

## JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 05/13/2012

### ATTENDANCE

*Ernest* indicates that Mother's Day has been trying his ability to find food. His first choice was closed for the day. Ever resourceful, he went from there to Quizno's where his turkey-and-ham sub was assembled by a slightly mobile block of wood the manager was trying to train to make sandwiches.

*Paul* sympathizes. He observes, "I spent five minutes in the drive-in of Chick-Fil-A... until I remembered that it was Sunday."

*Bruce* points out, apropos of nothing, that *Battle of the Planets* is available for streaming on Netflix. He has spent several days watching old episodes and feeling like he's 12 again. He starts to sing the theme song. The others prevent him before he can go too far.

*Chris* mourns that things have already gone too far.

*Patrick* agrees with him. Then he gets distracted by some cat furniture Chris is trying to get rid of.

*Matt* shows up just as Ernest advises everyone, "Don't go in with a half-empty clip!" He decides he would prefer not to know.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Harwynian Fallingleaf	Bruce	Elegant Elven Transmuter	5
Yoshihiro Kaijitsu	Ernest	Tien Reckless Mounted Archer-Knight	5
Jacob Frostfang	Matt	Ale-Loving Kellid Party Sorcerer	5
V'lk	Chris	Mute Feral Elf Stabber (and Oracle)	2/3
Gobo Samarillian	Patrick	Blind Gnomish Fortuneteller	5
Bjorn the Unlucky	Tim	Ulfen Woodsman	5

### BEYOND THE STATUE GUARDIANS

The characters have defeated the two statue guardians in a long passage underneath Ravenscraeg castle. They conclude that the oni *Thorborg Silverscore* is

probably beyond the door and spend a couple of rounds buffing before opening the door. *Jacob Frostfang* casts *Magic Circle against Evil* on himself. *Harwynian* uses the *Shozoku of the Night Wind* to turn himself invisible. And *Yoshihiro Kaijutsu* displays his magnificent Banner.

The chamber beyond is a two-tiered architectural wonder, a square shape imposed upon a diagonal structure with ledges twenty feet up around the corners. A waterfall pours from one ledge into a pond filled with ruby-colored poi. The whole area is divided up by decorative panels to make the area into a veritable maze.

The characters briefly see the beautiful and elegant Thorborg Silverscore in the room. She smiles at them and steps behind a panel.

V'lk moves into the room just ahead of Harwynian's *Haste* spell. Yoshihiro invokes *Air Walk* in an effort to get a better perspective on the combat. He sees a massive red giantess loom up from behind a screen. He calls out a warning, but nobody else can see anything. They assume that he must be hallucinating. He shoots the giantess-shaped Thorborg with an *Outsider Bane* arrow as she flies up onto a ledge. His arrow strikes, but inflicts a mere scratch.

Thorborg appears to everyone as she nocks an arrow to her bow and shoots Yoshihiro clean through with a flaming arrow. Yoshihiro falls to the ground, pierced by an arrow as long as Jacob's private organs.

And then the hidden ninjas spring out from behind the screens and attack with sianghams! Fortunately, the characters are able to avoid their attacks.

Gobo scuttles out to Yoshihiro and heals him back to (bare) consciousness.

Jacob lines up and slashes a ninja with his greatsword, bloodily injuring him.

V'lk decides that the current situation is intolerable. He moves it a notch back towards tolerable by casting *Obscuring Mist* over Thorborg and most of the party. Anything to cut her down to a standard action and prevent ninja sneak attacks is good!

Harwynian steps forward and starts summoning a giant wasp.

Bjorn steps into the wounded ninja and knocks him down, then mashes another ninja's face with his shield. Jacob carves apart a third ninja. Then Bjorn crushes the last ninja's head like an egg filled with red play-doh.

Thorborg flies to the other side of the chamber. As she flies, Yoshihiro notices that half of the arrow damage she has taken is already healed. V'lk poisons his magical *Death Kiss Dagger* with black lotus venom, then flings it at Thorborg from concealment. He is able to slip in and out of the mist without giving away his position, leaving a dagger embedded in her throat. Everyone is pleased to see Thorborg's complexion turn pale as the poison works its way through her system.

Harwynian summons up a giant wasp and sends it to attack Thorborg, but its stinger does not manage to pierce her tatami-do. Yoshihiro invokes *Air Walk* again and charges her, shouting a challenge: "I don't have many hit points, but I do have gumption!" He calls on the power of the *Scabbard of Vigor* to boost the accuracy of his strike. His attack critically wounds her!

Jacob runs up underneath the floating Thorborg and shoots her with his *Wand of Scorching Ray*, but her Spell Resistance renders the attack harmless. Asvig Longthews runs back out of the mist shouting, "Aah! They made mist!" He throws an axe at Thorborg, so poorly aimed that the characters are none too sure that he is even aiming at her.

V'lk shoots a poisoned arrow at Thorborg, inflicting a fairly minor scratch. She starts resisting his poisons, much to his dismay.

Yoshihiro strikes Thorborg again, knocking her down. She falls from the air, then promptly regenerates some of the damage, but remains unconscious and surrounded by player characters. Jacob had been standing directly underneath her, and ends up trapped underneath her. He hits her in the face point blank with a *Scorching Ray*, burning her to death. He has successfully committed a coup de grace against an oni!

The characters do a victory dance a la the 1980's Chicago Bears. They call it the Super-Oni Shuffle. And then comes the searching of the bodies.

- *Wand of Flame Arrow* (9 charges)

- Large tatami-do armor (+7 AC, very heavy)
- Large +1 *Tetsubo Oathtaker*, banded in corroded iron and brass studs embossed with tien characters describing punishment. Once per day it can cast a Blood Geas that will inflict 12d6+9 damage if broken.
- Large +7 STR composite longbow
- A set of *Lesser Bracers of Archery*
- A set of keys to all the doors the characters couldn't previously open
- Two silver braziers engraved with images of dragons and tigers (75 gold each)
- 3 sets of standard ninja kit: siangham, shozoku, short bow, jade raven statues, fugitive grenade, potion of *Vanish*, tindertwig, masterwork thieves' tools.

Gobo makes a point of stacking up the panels with the plan of bringing them out so they can be sold in the next town. Jacob makes a point of claiming one of them. V'lk takes Thorborg's knucklebones.

Bjorn searches for secret doors and finds one. He finds it by pratfalling through it, taking three points of damage in the process. The passage beyond carries a noticeable chill. It ends in two heavy doors locked with massive locks.

## THE DARK CELLS

As the characters move down the hallway they hear a low growl. Gobo swiftly heals Yoshihiro to keep him from dying from whatever attacks us next. Bjorn the Unlucky takes the lead, hoping that the growling is coming from an animal. He identifies the proper door and opens it. He sees a cell with a gigantic white wolf breathing cold vapors from its nostrils.

Bjorn attempts Wild Empathy and growls and snurfles at the wolf. It stares at him and says, "I have a degree in Anthropology from Columbia... the giantess' attempts to train me are as misguided as her disgusting outfit... are you her latest attempt?"

"Actually, we just killed the giantess. Would you like to leave?"

Bjorn ignores Yoshihiro standing behind him, wagging Thorborg's head and babbling, "Here you go! Here you go, boy!"

The characters hand the creature over to Asvig Longthews and his men, instructing them to let the creature leave. The other party members express some reservations at leaving a ravenous winter wolf alone with our Ulfen allies. Yoshihiro honors Asvig with a traditional Tien blessing: he coats him with A-1 steak sauce. The characters let it go, except for Jacob (a sorcerer of the North), who attempts to make friends with the creature. Rather amazingly, he is able to change its attitude around to "helpful". The winter wolf Skygni joins the group as a companion. Jacob shortens that to "Sky".

The other cell turns out to contain an unwashed man who fits the gear the characters found a little while ago. He is feeble and apparently blind. Gobo ministers to him. The man groans out, "You have to watch out! They're still here!" Two things emerge from the water in the back of the cell. As soon as their bug-eyes rise above the water level they emit a blinding flash. The creatures are blindheims. Blindheims are grotesque, frog-like creatures that dwell beneath the surface, subsisting on meals of fungi, rodents, and other underground creatures. They live in the darkest, dampest regions of cavernous sprawls, particularly enjoying underground bogs, lakes, rivers, and swamps. Although not aquatic, blindheims are excellent swimmers. They prefer to latch onto branches or rock outcroppings, where they maintain the high ground while in pursuit of food. They use the light from their eyes to attract prey, but go dark when larger creatures approach. They are magical beasts of animal intelligence, which leaves Bjorn very hopeful that his ranger tricks will work against them.

Bjorn strikes out and hits one of the creatures. Harwynian invokes his Bonded Amulet and gives Bjorn *Bull's Strength*. V'lk poisons himself, but assures the others that he's okay, he has *Delay Poison*. Yoshihiro calls out, "Bad froggie! Bad, bad froggie!" and assaults the unhurt blindheim.

One blindheim goes craaaazy on Bjorn, clawing and rending him (It doesn't actually rend). The other blindheim flings itself at Yoshihiro, clawing and biting him. Then Harwynian invokes his *Pearl of Power* and shoots both of them down with *Magic Missiles*.

### ***THE COLD-WEATHER GUIDE***

The blind man is *Ulf Gormunder*. He explains that Thorborg had locked him away to prevent him from serving as a guide to the Amatatsu heir. He very modestly claims that he is the best cold-weather guide not employed by one of the major trading houses. He has made the trek across the Roof of the World numerous times.

Ulf and two members of the group are blinded. He knows that the blindness will last for an hour or so. The others lead them to more comfortable quarters so they can recover

The characters give Ulf his equipment back, explaining that they drank his potions in the process of saving him. He doesn't seem to mind all that much. They persuade him to join in their expedition, given as we have an Amatatsu heir along and all.

### ***THE TRUE NAME OF THORBORG***

The characters learn that the true name of Thorborg Silverscore was *Kimandatsu*. She was an oni, member of the Army of the Five Storms, and leader of the Frozen Shadows. She was the chief hunter of the Five Storms, responsible for hunting their enemies. She lived in a twisted pagoda, training tigers to hunt the enemies of the Five Storms. She was probably set to hunt down the Amatatsu heir and decided to simply set down in Kalsgard and wait for them to arrive. Fifty years of waiting isn't much to an immortal oni.

### ***THE NEW PROPRIETOR OF RAVENSCRAEG***

The characters hand ownership of Ravenscraeg over to Asvig Longthews and his men. Yoshihiro thanks him for his help and asks, "I hope in light of our friendship that you will stand as an ally of the Amatatsu!"

Asvig introduces the characters to the secret Ulfen handshake, which appears to include a lot of backslapping. In return, the characters use their eleven skins of fortified wine to sponsor an Ulfen afterparty! The Ulfen in turn share their thralls with the characters. Harwynian is elegantly dismayed.

The characters load up hundreds (thousands?) of pounds of goods from Ravenscraeg, piling it all onto their overloaded caravan wagons, and head back to Kalsgard. Sandru has spent a lot of time getting the caravan ready for the overland trip.

He is a bit upset to see that the characters have brought a pet winter wolf and a new guide. He notes, "They won't let you bring that into the city. It will eat babies. Not the guide, the wolf. Though he looks hungry too." The characters oblige by leaving it to raid the outskirts of the city.

The characters give the main NPC's several gifts. They give Ameiko Kaijutsu a collection of silk panels. *Sandru Vhiski* gets a massive aurochs drinking horn. *Koya Mvashti* gets the two silver braziers and some incense. *Salelu Androsana* gets some magical arrows.

Gobo comments, "Hey, I've got a 20 relationship with Koya! What do I get?"

Yoshihiro compliments him, "Good job, man! Have you been hitting that? I've only got a 16 with Ameiko."

Given that Ameiko is Yoshihiro's sister, nobody else chooses to touch that.

Jacob gives Ameiko some comically oversized women's clothing taken from the ogre mage's quarters with the claim, "I think this will fit you nicely..." She responds poorly enough that the characters suspect that she might make her first act as Empress be to order him beheaded.

## **RETURN TO FINN SNEVALD**

The characters go back to *Finn Snevald's* house in Kalsgard. He is pleased to see them. "You have recovered the sword! Have you taken blood vengeance upon the thieves who took it and slew my servants?" V'lk shakes his bag of knucklebones. Finn is pleased and assures the characters that everyone in Kalsgard will know of their brave deeds.

Yoshihiro explains, "We are set to depart in our caravan soon." He presents Finn with the writ allowing service from *Sven Bloodeagle's* huscarls. In return, Finn invests 2000 gold pieces into their venture.

The party all goes into a frenzy of shopping. We buy an additional covered wagon to add to the caravan and invest in upgraded suspensions for all the wagons, and armor for a couple of them. The caravan levels twice and we take the Extended Caravan and Scavenger feats.

Skygni and Ulf take their places as new semi-trusted allies, but they should both be hell on wheels in the arctic!

## **OFF TO TURVIK**

The caravan sets off upon the 100-mile journey to Turvik, at the northern end of the Land of the Linnorm Kings.

The wagon comes to a raging river. Gobo creates a moon bridge that we use to try to get everyone across safely. It takes some hard work, but all the wagons and animals are wrangled across the span in good order.

We get to Turvik without any major issues. It is a foreboding fortress in the middle of the tundra. Many of the guards here seem to be convicted felons and drinking is the primary form of recreation. It is cold and inhospitable.

It does, however, have a family of Tien, the Marasawa, that teach the language to travelers. We get basic language lessons for everyone in the caravan. Yoshihiro offers to tutor people along the way, but it turns out the teaching method taught to him by his father is to scream “WHY ARE YOU SO STUPID?!?!” at the pupil.

The group sells some of the booze-oriented goods they obtained in Karlsgard and stocks up on narwhal horns and whatnot to trade across the Crown.

## **TO THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS**

The heroes plan their trip across the Crown of the World. They’re disappointed that they won’t hit the North Pole proper, but Ulf the guide assures them there’s a big haunted city there that you should stay well away from, built by some ancient degenerate race. This sets poorly with the group, who considers an expedition to murder the Ice King and his penguin minions. They are told of giant spires, star-shaped buildings, creatures of metal and ice, and black slush welling up from the Darklands. Everyone wriggles like itchy bear cubs wanting to go there while the GM prays we don’t.

The first leg of our journey lies across the Rimethirst Mountains. Ulf tells us that the Giantdowns of Urguk are right on the other side, and that there’s a truce such that if you follow the line of markers the giants won’t mess with you. But frost giants being



Chaotic Evil, it's still an iffy thing. The intoxicated party starts making off-color jokes about frost giant women, along the lines of "My Own Private Tauntaun."

Several days into the trip, we discover that some of the food we got in Turvik is bad and people start getting sick. The creeping rot spreads throughout the caravan. The healers combat the plague and we put the sick in a quarantine wagon. We spent three days with dysentery but eventually get better.

We reach the Giantdowns. Bets are placed on whether Jacob will score with a giant and whether he will be willing or unwillingly loved up. Hiro and Jacob are on watch at night when a horse screams in terror. They run over to find a fierce looking white-bearded frost giant carrying off a horse, punching it in an attempt to silence it. Hiro draws Suishen and it shines like the sun, and he cries out, "Drop the horse and face me, giant!"

Jacob calls for Sky the winter wolf and casts *false life*. A different winter wolf comes running out of the dark and bites at Hiro; Hiro strikes it with the blazing Suishen and cuts and burns the beast. The giant casts *obscuring mist* across the area and fog rolls in over the area. Jacob runs out of the fog and the giant isn't there.

V'lk comes awake and leaps out of his cabin to see a giant patch of glowing mist like it's a John Carpenter movie. He creeps up on it, looking for victims.

The wolf bites at Hiro but its fangs don't pierce his chainmail. Hiro smites the wolf again as the fog swirls around them. Sky runs up to Jacob and Jacob says "Find the giant!" The wolf's keen senses note that the giant is in the mist somewhere.

Suddenly the giant looms out of the mist and brings a crushing blow down onto Hiro with its greataxe. He cries out. Jacob casts *enlarge person* and wades into the mist, looking to settle the group's bet one way or another. V'lk moves into the mist carefully as well and tries to stab the giant, but it clearly has magical protection.

The winter wolf breathes ice on Hiro and V'lk. Suishen's magic protects Hiro but V'lk gets a bad case of frostbite. Sky charges in and bites the giant's calf.

Hiro slashes the giant badly. It cries out, "Surrender! This is my sacred land!" as it grows to an even larger size.

Jacob pleads for a truce. "We are brethren!" He and V'lk both stab away at the giant and blood flows onto the tundra. He crumples to the ground. Hiro shoos the winter

wolf off with Suishen and it flees. The group checks on themselves (badly wounded), the horse (just stunned) and the giant (unconscious).

“So, you want to save this giant’s life?” asks Hiro.

“Yes!” says Jacob.

“Knock yourself out,” he says looking at the fallen giant. “Hey, where’s Gobo? DID YOU EAT OUR GNOME?!?”

Gobo wanders out of the fortuneteller’s wagon, finally waking up. He missed every single Perception check to awaken for the whole combat.

They bind the giant to the best of their ability and wake him up. “Why have you done this to me!” he demands. Jacob talks to him and the giant tries some kind of Steven Seagal as Eskimo Wise Man lines on him. Jacob wants the giant to teach him the secrets of the frost giants, and negotiates some kind of mentoring and keeping other giant raiders off us for unspecified repayment (there is talk of an “ass, gas, or grass” policy) and food. So now we have a giant along. Given that Jacob’s boreal bloodline means one of these guys is his ancestor, this doesn’t inspire confidence in us.

There are two routes we can take – longer and easier going through a more settled area but potentially with more hostiles, or the shorter and more rugged path. We decide on the path less travelled.

## **THE END OF THE SESSION**

We level to 6<sup>th</sup>! Huzzahs are heard from all.