

## REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 05/09/2021

### TODAY'S EPISODE: LEG WORK

Our heroes of the *Chainbreaker* and their allies saved Port Shaw from a were-shark plot to bring Dajobas the Devourer into this world. Our heroes have decided to pick up the pieces from that night and investigate other mysteries they have encountered since arriving at Port Shaw.

Our 9<sup>th</sup> level heroes are:

- ▲ Captain **Sindawe** of the *Chainbreaker*, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris).
- ▲ Chief Gunner **Wogan**, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick).
- ▲ Quartermaster **Serpent**, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul).

### *The Dragons Return and Fish Heads*

The second day after the were-shark apocalypse sees the return of dragoon patrols, heavily armed and armored, to the streets of the Bawd and Silk districts. The prior day and nights saw them exclusively protecting the Jade district, leaving the common people to their fate. The people of the Bawd and Silk take this in stride and decide, "Well, if it is safe enough for the dragons to be out, then I should be okay."

Our heroes spend their evening in the Lavender Feather, an investment brothel, located in the Silk district. The establishment is usually crowded and loud, but tonight it is quiet as a handful of customers trickle in and out.

An invitation arrives by fancy messenger who is guarded by armed men dressed as Taldan knights. The message invites Sindawe, Serpent and Wogan to dine with Barrison Hargrove tomorrow evening at said individual's family estate. This causes a stir in the brothel... Barrison is the head of the city council and wildly rich man. The girls tell our heroes all about Barrison:

- He is older, silver haired and handsome

- He is the richest man in the city
- His family owns many plantations and a lot of land in the area.
- His family was one of the original settlers here.
- He works constantly to expand the city's population, wealth, reach, and power. It will rival Sargava soon.
- He is very rich.
- Ophelia tells Sindawe the rumors about Barrison that are shared less loudly:
  - His mother fell in love with a Tulita Mwangi and ran away with him.
  - His father fell into a depression, leaving Barrison and the family fortune at risk.
  - Barrison, at 13, took over the family and turned it around.
  - Barrison hired mercenaries to hunt down his mother and her lover. Their polished skulls sit in chest at the foot of his bed.
  - He keeps strict control over the Mwangi, including outlawing their language within the city.

Ophelia tells Sindawe these less flattering rumors in the privacy of her chamber, while flirting with him. He listens and makes some mental notes, then asks if she wants to see a trick. Ophelia quickly agrees, so Sindawe starts assembling a shrine to the wendo spirit Mama Watanna.

The shrine is not even completed when Mama Watanna manifests in Ophelia's place. She compliments him on defeating Dajobas' gambit, then states that Whale, Dolphin and Turtle are happy too. He asks her guidance on their current endeavors investigating the Stormdaughter, Tammerhawk, the Phantoms, the Ring of the Kraken, and Gregory Bonedeuce. She explains none of these register as dangers let alone as complaints in the spirit realm. Then adds, "Mama can see

all within sight of the water...” so ask something specific. Sindawe nods, “When I have something specific.”

He asks if she wants more religious presence in the city, more worshipers. She listens and puzzles out his questions before explaining that is not how Mwangi spirits interact with this world. The admiration and worship are welcome, but not needed or craved. Her power is based on other currencies.

Sindawe absorbs this without regret as Mama Watanna flirts with him. Then they celebrate their reunion and victory (over Dajobas) sexually. The walls bleed.

The night passes uneventfully for the others. Feather and Serpent talk into the night, as do do Wogan and Molly. They all resist the supernatural sexual attraction drifting through the halls.

The next morning Wogan and Serpent pray for spells at dawn, then head out with Sindawe for the abandoned plantation. But they are delayed by the sight of a barracuda nailed to the brothel’s front door. Sindawe removes the fish and goes back inside where he looks for a local girl to ask after the nailed fish’s meaning.

Septiva stops carving the names of random sex acts into a cabinet to answer, “I don’t know what that means.” She also suggests asking the person who nailed the fish up. Sindawe’s eyes narrow dangerously at her. A check of the fish head produces a human finger inside. “Must be nihilists,” she says unhelpfully.

Sindawe asks Serpent and Wogan if they can help identify the owner. Wogan mentions *blood biography* and Sindawe produces a potion for that:

- *Who are you? (The name by which the creature is most commonly known)* – Answer: Vic.
- *What are you? (Gender, race, profession/role)* – Answer: Human trader, male.

- *How was your blood shed?* (Brief outline of the events that caused its wound, to the best of the victim's knowledge) – Answer: bitten to death by a were-shark the other night.
- *When was your blood shed?* Answer: The other night.

Wogan checks with *detect magic* to find faint necromancy. He decides is meant to be a hedge magic method of cursing a household. The finger is incidental or at least a convenience of the were-shark attack.

They leave the brothel carrying the fish. Sindawe throws it down the first storm drain they cross. They head east past the docks, out of the city, and past Barrett's Barnacle. There they see two men crawling down the street. They reek of alcohol. Our heroes continue on, passing plantations where slaves are already working. They check several times for tails but spot none.

### *The Tulita Village*

Past that they find their way to the semi-hidden village of the Mwangi Tulita. Sentries take them into the village, where they are greeted by Mokoli Ali'i, the shaman Milliauka, Jalia Ramires and her two orphan wards, Samaritha and her children, and quite a few of their crewmen. Those are:

- (sick from poultices of were-shark curing) First Mate Big Mike, Dario, and Nemo
- Hatsheput – Samaritha's loyal companion and bodyguard
- Olgvik – Ulfen raider with a big ax.
- Billy Breadbasket – ship's cook
- "Sexy Beast" Sapier – professional pirate sick with a local jungle malady. Wogan determines he has the red ache from ticks and the illness is not transmissible. He should recover with further bed rest.

- Tiberiu – professional pirate. He has a stomach wound received for getting handsy with a Mwangi female.
- Prand – professional pirate.

The Ali'i and Sindawe exchange loud greetings, praise each other exploits from the Night of the Shark, and the heroics of everyone present. The social niceties observed, everyone is permitted to greet and visit with each other in a chaotic mix. Serpent in particular is happy to see his wife, Samaritha, and their children, then also relieved when she seems unperturbed that it took him so long to come back for her. They hug and watch their disguised serpentfolk children stare blankly at the orphans attempting to engage them in child's play.

Sindawe warns the Ali'i to move the village elsewhere for security and safety. The Ali'i eyes Sindawe's men before responding, "Yes, your men are... good fighters but their mouths flap constantly."

Sindawe nods then shrugs, "Never tell them anything of importance."

### *Jalia Ramires Recounts the Wave Riders' Demise*

Our heroes march their comrades and crew back into the city. Sapier and Tiberiu complain about their ailments and wounds, until well away from the village Wogan calls a halt to examine Sapier's rash and heal Tiberiu's stomach wound.

Sindawe, Wogan, and Serpent talk to Jalia on the walk back:

- Sindawe, "How did Solomon Trafalgar's war hammer end up in the hands of the Dragoon Sergeant Darenar? Did you see what happened to it when Solomon was slain?"

- Jalia, clearly upset, responds, “Are you asking because I am thief or because everyone blames me for what happened to Solomon? And my name is Hall-ee-uh, not Joll-ee-uh.”
- Sindawe checks his notes, “Uh, yeah. Hall-ee-uh, I have heard none of those rumors, but Father Zalen said you were one of two Wave Riders who paid your respects to him on the passing of his father, Solomon. He thinks well of you. He’s a good man and I trust his intuition.”
- Jalia, somewhat mollified, states she doesn’t know what happened to Solomon’s renowned weapon.
- With further questioning she tells the trio how Solomon’s death came to pass and the Wave Riders dissolution: “I would never hurt Solomon. He saw me as someone better than my humble origins, better than a thief. He saw a worthy comrade. But not the others... when he died, everyone started pointing fingers and arguing that it was more than bad luck. Some blamed me and the rest... listened. I know it was more than bad luck; we were ambushed. But it wasn’t me. We were fed bad intelligence and led the whole way. Someone was raiding the merchant ship lanes, making entire ships and crews disappear. No one got away, no one saw anything, and the targets were always worth the risk. We got ourselves a ship, lightly armed, forged a manifest for raw gold, and a standard crew of brave but lightly armed people. We set sail incognito and followed a route that led us through where the ships were lost. We were ready for anything, even the vast numbers of aquatic warriors that attacked us. But there were many, many more than anyone would send against a lightly crewed merchant vessel. And we were not ready for the gigantic tentacles that attacked with them. One such tentacle took Solomon.”
- Sindawe asks, “How did the rest of you survive?”

- Jalia pauses, teary eyed and shaking, then continues, “Solomon was our heart. We collapsed when the tentacle crushed him and pulled him below the waves. We panicked. Montgomery snapped out of it first and did what he did best. He was a fiend on the helm, outmaneuvering the aquatic marauders and tentacles. We escaped.”
- Wogan asks, “Do you suspect any of the Wave Riders led you into the ambush?”

Jalia replies, “You might as well ask the cat.” Sindawe curls his brow in confusion at a saying everyone else present understands immediately...

Wogan believes she is extremely upset and truthful about recounting these events.

Jalia continues her tale, “The others began listening to the rumors against me, or worse, spreading such themselves, so I left them and started my own investigation into the Ring of the Kraken. We had heard they were behind the ship disappearances. But I got no further than we had before. Those guys run a tight ship. I eventually switched my efforts to survival.”

They walk together in silence for a while, still slightly apart from the others.

Sindawe, Serpent, and Wogan drift away from Jalia to try to recall where they have encountered kraken signs before. They remember a dragonsmoke induced hallucination (Sindawe and/or Serpent) at the Barrett’s Barnacle that involved tentacles while they dealt with the criminals behind said dragonsmoke. Plus, on another occasion, they searched a former Gozreh high priest’s belongings including a miniature kraken containing a list of names. One name on that list led them to a phantom wearing that person’s skin. A hooker named Jessie, an ex-potter, helped them find that list of names on a note that included “Ring of the Kraken”. The names were mostly a list of Port Shaw high society. Bob (the phantom) was the one person on that list that any of their friends knew of.

No specifics are shared with Jalia, but when asked if she wants another shot at the Ring of the Kraken, she answers, “Yes.” And she wants to meet with Father Zalen more regularly.

Sindawe asks Jalia, “We have other business too. Do you know where to find the Salty Dogs? They abandoned their warehouse without a forwarding address. They owe us big. Blood big.”

She replies, “I know some places to look.” Sindawe makes a 200gp donation to the Orphan’s Fund and tells her, “You can find any of us at the Lavender Feather. Only leave word with us. Don’t trust the others. Their mouths flap.”

The column enters the city, skirting the Jade District and its aggressive patrols to “protect the rich from bad smells and sights”. The sick are sent to the ship for rest and recovery. Serpent takes Samaritha, their children, and Hatsheput back to their house. Wogan and Sindawe return to the brothel with the other crewmen.

### *Get Me Some Children*

Serpent and his family arrive home. He shows Samaritha and Hatshepsut where he found the burglars last night; they clean up the debris and blood. Serpent explains, “I wounded one and sent them away.” Hatshepsut departs to check the locks.

Samaritha and Serpent finish cleaning up, then put their children to bed.

Serpent says, “We need to get them play dates or something, so they can see what normal human behavior looks like.” He doesn’t finish his thoughts which are, “So, they can be normal.”

Samaritha replies, “Perhaps your new friend Jalia can supply us orphans to teach our children these necessary skills?”



Serpent carefully considers before saying, “Jalia cares for her orphans much as we do for our children. It would be play among peers. She will agree if I approach it right, but no harm must come to her wards.”

Samaritha nods, “Yes, that is acceptable. Our children need to blend in.”

Wogan and Sindawe return to the brothel. They are happy to see Tommy Blacktoes, Thalios Dondrel, and Crazy Jake are there to, back from the Corpse Patrol. The other members of that patrol departed with their earnings to live the high life in the Bawd. Or at least as high as zogp can purchase.

Other *Chainbreaker* crewmen are there too. And Carna the prostitute that helped Sindawe rob a warehouse just after the were-sharks were defeated.

Sindawe asks the other working girls about Carna. Molly says she’s related to some disgraced Dragoon guy (Roland Lawrence in the Run Aground Tavern). Others make professional evaluations, including several, “She’s hot!”. Another says, “She got kicked out of her previous job for causing trouble. And the one before that.”

Later, Tommy tells them the corpse patrol went well. He kicks 10% up to them. In return, they assign some more crew as muscle to the brothel for the next few days. Tommy, Sindawe, and Wogan are all worried about the poisoned customer and barracuda nailed to the front door.

Sindawe and Wogan kill time, including watching Tommy, Lavender Lil, Molly, Ophelia, and Feather decide brothel operations via the time-honored game of strip poker. Tonight’s stake decides if Carna is hired.

## *Fancy Dinner with Barrison Hargrove*

Wogan, Serpent, and Sindawe meet up at the Lavender Feather, then go to dinner with Barrison Hargrove. They enter the city's Jade district (rich people) where they have to present their invitation twice to heavily armed Dragoon patrols. This area is full of gated mansions inhabited by locals and exiled nobility (from afar). Most of these residents have their own guards, mostly dressed as Taldan Knights which means they appear vaguely foppish and bear their employer's crest.

They arrive at Barrison Manor which is a collection of white marble buildings, carefully tended landscaping, and a tall wall. A servant, Dominicus, greets and takes them to the baths to refresh themselves and serves gin fizzes. After a while Dominicus announces, "dinner is served", then leads them into the mansion's side door, down several halls, and eventually to the dining hall.

Already seated there are Barrison, dressed in a king's ransom, Nakuakua the Tulita elder and councilman, and another man dressed in a Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Band uniform if those guys were fascists. That one is the Dragoon Sorcerer Supreme, Aeron Chambers. Our heroes feel their cypher glyphs burn. Several minotaurs in the hall's corners shift slightly proving they are guards and not statues.

Dominicus announces our heroes, then pauses as they begin whispering amongst themselves.

Sindawe whispers to Wogan, "Hey, what are those witch hunter guys called?"

Wogan ponders while Serpent replies, "Witch hunters!"

Sindawe shakes his head, "No, like that hot, female half-orc with the hat back in Riddleport. She helped us hunt down those snake cult guys."

Wogan replies, "Inquisitors?!?"

Sindawe whispers to Dominicus, “We are also Gozreh Inquisitors!”

Dominicus continues with the same breath, “...And Inquisitors of Gozreh, god of Salted Waters, Storms, and the common sailor!”

Sindawe beams happily!

Barrison waves his hand to indicate Nakuakua while announcing, “We wanted to invite you to dinner as thanks for taking care of that unpleasantness night before last.”

Serpent says, “We like it here! We are here to invest. Can’t let lycanthropes overrun the place.”

They discuss the lycanthrope problem and get a promise from Aeron Chambers for access to the Dragoon’s reports, though the promise has to be extracted by Barrison. Nakuakua occasionally chimes in, but seems at least lightly baked.

They also discuss the Tulita brave Tambu, who is probably in the Dragoon’s dungeons at Fort Stormshield. Again, Barrison asks Aeron to help our heroes get their man Tambu out. Aeron is annoyed but quickly agrees, “Yes, as soon as my busy sorcerer supreme schedule opens up. I have many important matters to attend to, stars to align, ...” Barrison interrupts him with, “Yes, that is all good. As my guests requested, tomorrow morning would be best. It would make me happy if the Dragons do these heroes a service.”

Sindawe breaches the topic of Elias Tammerhawk and the Phantoms including their body snatching. Wogan tries a positive energy burst against outsiders in the room. Nothing visible happens. Our heroes are disappointed that they don’t get to kill a Phantom.

Barrison nods at the positive energy burst, then announces they will discuss all this further in his office / plotting room. He un-invites Aeron and Nakuakua. Aeron seems annoyed

that the adults will discuss something without him but departs after announcing, “I too have important matters to attend to”.

Barrison shows them a cypher glyph embedded in his forearm. (The GM reminds the players that the phantoms cause the burning to start and continue, but the presence of another cypher piece causes an initial burning). He found his in an Azlanti ruin unrelated to the Cypher Gate earlier in his career on this end of the world. He too has seen strange things.

They discuss the phantoms, proving they exist, Dragoon corruption, Bonedeuce’s treachery, and where Aeron’s loyalties lie. Barrison lets them talk, listens, and mostly limits his replies with set phrases:

- Commander Bonedeuce is an important and well-liked person in Port Shaw. Rumors against him would be ill received by populace.
- The Dragoons protect the city and sea lanes. The council cannot order them, the council has only indirect authority over them.
- Yes, there is something wrong or at least many things wrong in the city. Such is life in this end of the world.

Barrison asks the group if they are interested in Garr Bloodbane’s treasure. They nod, “Yup, we are after that. We are inquisitors but immense treasure is always a direction.” Barrison produces documents showing collusion between the Tulita and Garr Bloodbane. Said documents came from Commander Bonedeuce.

Wogan redirects, “Is it true the *Albatross* is out looking for the treasure?”

Barrison replies, “Yes, that was what I was told, though that seemed an unusual order for Bonedeuce to issue given that treasure rumors pop up all of the time.”

Our heroes dump more information upon him:

- The *Albatross* hasn't moved from its location at Hot Springs Island. It was probably sunk.
- Jacob Razor's ghost said Gregory Bonedeuce murdered him. And his corpse had a GB initial knife in its ribs.

Barrison listens then shares, "Bonedeuce indicated to me that Captain Perrin's loyalty was in question, so the mission was meant for Perrin to clear himself."

Serpent asks, "Where is Bonedeuce?"

Barrison replies, "Currently at sea aboard the *Bonedeuce's Pride*, a large warship. He sailed before the Night of the Shark (Barrison actually calls it "the unpleasantness")."

Wogan theorizes, "Perhaps Bonedeuce went to sea to go after the *Albatross*?"

Barrison says, "Maybe."

Sindawe smiles unpleasantly, "Bonedeuce left town with a warship full of soldiers the day before the were-sharks went nuts. His timing sucks or is spot on for someone who sold out Port Shaw."

Cigars and brandy are had. Our heroes get a letter from Barrison to the Dragoon fort, requesting access to the records and Tambu. He also thanks them again and applauds that the damage was limited to the lower classes which are less important and easily replaced. Sindawe quotes something proper about the "white man's burden" from the anti-elf book, "The Green Menace".

Then the evening is over. Barrison orders his guards to escort them safely out of the Jade district after they decline an invitation to be escorted further.

## *The Journey Home*

Sindawe, Serpent, and Wogan discuss their sleeping arrangements and plans for tomorrow as they leave the Jade district. Tomorrow they will go to Fort Stormshield to retrieve Tambu and the Dragoon records. Wogan plans to sleep on the ship and check on operations there. Serpent decides on his family's house.

That is until plans meet reality. They turn onto a street where a leper shuffles towards them. The shadows grow longer as they approach each other. Their cypher glyphs burn, indicating a shadow or another cypher glyph approaches.

The leper's fingers grow into claws as his shadow lengthens and leans toward our heroes. Then he disappears and reappears behind Serpent who he rakes with claws. Serpent and Sindawe turn on the creature with their orichalcum weapons. Wogan casts *dismissal* on the creature, but the creature remains firmly planted on the street. The leper shadow flies away, its robes no longer concealing a body consisting of tentacles and shadow. It takes several departing blows from orichalcum weapons, before landing on a single story roof 40' away. Sindawe waves at the shadow. Serpent heals his bleeding wound. Wogan hits the shadow with a *flame strike* (32pts, half holy, half fire).

The building catches fire. The leper shadow fades from sight, then the darkness and shadows return to normal. Wogan casts *sleet* upon the burning structure, which extinguishes the fire.

Wogan asks his friends, "Should we wake the homeowners up?"

Serpent shrugs, "The fire is out. Seems pointless."

Sindawe replies, "Yeah, let them sleep."

They spend the night at Serpent's, after Hatsheput reluctantly lets them into the house. Samaritha greets them, even after Serpent's explanation that they were attacked by a phantom disguised as a leper. They discuss the logistics of capturing a phantom, which Samaritha decides would need orichalcum, maybe in the form of a *magic circle*.

Wogan produces an orichalcum statue that can be broken down to make a *magic circle* that would keep them in or out. If they can *plane shift*, Wogan can counter attack with a *dimensional anchor*.

They just need to find a good forge or enough heat and pressure to powder the statue. Given 10 minutes they could combine the *magic circle* and *dimensional anchor* together.

They sleep peacefully. In the morning, they plan to leave for Fort Stormshield and Aeron's very probable ambush.