

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS 12/06/2015

Attendance

Tim sends an early message with his regrets – he will be absent owing to questionable health. Everyone else is sad, because they miss *Tim*, but also happy, because they do not wish to contract the plague.

Bruce finds out that *Ernest* has all of the hardware needed for remote connection and hasn't shown up quite yet, so he remains out of the loop. He can only speculate that *Chris* is in attendance, and that *Matt* will appear once he is done with Whataburger.

Paul is singularly unconcerned with everyone else's travails. After all, he is the referee and controls the *entire world!* Mua-ha-haaa!

Ernest finally shows up and brings the electronic gear on line! Everyone celebrates, but it sounds like they're doing it in dolphin voices.

| <i>Character</i> | <i>Player</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Level</i> |
|------------------|---------------|--|--------------|
| Tabregon | Bruce | Male Half-elf Oracle of Iomedae, Touched by Divinity | 15M9 |
| Tsuguri Chiba | Chris | Male Cleric of Tsukiyo, Child of the Crusades | 15M9 |
| Antonius | Ernest | Male Tien Monk/Paladin of Irori, Stolen Fury | 15M9 |
| Trystan | Matt | Male Half-elf Paladin of Shelyn, Touched by Divinity | 15M9 |
| Shawanda | Patrick | Female Mwangi Paladin of Iomedae, Exposed to Awfulness | 15M9 |
| Calanthe | Tim | Female aasimar Sorcerer of Shelyn, Riftwarden Orphan | 15M9 |

Deeper into the Threshold!

The characters are in the Threshold, the old Sarkorian prison in which *Arelu Vorlesh* had been imprisoned when she made her bargain with the Abyss and precipitated

the creation of the Worldwound. That bargain, of course, also resulted in the destruction of Old Sarkoris and the entire Prison Management Commission of Sarkoris, who might have briefly regretted not addressing additional resources to rehabilitation efforts in their prison system before they were all killed by demons.

One important detail of getting around in the Threshold is that moving from level to level requires the touch of an evil outsider. The succubus *Arueshalae* isn't evil any more, but she still qualifies and is able to get the characters through the level portals.

The Heart of the Worldwound

The characters pass through the portal to the next level of the Threshold. They enter into a huge chamber of pulsing, decayed flesh some 80 feet tall. Spurs of stone protrude from the walls. The floor is nothing more than a sucking whirlpool vortex of maggots centered around a pulsing orange light that causes nausea to gaze upon. The characters conclude that this is the *Heart of the Worldwound*.

The characters do not have long to wait for the defenders to appear. Four gigantic maggots, each sixty feet from loathsome snout to horrific tail-tip, surge upwards out of the maggot vortex.

Antonius launches himself at one of the giant worms, leaving it leaking pools of thickened insect ichor. *Trystan* hovers back and unleashes a burning tornado of arrows from the *Sun Bow*, destroying the creature.

Shawanda looses *Radiance* from its sheath and invokes her *winged boots* to carry the fight to a second devil worm. Her blade bites shallowly, barely scratching the creature's segmented hide. She howls out her battle cry, "Return unto the hellish offal-heap of which you were spawned!" The other characters are impressed by her diction, especially under stress and with time pressure. The mountainous maggot shows less sign of being impressed, or even of understanding that it is under attack. It shows much more sign of an unending, unhalting hunger that drives it to consume all before it that isn't another massive maggot.

Tsuguri casts a *mythic silence* upon *Antonius* and *Shawanda* to protect them from the maddening insect drone of the chamber. *Tabregon* encircles two of the giant maggots

with an *augmented mythic blade barrier*, carving massive chunks out of their segmented sides.

In response, two of the colossal grubs vomits out a swarm of lesser maggots over Shawanda and Antonius. Beyond damage, they also suffer *distraction* and *infestation*. Or at least they might – both are strong enough to avoid having rot grubs burrow into their flesh. Antonius strikes back with mythically inhuman rage, his anger sufficient to destroy one of the worms. Its massive carcass falls to ruination.

Trystan, who seriously doubts that the maggots are followers of Deskari but who also suspects that they do not worship Shelyn, plays his sun-bright bowstring, raining a succession of blazing shafts upon the one remaining maggot. It writhes and squirms from the burning pinpricks.

Shawanda rises up to attack a maggot entrapped within the circle of the *blade barrier*. Her marvelous *Radiance* strikes deep, wounding it badly.

Tsuguri brings down burning positive energy upon the swarm of rot grubs that torments Shawanda and Antonius, roasting them like grasshoppers in an oven.

The surviving underworld maggot gulps down upon Shawanda. The creature's poison saps her strength. Tabregon casts *neutralize poison* to purge the toxins. Antonius smashes the remaining rot grubs hanging upon his body. And Shawanda strikes out to destroy the maggot.

Chamber of the Devastator

Tsuguri summons a huge air elemental to hold the maggot swarm back. The characters descend through the hole in the center of the vortex surrounded by a *blade barrier* and the elemental. The characters are flushed down into a chamber some sixty feet across. The ceiling is a swarm of maggots. Tsuguri notes, "I don't think that ceiling is up to code."

A massive *devastator* demonic construct lurks in the center of the chamber. The characters last saw one of these things in the city of Kenabres, toppling buildings by walking through it. Its wings are made of sharp steel spines. Each of its four limbs ends in an implement of destruction. It is forged of soul-lead. And the great furnace in its chest cracks and pops with Abyssal flames.

Tsuguri notes that he doesn't like the looks of the *devastator* one bit. He casts a *mythic blessing of fervor* upon all his friends. Shawanda moves to close range with the creature. It grumbles in mythic rage and slashes her with its massive axe. She invokes her Guardian powers to counter the damage. Antonius follows her in, and is also struck with the axe.

Trystan calls upon his patroness Shelyn to guide his arrows. His shots pierce deep into the *devastator's* armored shell. Antonius flexes his mythic musculature and grasps strongly upon the *devastator's* plating, wrenching great slabs of it free. The *devastator* retaliates with one attack after another against Antonius, leaving him desperately wounded in spite of the protective effects of Tabregon's *mythic shield other*. Tabregon casts *mass heal*, restoring Antonius' injuries almost completely and leaving most of his other allies bursting with excess positive energy (and hit points).

Trystan fires a final burst of arrows at the *devastator*, finally sundering it. As the creature's furnaces gutter out the characters are able to see the soul of a corrupted angel flee from the cracked shell and vanish across the planes.

The Nightmarish Favored of Deskari

The characters find that there are five doors out of the Abyssal anteroom. They follow one of them through a small corridor into a chamber lined by suppurating, corrupted flesh leading to a central pit seething with vermin. A gargantuan creature combining the worst features of human, cockroach, crayfish and nightmare scuttles along the walls. The characters recognize it as the *Favored of Deskari*.

Trystan and Shawanda strike at the Favored of Deskari, inflicting only limited damage. The insect-like creature sprays out a fantastic volume of water, shoving Antonius and Tsuguri back. Tabregon cures their injuries with a *mass cure light wounds*.

Tsuguri casts an *earthquake* to discomfit the abomination. The creature scuttles down beneath the writhing surface of the pit of vermin. Tsuguri summons a *fire elemental* and sends it in pursuit.

Trystan and Shawanda start casting *blade barriers* into the vermin pit. The Favored of Deskari uses *greater teleport* to get itself out of the pit and up away from the

characters' reach. Antonius, frustrated by the creature's refusal to die, executes a *fleet charge*. He hammers the verminous Favored of Deskari again and again, leaving it badly injured. Tabregon cuts off its avenue of escape with a *dimensional anchor*. Shawanda and Trystan ensure the creature is done for.

The characters loot its remains. It turns out that it actually had quite a few nice items, which is odd considering that it was a 30-foot long demonic water bug.

- *Amulet of mighty fists* +4
- *Bracers of armor* +5
- *Ring of protection* +5

The Cathedral of Time

The characters depart from the lair of the Favored of Deskari and enter another chamber, a massive cathedral-like chamber lined by columns composed entirely of insects (Antonius: "Tabregon – don't go within 10 feet of the load-bearing bug columns..."). The floor includes one real chasm, and mosaics that depict additional chasms. The chamber is defended by four *bythos aeons*, semi-corporeal guardians of time and planar travel. They normally scour the multiverse looking for creatures that have abused time travel. It isn't immediately clear why they are here. But then the characters realized that the four *bythos aeons* present are crazy, which explains it all.

They might be crazy, but they are willing to talk. They communicate wordlessly and almost incomprehensibly by mentally scanning beings and responding with mental projections. Tabregon realizes that he can heal them with *mass heal*, so he does (with assistance from Trystan and Antonius, who force the *bythos aeons* to accept the spell).

The cured *bythos aeons* express visions of gratitude. They suggest through visions that they could change the characters' ages, or displace them in time. The characters negotiate to get themselves instantly rested, after which the *bythos aeons* teleport off to someplace else in time.

The Torment of the Lhaksharut

The characters enter the third great chamber. The chamber's walls are decorated with images of a growing rift engulfing an idyllic landscape. The rift ends at a massive iron gate. Trystan exclaims, "Just for once, I'd like to be the one to open the door!"

Beyond the door, he finds a circular room with walls of cancerous, growing flesh that is eaten away by ravenous insects as quickly as it grows. The floor heaves and bubbles. The ceiling is a dome constructed from cartilage and bone. In the center of the chamber is a cage of sinew and bone containing a prisoner, a *lhaksharut inevitable*. It has a body that looks like an orrery of steel bands, topped by a six-armed marble statue with wings. Four bizarre *katpaskier* demons that look like they have six-legged genitalia defend the cage. They are strutting around with great pride, exclaiming (in Abyssal), "Check out my bizarre six-legged junk!" to each other. There is also an *invisible* quasit in the room, an *invisible* quasit wearing a gimp mask and carrying a razor.

Antonius moves over to the cage, intending to sunder it. He finds that it is made from raw chaos and striking it will cause great pain. He decides to use a blade upon it, chopping at the bars. He strikes once, cutting almost through the bars. He strikes again, almost breaking the cage. On his third strike, he frees the *inevitable*. It thanks him for freeing it, but confesses that it is tremendously weakened (20 negative levels).

Tabregon decides to *dimensional lock* the central section of the room, denying the demons their teleportation tricks.

Trystan opens fire upon the demons, discovering that they warp distances near them, so all ranges are treated as double the distance. This discomfits him but doesn't detract from the unerring accuracy of his arrows. The bug demon writhes under his attack.

Tsuguri issues an order to advance! The characters move in on the creatures.

It turns out that many of the demons' powers are based upon dimensional manipulation, all of which are closed down by the *dimensional lock*. Instead, they start firing *empowered disintegrate* spells at the characters, all of whom have enough mythic bullshit available to completely stop their magic. Of course.

The *invisible* quasit turns out to be an assassin. It attacks Shawanda from (nominal) surprise, inflicting a surprising amount of damage. It turns out that the quasit is

armed with a *vorpal razor* that also infuses its victims with thoughts of despair and self-loathing. Shawanda is, of course, far too strong to be affected by such paltry effects. The blade is also coated with quasit poison that (nominally) reduces the victim's DEX. Shawanda suspects that this last bit is just gilding the lily.

Antonius, having freed the *lhaksharut inevitable*, executes a *fleet charge* against the mythic quasit assassin. He strikes with his mythic glaive, a glancing blow due to the quasit's agility.

Shawanda calls upon her *eyes of truth* and attacks the quasit. She strikes true, only to find that the quasit is wearing *heavy fortification* armor that deflects the main force of her blow.

Tabregon casts his second and third *dimensional locks*, closing off the rest of the chamber, uses positive energy to heal Shawanda (and any other allies who are injured) and invokes *energy body*. Trystan calls upon his patroness for a *miracle* to restore the injured *lhaksharut inevitable*, recovering its 20 negative levels.

The *katpaskier* demons launch another wave of *empowered disintegrate* spells. Again, the characters use mythic bullshit tricks to bypass their magic. Their mythic quasit ally slashes, bites and claws at Antonius, inflicting limited harm. Antonius responds with a devastating series of glaive strikes that leave the quasit pouring rivers of gore from four wounds wide as valleys.

Trystan fires upon a *katpaskier* demon, piercing it through three times with fire-touched arrows. The stricken shape of the creature clatters to the corrupted ground. A second *katpaskier* attaches itself to Shawanda and claws away. The final two shoot Tabregon and Trystan with more *empowered disintegrates*. Both characters resist the Abyssal magic.

Gimcrack (for that is the name of the mythic quasit) attacks Antonius, slashing across his stomach in a disemboweling attack. Someone tries to teleport him away, but the attempt fails thanks to the *dimensional lock*. The characters deduce that Gimcrack is Areelu Vorlesh's familiar!

Shawanda steps up to a *katpaskier* demon, *Radiance* in hand. She cuts free its arms, then its legs, then severs its head. Evil-smelling ichor flows across the floor. She

pronounces, “This is how you treat assassins who have no respect for life.” She is unaware that her words echo those of *Prince Argrath* upon his return to Pavis.

Antonius takes those words to heart, directing his rage at Gimcrack. The mythic quasit is utterly destroyed. He performs a victory dance. And Trystan finishes the last of the *katpaskier* demons.

The End of the Session

The session ends with the characters just short of the heart of the Threshold, full prepared to take the fight to the witch Areelu Vorlesh.