

## REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 01/26/2014

### TODAY'S EPISODE: SHADOWLANDS

Wogan and his comrades are in Karpad village, deep inside the shadow-haunted nation of Nidal. His sister, Anya, summoned him to help with a plague ravaging her husband's, Baron Stephan, lands. During the pirates' investigation Anya and her child were kidnapped by shadows, because the Baron is unwilling to fulfill an ancient pact between his ancestors and Nicasor, a shadow fae. Each generation must deliver its first born to Nicasor in return for power. Wogan volunteered to rescue his sister and nephew from the shadow realm. Stephan explained that the *Heart*, an artifact holding the pocket dimension together, must be destroyed before his wife, child, and the pirates can return to the Prime Material. And they must also destroy the pocket dimension's denizens to prevent their return... supposedly those denizens are monsters and exiled criminals. Stephan used a tome called the *The Night Without Moon* to steal the pirate's shadows in order to protect them from the shadow realm's influence. The pirates entered the *Midnight Mirror* and began searching the shadow mansion, destroying monsters as they went. They have yet to find any sign of Anya or her son.

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 is also Serpent's wife.
- ⤴ Ship's Surgeon Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization 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 their pirate crew, formed from previous pirate crews, escaped slaves, and recruits both willing and unwilling.

## *MIRROR MASK*

The pirates stand in a common living room on the shadow's mansion second floor. A half-dozen lethargic fetchlings, foot soldiers in a rebellion that failed a thousand years ago, wait with the pirates.

Another fetchling returns to the room accompanied by a figure wearing white garments, a mirrored mask and long hair of made of shadows. The pirates guess the figure is Nicasor, a shadow fae. The fetchlings other leader, Elenuta, is absent.

Nicasor says, "Greetings. Welcome to the *Midnight Mirror*. My name is Nicasor."

Serpent asks Wogan, "Do we know this guy?" The pirates do indeed know Nicasor because they have foiled his plans on several occasions. Serpent doesn't remember that because he tends to spend his time brooding, counting loot, and staring intimidatingly at random people.

Wogan ignores the question and asks, "We are here for the baron's wife and child."

Nicasor replies, "Baron Stepan made a bargain with me. I removed his brothers from the running for the barony. In return I get his first born child. The child is somewhere here in the shadow realm but I have not yet located it."

Wogan asks, "Have you been sending shadows into our world?"

Nicasor nods, "Yes. The crack in the mirror gives me some slight access. I have sent my creatures to remind Stepan of his obligations... to me." He continues, "Men such as yourselves can help me escape this place and rule the barony as is my right."

Wogan innocently asks, “How do we get out?”

Nicasor, “Oh, I am sure three heavily armed men without shadows have a plan to get out. Perhaps by destroying the *Heart*.”

Sindawe asks, “Do you need the child?”

Nicasor, “Yes, I need the child to obtain physical form, which will make it easier to rule. Wearing the form of the barony’s ruler will make ruling very easy. I will shower you with riches and power if you help me achieve my ends.”

Wogan asks, “Where is this *Heart*?”

Nicasor, “None of us have seen it. Ever. It keeps itself hidden, protects itself. It needs to be destroyed for my plans to advance... and it would be best if the child were handed over before the *Heart* is destroyed.”

Wogan asks, “May we discuss the deal first amongst ourselves?”

Nicasor nods, “Of course. We have nothing but time here.”

### *TRIPLE AGENTS!*

The pirates discuss their options. No one wants to give up Anya’s child. Everyone is angry with Stepan’s deception. It is agreed; they will work with Nicasor at least for the short term, then kill him. And probably Stepan. They return to the common room.

Sindawe asks, “How about a plan that does not involve the firstborn? We know the mother. Perhaps you could possess Stephan?”

Nicasor nods, “I suppose that could work but the mother would have to stay on.”

Wogan admits, “She might be up for that.”

Sindawe says, "But separate bedrooms. Where might she be?"

Nicasor replies, "I can verify that she is not on the second floor, because the second floor, minus the areas possessed by the baron's brothers, belong to my group. She is on the first floor. Or basement level."

## *GROUND FLOOR*

The Dining... Doom!

The pirates descend the stairs, returning to the dining room. A closer examination of the dining table and hutch cabinets reveals that the dining set is real, not a product of the shadow realm. The collection is large and contains many objects whose purpose escapes the pirates ken and is quite expensive. But the delicate bone cannot be easily transported by the loot hungry pirates... a bag of broken china is worthless.

One wall of the dining room pulsates, as if hiding a beating heart. The wall also drips ichor.

Captain Sindawe orders, "Search the pulsating wall for secret doors."

Serpent shakes his head, "You touch it first. It might be dangerous."

Sindawe touches the wall cautiously. Nothing happens. "It's safe, guys!" He turns to see the dining table's chairs stalking his comrades.

A trio of chairs herd Serpent against the pulsating wall, which opens to reveal a giant fire place. Its raging fire generates no heat or light. A chair grabs Serpent and dumps him into the fire, which damages with cold, not heat. Serpent jumps up and out, then smashes the offending chair with his staff.

Meanwhile, Wogan and Sindawe team up on another trio of chairs with mace and fist. They finish off the chairs, then rush to help Serpent.

Serpent fumbles a staff swing, which definitely releases shadows from his staff. These shadows swirl around him, protecting him (20% miss chance). A creature made of ghost fire steps out of the fireplace and is greeted by a full attack from Serpent. Then another creature of ghostly fire emerges.

The ghost fire creatures seem to be a type of elemental, swinging fistlike pseudo pods. Sindawe suffers cold burns each time he punches one. But they still fall when hit hard enough. The remaining chair uses combat maneuvers to make Wogan's life interesting, then succumbs to mace blows.

The wall around the fireplace flexes, then closes.

The pirates discuss how to safely loot the bone china. They decide to return later and use cloth and rope to pack the china away safely in a *bag of holding*. They exit the room and head down an unexplored hallway. Sindawe asks Serpent to try tracking. This nets no tracks as shadowy stuff making up the *Midnight Mirror* heals itself and does not collect dust or dirt. But he does find a silver baby rattle with the baron's family name carved into it.

The pirates investigate a nearby room which borders the dining room. It contains the fire place that produces no heat or light. And the north wall drips black ichor and pulsates. Wogan examines the fire place, trusting in his *protection from cold*. He finds a toy buckler and short sword made from *darkwood* lying in the fire.

## *The Ballroom*

The door opens onto a ballroom. The walls are covered with portraits. The wall closest to the dining room pulsates and drips ichor. Most of the portraits are of fetchlings that the pirates do not recognize. Five are of one shae with different masks... or five different shae, they're not sure which. Two are of human men, very much resembling Stepan. One matches the features of a cenobite monster encountered upstairs.

Wogan pulls at the brother's portrait. A shadow emerges from the wall and attacks, draining his strength with an icy touch. Additional shadows emerge from other portraits, mostly from the wall facing the dining room. Sindawe is happy to find that his orichalcum gauntlets negate their incorporeal defense; he destroys one. Wogan steps clear of his attacker and blasts the room with positive energy (23pts), destroying two of the remaining three shadows. Sindawe and Serpent destroy the last shadow together.

Wogan examines the ichor dripping wall to determine if his positive energy damaged it. He finds no damage, but he thinks it might have flinched back during the blast. Serpent heals Wogan's damage with *lesser restoration*.

Serpent threatens the house, "I'll smash you!"

Sindawe notices that the eyes on the paintings all turn to stare at Serpent. He asks the painting, "Are you the *Heart*? Blink once for yes."

The eyes blink once. Sindawe attempts to parlay, but the *Heart* is having none of that. Four more shadows emerge from portraits, starting another battle. Wogan destroys one with a *cure moderate wounds*. Serpent uses a magic axe to cut another one up. The last shadow attacks Serpent, fumbles and is sucked into the shadow swirl protecting Serpent... He regains some of the strength damage he took earlier. The pirates flee the room; the portraits whisper, "You are all mine!"

## *A Vault of Keys*

The pirates walk another hallway, which is also not part of the real mansion's floor plan. They pass a room with mismatched furniture and stop at a door at the far end of the hall. Wogan opens the door to reveal a plain room. Its floor is covered with thousands of keys. Each key is unique.

Wogan uses *detect magic* from the door and sees a single magic key on the far side of the room. He pulls a cat from his *beast coffer* and orders it to retrieve the magic key. The cat tries to comply, picking up several keys but not the correct one. Wogan quickly grows frustrated.

Sindawe asks, "Why not shoot it?"

Wogan replies, "The cat?"

Sindawe shakes his head, "No. The key."

Serpent asks, "Well the cat isn't dead, so it's probably safe." He enters the room and retrieves the key. It has a "tuning fork" shaped head. His casual walk back to the door turns into a run when the other keys begin to rattle. The pirates slam the door shut just as swarm of keys slams against the door. The cat howls once from inside the room, then ceases. Blood pools out from under the door.

Serpent comments, "That is a lot of blood for one cat."

Sindawe shrugs, "Perhaps it is a blood cat... you know... made of blood."

Serpent says, "Let's see what the key does." He taps the tuning fork end against the wall. The door to the key room pops open. A hungry swarm of keys flies at the party.

Wogan screams, "The key is a *chime of opening!*"

The key swarm damages the pirates with a thousand tiny cuts. Serpent and Sindawe run. Wogan is right behind them, then stops, spins and blasts the swarm with a *fireball* (from his *spell*

*storing* device, the *Rain Tiger*). Keys burn, splinter or melt depending upon their material. The house writhes in agony, tossing the pirates about. The pirates pick themselves up and dust off.

Wogan and Serpent examine the key and determine it has five charges. Meanwhile Sindawe pulls a few blobs of precious metals from the key swarm.

Serpent laughs, "I doubt we'll be able to sell those."

Sindawe stares at Serpent, "It is found money. You have been acting weird lately, Serpent. The Serpent I know is greedy and would never pass up a single copper piece." Sindawe concludes accusingly, "You don't seem to care much about money anymore."

Serpent shrugs, "I don't know what you're talking about."

### *The Locked Door*

The pirates return to a locked door they encountered earlier, eager to try the *chime of opening* without releasing a deadly swarm. Wogan raises the key...

Serpent shouts, "Wait! I have an axe. Let's not waste the magic item."

Sindawe replies, "Nice try, doppelganger!" But he steps aside so Serpent can chop at the door. The door is quickly turned to splinters; the shadow stuff is not very sturdy.

A porcelain masked man steps thru the ruined door and strikes Serpent with a falchion while hissing, "Be! Quiet!"

Wogan blasts the man with a blunderbuss just as the falchion bounces off his breastplate. Serpent chops away with his axe. Sindawe trips the man and knocks him unconscious.

Wogan and Sindawe kneel to strip gear off the man, while Serpent watches out for more attackers. The man's body is made of shadows, which burn Sindawe's hands with cold. Wogan



takes over stripping the man, protected from the cold by Gozreh's gifts. The pirate stops when he notices the shadow body dissipating. He guesses that the clothes hold the body together.

Wogan finds a *potion of sanctuary* and that the falchion is a Nidalese masterwork made of a shadowy substance (*master shadow falchion*).

The man's prison is a luxuriously appointed bedroom. They drag the unconscious man into the room and begin searching. Sindawe keeps watch. Most of the room and its items are made from the house's shadowy substance. They do find a real-world set of artisan carving tools (masterwork) and a suit of noble clothes. The pirates steal both without a second thought.

The porcelain masked man wakes up many minutes later. He whispers, "Who are you?"

The pirates have a whispered conversation with the man. It becomes obvious he is crazy and offers little useful information, although he did hear a crying child through his door.

Sindawe asks Serpent, "His mask is worth some coins."

Serpent stares uncertainly at Sindawe, "Yeah?"

Sindawe restates, "It is valuable. Don't you want it?" Serpent stares back blankly.

Wogan cuts the conversation short by whipping out a pistol and shooting the man (critical hit to the chest for 33pts). The body decomposes into shadows which merge with the house.

Sindawe gently packs the porcelain mask away.

### *The Living Room*

The pirates return to room with mismatched furniture to investigate its adjoining rooms. All four of the doors are locked. Sindawe searches amongst the furniture, finding mismatched game pieces on the table. And a dirty diaper in one corner.

Wogan knocks on the doors and announcing loudly, "Anya, open up! It's me, Wogan!"

He hears Anya's voice behind one door, saying, "Let him in. It's my brother Wogan. He's here to help."

Anya convinces her allies, a trio of crossbow armed fetchlings, to open the door. Anya holds her son, Marek.

Anya says, "I know Stepan would send help. Thank you, Wogan."

Wogan hugs Anya affectionately, then remembers his comrades are present. He pushes her back and asks, "How did you get here?"

Anya explains, "Creatures from Ansar's painting came to life and forced me through the mirror. These three fetchlings were kind enough to take Marek and I in. How are we going to get out?"

Wogan explains, "Well, the shadow fae upstairs wants your baby in order to enter our world."

Anya exclaims, "That is a terrible plan. Next."

Sindawe says, "Let's go back to the mirror. Stepan can let us out."

Wogan, "I thought Stepan said he couldn't let us out. We had to destroy the *Heart*."

Sindawe replies, "I think he was lying. But it is one thing to lie if it's your brother-in-law and ruffians. Another thing entirely if it is your wife and child."

## The Frighteners

The group walks cautiously back to the mirror room. They make it into the basement to find the mirror, still wrapped in chains. Wogan peers into the mirror. He can see Stephan sitting in the real mansion's mirror room. He gets his Stephan's attention. Stephan cautiously lights several *sunrods*

before getting close to the mirror. It quickly becomes apparent that sound cannot travel through the mirror, so communications are reduce to mouthing words and pantomime.

Wogan mimes, "Let us out."

Stephan mimes back, "You need to destroy the *Heart*."

Wogan announces to his comrades and Anya, "I think we have to destroy the *Heart*."

Sindawe orders Wogan, "Sell it. Tell him we can't find the *Heart*. He has to let us out.

That bastard is lying."

Wogan tries, but is ultimately convinced that Stepan cannot let them out.

Sindawe shrugs, "Great, let's go."

### *The Baron's Dirty Work*

The pirates return to the first floor and a hallway that pulsates and drips ichor. It too faces the same unseen room as the other pulsating, ichor dripping walls. The pirates discuss destroying the *Heart*.

The fetchlings guarding Anya grow upset, "The house will react violently. We should probably hide... and protect Anya and the child."

Anya introduces them as "Meryes, Jerjery, and Ochoth."

The group discusses how Stepan told them to kill the *Midnight Mirror's* denizens before destroying the *Heart*. Otherwise, they would be released in the barony to unleash untold chaos.

Sindawe explains that plan to Anya's fetchlings and that they get a pass for being such decent guys. None of them seem convinced that they'll be spared. He continues, "In the real world you should run for the woods or the fetchling slum in Karpad. Don't linger at the manor house."

Sindawe asks, “What other denizens are there here?”

The fetchlings scratch their heads, “Uh, we don’t remember. The first hundred years plays tricks on the memory. After that none of us can agree on the simplest detail.”

Sindawe sighs, “OK. Tell us about Nicasor and Elenuta. What are their powers? Weaknesses?”

The fetchlings come up with, “Shadow powers, summoning hairless cats and despotism... The latter led to these fetchlings taking their chances on the first floor. And no one talks about the *Heart*, because it is always listening.”

Sindawe sighs again.

#### When In Doubt, Murder

The pirates decide to kill Nicasor and Elenuta before tackling the *Heart*. The fetchlings, Anya, and Marek are escorted back to the fetchling’s locked room.

Sindawe orders them to, “Keep the door locked. If anything happens to Anya, you guys lose. And make notes about any monsters, men or fetchlings that inhabit this place.”

Serpent asks, “What’s the plan?”

Sindawe explains, “We kill everyone and everything then destroy the *Heart*.”

Serpent responds, “Let’s do it.” Wogan cocks his musket suggestively.