

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 10/07/2012

TODAY'S EPISODE: CIVIL WAR PART 2

Our heroes are on a tropical Azlanti island upon which dwells the Andoran Sun Temple Colony. They are there to hunt down Captain Baumann and capture her ship the *Black Bunyip*. But before they can do that they must defeat an ancient Azlanti Flying Death-Ray Lens (AFDRL) that protects the colonists by burning foreigners and their ships as well as outcasts and monsters. Our heroes are working with Andoren outcasts and Xiola (representing the cultist Fertile Families) to seize the control of the AFDRL from the God-Touched cultists. The alliance is tenuous because the outcasts hate the cultists, the cultists hate the outcasts, no one really trusts the pirates, and everyone is afraid of betrayal once the AFDRL is up for grabs. If the alliance succeeds, the outcasts and surviving cultists get to live in peace and use the AFDRL to keep marauding Mordant Spire Elves and monsters at bay. And the pirates get a trade monopoly with both groups (who frequently dig up exotic Azlanti goods) and safe passage from the AFDRL.

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).
- ^ Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common and her cobra Naja.
- ^ Samaritha, the wand-blastin' serpentfolk wizard in the guise of a pretty half-elf, and now Serpent's wife!
- ^ Bosun Tommy Blacktoes, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue (was Kevin, now an NPC).
- ^ Lavender Lil, a buxom tiefling ex-prostitute, and Tommy's girlfriend.
- ^ With them are the pirates of the *Teeth of Araska*, some 20+ souls consisting of:
 - ^ Survivors from the ship's previous pirate crew
 - ^ Ex-slaves escaped from their Chelish owner (Martino Marcellano) and recruited from their castaway island home

- ▲ Various other recruits, some willing, some not.
- ▲ Daphne, a female sorcerer kidnapped from the coastal town **Hollobrae** and dominated by Samaritha into compliance and friendly spell casting.
- ▲ JJ, an aquatic homunculus, whose master may be dead.
- ▲ Current temporary allies:
 - ▲ Xiola Chelman, a sorceress belonging to the Andoran colony's Sun Temple faction. She's asked her priest too many questions and is now on the run from his White Robes.
 - ▲ Narbus Smeet, aka Lefty, son of Elder Adara Smeet, member of the Andoran colony's purist faction, and turncoat/spy for the Sun Temple faction.

PIRATES AND OUTCASTS VS. CULTISTS

Part of the big plan from last time was having the pirate crew, outcasts, and mad hermit Mulenaar (and his golem) launch a diversionary attack on the cultist village. The attack succeeded in drawing off most of the cultist soldiers (white robes, god-touched, low ranked priests), allowing our heroes and some allies to sneak in and kill the village's high priest during a religious ceremony. But the question remains: How went the diversionary attack? Too many casualties amongst the pirates or the outcasts could spell disaster. The GM has decided to answer that question using mass combat rules.

The Good Guys: The outcasts (20 'individuals' in 2 units) have Azlanti tech including cryo guns and cryo pacifiers: one fires ice bullets, the other is the cold equivalent of a flame thrower. The mad hermit has an Azlanti tech golem (Shield Guardian). The pirates (20 souls in 2 units) have some magic items, a little Azlanti tech, some firearms and several leaders: Hatshepsut (a high level monk/cleric) and Tommy Blacktoes (halving rogue).

The Bad Guys: Cultists are the largest number (40 souls in 4 units) - they're basically true believers with some Azlanti tech, the next largest group are the Touched (10 Tear of Nuru'gal possessed cultists in one unit, with fire immunity and some spells), and a small number of Fertile

Family members (militarily and politically unreliable). The Touched are extra dangerous because when they die or go unconscious their Tear of Nuruu'gal possessor emerges to seek a new host while firing Scorching Rays.

THE LINES ARE DRAWN

The battle starts with confusion in the cultist's ranks; the Fertile Family members are dragging their heels at Xiola's direction, distracting the other groups. The hermit's golem charges into the Touched, killing several. The outcasts fire their cryo pacifier, numbing and subduing some of the cultists. This also puts three Tears of Nuruu'gal on the battlefield. Tommy and Hatshepsut murder enemy combatants.

The Touched and cultists counter with *Cause Fear* forcing a number of the pirates and outcasts to flee. Those that remain get hit with *Burning Hands* spells and *Scorching Rays*; grievous wounds and death occur. Cultists ineffectually attack the golem. The good guys have suffered 45% casualties (killed, wounded, or fled).

But the good guys stand their ground... the pirates give good account with cutlass and dagger. The golem squashes the Tear of Nuruu'gal plasma blobs with its mighty, over-sized metal hands. The outcasts don't fare nearly as well; they wound few enemies. Hatshepsut wades into another cluster of enemies, slaying several with her snake fist strikes. The cultists are at 50% casualties.

Luckily, the cultists have used their most powerful spells in the initial fighting, leaving only *Cause Fear* and *Scorching Ray* (individual targets only). They almost universally choose to use *Cause Fear* on the pirates but only send a couple more fleeing. A surviving blob seeks a new host; lacking eyes and higher judgement it randomly selects a cultist. Everyone retreats from the horrible

cavity violation. The Fertile Family members stay clear of the conflict, edging back to their village. The pirates are at 55% casualties, the outcasts at 50%.

The outcasts employ their stun weapons (electricity delivered via nets connected to Azlanti batteries) against the Touched, bringing them up to 60% casualties and making the stunned easier to squash. Cultists wade into the outcasts swinging morning stars, seeking out those with Azlanti cold-tech weapons. One plasma-blob shoots a *Scorching Ray* while the other is busy forcing itself down the gullet of an outcast. The Touched fire *Scorching Rays*, missing entirely and qualifying all for the storm trooper Olympics. A few cultists fire *Burning Hands* into the pirates, burning several. Others attack with morning stars. Hatshepsut avenges the pirate losses by killing three cultists. The pirates move clear of a single plasma-blob seeking a host.

And so the battle goes; neither side is winning despite mounting casualties. Things look worse for the cultists, who are doing more dying.

The battle continues: Tommy wrestles with a Tear of Nuruu'gal which forces its way down his throat; it burns his insides while telepathically demanding 'control'. Tommy chooses to burn rather than give in. Hatshepsut notices this while healing severely wounded pirates. The Touched and the Tears continue to draw the golem's attention. One decimated cultist unit flees the field and another ceases to exist due to casualties. Those that fled due to the *Cause Fear* (pirates and outcasts) do not return to the fighting. It remains to be seen if their absence is due to discretion or because they got ate by monsters.

An entire cultist unit rushes the golem and fails to hurt it. But one gets past the golem and severely stabs Mulenaar the hermit. He screams and a wound appears on the golem! Hatshepsut kills a pair of Touched and wounds the last one standing. The dead mens' Tears of Nuruu'gal spill out.

Tommy continues wrestling with his possessor while the last Touched cultist slowly drags him toward some bushes. Until pirates fall upon that one and murder him, spilling a third Tear onto the ground. Tommy finally expels his tormentor and crawls aside, badly burnt. Other pirates nearly destroy a cultist unit. Outcasts kill and wound the Tears with ice bullets. The cultists attack the hermit with great zeal, surpassing the damage shield he shares with the golem, wounding both. A cultist carrying a Tear is slain.

THE BATTLE ENDS

The remaining cultists all halt in unison, as if hearing a command. They break combat and hurry back to the village. They stop long enough to recover one Tear by offering it a host. The remaining loose Tears are destroyed by ice bullets and golem pounding.

The pirates, outcasts and hermit have the field. They tend to their wounded. The pirates also loot the fallen cultists, dispatching any wounded they encounter. The outcasts watch this activity with horror. The loot is mainly masterwork morning stars with a sprinkling of Azlanti tech and treasures.

It is during this time that the Watchers, who had been hanging about invisibly, appear and begin feeding on the energies released by death. Their lights dance merrily above the carnage-strewn field.

WE KILLED YOUR PRIEST! REJOYCE!

The cultist army returns to find their village priest slain. Xiola stands in his place, the Flame of Guidance in her hands. They are unhappy and angry, but Xiola calms them with a speech about freedom from Olibrax's tyranny.

Sindawe and Serpent noticed black sails out on the water. The *Black Bunyip* is taking advantage of the chaos and retasking of the Lens to leave the bay. Sindawe demands of Xiola, "Send the lens to chase them back here. Don't let them get away."

Xiola gestures at the cultist army and replies, "I can't. My people are unhappy and confused. They might attack us if I send the lens away."

Sindawe shakes his head and stamps away to help loot this high priest, Olibrax. A villager, angry over the treatment of Olibrax's corpse, draws Sindawe's ire. Sindawe beats the man.

Serpent asks his wife, Samaritha, to send Daphne after the *Black Bunyip* to burn its sails. However, she is too low on spells to make this practical.

Wogan turns to healing the commandos (the folks who killed Olibrax). All of them are heavily wounded. After he has finished Samaritha pulls him aside.

Samaritha asks him, "Don't go. Am I alright?"

Wogan replies, "What? Yes, I just healed you!"

Samaritha says, "No, not that. I'm pregnant; I want to make sure the baby is OK. Don't tell Serpent. I will tell him when the time is right." The pair retreat to Xiola's house for a full exam. Everything is OK. Samaritha is relieved. Wogan begins to worry about doctoring a serpentfolk woman. He understands that their anatomy can vary greatly from a human's. He also imagines delivering a clutch: some of the babies spill out onto the floor while others bite at his face and hands. Wogan decides he has a lot of reading to do.

Some time later the pirate crew wanders into the cultist village. The outcasts went home. Another fight is brewing until Xiola begins ordering her people about. Wogan heals his pirates and some villagers with Positive Energy Bursts. This also revives the heavily wounded Little Mike and Pirro.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FLED PIRATES?

The pirates leave after making sure Xiola has the situation under control. They return to the outcast village and are happy to find the crewmen that fled the battle. Those pirates managed to link up and return safely. They encountered a cultist raiding party on the way back. They killed all the cultists and Gareb captured a dragon-carved staff that throbs with power. It grants him a bite attack.

The pirates on the elf skiff also survived. Most of them managed to abandon ship before the AFDRL controlled by Olibrax attacked. Jaren the Jinx was badly burned. Their swim back to shore was uneventful, except apparently for some sexual escapades between Kahina and JJ the seamunculus, which no one wants to hear about in further detail.

BACK TO THE SHIP

The pirates return to their ship at the base of the cliff face where the outcast village resides. The ship is safe and sound, but Lavender Lil is missing. The crew spreads out to search. The pirates that went below quickly return to the deck yelling, "There's a tiger down there! And no Lil."

No one knows what to make of this until Sindawe explains, "The stripper must be here." Blank stares. "The vampire! She had a tiger!" The officers go below to find Saeng Ki's tiger in Lil's quarters with a paw on one of her bodices.

Wogan offers, "She must be angry that we didn't bring her the Flame of Guidance."

The pirate officers return to the deck and argue about their next move. They assume that the vampire stripper has kidnapped Lil hoping to get the Flame of Guidance for ransom. But they need to search the ship to make sure that Lil is gone and to find out what happened to the elf

prisoners. And it is still daylight out, so if the vampire stripper lurks below the pirates might more easily destroy her.

The crew is ordered to strip the roofing from houses in the outcast village. Those roofs are covered with a shiny metal that fully reflects the AFDRL's heat beam. And they make a dazzling sight in the sunlight. The strips of metal are to be affixed to shield sized pieces of wood. These giant mirrors will be used to flood the ship's interior with sunlight.

While the crew is busy with that labor the officers count their resources, pool their silver weapons, and figure out how they'll flush the vampires out of the ship's hold.

All of their plans are for naught. The only vampire down below is the stripper's tiger (Yes, Nick at Night's "vampire dog" episode has ruined vampirism for us all!). The search does turn up one of the two elf prisoners, Natulcien. Natulcien explains that she and Nariel heard voices on deck; they peeked out to see a mysterious woman talking to Lil. And there was a tiger too. For reasons that Natulcien cannot fully explain, Nariel decided that they should hide. She last saw Nariel when she sealed her into a crate in the cargo area. The search does not turn up Nariel.

Sindawe wants to kill the vampire tiger while it is at their mercy. Tommy argues that the tiger's mistress will kill Lil in retaliation. Sindawe is convinced that the mistress is crazy and cannot be trusted to make rational decisions let alone stick with them. Largely, Sindawe arrived at this through direct observation of the vampire. Plus, she's dresses like a stripper and everyone knows a stripper is crazier than a bag of rabid goblins. Sindawe relents because Tommy professes his love for Lil and Lil is a member of the crew.

CLIFFHANGER

The pirate officers decide that they will return to the cultist village and ask Xiola for help. They hope she will order some of the Touched to accompany them on their mission to rescue Lil and Nariel. The Touched are the next best thing for fighting vampires, because they have plenty of fire spells and when they die a Tear of Nuruu'gal emerges. The Tears shoot Scorching Rays until they find a new host. And probably, Xiola won't be upset if the pirates get some of the Touched killed; they will never be strong supporters of her leadership.