

## WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS 06/21/2015

### Attendance

*Bruce* calls in just in time to hear *Ernest* and *Chris* discussing the virtues of the new *M.O.D.O.K. the Assassin* comic book. Apparently he gets killed so often he finds that waking up on a morgue slab is completely normal.

By the time *Paul* has shown up, the conversation has moved on to killing player characters and how, in return, they tend to produce horribly intricate plans that take “playing the long game” beyond its limits.

*Georgina* walks into the room in time to hear an ongoing discussion on the possible reasons the incubus *Gelderfang* got his name. Upon hearing that “gelding” is something farmers do to horses she mourns, “Ohh! Cannot be unseen!”

*Matt* just silently enters and starts eating his lunch. He explains that his trip was complicated by the fact that a traffic accident had blocked three lanes of northbound IH35.

*Patrick* shows up, but he is so quiet and so much off the camera that he barely even raises a ripple. Until, of course, he does – but we certainly can’t write about that, it would be *scandalous!*

Nobody knows where *Tim* is. Until he shows up, just in time to learn that demodands worship the Thanatonic Titans.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Tabregon	Bruce	Male Half-elf Oracle of Iomedae, Touched by Divinity	12M7
Tsuguri Chiba	Chris	Male Cleric of Tsukiyo, Child of the Crusades	12M7
Antonius	Ernest	Male Tien Monk/Paladin of Irori, Stolen Fury	12M7
Trystan	Matt	Male Half-elf Paladin of Shelyn, Touched by Divinity	12M7
Shawanda	Patrick	Female Mwangi Paladin of Iomedae, Exposed to Awfulness	12M7

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Calanthe	Tim	Female aasimar Sorcerer of Shelyn, Riftwarden Orphan	12M7

## Catching up from Last Session

The characters are in Blackburg, the capital city of the Ivory Labyrinth and the best place to gather information about Baphomet. The entire city is a tangle of buildings, streets, plazas and alleys – a maze in the form of a city! Unfortunately, it is more the empty deception of a city, because that is Baphomet’s style.

The characters’ goals in this miserable corner of the Abyss are relatively straightforward:

- Go to the Lightless Maze to extract a goblet of blood from the *Father of Wyrms*
- Find the Ineluctable Prison in which the Herald of Iomedae is imprisoned.
- Pour the Wurm’s blood upon the lock to the cell holding the Herald of Iomedae
- As an aside, the blood of the Father of Wyrms might also be useful to breach the locks upon Baphomet’s Tower. Though the characters are not expected to go anywhere close to there, at least on purpose.

## Where is the Lightless Maze?

The project of finding the Lightless Maze is complicated by the fact that nobody can provide directions to any location in the Abyss. Nobody likes *Tabregon’s* idea of using intuition to locate the place: they instruct him that the Abyss might be chaotic, but it isn’t *that* chaotic. The characters are joined by a wandering *planetar* named *Sargona* who agrees to help in the search, which appears to depend in equal part upon Knowledge (planes) and Survival. Fortunately, *Sargona* has a remarkably high skill in Knowledge (planes).

After a couple of days of wandering, the characters find their way into the Lightless Maze. They fire up their various magic lighting powers, hoping that the colors they have available don’t attract demonic insects.

## Unhelpful Locals

Shortly after the characters enter the Maze a *shaggy demodand* and two *tarry demodands* wander across the characters' path. The shaggy demodand is quite bloated and toad-like, with jet-black skin. His tarry companions are thin and emaciated. A black tarry ooze drips from their bodies without cease.

The last demodands the characters encountered were not so enthusiastic about Baphomet, as they were all about the Thanatonic Titans. The characters speculate that these might be the same. The characters understand that the Thanatonic Titans are the best football team in the Abyssal Leagues.

*Antonius* challenges the demodands, "Greetings, O servants of the Thanatonic Titans!"

The shaggy demodand leader rumbles, "We have finally found the prey we have been searching for! You shall learn what it means for mortals to tread where they are not welcome!"

*Antonius* attempts to continue the conversation as *Shawanda* simply charges, *Radiance* gripped in her death-tainted hands. His question ("Why do you guys care what happens in Baphomet's demesne?") vanishes behind a cacophony of battle cries.

*Calanthe* casts *quicken*ed mythic haste on her allies, and then *mythic slow* upon the demodands. One of the *tarry demodands* slows, as if it were engulfed in thickening tar. *Tsuguri* urges the characters forward, and then engulfs the demodands in an *aura of madness*. The same tarry demodand who is slowed is also consumed by magical *confusion*.

The *shaggy demodand* says, "Submit yourselves peacefully, and it can all go so well for you!" *Tabregon* is *charmed* for a moment, he realizes that the Herald is in the Ineluctable Prison and that cooperating with the demodands is the fastest way to get there. But then he remembers his mythic *force of will* power to cast off the demodand's influence.

The *tarry demodands* move forward, allowing *Shawanda* to slash them with *Radiance*. Gouts of tar fly from their wounds. The tar cleaves to *Radiance*, pinning the blessed blade to the blackened body of the benighted foe. *Shawanda* exerts her great strength to pull it free.

One *tarry demodand* slips past Shawanda to strike Calanthe with a *faith-stealing strike!* This would be a more serious problem if Calanthe had any ability to cast divine spells.

Shawanda disregards the lesser foes upon the field. She wrenches her blade free from the engulfing muck of the *tarry demodand* and plunges it into the side of the *shaggy demodand*. She tells it, “Virtue and Blazing Truth shall end your bristling foulness!” The shaggy demodand howls in rage and agony. Why does its glorious evil pain it so?

Antonius steps up to one of the *tarry demodands* and tears it to pieces. Fragments of demodand remain stuck to his leg. He pulls them free and turns to challenge the surviving *tarry demodand*.

Sargona the *planetar* steps up to the big *shaggy demodand* and strikes it with his holy blade, leaving a burning wound across its chest.

Calanthe thinks that taking one of the demodands captive would be a good idea. She launches a *hold monster* at the *slowed, confused tarry demodand*, freezing it in place, but only for a moment. Then she zaps the *shaggy demodand* with *dimensional anchor*, blocking his escape. The others clobber the thing until it loses consciousness and falls insensible. Its gross bulk sags to the ground.

The surviving *tarry demodand* finally comes to its senses. It takes stock of the situation and attempts to escape. Antonius intercepts its flight, tripping it and allowing Shawanda to execute a righteous strike to the thing, slashing cleanly through its neck and sending its severed head rolling down the endless twisting corridors of the Lightless Maze.

### *Details of the Ineluctable Labyrinth*

The characters restrain the *shaggy demodand* with the goopy bodies of the two *tarry demodands*. *Trystan* promises to spare its life in exchange for information. He learns that the demodands are the prison guards for Baphomet, and that his prison is located in another demiplane. *Asmodeus* once imprisoned Baphomet there, and Baphomet continues to use the place after escaping it as a way of insulting *Asmodeus*. The demodand rumbles, “The First Minotaur took only ten years to learn every secret of the Ineluctable Labyrinth and escape. He tore it free of its roots in *Asmodeus’* Domain and preserves it as a symbol of his power, and his disdain for his former lover.” Followup

questions reveal that Baphomet was originally created as a sex toy for Lamashtu, which explains a lot really.

The *shaggy demodand* indicates that there are various ways to reach the Ineluctable Prison. One of those is in the realm of the Father of Wyrms, towards which the characters are already heading. Another is across the Breathless Mountains, which the characters suspect are not so-named because their beauty leaves the viewer breathless.

The demodand does not know the name of the cell where the Herald of Iomedae is held. He and his kinsmen do not actually know too much about the facility they have been charged to guard, especially not the deep secrets of the place. The prison warden *Aleshka* might know. She is a two-headed, twelve-armed *marilith*. She is reputed to be a combination of twins whose souls were combined when they were cast into the Abyss.

The *shaggy demodand* does provide some information on how to actually reach the Ineluctable Prison. In particular, reaching the Ineluctable Prison from the lair of the Father of Wyrms requires that the characters find the Spiral Path and follow it upwards instead of down. The symbol of the Father of Worms is a worm-filled hourglass! To see him is to be claimed by insanity!

Trystan grants the shaggy demodand leave to depart, but warns the creature that if it ever attacks them they shall strike him down.

The characters continue on into the Lightless Maze, searching for the Father of Wyrms. They wander through its reaches for seven days.

## **The Lair of the Father of Wyrms**

The characters come upon a vast cavern, its ceiling lost in the heights above. A feeble light shines from a shaft above. Underneath the faint glimmer the massive coils of the Father of Wyrms writhe in shuddering horror. The shaft probably continues below, but the characters cannot see through its depths.

The Father of Wyrms is a malevolent nightshade. Nightshades are nihilistic entities who desire to bring all of creation into darkness and oblivion. They originate in the deepest voids where the negative energy plane and the Plane of Shadows meet. They manifest in various types; the Father of Wyrms is one of the largest, a nightcrawler. He is stunningly big, some eighty feet long with massive eyes, pedipalps, legs and feelers.

Though he looks like a worm, he is hardly a mindless beast. And he is not alone: six greater shadow allies flit about his flanks.

Antonius bears the mystical *Chalice of Ozem*, the only thing that can hold the alien blood of the Father of Wyrms.

The characters put together a complicated plan involving lots of magic and the two paladins on the front lines against the worm, delivered to the attack by Calanthe's *dimension door*.

Calanthe drops her *dimension door* portal right outside the reach of the Father of Wyrms, passes through it, and promptly heads upwards to safety. Trystan follows, unleashing a *starlight barrage* from his *starbow*. The Father of Wyrms and his surrounding shadows burn!

Antonius and Shawanda straight-up charge the Father of Wyrms. The Father of Wyrms bites at Shawanda, inflicting a wound lessened by Tabregon's *shield other*. Shawanda strikes back with four clean strikes, leaving it stunned and crippled. She inflicts 251 points of damage upon the thing. The Father of Wyrms is bloodied, spraying horrible acidic blood across the cavern. Shawanda's *energy resistance (acid)* protects her entirely from the spray.

Tsuguri starts out with a *death ward* to protect all his allies, and then an *inspiring assault* to allow everyone to take a swift attack. Antonius strikes hard, leaving the Father of Wyrms stunned.

The planetar Sargona launches a *firestorm* on the Father of Wyrms and the shadows. The Father of Wyrms negates the spell, while the shadows are mostly incorporeal and are only barely impacted by the flames. The shadows move upon Shawanda, who lays about with *Radiance*. The shadows feel her attacks as faint whispers, again thanks to their incorporeal nature. They strike back incorporeally with a negative energy-based strength drain. Shawanda is protected by Tsuguri's *death ward* and ignores their attack.

Tabregon moves in with *energy body* active. He channels positive energy to burn up one of the shadows and injure all the rest. Calanthe tries her *rod of wonder* on one of the shadows and is pleased when it pledges its loyalty to her.

Trystan opens fire with a *cone of radiance*, obliterating all the shadows except for the shadow under Calanthe's control.

Antonius attacks the Father of Wyrms with the *Chalice of Ozem* ready to capture his blood. He jabs the chalice straight into the massive worm's body, coming out with a chalice full of blood and lung-juice. The Father of Wyrms is defeated, and the characters complete a Mythic Trial!

### *Legendary Looting*

The Father of Wyrms had a single enormous diamond embedded in the center of his forehead. Everyone agrees that it looks really valuable. Sargona offers, "My lord! This diamond looks like it came from the Mines of Azzussiaal! Its luster and shine are great! It must be worth at least 25,000 coins of gold! To accept less for it would be dishonorable!" Other treasures include:

- A mud-encrusted shield that turns out to be an *animated heavy wooden shield +4*, though rather unfortunately decorated with the symbol of Dagon.
- A filth-grimed medallion, a pendant disk hanging from a silver chain, that the characters identify as a *medallion of thoughts*

Trystan claims the shield – he can make best use of an animated shield. Tsuguri takes the medallion.

The characters decide to name the cavern the *Cavern of Good Hope*, on the premise that it has done nothing but improve with the death of the Father of Wyrms. Then they head up the shaft above the Spiral Path.

## **The Doorstep of the Ineluctable Prison**

The characters end up on a mountainside, gazing down upon the Ineluctable Prison. The whole prison is a massive spiked ball hanging from huge chains depending from nearby mountain peaks. The one door is a huge portal flanked by statues of Baphomet. The spikes seem to shift and move. Some of them impale the bodies of long-dead creatures. A long bridge leads to the main gate.

At the far end of the bridge a massive twitching red lock seals the gate.

Two screaming one-horned cyclops women with wings guard the lock. Each stands in a pool of water to one side of the bridge and is armed with a glaive. They move immediately to the attack!

Shawanda is relieved that the cyclops guards choose to fight – killing is easy, talking is hard. She *smites evil* upon the one on the left, trading strikes with it. She shrugs off a strong glaive hit (defended by *shield other*) and returns with a single massive strike that leaves the guardian severely wounded.

Antonius, also protected by *shield other*, sustains a strong glaive swing. He hammers his foe in return.

Tabregon moves up and heals the two paladins with *positive energy*. Calanthe sends flights of *mythic magic missiles* at the guardian on the right, seriously injuring it. Trystan peppers one with arrows, dismayed to see it evade several of his shots.

One guardian slashes Trystan with her glaive, leaving him badly hurt. The other is consumed by Tsuguri's *aura of madness* and attacks herself. Tabregon heals Trystan with a combination of *energy body* and *cure moderate wounds*.

Shawanda moves in and cuts the cyclops guardian that attacked Trystan. It falls and no longer moves.

Antonius trips the confused cyclops guardian, and then unleashes his neck breaker attack upon her. Calanthe shoots the *rod of wonder* at the surviving cyclops guardian. She gains an extraordinary ability. But then the planetar kills her.

Antonius pours the blood of the Father of Wyrms upon the lock of the Ineluctable Prison. The blood eats through the lock almost instantly, causing it to slough off. The doors may be opened with ease. Piercing the doors of the Ineluctable Prison is another Mythic Trial. Plus the characters gain another level (to 13<sup>th</sup>).

## The End of the Session

The characters end the session at the doorstep of the Ineluctable Prison, ready to enter and rescue the Herald of Iomedae. Each character rises up to 13<sup>th</sup> level.