

## REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 05/05/2012

### TODAY'S EPISODE: FAMILY, WORSHIP, AND BUSINESS

Our heroes are docked at Riddleport. Their crew runs amok in the city buying, drinking, drugging, fighting, fornicating, and in one case, dying. Wogan, Serpent, and Sindawe investigated Little Mike's murder and captured the *Yellow Jackets* responsible. But Inquisitor Salvadora Beckett forced them to give up those prisoners to keep the secret treaty between Calistra's worshippers and Riddleport. No one is sure who deployed the *Yellowjackets*, yet victory has been declared in blood - the *Yellowjacket* who slew Little Mike is dead. 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)
  - ▲ Other recruits, some willing, some not, including a few from the Andoran Colony.
- ▲ 20 or so pirates captured along with the *Black Bunyip*; they have signed on with the *Araska*. Their ex-captain, Morgan Baumann, languishes without thumbs in the Citadel.

## *Spizzing the Weasel Mast*

Wogan wakes up to a new day. He decides, "I'll pick up my enhanced armor from the Cypher Lodge, visit that other Gozreh priest, and then have a personal experience with Gozreh atop the high local hill. Up on deck Wogan remembers that no one has done any ship maintenance since their repairs at Hermea. His day is dashed! Then he remembers, "I am an officer. I can order someone to do that." He looks about for sober crewmen and spots Mase Venjum and Slasher Jim.

Wogan declares, "You two! Make sure Tanned Hank checks the ship stem to stern, make a punch list, then knock those items out. Enlist whoever is stupid or drunk enough to be there when the work is handed out. I'll be back later to check on your progress!"

Mase Venjum is only too happy with the assignment because he longs for the days when he was a captain. Lording it over the other sailors should help ease the pain. He recites a laundry list of maintenance tasks to Wogan, including one that sounds suspiciously like "...spizzing the weasel mast". Wogan laughs as he commits another juvenile sounding nautical term to memory.

Slasher Jim is unhappy with the assignment, even though he'll get to boss about and threaten the other sailors. Then again, nothing seems to make Jim happy except unmentionable acts with a knife.

Wogan goes back below to enlist Tommy Blacktoes and his persuader (a whip) to oversee the maintenance. Pausing at Tommy's cabin door he hears Tommy, Lavender Lil, and another woman. Yet, when the door is opened only Tommy and Lil are within. Wogan decides that the second woman was probably Seyanna the succubus, who prefers to remain anonymous. He decides it is for the best that Seyanna doesn't want to stay and talk.

Meanwhile, Sindawe grabs JJ the sea homunculus and orders the creature to gather hull wood from the other ships in the harbor: The *Bloody Vengeance* and the Tian junk.

JJ gestures at a nearby sleeping/unconscious whore, "Let me bang that first!"

Sindawe demands, "Hull wood, then whore."

JJ counters, "Give me coins then. I'll buy it."

Sindawe explains, "Use your own money. You're crew; you get a share."

JJ seems surprised, "I get paid? Gimme!"

Sindawe shakes his head, "You get paid when everyone else does. Now get me that hull wood." He throws JJ overboard.

Twenty minutes later the sea homunculus returns with two large wooden shards explaining, "The boxy ship has dogs; I think they were barking at me."

Sindawe hands the shards over to Karomander for filing, after having JJ explain which is which. The creature slinks slyly toward the sleeping/unconscious whore. Sindawe decides to go elsewhere.

Wogan climbs the stairs to the deck and heads to the gangplank when Serpent announces, "Hey! Join me for a shopping trip and a visit to my wife."

Wogan sighs, then nods, "Sure."

Sindawe walks over, "Where are we going?"

Serpent explains, "I have to buy a chest for the <whispering> eggs. Then we can visit my wife."

*We Have Stuff to Do*

Serpent leads Wogan and Sindawe to the Gold Goblin where he inquires with the proprietor (and crime boss) Saul on the best places to buy exotic chests. Saul recommends a locksmith/artist in the Windward district who caters to rich clients and adventurers.

Sindawe at Serpent's urging asks Saul for help, "Where do I go to meet with pirate captains interested swapping intel on merchant shipping and navies?"

Serpent adds, "Yes. Any sane, reasonable captain will do. Do they have a favorite bar?"

Saul's reply, "Sane, reasonable captains? Well, there's:"

- The infamous orc Scarbelly, captain of the *Bloody Vengeance*. He and his orc crew are pirates and slavers... well, mostly slavers. They hang out at an "orcs only" establishment in the area between the Wharf and Rotgut districts. It opens after dark and one shouldn't go there alone.
- Xian-Li, captain of the Squiggle-Squiggle (no one local reads Tian), a Tian junk. Xian-Li is an unknown but thanks to an exotic appearance and a language barrier he is already known as a violent psychopath.
- Captain Sempronia, who recently lost her ship. Lacking the crew and funds to gain another vessel, she is now looking to hire on as crew. Saul warns him that the woman might be more interested in mutiny and capturing the *Teeth of Araska*.

The officers listen patiently, then Serpent asks Saul, "Do you not understand what sane and reasonable mean?"

Outside the officers discuss why Saul mentioned only these particular captains: a) Saul wants them dead and murder oriented cohorts are a likely means to that end, b) Saul owes them and sending business opportunities their way counts as "payment", or c) Saul doesn't know a great deal about the captains because he is concentrating on Riddleport's gangs.

The officers walk to the River district to catch the ferry over to the Windward district. The Windward district is built on the slopes of the city's western ridge line. Riddleport's affluent, scholars, and sages live here in tall buildings amongst steep and winding streets.

Their first stop is the Cypher Lodge to pick up Wogan's upgraded breastplate. Eli, the lodge leader, complains about rock throwers plaguing the mages whenever they venture out. Sindawe offers bodyguards for their next outing. Eli accepts.

On the way back they take a slightly different route and spot the *Tranquil Shark Protection Agency*. They pop in for a quick look - the place is a rent-a-bodyguard business complete with a gym for learning take down techniques.

The next stop is the *Block-And-Tackle* shop recommended by Saul. It is full of high-end liquor barrels, hand-carved keep sake chests, sturdy payroll chests, etc...

Serpent introduces himself to the female proprietor, then explains he is a griffon egg hunter in need of an extremely sturdy chest for transporting said eggs. It must be insulated for long journeys, float easily for the best griffons reside on seaside mountains, and handily protect the contents from drops, tumbles, and rough housing.

An assistant brings out pen, ink, and paper. The woman begins designing Serpent's chest. She stops occasionally to inquire about egg size, materials, features, and budget. The final design features are:

- The floatation via air tight bladders. A tuck away niche in the lid holds a hand pump.
- Six compartments: two for the bladders, two for the eggs, and two for *beating stones* (Serpentfolk tech recovered from deep inside *Viper Wall*).
- Copper hinges, corners and joints - the material is strong and resists salt damage.

- Darkwood (+500gp) for the chest.
- A magic lock (+2500gp).
- An alarm (+2500gp).

Serpent says, "That is more than I expected. I need to check with my business partners.

How much is a down payment?"

The proprietor replies, "2000gp down. Remember, you are investing in quality."

Serpent hands over the money, replying, "Hold off on the magic lock and alarm until you hear back from me."

### *Worship*

Then they stop off to see Roland Torin, the other Gozreh priest in town. One of Roland's religious duties is to carry letters for the faithful as he travels from port to port. Wogan hands over his own letters, plus a four month old letter from the Firewatch Island hermitage. That letter requests help from the hermitage's patron country of Cheliax; it states "...we have been wiped out by zombies and hags. Send more hermits."

Wogan strikes out alone on his personal mission. He purchases sacrifices, then walks into the hills lying between the Boneyard and eastern Riddleport. From that high point he will commune with Gozreh thru prayer, sacrifice, and rum. But mostly rum.

After many hours, the bearded sailor has a vision: a picturesque bay's clear blue water gleams under the high sun. The air is lightly scented with salt and sea breeze. Suddenly, the water turns to blood and the air smells of copper. Wogan has a strong sense of something awful lurking further out in the bay... something that he might be able to stop.

## *Visiting Xian-Lie, Captain of the Squiggle-Squiggle*

Serpent and Sindawe walk down the dock leading to the Tian vessel, which is teeming with... well, with Tianese. The vessel looks sturdy yet incapable of handling a rough sea. The sailors arming themselves and line up portside. Also on deck is a Tian woman in ornate clothes, demurely covering her face with a fan. Beside her is a robed Tian man covered in beaded necklaces and many small bags. He carries an ornately carved jade rod.

Several guards tell the pirates, "You. Go. Away. Now."

Sindawe counters, "We will talk to your captain. We can stand here all day."

Serpent adds, "I like standing here."

The robed arcanist steps to the rail, "Greetings foreigner. The captain is not available. What is it you want?"

Sindawe sighs, "To talk to your captain. To discuss sea travel, swap information and maps. Make friends."

The robed arcanist repeats, "The captain is not available."

Sindawe shrugs and replies, "We leave now. Your captain may visit us aboard the *Teeth of Araska*." They depart.

## *Family*

Sindawe and Serpent go to Saint Casperian's poor house to arrange for vests and other needlework. Then they stop at several silver artisans to arrange for other goods. In all Sindawe purchases:

- Vests (40) and patches (350) with varying designs - 500gp
- Silver torcs (10) and armbands (50) - 500gp and 500gp

These items are for next week's "patching in" ceremony for the crew. Each vest, torc, and armband has the *Teeth of Araska* pirate flag mascot - a skull chewing chains to splinters.

The pair head into the Riddleport sewers to access a largely abandoned, subterranean serpentfolk temple. Behind a secret door in the altar room is a tunnel leading to a birthing/egg chamber. In that place, Serpent's wife Samaritha rests and tends to a pair of serpentfolk eggs. One egg was recovered from Viperwall after having been in stasis for millenia. The other resulted from Serpent and Samaritha's union upon an ancient Azlanti "honeymoon" rock.

Serpent discusses the egg chest with Samaritha, seeking her help with the design and financing (she still retains most of her pirate loot).

Sindawe waits patiently near the chamber entrance. After twenty minutes he announces, "Serpent and I need to go. We have to meet a man about some work."

Serpent nods, "It is important."

Samaritha looks at Sindawe and asks, "Does Serpent have to go with you?"

Sindawe reads Serpent's body language as, "I want to go with you to the orc bar!" He replies to Samaritha, "Oh, I couldn't do this without your husband's backup."

Samaritha looks down to caress one of the eggs then says, "What about Hatshepsut? Could she go with you?"

Unable to resist, Sindawe smiles at Serpent and replies, "That is a good idea. Hatshepsut is excellent backup."

Serpent quietly mouths "you bastard" at Sindawe, then dutifully kneels next to his wife to admire their eggs. Sindawe departs.



## *Business Drinks*

Sindawe returns to the *Teeth of Araska* to get Hatshepsut for the trip to the *Happy Fellow* bar. They venture into the Wharf district in search of the establishment, which only caters to orcs, half-orcs, and ogres. Its main customers are Scarbelly's crew and they are in port only rarely. As a result the *Happy Fellow* has no set location and is closed for weeks at a time.

The two monks find it in a building of cinder blocks with a door of oak that is half a foot thick. The sign outside declares in common "*The Happy Fellow*"; pictured is an elf with shark teeth.

Hatshepsut pushes the door open to reveal a tavern that is an offense to all civilized sensibilities. There are no tables or chairs or music. Instead, four cisterns stand on iron legs. Each has many iron nipples at the base. A group of orcs form a thrashing frenzy at the base of one cistern, pushing and shoving and fighting to access the iron nipples. At another cistern orcs throw coins to the half-orc proprietor; he turns on the cistern once he is satisfied with the coins. The place grows quiet as everyone turns to stare at Sindawe and Hatshepsut.

Sindawe declares, "What's the matter? Never seen members of the human race? We're here to see Scarbelly."

The denizens continue staring.

Sindawe knocks the closest orc out cold with a single blow, then screams, "An orc taught me that one!"

The place returns to its early pandemonium. The proprietor walks over and demands coins from Sindawe and Hatshepsut, who pay what they hope is the proper amount.

The monks spot Karl the Kraken, one of Boss Croat's enforcers. The half-orc is currently clear of the drinking scrum. They also see Aggro, first mate of the *Bloody Vengeance*, drinking the blood grog from a cistern nipple while holding two other orcs at bay.

Several orcs mumble, "Woman" then start mauling Hatshepsut. She serpent strikes them until they fall back.

Aggro approaches and says, "I don't think you're tough enough to talk to Scarbelly."

Sindawe replies, "You don't think that or your men don't think that?"

Aggro demands of the proprietor, "Cragwipe! Bring out the wheel."

Cragwipe rolls out an iron wheel apparatus. He pours a mug of blood grog in at the top, which activates the wheel's water clock mechanism.

Aggro announces, "You must prove your thirst for blood grog before the iron wheel completes its roll."

The two monks determine that they must fight thru the orcs to the cistern, then fight to maintain their position at the nipples. Sindawe holds the wheel static with his leg as he and Hatshepsut slather themselves down with an *oil of slipperiness*. Then they leap into the press.

They acrobatically maneuver thru the press to arrive at the cistern, then knock and bludgeon drinkers out of the way of a teat. Orcs immediately attempt to grapple and pull the monks. One unlucky orc attempts to grope Hatshepsut and receives a serpent strike to the throat... "Gggaaaccckkk!!!" The orc collapses and is lost beneath the scrum.

The monks take turns drinking the blood grog, which is coppery and vile, as the orcs rage around them alternately drinking and fighting. They shake off the strong liquor and fight on. The iron wheel turns slowly. The orcs switch to throwing punches, connecting with some and losing an orc to the monk's attacks of opportunity.

The monks drink again; Sindawe's vision swims then steadies. The denizens continue punching and shoving. The monks counter attack, knocking out a fifth and sixth orc.

This cycle repeats again and again as the iron wheel slowly completes its first turn. After several minutes both monks are tipsy (-1 for Hatshepsut) and drunk (-3 for Sindawe). The denizens, unhappy with the monk beating, switch to grappling which is equally disappointing against the admittedly intoxicated monks. One orc does manage to hammer lock Hatshepsut, who immediately escapes and knocks out three more orcs. Some orcs fight over the freed up nipples but most decide to beat on the *beu-mon* monks. The monks find themselves beneath the nipples after beating pummeling three more orcs into the floor. The orcs respond with wild punches, connecting once. The monks have now cleared out twenty orcs.

Aggro screams out, "Time!" The iron wheel has completed one turn, which took 5 minutes. The monks acrobatically remove themselves from the press, mainly because the remaining orcs are more interested in drinking from the cistern's drizzly holes.

Sindawe and Aggro discuss the logistics of a meeting with captain Scarbelly. They agree on tomorrow at the *Windward* district side of the Cypher gate.

Sindawe declares in orcish, "We are leaving now to mate and throw-up!"

Once outside, Hatshepsut throws a surprised Sindawe into an alley, then pins him to ground. They mate like drunken monks, aided by the *oil of slipperiness*. Sindawe briefly attempts to divine what has made Hatshepsut amorous, then slippery surfaces demand his attention.

## *Picnic at the Cypher Gate*

The next morning arrives. Wogan inquires about the ship repairs. Serpent wanders aboard after having spent the night with Samaritha. Sindawe wakes up in his cabin.

Later, Sindawe gathers sober and semi-sober sailors for the day's Cypher Gate outing, leaving enough behind to guard the ship. He orders the eight man away team to make ready for a long walk and fighting. He also directs Billy Breadbasket, the assistant cook, to pack a picnic basket, because "we are not stopping to eat!"

Lavender Lil bounds out and declares, "I want to come along."

Wogan explains, "We're going to beat up a bunch of rock throwing hooligans, then meet with Scarbelly and his orcs."

Lavender Lil declares, "That sounds like fun!"

Wogan shrugs.

En route to the Windward district the pirates stop for several small beer casks, despite Sindawe's declaration, "We're not stopping!" The hour is still very early, giving the pirates a chance to see several press gangs in action.

The pirates arrive at the Cypher Lodge to find Eli and his mages are ready to go. All eight have their day packs, art supplies, and bag lunches. The group travels from the Cypher Lodge to the Cypher Gate. The locals look out their windows but decide that the dozen pirates escorting the mages are not to be crossed. They arrive at the gate without incident.

Billy Breadbasket chats up one of the male Cypher Lodge mages; the pair are soon sharing victuals from the picnic basket. The pirates' officers note the behavior and are ready to pounce if stabbing or magicking breaks out.

A smaller press gang stops for a moment to watch the mages. Their leader tells the pirates, "Don't let them start that thing up again. They nearly destroyed the city last time."

Sindawe points at Wogan and explains, "Our Cypher Gate expert is here to prevent that from happening."

Serpent explains, "It is OK. We purchased the gate from someone down at the docks. It belongs to us."

### *Mob Justice*

After about an hour a group of ruffians begins to assemble on the opposite end of the street. Some are sailors, some are eastside river locals, and some are Windward district toughs. Several carry lanterns that cut through the fog. Many of them carry job related implements (hammer, crowbar) that easily double as weapons.

Sindawe orders his crew, "Stay put and guard the mages. Kill if you have too. We'll be back soon." Sindawe, Serpent, and Wogan walk toward the still forming mob.

The pirate officers try threats ("We play for keeps!"), free drinks ("I'll buy you all a round or two at the Gold Goblin!"), and more threats ("Scarbelly will be here soon!"). The mob begins to break up several times, but is stabilized by the demagogue appealing to their prejudices ("Mages are trouble! Foreigners are trouble! They're taking your jobs!") and desires ("You can solve this problem with violence!").

Wogan and Sindawe notice the demagogue working quietly at the back of the crowd. The man declares, "Those fancyboys already destroyed your jobs and homes once. Will you let them do that again?"

Sindawe points at the man and says to Serpent, "Do you want him? Or should we both go after him?"

Serpent screams, "YOU!" He wades through the startled crowd and strikes the demagogue unconscious with a single staff blow. The mob backs away from the crazed Ulfen.

Sindawe shouts, "Run for it, lads. Before the Ulfen decides to send you to hell."

Serpent glowers at the crowd while swinging his staff. The mob breaks and runs thanks Serpent's critical success on Intimidate (aided by another +8 from Sindawe and Wogan).

Wogan stabilizes the dying orator, who is dragged back to the Cypher Gate by Sindawe and Serpent.

Back at the gate Wogan declares, "I need to recharge the old Rain Tiger (referring to his *spell storing* device)."

A nearby pirate says, "I got some pills for that, boss."

Captain Scarbelly and his retinue of orcish crew and Aggro approach from the street. He has a reputation for pirating, slaving and having killed 29 men. At his belt is a large pistol and larger battle axe.

Scarbelly gestures at the Cypher Lodge mages and says to Sindawe, "I will give you a 1,000 gp for the fancyboys."

Sindawe shakes his head, "No, I cannot sell them. They are allies."

Scarbelly tries again, "1,200 gp. Mages are valued by my customers."

Sindawe again refuses, then says, "Let us discuss the pirating business."

Scarbelly walks toward the cliff, "We will talk over here."

The captains depart the crowd. The fog becomes heavier.

Serpent and Wogan notice Billy Breadbasket and his picnic basket friend, the Cypher Lodge mage, sneak into a foggy alley... with the picnic basket.

Wogan waits for a few minutes before telling Dum Dum, "I heard something in that alley. Go check it out."

Dum Dum enters the alley cautiously, disappearing into the fog. He quickly returns explaining, "Billy is just helping that fancyboy go to the bathroom." They wriggle uncomfortably at this news.

Lavender Lil begins chatting up the orcs, encouraging them to vie for her attention. The orcs are malleable testosterone before her charms.

### *Intel Exchange*

Sindawe and Scarbelly stare out upon Riddleport from the cliff top.

Sindawe begins, "I need to know the better places to intercept merchantmen. I have information to trade."

Scarbelly says, "It is dangerous for me and mine around Cheliar right now. They have navy gathering in Kintargo, so they have less coverage on the shipping across Conqueror's Bay. Some sort of the disagreement with Korvosa."

Sindawe replies, "White Estrid and her fleet will hit Nidal's city of Nisroch."

Scarbelly, "Shackles' pirate ships have been landing at Nisroch, too."

Scarbelly adds, "Garund is a good place to sell things for people such as ourselves."

Captain Scarbelly seems intelligent for an orc. The two discuss pirating business a bit more before Scarbelly announces he has to go. Sindawe hands him a gift: a Mordant Spire elf mask.

Scarbelly admires the mask then says, "I need to find a prostitute." He marches off.

*Next Time*

Interrogating the mob wrangler, interviewing new crew, and the *patching in* ceremony.