Monster #2 continues grappling Serpent but delivers no damage. Monster #3 hits Sindawe for 12 hp and grapples him! Sindawe counters with a single hit for 11 hp bringing monster #3 into "badly hurt" category. Wogan throws alchemist's fire at monster #1, misses, setting Tanned Hank on fire (turns out Tanned Hank is just unconscious not dead; he sizzles). Big Mike hacks monster #1 twice, crits it, knocks it out and pushes it overboard.
- Monster #2 critically misses Serpent and takes a -4 to AC for several rounds. Monster #3 misses Sindawe; Sindawe gargles water in frustration as yet another flurry of misses disappoint him. Serpent and Saluthra both roll 1's, gaining exhausted and -4 on attack rolls.
- Dawn's rosy fingers claw at the sky. Wogan's channel healing powers are restored for this new day, which he immediately uses on the ship's crew, stabilizing Mano and returning Tanned Hank to consciousness. Wogan yells orders to point a ship's gun at Monster #3.
- Additional sharp rock damage is marked upon ToA's grids 3 and 4 as no one is able to concentrate on controlling the craft; the surf brings the hull, shuddering, against the rocky outcroppings under the lagoon.
- Monster #2 and #3 claws and misses. Sindawe does another flurry of blows, lands one and crits, staggering his opponent. The ship's swivel gun delivers solid shot into monster #3, exploding its head all over the surprised Sindawe.

- Saluthra constricts around the neck of monster #2. Monster #2 claws, misses and goes unconscious.
- Serpent transforms partially into a snake again, adding to his swim skill. He returns to the surface alongside long boat #1 where Little Mike begins beating at him with a paddle, while an obsidian spike pokes thru the hull.
- Sindawe returns to long boat #2 and pours a Cure Moderate Wounds potion into Slasher Jim - that boat takes 9 more points of bashing against the rocks. Slasher Jim and Sindawe exchange profanities before rowing begins again.
- The long boats begin hauling again. Many long rounds happen with little gain, or no gain, or worse yet ToA rubbing against obsidian shards. Finally, ToA is almost clear of the shards. And a bit more of arm numbing, back burning rowing pulls us free of the shards. Some crew cry, some cheer, but most just collapse from exhaustion.
- Long boat #1 has 7/30 hp remaining, #2 has 19/30. And the ToA has taken damage to grids 1*2, 2*2, 2*3, and 5*1, but is now safely anchored a hundred yards from the edge of the shards.

Well, That Sucked

Several hours are spent resting, sleeping, and drinking rum. The Teeth of Araska is then sailed to the west side of the island, but is not docked as the winds and unfamiliar pier (submerged and with no clear means of tying off) make it too dangerous. Sindawe orders Wogan to gun down the skeleton phalanx standing on the pier. Wogan and Stoke put their heads together and decide upon a small culverin loaded with grape shot. The firing platform is reasonably stable, the sea being less frothy on the western side. The first shot clears half of the pier of skeletons. The remaining skeletons stand stoically. The second shot does the rest in. Stoke fires a third shot just for the lulz.

A long boat is launched with Sindawe, Serpent, Wogan, Kahina, Pirro, Stoke, and Sevgi. The "stroke, stroke" orders make Kahina and Sevgi giggle. The lot moors on the submerged pier and then climb up the steep cliff to the cavern that contained the skeletons and basket of eels. They climb down the "chimney" to the cave holding the ship's stores.

Pirate Booty Part 2

The door out is blocked with stores, while Wogan takes 20 looking for secret doors or other surprises. An inventory of the goods reveals:

- Two crates of furniture, carved. Potentially expensive. 300 per crate.
- Six tons of fine wood. 60gp/ton.
- Eight crates of glass ware. One hundred pieces to a crate, but not high quality. (One crate gets broken later while hauling it out.) 125 gp per crate.
- Six 500' coils of ropes. These will be added to the ToA's stock, easily replacing the latest rope attrition.
- Eight crates of pottery. (One crate gets broken later while hauling it out.) 15gp per crate.
- Three pallets of iron ingots. 75gp per pallet.
- Total: $600+360+875+120+225 = 2180$ gp value.

Around noon the inventory is completed. The NPCs wander off en masse searching for loot. The PCs play cards while waiting for the screams. The NPCs return with many obsidian stones that had been mounted in many places spy-camera style.

We decide to cart the lighter items, pottery, glassware, and furniture out by hand. Kahina missteps and almost rolls/falls 50' amongst the obsidian. Luckily, Serpent rescues her from the fall; the glassware crate is destroyed. Pirro also missteps but only loses a crate of pottery. The loot loaded is glassware (105gp), pottery, furniture (600 gp), and rope (0 gp).

A second long boat is launched and Wogan, Serpent, Saluthra, and Sindawe search for the missing ogre. We find some overlooked loot on the beach: a mw morning star, a chunk of obsidian (1gp), an *elixir of vision*, a scroll of *obscuring mist*, mw light steel shield, a mw sewing kit (artisan tools 50gp).

Tracking by scent doesn't locate the ogre, but searching the wrecks reveals its lair inside the hulk of a ship, decorated with a mermaid figurehead clearly used by the ogres for carnal purposes. The trio beat and shoot the ogre dead after a short and unfruitful attempt to recruit him to a life of piracy, a great idea scuttled by the lack of a common language. They search and find a blowgun, a scroll of *magic fang*, and a chest. The chest

is empty except for two inches of sand - Serpent searches it to find 3 pp. They return to the ship happy.

Plans are made the following day to haul the heavy goods out using the *ant haul* spell to give everyone additional strength.

Pirate Booty Part 3

That night Serpent awakens from a deep sleep to find Kahina in his room, seemingly sneaking toward his bed. She wishes to thank him for saving her from a nasty tumble on the island. Serpent weakly refuses her advances, saying, "My girlfriend is back in port and we're going back there soon." She counters with, "What happens at sea stays at sea." Serpent's refusals become weaker and weaker still ("No... Stop... Don't...") as Kahina drops to her knees and opens his trousers. Kahina gives her thanks.

The next day, we return to the island. Tanned Hank finds the one area of the pier water to slip and fall into, slashing his head open for 11 hp. The *ant haul* goes well otherwise - 360 and 225 gp in goods are hauled aboard.

Sindawe asks Stoke, Bel, Tommy, Wogan, and Serpent to discuss sticking around for a week to lay in wait for the Hag's cargo pickup ship. Most are indifferent to the plan, so he orders the ship home.

Back to Riddleport

A large storm is hit. The GM decides that the crew and ship give a +4 to sailing checks. The captain's sailing check comes out to 23, just short of the storm's DC of 26. Serpent saves Stoke who is washed overboard – Serpent dives in after him with a rope, and manages to grab his flailing arm bare seconds before the ship would have heaved out of reach. The storm passes without further incident.

The *Teeth of Araska* fights winds blowing against it on the approach to Riddleport. Tacking back and forth allows us to make headway. Time is important, because we'll have only a week in port before the weather seals it up tight with ice.

But before we return to Riddleport, an oar powered galley is spotted, possibly the Overlord's barge *All Due Restraint* which we last saw departing the Devil's Elbow weeks ago. We draw closer and confirm the name. No one is on board; the deck, rigging and

such is in disarray. The dangling ropes have dead sailors on the ends. Wogan confirms that there was a battle. ToA pulls up alongside and ties up to it.

ADR has been thru a battle. The corpses are dwarves. The hanging was done to put half the body in the water, and the bottom halves have been eaten away by sharks or similar. The carnage is several weeks old; the ship has been drifting since then. A boarding action would account for the sword and bullet wounds we detect.

We discuss returning to Riddleport with the ADR and claiming salvage rights. But Riddleport laws would probably interpret this as: “Oh you murderous bastards, thank you for confessing to your heinous crime!”

We investigate to find signs of fighting below. The letters KC are carved on a surface down below, perhaps in the last moments of someone's life. Several dwarf corpses are collected for a later *Speak with Dead*. Serpent finds a set of dried shark jaws with recent blood on them, which reminds him of the Shark God (we encountered some of its followers in recent weeks). Only dwarven corpses are found; the many, many gendarmes are not to be found.

Sindawe assigns the three sailors who have done something retarded in the last week the job of barreling up the dwarf corpses. The list starts off with Serpent, Wogan and Goat. Out of courtesy to his fellow PCs, Sindawe drops down the list of real and imagined shortcomings and picks Goat, Perro, and Orgon for the task. We take off a dozen dead dwarves, the shark jaws, and little else (ship has been thoroughly looted). The crew hates this plan and urge us not to take a dozen mutilated dwarves in barrels aboard the ship. We sail on after quelling the dissent.

Wogan begins using *Speak with Dead* the following day; he sits down in the hold, petting the barrels of dwarf slurry and crooning questions to them. He asks:

- Who attacked you? Pirates.
- Who was the pirate captain? A woman.
- What happened to the gendarmes? Slain in combat, unlike us.
- Why didn't you fight? We did, but they captured us. (They're the gas-forge dwarves, so they're more technicians than fighters.)
- Describe the pirate flag - Red Tentacles on black. Tommy IDs that as the flag of the *Kraken's Claw*.

- What was your route? Devil's Elbow to Riddleport.
- What did you take off Devil's Elbow? Some of the god metal.
- Did they take any prisoners back to the *Kraken's Claw*? Yes, one of our number betrayed us, after torture. He will show them how to work the metal.

Morgan Baumann is the captain of the *Kraken's Claw*. She is ugly (yes, being men, we can short-cut a woman's decription with "she's ugly"), and Sindawe recently insulted her when attempting a business transaction. Tommy doubts one of the crime lords would back this play; attacking a ship flying the Overlord's flag would bring down a world of hurt on them. But Captain Morgan seems like the type to commit such a crime on her own.

The *Teeth of Araska* sails into Riddleport harbor. The Cyphergate glitters unholy in the light. The crew looks forward to spending their pay. The PCs worry about the unfamiliar task of dividing up the loot given given the many participants, complex share algorithms, and greatly varying loot values.