

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 05/29/2016

TODAY'S EPISODE: THE BATTLE OF NIGHTFALL STATION

Our heroes hired on as guards with the Aspis Consortium for a trip up the Vanji River into the Mwangi Expanse. This plan immediately goes from awful to *Heart of Darkness*. The crew retake Whitebridge Station from Ekujae elves, kidnap a shambling mound for fuel, fight through an ambush, don't die during a mosquito attack, and arrive at Nightfall Station where they join the employees in defending against the Ekujae elf siege. Our heroes are:

PCs:

- ▲ 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).

NPCs:

- ▲ Mitabu, a trap-loving Mwangi rogue.

Chase Ends, Screaming Begins

Earlier in the night Serpent spotted a furtive figure leave the station house and enter the jungle. He summons his companions and they follow the booted tracks into the jungle. They eventually find their man meeting with Ekujae elves in a clearing, where several more elves are bound, gagged, and hobbled. The pirates interrupt the parley by sneaking up less than quietly; everyone flees the clearing. Serpent and Sindawe chase the station man back to the station. Wogan retrieves the prisoners and begins to walk them back to the station via lantern light.

Sindawe rushes back into the station's grounds to find the station secretary Petrune running behind the outlying cold house building. Serpent is a short distance behind. Mitabu is somewhere on the grounds, having been left behind to actually maintain the guard station.

Petrune unlocks the cold house's padlock and enters the building. Sindawe enters. The building houses the recently deceased Aspis employees and Ekujae elves. Serpent and Mitabu see Sindawe enter. The smell of decomposing bodies is overwhelming in the cold house.

Petrune cowers at the far end of the cold house, "What do you want?"

Sindawe replies, "Come outside and answer for your crimes."

Petrune asks, "What crimes?"

Sindawe answers, "We will come up with some. Please step outside."

Petrune casts *wave of fatigue* which injures Sindawe. 12 fast zombies rise and swarm him until Serpent and Mitabu arrive. They are able to destroy several zombies; Sindawe exploits the gap to retreat from the cold house. Serpent destroys 4.5 zombies with his next full attack action. Sindawe helps.

Petrune casts another spell – a *spectral band* appears inside the cold house and closes with Serpent who attacks it with staff and bite. The contagion zombies step over the remains of the fast zombies to attack the pirates. Sindawe destroys two with a flurry of blows; both blow up in a shower of decay. Serpent and Sindawe destroy several more while Mitabu reloads his firearm. An empowered fireball explodes on Mitabu.

En route to the station Wogan hears bow strings twang in the darkness around him. Arrows miss or bounce off his armor. He spots several forms in the dark jungle and shoots one with his *mace of terror* causing that one to flee into the jungle. The remaining sniper rushes Wogan

with a spear and is met with by a swinging *frost mace*. The pair whack at each other for almost a minute with Wogan giving better than he gets.

Wogan downs the attacking Ekujae elf then declares, "Brain freeze!"

The bound and gagged prisoners stare at him without comment. Wogan urges them east again, then orders a halt to listen. He hears a large body of men moving east in the jungle perhaps only yards from their position. He moves his prisoners east again.

The empowered fireball does 55 points of damage. Mitabu and Sindawe avoid the flames altogether. Serpent takes 27 points. Petrune crackles with energy, perhaps empowered by the fiery blast.

Serpent retreats to heal his wounds. Mitabu holsters his firearm and climbs up a wall and along the ceiling of the cold house, courtesy of his *slippers of spider climbing*. Sindawe uses a flurry of blows to destroy more zombies, leaving one lone contagion zombie standing. Petrune shoots a flight of empowered *magic missiles* at Sindawe and Serpent injuring both. Serpent rushes the length of the cold house and swings at Petrune. Then Mitabu drops behind the wizard and backstabs – a glowing necromantic bone intercepts some of the blow. And it does so again, when Sindawe closes with and punches the wizard (non-lethal stunning fist punch)... then Serpent kills Petrune with five well placed staff blows.

The last zombie is destroyed by Mitabu.

Elves in the Wire

Mitabu steals several rings from the dead Petrune. Serpent casts a healing spell upon himself. Sindawe drags dead Petrune out of the cold house and back to the station house.

Several guards approach Sindawe. One asks, "What's going on?"

Sindawe keeps dragging while replying, “Petrunne created a bunch of zombies in the cold house. We also caught him talking to the Ekujae elves in the jungle. We killed the zombies; I think Petrunne’s dead.”

Wogan drops the lead to his prisoners and runs for the station house. He bursts out into the clearing, screaming, “Elves! Lots of elves!”

Ekujae arrows fly out of the jungle, hitting Wogan with a single barbed arrow. A pair of Aspis mercenaries fall beneath flights of arrows. Aspis employees run for the station house. The mercenaries in the distant guard towers remain at their posts.

The Ekujae elves exit the jungle and onto the station grounds. There are probably forty lead by a chieftain.

Sindawe, Wogan, Serpent, and Mitabu make the station house. Mitabu bars the door. Serpent drinks a healing potion. Sindawe digs a barbed arrow out of Wogan’s back. Wogan channels positive energy to heal the wounded.

Mynafee Gorse runs into the guard room. He spots Petrunne’s corpse and demands, “What happened?”

Sindawe reports, “He was dealing with the Ekujae elves tonight. We followed. He ran to the cold house. We fought him there along with his zombie horde. He committed suicide by letting Serpent hit him a bunch of times with his staff.”

Mynafee replies, “No drinking while on duty!”

Mynafee peers out an arrow slit and listens to a report shouted from a mercenary on the second floor. There’s scores and scores of elves making a move on the station house.

Mynafee issues orders: The PCs will defend the ground floor. Mercenaries to the second floor and guard tower. Do the best you can. Barricade and hold. If they get through, retreat upstairs.

Sindawe orders Mitabu to trap the guard door to the docks and the room behind it. Wogan will cover the front door (heavy duty and barred) from enfilading arrow slits; he has eight guns. Serpent and Sindawe head off to the warehouse section of station house to barricade its two sets of double doors.

Wogan watches from the arrow slits. In the distance he hears screams as the outlying guard towers are set ablaze. He spots the chieftain and his retainers; he hits the group with *call lightning*. He leaves his post for a second to pile furniture across the front door.

Mitabu sets his traps well. Sindawe uses a feather token tree to help block the landside warehouse doors. Serpent pushes barrels and boxes in front of the other doors.

Elves climb the front exterior of the station house to reach the second floor where they fight a unit of mercenaries; additional mercenaries shoot at their flank with crossbows. Other elves hit the front door with a battering ram; Wogan punishes the group with *call lightning* but they keep swinging.

Faruq and Esteban enter the warehouse seeking exit to their boat. Sindawe informs them the doors are barricaded. He hears the battering ram at the front door. He and Serpent leave the pair to guard the warehouse.

A second battering ram team replaces the first. Wogan blasts them through the gunport in the door with a blunderbuss that also deploys a stinking cloud; elves stagger off the patio choking. Serpent joins him at the second floor arrow slits; both fire at the elves with bow and firearms. Sindawe joins the guardsmen defending the second floor windows. He punches an elf

backwards onto the patio roof, then steps out the window. Elves attack him instead of entering the windows. More elves fire bows from the ground at mercenaries and Sindawe. Sindawe throws elves off the roof.

Serpent hears battering on the opposite side of his tower. He investigates; a unit of elves are on the first floor roof forcing barricaded windows. He fires at them from an arrow slit, while an Aspis accountant defends a splintering window shutter.

Wogan shoots buckshot and solid projectiles into the elf battering ram team at the front door. They stand up to the stinking cloud and murderous gun fire; they are hopped up on khat. They bash the door down. Their momentum carries them instead. Several spot Wogan and charge who blasts with his *mace of terror*. Seven scream and run away. The remaining four attack with spears.

Sindawe takes several arrow hits on the patio roof. He drops to the ground and runs inside thru the battered front door. Aspis crossbow men kill several of the elves left behind by Sindawe. The patio roof is almost swept clean of enemy. The mercenaries there barricade the doors.

Ekujae elves rampage thru the accountant's quarters, spilling into other officers' quarters nearby. Serpent rushes downstairs and crosses to another staircase that grants access to the officer quarters on the second floor. He runs right into the mass of marauders. Serpent crashes into the first one; he vigorously stomps on the downed man's head. Other elves rush him.

Wogan sweeps his attackers with a blunderbuss full of nails and iron scrap. Several drop. Sindawe kills the last few with a flying leap that drives their skulls into the hard stone floor.

Second Wave

Wogan peeks out the arrow slit. Two units of Ekujae elves have fallen. One is routed. And one is shot up. Several more units of elves rush out of the night to attack. One attacks the tree blocking the warehouse doors. The other rushes the freshly battered down front door along with the elf chieftain and a partial unit of elf archers.

Mitabu waits quietly near the heavily trapped back room. He tries out the rings stolen from Petrune's corpse.

Sindawe turns to defend against the new attackers. Wogan lights a bomb and throws it over Sindawe's head through the doorway. Sindawe holds the door, killing a pair of attackers. He is untouched by their attacks but the exploding bomb rips through him and the elves (14 pts, 8 pts of splash). Wogan heals him with maximized *cure serious wounds*.

Serpent kills a pair of attacking Ekujae elves in an Aspis officer's living quarters, then charges several more down a stairwell. More elves eagerly replace them. A spear slips past his defenses, which fuels his last round of rage. The last four elves die horribly beneath his staff.

Mynafee Gorse leaves his mercenaries on the second floor to check the first floor's sitrep. Sindawe and Wogan hear wood splintering at ground level the right of the front door. That noise is covered by an uptake in the rainfall. From that direction Ekujae elves rush down the corridor lead by the chieftain. Wogan blasts them with his *mace of terror*; four flee. Mynafee rushes the remainder with scimitar in hand. He is joined by Serpent. Wogan casts *blessing of fervor* covering Mynafee, Sindawe, Serpent, and Wogan.

Sindawe kills the last elf attempting to breach the front door, then rushes a unit of archers just beyond the patio. Ekujae archers die. The mercenary crossbowmen watch the melee. Their corporal declares, "The Mwangi has got it. Let's help Mynafee." The group moves rapidly toward the stairs.

Serpent and the chieftain collide, staff against spear. Wogan shoots an honor guard elf in the head. Mynafee slashes at elves. The chieftain withstands the first clash and delivers some heavy wounds to Serpent, reducing him to 5 hit points. Then Wogan heals him for 19 points. Serpent ends the chieftain.

Mynafee declares, "I am not half-orc woman! And we have defeated the chieftain! Flee! No, I mean them!"

The remaining Ekujae snatch up their chieftain's body and retreat. Wogan channels positive energy, healing Serpent, Mynafee, and himself. Then they rush off to help Faruq, Kelim and some guards against an Ekujae breach in the warehouse.

A drum beats in the jungle. The remaining Ekujae inside the station and grounds retreat.

Sindawe spots half a hundred torches in the treeline. This is before the Ekujae attackers retreat. He calls out, "Mynafee, we have to leave. There's more of them in the trees!"

Men rebuild the barricades.

Sheet lightning strikes the tree line. Dying and wounded scream in pain. Everyone looks at each other. "Did you do that?" "No, did you?"

Mynafee declares, "Help has arrived. Barricade the ground floor. Be alert!"

More energy discharges strike the tree line. A large animal with the lower form of a lion and the upper body of a woman charges out of the tree line toward the station house. She waves a banner and shouts, "Station Master Gorse, the Hands of Slaughter have arrived!"

The torches extinguish in the distance and small group walks out of the jungle and up to the station house. They are:

- Yruretugala – an ape in plate armor. His name means “eater of elves”. He is an anti-paladin.
- Azygos Qurashi – a heavy set caveman.
- Isai Odighuzua – an emaciated looking voodoo practitioner.
- Aliciette Cardoso – a tanned, blonde woman armed with a whip and bow.

Aliciette declares, “You needed help, Gorse?”

Gorse shrugs and invites her inside.

Yruretugala rolls up a barrel of elf hands. Then throws a few more inside from those fallen near the station house.

Wogan seizes the chieftain’s spear, ignoring its frost affect.

More “Hands of Slaughter” troops wander the tree line and the station house ground. A dretch, a shambling mound, and other alien creatures make up their ranks.

Serpent volunteers to check the restricted barracks for survivors. He finds its doors closed and barred. He commands them to open up, but its denizens initially refuse to believe that the Aspis won the fight. Wogan is invited inside to drink but doesn’t find out what they are doing in the building, though the equipment appears to be mining in nature and he suspects they have elf slaves somewhere that they’re using for said mining.

Clean-Up

The immediate clean-up is limited to extinguishing fires and removing corpses.

Gorse asks about the cold house after receiving a report that the cold house is full of dead zombies. Sindawe explains to him that secretary Petrune was a necromancer. Gorse orders

several officers to toss Petrune's room. Sindawe searches the corpse. Gorse offers them Petrune's belongings as reward but only after they have been reviewed for intelligence.

A note written in Ekujae is found, "Three more for your use. Bring payment to the usual place."

It is decided that the Secretary Petrune was buying victims from the Ekujae, taking them to the cold house, murdering them and raising them as zombies. Mitabu verifies that the Ekujae zombies were from another tribe though the local tribe probably thought they were selling them into slavery not death. Petrune was augmenting his Ekujae zombies with murdered Aspis employees.

No information is found on Petrune's allies or employers, let alone his agenda. Gorse offers a spare 250 gp when Wogan says he will use *Speak with Dead*.

Wogan does so the following day.

- Who were you working for? *A rival trading consortium in Bloodcove, House Barzoni.*
- What was your plan? *Build up an army of zombies and take over the Nightfall Station operation.*
- Who were your contacts in the Ekujae? *Several names are supplied.*

The station is officially relieved and the Hands of Slaughter go to murder every elf in the zip code. The station staff begins trying to put the station right again. The PCs are paid off.

Gorse gives each of them a letter of reference from the Aspis Consortium. They board the *River Queen* for a trip downriver to Nantambu.

Everyone levels up to 8th. This is a big deal because it has been years of game play since they last leveled! Everyone is happy.