

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE SESSION SUMMARY 09/20/2009

ATTENDANCE

Early in the morning, *Kevin* (Tommy “Blacktoes” Burrowbank) shows up at *Chris’* (Sindawe) door. Chris peers through the peephole and thinks, “Well, it looks like he either wants to tell me about Jesus or chop me up with a chainsaw. I hope it’s the second, because at least that’ll get me a bit of exercise.” Both are more than a little relieved to discover that Kevin is just the new member of the gaming group.

Georgina shows up next, explaining that she is soon to depart for the exotic land of “Ca-lee-for-nee-uh” and that this is likely her last time to attend. *Paul* (Serpent) is quite skeptical. “Where do you say this mystical land is? Near a huge ocean so wide nobody can see across it? Yeah, right.”

Patrick (Wogan) defends her, “It is too real! I’ve seen television programs set in it! Lots of television programs!”

Bruce (Melako “Ox” Chaalu) scoffs, “That doesn’t mean anything. Everyone knows that television programs are all filmed in Vancouver because California is too expensive. Besides, they claim to have the Terminator as Governor. Next thing you’re going to say is that Minnesota is real too because they elected Jesse Ventura to be their Governor.”

Ernest grumbles, “But I really like Jesse Ventura. Of course he’s real! Just like Darth Vader and Indiana Jones!”

<i>Player</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Class / Level</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Bruce	Melako “Ox” Chaalu	Barbarian 1	Enslaved ship crew from Rahadoum
Kevin	Tommy “Blacktoes” Burrowbank	Rogue 1	Riddleport halfling
Paul	“Serpent” Ref Jorenson	Druid 1	Northerner human with a southerner snake pet

<i>Player</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Class / Level</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Chris	Sindawe H'Kilata Narr	Monk 1	Mwangi-Bonuwat (human) monk
Patrick	Wogan	Cleric 1	Human priest of Gozreh

THE ALBERS EMBARKS

The characters have recently come on board the *Albers* at the Chelaxian port of Kintargo, the largest Chelaxian port on the Arcadian coast. The ship is already a couple of days out of port, bound for Riddleport. It carries a cargo of wine, olive oil and other goods desired in the savage hinterlands of Varisia. *Captain Fenn* leads the ship with his one glass eye, but *First Mate Huxley* is the one who does most of the talking to the crew. Most of the crew are new to the ship, though it isn't clear why the Captain needed to take on new crew in mid-voyage.

It is the middle of Gozrin, the month sacred to the god of wind and sea. The course plan is to head for deep water to avoid pirates then north to the Varisian Gulf. The more experienced crewmembers tend to be a surly lot, including *Bull* (whom *Ox* takes an immediate dislike to) and *Old Pete* the lookout. There is also *Wendt the Cook*. He is missing two fingers, but his main infirmity actually seems to be that he is a cranky sleazeball. *Durt* is the cabin boy. *Ellis* and *Petronicus* make up the rest of the crew.

The *Albers* is a fairly small merchant ship with many typical features and one unusual one: an actual brig, currently occupied by an unconscious prisoner brought on board in Kintargo. The characters deduce that he needs to be transported to Riddleport.

"*Serpent*" *Jorenson* tells the others, "Well, the good thing about having me on board is that this will be the most rat-free vessel in all of Golarion." He demonstrates his pet, a massive constrictor named *Saluthra*. He grew up in the lands of the Linnorm Kings, but has spent a lot of time in the south. None of that has done anything to improve his nonexistent tan. He tells the others a touching story of how his first pet was an icicle named *Ulf* that he kept for five years until it was run over by a rogue salt cart. He admits that the driver screamed for three days, but he has become much better at torture since then.

Sindawe HP Kilata Narr is a big, bald black man with scarified tattoos on his upper body and a very sharp fur vest. He doesn't say a lot. And what he says, he says with his fists and his deep sense of personal enlightenment.

Wogan is a human priest of Gozreh from southern Cheliox. He wears blue-and-white vertically striped pantaloons and has a big bushy black beard that he keeps tied off with little bows. He's also fairly pudgy. Sindawe is just happy to hear that he wears pants. Serpent starts to think that he looks a lot like Yosemite Sam. Most of his duties involve placating the water gods.

Tommy "Blacktoes" Burrowbank is a halfling crewman out of Riddleport. He wears a blue silk kerchief and a matching shirt. His fondest ambition since his arrival on the ship has been to take Old Pete's job. In the meantime, he hangs over the gunnels trying to knock down flying fish with his staff sling. And he wears pants.

Melako "Ox" Chaalu is a big Garundi from Rahadoum. He has a shaven head, a crimson sash and canvas pants. Everyone else is very glad to hear that he wears pants. He was technically sold to the ship by a Chelaxian shipowner and seems to have a very poor attitude.

THE VOYAGE IS INTERRUPTED

Old Pete calls out, "Sea serpent to port!" The characters rush over and see a long sinuous shape under the water, paralleling the course of the *Albers*. Serpent notes, "It's only about twenty feet long, practically an infant." He looks to Blacktoes, "Want to try and enrage it with your sling staff?"

Bull comments, "That's a real beauty. You don't normally see them this time of year." The shadow slowly vanishes.

Sindawe suggests, "Perhaps it's just submerging to drill its way through the hull."

Ox scoffs, "That's just an old wives' tale. In all my months of service at sea that's never happened."

Serpent points out, "Actually, that's a devilfish. Those things are the spawn of Dagon, they've got lots of tentacles and hooked teeth, and they like eating people. They say that anyone bitten by a devilfish will inevitably turn to evil as their soul is consumed!"

At this point Captain Fenn comes out of his cabin and yells at everyone to get back to work. The crew, lashed on by the First Mate, comply.

That afternoon, Bull tells Sindawe that devilfish are bad luck. He isn't surprised: after all, the Captain is hiding a woman in his quarters. Sindawe asks, "Has there been any other bad luck on the ship lately?" Bull refuses to answer.

Blacktoes tries to pump Old Pete for information about the prisoner. Old Pete tells him that the man is a serial cow rapist who went on a rampage down around Kintargo. He's being transported up to Riddleport where they don't have cows. Blacktoes concludes that Old Pete isn't that well informed.

The First Mate comes on deck and summons the characters (even the slave) to meet with the Captain. They find the Captain working at a small table. His woman *Selene* and *Tomas the Navigator* are in the background; none of the characters have seen much of either of them before. Serpent is amazed to see that Tomas actually wears a beret. The Captain offers some pleasantries, urges the characters to do what the First Mate tells them to do, and to stay clear of the prisoner. Serpent cackles from the shadows, "Is he dangerous? If he causes trouble should we ki-ki-kill him on sight?" The Captain avers that the prisoner is drugged up enough that he shouldn't be any trouble and that his value on arrival in Riddleport will be reduced if he is damaged.

SKULLS

That evening, after Ox demonstrates that he considers the gruel Wendt dishes out superior to anything he ever ate in Rahadoum, Bull recruits several of the characters to play a card game called *skulls*. On the way down belowdecks, Old Pete warns Serpent that Bull plays hard and has won a lot of money from him. Serpent is dismissive. But then Old Pete shows that he is able to channel Don King – he proposes setting up a fight with Bull. The two of them could split the winnings. Serpent declines on the grounds that he is much better with a blade than with his fists.

Everyone joins in the card game, even Ox (the First Mate forgot to lock him up after his conversation with the Captain). Ellis and Petronicus are in, but Old Pete owes Bull too much money so he's kept out of the circle. Bull wins the first set of hands, raking in a remarkable 157 silver coins. Ellis takes the second with 180 silvers.

After the second hand, everyone takes a short break. Serpent approaches Sindawe and suggests, "You know, both of us have lost a lot of gold and I hear that

Bull might be interested in a boxing match.” The two of them watch as Bull makes the mermaid tattoo on his back ripple. “I was thinking that you might be able to take him, and get us our money back.” Sindawe thinks about it, then agrees.

Midway through the third hand, Blacktoes asks Bull, “I would bet, but I can’t tell if this is a four or a five with this little marking on it.”

Sindawe glares at Bull, “It appears that one of us has dishonored his mother by cheating!”

Bull grumbles, “I don’t know what you’re talking about. Sure it’s a new game to you, but if you’re going to be sore losers then I guess that’s the way it’s going to be.”

Sindawe proposes, “Alright Bull, let us play for all the winnings. Stand up and box me!” The others are quite eager to see this, but the fight must be set for the next evening because there must be time for betting. Old Pete in particular is eager: he explains quietly to Wogan that Bull lost a prize fight at the last port call and is feeling a bit sensitive about it. He also tells Blacktoes that the *Albers* hasn’t had pirate trouble practically in ages, and everyone thinks this is because Captain Fenn pays them off on shore.

Over the course of the day it appears that Durt has taken a liking to Ox. The two of them have had similar lives and can share abuse stories. Over lunch he tells the big Rahadoumian that this is Captain Fenn’s last voyage and First Mate Huxley will be in charge after that.

The rest of the crew seems unhappy, squabbling among themselves all day long. The weather is nice, so Tomas the Navigator deigns to appear on deck for a short while. He even allows Sindawe to take the wheel for a while. Ox had hoped to have that chance, so he spends the later part of the afternoon sulking.

SETTING THE ODDS

Blacktoes organizes betting for the upcoming fight between Sindawe and Bull. Ellis puts 5g and Petronicus puts 2g on Bull. Ox joins them with another 2g for Bull. Sindawe and Serpent put 10g on Sindawe between the two of them. Wogen gives 3g to Old Pete, who bets on Sindawe. Wogen puts 5g of his own on Sindawe as well. And Bull bets 10g on himself. Blacktoes bets 5g on Sindawe. Then Blacktoes persuades Tomas to bet 10g and Wendt the Cook to bet 8g on Bull as well.

THE PUMMELING BEGINS

That evening after dinner the crew knows that they have some time to get themselves into trouble. Tonight, that trouble will be a fight! Serpent chirps, "This is much better than the old tradition of Sodomy-and-Cannibalism Thursdays!"

Bull clearly has a traditional approach to preparing for fisticuffs: he jumps around, flexes his muscles and works himself into a lather. Sindawe has a slightly different plan: he goes into lotus position, drops into deep meditation, and then starts to suffer from shooting stomach pains and... emissions issues.

Sindawe starts out by cracking Bull twice in the sternum and the head. Bull staggers back; his counterattack is off-balance and misses. Sindawe powers in again, slamming one meaty fist into Bull's abdomen and a rough foot into his crotch. Bull collapses in a heap, and the crowd goes wild.

At this point, Sindawe goes over to the cook and asks, "Did you bet for me or against me?"

In the background, Blacktoes speaks up, "Against you!"

Wendt the Cook (who had been sitting comfortably upon a barrel) is very surprised when Sindawe slugs him twice, explaining, "You have dishonored your father and mother for poisoning me!"

"Take that back you sheep-raper!"

"You poisoned me!"

"I can't help you if you're a lousy land-lubber!"

"We've been at sea two weeks!" Sindawe moves on the cook again. Wendt flees into the galley.

With the event over, Blacktoes distributes the winnings.

DAY THREE IN THE ONGOING SERIES

Wogen and Serpent arrange a short worship ceremony to Gozreh in the morning. Ox decides to take part because he likes the way Serpent approaches Gozreh-worship. He takes a glance askance at Wogen.

By midday the wind has blown up and the sea has become choppy, but the crew (remarkably) works well together and First Mate Huxley is able to keep the ship safe and on course. The storm blows through rapidly, leaving nothing in its wake.

The water calms and the ship is becalmed. Wogen and Serpent spend the time fishing. Ox spends time splicing rope into a ladder, and showing Durt how it is done.

The Prisoner Wakes

Late in the afternoon Sindawe hears someone moaning for help belowdecks. He follows the sound to the brig, where the prisoner *Vincenz* is coming conscious. The man is partially alert and calling for water, so Sindawe brings him some, pausing only to warn the Captain. Vincenz drinks the water, then immediately fall back to sleep. Sindawe is confused.

The Sky-Wolf Eats the Sun!

Ox is staring at clouds when he notices that the sky is getting darker. He becomes alarmed when he sees a bite taken out of the sun. He calls Serpent, who tells him it is a solar eclipse. Wogen admits, "I do not know what it means! But I am praying to my god!"

Ox answers, "I do not know if that will do any good. Serpent! Pray to his god!" Serpent obliges.

It is at this point that Huxley rings the alarm bell and yells at the crew, "All you dogs get to work! I've seen this before and it doesn't mean anything!" After a while, the eclipse passes.

The Prisoner's Story

A bit later, Sindawe hears the prisoner Vincenz calling out for food. Sindawe brings him some and explains where he is and where the ship is going. He asks why the Chelaxians didn't simply execute him, preferring to ship him to Riddleport. Vincenz claims that he doesn't even know what he's been charged with: the Hellknights just came for him one evening, he got a bit of a show trial, and then they fed him some gray goo and he passed out. His best guess is that the authorities blamed him for the death of a merchant family he was staying with. He explains that he is self-taught and had a trading business that was in trouble. A merchant family took pity on him, but before he can finish his story Durt whispers down "First Mate's coming!"

Sindawe stands and loudly states, "And don't get any ideas, prisoner!" just as Huxley walks up. He tells the First Mate that the prisoner woke ad got hungry. The First Mate tells him (and the rest of the crew) that there will be an extra ale ration

that evening. He breaks out a keg for them. Blacktoes (who doesn't drink all that much) breaks Ox's heart by taking his mug of ale down to Vincenz to have a longer conversation with him. Vincenz tells him that he was a sage back in Kintargo, and that he thinks the merchant family who treated him so well has been murdered bloodily. He doesn't know this directly: he was arrested by the soldiery as he returned to the house and never saw the bodies.

Blacktoes heads back up to the deck and tells Sindawe, "I think he's lying, or leaving something important out."

Sindawe agrees, "Yes. I could tell that he wasn't telling us everything...."

SCREAMING FROM THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Suddenly Serpent hears screaming coming from the Captain's quarters. He runs to the door, finds it locked, and breaks it open. He finds that the Captain is slumped across his desk, stone dead. He also notes that the Captain's glass eye is missing. And Selene is screaming at the top of her lungs.

Serpent attempts to calm Selene by shouting at her. This doesn't work at all. But by the time he's ready to give up most of the other folks on board have arrived. Blacktoes breaks the trend by checking on Vincenz, who doesn't seem to be doing anything remarkable.

Sindawe shows up and cracks Selene in the head. This quiets her down. He asks her what happened just as Huxley comes on the scene. She explains that she was sleeping and found Captain Fenn slumped over his desk when she woke. She thought he was merely sleeping but when she checked she found that he was dead.

Ox scuttles around looking for Captain Fenn's glass eye, but finds nothing. Then he notices that there is a bowl of stew and a mug of ale on the Captain's desk. He moves to try it.

Blacktoes enters the chamber just in time to see Ox raising a spoonful of the Captain's stew to his mouth. He cries out, "Stop! It might be poisoned!" and strikes the spoon away.

Ox complains, "Hey! I was going to eat that!" Blacktoes reflects that allowing the big Garundi to poison himself might have been simpler.

Ox eats two bites, then allows Sindawe to convince him to put the bowl aside. Sindawe reassures him, "Everyone knows that it's *your* stew."

Serpent turns to examining the Captain's corpse. He thinks the Captain was eating, then had some kind of violent convulsion. He explains this to the characters then points out, "This *sounds* like poison..."

Ox announces, "I feel fine" and returns to eating stew.

Sindawe persuades him, "Just don't drink anything you find in this cabin." Then he looks at the maps the Captain was studying. He thinks the Captain was replotting the ship's course. He gathers up the charts and goes to find the navigator Tomas.

ALL-HANDS MEETING!

First Mate Huxley announces, "Everyone out! Everyone get up on deck!"

Along the way, Blacktoes passes by the galley. Wendt pokes his head out and asks, "What's goin' on, fish molester?"

"Captain's dead. What's for breakfast?"

"You'll find out when everyone else does, you little pervert."

Blacktoes heads up to the deck, resolving to sneak back down again to get himself an early breakfast when the cook isn't watching. He searches the place, but doesn't find anything too interesting. He does lift an orange to give to Ox.

Sindawe finds Tomas in his quarters and brings him to the deck. On deck, he tells Tomas that the Captain was plotting a new course and gives him the charts to examine. Tomas assures Sindawe that he had plotted a perfectly safe course and that the Captain hadn't said anything about a new course. He does promise to figure out what the Captain was doing and to let Sindawe know.

Once he is convinced he has everyone except Selene up on the deck, First Mate Huxley asks if anyone has seen anything. Nobody volunteers any new information. Arrangements are made for a burial at sea for the Captain's body. Wogan gets the job of preparing the body and uses the opportunity to closely examine it. He doesn't find anything suggesting foul play.

SELENE OFFERS HER THEORIES

Blacktoes spends some time spying on Selene and First Mate Huxley. She spots him when he tries to sneak into the Captain's quarters, then invites him in. She tells him that she thinks the Captain was murdered. He promises to keep an eye out for her.

A little later, she calls him back down into the cabin to ask if everything is going okay. He tells her that everything is going well and that it is safe for her to sleep. She fears that now-Captain Huxley will try to kill her too. She has clearly decided that Huxley is the murderer. She knows that he used to argue with the Captain, but she doesn't know about what. Most recently they argued about the wisdom of taking the prisoner aboard.

THERE IS A SENSE OF FOREBODING!

Sindawe goes to talk to the prisoner. Vincenz indicates that he was having bad dreams. He felt that an unknown presence was watching him. There was a throbbing or drumming sound and a sense of foreboding. Sindawe explains that the Captain died very mysteriously. Vincenz asks if anything unusual has happened and Sindawe tells him about the eclipse and the fact that the vessel was becalmed. Vincenz suggests that he might be able to say more if he could look at the charts and determine the current location of the ship. Sindawe explains that Tomas is looking at the charts, to which Vincenz intones, "But he surely does not have the same level of mysterious arcane knowledge that I do!"

THE CAPTAIN'S FUNERAL, INTERRUPTED

Wogen leads the brief funeral ceremony for the Captain. Ox pays very close attention to his every word. Captain Huxley gives a short speech, clarifying that he is absolutely taking the position of Captain at least until the ship reaches port. And then the body is pushed over the side and vanishes in the deeps.

Sindawe hears sounds of a conflict belowdecks. He thinks it sounds like Bull and Huxley. He heads down to see what's happening, followed by Serpent and Ox. They find the two of them grappling outside Huxley's quarters. Sindawe yells, "Stop!" and starts slapping people around.

Bull howls out, "He's a murderer! A horrible murderer!"

Huxley protests, "I don't have any idea what he's talking about!"

Sindawe unleashes a *stunning fist* on Bull, who shakes it off. Ox goes into a rage and decks Bull, making the big man stagger back against the wall.

Huxley offers, "Thanks, men."

Serpent points out, "Unconscious again. Isn't that the second time he's been making trouble? Shouldn't he be tossed into the brig along with the prisoner?"

Huxley concurs, "Good thinking!"

It is at this point that Serpent notices that the Captain's missing glass eye is sitting on Captain Huxley's trunk. Serpent points it out. Huxley indicates that he has no idea what the eye is doing in his quarters, but the priest Wogen was in his quarters earlier in the day.

Sindawe drags Bull off to the galley and splashes some water on him to wake him up. He asks, "Why were you accusing Captain Huxley of murder?"

"Because he had the Captain's eye in his quarters!"

"Yes, well Serpent spotted it too and Huxley sounded pretty surprised about it."

"You're retarded! He killed the Captain! We need to stuff him in the brig!"

"Yes, but that's going to look like mutiny when we get to Riddleport. So if you just quiet down and follow my lead everything will be just dandy."

"I still say you're retarded."

"Then I need to put you in the brig."

Bull isn't too happy about this. He feels that Huxley needs to be in the brig and that Ellis and Petronicus would feel the same way. Vincenz is a bit surprised to see that he is getting a room-mate. Sindawe assures him, "You two play nicely!" He notes that the brig is none too large. Sindawe eventually reconsiders and persuades Captain Huxley to lock Bull up in Ox's spare pair of manacles. Captain Huxley indicates that the brig is off limits.

The evening ends with everyone keeping a close eye upon everyone else, with nobody sure who the murderer is or even if there was a murderer.

THE MYSTERIOUS DERELICT

Sindawe and Old Pete are both on morning watch. It is foggy, and a ship looms up out of the fog. Sindawe rings the alarm bell. As the ship approaches, everyone see it looks like another mid-sized cog with a derelict look to it, save for one odd feature: the mast looks like a big carved totem pole.

THE END OF THE SESSION

The session ends with the characters looking nervously over at the decks of the mysterious derelict ship. They know that they will soon need to board and investigate, but do not know how many of them will survive the experience.