

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY II/O2/2014

TODAY'S EPISODE: *OLD FLAMES, FALSE PROMISES – PART II*

The pirate ship *Teeth of Araska* (ToA) is just offshore at Staufendorf Island. The crew on board waits quietly in the darkness for signal from the away team. The away team's job is to infiltrate Staufendorf Manor, actually a castle, and open its gates to the invading pirates. The village at dockside is considered a soft target having no soldiers or fortifications. At least that is the plan... our heroes are:

- ✦ Captain Sindawe H'kilata Narr of the *Teeth of Araska*, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris).
- ✦ Chief Gunner Wogan, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick).
- ✦ Quartermaster Ref "Serpent" Jorensen, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul).
- ✦ Mitabu "Keel Breaker," a Mwangi rogue and breaker of Chelish ships (Ed).
- ✦ Zoamai "Elf Burner," a half-elf sorceress/arsonist responsible for burning down the Elven embassy in Korvosa (Ashley).
- ✦ Samaritha, a serpentfolk wizard in the guise of a pretty half-elf and Serpent's wife.
- ✦ Ship's Surgeon Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization and her cobra Naja.
- ✦ Bosun Tommy Blacktoes, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue.
- ✦ Lavender Lil, a buxom tiefling ex-prostitute, and Tommy's girlfriend.
- ✦ With them is a pirate crew of professional pirates, escaped slaves, and adventure seekers.

STAUFENDORF MANOR

Wogan, Mitabu, Zoamai, and Sindawe are in a hallway just outside the dining hall, a room they just fought clear of. Amalinda Staufen and her surviving minion, an erodaemon, are still in that room hidden by a *darkness* spell. Serpent ran into the dining hall convinced by magic that the erodaemon is his mother.

Wogan channels positive energy to heal his wounded comrades including a pair attractive and unconscious aasimar women at their feet. This revives the aasimars who immediately take in their surroundings then cling desperately to Wogan. He seems uncomfortable with their attention... and secretly pleased.

Sindawe, having drunk a *darkvision* potion earlier, watches the erodaemon leave Serpent's side to walk over to Amalinda. She touches the anorexic noblewoman's shoulder and the pair disappear from the room.

A voice fills the pirate's heads, "We have your mother and your children. We await you at the chapel."

Wogan and Sindawe ask in unison, "Whose children?"

Wogan points at Sindawe, who shakes his head in the negative. Amalinda was too thin and anorexic to support life.

Serpent shouts, "They have my mother!"

The group hears cannon fire in the distance.

Serpent says, "Wasn't something supposed to happen soon?"

Mitabu looks at him in disgust, "Yes! Our pirates are attacking at 4:15!"

Serpent replies, "That must be them then."

Wogan says, "Let's go open the gate. Then go to the chapel."

THE COURTYARD

Sindawe, Wogan, Mitabu, Zoamai, and Serpent hurry to the gates. They find the courtyard suddenly full of guards (30)! There are ten soldiers defending the gate and ten more

soldiers atop a tower firing crossbows at a pirate army outside the gate. The pirate army is milling about uncertainly.

Sindawe asks to no one in particular, “Where did all of these guards come from? Where were they hiding?”

Wogan shrugs, “I have no idea. How did our guys get here so quickly?”

Sindawe rolls his eyes in disgust, “For a change everyone is on time and we’re late.”

The erodaemon appears in a tower opposite the gate. She stands tall while calling upon the powers of Abaddon. Abaddon hears her plea and places two large creatures in the courtyard. They look like misshapen apes with twisted racks of horns on their heads.

They declare in unison, “Ceustodaemons!” They high five each other as a guard unit scrambles to clear the area.

The erodaemon orders one to destroy the pirate vessel. It flies away with Samaritha (also flying) in pursuit.

She orders the other ceustodaemon, “Kill these fools!” It rotates its head to take in the soldiers, guards, and a handful of pirates. The ceustodaemon decides to wait for the fools to reveal themselves.

Zoamai casts a *maximized fireball* and burns the guards in the courtyard (thanks to mass combat rules this kills 7 guards in one ten man unit).

Serpent pulls out a tuning fork and points it at the fortress gate, opening it with a *knock* spell, then runs at the summoned ceustodaemon swinging his staff, but is intercepted by the guard unit getting away from the ceustodaemon.

Hatshepsut charges thru the open gate, leading her squad, screaming, “Cut their souls!”

They smash into the soldiers at the gate. Soldiers atop the tower exchange crossbow fire with the pirates backed up at the gate. Lavender Lil uses her bardic skills to *inspire courage*.

Mitabu sneaks up on the ceustodaemon and back stabs it with his +3 *dagger*. Sindawe runs into the stables, up the stairs, onto the roof and leap atop the fortress wall. This still puts him many feet away from the erodaemon. Wogan casts *sleet storm* on the guard units making their footing uncertain. The erodaemon shoots a *crushing despair* into the courtyard, catching pirate and guard alike. Then the erodaemon hits Mitabu with *enervation* (3 lvls); Mitabu is now down 5 levels total. The Mwangi rogue staggers back toward Wogan to seek healing. The ceustodaemon in the courtyard maneuvers to put Mitabu and Serpent into view, then breathes fire on them... and a number of guards. Serpent hits back with his staff. The ceustodaemon counterattacks with bite and claws, but misses with all three. Serpent switches to his magic axe (+3) and chops the daemon for 20pts.

Zoamai hits another guard unit with a *maximized fireball*, killing six of them. However, this and the *sleet storm* does not prevent the guards from jamming into the gate area with the soldiers, keeping the pirate army bottlenecked. Hatshepsut kills a trio of soldiers with her martial arts, while her pirate squad nickels and dimes several more to death. Together they push the soldiers and guards back, allowing another pirate unit (10) to push into the courtyard. The remaining pirates fire crossbows without regard for friends into a cluster of guards at the gate, dropping several more. Two of the three guard units have been wiped out.

Lavender Lil casts *black tentacles* from a scroll and centers it on the soldiers atop a tower. They scream as tentacles seize and crush them. Wogan casts a cure spell on Mitabu, who then sneaks away to watch the battle from a hiding spot. Tommy sneak attacks a sergeant, killing him

with a sling stone. Zoamai throws another *maximized fireball* into the guard unit around Serpent and the ceustodaemon, destroying them utterly. Serpent and the daemon are unimpressed by the fire (though they do burn a bit).

The remaining guards surrender. The soldiers soldier on but are too few to make a difference. A few soldiers even win free of the *black tentacles*. The pirates cut down the soldiers remaining around the gate. Most of the pirates run into the manor house proper, looting as they go. Zoamai joins them, though she spends more time starting fires than looting.

The single aasimar not accounted for is skulking around the manor house. She spots Dum-Dum and decides, "That's a mark." It takes her twenty minutes to get him into bed (a closet) and convince him to protect her. Dum-Dum is convinced that this is his idea and the best thing since sliced bread.

Sindawe cannot lay a hand on the erodaemon, despite several flurries of martial arts blows. She insists on pretending to be Mama Watanna even as he screams, "You lie!" He switches to tripping and finally succeeds. The erodaemon falls backwards. She is unimpressed, demanding, "Join us below." She disappears.

The Chapel

Sindawe looks out over the courtyard from the tower. The pirate army has won. Serpent slays the ceustodaemon with a critical hit from his magic axe. The daemon dies from *split head-itis*. Wogan heals the fallen pirate, Gareb. Mitabu watches from the shadows.

Sindawe whistles to get their attention, then points at the chapel.

The four pirates gather at the chapel entrance which faces the courtyard. They turn to watch Tommy Blacktoes chase a giggling Lavender Lil into the manor house. Then turn their attention back to murdering Amalinda and her erodaemon.

The four pirates enter the chapel, which is a long rectangular room lit by candles. It is dedicated to Asmodeus but has not repaired or cleaned since the pirates were last here. It is unoccupied.

Wogan notes the two aasimars still clinging to him. He asks, "Why do you wear these masks?" They all have iron animal masks on their faces.

The pair answer in unison, "Because we have to."

Mitabu and Serpent investigate a hatch leading to the family crypt. Mitabu opens the hatch, ignoring the poison slathered on the handles thanks to his *periapt against poison*. The pirates pull out a collection of *ever burning torches* and descend the stairs.

The crypt is a large room full of shelves carved into the walls. The shelves hold piles of bones, stacked haphazardly.

Mitabu searches the room for traps, finds none, but does find its secret door. Scattered bones help mark it. Mitabu opens it and Serpent charges thru into a hallway. The pirates follow it into a rubble strewn chamber. Dead people dressed in Staufen servant uniforms litter the floor. A door is the only exit from this room.

Wogan investigates the bodies. The flesh is sunken to the bone, the faces twisted in agony. The skin is lacquered.

Wogan announces, "They were strangled to death."

Sindawe asks, "Strangled? Or suffocated?"

Wogan points at ligature marks on a corpse, then says, "Literature marks."

Sindawe stares at the round cleric a moment, “Uh... they got read to death?”

Mitabu offers, “Maybe someone put a heavy book on their necks.”

Sindawe nods at that; it sounds exactly like something Chelish nobles would do. What bastards!

The pirates go thru the door into a side corridor pitted with tunnels. The far end holds another door. They shine their lights down tunnels as they pass revealing villagers and other prisoners. Most are missing one limb. Some are missing several. All are manacled to the tunnel walls. They beg to be set free and make quite a bit of noise.

Mitabu asks, “Do we free them now?”

Sindawe says, “After.”

Mitabu checks the door for traps, then opens it.

This lozenge shaped chamber contains a long dining table. Amalinda and her erodaemon sit at opposite ends of the table. Amalinda’s family are also seated at the table, frozen in a tableau of dining and arguing. Each has a live baby on their platter. The babies are making very little noise given the situation.

The pirates enter. At close range it is obvious that the Staufen family members are still dead, much like the servants in the earlier chamber. They are also lacquered into their death poses.

Amalinda says, “Welcome.”

Sindawe asks, “Whose babies?”

Amalinda replies, “All of these babies were born exactly nine months after your ship left this island.”

Serpent says, “Oh, so they’re bastards belonging to our crew.”

Amalinda nods, then continues, “My family gets hungry. But they don’t have to feed tonight. If you join me, Sindawe. Here. Forever.” She waves her arms and the doors on the far side open to reveal a chapel.

She continues, “If you marry me now, your crew can take the babies and sail away.” She smiles prettily.

Sindawe crosses over to her and whispers in her ear, “What again is the deal, woman?”

She repeats herself.

Sindawe says, “No.”

Amalinda stands up, “Sindawe, you will marry me! Now!” She gestures and the lacquered Staufens (seven) stand up, zombie style. And they reach for the babies.

The erodaemon, disguised as Serpent’s mother, tells Serpent, “Your friends are betraying you.” She casts *utter contempt* on him.

Serpent’s like for his companions shifts several rungs lower. As does his regard for Amalinda and his mother.

Serpent nods and screams, “I have utter contempt for all of you!” He chops a zombie Staufen down with his axe.

Sindawe, Wogan, and Mitabu shrug at Serpent’s declaration.

Sindawe grapples Amalinda. She responds with a *command* spell, which he shakes off then bites at him as he tries to pin her.

Wogan channels *positive energy* against the zombies, wounding all of them. But they are not slain, and hungrily reach down for the babies.

Mitabu thinks quickly and kicks out the table legs on his side of the table. The babies all roll off the tilted table onto the floor and out of reach of the zombies. Their rolling is aided by a coat of butter. The babies cry their disapproval.

The erodaemon casts *unnatural lust* on Mitabu, who turns to Serpent with lust filled eyes. Serpent ducks under the Mitabu's embrace. Clearly the rogue was trying to deliver the infamous Mwangi *kiss of death*.

The erodaemon bites Mitabu while shouting, "I'll save you, Serpent!" (10pts, 3pts of Charisma). The unhappy Mwangi staggers backward slashing at the daemon while Serpent swings at him.

Wogan's second *positive energy* destroys the remaining zombies, then casts *silence* on the disabled dining table.

Serpent's mom (the erodaemon) backs away from Mitabu. She transforms into Marissa, Mitabu's young love, and mouths at Mitabu, "Serpent hurt me!"

Serpent decides that isn't his mom and swings his axe right into the erodaemon. Wogan casts a *magic missile* out of the *Rain Tiger*. The erodaemon, still looking like Marissa, bites and claws at Serpent but largely misses. Mitabu stabs at Serpent.

Sindawe hits Amalinda with a stunning fist, then pummels her mercilessly. Amalinda pulls out a punching dagger, punches at Sindawe and misses, then she crawls away as Sindawe kicks her. She is strangely resistant to Sindawe's blows, so he chases after her with his temple sword. She continues crawling and makes the chapel room, then stands up. Sindawe follows, trips her, and throws her out of the chapel. She stands back up while making an unladylike like hand sign at him.

The Mitabu, Serpent, and erodaemon melee continues. Wogan casts *bless* using his *metamagic rod of silence*. Mitabu shakes off the erodaemon's influence and stabs the surprised erodaemon (24pts). She responds with claws on Mitabu (13pts) and bites Serpent (8pts and 1 Charisma). Serpent swings his axe a great deal but is unable to connect, but Mitabu manages another back stab (18pts).

The erodaemon dashes out of the melee and into the hallway, clear of the silence zone. She waves good bye to Amalinda and teleports away.

Serpent dashes over to Amalinda swinging his axe. Sindawe cuts her once. Wogan channels *positive energy* healing everyone (including the babies) but not Amalinda. Amalinda uses *sprint* to make a run for the chapel but is tripped by Sindawe, then hacked repeatedly by Serpent until she goes limp.

Clean-up

Sindawe drags Amalinda's body over to a chair and drapes her over it, intent on chopping off her head once and for all. She pops up with a shriek (fast healing), grabbing and biting at the pirate.

Sindawe backs up screaming, "What the hell!?"

He and Serpent hack and slash the noble woman until she no longer moves.

Wogan announces, "I smell smoke. Those fools are going to drop the fortress down around our ears."

Sindawe declares, "Loot!"

Serpent takes a magic headband and ring from Amalinda's corpse. (Loot: *headband of alluring charisma +2, profane signet ring*). Wogan examines the chapel and determines that it is dedicated to the daemon lord, *The Gaunt Stranger*. Sindawe picks up valuable looking silverware. Mitabu gathers up the babies for travel.

Loot gathered, each pirate takes up a pair of babies.

Sindawe orders, "Serpent, get up top and organize the looting. We need supplies for the trip."

Serpent eagerly hands his babies to Sindawe and runs out of the room.

Sindawe orders, "Wogan, gather up your aasimar harlots. Bring them back here for baby duty."

Wogan leaves the room muttering, "Babies might give them the wrong idea."

Sindawe and Mitabu free the amputees. Wogan returns with the aasimar women.

Everyone carries a baby or two and heads up top. The amputees drag themselves along behind.

Serpent finds Stoke and his wife Tegan having sex on the altar to Asmodeus. They stop.

He says, "That's probably a bad idea. Sex on altars tends to produce unwanted children. Or commitments."

Stoke and Tegan stare at him.

Serpent continues, "Never mind. I'm sure you'll be all right."

Serpent exits the chapel and goes into the manor house to get the pirates under control. He is able to downgrade the situation from "chaos" to "arson and looting".

What Next?

Sindawe, Mitabu, Wogan and their companions exit the chapel some minutes later.

Wogan asks, “I wonder how Samaritha is handling the ceustodaemon that left to attack the ship.”

Sindawe responds, “I’m sure it will be all right. Mase had twenty pirates, murder guns, and cannon to defend the ship.”

Mitabu groans, “I don’t want to be trapped on this island.” He glances back at the dozen or so amputees dragging themselves along behind.