

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 07/29/2012

TODAY'S EPISODE: GRAVEYARD OF THE MASTERS

The pirate vessel *Teeth of Araska* sails the Azlant Islands in search of the *Black Bunyip*, her captain (Morgan Baumann), and the Andoran Sun Temple Colony to which Sindawe's father Mogaba had left him a treasure map. At the end of the last game our heroes have made "friends" with Xiola (an attractive sorceress, is there any other kind?) of the Sun Temple while alienating every last member of said temple's White Robes (thought police, gestapo, and soldiers of god wrapped all in one). Our heroes narrowly escaped the White Robes' trap, found a lecture hall of dead Azlant scientists, listened to several lectures, and garnered some clues as to the Sun Demon Temple's origins (and possibly the location on a treasure map Sindawe's father, Mogaba, left him). They had just entered the underground Azlanti labs... or a temple to Zura, vampire goddess... or maybe both... sexy science anyone? Our heroes are:

- ♣ 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).
- ♣ Xiola Chelman, Sun Temple colonist and leader of the "fertile families" (NPC)
- ♣ Narbus Smeet, aka Lefty, one-handed teenage son of an outcast colony (NPC)

UNDERGROUND LABS OR ZURA LUST CHAMBERS?

Serpent, Wogan, Sindawe, Xiola, and Lefty pass through the temporary passage beneath the statue of an Azlanti Sun God sitting on a throne supported by a pair of elephants. The chamber on the other side has a mirroring statue. This statue's throne is supported by a pair of giant beetles.

The Sun God lies embedded in the floor while Zura, vampire goddess/goddess-vampire, sits on the throne above him with one talon sank into his thigh and another embedded in his screaming face.

Wogan identifies the beetles as "some sort of beetles". Serpent tops this by guessing "some sort of face-eater beetles". Sindawe sighs. The group spreads out to examine the frescoes and search for secret doors.

Finding nothing readable or secret they exit the room through a large hall to the north. They find double doors at the end of the hall as well as a T-intersecting hallway. The eastern hallway contains colonnades and disappears into the dark distance. The western hallway has the same, with the addition of archery slits in its northeastern wall. Wogan peeks into the first such slit and gets a crossbow bolt fired into his breastplate by a figure lurking inside. Wogan shoots back with a pistol (7pts). The crossbow man shoots off several spells which Wogan successfully resists (Will saves). Serpent drops a Spider Swarm through the slit and onto the crossbow shooter, followed quickly by Produce Flame (6pts). The shooter reacts appropriately by dropping into the universal "get it off me" dance. The slit limits their ability to see more than a "shadowy figure" and even that detail is lost when the shooter flees.

Sindawe tries the double doors but finds their stone weight immovable. Wogan uses his Chime of Opening. Still the doors do not move.

Sindawe sees a snake sneaking along the western hall; he charges it shouting, "Snake!!!", and stuns it with Stunning Fist (11pts) despite its heroic size (4 man lengths). The Spider Swarm continues chasing the crossbow man. Serpent, no longer able to see that shooter, throws Produce Flame (6pts) at the stunned snake. Xiola shrieks, "Snakes!" and hits the snake with Magic Missiles (8pts). Wogan worriedly asks, "Snakes?", as he shoots the snake (12pts). Lefty runs away shouting, "I want a weapon!"

Sindawe follows up with a Flurry of Blows (14pts). Serpent hits the snake again with Produce Flame (10pts). The snake bites and misses Serpent. Xiola holds her fire. Wogan's gun misfires, detonating in his hand; he drinks deeply from his rum flask then pours some more on his injured hand; fixed! A second Flurry of Blows kills the snake.

Investigating Ruined Rooms

The pirates press their luck and continue down the westward passage to find the remnants of a copper sleeved door with a serpent motif. A musty odor drifts out.

They are about to enter when Xiola announces, "I cast Comprehend Languages on myself. Shall I read something now?" She is still very hung over. The pirates return to the heavy stone doors to allow Xiola to translate the non-Azlanti, non-Aklo writings.

The translation: "All fall before the Queen of the Dead. A dread curse will befall all who enter without Zura's blessing. "

All of the parties' spell-casters announce that the door is heavy with curse magic.

The pirates return to the snake door room. The frescoes depict humans groveling before serpents of immense size. The central column has a huge snake's shed skin wrapped around it.

Serpent announces, "I'm going to use this design for my kid's nursery!"

Wogan replies, "Yeah... let's look around."

Finding little of interest the group exits through a second splintered door leading east. This room contains broken furniture, another door leading east, and a second splintered door. Serpent notes that the shooter passed through this room, then begins searching amongst the room's broken furniture. He turns up several locked, utilitarian chests. He pries them open with a crowbar to find several thousand silver coins (treasure: 2000 sp). Lefty is unimpressed, declaring "Only silver? Dang! Why bother?"

Sindawe asks, "Does anybody remember that mission where the only loot was that nice desk?"

Serpent, "I remember a mission where you made us carry a desk away despite the other treasure we had found."

Sindawe replies, "But it was a nice desk."

The pirates go through the eastern door. There's more mildewed wood and embrasures along the walls. A rack of Azlanti halberds hangs in poor condition. Wogan selects the best of the lot and hands it to Lefty, who demonstrates that one-handed pole arm fighters are at a huge disadvantage. The pirates search the room then press through yet another eastern door.

It leads to the room where the crossbow man had been shooting through the slit. Several armored skeletons litter the floor, yellowed with age. Wogan peers out through an arrow slit facing out through the northern wall... Not the one facing south through which he got shot. He sees another passage with a moat rather than a wall on its northern face. He smells blood.

Wogan, "I smell blood. I think I hear water flowing. Wait, nope, that's a moat of blood. It's magical too."

Serpent asks hopefully, "Maybe it is copper? Blood smells like copper... Maybe it's molten copper!"

Sindawe asks, "Is the blood valuable? Should we drink it? What powers would we get?"

Wogan says, "It would probably just make us sick. And give us whatever blood diseases the origin has."

Serpent declares, "My father once told me never to swallow more than a pint of blood. Any more than that is a waste because it just makes you sick." Lefty is clearly impressed by Serpent's biological knowledge. Xiola backs a little further away.

Wogan shakes his head and continues, "But it would be a useful potion ingredient. Especially amongst higher ranking necromancers."

The pirates turn their attention to searching for loot. The armored skeletons wear bronze breastplates, armored kilts, and one has a nice ring on its finger. Wogan snaps the finger off (treasure: ring, jewelry).

The group heads back several rooms to another splintered door, which was clearly beaten down by something massive. Sindawe speculates to Wogan, "Maybe the crazy hermit and his clockwork went through here."

The group searches the next room, an armory, finding a masterwork short sword (treasure: short sword, masterwork). Wogan hands it over to Lefty explaining, "Careful with that. It is worth more than you!"

The west wall has an arrow slit. The door to the north has also been broken down. Wogan spots four men in breastplates skulking down the hall. One spins and shoots at Wogan, causing the others to reflectively fire too. All miss due to the cover provided by the arrow slit. Wogan shouts what he has seen to the rest.

Serpent asks Sindawe, "Want to go meet them at the door?" Sindawe nods. The pair run quickly to the fight.

Wogan watches the four men duck into the next room casting spells along the way. Sindawe rushes into that same room from another door. At this range the four men (robes, breastplates, and crossbows) are clearly four undead creatures (indeterminate); he shouts, "Undead!"

Xiola runs in just after Sindawe. She agrees, "They are undead!" and breathes fire (17pts) making them unhappy undead (still indeterminate despite the unhappy type). Wogan gets to the door and shoots the closest undead in the head; it drops. Serpent joins the fray and kills another with a staff swing.

One undead drops its crossbow to attack Sindawe with claws; it misses. The other undead hits the living with negative energy burst (5pts). Apparently they are undead evil clerics.

And then a tiger lunges through the door behind the undead to pounce upon Serpent. It is mutated beyond normal tiger-ness, with demonic eyes and reddish fur and bone-spurs coming out of odd places. The tiger hits the surprised pirate with jaws and several claws (37 pts), pinning him to the floor.

Wogan shouts, "There must be a tiger themed room in this complex!"

Sindawe pounds away at the tiger (27pts). Xiola breathes fire upon the undead (4pts). Lefty runs away while claiming, "I'm going to get a torch!" Serpent switches to his silver scimitar and slashes at the tiger (5pts), noting that the slash does no damage. Wogan heals Serpent (21pts).

The undead claw at Xiola, dealing minor wounds. The fiendish tiger flings itself at Wogan missing with its jaws and a claw; its hits with a single claw (8pts), grabs Wogan, and grapples him. Sindawe hits the tiger repeatedly with Flurry of Blows (36pts). Xiola breathes fire again, but misses. Wogan stabs the tiger with his trident (1pt). Serpent grabs up his staff and hits the tiger (16pts).

The undead shred Xiola unconscious. The tiger continues attacking the grappled Wogan (32pts); Wogan clings to life. Serpent notices a giant constrictor snake enter through the far door and narrowly avoids its attack. Sindawe beats the tiger to death (41pts); it leaves only sulfur dust.

Lefty runs back into the room screaming, "Let's get them, Serpent." He swings at the undead with his short sword. Wogan channels positive energy (13pts) to everyone in the room, including Xiola who was perched upon death's precipice. Serpent decides that the summoner must be out in the hall from whence the summoned snake came; he dodges past the snake and into the hall. He finds only darkness.

The undead split up to attack Lefty (9pts) and Xiola (3pts). Sindawe destroys the undead threatening Xiola. She fires Magic Missiles into the remaining undead, shattering it. Wogan channels positive energy (9pts), healing Xiola and Lefty fully. Serpent turns on a Snake Totem power gaining Scent and Low-Light vision. He follows the snake and tiger's sulfurous paths back to a room yet unexplored by the pirates.

ZURA'S ROOM

Serpent enters through open doors. It is a high ceiling room with a statue of Zura (bat wings instead of arms, talons in place of her feet). Blood drops from the altar into a channel carved into the floor. The channel passes through the metals bars set in the eastern wall. And finally, there is a trio of priest types chanting in an alien tongue. They point their spells at Serpent; he shrugs off a *Bestow Curse* and a pair of *Dooms*.

Back in the other chamber the summoned fiendish snake wraps around Wogan (13pts). Sindawe unwinds the snake from Wogan and whip snaps it against a column (47pts); only a sulfur dust remains. Xiola casts *Light* on a rock and runs after Serpent. Lefty follows. Wogan heals himself and also follows. Sindawe looks around and asks, "Hello?" and then charges after them.

Serpent slams a priest several times with his staff. The two minion priests claw at him (5pts, plus something requiring a Fort save). Sindawe, using his monk speed, joins Serpent in the room; his Light spell reveals that at least the minion priests are undead. Xiola enters and shoots *Magic Missiles* into the high priest. Lefty attacks a priest fighting Serpent; Serpent flinches away from the dangerous sword swings. Wogan puts a bullet into the high priest. Serpent RAGES and badly injures an undead priest.

The high priest successfully paralyzes Serpent with *Hold Person*. One minion priest delivers a coup de grace on Serpent; Serpent clings to life. The other undead priest attacks Lefty. Sindawe rains blows upon Serpent's attacker (8pts) but misses several times. Xiola uses another *Magic Missile* to finish off the other minion priest. Wogan casts *Silence* on the floor in front the high priest.

Serpent shakes off the *Hold Person* just before the minion priest bangs Lefty's and Serpent's heads together. The high priest dips his hand into the blood, climbs up onto the altar, and smears the blood onto the statues lips. He disappears into a mist of blood. Sindawe kills the last minion priest. Xiola fires *Magic Missiles* at the high priest's gaseous form; it works and deals some damage!

Wogan casts *Dispel Magic* (using his Silence meta-magic rod); natural 20. The high priest appears over the blood channel - SPLASH. Serpent leaps upon the high priest and beats his head to bits; the head emits a puff of dust and priest ceases to move.

OUR PLAYERS TAKE A SNACK BREAK

Chris complains, "Why does Hero Lab list 'rations' on the spendable resources list? I just want the combat stuff. And I want it right now!"

Ernest agrees, "I know. They need a 'sort by shit I care about' button."

Paul offers, "Rations? That's a weird item for software to obsess over. On the other hand, I have never seen a feminine hygiene product on an equipment list."

Patrick remarks, "Well, I guess that means the women in Pathfinder are stinky and bleed all over the place."

Chris laughs around his scotch and declares, "That would be a great title for a book. It needs chapters called "Don't Ever Buy a White Sofa," "I Shit Myself Unconscious," "Don't Swallow More Than A Pint of Blood," and "Daphne's Anus!"

Then we take a break to sober up.

LOOTING THE UNDEAD

Wogan gathers up samples of fiendish sulfur from the deceased summoned monsters.

The others gather equipment and identify magic items:

- ♣ Banded Mail +1
- ♣ Large Wooden Shield, Morning Star
- ♣ Scroll - Spiritual Weapon
- ♣ Potions: Cure Moderate Wounds, Invisibility
- ♣ Breastplate (6)
- ♣ Crossbow, light (4)
- ♣ Magical Bolts +1 (10)

One breastplate, a light crossbow, and the 10 +1 bolts go to Lefty.

Wogan takes a closer look at the Blood Altar with its 10' tall statue of Zura. The trough of blood it generates runs east through bronze bars and into the blood moat. The blood radiates necromantic magic. Wogan fills and stoppers several bottle of the "blood".

In the altar room are three alcoves with interesting frescoes. The first is of a fighting warrior with a terrible smile. The second is a coiled serpent with the same smile. The third is a sleeping elephant - Wogan remembers that the elephant is an avatar of the Azlanti Sun God. On that same fresco Sindawe spots Mwangi trail markings. He ponders their meaning and comes up

with, "Much Danger. Turning Back." But it is unclear if this applies to the alcove or the overall area. Each alcove also holds a door out of the chapel chamber.

Serpent says, "If we had a mouse we could threaten any elephant beyond that door into compliance... or an orgy of stamping."

Wogan replies, "I might be able to get a rat out of my Summoning Box."

Serpent shakes his head, "Rats won't work." Then he smiles.

Wogan decides to examine everyone for diseases given the recent bout of undead bites. Xiola has contracted filth fever but has several days before it sets in.

MORE EXPLORATION

Serpent determines that the serpent door has been opened recently. The elephant door hasn't been opened in a long time. Serpent opens the serpent door to find a room equipped with shackles and irons in a cage. They search but find nothing except additional exits to rooms they have already been through.

They try the tiger door next to find a kitchen with additional exits. The room is searched for valuables. They claim several sets of Azlanti dining utensils - alien devices with two pronged forks, three different sizes of spoon, etc... A crossbow slit looks out over the Moat of Blood. A Light spell is applied to a crossbow bolt, which is fired across the moat to reveal another landing/passage, colonnades, and a very tall basalt wall.

The search continues. They find a stew pot with human remains. Yep, undead ate here.

A northern double door is thrown wide to reveal a long, large chamber, one exit on the northern wall, and ten monk cells. Each cell contains a pallet. Four contain undead, which leap up and attack.

Several undead cast *Doom* upon Serpent and Xiola, and several try touch attacks on Sindawe and Wogan. Xiola counters with *Fire Breath* (9pts) on the lot. Sindawe smashes one to bits (19pts). Wogan gut shoots another with his pistol. Serpent bashes another (16pts). Another *Doom* spell goes off without success and they toss several negative energy bursts (6pts and 6pts). Another *Fire Breath* from Xiola (7pts) burns them back. Sindawe beats another to splinters. Wogan uses a positive energy burst (15pts) to heal his friends.

Xiola and Lefty both shout, "Yea! Take that evil worshipers!" The pirates wonder at their arrogance.

Serpent ends a third undead with a double hit from his staff. The last undead cleric turns and runs through the northern doors. Lefty grabs hold of it and gets dragged several feet before getting knocked loose. Xiola refuses to chase it down. Sindawe does - he runs through a ruined library with doors to the north and east. The undead runs through the east door; Sindawe catches up to it. Four more undead lie within this chamber. They leap up.

Sindawe sighs, "Shit." But he brightens when he hears his friends running up behind him.

Wogan gets far enough to obtain line of sight; he shoots the racing zombie (12pts). Serpent catches up to Sindawe and the zombie. The zombie turns and uses *Negative Energy* (4pts). Another zombie races to a rope and pulls on it... a silent alarm?!? The third zombie kicks at Sindawe and misses. The fourth and fifth race around Sindawe to attack Serpent (6pts and fort saves vs disease and *Stunning Fist*). Xiola breathes fire on these last two (2pts).

Sindawe and Serpent flank one of the monks and beat it into proper death. Wogan moves into the chamber and hits the undead with a *Positive Energy Burst* (9pts) - killing the undead cleric. The monk undead rush in eagerly and miss... a lot. Xiola hits one with *Disrupt Undead*. Sindawe and Serpent disassemble another. Serpent maneuvers for a better position and steps into Lefty's poorly aimed blow (4pts). An undead monk hits Serpent (6pts and a failed *Stunning Fist*).

Xiola snipes again with *Disrupt Undead* (5pts). Serpent and Sindawe ends a third undead monk.

Wogan and Xiola snipe at the last undead monk (12pts) and Serpent ends it.

Wogan looks around for materials to barricade against the double doors. Unfortunately, the monk cells are furniture light and most of that is rotted. Serpent looks for loot. Sindawe says, "We should get out of here. Wogan, heal the wounded when you can."

CLIFF-HANGER - THE SKULL FACED STRIPPER

A pale skinned, scantily clad woman steps through the double doors. She is hot in that way only the supernatural can achieve.

Sindawe whispers to his friends, "I'm going to take the bullet on this one and sleep with her. Just hang back and play it cool." Wogan rolls his eyes.

At the stripper's side is a large tiger. Her face has a skull painted upon it. She looks imperiously upon the pirates and their hangers on. She looks back to Sindawe and says with a smile, "Mogaba. Have you returned to me after all this time?"

