

## JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 02/19/2012

### ATTENDANCE

*Ernest* sees *Paul* and *Patrick* show up. He howls out, “Abort! Abort! The stripper is crying!”

*Bruce* and *Chris* understand immediately what he is talking about, and take appropriate action. Everyone else remains blissfully unaware. *Paul* takes the opportunity to describe the worst credit card offer ever: not only did it have a usuriously high interest rate, but it *started* with a \$500 balance just for opening an account. *Chris* muses that this card is aimed at clueless college students, ex-cons, and people who don’t read legal documents very carefully.

*Matt* makes a dramatic entrance a bit later on, as we are handing out magical treasure.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Harwynian Fallingleaf	Bruce	Elegant Elven Transmuter	4
Yoshihiro Kaijitsu	Ernest	Tien Reckless Mounted Archer-Knight	4
Jacob Frostfang	Matt	Ale-Loving Kellid Party Sorcerer	4
V’lk	Chris	Mute Feral Elf Stabber (and Oracle)	2/2
Gobo Samarillian	Patrick	Blind Gnomish Fortuneteller	4
Bjorn the Unlucky	Tim	Ulfen Woodsman	4

### THE REMAINING BRINEWALL TREASURE

The characters prevail upon Varisian caravan master *Sandru Vhiski* to open the remaining two chests of treasure they brought up out of the vaults of Brinewall castle. He is able to open the locks with some effort, revealing a variety of treasures. It takes *Harwynian* and *Gobo* a couple of days to identify all of them:

- *Headband of Intelligence* +2 (*Harwynian* takes this item)
- *Spiked Small Shield* +1 (*Bjorn* takes this, and gives his *Small Shield of Fortification* +1 to *Gobo*)

- *Quickdraw Scabbard* (V'lk wins a game of rock-paper-scissors over Yoshihiro to get this)
- *Headband of Charisma* +2 (Gobo takes this one, as it's the much nicer looking of the two)
- *Headband of Charisma* +2 (Jacob takes this rather plain item and hands his *Circlet of Persuasion* to Yoshihiro).
- *Shortsword of Stabbing* +1 (+2 damage to sneak attack damage; V'lk takes this item)

The characters distribute most of the mundane gear taken from the castle, including some heavy crossbows and half-plate armor, among the guards of their caravan. The two chests are added to the stack of discarded treasure chests in the back of one of the wagons. The characters discuss finding a locksmith in the next town they visit so they can get new keys for all of them: they have something like five of them now.

## **THE ROAD TO THE RIFT OF NILTAK**

They peruse the treasure map we got from a filthy hermit in Wolf's Ear that alleges to show the location of treasure in the nearby Rift of Niltak. The path from Brinewall to the Rift of Niltak is about sixty miles. *Yoshihiro Kaijitsu* suggests, "We should have Koya do a Harrow deck reading for us first, so the Gamemaster has an out in case he hasn't prepared anything." *Koya*, the caravan's resident fortuneteller, is noticeably silent on the subject.

### ***DISTRIBUTION OF MONEY***

The characters divide up some of the available treasure six ways. Each character gains 400 gold. There is 216 gold remaining in the kitty and 379 gold for running the caravan.

### ***THE MAGICAL STONE***

*Harwynian* examines a magical stone taken from a previous adventure. It takes his *wand of identify* to figure it out, but he eventually proclaims that it is an *Earth Elemental gem*. Crushing it will allow the user to summon a large earth elemental. The

elemental is under the control of the creature that broke the gem. The duration of the summoning is 11 rounds (CL 11).

On the basis that Gobo is the most sane of the available spellcasters, he takes the gemstone.

### ***WHAT ABOUT THE RIFT***

Most of the stories the characters have heard about the Rift of Niltak suggest that most people who enter there never come back, and those who do are irredeemably insane. The characters are not sure how such an accurate map of Varisia (showing details of the Rift) ended up in the hands of a filthy lunatic in Riddleport.

### ***CARAVAN UPGRADES***

The characters' caravan has gained two levels since the characters last looked at it, so they pick out two more feats. The new caravan stats are:

Offense	5
Defense	3
Mobility	2
Morale	3
Hit Points	110
Actions	4
Feats	Enhanced Caravan (x3), Circle the Wagons (+4 AC bonus when in a defensive posture)

There is some debate upon the worth of Efficient Consumption or Efficient Repairs. General consensus is that these will be more worthwhile once the caravan is farther from civilization and easy repair and resupply.

### ***THE JOURNEY TO NILTAK***

The characters make the 60 mile journey across the Nolands to the Rift of Niltak in only two days. It turns out that their caravan is able to make almost 35 miles per day, which is really remarkable across clear terrain with no roads.

Yoshihiro notes, “This is the terrain the prairie schooner was made for!”

Harwynian suggests, “Actually, this is because we’re really kick-ass with Survival and Knowledge (geography) and wagoneering! There’s nothing we can’t do!”

## THE BANDITS ATTACK

On the way to the Rift of Niltak, barbarian bandits attack the caravan! *Bjorn the Unlucky* is beside himself with glee. “Do they have horses? Do they have horses? I’m going to kill their horses!” The others point out that if they do have horses, that is probably the most valuable treasure the characters can get from them, and allowing him to take advantage of his favored enemy (animals) isn’t worth losing that money.

The characters assign the caravan personnel to the various roles of defense (AC), attack (to hit), repair (mobility) and leadership (morale).

<b>Defense (+3)</b> Yoshihiro Vankor (driver) Bevelek (driver) Koya Guard/Trader Driver	<b>Attack (+5)</b> Bjorn the Unlucky Jacob Frostfang V’lk Kelda Oygutter Shalelu Sandru
<b>Repair (+2)</b> Harwynian Fallingleaf Spivey Cook Driver/Wainwright	<b>Leadership (+3)</b> Gobo Ameiko Kaijutsu

The GM, Paul “Two Sheds,” has come up with alternate and hopefully less sucky caravan combat rules than the default Jade Regent ones. Each section rolls its stat + number of helpers to achieve its desired effect.

The characters circle the wagons and strike out at the incoming barbarians. The attackers appear to be Linnorm exiles and ruffians, and it takes the characters little time

to drive them off. Bjorn calls out, “They have a pug as a mascot! It’s mine!” He shoots it dead.

The characters investigate those bandits they managed to slay. They conclude that as with most exiles, these men were cast out from their homeland with nothing of consequence. Most of the bandits were clad in untanned hide armor and armed with improvised weapons. The characters arrange for a decent funeral pyre that evening. They eat roast pug for dinner.

### ***BJORN ENCOUNTERS SOME ANIMALS***

Bjorn is off spearfishing at a small stream when he sees two bears approaching him from upstream. They are in poor shape: their fur is ragged, their eyes are glaring, and foam drips from their lips. He casts *Longstrider*. As he does they spot him and let out a horrifying, “Rrraaughk!”

Bjorn moans, “Uh oh, they’re getting ready to rock.” He heads back towards the rest of the caravan. Unfortunately, the bears are faster than he is. One of them leaps on him, claws him, and grabs him. The other one roars defiantly at the trees.

Bjorn slams into the bear grappling him with his shield, irritating it. The bear responds by squeezing him hard enough to make the juices come out. Bjorn howls, “This is why I hate animals! The same thing happened with the family kitten!”

V’lk runs up, rolls under a horse, and comes up with a bow at the ready. He shoots an *Animal Bane* arrow into the distant woods. He gestures to indicate that he was only trying to warn the bears. The second bear charges him. He doesn’t know it, but bears can smell elves to a range of three miles, and elves are their favorite food. V’lk takes a rough scratching and gets grappled.

Yoshihiro and his horse *Akumu* ride in to help V’lk. He strikes the bear with his glaive.

Gobo is on the other side of the caravan, and cannot actually see what is going on. He runs towards the sounds and hopes for the best. Ameiko Kaijitsu pulls out her samisen and does her best to inspire courage (“About a bear I’ll sing a song, sing rikkety-tikkety tin!”). Koya casts *Sanctuary* and moves in towards the combat. And Sandru approaches acrobatically, moving in to flank the bear grappling poor V’lk. His scimitar bites deep into the bear’s chuckle. V’lk writhes out of the bear’s grasp and dodges away.

Harwynian casts *Bull's Strength* on Jacob Frostfang. Jacob feels the strength of the bull filling him as Harwynian touches him. Which really sounds a lot more dirty than it really is. Jacob doesn't complain a bit – he charges in and chops at the bear grappling Jacob, badly wounding it.

The bear responds by attacking Bjorn all out, clawing him badly. Its companion tries to drag Yoshihiro off his horse, leaving horrible claw wounds but failing to pull him from the saddle. Yoshihiro slashes down, killing the creature, then rides for the bear holding Jacob. Akumu overruns the bear. Then the others pile on in, burying the creature under a torrent of strikes and spells. The bear collapses and releases its death-grip on Bjorn.

Bjorn stands, howls, and commences beating the corpse with his morningstar.

Yoshihiro asks, “What’s wrong with these bears?”

Sandru responds, “Actually, what’s wrong with Bjorn?”

Yoshihiro comments, “He’s probably got the rabies.”

Harwynian offers that it is quite unusual for bears to attack large groups of armed people. Animals can go insane from infected wounds, but he’s unable to find anything like that. The other possibility is that they could have been driven crazy by disease. Gobo tries casting *Detect Poison* but fails to find anything. He checks the bodies and doesn’t see signs of any disease he’s aware of.

Gobo, Spivey and Koya heal the characters wounded by the bear attack.

Several characters examine the bears’ trail and conclude that they came from deeper within the Rift of Niltak. The characters discuss the possibility that the bears might have wandered into the rift and been driven insane there. Yoshihiro suggests that the characters should bring in their own food and water. Nobody has a good suggestion on what to do if the problem is bad air.

The more visceral characters dissect the bears. They find nothing abnormal about their brains: no parasites, no weird staining. Their stomachs suggest that they have been eating unusual things: bark, dirt, pokemons, that sort of thing.

The characters notice that Kelda Oxgutter didn’t really contribute to the fight. Harwynian comments in his most disdainful elvish style, “That is because she is all furs and no axe-blade.”

Kelda (and most of the Varisian caravaneers) is confused by the barb. Yoshihiro tells her, “You can take him as your wife if you’d like...”

## INTO THE RIFT

The characters decide that they will head into the valley on foot, leaving the caravan behind. Kelda Oxgutter is the only NPC to accompany the group. Harwynian (aided by his magical *Wayfinder*) guides the characters down into the valley, following the slightly harder high path to allow better visibility.

Yoshihiro spots a small, fortified dwarven settlement in the distance. Closer by, the characters see a mixed party of dwarves and humans approaching. Some of them are bound, others are not. And they are accompanied by a tentacular monster.

Harwynian casts *Protection from Evil* on Yoshihiro and Bjorn. Gobo casts *Protection from Evil* on Jacob. Jacob casts *Righteous Might* on himself. And then Yoshihiro moves up to hail them. “Huzzah!”

The lead human yells back, “You’re in the wrong valley! This is the rift! Lay down your arms and surrender to us!”

Gobo comments, “That doesn’t sound very promising.” He is far enough away from the locals that he cannot see what is going on.

The gang of locals includes six bound humans and dwarfs, all of them apparently violently insane crazies, three drivers, and one tentacle beast. As the characters approach, the gimpy-wranglers untie their charges and hand them knives.

Yoshihiro puts spurs to Akumu and charges the pack of locals. He overruns a crazy, slashing the man with his glaive. The crazy suffers a fatal wound, lifeblood spraying wildly, but still he fights on.

Bjorn puts his horn to his mouth and blows, thereby attracting the attention of every monster in the valley.

The tentacular monster proves to be carrying a dagger in one tentacle and a wand in another. It gestures and vanishes into a cloud of fog all around itself. The fog isn’t quite thick enough to obscure vision, as much as the characters might want to not see the creature.

Kelda Oxxgutter falls into rage and charges into the melee with unbelievable speed. She tears through another crazy. Unarmored, the crazies have little ability to avoid the characters' attacks.

V'lk steps up and shoots a wounded crazy with an arrow.

The crazies fall upon Kelda, inflicting two stab wounds upon her. One of them falls to cutting himself instead. A fourth, knocked over by Akumu's charge, steps up and takes a hoof to the head for his trouble. He falls dead as a stone. And then the last group of crazies swarm onto Yoshihiro and Akumu. The characters start to realize that the earlier distinction they had made between wardens and crazies has largely broken down.

Jacob decides to find out if the tentacle beast has spell resistance. He fires a *Magic Missile* at it and confirms that yes, it does have spell resistance sufficient to stop his spell.

Yoshihiro overruns his way through the battle line of crazies and gallops into the mist surrounding the tentacle monster. He quickly learns that the mist inflicts a *confusion* effect that bypasses the immunity to behavior-controlling effects provided by *Protection from Evil*, in addition to requiring a Will save with a -10 penalty! A moment later, he finds that the worm-creature's ability to control him as an immediate action is blocked by the *Protection*. And that his horse Akumu is fully vulnerable to the effects of the mist.

Harwynian summons up a giant wasp and sends it buzzing straight at a crazy. The crazy is a lot less impressed than Harwynian had hoped. For their part, the other characters are plenty impressed by the sight of a wasp with a 10-foot wingspan go screaming overhead.

Bjorn cuts down two crazies. V'lk cuts down another one. Another one stares piteously at Kelda Oxxgutter as it slits its own throat.

The tentacle beast takes a couple of hits from Yoshihiro and his (now-insane) horse. The horse rains down hoof blows upon it to little effect. It responds with an excellent strike with its large shortsword, cutting Yoshihiro down. Then it looms over him and bites, injecting its mind-destroying poison. Yoshihiro feels his mind expanding, leaving him with a keen understanding of just how insignificant he is against the background of the universe.



Harwynian sends his summoned giant wasp to attack the tentacle monster. Sadly, the wasp doesn't manage to connect with the creature. But Akumu doesn't have *Protection from Evil*, so the creature commands it to attack the wasp. Then it steps back and volleys *Magic Missiles* into the wasp until it is dead. The wasp vanishes back to whence it came.

Harwynian casts *Expeditious Retreat* and moves up to where Gobo stands. He asks the gnome, "How're you doing?"

Gobo responds, "Pretty well. I still don't really know what's going on."

Harwynian answers, "Trust me, you really don't want to know." He watches as Jacob casts *Enlarge Person* and steps up to slash apart another crazy.

Gobo casts *Protection from Evil* on Kelda, hoping to ensure that a reasonable percentage of the group is able to engage the tentacle beast.

Yoshihiro's horse comes riding out of the mist to attack Jacob. And the tentacle creature fires more *Magic Missiles* at Bjorn. Jacob notes, "That's a really nice item, if we can get it before it runs out of charges."

Harwynian agrees, "Yes, it really would be. Presuming that we don't get gunned down by it first."

The last gimp falls and Kelda rushes to attack the tentacle beast, but becomes *confused* by the fogs and attacks herself instead. V'lk had been keeping his distance, but finds himself also *confused* and attacking himself. Harwynian moves in, gets *confused*, but still manages to hit the creature with a *telekinetic fist*.

Gobo finally manages to get close enough to Yoshihiro to heal him and bring him back around. The little gnome oracle howls, "Control your horse! Control your horse!"

Bjorn is not paying attention. He smacks himself in the face.

Inside the mist, Kelda takes several hits from the tentacle monster: two from its shortsword, and once from its bite. She goes down.

V'lk tries shooting the creature with an evil outsider bane arrow, but misses. Harwynian shrugs off the confusion and webs the entire area the worm is in. Jacob chops into the worm and hurts it.

Hiro urges Akumu back out of what he hopes is the confusion radius and shoots his bow at the worm-beast to no effect. Bjorn babbles incoherently. As does Gobo. Jacob chops deeply into it again. Hiro chugs a healing potion, but is still at negatives.

The worm-thing blasts Jacob with its wand of magic missiles. Harwynian gets his shit together and casts protection from evil on V'lk, who charges in and smites it mightily with his cold iron morningstar, giving it a critical wound.

Gobo calls down the void upon the worm, and the cold damage staggers it. Hiro, though badly wounded, sights down upon it with his longbow and sends it back to hell with a well-aimed shaft.

The group heals up and recovers the *magic missile* wand from the worm-creature. It also has a bizarre large-sized shortsword. They bivouac some distance away and watch the keep. Bjorn and V'lk secure the surrounding area.

There is a profusion of very large fungi growing all over the valley. They camp, and start no fire to avoid detection. After dark, as the stars come out, they see no lights from the keep but do hear noises – first, drumming; then, instruments – thin, shrill piping from the direction of the dwarf fortress. Then strange lights begin to shine out of the keep at random. At intervals a deep roaring sound echoes through the valley. As they watch, something very large emits from the keep emerges and takes to the air; something long and sinuous that they cannot see well in the darkness. Their sanity is probably the better for that. The group sleeps poorly.

## **DWARVEN PLEASURE MOUTH**

After breaking camp, the group comes upon the location marked on their map. It appears to be a dwarven burial ground or tomb of some sort on the cliff wall. Mushrooms, lichen, mold, and other weirdness coat the cliffs here and a deep chasm is visible in front of the keep.

A platform with stone steps leads up to a façade looking like a helmed dwarven head, flanked by two towers. In front of the mouth-door, there is a bonfire with crazy dwarves dancing in front of it.

The characters, having learned their lesson in the previous combat, array themselves with bows some 200' away and start shooting. The crazies run down towards them but Hiro drops two with carefully aimed longbow shots before they reach their lines. The three remaining fling themselves at the group and one deals a vicious blow to Hiro. V'lk, Jacob, and Bjorn chop into them. Akumu rears and brains the dwarf attacking Hiro as Hiro sends a shaft through the one on Jacob, killing it as well. Gobo heals Hiro and the last crazy flings itself at Bjorn. Kelda Oygutter cuts him and Hiro shoots him down too. Yoshihiro feels somewhat redeemed after his less than stellar performance in the previous battle.

They approach the pleasure mouth carefully. Kelda notes that she can see shadowy creatures smelling of rot lurking in the area, hiding behind rocks and stuff; spindly lurking humanoid shapes. Hiro calls them out but there is no response. Gobo puts a protection from evil on Bjorn who goes forward and flushes one out; it scrambles from one hiding place to another. V'lk shoots one and they all scramble madly away down the cliff.

A set of shallow stairs descend into a corridor from the mouth-doorway. A corridor with three sets of alcoves is revealed. Hiro leads Akumu carefully down the stairs out of sight of the door and commands him to guard. Harwynian stays with him, on the grounds that he'd rather brave the ghouls than go into a "dwarf house." There are carvings of long forgotten dwarven heroes in the alcoves. Tracks lead to a hide curtain in the back of the corridor. Doors flank the hide curtain, but the group's attention is all on that curtain.

V'lk checks past the filthy hide and sees a couple caves leading away from a room containing three twisted parodies of the human form, flesh twisted with metal bars and surgical tools extending from their fingers. V'lk immediately fires a snap shot at one and scuttles back to the party as they screech and run at him.

Bjorn and Hiro move up to block them at the curtain. Gobo *blesses* the group in Desna's name. Jacob rushes in but gets cut by one's scalpel hands.

Hiro and Bjorn both hit one of the mutated guys and fell it. The remaining two get even faster, however! They still can't hit any of the front line guys, however.

Even the blind Gobo charges to the attack. Jacob destroys one with his frosty blade attack. All the fighters enjoy the AC 13-ness of the creatures and wade in, flailing blades, until they all fall.

A quick looting reveals nothing of interest, besides the hacked apart bodies of some Cenobites. We look suspiciously at the two tunnels, and the clock. More next time!

**THE END OF THE SESSION**