

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS 08/16/2015

Attendance

Chris is pleased to inform *Bruce* that he sounds rather like a chipmunk. *Bruce* says nothing, content merely to be served tea by the glamorous *Georgina*. *Paul* and *Ernest* discuss various Pikachu-NWA crossovers that are now possible. Especially when smoking weed. Strange, scary types of weed. *Ernest* comments, “Bruce is our Easy-E!”

Patrick notes, “He doesn’t look dead.”

Bruce has no idea what either of them is talking about.

Chris has moved on to discussing how the only redeeming virtue of the *Kevin Costner Robin Hood* is *Alan Rickman* chewing upon every piece of scenery available. *Matt* shows up just in time to agree. Then the conversation moves on to the random suggestions of Amazon’s customer service algorithm and the power of a mythic bard to make eagles cry.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Tabregon	Bruce	Male Half-elf Oracle of Iomedae, Touched by Divinity	14M8
Tsuguri Chiba	Chris	Male Cleric of Tsukiyo, Child of the Crusades	14M8
Antonius	Ernest	Male Tien Monk/Paladin of Irori, Stolen Fury	14M8
Trystan	Matt	Male Half-elf Paladin of Shelyn, Touched by Divinity	14M8
Shawanda	Patrick	Female Mwangi Paladin of Iomedae, Exposed to Awfulness	14M8
Calanthe	Tim	Female aasimar Sorcerer of Shelyn, Riftwarden Orphan	14M8

We Have the Heart. Now What?

The characters are now in possession of the Stolen Corrupted Heart of the Herald of Iomedae. *Tsuguri* has temporarily neutralized its corrupted nature with an *atonement* spell, making it mostly safe to transport. The characters also hold some other artifacts that they do not really understand:

- The scimitar *Dawnflower's Kiss* (corrupted)
- An *unholy speed glaive* +4
- The *Beast Twine*.
- The gold orb, weighing some 80 pounds (and worth a comparatively paltry 4000 gold)

Antonius boasts that his STR is 32 now, so he can effortlessly toss the gold orb around. If he had two more of them, he could juggle them.

The characters move to a rousing debate on whether or not they should leave the Ineluctable Prison for a quick trip home and use the *planar tuning fork* to bring themselves back. *Tabregon* tries an *augury* to see what Iomedae thinks about the idea. She thinks that it doesn't matter one way or another, so the characters do the *plane shift*.

Zap! Back in Drezen!

The characters reappear about 40 miles from Drezen. They make their way back to the city with various miscellaneous magic. They have been gone for weeks and are quite interested in seeing how the city has developed.

The characters explain the rescue of *Waxberry* the Halfling cleric to the authorities at Drezen and hand her over for debriefing. For her part, she is just happy to be back in the mortal world.

Antonius picks through the characters' goods. He offers up an *unholy morningstar* +2, which could be run through the Purification Forge (formerly the Corruption Forge) to make it into a *holy morningstar* +2. *Tabregon* expresses some interest in it. The group converts a massive diamond into 25,500 gold worth of diamond dust, good for *greater restoration* and many other interesting spells.

Speaking as the most responsible member of the party, *Tsuguri* agrees to safeguard the *planar tuning fork*.

Each character gets 12,842 gold to spend. Sadly, the selection of interesting magical items available in the Drezen bazaar is not all that interesting.

The characters are able to prevail upon some of their arcanist allies to cast *legend lore* upon *Dawnfire's Kiss*. They learn that the scimitar was originally formed from a droplet of Sarenrae's blood that fell to earth at the moment of the first dawn. There are many such blades, this one was borne by the *Lady Cecily Mantille*, a mighty paladin of Sarenrae who fell to Baphomet and was corrupted by him. The characters decide to bring the blade with them in hopes of finding the Lady Cecily and redeeming her.

Return to the Ineluctable Prison

Calanthe zaps the characters back to the Ineluctable Prison using the *planar tuning fork*, and then promptly takes refuge in her mythic *sanctuary* where she hangs out drinking mint juleps on her virtual porch.

The characters reappear back in the initial Temple Chamber of Baphomet, the first location they saw in the Ineluctable Prison. With a limited amount of additional information available, the characters decide to go find the mysterious Warden *Aleskha of the Twelve Arms*, in hopes that she will be able to show them the path to where the Herald is imprisoned. Antonius uses the *beast twine* to show them a path.

The characters follow the twine for four hours. As they walk, Tabregon chats with *Shawanda* about how neat it is to have a mythic power that allows them to survive without needing to eat or drink. Antonius idly wishes there were a mythic power that allowed characters to not need to talk to survive.

The characters come to a series of four adamantite gratings. A carving in Abyssal outside the grates reads:

Supplicants!

Enter the Crimson Cage and await your Warden's

Pleasure!

The characters notice that the section of hallway between the second and third grate is painted red. It is possible that the red is actually blood. Beyond the grates the characters

can see a grand stairway with a throne at the top – very typical décor for a prison warden’s office.

The grates appear to be solid, with no obvious way to lift them. Antonius is not dissuaded and attempts to either bend or warp the first grate. It turns out that adamantine is substantially beyond his ability to bend.

The others try searching for other ways to get past the grates. They notice that two balconies overlook the throne room. They also think that there are some secret doors nearby. Tabregon notes that he can *stone shape* 24 cubic feet of stone at a time. This works nicely to bypass the adamantine grates.

Enter the Warden!

As soon as the characters bypass two of the grates a massive two-headed, twelve-armed marilith appears upon the throne. Aleshka’s two heads proceed to have a very threatening conversation with each other on the various ways the characters need to die. As she chats with herself, the two secret doors start to open. The characters can only assume that horrible threats lurk inside.

Antonius brandishes the *chalice of Ozum*, intones, “Ozum for Iomedae!” and creates a *sphere of invulnerability*. Thus shielded from the marilith’s anger, he addresses himself to breaking through the stone around the edge of the next adamantine grating. Crunch!

Aleshka’s right-hand head offers, “Impressive!” Her other head merely spits out imprecations on how the monk will suffer and die.

Tabregon casts another *stone shape* and creates a path past the final adamantine grating. Aleshka responds by placing a *blade barrier* in the characters’ path. Her left-hand head simpers, “How committed are you little creatures? Will you be willing to slash yourselves to proceed farther?”

Trystan answers her by invoking *smite evil* and firing his *star bow* through the barrier. Only one of his arrows pierces through the cover created by the blades of force to strike the demonic warden. The shot strikes true, but Trystan feels that Aleshka’s response is not sufficiently realistic.

Belinda Sargona the planetar makes a mystic gesture and banishes the *blade barrier*.

As the planetar finishes her spell, the secret doors finish opening and a squad of four *stringy demodands* bursts through. The creatures are covered with long, wiry growths of twisted flesh and skin that swing back and forth as they move. The characters are horrified and disgusted by the creatures' appearance.

Shawanda wastes no time at all. She slashes at a *stringy demodand*, burning its unclean body with the sacred light of *Radiance*. The *stringy demodand* snarls at her in quasi-demonic rage. She responds with a mighty overhand chop, leaving the creature critically wounded. Her final strike divides it in two, shattering it into bits of stringy ruin.

Antonius glances down at the *beast string* and sees that it goes off to one side of the throne. Aleshka has deployed an illusionary doppelganger to confuse her foes! How devious! Antonius invokes his *titan's rage* to grow to fantastic size and flings his *dancing glaive* at Aleshka! He is somewhat disappointed to see that the weapon will only strike once on its own, rather than with the blender-like sequence he could manage on his own.

Tsuguri decides to put paid to the *stringy demodands* with a bit of *confusion*. The two demodands in the back ranks fall victim to the spell. Tabregon casts *dismissal* and sends the healthiest, least-confused *stringy demodand* back home to the Abyss. As the spell goes off, it seems like the demodand is drawn upwards by a huge hand – the special effects budget of the Ineluctable Prison has clearly seen better days.

One of the *confused stringy demodands* flings itself at Belinda Sargona, desperately attacking the planetar. Tabregon puts an end to that with another *dismissal* spell, sending the demodand back to the Abyss.

Aleshka decides to fling Antonius into lava with *telekinesis*. Antonius evades her spell with ease. As she casts, her image dissipates, leaving Trystan with free line of sight to lay down a punishing barrage of arrows at her.

One of the confused *stringy demodands* attacks Belinda Sargona, clawing at the planetar three times and leaving awful, ragged wounds. Belinda Sargona bears the injuries with the stolid reserve befitting a denizen of the upper planes.

Antonius hits Aleshka so hard she loses two hours of her memories, in addition to an incredible ocean of hit points. He also learns that she is (like all demons) immune to

electricity and poison. Tabregon explains that this is because demons are traditionally employed in the Facilities departments of semiconductor fabs – they need the electricity immunity because they need to be able to work safely with 13kV transformers, and they develop the poison immunity because semiconductors require the most toxic chemicals at the highest purity possible.

Almost destroyed, Aleshka evades Antonius' reach and invokes *greater teleportation*. Her empty breastplate clangs to the ground as she vanishes. The breastplate is a *four-breasted breastplate +4*. Tabregon agrees to wear the thing, in spite of the fact that it makes him look rather odd. Well-armored, but odd.

Defeating Aleshka counts as a mythic trial for the characters.

The Secret History of the Demoness Aleshka

Ages ago, twin sisters, their names long-forgotten, ruled a nation far from Golarion. They were identical in all things, including their capability for cruelty. They treated their nation as a personal plaything, right up until their people rose up and overthrew them. Their final defeat, torn from the jaws of victory, came at the hands of a Freedom Priest's sacrifice. He and his flock destroyed themselves as they called a volcano upon the capital city, inundating the sisters in lava and sending their souls to the Abyss. Their souls merged with the spirit of a previously-unimportant demon. The awful union of the three soon became known by the name Aleshka!

The Records of the Ineluctable Prison

The northern door leads to a Records Room that contains records on every prisoner ever held in the Ineluctable Prison. The records are magical, written in Abyssal, and require a DC 30 Linguistics check to look up any specific individual. It takes about 15-20 minutes to look up a single name.

Unable to read the records on their own, the characters simply take them all back to Drezen and enlist a staff of scholars to research them. After a bit of research, they have enough information to find the Herald of Iomedae, the Runelord of Wrath, and anyone else they would like. They've also possibly planted the seeds of dozens of demonic cults by asking a group of researchers to perform deep study upon a magical document written

in Abyssal detailing thousands of years of entities locked in the Ineluctable Prison. But nobody chooses to dwell upon that.

Tsuguri suggests, “I think that what Tabregon is saying is that we need to kill all the scholars.”

Tabregon clarifies, “Well, yes. But only *after* they turn evil.”

Demonic cults or not, the characters are able to locate not only the Herald of Iomedae but also the Lady Cecily Mantille.

Down in Cellblock 1138-THX

One more trip back to the Ineluctable Prison later, it takes the characters a mere three hours to find the cellblock holding the Lady Cecily. It is guarded by three *tarry demodands* and a statue of Baphomet. Trystan decides to intimidate them with the very-plausible story that he and his companions have already chopped their way through the entire prison, up to and including the warden Aleshka. All three of them turn and run.

Two cells are occupied. One contains the mutilated corpse of an angel, its golden wings torn free of its body. Another contains an immolation devil named *Surlahetas*. Ash and embers cover the skin and the imperial dragon wings of his body. The paladin’s cell appears to be completely empty.

Surlahetas speaks to the characters as they pass by. He implores them, “Please release me! I will help you! I know much of this prison! I know not your goals, but I have deep knowledge and can surely help you achieve them!”

Antonius responds, “I think we’re all good on secrets. What happened to your cellmates?”

“The angel was tortured to death by the demodands. I have seen no paladin. Are you a paladin? If you are then you know we are closer than anything else you will find in this place. I will agree to what you will, and sign my name to it. You know I will be true to my word.” Surlahetas sweetens the deal by promising knowledge of various aspects of the prison.

Antonius is willing to talk to him, but the other characters point out the various negative aspects of signing deals with devils. Surlahetas shrugs. He does note that there has been no paladin in the third cell since he arrived.

The characters decide to check the paladin's cell anyway. The problem is that the cell is closed off by a *wall of force*, an effect that is specifically immune to *dispel magic*. Tabregon uses *stone shape* to bypass the wall. Everyone is able to feel the cold chills that blow past them. Trystan enters the room with the scimitar. He sees the manifestation of a beautiful woman, clad in rags and dead of a self-inflicted wound in her throat. She mourns how she was imprisoned, how the weapon entrusted to her was taken from her and corrupted, and how in her despair she took her own life.

As a curiosity, it turns out that she was the husband of the grave knight the characters previously laid to rest. Small world, small world.

Trystan says that she could still find eternal peace and redeem the blade. She grants her blessing and evaporates. The characters gain the uncorrupted *Dawnflower's Kiss*, the *Staff of Healing* they found with the grave knight becomes a *Staff of Life*, and the characters gain a *death ward* until they leave the Ineluctable Prison. For Trystan, *Dawnflower's Kiss* is a *holy flaming scimitar +4*. Once per round it may unleash a bolt of *searing light*. Once per day it can produce a *sunbeam*.

Before the characters leave the cellblock they make sure to take a careful look at the statue of Baphomet. It is clearly magical with all sorts of active enchantments. Any demodand, demon or worshipper of Baphomet may touch the burning star on the statue's brow and gain the benefits of a *heal* spell (CL20). Anyone else who touches the star suffers a *harm* spell (CL20). And at the end of the characters' time in the cellblock, it no longer has a head.

Tabregon Finds a Friend

Tabregon hears a voice in his head, "Master! I've been looking for you for so long! I'm glad I found you!" Something small and light settles on his shoulder. There appears to be nothing there.

"Who are you?"

"Have you forgotten your familiar Quaffler? Now that I've found you again, I shall serve you forever and ever!"

"Could you show yourself to my friends? I should like to avoid friendly fire incidents." A quasit appears on his shoulder, a little demon. It's body is thin and wiry and his has ram's horns on its head.



“I’ve been lost in this maze for a long time!”

Trystan looks at the creature. He asks, “Who is that?”

Quaffler helpfully chirps, “My master!”

Tabregon asks the quasit, “What’s his name?”

Quaffler seems confused, “I think it starts with an N... Oh master! I’ve forgotten your name!”

Tabregon, “You’ll do anything for me?”

Quaffler is deeply eager, “Oh yes, master!”

Tabregon instructs him, “Stand still.” *Dismissal*. Zap. He’s gone.

Which Way to the Runelord?

The characters attempt to use the *Beast Twine* to find their way to the Runelord *Alderpash*, onetime Runelord of Wrath. The route takes only two hours to trace, because *Beast Twine* is awesome. The characters find themselves in a massive chamber

combining the qualities of library, wizard's laboratory, and throne room. The housekeeping of the place is distinctly sub-par and it seems deeply empty. The wall is decorated with the image of an immense bridge leading to an island mountain carved with the head of a grimacing old man. Some of the characters recognize the bridge as the original form of the bridge that today exists only in fragments in the city of Magnimar.

Antonius cries out, "Oh Runelord Alderpash! We come to speak with you!"

An old man walks from a side chamber. He comments, "You have finally arrived. I have been scrying upon you for some time and I already know of your quest."

Antonius, "It would seem like someone of your power would only be here because you wanted to be here."

Alderpash grumbles, "That disgusting creature Baphomet has tricked this place up with a binding that prevents me from leaving. Even normal antimagic cannot touch it. It would require an *anti-magic shell* or *mage's disjunction*, and (frustrated hammer!) abjuration is not on my spell list, like all of the Runelords of Wrath."

Antonius asks, "Were you the last Runelord of Wrath?"

Alderpash muses, "That depends. How long have I been here?"

Antonius rather carefully hedges, "A couple of years."

Alderpash asks, "Has my apprentice succeeded me?" (his apprentice was Runelord when the Starfall happened and everything he knew and loved was destroyed).

Antonius offers, "That depends. What do you say to helping us free Iomedae's Herald and sticking it to Baphomet?"

"Can you bring up an anti-magic shell?"

"We can maybe bring along a *rod of cancellation*."

"That should work. I cannot leave this chamber – technically this is a hedge-prison binding."

It turns out that Alderpash has never been able to control his anger, but is now somewhat regretful that he killed so many of his followers and betrayed so many of his allies. He sold his soul to Baphomet for the *Beast Twine*, which he hoped to use to control the *Oliphant of Jandelay*. Had the plan worked, he would have given the soul of one of his fellow Runelords to Baphomet in exchange for ascension.

He wants Baphomet to be slain again – when Nocticula killed him once, the binding fluctuated. Were Baphomet to be killed again, the binding might fail. And then he should be free to drive the demons from the world – though he would need to build an army to do it. Or perhaps the Oliphaunt!

“Do you know how to get to the Herald? It requires the teleport circles.”

“We need some assurance of you behaving on Golarion.”

“If I must agree to mend my ways if you will help me, I shall.”

“Give us 200 years of peaceful contemplation and living as a common man, perhaps as a craftsman. Give us that and we will make the deal.”

Alderpash agrees, “Very well.” He commits to follow a path of redemption for at least 200 years. The characters put a *geas* on him to make it stick.

With the legalities out of the way, Alderpash explains how things work in the Ineluctable Prison. The pentagrams serve as permanent *teleportation circles*. They work this way for the local demons and demodands. For other creatures, a strong willpower is necessary. However, if you possess three of the five keys of the prison it will take you to the innermost chamber, the part of the prison where they have the Herald. The Warden had three of the keys, and she fled the place.

But there is another way! If the characters can teleport themselves Alderpash can describe the location in enough detail to let them reach the innermost chamber. Alderpash assures them, “I have been here for a long, long time and I have been constantly scrying upon other parts of the prison. I know each of its locations intimately. I know of potential allies, though you have already found most of them. If you were to bring the dead angel I could bring it back to life. And of course that devil you spoke to could also be an ally. I do believe that if you do wish to draw the ire of Baphomet and draw him out of his chamber, there is only one way – to slay the Herald of Iomedae.”

The characters indicate that they have a better idea – they shall restore the Herald, because that’s what good people do. Either way, it is clear that Baphomet will only emerge from his fortress if the Herald is destroyed or redeemed.

Alderpash is dubious, “Perhaps. But restoring his heart will require at least a few *atonement* spells.”

Speaking of *atonement*, Alderpash is willing to repent and accept *atonement*. The characters cast it upon him and then listen to his long, long confession of all his horrible deeds. He walks away from the experience Lawful Good. The redemption of the Runelord of Wrath counts as a mythic trial for the characters.

And then Antonius pulls out a *rod of cancellation* and breaks the binding.

There are two other creatures the characters must kill before attacking the Herald: *Inger Maghore* the Ivory Hunter and *Plorig Staygul* the Torturer. Inger Maghore is a minotaur anti-paladin and tends Baphomet's favorite hounds, the tauren linnorms (great two-headed acid dragons). Tracking and killing Inger Maghore will be a challenge as he wanders constantly; slaying one of his linnorms should bring him running. Finding and slaying Plorig will be comparatively easy: she stays in her den. She is a shaggy demodand.

Destroying Baphomet's favorite items would also help in the fight against him, his glaive or his ball of twine.

Also, Alderpash can use a *wish* to bring back the angel in the cellblock. It is an *astral deva* named *Malaika*. It comes back with a new sense of humility and a stronger desire to serve his goddess. He says, "Now that I have been restored, I promise to aid you in your quest but I shall not take the lead in combat. In my first life I charged in and sought personal glory. I now know this is wrong." He also doesn't have his *disrupting Warhammer +2*, it was thrown into a pit in the lair of the Linnorm *Frandir*.

On the personal side, Alderpash has some issues to work through. In particular, his fellow Runelords Xandergul (gluttony) and Sorcha (lust) both got to become mythic, and he didn't. He still feels bitter about that.

The End of the Session

The session ends with the characters ready to start clawing their way through Baphomet's closest servants.