

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 07/14/2012

TODAY'S EPISODE: TREACHERY ISLAND

The Teeth of Araska (TOA) has sailed from Riddleport to the Crown's Point just south of Magnimar, where they have been preying on the shipping lanes. They boarded and took cargo from a merchantman. A long cannon battle with a privateer ended with the privateer's crew dead and their ship captured. The TOA is battle damaged and needing repair, so they have sailed to a semi-secret cove identified by the ship's navigator, Sempronia. Our heroes are:

- ♣ Captain Sindawe H'kilata Narr of the *Teeth of Araska*, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris).
- ♣ Quartermaster 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!
- ♣ Ship's Surgeon Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common and her cobra Naja.
- ♣ Chief Gunner Wogan, 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 pirate crew *Teeth of Araska* pirates: Survivors from the ship's previous pirate crew, ex-slaves escaped from their Chelish owner (Martino Marcellano), recruits (now old hands) acquired during the 1st Azlanti Island voyage, 15 or so ex-pirates from ex-captain Morgan Baumann's, *Black Bunyip*, and new recruits, most with considerable sailing skill, found in Riddleport.

There Is An Obelisk

Wogan asks Sempronia, "Is this island deserted?"

Sempronia replies, "We never saw much, but we never investigated it too deeply either. There is a rune encrusted obelisk at the island's center we saw once." Naturally the command staff decides immediately this obelisk needs investigation.

Wogan orders, "Tommy and Tanned Hank, get this ship repaired."

Tommy asks, "Any other orders?"

Wogan, "Yes, send some search parties out for food and water."

Sempronia suggests, "Load the murder guns, too. Just in case." The pirate officers agree; soon the murder guns are loaded.

Sempronia leaves to prepare for the island trip. She returns dressed in spiked armor, carrying a glaive, which Wogan determines is magical. Coxswain Gareb orders up a boat and crew to take them ashore.

The pirate officers begin the walk inland. Hiking through the forest they hear a gunshot, but cannot pinpoint where it came from. A second gunshot many seconds later is clearly coming from the direction of the ship. The pirates start to run back to the ship. Sempronia drinks a potion that increases her speed. The monks pull away immediately, leaving Sempronia to execute a whirlwind attack on Serpent, Samaritha, and Wogan. Everyone is wounded and surprised.

Sindawe and Hatshepsut turn back, tripping Sempronia. Wogan uses a positive energy burst to heal his friends. Serpent rages then hits the prone mutineer multiple times (60pts). Sempronia struggles to her feet declaring, "My men have already taken your ship!"

Samaritha tries *daze monster* on Sempronia who shrugs it off. Sindawe knocks her out with a flurry of blows.

Serpent asks, "What do we do with her?"

Sindawe says, "Kill her."

Wogan pulls off her helmet, presses a pistol to her temple and shoots (34pts).

Sindawe snatches up her glaive and runs for the ship, followed closely by Hatshepsut.

Wogan tells Serpent, "We should have hired that other guy over her."

Serpent replies, "What other guy?"

Boarding Action

Minutes earlier, several dugouts full of men stealthily rowed up to the *Teeth of Araska*, intent on mayhem. A lookout spots them too late to warn against a ranged sneak attack. The ship's defenders respond with the murder guns, but find them rendered useless by bad powder charges. The privateers quickly board the ship as the alarm is raised.

Thus far, Sempronia is leagues ahead in her treachery. These privateers are Sempronia's men, left on the island until she returned with a ship or victims willing to put themselves in the cross hairs.

The pirates and privateers engage in several rounds of mass combat during the officers vs. Sempronia fight. Initially, it is only two pirate units defending; many are cut down quickly. Mase Venjum commands the pirates. Several units of pirates down below gather weapons and try to charge out, only to find the hatches locked and doors wedged shut. They batter at these barricades, losing precious seconds. Tommy and Lavender Lil find themselves locked in their cabin by some tightly wedged debris.

The combat on deck goes badly for the crew with those still standing holding off nearly three times their number in privateers.

Back on the island, Samaritha casts *fly* on Serpent telling him, "Make sure our children are safe!" Sindawe and Hatshepsut are already some distance off, having opted to run. Wogan and Samaritha follow at a quick jog.

Crewmen pound at locked doors while defenders die. Kitty the Cantankerous murders a privateer while swearing like a sailor. Melella casts *obscuring mist*, removing the privateers' ability to sneak attack. Mase pries at a locked hatch just as the crew hit it, breaking the door open. The deck is covered in mist and melee, into which the reinforcements charge. Melella uses *stablize* whenever she finds a downed crewman.

The melee continues for several more rounds before the officers return. Serpent arrives at the ship first thanks to the *fly* spell. He drops Sempronia's corpse amongst the privateers, then flies below decks to check on his children. Tommy and Lil continue pounding at their cabin door. Sindawe and Hatshepsut come out of the tree line and onto the beach. They drink his *dimension door* potion, arrive on the ship and begin knocking attackers out. The melee still favors the privateers, who have taken fewer losses than the pirates.

Serpent frees Tommy and Lil first, then the general sleeping quarters (tied closed with a rag). He tells them, "Captain Sempre Fi has mutinied! Privateers on deck! Counter attack!" They charge off. On shore, Wogan and Samaritha push the beached boat out and begin to row.

The melee on deck continues. The privateers fight, buoyed by their initial gains and disoriented by the *obscuring mist*. Serpent returns to the deck on the coattails of the last pirate unit. He, Kitty, Serpent, and Hatshepsut kill or knock out privateers. The pirate crew kills even more. The tide turns quickly; several privateers surrender, one jumps overboard, and three flee for the dugouts.

Sindawe and Hatshepsut follow onto the dugouts, then throw themselves overboard to avoid Samaritha's incoming fireball. Wogan and Kitty shoot at the swimmer while pirates bet on the outcome.

Wogan and Melella begin healing the twenty-three the dying and wounded. Melella was able to stabilize ten crewmen during the battle. She and Wogan are able to save all but five: Valentine, Gaestel, Ragged Pete Morgan, Long Bonifacio Copper (good gunner) and Kent the Rusty Butter Cutter. Svegi remembers Kent lurking around Tommy and Lil's room before the attack. Three privateers are also saved from the vengeful crew.

Serpent loots Sempronia's body. She has: +1 glaive, +1 full plate with cold iron spikes, +1 short sword, +2 belt of giant strength, +2 cloak, and a potion of cure light wounds. He's pretty sure she had a magical ring, but lying on deck during a pirate fight has caused it to disappear. The thirty attackers had masterwork bucklers, light crossbows (26 salvageable), and short swords. Wogan investigates Sempronia's quarters finding a lot of notes acquired about sailing the Inner Sea.

The pirate crew are equipped with 30 masterwork light crossbows (from last session), 20 masterwork bucklers (the TOA crew don't use them), and the rest is stored in the hold.

Interrogation

Tommy strings the prisoners up by their thumbs. He whips them vigorously to get a straight story out of them. The crew watches with approval.

They are Taldan privateers with an Andoran Letter of Marque. Their ship was sunk. Captain Sempronia told them that she'd get a new one. More questioning and whipping reveals that Sempronia took two other sailors with her: Kent the Rusty Butter Cutter and Cannonball Jack. Their original vessel was sunk by the *Wandering Dagger* under Captain Clap.

Kent is dead. Cannonball Jack denies the accusation until Samaritha uses *dominate* to convince him otherwise. Samaritha argues that Cannonball Jack didn't help with the mutiny (thanks to her dominate connection to him). Sindawe decides to give Cannonball Jack a pass because he doesn't want to lose another experienced cannoneer.

The prisoners are thrown in the brig.

Cleanup

The pirates make their repairs over the next few days. At the same time they investigate the privateers' camp, which is built mainly using materials from their vessel, including enough food and water to keep them in healthy. The loot is four units of ship's stores, some nice cheese and wine, and some personal effects.

The repairs go well with Wogan's repair spells aiding Tanned Hank's carpentry work. The *Araska* is repaired.

During their stay on the island many pirates visit the privateer camp for random looting and wander about looking for anything interesting. Some of them suffer misadventures:

- Gareb is attacked by a jigsaw shark while coxswaining crew to and from the island. He survives the attack.
- Kent the Rusty Butter Cutter's corpse is hung by its neck from the yard arm.

After 3 days the *Teeth of Araska* returns to sea. The first order of business is deposing of the 35 corpses. Wogan performs a basic ceremony for the Taldans, whereas the *Araska* dead are given the full works.

To Nidal

A course is set for the Nidalese settlement of Karpad. Karpad is a small village approximately 100 miles north of Nidal's capital, Pangolais, just south of the region known as the Atteran Ranches. It has been ruled for centuries by the Barons of the House of Boroi.

In route, the ship encounters a plundered foundering merchantman and a storm. Days later they encounter a very large ship which they actively avoid closing with.

Foreign ships dock at Nisroch. They also have a possible contact in Nidal, a necromancer who is based in or around Albatross. The pirates opt for Albatross.

On the furthest western point of Nidal is a 10-mile wide island that houses the town of Albatross. The ship sails toward this destination the crew becomes more wary. They also enjoy sharing stories about Nidal and its awfulness. The bird-ridden town is at the top of the cliffs that form the island's perimeter. A quay (pronounced "key") leads from the sea up to stairs at the cliff's base. The pirates decided to fly their pirate flag, which is remarkably like the Nidal national flag. Samaritha, using Linguistics, whips up a "letter of marque" for the ship, plus permissions to land where needed to repair, resupply, recruit, and zombify.

The ship ties off at the quay as a lone figure approaches. Otherwise, the dock is abandoned at this hour. The figure is a pale skinned man with greasy dark hair dressed in nice black clothing. His forearms are pierced by metal bars. Wogan suspects the bars might represent his devotion to Zon-Kuthon.

He whispers, "This is the town of Albatross. What are you doing here?"

Wogan replies, "We have a writ that allows us to dock here. We need supplies."

The man reads the writ, then says, "Porters will be sent with supplies."

Wogan hands over another paper with the necromancer's sigil on it. The man examines the paper, then says, "Wait here. I will make contact." He leaves.

Eventually another figure appears. It is a woman, shaved bald, in midnight blue robes. Her mouth has been cut to extend her smile up and onto the cheeks. She stands and waits. Serpent, Wogan, and Sindawe approach.

Joker Face speaks to them in common. "You seek to find Thartane the Necromancer. He is sending someone to guide you."

Wogan asks, "You are?"

She replies, "I am but a humble flagellant of Zon-Kuthon. Would any of you care to worship while you wait?" They decline graciously.

Necromancer Business

They return to the ship to find the necromancer's homunculus waiting. He asks them their business with his master, then promises to take them to him. They cast off and set sail to the west, going seven miles to another island. The homunculus acts as their guide, flying off and returning several times to supply course corrections. The homunculus asks them a series of questions about their personal encounters with fear and fearsome monsters.

The homunculus says, "Trim your sails and slow down." Wogan gives the orders. "Slow down some more." Suddenly in front of the ship is a craggy rock. Rising from it is a femur shaped tower which appears out of nowhere.

Homunculus says, "There is a dock around the south side. Dock there. My master will be here shortly."

The pirates dock at the quay, which leads to a tunnel in the rock. A man with a skull topped staff emerges from the tunnel. Four ghouls escort the man.

Thartane the Necromancer asks, "May I come aboard?"

A gang plank is lowered. The ghouls stay on the quay.

Thartane cordially fills in the crew on local protocol. Commoners are not allowed to carry weapons except in service to Zon-Kuthon. Of course, outsiders are not welcome. Public displays of violence, even those reasonable elsewhere are deemed "inciting revolt" which is punishable by death. The command staff expresses its desire to get to Wogan's sister in Karpad.

"I take it you want to travel there with weapons? Six people is probably the maximum that can be managed. More than that would be deemed "unlawful assembly".

"In exchange for my help, I would like new forms of life to experiment upon with undeath. And such things are difficult to acquire here in Nidal." He explains that he is a practical necromancer who wants quantifiable results, unlike the "necromantic masturbation" of most of the mainland Nisrochi.

“I can arrange travel papers for Nidal. You cannot wear arms, but you can transport them with you via locked box. Thrown away any Desna related items as those items will get you tortured to death. Any worship other than Zon-Kuthon is illegal too.”

“You’ll have to dock as Nisroch. Don’t use cheap forgeries like the one you flashed around at Albatross.”

“So now for my part. Each of you, describe to me the most disturbing part of the worst creatures you’ve encountered. What is truly horrifying? I want to take something that fits that description and turn it undead to see if it’s even more effective.”

“Tentacles! I hate tentacles. They drag me down, down...” says Sindawe, with a far-away look. “And being ripped apart by undead tigers.”

Wogan shudders. “Those slimy, three-eyed aboleths, I can’t stand their eyes.”

“Being raped into having chlamydia. And secretions.” Serpent shrugs off the concerned glances of his crewmates.

Thartane muses over his market research. “Something slimy, with three eyes, tentacles, and rapes you into having Chlamydia while it tears you apart. Hmm. I can take care of the undead part myself of course...”

“Sounds like a froghemoth,” says Serpent idly.

“A froghemoth!” Thartane brightens. “Brilliant! Yes, bring me one of those. I think some can be found in the northern swamps of Nidal. I need it alive, of course.”

The command staff's feet grow cold quickly. "Can't we bring you a baby one? How about an otyugh, they're kind of like that..." Everyone hems and haws about the difficulty of the task.

"Oh nonsense, you'll do fine. Now, frogheмоths, electricity doesn't hurt them but it slows them down. Resistant to fire. Electricity slows them down. And they swallow whole using their tongue or tentacles, both at a distance. They have a thick hide, making them hard to hit. I'll provide you some electrical magic, and I could arrange for quick transport after you subdue it."

"You should be able to dock in Nisroch, especially with papers from me, because they welcome pirates there these days. The diocese there is seeking to spread Zon-Kuthon's word through non-traditional means."

The crew negotiates for a while until they reach an accord.

"Very well! Here's a wand of lightning (27), a scroll of lightning, a set of teleport spikes to put around a subdued froghemoth for instant extraction, papers for traveling in Nidal (Nisroch to Karpad, and to the froghemoth-bearing areas), and I'll clue you in to any merchantman sightings I come across."

Thartane departs the ship, picks up his ghoul escort, and enters the tunnel at the base of the femur-shaped island. Keen-eyed crewmen see his image dissipate inside the tunnel and the ghouls lope off into the doubtless deathtrap-sown interior.

A few hours later, the homunculus delivers the goods. The travel papers describe the pirates as "monster acquisition specialists" who therefore need weapons... or at least a lockbox of said items.

"To Nisroch!" declares Captain Sindawe. "Those are reasonably common last words, just for your information," notes Mase Venjum.

The Teeth of Araska's Crew

- Captain - Sindawe
- Master Gunner - Wogan
- Quartermaster - Serpent
- Boatswain - Tommy Black Toes
- Coxswain - Gareb
- Gunner's Mate - Stoke
- 1st Mate - Mase Venjum
- 2nd Mate - Little Mike
- 3rd Mate - Big Mike
- Carpenter - Tanned Hank
- Surgeon - Hatshepsut
- Crew: Samaritha, Lavender Lil
 - Original TOA: Orgon, Dum-dum, Slasher Jim (psychopath), Ori (cook)
 - Ex-slaves: Bel, Pirro, Sevgi, Kahina, Karomander, Delmer
 - First Azlant Voyage pickups: Olgvik (Ulfen barbarian), JJ (seamuculus), Lefty, Claxton

- Black Bunyip crew: Samuel (gunner), Billy Breadbasket (cook), Feissian Hareskinner, Taunya, Dario, Zita, Clubbreaker Cordell, Tiberiu, Nimborn, Hovax Littlehands, “Sexy Beast” Sapier, Prand
- Riddleport Recruits: Melella (half-elf druid), Cannonball Jack (gunner), Nemo, George Peters, Kitty the Cantankerous, Durt (cabin boy).

Gun Crew

- Experienced Gunners: Wogan (master), Stoke (gunner’s mate), Samuel, Taunya, Nimborn, “Sexy Beast” Sapier, Cannonball Jack Orgon, Delmer, Sevgi, and Mase Venjum

The Dead, be they Glorious, Terrible or Sorrowful:

- Original TOA crew: Seven, Mano, Goat
- Ex-slaves: Olhas
- The 1st Recruits: Del, Speg, Rolf, Bojask (rapist)
- The Prisoners: Anga, Nariel, Daphne
- Black Bunyip crew: Jospur Foxkiller, bosun Peg-Leg Pete, Vedui, Gwyllt, Valentine, Gaestel
- Mutineers: Sempronia, Kent the Rusty Butter Cutter
- Post Azlant Recruits: Ragged Pete Morgan, Long Bonifacio Copper