

REAYERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 09/11/2011

The heroes have picked up new crew and are currently anchored outside of Sandpoint aboard the pirate ship the *Teeth of Araska*. Our heroes are:

- Wogan, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick)
- Sindawe H'kilata Narr, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris)
- Ref "Serpent" Jorensen, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul)
- Tommy, our degenerate halfling, is unfortunately now an NPC as family matters caused Kevin to have to withdraw from the campaign.

NEGOTIATION

We're about to come back into port at Riddleport, and we begin tallying up our cargo and items to be divided among the crew of our captured pirate ship, the *Teeth of Araska*.

Captain Sindawe decides that he wants to deal with the issue of the thumbless Chelish Navy captain, Mase Venjam, that we have been keeping captive since inheriting him with the ship. No one can quite remember the details of whatever deal we made with him before, and we don't really believe his claim that he knows where a great treasure is hidden. Captain Sindawe orders Gareb to haul the Chelish dog up from the hold, bind him, and throw him off the side to drown.

When Serpent notices how eager the crewman is to throw the Chelish prisoner overboard, Serpent offers, "You know it's 50 gold off your share for getting to kill him, right?" Gareb hesitates as if thinking about it.

This soon becomes a bidding war with different crewmen offering parts of their shares for getting to kill the prisoner. Everyone hates Chelaxians.

The bidding gets up to 16 gold (Little Mike, who was formerly in the Chelish Navy, holds the high bid) before the Chelish prisoner shouts, "Wait, I'll tell you about the treasure, just don't kill me."

He reveals that the "treasure" is actually some giant underwater creature called the Terraken, used as a weapon by the Chelish during their war with Andoren, and that it can be controlled by a magical talisman. He knows where the talisman is, in the Sodden Lands. Sindawe refuses to trust him unless he totally betrays the Chelish navy, and though he is reluctant, in the end he agrees to join our pirate crew. If we regrow his thumbs he'll lead us to the Terraken. The crew is bitterly disappointed to not get to kill him.

TRIBUTE

As we sail in, we note the presence of the *Bloody Vengeance*, an orcish pirate ship captained by Captain Scarbelly. The docks have had makeshift repairs since the tsunami hit and there are a couple other ships in port, though it's a poor catch especially with winter likely to close the port soon. We pay the dockmaster and stevedores their fees and bribed to get the *Teeth of Araska* safely ensconced in port. Captain Sindawe gets ready to lead the crew to the Fish Bowl to give their traditional respects to Besmara, the Pirate Goddess. Tommy and several crewmen get assigned to guard the ship and its treasure, but Serpent is unwilling to leave the treasure and stays behind as well.

Locals are already lining the docks, trying to sell goods or themselves to the arriving crew. One hefty strumpet has an orange between her breasts, and cries out with an only partially toothed mouth, "I got yer cure for scurvy right here!" Only the fact that loot shares have not yet been distributed keeps everyone together. Sindawe leads the line of crewmen to the pirate temple. There he meets Ruben Carfay, the old one-legged priest of Besmara. Apparently Carfay doesn't remember preaching against us in the street a week or two back, and greets Captain Sindawe with a phlegmy cackle. After a bit of conversation with the dingy old bat, every man tosses a coin into the pool in the center of the temple and leads the train of crew through to make their own donations. He then leads the train of pirates back towards the ship.

On the way, Gunner's Mate Stoke takes a detour into an alley to boink a prostitute, but catches back up to us after we've only gone a couple blocks; everyone is impressed/horrified by how little time he took.

Captain Sindawe is approached by three hillbilly Varisian youths wanting to sell him a big-ass swamp barracuda they have lashed down in a wagon. Sindawe doesn't want it but advises them that the Gold Goblin might want it for pit fighting. They give him their names to contact "for all your swamp barracuda needs!" Their names are Dookus, Folger, and Dilly-marth.

ESCORT

When Sindawe gets back to the ship, a surprising lack of groupies is explained as he is immediately approached by a large group of gendarmes who insist that the ship's officers must come with them to see the Overlord on Maskyr Island. There are four heavy infantry and four musketeers. Wogan asks to stop at the Gold Goblin on

the way to drop off some of his heavy gold and they assent. As we pass we see a new tavern, the Vile Fish, which appears to have been built out of a wrecked ship beached by the tsunami.

We are greeted at the door of the Gold Goblin by the bouncers, Hans and Beyar. They greet us, though when Sindawe asks “if the boss is in,” they look suspiciously at the crowd of gendarmes escorting us and say “No!” simultaneously. We nod in understanding. Sindawe offers to buy the gendarmes a drink but they refuse on the grounds that they are on duty.

Serpent shouts, “I don’t know what’s with this supposedly lawless town! This is the most lawful place I’ve ever seen!”

Wogan drops off his money at the casino cage for placement in the vault and we travel on.

COMBAT

As we pass into the Free Coin district, we get met by eight more gendarmes. We all feel a burning pain in our orichalcum glyphs and look around for trouble.

Sindawe says, “This probably means a monster is about to attack us. You should load your guns.” The gendarme escorts are confused by this.

Sindawe asks our escorts, “Do you recognize those guys?” He nods at the approaching gendarmes.

The eight newcomers call over and say, “We are here to help escort them.”

The leader of our escorts asks, “What district house are you guys out of?”

The gendarme responds by forming his arm into a sword blade T2 style and spitting the gendarme with it. His features melt and shift. All the eight new

gendarmes shift into shadowy monsters with blade arms and expressionless masks for faces. Sindawe reacts quickly and smacks one with his orichalcum spiked gauntlets twice. A small crack appears in its mask but there is no other effect. “Uh-oh,” he thinks.

One of the masked phantoms slices off the head of one of the gendarmes, spraying blood everywhere. The blood that gets on the phantoms’ white masks disappears as it gets absorbed.

The musket-wielding gendarmes fire their guns wildly and the others attack with halberds. The phantoms flit back and forth disconcertingly, and only one gendarme manages to lay his halberd on one. The halberd passes through the phantom without harming it. “What are these things?” cry the gendarmes.

Sindawe slams one again with his orichalcum fist, shattering its mask. Its shadowy form dissipates.

The phantoms ignore us and continue to hack apart our escorts. The phantoms toy with them, chasing them around. Serpent smacks one of the phantoms with his orichalcum staff and Wogan icicle-bursts it. Sindawe finishes it off with three more blows from his orichalcum fist. They begin to pay attention to us.

One of the phantoms tries to attack Sindawe but he dodges. Serpent slams it twice with his staff, getting some attack momentum going at last.

The gendarmes form up a retreating defensive formation and start to withdraw. Sindawe slams one of the phantoms a few more times, but it doesn’t prevent the phantoms from killing two more gendarmes. One of the gendarmes gets snipped cleanly in half as if cut by giant scissors; another is lifted off the ground, impaled on one blade, and gruesomely eviscerated with the other. One of the

phantoms stabs Wogan, and he feels the blade literally suck the blood from his body, weakening him before he can tear free. Wogan manages to stab the phantom with his trident as he retreats with the gendarmes. His trident goes through it with no effect, but his trident is Thundering, and sets off a sonic boom inside of the phantom that explodes its mask from the inside.

One of the phantoms that had been battered until its mask was a spiderweb of cracks goes after a fleeing gendarme, spitting the gendarme to the cobblestones with its arm-blade. Blood pours out his mouth, but then bizarrely reverses course and pours back up as the blood is drained from his body by the creature's blade right before its mask shatters and it disappears.

The four remaining phantoms try a different tactic - two move to flank a gendarme and two of them flank Serpent; they slash horribly at the victims trapped between them. The gendarme falls, slain by a dozen cuts, and Serpent bleeds from as many places, barely remaining standing.

Serpent is bleeding heavily from many wounds, and he flies into a rage, striking one of the phantoms twice. Wogan immediately moves and gives some healing to Serpent, closing the worst of his wounds. Unfortunately the phantom slashes Serpent twice more, reopening the wounds and then some.

A phantom kills the next-to-last gendarme, sucking all the blood from his body, and Serpent finishes off one of the ones attacking him. Sindawe slams another one, and Wogan throws more healing on Serpent.

The three remaining phantoms converge on Sindawe but he frantically dodges all of their attacks.

Serpent smacks one of the phantoms twice hard and sends it flying into a fruit cart. Its impassive mask looks out, covered in fruit. The one remaining gendarme runs over and performs a coup de grace on the downed phantom with his halberd, smashing its mask and dissipating it.

Sindawe performs a whirlwind of attacks on the phantoms, destroying one and damaging another, but in the process overreaches and tumbles into the fruit cart, getting fruit in his eyes. With fruit in his eyes, Sindawe can't see clearly and he attacks the fruit cart, shattering it with a mighty monk stomp.

The last phantom leaps across the gap and slices into Wogan, draining some more blood, and Serpent slams it twice more with his staff. It then turns to go after the last gendarme, and we could swear we hear giggling, but Serpent pursues it and smashes its mask to bits before it can reach the man.

After the fight, Serpent has to sit down and rest for a moment, drained, damaged, and fatigued. Wogan has also been damaged and drained, and he uses his healing wand to close our wounds.

INTERROGATION

We learn that our lone remaining escort is named Sergeant Cribes. He has never seen anything like those phantoms. Since we saved his life, he agrees to tell us why we're being brought in. He tells us that one of the Overlord's ships has been lost at sea, and all captains that come into the city are being hauled in to account for themselves.

“The Overlord has ships?” asks Sindawe innocently.

“Sure, don’t you remember that ship...?” starts Serpent before being elbowed into silence.

Cribes has us ferried across the river to the Overlord’s citadel on Maskyr Island. We have to give up our weapons at the gate.

We are shown into a room where the Overlord Gaston Cromarcky and General Anton Mescher are conferring. We remember meeting both of them at the Riddleport crime lord sit-down some months ago. That one ended with us being marked for death, so we are optimistic that this meeting can’t go any worse.

The Overlord says, “Ah Saul’s boys, I heard you’ve taken up piracy. Come on in, I hear you had some trouble on the way here.”

“Yes, they were similar to the monsters on Devil’s Elbow.”

The general chimes in, “You were at Devil’s Elbow? Can you account for your whereabouts for the last two months?”

Sindawe details our activities at Devil’s Elbow, the monsters, the portal to a dark universe, Screev Ten-Tooth, our flight from the island, our fight with the *Teeth of Araska*, killing Captain Grudge and taking his ship, making a crew run, and heading off to the hag island. He gives the General a copy of the fake treasure map showing the way to the wreck of the *Sandspider*.

Sindawe claims that we have not seen the *All Due Restraint* since parting with it at Devil’s Elbow. The general says, “So you wouldn’t mind if we searched your hold to make sure you don’t have anything there from the *All Due Restraint*?”

Sindawe thinks about some of the old gendarme equipment we have stashed away in the hold. “Actually I would mind. We haven’t gone over the ship with a fine tooth comb and I wouldn’t want to be held accountable for anything the previous

captain might have done.” The Overlord and General shoot each other a dubious but not entirely unamused glance.

The general tells us that the *All Due Restraint* never came back to port and he’s offering a reward of 100 gp for information about what happened to the ship. This isn’t much to us, but he intimates that it might be enough for many folks to narc us out for.

Sindawe counter-offers that he might be able to help if the Overlord offers a better reward: forgiveness for any and all crimes we might have previously committed in Riddleport. The Overlord agrees to this and Sindawe asks if there are any clerics about who can speak with dead. He reveals that we have some dwarf corpses on our ship that were former crew of the *All Due Restraint*, and they can be questioned using *speak with dead*. The Overlord sends some men to our ship with a note from Captain Sindawe ordering the crew to give the barrels of dead dwarves to the soldiers. In the meantime we stay as “guests” of the Overlord. The Overlord and General excuse themselves, and several squads of gendarmes come in and eye us balefully. We wonder whether Tommy is going to believe the letter or if not, perhaps there will be a major waterfront battle going on soon.

PARDON

More gendarmes arrive with the eleven barrels full of dwarf slurry from our ship. The overlord summons the High Publican of Cayden Cailean, Arnando Rolf. He is a big bear of a man with a notched sword at his hip. “Who summons Arnando?” he asks imperiously. He takes a swig out of the mug of ale he carries.

The Overlord announces that he has a barrel of dwarves he needs to talk to. This does not seem to take the High Publican aback at all. Arnando demands a fee to cast the spell and the Overlord refuses to pay, forcing us to pay for it instead. At 150 gp per casting, we're not too happy about it.

The Publican gives the corpse a swig of ale.

"Tell me, laddie, who did ye in?"

"Twas Captain Baumannnnn..."

"Hows she done it?"

"The Kraken's Claw took us at niight..."

"Who was her accomplice?"

"Grandus betrayed ussss..."

The Overlord says, "I guess you boys were telling the truth. Not usually a good trait in a pirate." After conferring with the General that they don't have evidence that we're behind anything too bad, he agrees to write out pardons for us for our past crimes, but he makes sure we know that this is not a pardon for future crimes, and we should watch our step in the future.

The general offers us 2000 gold if we can catch Captain Baumann and bring her back alive for public execution. He even offers to hold off a couple days on posting the bounty so we can get a head start.

The Overlord shuffles us out and tells us to be sure to visit his casinos in the Free Coin district to spend all our money.

We head back to the ship. There's a stack of crates and bags at the top of the pier that whispers at us, "Hey!"

“Hey Tommy. Everything’s fine. We got pardons.” Tommy is quite glad to have his crimes forgiven. He wishes that the pardon had been extended one day into the future, because he has some people that need killing. Especially Clegg Zincher, as his hatred for Tommy’s girlfriend Lavender Lil requires her to not set foot outside the House of the Silken Veil. Tommy has found out that Zincher is back in town, but he didn’t come in on his ship, he (and the girls, Samaritha and Hatshepsut) rode in from the east.

COMMERCE

We decide to try to sell the 40 pounds of orichalcum we got from the Teeth of Araska’s hold. We have no idea of the value of the stuff, so we try to ask around for how much it’s worth. No one in town seems to know, but we have a friend who works at the dwarven gas forges (a dwarf named Garin Delar we previously rescued from tongue zombies and cured of the plague). Garin promises to find out for us. For now we decide to take a trip to the Cypher Lodge.

As we walk past a bar, we see someone getting thrown out violently. It’s one of our crew members, Pirro. Pirro got swindled out of all his money already by someone who talked him into joining a gambling game with “a bunch of suckers.”

Along the way we find several questionable and creepy shops where we are able to sell almost all of our loot. First we sell our masterwork whip and slick leather armor at an odd shop run by a gnome with a three-part Mohawk who likes to pat us way too much. Tommy happens to know of a bar where a bunch of elf-hating racists hang out, and we are able to sell our cold iron weapons for good prices.

As we pass it, we notice that the Cyphermage bar, the Mystery of the Gate, has been closed and its boarded-up windows defaced with crude graffiti.

MYSTERY

When we get to the Cypher Lodge, it's locked up tight and it takes a while to get someone to open the door. Finally someone comes to the door and interviews us through a hole in the door. It takes some convincing, but finally Elril lets us in. He has been put in charge of magic item projects, and he has the pair of magical boots that Serpent had commissioned some time ago. Serpent is glad to see that the mages have decorated the second boot to look like the original junk-kicker boot.

Elril seems quite nervous. Apparently Thorgrim, the former Lord Protector of the cypher lodge, has taken over as head of the lodge, and Elril seems terrified of him. A huge portrait of Thorgrim hangs in the main room, and Elril glances at it nervously.

Suddenly our glyphs begin to burn again. We decide that there must be more monsters about to attack. We seal Elril and poor drunk Pirro in a cabinet and go looking. There are huge portraits of Thorgrim staring down at us all over the place. We head for Samaritha's bedroom. Her door is locked but we hear something from inside the room. We use a chime of opening to open the lock and go inside, but the room is empty and doesn't appear to have been used lately. We hear a whooshing noise from the stairwell. Casting about with *detect magic*, there is a magic portrait of Thorgrim in her room.

We go back downstairs, retrieve Pirro, and search around. We decide to go down to the basement because that's where Thorgrim's room is. His room has a big

sand battle circle in the center of it. We see the unexpected sight of the half-orc gendarme agent Salvadora Beckett hanging from chains unconscious and bloody above the circle. The shadows ringing the room begin to move...