

## JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 03/04/2012

### ATTENDANCE

*Paul* asks *Bruce*, “Have you cleaned your ear recently? Remember to clean your finger with your mouth afterwards, otherwise it’ll be dirty.”

*Chris* points out, “That’s just good thinking! It’s got everything you need to survive!”

*Ernest* suggests, “They say that human meat provides all the nutrients needed for human survival. It’s really the ultimate food!”

*Chris* ponders, “You’d probably need to eat a lot of the organ meats. But then you’d have to deal with all the stuff that people put into themselves – alcohol, drugs, caffeine, yogurt. But wait, Mormons aren’t allowed to eat any of that stuff!” He swiftly comes up with a great marketing slogan: “Mormons – the free range humans!”

*Patrick* offers, “What about those guys who make furniture? Who were they?”

*Bruce* mumbles, “Quakers...”

*Ernest* comments, “We use every part of the Quaker!”

*Patrick* quietly speculates on how today’s conversation has taken a rather disturbing turn to the blasphemous. Especially since those poor, nonviolent Quakers (by definition) never hurt anybody.

Everyone else decides to spend a lot of time thinking about what time to show up. *Tim* shows up somewhat later, fearful that the characters might have spent his absence fighting a variety of animals.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Harwynian Falingleaf	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

## DEEP IN THE RIFT OF NILTAK

(Sung to the tune of “Deep in the Heart of Texas”). The characters have found a dwarven funeral catacomb slightly to the east of the massive dwarf fortress from which a massive flying creature launched itself a little while ago. They bypassed some ghouls on the way, ghouls who didn’t seem that interested in them. *Gobo Samarillian* comments, “They’re probably looking to gank us on our way out.”

The characters decide to leave *Bjorn the Unlucky* and *Jacob Frostfang* to “watch the horses.” *Yoshihiro Kaijitsu* notes that the horse seems to be nervous.

Inside the catacomb, the characters found some mysterious golems stitched together from a variety of fleshy and mechanical parts. The characters destroyed them in detail, then pulled back to the tunnel mouth as additional locals show up to object.

## WE'RE ARRANGED RANDOMLY?

The characters are picking up loot and debris when a half dozen crazy people come stomping down the corridor. As it happens, the characters are all “arranged randomly”, which means that Harwynian finds himself right in the front row. The attackers appear to be a mix of gimp psychos and free-range psychos.

*V'lk* earns Harwynian’s undying gratitude by moving forward and attacking the lead gimp. He smashes the fellow square in the face with a cold-iron morningstar hard enough to kill a regular psycho. Unfortunately, these are frenzied psychos and fight until they are chopped into pieces. Harwynian helps out with a quick *telekinetic fist*. Yoshihiro finishes the job with his glaive, then comes around to slash through another rushing crazy as he charges.

The next psycho in line falls victim to his perpetual confusion and simply stands in place howling obscenities. Harwynian refrains from transcribing them into his journal, as most of them are not that creative.

The psychos fall upon *V'lk* and Yoshihiro, but do not inflict any significant amount of damage. *Gobo* flings alchemist’s fire on the crowd, burning them in return.

*Kelda Oygutter* steps up and stabs a psycho. V'lk follows up and ends him. Harwynian takes a *Magic Missile* wand shot at a crazy with a staff, then Yoshihiro cuts him down with his glaive.

The psychos descend upon V'lk, cutting him badly. Gobo moves in behind him and casts a healing spell. "By the cold depths of lightless void, be healed!" Spectral tentacles lash out from the shadows and wrap around V'lk, leaving him healed (but disconcerted).

The characters finish off the last of the crazies, leaving the hall clogged with the dead. V'lk signs, "Now this is where that half-ghoul template would come in handy!"

Gobo suggests, "You could write a memoir describing how you became a lawful good ghoul by eating adventurers' kills."

The characters make their way past the bodies without eating any of them and proceed further into the tunnels. They find a larger chamber mounded with the sort of bedding that crazy people use. A shallow pool stands at the entrance to the chamber.

Yoshihiro finds some boxes of stuff. He starts by taking bets, "Is this going to be less crazy or more crazy than goblin stuff?" He bets it'll be more crazy. Everyone bets against him, two gold each. The first box contains some horse jerky and a rusty knife. All agree that this is less crazy than goblin goods. Yoshihiro grumbles and pays out.

The characters continue opening boxes until they find one containing a little demonic creature. The thing flies out and shrieks, "Leave the emerald alone! I am the guardian of the emerald!" There is a large emerald inside the box. V'lk determines that both the imp and the emerald are magical. Harwynian examines the creature and suggests that it isn't an imp – it is actually a homunculus. Harwynian amazes everyone when he pulls out his *Magic Missile* wand and racks it like a pump shotgun.

This proves to be the characters' cue to act. V'lk grabs the box and slams it around the homunculus. The creature doesn't even try to avoid him. V'lk slams the cover closed, and hears a quiet, "Thank you!" from inside.

Yoshihiro talks to the homunculus. He learns that the creature's master is the *Fabulous Fizznaleous*, who had been a wizard until the tentacled worms ate his brain

some seven years ago. The gem is notable because it has healing powers. The creature absolutely refuses to either let the characters use the gem, or to use it on their behalf. Yoshihiro is able to extract a description of Fizznaleous: human, bald, with a mole the size of a walnut on the side of his head.

## **THE MUSHROOM AND BONE CHAMBER**

The characters enter another chamber lined with bones. Fleshy, finger-like purple mushrooms protrude from among the bones. The sickly sweet scent death and decay defiles the air. The mushrooms are covered with a sticky, thick liquid. V'lk estimates that walking through the area would probably result in him getting covered with it.

The characters decide to turn around and try another route. Gobo comments, "Screw you, mushroom death room!"

The alternate passage goes to a chamber with several cages built into the walls. Most of the prisoners are gone, having previously been sent out to attempt to kill the characters. The one remaining is a bald Shoanti man. He tells the characters, "The worms haven't got me yet!"

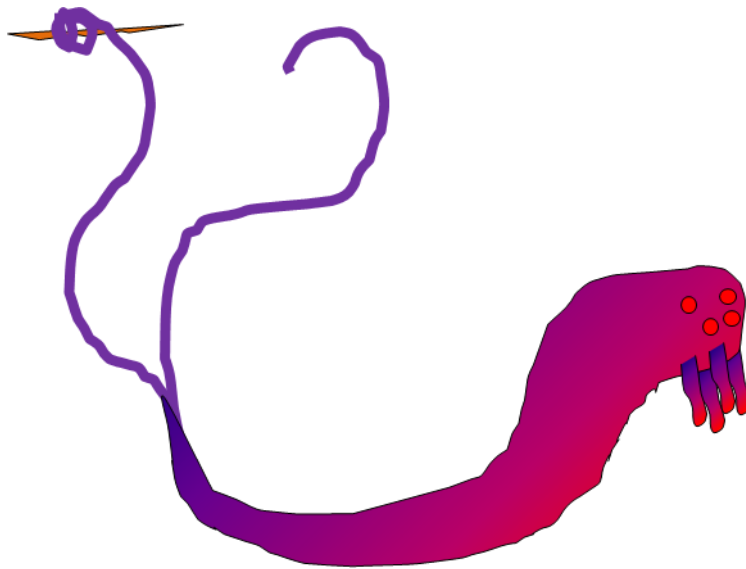
The characters let him out. He introduces himself, "I am Kalmak of the Tamiir-Quah! What you foreigners would call the Wind Clan! We are perhaps the most secluded of the quahs, venturing out of the mountains of northwestern Varisia or the southern Lands of the Linnorm Kings only to raid lowlanders for valuable resources. We venerate flying animals above all others." He indicates that he was captured by the tentacle worms but they were unable to break the mind of a strong Shoanti warrior.

The characters decide that he needs to be checked out. Gobo asks, "Will you submit to my ministrations?" V'lk holds his head. He hopes that the next time Gobo wants to cast *Cure Light Wounds* he won't refer to it quite the same way. In any case, *Kalmak of the Tamiir Quah* checks out.

Kalmak is able to explain that there are those folks who were insane before they met the worms – they work for them voluntarily and have somewhat more control. Other folks who fall into the worms' tentacles are driven completely insane and no longer have any personal volition.

On an equally promising note, Kalmak explains that the mushrooms are *death mushrooms*. They aren't all that bad: they're just irresistible to ghouls, rather like undead catnip. Kalmak thinks that the worm-thing's laboratory is further beyond the death mushroom chamber. He agrees to help the characters fight the worm-thing. Harwynian lends him a masterwork longsword.

Then the characters continue on and find that the alternate passage just leads back to the death mushroom chamber. The characters make booties out of sackcloth to avoid getting the mushroom sap on themselves. They are mostly successful.



*Seugathi Tentacle-Worm (with wand, tripartite mouth not shown)*

## **THE SEVGATHI LABORATORY**

The characters make their way further down the corridor. They find another chamber with cages, these made from metal rather than wood. There are three prisoners, two female and one male. All three of them appear to be, if not insane, at least deeply disturbed.

V'lk sees a curtain in the chamber. While the others try to talk to the prisoners, V'lk peers through the curtain. He sees a massive, horrible seugathi worm looming over a terrified naked man bound to a stone table. It carries a wand in one tentacle and a blade

in the other. Two golems with razor-clawed hands stand ready at the sides. None of them notice V'lk, enabling him to retreat back and explain what he's seen.

The characters hatch a clever plan to avoid the seugathi's insanity effects. They cover as many of the group (and their NPC allies) with *Protection from Evil*. Kalmak will tear aside the curtain, Harwynian will cast *Web* into the chamber, and Gobo summons an earth elemental to rush the seugathi.

The *Web* covers the room, the elemental appears and earthglides its way into the web, and then the plan starts to disintegrate. The seugathi and the two golems avoid the webbing, and the earth elemental fails to strike the worm. But things aren't all lost: the two golems fail to inflict significant damage on the elemental, and the seugathi's attempt to dispel the *Web* fails.

Kalmak wanders into the worm's insanity radius, succumbs, and promptly attacks V'lk. Harwynian warms up his wand and volleys an array of *Magic Missiles* into the worm. Gobo cheers as his elemental hammers away at the monster. The worm turns out to be fairly resistant to bludgeoning damage, but that is only partial comfort considering the sheer volume of damage the earth elemental dishes out.

V'lk decides that random vengeful activity is going to be his way. He saps the insane Kalmak. Kelda grabs him and grapples him to the ground.

The elemental grabs the worm in its two hands and pulls. The creature comes apart with a horrible sucking sound. Worm entrails fly everywhere. The elemental follows up by pulverizing the two golems. The group cheers.

The dead worm turns out to be carrying a couple of valuable items. While the characters loot, Yoshihiro reassures the insane bound prisoner, "You just stay there and scream while we go through its pocketses."

- A wand of *Cause Fear* (32 charges; DC 15)
- Large-sized masterwork shortsword (1d8 damage)\
- Masterwork healing kit
- Masterwork torture kit

The rest of the tools are both incomprehensible and dismaying. Yoshihiro holds up something that looks like a protractor with spikes and asks, “Any ideas what this might do?” Gobo takes the wand and the healing kit. V’lk takes the masterwork torture kit. Yoshihiro gives Kalmak of the Tamiir Quah the seugathi’s sword to commemorate his role in the battle. And then he stands back stone-faced as Yoshihiro starts making fun of him for going insane and having had to be restrained by a woman.

Additional investigation of the victim on the table suggests that he has been driven permanently insane from excessive exposure to the tentacle-worm’s aura.

#### ***ANYONE LEFT IN THERE?***

The characters interrogate the three remaining prisoners to see if any of them are cogent enough to be let free. They find that two of them are not completely insane yet. Those who are let free and sent back to Jacob and Bjorn for safe-keeping.

#### **A CAVERNOUS ROOM FULL OF CRAZIES**

The characters continue through the caverns until they find another gang of six crazies. They’ve been waiting for the characters, alternating between lurking and smearing their wastes on the walls. V’lk and Yoshihiro come rushing in, quickly slaughtering one. Harwynian shoots another one with *Magic Missiles* and is somewhat surprised to see the creature respond by stabbing itself to death.

The remaining crazies mostly engage in unprofitable behavior, right up until one of them gets it together enough to attack V’lk. *Bjorn the Unlucky* shows up and executes one with a thrown starknife. Harwynian shatters another one into arcano-gibbets with his wand of *Magic Missile*.

The last survivor starts cutting intricate designs into his own arm. Kelda Oygutter walks up to him, “Sorry, you have to die.”

“I have to finish my pattern!”

Whack. Bjorn helps with his starknife. The crazy goes down. He comments, “I love this thing!”

There are several barrels and crates in the room. Gobo searches through them and finds:

- 200 gold in coins from assorted nations;
- A couple of gold teeth;
- Dice and cards

Harwynian takes the dice and the cards. Bjorn takes the gold teeth.

#### ***WHO GAVE YOU THIS MAP, ANYWAY?***

Yoshihiro happens to ask Bjorn, “Who gave you that treasure map in the first place?”

Bjorn admits, “I don’t really know his name, but he was bald and had a mole the size of a walnut on the side of his head.”

Yoshihiro notes, “I think we found his homunculus. And his emerald. Maybe if we took it to him he would give us the gem...”

#### **MILDEW – THE SMELL OF TRAPS**

The characters continue on into a small chamber with a moldy velvet curtain in the back. The floor is covered with fungus and debris, and shows some signs of recent passage. V’lk sneaks forward and pulls the curtain aside. He sees another room with glowing fungus on the walls. There are several chests and barrels piled in the center of the room. The heavy scent of mildew is upon the air.

V’lk tries casting *Detect Magic*. He finds nothing. He decides to pull down the curtain and let everyone else see.

Yoshihiro steps in and prepares to open a barrel. At that point, bad things start to happen. Something drops from the ceiling and wraps itself around Harwynian’s head. It is only blind luck that keeps its mouth and tentacles from actually damaging Harwynian. And at the same time, one of the chests attacks Yoshihiro. He finds himself grappled by the so-called “chest”.



Bjorn comes to the rescue with morningstar and shield. He tells Yoshihiro, “Watch out! These cube bears are notoriously sticky!”

The hood falls away from Harwynian and attempts to clamber back up the wall. It turns out the creature is mostly an ambush few hunter and if it misses its initial attack there’s not much it can do. Kelda turns and kills the hood. “Really? Really? You couldn’t handle this on your own?”

Harwynian calls out, “I knew it! I knew you cared for me!”

Kelda snaps back, “Shut up, twat!”

Harwynian prefers to hear her words differently. He steps up and shoots the mimic with *Magic Missiles*. Bjorn continues to slash away at the creature, getting his shield stuck on its skin in the process. He calmly transfers his starknife to his off hand and readies his axe. Yoshihiro finishes it off with his longsword.

The characters open the remaining barrels and chests by smashing them open. They find:

- 300 gold coins;
- A large folded tapestry with only a few mildew stains. It shows a big portrait of a big dwarven king sitting on a big dwarven throne in a big dwarven throne room. The whole thing is only worth 20 gold, due to the mildew.
- A magical well-crafted bag silk made in the elven style, a *Type I Bag of Holding*.
- A magical birchwood wand, a wand of *Magic Missile* (CL5, 3 charges).
- A silver dagger with a deep blue spinel set in the pommel, a *+1 Silver Dagger*.
- A sapphire worth 100 gold.

Harwynian claims the wand and the *+1 Silver Dagger*. Yoshihiro takes the *Bag of Holding*, noting that it weighs 15 lbs no matter what but can carry 250 lbs in no more than 30 cubic feet.

We continue into the caves. Three of the weird stitched-together corpses with surgical tools on their hands attack us from the shadows. V'lk, Bjorn, and Hiro all attack the first one but it shrugs off their blows and slashes V'lk. We take one down, but then they get all weird and start moving fast like this is Silent Hill or something. V'lk takes a couple more shots before we fell the one attacking him. The third is pursuing Kelda Oygutter step by step across the room, though she is fending its scalpel-hands off skillfully. Gobo stabs it in the spinal column and it drops, inanimate!

V'lk heals himself as we look around at the evil-feeling cave, its floor is stained crimson. The last cavern to the north opens up into some kind of evil altar with cloven hooves and horns all over it. Gobo examines it but can't identify its affiliation with any specific religion. After some investigation a weak section of wall is found in the wall to the right of the altar.

Bjorn posits, "Maybe this is where the dwarves dug too deep. Then they covered it up!"

Hiro retorts, "Oh, yeah, they stacked up some bricks and covered it with dirt. Real dwarven craftsmanship there."

Pushing down the wall reveals a large square room with a stone dais in the midst of a sand floor. Two chests of gold and big frog-god statue adorn the dais and two braziers on the ceiling cast a hellish red glow. A large twisted dwarf in heavy armor kisses his gore-smeared axe and waggles his bloody tongue, pointing one of his exposed finger-bones at us.

"Let's not try talking," says Bjorn.

Hiro charges him and his glaive rings off the dwarf's armor. V'lk runs up and tosses the bag of ghoulish mushrooms onto it! The dwarf blinks at him. He opens his mouth and shrieks! Kelda and Yoshi both cower in fear.

Bjorn tries to hit the dwarf but his massive metal armor causes his flail to rebound. V'lk moves around behind him as Yoshihiro summons his resolve and shakes off his fear. He brings his glaive down hard on the dwarf as V'lk backstabs him.

The dwarf steps up and chops at Hiro with his greataxe; he ducks the first but the second cuts deep into his chest. Gobo heals Hiro, somewhat at least. Hiro shouts, “Dwarf! Yoshihiro Kaijitsu will be the end of you!” His samurai challenge bolsters all his comrades. Bjorn bashes the dwarf from one side with his flail and V’lk bashes from the other side with his morning star. The dwarf seems resistant to the bludgeoning attacks.

Bjorn’s ill luck causes him to stumble right into the dwarf, but the dwarf fails to capitalize on the opening. Gobo touches the dwarf with a *cure moderate wounds* and shrivels his undead flesh.

Kelda Oygutter rages and hacks at the dwarf, and then Hiro decapitates it with his glaive!

We gather up the gold and Hiro begins to put it in his new bag of holding. It suddenly tries to bite off his arm! He flails around and flings it off him. It flaps a circuit around the room and then collapses into a heap of silk again. This causes some consternation in the group. We lock the bag up in a box for safety.

Besides killing some hapless ghouls, we seem to have covered the whole tomb system. V’lk plants himself a ghoulish mushroom. Gobo and Hiro discuss what to do with the several insane prisoners. There’s no real way to get them all the way out of there and back to some asylum somewhere. But we don’t want to kill them. Though they may end up working for the worms again, we decide to just set them loose. One gets away, but one runs right off a cliff. We shake our heads sadly.

We head back to the caravan. Every time we pass a hollow tree, Hiro whispers, “We have your homunculus!” into it on the theory that the wizard is scrying on us. He occasionally shakes the box and asks the homunculus how he’s doing. “Fine, just fine,” is the response; the little guy seems content to just stay in a box guarding a gem.

Kalmak heads back into the mountains to find his people. We take the three non-insane prisoners back with us.

The caravan’s fine, Shalelu has kept them hidden and has chased off any problem critters. And killed goblins. She always kills the goblins.

Giddy with returning alive, the party hypothesizes about why Shalelu hates goblins so much. Hiro suggests that V'lk ask her. Hilarity ensues. Gobo forwards that maybe she was on her way to a job interview one day and her regular hairdresser was busy so she went into a place called "Goblins with Scissors." Needless to say, she didn't get the job.

It takes seven days to get back to Roderic's Cove. Nothing bothers us, we suspect because of the flock of ghouls following us due to V'lk's stock of ghoul fungus syrup.

We resupply and plan the trip to Karlsgard in the Land of the Linnorm Kings. We plan our route. It'll be two weeks to Jol, the southernmost city we know of (and half of that is retracing our path to Brinewall). Then east around Grungir Forest since there's a lot of towns there and up the river to Karlsgard.

While the caravan resupplies, Bjorn, V'lk, and Shalelu travel south to give the homunculus back to the old hermit. He is so happy when he gets his homunculus back. He gives Bjorn the gem, and it's a healing gem! You hold it, concentrate on healing, and it heals you. It only has three charges. But at least we made a freaky old guy happy. He sets the homunculus to guarding his lamp.

## **THE END OF THE SESSION**

Loot divvying is 600 gp in cash each, after Hiro and Gobo cut a sweet deal for selling all the masterwork doodads back in Roderic's Cove.