

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 06/12/2016

TODAY'S EPISODE: NANTAMBU, RUINS, AND RICHES

Our heroes hired on as guards with the Aspis Consortium for a round trip on the Vanji River to Nantambu. Despite that trip going *Heart of Darkness* our heroes and half of the *River Queen's* crew survived. Mitabu has promised a "big score". One of his old buddies found Shory flying city crash site. And no one else. The Shory were rich enough to have many flying cities and everyone loves looting ancient ruins. Our newly minted 8th level heroes are:

- ♣ Captain Sindawe of the *Teeth of Araska*, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris).
- ♣ Chief Gunner Wogan, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick).
- ♣ Quartermaster Serpent, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul).
- ♣ Mitabu, a trap-loving Mwangi rogue.

Vanji River Trip

The *River Queen* sails south on the Vanji River. The crew includes Captain Kelim Esteban (and his immense moustache), strong arm and half-orc Faruq, ship's mechanic Hurg, and short term guards/crew Serpent, Wogan, Mitabu and Sindawe. There were more crewmen, but they have all met with death by misadventure. The ship makes nine knots downriver. The weather is 90 degrees and humid. Sections of river are covered by canopies of jungle, sometimes fifty feet overhead. The pirates spend their time divvying some loot taken from the Ekujae elves and a turncoat Aspis employee, Petrune:

- Frost Spear +1 (Mitabu)
- Ring of Endure Elements (Sindawe)
- Bracers of Armor, Ring of Protection and several other minor items (to sell)

Night Snakes

That evening the boat is beached on a sand bar offshore. The night's watches are split amongst lowest ranking crewmen (the PCs).

During first watch Sindawe hears some branches moving in the jungle canopy overhead. He climbs the ship and into the canopy where he narrowly dodges a very large anaconda. His very mannish screams waken the crew below. He drops back onto the ship after narrowly avoiding the snake's coils.

The snake follows; it bites and constricts Mitabu who is immediately crushed... almost unconscious. The other pirates attack – they get a few hits in but the anaconda's thick scales turn most. Wogan heals Mitabu greatly only to see his work largely undone by another squeeze. But Mitabu squirts free immediately after. The pirates stand their ground despite the crushing despair they feel. Serpent finally lands a volley of hits that ends the monster snake's life.

Faruq leaves the pilot house to investigate but is quickly satisfied that the giant snake is dead. He leaves with the observation, "I have seen bigger."

Several pirates reply, "Bath houses don't count!"

Wogan heals the heavily wounded Mitabu and the slightly less Sindawe. The pirates then apply block and tackle to dump the carcass overboard where it sits on the sandbar. Clouds of flies descend upon it. The next morning reveals a giant anaconda skeleton.

Song-Wind-City

The trip continues the next day. Captain Esteban is even willing to stop at the seemingly abandoned Nantambu docks to let the pirates off. The two groups say their goodbyes, including an overly complicated Keleshite bow by Esteban.

Serpent asks, “Any special laws we need to know about, Mitabu?”

Mitabu replies, “No. Same as everywhere else.”

Wogan, “What is your friend’s name?”

Mitabu replies, “Muturi Kar’uki.”

An argument over the nationality of that name is quickly crushed by Mitabu screaming, “It’s Mwangi!”

The pirates admire the dock pilings that are made of ivory. They also comment that “I feel watched.” The pirates jump off the *River Queen* as it lightly bumps the dock and then sails on downriver.

Mitabu continues, “They don’t have a law enforcement organization per se, but large scale misbehavior gets fireballed by the local wizard’s college.”

Sindawe asks, “Wizards have a school?”

Wogan replies, “Yup. Not like the sorcerers who get to do magic because they’re jerks.”

Mitabu calls to the jungle beyond the docks, “We come in peace. It is I, Mitabu, returned to my favorite city with friends.”

Mitabu tells the others, “OK. No one is shooting at us, so we’ve been given the all clear.”

They walk a path from the dock into to the jungle. The first structure is a trading compound built in the northern style from repurposed rocks with a Taldane sign announcing, “Sharrowsmith’s Exports.”

Further in are large towers covered in mosaics. Lower buildings have chimes of multi-colored glass hanging from their exteriors. The buildings are laid out in concentric circles. Canals form one or two of the circles and also cut thru the circles. Cosmopolitan dressed Mwangi walk the streets with purpose; most wear a great deal of gold. The wizard's college, the Magaambya, lies at its center on a small lake.

Wogan asks Mitabu, "Does your friend know we are here? Or when we arrived?"

Mitabu, "Probably. Maybe. We should go see him after dark."

Wogan replies, "Is he a vampire?"

Mitabu, "Uh... not last I checked."

Noticing stares from the locals Serpent says, "We should get some local garb. Something to blend in with."

Mitabu and Sindawe use Polygot to buy garments from a merchant. They note that most of the locals are Zenj with Bonuwat representing the next largest group. The white members of the group, on the other hand, just see "a bunch of black people."

They find out that the local trouble makers are held in check by the Magaambya wizard's college, except for the Gorilla King and his spreading darkness from Usaro. Rumors say he is a demon gorilla with many giant, animal followers. They also say his title "Silverback King" is because he favors a monetary system backed by silver. The PCs debate the merits of libertarian demon gorilla based government for some time.

The pirates pass the time by sightseeing dressed in their local garments. They see the Magaambya, which bears ten mosaiced towers representing the Ten Magic Warriors, the ancient Old-Mage Jatembe's retinue. Around 2 PM the locals take the day off, retreating inside or under heavily shaded areas. They enter a tavern where Mitabu orders local dishes.

Come evening the multi-colored chimes are lit by various light spells, varying with the skill level of the home or business owner. Mitabu leads the group back to the outer ring of the city where things are less clean, friendly, and well lit. There are also more foreigners present. He stands at the front door of a story and half hut, then hisses.

He announces, "We are coming in!" Then searches for traps. The door swings open after he slides a piece of vellum between the door and jamb and creates a little "poof" of smoke.

The interior smells of spoilage. A voice finally answers Mitabu's, "Muturi, we are here." A dirty, emaciated figure emerges from a back room. The man uses a walking stick to find his way; a blindfold hides his eyes.

Mitabu and Muturi exchange greetings; it is clear the pair haven't seen each other for years. Everyone sits down; dirty dishes are cleared from a table and chairs.

Mitabu demands, "You need to send us to the city."

Muturi replies, "The city is terrible. I am the only one to ever return from that accursed place."

Mitabu says eagerly, "But there is treasure there, right?"

"Yes, the city's treasures lie undisturbed. And horrible things guard those treasures."

Sindawe asks, "What sort of horrible things?"

Muturi does his best to describe what Wogan eventually guesses to be a chaos tainted cityscape. The location is Ulduvai, a crashed flying city of the ancient Shory people. Muturi found it during an expedition. Part of that city remains intact despite the crash.

Mitabu begs again, "You have the means to get us there? Will you do so?"

Muturi admits, "Yes, I have the means to get you there."

Mitabu replies, "And I have a plan to get us back."

Sindawe reaches over and pulls Muturi's blindfold up to reveal small mouths in place of his eyes. Shocked, he releases the blindfold.

Mitabu slaps Sindawe's hands down, then asks Muturi, "We have device that can hold spells. Will you cast the return spell into it?"

Muturi agrees while muttering, "Leave no one behind." Then "I must rest and gather my strength for spells. Tomorrow."

Trip Preparations

Mitabu volunteers to spend the night with Muturi because it is free. He claims the table. The other pirates decide to take their chances at a nearby inn.

Sindawe asks Mitabu, "Should we ask some local scholars about the eye hole mouths?"

Mitabu explains, "No. The locals would ask questions back and probably round up a posse to kill Muturi." He goes on to describe what he knows of the eye hole mouths, gained in the lost city, and Muturi's recollections. Sindawe decides that the absorbing mass that killed Muturi's friends and scarred him might be a gibbering moulder.

Sindawe, Wogan and Serpent make a shopping list while they walk back to the inn. The place is disreputable by local standards but completely fine by Riddleport standards. They buy rooms for the night, then enjoy the local alcohols including:

- Lagmi – a palm wine
- Pito – sorghum based beer
- Muputa – a pineapple liquor

They drink the watered down lagmi and muputa until the other liquors taste good, then switch to pito and bar food. The locals ask Sindawe a lot of questions about his white devil travel

companions. He gladly makes up blatant lies as answers in Polyglot, largely at his companions' expense. The evening and night passes uneventfully.

The next day the trio sells loot from their travels on the Vanji and buys travel goods including a campsite kit, climbing gear, ear plugs, and local travel rations. Wogan buys a small version of the multi-colored glass chimes that hang throughout the city.

Shadows? We Hate Those Guys!

They return to Muturi's house where that individual places a teleport spelling to Wogan's *Rain Tiger Emerald* (spell storing device). He explains that the trip there will be done via the Plane of Shadow. This makes Wogan, Sindawe, and Serpent very unhappy, as they've had a lot of bad experiences in the realms of Shadow and have reason to believe there's a shadow demon looking for them there. But they decide there's nothing but to do it. Muturi casts *shadow walk* and sends our heroes on their way. Once in the shadow lands, Mitabu explains that he has pumped Muturi for information including how to shadow walk. The trek lasts 8 hours. They head south east through Nantambu, through mountains, past the city of Hungry Spires, jungles, etc...

Everything about the trip is unhappy and frightening but greed and the thought of making the trek in real world makes everyone push on. The later leg of the trip includes movement in the shadow world near Mzali, a city ruled by a mummified child god. A quadruplet of upside down crucified figures scream incoherently at the travelers. Sindawe applies his ear plugs and motions for Mitabu to press onward.

They do so. Mitabu and the others keep an eye out for the tallest peak in the Shattered Range, which will be a way point to the crashed Shory city. They pass the peak of Mount

Dowama. Mitabu leads them into the border shifting between shadow and real, where they travel and seek out the mountain pass. Their cypher glyphs burn!!!

Serpent screams, "Incoming shadow creatures!"

Mitabu points, "A shadow! It's coming right at me!"

Mitabu dodges the attack. Wogan uses his *wand of bless* to... bless them all. The shadows stay back and flit about behind pieces of the shadow terrain. They press onward looking for the right valley, while eyeing the nearby shadows. One cut in the mountain (shadow side) is blocked by a gargoyle creature made of shadow and purple crystal.

Wogan says, "We have been herded."

Gargoyle asks, "Mortals, what brings you here?"

Wogan replies, "Just passing through."

Gargoyle demands, "Give me your names and I will let you pass."

Sindawe counters, "Yeah, that ain't happening. In fact, give me everything in your pockets or I'll kill you."

Serpent whispers, "I admire your negotiating skills."

The gargoyle motions – a shadow beam leaps from its finger to Sindawe (inflicting one negative level). Serpent and his snake Saluthra charge the gargoyle but they are unable to approach. Sindawe picks up Wogan and rushes after Serpent. He spends an infamy point to drop all of them into the real world. And avoids (retroactively) the 12 shadows and 26 points of strength drain from the dozen shadows that swarm them!

The weather is mountain side cold. Wogan casts endure elements on several party members. They travel along a narrow cut atop a glacier. Mist cuts their vision until they descend a bit more.

A valley emerges from the mist. A city of purple metal and glass towers sits askew on the valley floor. Steam rises from the ground, possible from within the fallen city. A waterfall feeds into the city.

The Valley of the Gwangi

Serpent warns, “Well, tropical valleys warmed by volcanoes in remote mountain ranges spells ‘dinosaurs!’ Keep your eyes peeled.”

Wogan uses his spyglass. He spots cultivated fields, enough for a village.

Sindawe says, “Let’s get moving. If we stick around Mr. Crystal Pants will jump us.”

They pick their way down game paths to the valley floor. An invisible something crashes into Sindawe! Wogan casts *invisibility purge*. Nothing appears. Wogan is knocked around by something unseen. Everyone gets smacked around by invisible punches or head butts or whatever. Everyone tries various tricks to reveal invisible attackers.

When Mitabu gets hit, he yells out that the attacker is invisible and using flyby attacks. Mitabu drops a smoke stick (10’ radius cloud). Then Sindawe is narrowly missed but notices the movement of air past him. He runs back to the party. Everyone retreats into the smoke cloud. Wogan uses a healing burst. Serpent and Mitabu hold an attack; Serpent uses his serpent shaman power to gain scent and he smells ozone.

Serpent uses his scent to locate the creature, which has decided to carefully negotiate its way through the smoke because it can’t see to use flyby attacks. He hits it repeatedly with his staff and bite attacks. Sindawe gets a few punches in. Wogan blasts at it with his blunderbuss.

The invisio-beast flies up and out of the smoke cloud. The pirates wait as the cloud slowly disperses. The invisible creature makes a diving attack at Serpent and miscalculates its

approach, giving him a slight sign of its approach. Serpent lashes out at it; his staff strikes hard then passes through nothing. The scent of the creature fades.

They scuttle down the rocks and further into the valley.