

JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 01/06/2013

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Ernest provides advance warning – today’s game will be held at his house, not at *Chris*’ place as per usual. To provide some incentive for the others to remember, he promises sausages on the grill. *Chris* indicates perfect understanding and offers to bring additional victuals. *Paul* is merely disturbed by what *Ernest* might mean by “sausages”. Even beyond that, he proclaims that he now has a new laptop, one that has a working battery and whose power supply is not a potential fire hazard (all celebrate!). *Tim* does his level best to deliberately misunderstand the instructions. And *Bruce* is nothing but a ghost, trapped in this far-off half-world some call “Richardson”. *Patrick* steps by his monitor screen to poke him a few times. All shudder.

Tim notes that *Bruce* is now sporting a moustache and a fine snood. That combined with his big smiley t-shirt leads all to conclude that he now spends his days sitting in coffee shops talking about working on his novel. *Bruce* does not bother to correct this impression: his novel will demonstrate everything that is wrong with the American literary scene and take the establishment by storm!

Matt shows up a bit later with a shocking revelation – the British make television shows! Apparently, they have been doing so for quite some time. They’ve got a national television network and everything! All are amazed. *Bruce* takes a long draw upon his clove cigarette.

| <i>Character</i> | <i>Player</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Harwynian Fallingleaf | Bruce | Elegant Elven Transmuter | 11 |
| Yoshihiro Kaijitsu | Ernest | Tien Cavalier/Samurai-In-Training | 11 |
| Jacob Frostfang | Matt | Cold-Loving Kellid Party Sorcerer | 11 |
| V’lk | Chris | Mute Feral Elf Stabber (and Oracle) | 2/9 |
| Gobo Samarillian | Patrick | Blind Gnomish Fortuneteller | 11 |
| Bjorn the Unlucky | Tim | Ulfen Woodsman | 11 |

THE RESCUED GEISHA

The characters have rescued the geisha *Osayumi* from the clutches of the evil necromantic pearl merchant *Yugureda Shosaito*, who had wanted to use her to restore his dead wife to life. The characters remain upon Shosaito's island, the rest of which is inhabited by suspicious-looking creatures that may or may not be undead, but which certainly do not live up to the general image of the alluring Minkaian pearl diver. They decide to spend the night in Shosaito's house, with guards set to warn them if the locals become too curious.

SO-CALLED NIGHT WATCH

Bjorn the Unlucky is on watch when the maids come crashing through the paper walls. He is just barely alert enough to notice that they are lacking lower bodies. He is not alert enough to provide an effective alarm to the others. They tear into him with their long, snaggly claws. One of them grapples him and makes ready to drink his blood. As usual. Another housekeeper fixes on *V'lk* and tears great raggedy bits of flesh out of his throat, causing his succulent lifeblood to seductively spurt and ooze.

In swift order *Gobo* and *Shalelu* also find themselves grappled by the dangling intestines of the creatures. *Yoshihiro* invokes *Daylight* from his sword *Suishen* on the theory that they are vampires – ooey, gooey vampires. The bright light dazzles them, but has no other remarkable effects. The characters bemoan that no monsters at all seem to be vulnerable to *Daylight*, probably because all those monsters that were have already been slaughtered by *Daylight*-using adventurers.

Bjorn realizes that he is only grappled by the throat. He invokes his *Nine-Ringed Spirit Sword* and his spiked shield! He swings and strikes the demon housekeeper with his blade and shield, but is dismayed to see that the creature is barely hurt by his strikes.

V'lk uses his shadow jump trick to spirit himself and *Shalelu* away from the housekeepers' grasp. *Shalelu* readies her bow and fills the housekeeper grappling *Bjorn* with arrows... arrows that do a disappointingly small amount of damage.

Harwynian casts *Blink* upon himself, hoping to keep himself out of the clutches of the demon housekeepers. Gobo casts *Holy Smite* on the room. Osayumi starts to sing, filling the characters' hearts with murderous joy (and giving them +3 to hit and damage).

Yoshihiro slashes at the monster throttling Gobo, inflicting horrible burning wounds with *Suishen's* flaming blade. The housekeeper bares its jagged teeth at him, clearly eager to see his soul drawn down into the burning depths of the Sulfurous Hells. Yoshihiro strikes again, cutting the creature in half and sending it to its own eternal torments.

Bjorn follows up with another barrage of attacks against his own foe. *Jacob* comes to his feet and assists Bjorn. Shalelu sends another volley of arrows at Bjorn's opponent, leaving it critically wounded. *Harwynian* finishes it with a spread of *Magic Missiles*. The creature explodes in a burst of Bjorn's blood.

V'lk notices that there are a lot of wounded characters. He casts a *Mass Cure Serious Wounds* to correct the situation. Osayumi follows up with another spell to help Gobo, who still has a demon housekeeper chewing upon him.

V'lk's opponent decides to put an end to his helpful healing ways. She claws him bloody, then grabs him with obvious delight. She is clearly imagining the sweet, sweet taste of his heart's blood next round. V'lk slips away from the creature as Shalelu shrieks out, "How dare you attack V'lk!" She sends a poorly-aimed barrage of arrows at it, scoring only a single hit.

V'lk decides that it is time to try something else. He uses an illusion power to make one of the housekeepers look like him. The others are treated to the interesting sight of V'lk suddenly clawing and biting at Shalelu. *Harwynian* shoots a barrage of multicolored, floral-scented *Magic Missiles* at the other housekeeper, leaving her critically injured. The creature decides that it is time to flee. It withdraws straight through a paper wall. Yoshihiro steps to the hole in the wall, quickly draws out his daikyu, and sends a pair of arrows after her. She shudders in her flight and falls with two arrows in her head.

Jacob softens up the last housekeeper with some *Magic Missiles*. Bjorn follows up with a charge and V'lk moves in with a surprisingly effective sneak attack. For some reason, the creature seems specifically vulnerable to his shortsword (or, possibly, all shortswords). Harwynian invokes his *Pearl of Power* and finishes the creature with a third burst of *Magic Missiles*.

Once the battle is done, the characters inspect the creatures that attacked them. Osayumi is able to identify them as manananggals, horrible creatures of the night that prey upon the innocent and unwary (the characters clearly falling into the second group). During the day they hide as mundane people. They are able to disguise themselves well enough that during the day even a *Detect Evil* spell will not reveal them. As they fly through the night, they make a clicking sound.

The characters venture over to the housekeepers' quarters to see what remains there. They find the womens' missing lower torsos, plus V'lk's mended pants. The characters do not find anything beyond that that resembles treasure.

RETURN FROM THE ISLAND

The next morning the characters wake and start their journey back to the city of Sakakabe and civilization, with a side trip to check in with Osayumi's kappa uncle. On the way the characters explain who they are (and who they are escorting) to Osayumi. Osayumi has seen a vision in which *Ameiko Kaijutsu* is not just the Empress, but a great Empress. She is more than willing to join the characters in their quest to restore the rightful ruler to the Jade Throne. Of immediate importance, she is a friend of the brother of the *Daimyo of Enganoka* and can provide an introduction to him. The Daimyo is *Sikutsu Sennaka*. His brother is *Sikutsu Itsuru*.

The characters give her some gifts, including a fancy tea set. She gifts them with the *Samisen of Oracular Dreams*. Yoshihiro practices his samisen playing with her, and proposes that they form a Minkaian pop punk band called "Hi Hi Puffy Osayumi." She declines.

RETURN TO THE TEAHOUSE

The characters discuss their next steps. They need to return Osayumi to the teahouse mistress *O-kohaku*, would be well-advised to take advantage of their new inroads to the Daimyo Sikutsu Sennaka, and also to gain the alliance of the *Three Monkeys* ninja clan.

O-kohaku is extremely happy to see Osayumi return. In gratitude she gives the characters a magical *Harukai* tea set. It is of exquisite workmanship, with a willow tree motif. A tea ceremony performed with this tea set and appropriately fine tea (at least 10 gold pieces worth) can provide up to six people with calming visions of a willow grove. Depending upon the quality of the Diplomacy roll used to perform the tea ceremony the participants gain bonuses to resist poison and disease, and possibly *Heroism* or *Greater Heroism*. The characters determine that even though he doesn't like serving tea ("It takes too long!"), Jacob has the best Diplomacy score. They give the set to him. He grouses, "Many of us are good at things we don't like doing."

THE DAIMYO'S BROTHER

O-kohaku is quite happy to arrange meetings with several local nobles and merchants for the characters. They meet at the tea house, over tea served by Jacob. Many of the eminences are taken aback by the fact that a foreigner is serving the tea, though all are impressed with his skills.

The characters start by meeting with Sikustu Itsuru. He notes that his brother is a major backer of the Jade Regent, but he is not. Honor forbids him from directly acting against his own blood. However, he does know that his brother travels to the hot springs at *Shirio Onsen*, escorted only by a few retainers. He also knows that a group of ronin called the *Nine Pawns*, former samurai dismissed from Sikutsu Sennaka's service due to their refusal to burn a village for failure to pay taxes, have infiltrated the workers at Shirio Onsen and intend to take some action against him when he arrives.

If Sennaka is removed from power then Itsuru will inherit his position. In practical terms, this means that Sennaka would have to die. The armies of the North form

a significant portion of the total strength of Minkai. If the honorable samurai of the North were to turn against the Jade Regent they would represent a significant threat.

Itsuru does caution the characters that his brother is one of the most skilled and powerful samurai in the entire country. Sennaka follows the samurai Order of the Warrior, so he can gain morale bonuses to skill rolls and saves, retry attack rolls, and possibly gain automatic critical threats from time to time. Yoshihiro concludes that he'd better eat his Wheaties.

The characters determine that they have enough time to travel to the port town of *Engenoka* to speak with the Three Monkeys ninjas before they need to travel to Shirio Onsen to deal with Sikutsu Sennaka. There are decent roads between Sakakabe and Engenoka, and the characters' caravan is capable of a near-incredible 50 miles per day over good roads.

THE THREE MONKEYS

After buying and selling with some friendly contacts the geisha set us up with, the characters go to Engenoka to meet the Three Monkeys ninja clan leaders. When they arrive they find six cops bullying a guy in the market. When the threats turn to an impromptu execution, the characters take action. V'lk casts a spell turning the executioner's sword into a snake. The guardsmen correctly see this as a direct challenge to their authority. They attack. It doesn't take long for the characters to discover that these guards have supernatural strength. When one falls, it turns into a blue-faced, tusked kua (human) oni. The populace flees screaming. Gobo lays out the holy smites while everyone else pours damage into the regenerating oni.

Once the characters have killed them all, they find out they are the *Daikan Tetsuku* – rural cops with an attitude bringing their particular kind of curbstomping to the city. It is not clear if every one of them is an oni, or just an elite few.

WHERE ARE THE THREE MONKEYS?

The characters have descriptions of the three ninja leaders they are to meet. *Ishibasho* – Black Lotus clan – is a bald guy. *Hosokaia Kazu* – Dragon Shadow clan – is young with a half smile. Finally *Kando Yori* – Emerald Branch clan – is a thick necked

peasant woman (Jacob thinks, "Aren't they all... and yet I still love them the more for it...") He smiles, while the others resolutely decide to not imagine exactly why).

The characters head into a restaurant on the market and meet Ishibasho. After a brief feeling-out period, he tells them that all three leaders will meet at the new moon, and Yoshihiro forks over 300 gold for a black lotus flower scroll that will allow the characters admission to the event.

WAITING FOR THE NEW MOON

The new moon is not for several days, so the characters take the opportunity to explore the wonders of Engenoka. They also ask Ameiko use the *Samisen of Oracular Vision* to perform a divination about the meet. It reveals, "The ninja will not help you unless you kill the slave to the coin."

The characters go at the appointed day and find all three ninja leaders present. They describe a problem they have - the Jade Regent doesn't use the clans any more. Instead he has a new Oni's Mask clan with some new upstart superninja named *Kaibuninsho*.

Yoshihiro asks, "Is he the slave to the coin?" This causes a minor ruckus. The ninja leaders have heard of a magic ninja coin. It is reputed to be the first coin ever paid for the services of a ninja and it has the ability to transform its owner into an exemplar of ninja skills and powers, some clearly unnatural. However, there is a downside. Each person that uses it unlocks a power until the eighth user, who brings a disaster on the land. Two of the ninja leaders want the characters to bring it to them, but Kando Yori says it is too dangerous. The characters like her answer.

The Three Monkeys leaders have no way to locate *Kaibuninsho*, but indicate that he has been given a contract upon the characters so he is likely to come to them. They can't help the characters because ninja clans have an agreement not to interfere with each other's contracts, an arrangement that apparently holds true even with illegal oni-dominated upstart ninja clans.

Yoshihiro clarifies, "But if we separate him from his vertebrae then the deal is off and you can help us right?"

The clan leaders nod solemnly, "Yep."

The clan leaders end the conference with a description of Kaibuninsho's powers. He can walk through shadows, climb anything, misdirect magic used to find him, teleport, spy from distances... and many other things. He is clearly SUPER NINJA.

We seriously consider ending the meeting in impressive ninja style by throwing down a ninja *fugitive grenade* and disappearing in the smoke, but a sober analysis of our stealth abilities makes us figure that "hilariously incompetent" is probably the best reasonable outcome of that plan.

TROUBLE ON THE ROAD

The characters take their leave from the Three Monkeys leaders and take their caravan to the Shirio Onsen lodge where they expect to do a bit of Daimyo murdering.

On the way to the lodge the caravan is caught in a mudslide. It inflicts 14 damage to the caravan (which is apparently at 2/3 of its hit points already and has been left unrepaired for some reason). Two wagons get stuck. It is at that moment that a sudden snowstorm comes upon the group! To make things worse, an incorporeal ice woman attacks.

Yoshihiro spears her with a lance charge and everyone gangs up. She pours out cold all over both the characters and the caravan. Yoshihiro and V'lk are enchanted by her gaze, but Bjorn kills her with his nine ring ghost sword. We divine her final resting place and go loot it and lay her to rest.

THE END OF THE SESSION

The end of the session leaves the characters still on the road, in sight of Shirio Onsen. All the characters go up to 12th level.

Harwynian gets the same treasure distribution as the other characters, plus some other items:

- A scroll of *Resist Energy*
- Yugureda Shosaito's spellbook (containing "lots of nice spells", with details to follow)
- A spell component pouch
- 250gp of diamond dust

- 9772.25 gp from the last "virtual distribution"
- 2914 gp additional distribution
- 200 gp additional distribution

The treasure spreadsheet can answer all questions.