

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 02/09/2014

TODAY'S EPISODE: NO SUBSTANCE BUT HORROR

Wogan and his comrades have entered the *Midnight Mirror*, a pocket dimension of shadow, to rescue Wogan's sister and nephew. Wogan's brother-in-law, Baron Stephan, helped them enter and advised them how to destroy its power source, the *Heart*. Destroying the power source will the *Midnight Mirror* and return all of its denizens to the Stephan's mansion. Many of those denizens are monsters or rebels, so Stephan has requested that they be destroyed first. Of course, Stephan forgot to mention that he cut a deal with the *Midnight Mirror's* ruler, Nicasor, a shae (shadow fey). Nicasor killed Stephan's brothers, allowing Stephan to inherit the barony and in return Nicasor gets Stephan's infant son. Mother and son have been located, healthy if not safe. Nicasor has offered the pirates a deal. And the pocket dimension itself is resisting our heroes' efforts to locate and destroy the *Heart*.

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/barbarian and his snake Saluthra (Paul).
- ♣ Samaritha, the wand-blastin' serpentfolk wizard in the guise of a pretty half-elf, and 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.

KILL ALL DENIZENS!!!

Anya and her son along with their fetchling bodyguards have locked themselves in a room to await the pirates' victory. The pirates have decided to sweep and clear the entire house, then tackle the *Heart*.

The pirates go upstairs to kill Nicasor and his fetchling minions. They buff up in a nearby hallway, then bust in to find the six fetchlings lounging about in the common area. They lounge about, bored, unaware that this visit will be more violent than the last.

Sindawe is momentarily overcome by the possibilities for killing the six fetchlings. He goes last. Wogan pushes past Sindawe to cast *cone of fear* from his *mace of terror*; several fetchlings scabble away quickly. Serpent closes with and ends a fetchling with his axe.

The remaining fetchlings run out of self-preservation. One fetchling emerges from a bedroom to investigate; Serpent spins about and chops him down. Sindawe runs after a fetchling running to Nicasor's quarters. He attempts to kick her through the barred door.

Wogan follows closely behind. He shouts, "Serpent! We need the *chime of opening*."

Serpent shouts back, "I am busy killing fetchlings!"

Sindawe screams, "The fetchlings aren't the threat! We have to get Nicasor and their sorceress leader!"

Serpent doesn't respond, except to continue chopping at an armoire shielding a cowering fetchling. He froths at the mouth as the fetchling screams for Mommy.

Wogan lights a bomb and hands it to Sindawe, "Here! Try this!"

Sindawe plants the bomb, then moves off. It goes off, leaving the door heavily damaged. The floor buckles and heaves as if alive, throwing the pirates (and no one else) around. Sindawe throws himself through the door.

LUXURIOUS AND URBANE, EXCEPT FOR THE SNAKE

The room beyond would not be out of place within a rich lord's home. It oozes wealth and taste, including a painting of an idealized Nicasor riding a giant lion, both trailing mighty manes of shadow hair. Nicasor stands ready with drawn blades on the far side of the room. Next to him is a man-sized snake apparently made of shadow. Another locked door is in the far wall.

Sindawe takes this all in as he tumbles into the room. He also notes the open door next to the door Wogan's bomb took out. A screaming fetchling runs thru the door toward Nicasor, begging for protection. Sindawe sighs.

Nicasor announces, "Very well. Death is your reward." He points at Sindawe, who is bathed in shadowy fire. It seems to burn, but not nearly as badly as should... Sindawe is able to shake off the illusion.

The shadow snake slithers forward to bite Sindawe – the dark pirate is bitten, poisoned, grappled then squashed, and suffocated. Wogan shoots the snake.

The house bucks again throwing the pirates around. Nicasor and his allies seem immune. Then all of the doors slam shut. Serpent puts aside his fetchling killing to help Wogan and Sindawe. Sindawe thinks he hears someone (invisible) in the far corner casting spells, then falls unconscious due to suffocation (critical failure).

Nicasor laughs then points at Serpent, "Now that one!" Serpent is bathed in shadowy fire (4pts). The shadow snake releases the unconscious monk, slithers up to Serpent who is bitten, grappled, squashed, and suffocated. He easily shakes off the poison. Wogan stands back up, pulls another gun, and shoots the shadow snake.

Serpent rages and attacks the shadow snake with his battle axe. The shadow snake bites him repeatedly. Sindawe leaps to his feet and runs toward the invisible spellcaster, dodging past a shadowy dog (just summoned) and Nicasor's blades. He spent a precious *fate coin* to recover from the snaking, arguing, "I was *feigning death* like a first edition monk!"

The house shrinks the room, putting the combatants closer together. The invisible caster runs away from Sindawe just as the shadow hell hound breathes shadowy flames. Sindawe dodges out of the way, noting that the house writhes in pain from the flames. Sindawe misses Nicasor with a flurry of blows. Nicasor counterattacks with his long/short sword combination, hitting all four times and dropping the monk. Wogan rushes into the room and hits Sindawe with a maximized cure spell (31 hp). Then house shrinks the room again. The shadow snake's wounds magically heal, suggesting an invisible caster.

The shadow snake attacks Serpent again, but finally misses, denying it another bite, poison, grapple, squash, and suffocate. Serpent attacks the shadow snake before succumbing to suffocation.

Sindawe decides all is lost and surrenders. "I surrender. You can have the child."

Nicasor and the shadow snake move up and accept the surrender. Then everyone flees the still shrinking room. The room finally disappears, leaving behind a key.

Nicasor demands of the pirates, "Go destroy the *Heart*." He pokes them with his swords, herding them downstairs.

DOWNSTAIRS

Wogan uses his *wand of cure light wounds* on Sindawe, while Serpent casts cure spells upon himself. Various buffs expire, including the summoned shadow hell hound. Nicasor, the shadow

snake and Elenuta, the no longer invisible fetchling shadowcaller, urge the pirates to destroy the *Heart*. The defeated pirates grudgingly agree to be their cannon fodder.

Serpent chops thru the ichor-dripping wall of the dining room to reveal the courtyard. A huge, black, dripping plant stands in the fountain. There are no exits from the courtyard; the huge plant must be lonely.

Wogan rushes forward, avoids a searching tendril, and throws a grenade. The explosion drives the *Heart* into overdrive! Tendrils explode outward and the *Heart* takes on a more aggressive expression. Serpent casts a spell (buff) then rushes forward avoiding an attack of opportunity. Sindawe rushes and attacks with a kama.

The *Heart* lashes out with tendrils at all of the pirates. It bites Sindawe with its acid dripping maw (20pts). Wogan runs up behind the creature and stabs it with a glass shard from the *Mirror's* crack (several people start giggling). He gets a critical hit (23pts). The pirates note that the *Heart* can heal its wounds, except those caused by the shard. Serpent follows with several critical hits (53pts and sickened) from his battle axe.

The Heart falls, but does not die. The room shakes violently. Wogan delivers a *coup de grace* using the mirror shard. Plant spores shower the pirates, hitting Wogan and Serpent. Serpent is paralyzed - until Wogan casts *remove paralysis*.

The pirates begin healing then rush to destroy Nicasor, Elenuta, and her shadow snake. Wogan throws a bomb at their feet (15pts), Serpent closes with Nicasor while dodging the snake. Sindawe attempts to run past Nicasor, fails, so punches Nicasor with a stunning fist. The shadow fey drops his weapons.

The house shudders... the dining room's floor grows caltrop-like spikes. The room outside where Elenuta stands becomes like quicksand; the shadowcaller plunges in.

Wogan casts *silence* into the next room, further locking Elenuta down. Serpent hacks at the stunned Nicasor (15pts) while the shadow snake fails to grapple him. The pirates are happy to find that the snake and Nicasor are much less dangerous without their buffs. Elenuta swims out of the quicksand and climbs into the room only to be tripped back in by Sindawe. Sindawe rains blows on Nicasor.

The house rumbles... but does nothing.

Nicasor recovers from stunned, decides against snatching up his long and short sword, so pulls a dagger and stabs Sindawe (9pts). Wogan tries a shot, but suffers a misfire (broken). Serpent whacks Nicasor several times (25pts) with his axe, missing once due to flitting shadows (20% miss chance). The shadow snake dashes past the melee to rescue Elenuta from the quicksand.

The house rumbles and collapses the dining room. The combatants are tossed into the quicksand hallway. Nicasor surfaces and stabs Sindawe and Serpent repeatedly with daggers, until Serpent kills him with a mighty axe hack (20pts). Nicasor screams as his shadow stuff bleeds out. Sindawe snatches up his mask and mithral banded mail.

NOTE: Quicksand requires a DC 10 swim check to avoid sinking. For every 5 over that DC the person may swim 5'. Creatures with a swim speed treat quicksand as water.

Elenuta clings to her shadow snake, which uses its swim speed to dart through the quicksand. Serpent uses his serpent totem to give himself a swim speed then pursues. He catches up to Elenuta just as she and the snake clear the water. He dodges a dark ray from her and a bite from the snake. The house excretes a shadow dog that attacks Serpent; it also misses.

Wogan swims after them and shoots Elenuta with *magic missiles* (from the *Rain Tiger*). Sindawe swims after them too. Serpent emerges on solid footing and hacks away at Elenuta, whose

protecting shadows cause him to repeatedly miss (20% miss chance). Elenuta hits Serpent with a spell that makes his head spin, then backs away.

Wogan roots around in his bandolier and finds a gun not encrusted with muck and shoots Elenuta. Serpent closes with Elenuta despite his spinning head and hacks her once. Elenuta's shadow snake moves in behind Serpent and bites him. Sindawe punches the snake (27pts). The house's shadow hound drains Elenuta's strength. Then Serpent kills her with an axe blow (21pts); her shadow snake (eidolon) immediately dissolves. Sindawe destroys the threatening shadow.

The pirates search Elenuta but find only mundane items. The disgusted pirates run to gather up Anya, Marek, and their fetchling guards. The group then runs for the *Mirror* in the basement. They make their way down several halls to find the stairs covered in darkness that cannot be penetrated by light. They feel their way down the stairs and thereby avoid a pit trap at the bottom.

Aunt Evgenia, a blood relation of Baron Stephan and a ghost, greets them in basement. She is so pleased to see her great nephew that she fights off the pursuing shadows.

THE MIRROR BROKEN

The pirates gain the mirror room; Wogan stabs the *Mirror* with his mirror shard. The group is sucked through the mirror and dumped in the real manor house's basement (without ceremony). Many other non-shadow items are ejected with them including the dining room china set and various people, dead and alive.

Stephan runs over and hugs Anya and his son, Marek. Wogan stands nearby. Serpent and Sindawe gather up loot from the debris.

All told the ejectees are:

- Wogan, Serpent, and Sindawe
- Anya and Marik
- Anya's three fetchling bodyguards
- two of the lethargic fetchlings (upstairs)
- a crazy fetchling with tangled hair and extremely long fingernails
- various mundane, prime material items
- a chest of items looted: a *scroll of day light*, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of remove disease*, masterwork hand crossbow with 12 silver bolts, *bracers of armor +1*, *wand of lesser restoration* (14 charges)
- Nicasor's *+1 long sword* and *+1 short sword*
- Iron bound book written in Aklo titled *Atlas of the Black Shores*, which has maps and details on the shadow plane's citadels (9,000 years ago).

Stephan's hound master covers the fetchlings with a loaded crossbow. Stephan lets them go, telling them to seek out *Shade Grove* where the fetchlings of Karpad live. He welcomes the trio that helped his wife.

Wogan tells Stephan, "We met your brothers, Stephan. You are a complete bastard. I approve."

Stephan replies, "I am pure blood."

Wogan looks at his companions, then tells Stephan, "We want our shadows back." Several people notice that Serpent already has a shadow.

Serpent notices too, "That must be good. Oh, but I still feel sick."

Sindawe tells him, "That's probably Nicasor's shadow. And it will plague you for the rest of your years." People start pulling blades and staring at Serpent's shadow.

The shadow breaks free of Serpent, lengthens, and takes the form of a shadow demon, "It is I, Chmetugo. You have freed me from the shadow realm. See you later, gators." He flies out of the room. In the distance the pirates hear the demon continue, "Ah Nidal, the one place worse than prison."

Stephan stares after the departed demon.

Wogan asks, "Is your staff still shadowed, Serpent?"

Serpent examines it and determines it is indeed shadowed.

Stephan looks at it, then says, "Follow me. I will return your shadows."

Stephan reads from the *Book of Night Without Moon* and returns their shadows. He looks at the staff and determines, "Its glyph has been tainted. Possibly its previous owner was shadow tainted. I can remove it." He does so using the book.

Stephan says, "I believe that was an invidiak. *The Book of Night Without Moon* shows they are not true demons, but they did serve the demon lord Vyriavaxus... before he was seduced and slain by Nocticula. They are incorporeal, immune to cold & electricity, and are resistant to poison, fire and magic. They are associated with the sin of envy in Thassilonian writings, they like to eat souls, they can possess people, and magic sunlight might drive them out of a body."

Stephan asks, "What is this creature's relation to you?"

The pirates' collective reply is, "Uh... not sure. He or his minions show up and make our lives difficult."

Stephan replies, "Hmmm... that was an amazing series of coincidences that allowed Chmetugo to escape with you from shadow realm. I wonder how he pulled it off."

Sindawe says, "Thank you. We know you murdered your brothers."

Stephan hotly replies, "I didn't kill my brothers. I just imprisoned them."

Sindawe shakes his head, "Yes, but then you sent us into that prison with orders to kill everyone. Sounds like murder to me."

Serpent stares at Sindawe, then asks, "Are you going to kill him now?"

Sindawe shrugs, "No."

Baron Stephan feigns indifference.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

Wogan asks Stephan for additional travel papers for Rucia and possibly others. The baron delivers. Wogan also asks about guides for their trip into froghemoth territory. He delivers.

The next few days prove that the *tallowthroat* plague is ending.

Rucia, the waitress and chosen of Desna, agrees to accompany Wogan out of Nidal. Especially after she remembers how much the Nidalese religious government hates Desna.