

JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 08/05/2012

ATTENDANCE

Matt sends word that he might not be able to attend, owing to a broken arm sustained in a cycling accident. Everyone wishes the best to him, and hopes for a good recovery. *Georgina* understands that when *Matt* says, “cycling accident” he is being modest: he was actually injured protecting a group of young, photogenic orphans from the depredations of a Snidely Whiplash-like villain and his pack of beetle-browed henchmen.

Ernest explains that he is going on summer vacation. As a result, Yoshihiro will miss the next boss fight. The others suggest that he might just be too chickenshit to fight boss monsters.

Paul absolutely denies that he was responsible for starting any of these rumors.

Chris says nothing. He simply eats his remarkable sandwich, completely immune to *Bruce*’s pleas to share.

Patrick indicates that he will be late, because he cares about his family.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Harwynian Fallingleaf	Bruce	Elegant Elven Transmuter	8
Yoshihiro Kaijitsu	Ernest	Tien Reckless Mounted Archer-Knight	8
Jacob Frostfang	Matt	Ale-Loving Kellid Party Sorcerer	8
V’lk	Chris	Mute Feral Elf Stabber (and Oracle)	2/6
Gobo Samarillian	Patrick	Blind Gnomish Fortuneteller	8
Bjorn the Unlucky	Tim	Ulfen Woodsman	8

THE LAIR OF THE YETI KING

The characters examine their current resources (mostly spells) and decide to find a quiet cave to take refuge in while the spellcasters regain their powers. They pass through several chambers, including one with a mated pair of yeti savages that ignores them,

finally finding a large chamber divided by a crevasse. Three yetis led by a fourth, larger yeti growl at the characters from across the crevasse.

Harwynian leads with a *Web* that manages to entrap only the largest of the yetis. *Bjorn the Unlucky* follows with arrows that inflict minor wounds upon the yeti with the reddish eyes. *V'lk* makes himself *Invisible*, indicating that "This fight isn't challenging enough! I cannot stand to look upon them any more!"

The yetis decide against trying to leap the crevasse. Instead, they clamber down the side and move across the bottom. The yeti trapped in webbing easily snaps the filaments and follows along. The characters make ready to receive their charge, only moderately panicked by the discovery that yeti have a listed climbing speed.

Gobo manages to catch two yetis with a *Color Spray*. He stuns one and sends it falling back down into the crevasse. *V'lk* emerges from *Invisibility* to stab another one with his shortsword. His defensive strike doesn't inflict that much damage, but does put him into a good position for a followup. *Harwynian* catches two yetis with his *Slow* spell, leaving them moving as if through molasses. Tasty, tasty molasses!

One yeti claws *V'lk*, inflicting minor damage. *Bjorn* slams into the red-eyed yeti he shot earlier, pushing the creature off the crevasse. He is disappointed by the fact that the thing survives the fall.

The one remaining yeti on top of the crevasse goes berserk and attacks *Bjorn*. *Harwynian* casts *Blur* and *Calcific Touch*, then draws away 4 DEX from the creature. Technically he also *Slows* it for a turn, except that it is already *Slowed*. *Bjorn* follows up with a hit from his nine-ringed sword and two hits from his shield. The yeti responds by slamming into him with a two-handed spear hit for 32 damage. *Harwynian* tags the yeti for another 3 DEX loss. *Bjorn* continues hammer it with the sword, hitting twice more. The yeti finds himself increasingly unable to avoid *Bjorn's* blade as his reflexes are slowly calcified away.

Gobo Samarillian steps up behind *Bjorn* to heal him. *V'lk* gets into flanking position and delivers an insane amount of damage with his two blades, compounding it with a dose of spider venom that starts to sap the yeti's strength. The yeti collapses.

Bjorn climbs down to the base of the crevasse to look for treasure on the body of the dead boss yeti. V'lk joins him. They find an *Amulet of Natural Armor +1*. V'lk notes that the amulet is made of bone, carved to look like a little skull. He lays claim to it.

The characters once again rely upon Gobo's *moon bridge* to get them across the crevasse. Everyone agrees that the *moon bridge* is the Best Power Ever.

THE CHAMBER OF THE YETI KING

The characters pass a wide variety of caverns, some inhabited and some not, before they enter the chamber of the yeti chieftain. He is seated upon a rude stone throne placed beneath the skull of a massive mastodon over which a Tian-style banner is draped. The Yeti King has clearly prepared himself well for the characters' arrival: he glows with the effects of several spells. Two yeti berserkers stand by the king as bodyguards.

V'lk casts a *Dispel Magic* at the Yeti King, peeling off one of his defensive spells. Bjorn rushes up and slashes at one of the bodyguards. The yeti responds by rending him with both claws. Bjorn staggers and reels from the attack. The Yeti King casts *Divine Favor* upon himself, granting him the power of Sithhud, the Frozen Lord. Everyone thinks that this is a very unpromising development. Harwynian casts a second *Dispel Magic*, removing another spell effect. The Yeti King seems to get visibly weaker.

While one bodyguard claws apart Bjorn, the second bodyguard backhands Harwynian and sends him spinning. The Yeti King casts *Blessing of Fervor* on himself and one of his guards. Harwynian ponders just how many spells the Yeti King might have stored up.

The characters decide that the situation is getting untenable. Harwynian moves up to cluster with the rest of the group, casts *Dimension Door*, and brings the whole group back to the caravan. Bjorn is disoriented. "I feel like someone just used a hearthstone to take us back to the inn..."

The Yeti King appears to not be quite so brave to attack the characters' entire caravan, allowing them some chance to recover and regain spells.

THE SECOND ASSAULT

The characters line up for their second assault against the Yeti King. Harwynian's plan is to cast *Bull's Strength* from his wand on V'lk and Bjorn, then *Magic Circle against Evil* on himself, *Haste* on everyone, and then *Dimension Door* to bring the group into the attack. Gobo will stack on a *Bless* and Bjorn casts *Cat's Grace* and a pair of *Protection from Cold* spells just as Harwynian reaches the end of his casting sequence. V'lk puts an oil of *Bless Weapon* upon Bjorn's nine-ringed sword.

All their preparations made, Harwynian casts his *Dimension Door*. An instant later, the characters appear in the room in front of the Yeti King. Harwynian leads with three *Scorching Rays*, leaving the yeti badly wounded. V'lk follows up with a thrown blade loaded with *black lotus extract*. As the knife bites home, V'lk realizes that the yeti king is under a foreign mental influence. Unaware of the situation, Gobo unleashes a *Color Spray* that stuns and blinds one yeti.

The bodyguards stomp down upon Bjorn while the Yeti King casts *Divine Fervor* on his men. Harwynian responds by casting *Slow*, catching one of the bodyguards. V'lk decides to try a *Protection from Evil* on the Yeti King to free him from mental control. He succeeds, and sees *Katiana's* ghost is pushed out of his body.

GHOSTFACE KILLA

The formerly-possessed chieftain claims, "Aha! You have freed me from the evil spirit's power! Stop attacking them! Destroy the spirit!" Both the characters and the yeti turn upon Katiana's ghost. Bjorn swings at her with his ghost-destroying sword. She responds by flying up and away from them, far enough that the characters cannot hit her with their blades.

Harwynian responds by pulling out his amulet and casting *Fly* on Bjorn. V'lk helps out by making Bjorn *Invisible*. Harwynian exclaims, "Oh no! Our fighter has abandoned us! He has teleported away, using a magical object!"

It's not clear if this gulls Katiana, but Bjorn doesn't worry about it: he engages with her, striking two-handed with his ghost-bane blade. He delivers a shattering strike, though not one strong enough to end her. She responds with a touch attack that Bjorn

evades by the barest of margins. Bjorn strikes again, inflicting 76 damage. He is amazed to see that his strike doesn't actually kill her. Harwynian manages to get a *Magic Missile* through her spell resistance, leaving her almost destroyed. Bjorn's final attack goes right through her. She howls as her body evaporates – with her destruction the threat has ended, as well as that of the *Hungry Storms*.

BEYOND THE SPIRIT ROAD

The characters debate the best way to destroy the *Anti-Life Shells* cast around the demonic faces. The eventual path chosen is to have Gobo cast *Freedom of Movement* on one of the yeti berserkers, then send him through the shell to smash the stone faces. This proves effective and the spells are destroyed.

With no magical barriers remaining, the characters lead their caravan up the ramps and away from the Spirit Road. When the characters emerge from the Uq'taal necropolis the storms have broken, leaving clear skies over the Wall of Heaven mountains. The characters have another 150 miles to travel to reach Ordu-Aganhei and the way into Tian Xia.

Along the path, the caravan runs across a group of eight mountain tengu. The characters attempt to trade with them. They occupy a nearby abandoned mining shack, and indicate a great interest in anything shiny the characters can offer them. The characters decline to trade them their magical banner, instead putting together a package of colorful cloths for them. One of them tries to pick Bjorn's pocket and is caught – Bjorn shield-bashes the creature, causing it to abase itself at his feet, then slink away.

HONGAL AND BEAUTIFUL CAPITAL CITY!

The caravan reaches Hongal, the northernmost realm on the Tian continent, and the terminus of the Path of Aganhei (i.e. the caravan route that crosses the Crown of the World). The Hongali are a semi-nomadic people living in a mountainous land cut with steppes. The caravaneers see yurt villages with large horse pens. The locals herd sheep, goats, and strangely enough at least one breed of dog. Yoshihiro comments, "Those dogs look good enough to eat!" The others exchange knowing looks.

An additional week of travel lands the caravan at the gates of the Hongal capital, Ordu-Aganhei. There is a long line of people waiting to enter - the gate guards aggressively question and search everyone. Eventually, it is the caravan's turn. They try talking to the guards in Tien, which moves the guards from aggressive/paranoid to screaming loudly, paranoid, "You speak Tien! You must be spies! How long have you been spies? What are you here to spy on?" The more mature, less bloodthirsty travelers talk respectfully yet firmly to the guards and begin to calm the situation down.

About this time an older Hongali arrives; he is dressed in a white robe and immense hat that screams, "I am an official on official business!" He is carried on a litter by uniformed men. The official screams at the guards who immediately bow and scrape before the man. The official then speaks to the caravaneers in perfect Common, "Greetings, great travelers! Have you crossed the Crown of the World?" Never once does the old man's face show any expression other than a toothy smile. Once he has established that the caravan has indeed made that great trip, he grants them entry into the city where they will be guests of Kiriltai Khan and his court.

The trip thru the city is a sensory overload: there are people everywhere, many strange food smells, merchants hawking their wares, food vendors, acrobats, fire-eaters, and many other entertainers. Colorful banners are everywhere. From the comfort of a wagon Bjorn and V'lk purchase many exotic, at least to them, snacks from the food vendors who are happy to run along to make a sale. And everyone has a great big, toothy smile pasted on their faces.

The bureaucrat leads the caravan to the khan's court. They are introduced to the khan and court as great travelers, great adventurers, etc. who have braved the Crown of the World to see the even greater khan, Kiriltai! Smiling courtiers wait warily for a sign from the khan. The khan says, "Welcome to my city! You will tell me of your adventures! You will show me your exotic wares! We will have feasts, contests, games, and performances to celebrate this happy event for three nights! And on the fourth night you will cook your western delicacies and entertain us with western things!" The courtiers applaud madly; their smiles become even larger.

Each member of the caravan is given their own apartment in the palace. Everyone takes a long hot bath. There are servants, including gisaeng (i.e. geisha) for each apartment. Sadly, Bjorn never figures out that he can just ask his lovely gisaeng for a happy ending. He spends his four days and nights trying to impress her; being the consummate companion she is visibly impressed. V'lk tries his hand at seduction with Shalelu; she is not impressed. V'lk settles for his gisaeng.

The ever responsible Gobo spends his days venturing about the palace. He talks to servants, explores lavishly decorated rooms and lovely gardens, and finds the kitchens. Gobo determines that everyone is afraid of displeasing the khan, who is quick to anger, quick to take insult, and quick to deliver punishment. Thus, everyone maintains a manically happy exterior. The people outside the palace vie to sell the palace foods and entertainments.

Gobo remembers that his group is responsible for food and entertainment on the fourth evening, so he sets about organizing that. Teams are organized to get the proper food stuffs. Shalelu, Bjorn, and others venture outside the city by day to hunt game appropriate for western dishes... everything inside the walls seems to be pig chuckles, fermented eggs, and other eastern delicacies... or as a stodgy Westerner would say, "Not food!"

For entertainment, the party decides to perform Yoshi's play, The Cuckolded Cuckoo, which was appropriated from an insane tengu months ago. Yoshi's sister, Ameiko, offers to play her samisen. She is politely reminded that empresses-to-be get kidnapped when they fail to remain quiet and nondescript.

Other party members venture out into the city on succeeding days. They find many things to buy, many things to do. All of them are happy to find that some of their deities are revered in this distant land along with local gods: Abadar, Desna, General Susumu (evil god of proud/vain samurai), Irori, Kofusachi (god of joy and prosperity), and Yamatsumi (god of winter, mountains, and volcanoes). Most the caravaneers give offerings to Desna; several do the same for Yamatsumi for the interesting if not safe trip they just finished.

THE FIRST NIGHT OF CELEBRATION

The first night starts off with a multi-course meal; the party loses count somewhere in the teens. V'lk makes himself sick trying everything put in front of him; he staggers off several times to the vomitorium, then returns and over indulges all over again. The courtiers smile in dismay at party's varying levels of expertise with the chopstick. V'lk gives up on the chopsticks and uses his fingers; the smiles become more strained.

The major-domo announces the evening's contests - Mounted Archery! Yoshihiro announces he will compete. Bareback Horse Racing! Despite the snickering from his friends, Yoshihiro again announces, "I will compete!" And the final contest will be Wrestling! Yoshihiro wins both horse contests. Bjorn wins the wrestling. They are awarded a masterwork composite short bow, ten +1 arrows, and an *Efficient Quiver*. The winners are suitably impressed. The khan beams proudly.

During an interlude in the contests, the khan confides to Bjorn and Gobo, "I am the greatest speaker of your tongue in my country! No one speaks your language better than I, for only I have the talent and perseverance to master it! You only have 28 letters in your alphabet - outrageous!" Everyone in the caravan notices after that the rest of the Hongalis' ability to speak Common is greatly diminished.

THE SECOND NIGHT OF CELEBRATION

Again, this night begins with food, more food, and even more food. The party fails to win any contests this night, yet they manage to not embarrass themselves or insult the khan's hospitality.

THE THIRD NIGHT OF CELEBRATION

More food. This night's contests involve dancing, tumbling, and fire walking. Bjorn wins the tumbling contest by taking to the balconies and lantern ropes overhead. V'lk wins the fire walking contest thanks to his Ring of Fire Protection, his enormous troll (russian) hat, and the GM allowing him to use Intimidation for this roll. V'lk also

competes in the dance contest; he didn't win but he wasn't the worst. They win a +1 *silver scimitar* and four *Elixirs of Fire Breath*.

THE LAST NIGHT OF CELEBRATION

Thanks to the caravan's cooks and much preparation the party produces a feast that is tasty and representative of Varisian cuisine... or at least it is as far as the khan is concerned because he is an expert in such matters. Of course, the khan's kitchens and servants were responsible for cooking the huge volumes of food required; they get an honorable mention.

Yoshihiro's play is executed reasonably well by the caravan's "players". The courtiers are quiet when it finishes, again waiting for the khan's decision. He claps while proclaiming, "Yes! Yes! The evocative foreshadowing by the mimes... the spatial dialogues... the Adler influences in the man-child bird's flight... I understood it all!" The court erupts with applause.

The last entertainment is a Harrow reading by Koya Mvashti. A great and long reign is revealed. The khan is pleased but not surprised. Smiling courtiers pummel their hands together. The celebration ends.

FURTHER ALONG THE PATH TO MINKAI

The characters finally reach the far northern reaches of Tian Xia. Two obstacles stand between the characters and Minkai: the nation of Hongal, and then the Forest of Spirits. Each character advances in level at the end of the session.

THE END OF THE SESSION

The characters manage to reach the nation of Hongal, and level up to 9th level. All celebrate as they prepare to venture into the Forest of Spirits.