

REAYERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 10/09/2022

TODAY'S EPISODE: CASINO ROYALE

Our heroes aboard the *Chainbreaker* are shipwrecked on Hot Springs Island thanks to a welcoming committee of infant dragon turtles. The crew is busy with repairs while our heroes investigate a nearby abandoned ancient elf city. Our heroes entered that city, looted and fought, then fled the city before dark. They decided to set up a new base camp in an ancient park and scout the vicinity before returning to the city for loot. And then they found a cyphergate.

Our 9th 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).

Samaritha Disappeared!

Our heroes Sindawe, Wogan, and Serpent, plus Jacinth Deepwarder, Harvard, Harp, Nemo, Mitabu, and Saluthra are camped near a cyphergate on Hot Springs Island. Later that night, Sindawe wakes up from a deep sleep, realizes he was on watch with Samaritha and she is gone.

Folks start donning armor and equipment while Serpent searches for tracks. He finds her footsteps leading away from the camp and into the jungle. He follows the tracks and the others follow him posthaste leaving most of their camping equipment behind.

The light jungle turns to a heavy canopy which blocks out most of the starlight. Serpent continues, taking them through a clearing with multiple dead naughty tentacles. Those plants were clearly blasted with fire spells.

They arrive at stone stairs going down into the earth. Serpents declares, "There are many other footprints here."

Serpent descends the stairs followed by the others. He pauses upon hearing the pounding of running feet. He sees a black woman in braids with beads and clay and wearing and wearing loose, flowery, brown robes charging up the stairs. Serpent allows her to pass and prepares for whatever is chasing her. Serpent's companions do the same; the woman dodges past them and into the night.

Serpent finishes descends the stairs to a large room with four cyclops that look at him and then ignore him. The large chamber has four large columns supporting the roof. Light comes from glass panels in the floor. A distinct ringing comes from rings hanging from chains anchored into the ceiling.

Serpent points out a flying mass of ooze and earth moving along the roof. The others follow his pointing finger, until they all turn to face a conversation in an alien tongue that approaches closer and closer. Two fire salamanders are conversing with a man in time-worn robes and wearing exotic chain gauntlets.

Serpent shouts, "Greeting! Do you speak Common?"

In response the man and salamanders turn 45 degrees away from our heroes, while keeping an eye on them and continuing their walk.

Serpent studies the tracks, while the others check out the giant pit in the middle of the room. More salamanders enter the room, approach the pit, and start a conversation that involves a lot of gesticulating.

Sindawe sits on his haunches to watch and listen. Wogan casts *comprehend languages* to listen in on their conversation. He gathers that one of them has to go down the pit; they decide to throw dice to figure out the loser.

One salamander loses at dice and decides to run for it. The other two pursue him. Serpent throws his arms wide to block the runner, who turns 90 degrees and runs out of the chamber; the other two continue their pursuit.

Wogan approaches the pit and peers over the edge. A thick mist blocks his vision until he puts on his Gozreh mask. It cuts through the 1st 40' of mist but he still unable to see the pit's bottom. He studies the magic energies within the mist.

The party entered by stairs heading down and south into this chamber. There are exits at its east, west, south, and southwest.

They pick southwest, following a passage from which they can hear the chant of, "Drink! Drink! Drink!"

They find a bar room with mirror smooth bar and smooth stone stools carved from the cave itself. The bar is covered with mismatched cups. Light is supplied by floor glass panels.

Another damp earth elemental moves around the floor, cleaning up debris. Four whoop-whoop birds are busy drinking at the bar. Four steam elementals dance on the bar. Everyone looks at each other wondering what all this weirdness could mean.

Wogan demands, "Barkeep!"

Multiple mugs are slid down the mirror smooth bar surface by no one in particular. The bar surface explains, "The first drink is free!"

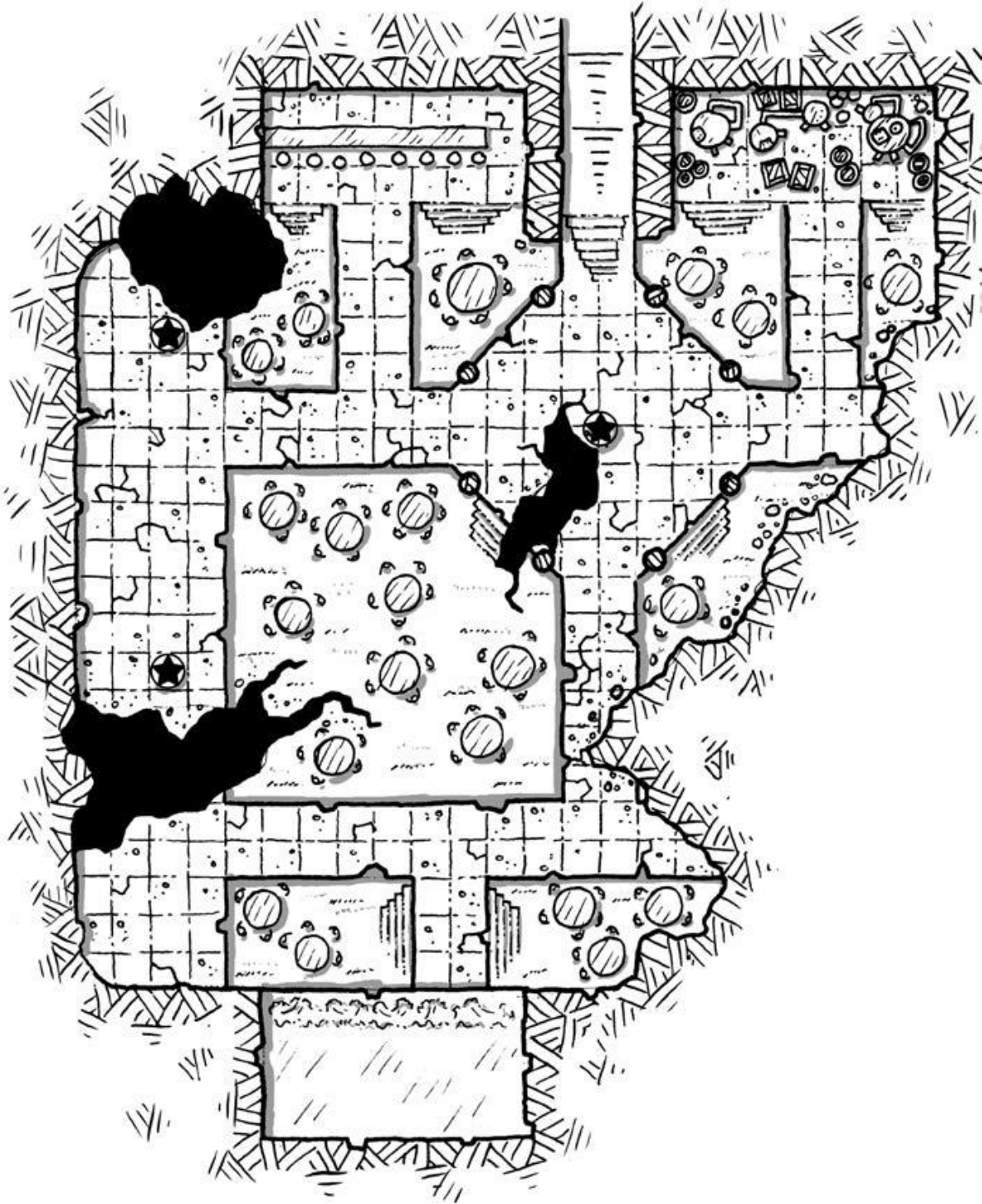
The birds and bartenders seem unable to speak a common language.

They return the hall and continue following it. The next room is a large room housing a casino operation. They enter to gawk at giant centipedes and whoop-whoop birds and the local indigenous earth elementals gambling. Each stone table has a spectral dealer in charge of running the game.

They pass through to find more though smaller gambling rooms and finally a room with seating and a stage. Serpent ignores the patrons waiting for the next show and leaps upon the stage. He finds five steam mephits preparing for their next performance. They all scream in alarm at Serpent's appearance until he leaves.

A member for audience, another steam mephit, clings to Serpent's leg and asks, "Is there steam pressure in there?"

The next chamber is a liquor manufacturing operation. Salamanders are guarding or running it, while steam mephits are heating stills.



The Temple of Tranquility

Aka "The Tranq Tank"

They decide to go back outside for a breath of fresh air, relieved to find that time has not passed weirdly while they were outside. A small earth elemental shows up and talks at Wogan, who can understand its language but cannot speak it back.

He promises to lead them to a steam mephit who speaks their language. He waddles down the stairs and they follow him. Many minutes later, they are returned to the stage area where a mud mephit introduces the hit steam mephit act, “Wrath!”

The audience has filled up with a wide array of onlookers of various species, mostly weird variant elemental critters. Harp and Harvard shout, “Benjamin! You’re alive?!?”

A human in the audience stands and turns. They reunite and talk. Benjamin explains, “I got cut off from you, ran into the jungle, and made it here!”

Serpent asks, “Have you seen a half-elf?”

Benjamin answers, “Maybe,” while rolling a cigarette. Serpent slaps it out of his hands and screams, “Where? How?”

He grabs Benjamin by the collar and drags him through the various rooms, while Benjamin explains, “She lost a bet with the house! They told her she could work it off.”

Serpent asks more questions, but Benjamin gives lackluster answers. He seems drugged. He pulls out another dragon smoke cigarette, which is also slapped out of his hand.

A broken-Common speaking steam mephit is located. He introduces himself as Steam Vent, but only seems interested in telling them how to gamble.

They return to the performance hall to find Jacinth enjoying the show.

They watch the steam mephit play. A particularly intelligent looking cyclops enters the room, stares at the audience members, then leaves. Sindawe follows him out and back to the bar where he engages the beast in conversation. Elven and Azlanti gives the pair a common tongue, but only barely. And the cyclops is looking for his friends.

Sindawe notices a blue skinned woman with flowing, styled hair and dressed in an elegant gown. He scopes her out to make sure she is not the crazy nereid from near their ship and once he is satisfied she is not, they introduce themselves. Her name is Daphne and she is stunningly beautiful like all nereids.

He asks where he can buy out his friends who lost bets. She explains, "It depends on what they lost and what they can do to repay it. But it isn't straight payment; it requires payment. In the temple of tranquility, two parties agree on stakes and game. Then they gamble. And the house always gets a cut." Sindawe grimaces and excuses himself.

He encounters Nemo on the way back gambling with four bird creatures. Nemo is losing but manages to win it all back.

They get back to the stage just after the play finishes. Benjamin and Harp are smoking laced dragon smoke cigarettes. They find Steam Vent.

Wogan asks, "We are looking for our friend, Samaritha."

Steam Vent replies, "Okay. What would you care to wager?"

The wager is: our side offers valuables vs Steam Vent's bid of the location of Samaritha.

Serpent offers “two bottles of fancy wine”. Wogan offers “gold coins”. The steam mephit refuses and requests, “More!”

The beast listens to a voice that the pirates cannot hear. He offers: “Craps. If you win, you clear Samaritha’s debt and the information she was betting for. If I win, you have to retrieve two legs from a giant centipede in the basement; its legs are made of topaz.” Or trade those items, no bet required.

Serpent agrees to the bet. Wogan throws in a side bet of “500 gp diamond for me” vs “two more centipede legs”. Serpent loses after a long run.

The party is briefed on their unfortunate task. The giant albino centipede is on the two lowest floors. It bites, stings, and tramples opponents. The lower levels are an aquarium. You climb down the pit via rope.

Giant Albino Centipede

Our heroes Sindawe, Wogan, and Serpent ask Benjamin for the best sleeping location inside the curious casino and find out that would be one of the lounges, where it isn’t quite so hot. They and the others are making a crude camp when Wogan spots a scarred orc chatting up Daphne.

Wogan thinks for a moment, trying to place the familiar orc. Sindawe decides, “He works for the Stormdaughter, right? He was on the *Crimson Shark* when we last encountered that ship.”

The next morning our heroes Sindawe, Wogan, Serpent, Saluthra, Jacinth Deepwarder, Harvard, Harp, Nemo, Mitabu, and Benjamin assemble at the hole. Wogan casts *delay poison*, *communal* twice on the group, giving each one two hours of protection.

Steam Vent has put out the word that folks are going into the pit. Many weirdo gamblers show up for the event. Sindawe, Serpent, and Wogan bet 3,200 gp in coins for double that in diamond dust (1000gp) and 4400 in gp and topaz. The house guarantees the wager; the bets are placed in a stone chest that grows out of the ground.

The ring for their descent is thrown over a golem limb stone melded to a support column. They descend into pit via rope which is lowered by guests and employees of the tranquil temple. Steam mephits descend to watch the game.

At the bottom is a pile of basalt and bones. Exits are up, east, south, and west. There are busted up aquarium tanks all about. Sindawe and the others approach an intact 30' cylinder aquarium. It glows inside and contains stingrays of various shapes and sizes. The tank descends past the floor.

Serpent looks for tracks; he decides that there is a 60' long centipede that regularly charges through the area. "You mean inches, right? RIGHT?!?!?" says Jacinth. He leads them south. An ooze mephitis is in the next chamber, eating stone surfaces clean. Giant centipedes are in the chamber and amuse themselves by spelling out messages for the ooze mephitis.

Serpent spots a severed arm wedged under a rock. Sindawe tries to pull it out, but is driven off temporarily by steam mephitis spraying steam at him. He doubles down and tries again and comes away with the limb.

One finger has a heavy metal ring set with a cracked red stone. It detects as evocation (fireballs?) and chaos (with targeting).

They climb the ruins of broken aquarium to a higher level. They walk over a six-foot section of pristine glass inlaid in the floor. It plays a repeatable educational video about the anatomy of a giant prehistoric fish.

The video lecture is interrupted by a booming male voice asking, “What are you doing to that fish?”

In the distance, a large man covered in armor of wooden naughty tentacle vine. He carries a large, gnarled club. He introduces himself as “Juice!”

He brags that he has lived down here for a long time and is at peace with the giant centipede.

Juice takes his leave, adding, “It will be here in several minutes.”

Serpent casts *spider climb*, *communal* and *bone fists* on his companions.

Bone Fists: The bones of your targets' joints grow thick and sharp, protruding painfully through the skin at the knuckles, elbows, shoulders, spine, and knees. The targets each gain a +1 bonus to natural armor and a +2 bonus on damage rolls with natural weapons, and they are treated as having armor spikes, with which they are proficient.

Several *freedom of movement* spells are also handed out.

Mitabu offers to lay traps to tear off legs, which he taken up on. Wogan summons animals from his two *bags of tricks*, adding some wolverines to the mix. Serpent makes preparations. Everyone hides in the rubble.

Mitabu is able to lay seven traps before the very, very, very large centipede shows up. It searches the area across the giant room from their hiding spot, then closes in on the summoned animals seeking an easy meal. Jacinth snipes at it with her bow and arrows. Serpent summons a pony near one of the traps, resulting in the centipede trampling the pony and the trap grabbing its leg. It loses the leg. This agitates it greatly.

More creatures are summoned! Jacinth contemplates shooting, then decides that the giant monster is too close. The monster tramples another pony, losing a leg to another trap.

The plan goes well, until it doesn't. The centipede tramples Nemo's position, crushing him unconscious (~4hp).

Mitabu throws a bomb at the monster's tail (13pts of fire), which confuses it. Then it senses Benjamin and crosses over the rubble from its east to west side. Mitabu runs for a distant trap, hoping to lure it after him.

Serpent does the same after completing another *summon pony* spell to make a target rich environment, running for another trap. Saluthra slithers after him. Wogan worms his way to Nemo behind cover and lays a *cure light wounds* on up him (7pts).

Sindawe keeps his hiding spot near Benjamin who breaks cover to flee from the giant centipede. Jacinth, Harp, and Harvard keep hidden too.

The centipede turns to trample a pony and takes some damage from a trap, but keeps its leg. Then it plows into a second trap, which also only hurts it. Mitabu sets another trap, sandwiching himself between two traps. Serpent summons another pony near a distant trap.

Wogan hides himself close to Nemo, who is wishing he had not gambled away his *cure light wounds* potions. He coughs up blood. Benjamin goes to ground behind the intact aquarium.

The centipede bites and grabs the summoned wolverine, killing it quickly. Mitabu lays another trap. Serpent summons another pony. Harp takes a swing at the centipede as it passes, then returns to hiding.

The centipede heads toward the far pony, then spots Mitabu along the way. Mitabu throws a smoke bomb at his feet! Serpent summons a horse this time and places it near Mitabu! But the centipede goes for the further away pony, tramples it, and loses a leg to the trap behind it. Mitabu sneaks back to the debris pile.

The giant centipede reverses course and heads into the smoke bomb, losing two legs to traps and trampling the horse there. Mitabu continues sneaking back to the debris. Serpent summons another pony and moves to put another trap between him and it.

Wogan casts *fly* on himself, then flies to a trap to grab a leg. Benjamin huddles in place. Sindawe breaks cover, activating his *ioun stone* lights. Others hide and brace for impact.

A Field Guide to Hot Springs Island

- Purple Blood Tree – A short tree with white, twisted leaves. It drips a viscous, translucent purple fluid when cut. The fluid can be used for glues or putties.
- The goat sized herbivores are named armadillo-dans.
- The white flightless birds are dubbed Jungle Runners.
- The bushes with tiny white flowers are dubbed Scuttling Sun Lovers.
- The metal plate covered shiny monster is dubbed the Metalosaur!
- Unnamed foot long bugs that spit poisonous cloud.
- Flap-a-corn – a vulture like bird with a single horn on its head. It leaves an orange dust coating on creatures it flies past; affect is currently unknown.
- Muttering Face Stealer – telepathic snake that eats people by hypnotism.
- Rock Rollers – an intelligent diminutive elemental race.
- Serpent Friends – very large, herbivore dinosaurs.
- Giant Albino Centipede – 60' long with real topaz legs.