

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 02/24/2012

TODAY'S EPISODE: WRATH OF THE LOST

Our heroes are on Argavist Island to visit the Arm-Ripper Shrine for its little known regenerative properties. The landing party includes every sailor who is short a body part or two. They discovered that White Estrid's Ulfen fleet is anchored at the island in preparation for raiding season. And the shrine has been overrun by wrath sinspawn and their mutant spider pets. Mythra, *Witch of the Dark pines*, and her werewolf children want the shrine back... Or rather they want the pirates to take the shrine back for them. A deal was struck - take back the shrine and Mythra herself will regenerate limbs and remove curses. Sindawe nurses a secret curse of bad luck from when he murdered Jaren the Jinx on the voyage here. We hate them all. Our heroes are:

- ♣ Captain Sindawe H'kilata Narr of the *Teeth of Araska*, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris).
- ♣ Bosun Ref "Serpent" Jorensen, the staff-bashin' ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul).
- ♣ Samaritha, the wand-blastin' serpentfolk wizard in the guise of a pretty half-elf, and now Serpent's wife!
- ♣ Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common and her cobra Naja.
- ♣ Captain Wogan of the *Black Bunyip*, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick).
- ♣ Bosun Tommy Blacktoes, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue.
- ♣ Lavender Lil, a buxom tiefling ex-prostitute, and Tommy's girlfriend.
- ♣ With them are *Teeth of Araska* pirates:
 - ♣ Survivors from the ship's previous pirate crew
 - ♣ Ex-slaves escaped from their Chelish owner (Martino Marcellano)
 - ♣ Various other recruits, some willing, some not.
 - ♣ JJ, an aquatic homunculus, whose master may be dead.
 - ♣ Recruits from the Andoran Colony, rebel faction (not Nuruu'gal):

- ♣ Lefty (Narbus Smeet), traitor to his people, self-inflicted amputee, and son of the sorceress Elder Adara Smeet.
 - ♣ Claxton, he's tried "rebel" now he'll try "sailor".
 - ♣ Tegan, skilled house wife, and recently married to Stoke.
- ♣ 20 or so pirates captured along with the *Black Bunyip*. Their ex-captain, Morgan Baumann, languishes without her thumbs in the *Araska's* brig.

BIOLOGY 101

The pirates are taking a short break in a side room, while Serpent mends his staff. It achieved its broken status by smashing a gray ooze into small acid puddles. The room's air quality is eye-wateringly bad thanks to the dead acid emitting ooze and what smells like a rotting cave bear carcass. The pirate officers are convinced that the smell is from a cave bear because they killed one on their last visit to the island... just through that door.

The landing party includes: Serpent, Wogan, Sindawe, Saluthra, Lefty (expert 2, missing his right hand), Mase Venjum (no thumbs, aristocrat 2/warrior 2), Orgon One-Ear (fighter 2, missing an ear), Bel the Eunuch (warrior 2, missing his junk), and Peg-Leg Pete (rogue 1/warrior 2, missing a leg).

Mase Venjum asks, "Are we close to the shrine?"

Wogan consults a crude map, then his memory, and answers, "Yes. Well, probably."

The rest of the crew amuse themselves at Serpent's expense while he lovingly applies *mend* to his killing staff. Eventually he finishes the job and announces he is ready.

Sindawe opens the next door, revealing the cave bear room. The cave bear, long dead, is still rotting and covered with dungeon quality fungus. The pirates decide to edge quietly around the

organic mass. Even most thrill happy amongst them recognize the potential danger; everyone is very quiet and moves through the room slowly.

Suddenly, there is a slight earth tremor. Dust and small debris rain down onto the fungus and corpse. In response the organic mass writhes and explodes. Spores fill the room. Adrenaline fueled pirates stab and slash the mass. None seem to strike anything vital. Orgon One-Ear manages to cut himself. The rotten mass sloughs up into a semi-standing position, with big chunks falling off with slurping sounds.

Wogan yells out, "It's undead!"

Serpent replies, "I agree!"

Serpent pounds on a likely fungal mass with his staff but it merely compresses then springs back. Wogan's blunderbuss misfires, showering his hand and arm with burning powder. Sindawe stabs with his shocking spear to little positive effect... and the electricity seems to benefit the fungus which stands up taller. The yellow spores land on most of the men; Bel, Lefty, and Orgon start coughing heartily. Bel drops to the floor (3 Con pts), while Lefty and Orgon shake off the lung clogging spores. The pirates continue attacking, again to little effect.

Serpent and Wogan both decide this isn't an undead creature. The fungus grabs Serpent with a pair of fungus arms?!? Serpent also deduces that the fungus, not the organic mass, is the monster. With his magically enhanced intelligence, he decides that it is probably a shambling mound mutation. Serpent pulls his scimitar and cuts a small chunk off. He yells out, "Use slashing weapons!"

Wogan frees Serpent using *freedom of movement* cast from a scroll. Sindawe slashes with his kama but drops it by accident while dodging the fungus arms.

Another shower of spores robs Bel and Sindawe of constitution. Mase picks up the kama and tosses it to Sindawe, but throws wide thanks to his missing thumbs. Serpent slashes the fungus repeatedly. Wogan's shots again. Sindawe retrieves his kama. Bel finally shakes off the lung clogging spores, while Orgon sucks in a lungful. Serpent delivers a minor cut. Wogan shoots a magic missile out of his *Rain Tiger* emerald. Sindawe yells, "Flee!"

The pirate crew follows orders - they push open the northern door and rush into the next chamber. Serpent refuses to retreat and strikes the creature several times, winding himself in the process. Wogan runs out of the chamber, turns and shots a musket into the fungus. Sindawe swings his kama wildly doing little damage then screams, "Serpent, why didn't you flee?"

Serpent lies, "I didn't know you were talking to me!" The fungus hits him heavily and tears itself open on his dragon shaped helm. He retreats out of the room, followed by Sindawe. Lefty throws a hand axe at the fungus just before the other men slam the door shut and lean heavily against it.

But fungus cannot be denied! It throws its mass (cave bear size) against the door and sends the men stumbling clear of the splintered remains. The crew panic and run for it, except Mase who keeps his wits and tries to establish order. Several declare, "To the cannon! The cannon can kill it!"

Wogan and Serpent both cast healing spells on Serpent's wounds. Sindawe shrugs and delivers several minor kama wounds before getting smashed twice; he narrowly wiggles free of its grab. Serpent rages, closes with the fungus, and possibly staggers the creature with multiple staff smacks. Wogan uses a positive energy burst to heal the wounded, minus the fungus. Sindawe steals the kill with another minor cut. The fungus collapses spilling lackluster spores onto the floor.

The pirates regroup for healing and a few lesser restorations. Wogan examines the men for spore infestations. He doesn't find any, but Serpent points out, "The spores might only grow fungus on dead, rotting flesh."

Wogan advises Sindawe, "You should order the men to not die in the next few days. That way we can avoid a fungus outbreak."

Sindawe merely laughs.

DEALING WITH THE DEVIL

The officers organize the group into a rough formation with Sindawe and Serpent in the lead, followed by Mase and Wogan, and the rest bringing up the rear. The last two men in the group are warned to "Look back. A lot." Another small tremor hits as the group moves northward.

The next area is naturally occurring tunnels with root heavy, earthen ceilings. The officers stick to the old route. Rounding a corner, Sindawe and Serpent spot a pair of wrath sinspawn. They back up quietly, signaling for quiet. For a change the men are paying attention and follow orders.

An ambush is laid - some of the men press themselves into niches along the walls, while others duck into a side passage. Sindawe steps out into the open, then makes some noise as he slowly flees in the "Han Solo Gambit." The sinspawn take the bait! A few seconds later the sinspawn run into a flurry of sneak attacks, punches, and staff swings. And then the fight begins in earnest. Sindawe staggers one, then Wogan stabs it in the head with a trident. The other one tries to run for it just as Serpent cuts him down.

Sindawe asks Serpent to scout ahead while everyone else hides the mess. Serpent takes off. Sindawe orders men to haul the dead down the side passage, others are directed to throw earth over

the spilled blood. The ranseurs are cleaned, the heads covered with spare burlap sacks, then placed into the portable hole. Sindawe notices Pete painting in blood on a wall, "Bugs Die! Pete w..."

"What are you doing?!? Stop that. We don't want them to know we are here." he whispers.

Pete answers, "But Captain Baumann always had us write in blood on the walls!"

Sindawe replies, "Clean that off. Remember - you are the new guy. I don't have to bring you back."

Meanwhile, Serpent quietly moves through the guard area. Nothing is moving. He continues on to find a large open cave. There is another tunnel on the far end. Roughly in middle is a 60' wide chasm crossed by a single, unstable earthen bridge. There are no more sinspawn. He remembers that the chasm was full of bugs the last time, so he decides to sneak up.

A chirpy voice says, "I wouldn't do that."

Serpent spins on the talking crow. It sits high over head amongst a tangle of roots. He doesn't see any daylight and wonders how it got into this area.

"What do you want?"

"You know what I want!" answers the bird.

Serpent replies, "That isn't going to happen."

The bird taunts, "I can pay!"

Serpent offers, "Let's go talk to the captains." He jogs back to the other pirates. The bird flies after him.

A short time later the other pirates are filled in.

Sindawe says, "We can't give you the dwarf. We made a deal with his new boss. Not going to happen."

The bird says, "I can pay! What do you want?"

Sindawe rolls his eyes, "Bird, you better offer something good. And remember, you hounded us for several weeks after we last left this island. You better offer something really good."

The bird cocks its head, then replies, "What are you talking about? That wasn't me. Besides, you killed my hell hounds!"

Serpent says, "Your hounds attacked us. They deserved death. They got dead."

Sindawe smiles, "Exactly. That doesn't matter. We blame you. Your fault, my fault, nobody's fault. You owe us big."

The bird bobs, then declares, "My master has contacts. He can answer any question you have. Six questions."

Wogan asks, "Who is your boss? That sounds like demon magic."

The bird snottily explains, "Not a demon. He's a great devil. He can answer any six questions you want."

Sindawe asks Wogan, "Do we have any unanswered questions? That are heavy enough to rate killing a werewolf dwarf and pissing off Mistra, Mistress of the Dark Pines?"

Wogan shrugs, "We could ask about what is up ahead."

Serpent covers his eyes with one hand and says in a spooky voice, "I see... sinspawn! And a chasm full of bugs! And... a shrine! I bet Mr. Devil would tell us that exactly."

Sindawe tells the bird, "We'll think about it."

FORWARD! THE WORST IS BEHIND US!

The pirates arrive at the earthen bridge. The men have been told to cross quietly and quickly. A rope is tied around giant rock. Sindawe crosses nimbly with rest of it. He notes several skeletons amongst the writhing insect mass 30' below. He ties the rope off. Serpent, Mase, and

Wogan cross one at a time. But Wogan missteps and falls off the very narrow bridge. He grabs the rope as he plunges down! The rope holds, leaving him dangling 20' above the bugs.

The noise stirs the locusts up. One swarm rises out of the chasm to chew on Wogan. He hangs on for dear life, but his grip fails him. Luckily, the earthen floor and second locust swarm break his fall.

Serpent bank shots an alchemist fire off the bridge and into the airborne swarm, burning many. Wogan sees the fiery fuel dropping toward him in a burning rain; he rolls out of the way. Lefty cuts the rope on his side allowing it to drop into the chasm. He yells, "Wogan! Get the rope!" Sindawe drops into the chasm regardless of his own safety and drags Wogan out of the swarm and to the rope. Wogan pops the cork on his *eversmoking bottle*. The smoke drives the locusts away from the two pirates.

Bel runs across the bridge while Lefty yells out, "They got vaporized!" No one knows who or what he is talking about. Bel missteps and falls into the smoke-filled chasm right onto Wogan, collapsing both to the ground. The burning swarm rises to envelop Serpent, who runs clear and throws another alchemist fire into the mass. The swarm follows him. Mase runs over to the fire and jury rigs a torch from his sleeve and swagger stick.

Below, Wogan and Bel pick themselves up while Sindawe dons his dwarf-manufactured gas mask. He hands his *gloves of climbing* to Wogan, then points up. Wogan climbs quickly and with confidence. Bel follows close behind. Sindawe runs over to the skeletons he spotted earlier. The locusts have eaten away every bit of organic material. He snatches up a black wood wand, the single recognizable item remaining.

Peg Leg Pete dashes agilely across the bridge to the amazement of his colleagues. Orgon and Lefty both immediately move to follow but crash into each other before even setting foot on the bridge.

Wogan climbs out of the chasm in time to see Serpent cut the swarm enveloping him with a *flame blade* right before being incapacitated by the swarm coating him.

“Beeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!” he screams. Mase swings his torch at the locusts. Pete runs to the locust-covered Serpent and tries to trip him. Serpent resists, cursing him. Lefty and Orgon pick themselves up and try the bridge again. Lefty makes it across, leaving the belly crawling Orgon far behind.

Bel fails to climb out and burns his hands a bit on the rope. Sindawe arrives at the rope. Wogan stoppers his *eversmoking* bottle, then casts *summon monster* to bring a fire beetle into the fight. The swarm gnaws horribly at both Pete and Serpent.

Bel climbs further up the rope. Pete rolls around in the fading alchemist fire, burning some locusts (and himself). He yells at Serpent, “Stop, drop, and roll!” Lefty tries to grab Mase’s torch, but Mase snatches it away. A very unmanly slap fight begins. Orgon completes the crossing, encouraged greatly by the huge serpent Saluthra coming up from behind. Sindawe climbs the chasm wall. When it appears, Wogan realizes that the famed *fire beetle* is fact not a fire emitting creature. He curses at its false advertising. Wogan hits Serpent with a *cure moderate wounds*. Serpent recovers enough to disperse the swarm with several more swings from his *flame blade*.

The pirates leave the area quickly because the smoke-addled swarm is showing more signs of life. They stop several minutes later for a rest. Wogan distributes healing while Serpent identifies the black wood wand as a *wand of lesser restoration* (6). Wogan uses the wand on several men who inhaled fungus spores.

SINSPAWN ARENA

They travel down a long tunnel to find a u-shaped cave with a closed portcullis at the center of the curve. A great deal of noise is coming from that direction. Wogan creeps up to the gate and peeks through. He sees a pair of sinspawn fighting bare-handed in a pit while other sinspawn watch. A very large sinspawn with a ringed nose laughs. He notices that a tremor occurs every time the combatants slam mightily into each other. He decides, "Enough of that!" and shoots them with a *fireball* out of his *Rain Tiger* emerald. It explodes, filling the arena. The sinspawn grunts suffer the full burn, but the leader throws himself clear of the worst.

Sindawe rushes up to take a position next to the portcullis. He waves the other pirates to do likewise. Serpent uses *serpent transformation* to increase his armor while handing a potion of *shield* to Pete. Pete drinks, then moves into position as does the rest of the crew. Wogan hits a group of sinspawn with *slow* (also from the *Rain Tiger* emerald), but only nails one.

The leader sinspawn hisses orders to his troops, who gamely run at the portcullis. Several split off to raise the gate. Their level of agitation causes the tremors to arrive at shorter intervals. The portcullis slowly ratchets up. Sindawe drinks an *enlarge person* potion. Serpent shoots arrows at the creatures as their rage washes over him. Several pirates rush to Serpent's side and throw handaxes. Lefty gets overexcited and throws his short sword.

The first group of sinspawn charges through the still-lifting portcullis. Sindawe uses his reach to trip one. The remaining sinspawn close with the pirates, successfully hitting Pete and Orgon (who drops from his wounds). Wogan fires his double-barreled pistol into the portcullis

entryway, one shot hitting a sinspaw and the other releasing a *stinking cloud* that blocks the entry. The tripped sinspaw begins puking, an interesting sight given the creature's sidewise mouth.

Sindawe trips all three of the fighting sinspaw. Serpent whales on a fallen foe, nearly crippling it. Saluthra bites and grabs another, snapping bones. Bel and the other crewmen enthusiastically attack the last of the fallen. Lefty seizes the fallen Orgon's battleaxe. Mase drags Orgon clear. The prone sinspaw attacks, cleaving with his ranseur, killing Pete outright and staggering Lefty.

Wogan steps past the combat to hit the doorway, still draped in a stinking cloud, with a cone of *fear* from his Terror Mace. The cloud parts revealing two hatefreaks fleeing and six charging forward with ring nose in the back! The creature missteps on the shaking ground and gashes its head open on the portcullis blades. Sindawe stomps one prone sinspaw to death and injures another. Serpent kills the other one while Saluthra crushes the last one into gravy.

Lefty drinks the *cure light wounds* potion his mother gave him, then crawls away. The remaining sinspaw charge through the entrance and attack Sindawe, Serpent, and Bel. One splits off to attack Wogan until Sindawe trips it. Bel stabs his attacker but falls unconscious from a ranseur blow. Sindawe is hit several times.

Wogan uses a healing burst to fix up the wounded and returns Bel to consciousness. Sindawe pounds on a single sinspaw which won't drop. Serpent attacks another grunt, wounding him badly. Lefty and Bel attack a sinspaw, hitting repeatedly. Mase gathers sand to throw in their faces. Saluthra attacks another sinspaw, biting it savagely. The sinspaw attacking Sindawe hit once. None of their attacks touch Saluthra. The sinspaw fighting the crew hits Mase, then cleaves Lefty. The sinspaw captain clips Serpent once.

Wogan casts a cure spell, then rushes over to Serpent and heals many of his wounds. Sindawe kills a heavily wounded sinspawn, then uses his reach to kill one and wound another that is attacking Serpent. The captain sinspawn swings repeatedly at Serpent but can't penetrate his +3 Dragonhide Breastplate. Serpent strikes the captain three times while Saluthra kills another wounded sinspawn. Mase throws sand in a sinspawn's face helping Bel, Orgon, and Lefty to cut the creature to bits.

The remaining sinspawn grunts and their captain brave on. Two grunts attack Sindawe and one attacks Serpent. They all miss. Wogan casts another heal spell on Sindawe, returning him to lightly wounded. Sindawe kicks one attacker to death, then wounds the other. The captain sinspawn sunder's Serpent's staff, but falls just short of making it broken. Serpent counterattacks, hitting twice, then fumbles (-4 to all attack rolls next round). Saluthra succumbs to the sinspawn's wrath and refuses to move.

Bel, Lefty, and Orgon are all heavily wounded; they pull handaxes and throw into the melee. Amazingly, all three hit the same sinspawn, dropping it. Wogan critically shoots the captain (lodged in the bone!). Sindawe punches and kicks the remaining grunt. The captain sinspawn drops his weapon while swinging at Serpent. Serpent strikes back several times.

The pirate crew's blood is up and they're out of handaxes, so they rush the last sinspawn grunt with swords and a battle axe. They crash into the creature and hack it apart. Another, larger tremor hits knocking most of the pirates to the floor. Sindawe and Serpent remain standing. Sindawe charges and kicks the sinspawn captain. Serpent tries to strangle the creature but can't get his rope around its neck. Wogan rises to kneeling and kills the creature with a single shot.

CLIFF-HANGER

The pirates slowly gather their wits. Some finish downed foes. Lefty checks Pete; yes, the man is dead. The possibly antique ranseurs are gathered, cleaned, and bagged, bringing the ranseur count to 20. Wogan robs the dead captain of its magic belt and rune-encrusted ranseur. Serpent identifies the items using his Azlanti magic necklace (+5 to Spellcraft). The belt grants bonuses to Dexterity and Constitution. The ranseur is a +1 sadistic ranseur.

Wogan hands out some more healing.

Serpent says, "Can we rest before taking out the shrine?"

As if in answer another tremor passes through the area.

Treasure found by the landing party thus far:

- From the Ulfen:
 - magic battleaxe
 - magic chain mail
 - Feather Token
 - magic boots
 - potions
- From the shrine caves:
 - Trade goods - piled high, roughly dining room table sized.
 - Wand of *Lesser Restoration* (6) - less charges used by the pirates.
 - Ranseur (20) - possibly antique, definitely not magical or masterwork.
 - +2 Belt of Mighty Stuff (Dexterity and Constitution)
 - +1 sadistic ranseur