

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 10/21/2012

TODAY'S EPISODE: LAIR OF THE VAMPIRE

Our heroes are on an Azlanti island upon which dwells the Andoran Sun Temple Colony. They are there to hunt down Captain Morgan Baumann and capture her ship the *Black Bunyip*. But the *Black Bunyip* fled during the recent civil war. The heroes were intent on giving chase but cannot until they rescue Lavender Lil and her elf slave, Nariel, from the “vampire stripper” Saeng Ki. Saeng Ki wants the *Flame of Guidance* so she can control an ancient Azlanti Flying Death-Ray Lens (AFDRL) that protects the island by burning foreigners and their ships as well as outcasts and monsters.

Our heroes are:

- ♣ Captain Sindawe H'kilata Narr, the fist-punchin' Mwangi monk (Chris).
- ♣ First Mate Ref “Serpent” Jorensen, the staff-bashin' Ulfen druid/ranger and his snake Saluthra (Paul).
- ♣ Gunnery Mate Wogan, the pistol-packin' celibate cleric of Gozreh (Patrick).
- ♣ Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization who doesn't savvy much Common and her cobra Naja.
- ♣ Samaritha, the wand-blastin' serpentfolk wizard in the guise of a pretty half-elf, and now Serpent's wife!
- ♣ Bosun Tommy Blacktoes, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue (was Kevin, now an NPC).
- ♣ Lavender Lil, a buxom tiefling ex-prostitute, and Tommy's girlfriend.
- ♣ With them are the pirates of the *Teeth of Araska*, some 20+ souls consisting of:
 - ♣ Survivors from the ship's previous pirate crew
 - ♣ Ex-slaves escaped from their Chelish owner (Martino Marcellano) and recruited from their castaway island home
 - ♣ Various other recruits, some willing, some not.
 - ♣ Daphne, a sorceress kidnapped from the coastal town Hollobrae and dominated by Samaritha into compliance and friendly spell casting.
 - ♣ JJ, an aquatic homunculus, whose master may be dead.
- ♣ Current temporary allies:

- ♣ Xiola Chelman, a sorceress belonging to the Andoran colony's Sun Temple faction. She's asked her priest too many questions and is now on the run from his White Robes.
- ♣ Narbus Smeet, aka Lefty, son of Elder Adara Smeet, member of the Andoran colony's purist faction, and turncoat/spy for the Sun Temple faction.

WE GET RATING CARDS

The GM hands out cards asking each player to assign 1-5 to four categories: Complexity, Eroticism, Ultraviolence, and Difficulty. This player put 2 for Eroticism, assuming that this GM can make a 4-5 way scary. Hopefully, the other players rated it low too. This player put 5 for Ultraviolence, though another player pointed out, "This is D&D. Isn't every game session ultra violent?" Our GM counters with, "What if D&D typically has an Ultra Violence rating of 2? What would a 5 be like?" The player seems unconvinced that it can get any more violent.

THE PIRATES RETURN TO THE CULTIST VILLAGE

Our heroes return to the Cultist Village with their entire pirate crew. Their ship is securely anchored with cables of ropes into a niche beneath the rebel's cliff top village. Leaving crew behind on the ship would invite attack and kidnapping by the vampiress. The crew will be left in the colonist village instead while the officers head out with Sun God cultist volunteers to destroy the vampire and rescue Lil.

The pirate officers warn their men to treat the villagers with the same respect they would show their own families... and don't go anywhere without a buddy. Several assignments and conversations take place just after they enter the village:

- Sindawe tasks Big Mike with watching over Natulcien, the elf maiden prisoner. Initially, Big Mike isn't sure what is being asked of him because of Sindawe's oblique approach, asking him questions like, "Do you love your mother, Mike?" Mike is happy to eventually find that his captain isn't threatening his mother, just asking him to keep Natulcien safe.
- Sindawe asks Kahina about JJ's whereabouts after the elf skimmer was sank by the AFDRL. He suspects that homunculus has been sent to spy by Captain Baumann. Kahina smiles slyly and explains that she and homunculus had sex after they swam back to shore... and that the homunculus was never out of her sight for long during the skimmer mission or after. She starts to share some specifics about her encounter with Sindawe, then thinks better of it.
- Sindawe assigns Olgvik and Stoke the job of keeping an eye on Slasher Jim, who he suspects is a serial killer/rapist. If they catch him in any such act they can kill him or raise the alarm and kill him. And if Jim does no such thing, then that's good too. Olgvik and Stoke will get an extra half share for this job. Sindawe doesn't explain to them that the assignment ends when they make it back to Riddleport.
- Big Mike chats up a local colonist's daughter. "So, what makes members of the Fertile Families so fertile?"

The officers discuss their problem (specifically that the vampire has kidnapped Lavender Lil and one of the elf slaves) and their plan with Xiola, the current leader of the cultists, who they helped put into power just yesterday. The plan:

- The officers will supply a half-dozen pirates to bodyguard Xiola, who admits her position as new leader of the village isn't secure yet.
- Xiola will convince some of the Touched to accompany the officers in their attack on the vampire. The Touched have lots of fire magic which is useful for fighting vampires... and

the officers have in short supply. Xiola is encouraged to pick Touched that are challenging her rule so that if they don't come back it's no big deal.

- The officers will destroy the vampire stripper and her pet vampire tiger. And rescue their kidnapped crew. Any treasures found belong to the officers. And if some of the Touched get killed in the process, well, that's just gravy.

Xiola summons her people to the church for a late night speech. The cultists are used to such requests; they assemble quickly. Xiola gives a speech explaining that there is a new danger facing their community: a vampire priestess of the corrupt goddess, Zura, wants the *Flame of Guidance*. She requests volunteers from the Touched to venture into that vampire's lair and destroy it. With support from Wogan, Sindawe, and Serpent she convinces the Fertile Families that this is a must-do mission. The Touched are less convinced, but are embarrassed into volunteering by the enthusiasm of the Fertile Families, who are really enthusiastic about the back-up volunteer program. If a Touched falls in battle with the vampire, the back-up volunteer can accept that Touched's Tear of Nuruugal, which possesses the Touched and gives them their fire magic and creepy telepathic link.

Six God-Touched and three backups volunteer: Ohmofor, Kavald, Deswere, Camnus, Styin, Cidius, Evita, Hagen, and Knearin.

Wogan asks Xiola to stock his *Rain Tiger* emerald (10 levels of spell storing) with some of her spells. They settle on Fire Breath (3) and Magic Missile (4), all at 10th level.

THE NEXT DAY - THE LAIR

Serpent, Wogan, Sindawe, and Tommy lead their volunteers into the vampire stripper's lair, which is actually a temple complex tied to Zura, the vampire goddess. They stand before the

statue of the Azlanti Sun God (not Nuruu'gal), which contains a secret door into the vampire's lair.

Instructions are issued and information exchanged:

- Don't wander off by yourself.
- Gun down the vampire stripper ASAP. She's the slutty looking woman.
- Tommy describes Lil so the volunteers understand who not to shoot. Basically, the "shoot the slutty looking woman" order is reworded to "shoot the less buxom slutty looking woman".
- Wogan gestures at the Sun God statue and asks several cultists "Do you recognize this guy?" They reply in disgust, "That's the false Sun God." Everyone nods in agreement at the heresy of such a thing.

No one is sure how to open the secret door and the pirates are down to their last charges on the *Chime of Opening*. So, the group settles into the old school method of determining the mechanism to open the secret door. Eventually, Tommy notices the slight abrasions on the sun god's cheek and guesses that the followers of Zura, lacking respect for the sun god, would slap that cheek to open the secret door. It is an action that almost any other Azlantian would never imagine or dare. The slap does open the secret door.

The group hurries through into the lair. A short time later they arrive at the main entrance to the fortress that surrounds the temple complex. The double doors swing open quietly to reveal Saeng Ki, the vampire stripper (OK, she's actually a priestess of Zura, but damn she dresses and behaves like a stripper).

Saeng Ki greets them with, "Welcome! We will discuss your surrender to my will." And then she immediately shuts the doors when everyone rushes to attack. The attackers futilely bang on the doors, which are well constructed and warded with potent curses. They cannot enter this way. They hear a bellow from deeper inside the complex.

Serpent leads the group along the path they took on their last trip to this place. Eventually, they end up in the altar room that seems to be producing the blood that feeds the moat just inside the warded doors. A door with an elephant carved into stands open; this is the door at which Sindawe's father Mogaba left a Mwangi trail-sign indicating "Danger" long ago. Wogan and Tommy check it for traps, then the group passes through.

ANOTHER TEMPLE DENIZEN

The group stands on a narrow walkway on the outside of the blood moat. On the other side of the moat stands the ziggurat which holds the temple complex... and more traps. Serpent takes a running start and leaps across the moat and begins work on a rope bridge for the others. Another bellow rings out! A large figure charges toward Serpent down the colonnade - it has the head of elephant, the body of a heavily muscled man, and a huge axe in its hands. Serpent quickly leaps back across.

The elephantaur ceases its charge and is enveloped in a blood mist that slowly spreads in all directions. This discourages the cultists from firing at it. Serpent and Sindawe leap to its side of the moat, hoping to draw it out.

The elephantaur does not cooperate! Its blood mist spreads further out, crossing the moat. Finally, it charges out of the mist and into the cultists - it changed sides of the moat in the concealment of the mist. It bull rushes Wogan (24pts), gores a cultist, and slays another cultist with its mighty axe. Serpent and Sindawe leap back across, engaging the beast as it trumpets angrily. Wogan fires several shots into the creature. Tommy pitches in with sneak attacks whenever possible. The fight is going well until the elephantaur points its trunk at Serpent - and Serpent disappears. Cultists fire Searing *Light* spells at the creature which mostly miss thanks to panic and confusion.

Saluthra, Serpent's snake companion, joins the fight. Both she and the Tear of Nuruúgal from the deceased cultist attempt and fail to grapple the elephantaur. Its axe connects with Sindawe (29pts).

Finally, the beast man is covered in many wounds. Wogan kills it with a rail gun shot to the forehead, splattering its brains all over a column. But Serpent is still missing!

Serpent reappears many, many minutes later. He explains he was trapped in a maze until his mind solved it and he was dumped back here... Serpent often brags about his newly boosted intellect, often ending with, "But you couldn't understand with your inferior intelligence." It still seemed to take him a good while to get out of the maze, however.

Wogan heals the wounded, while the cultists help backup candidate Evita absorb the Tear of Nuruúgal liberated from the fallen God-Touched, Ohmofo. Evita successfully surrenders her will to Nuruúgal's servant, though it was touch and go for several minutes. Her face is burnt from when the Tear entered her mouth. Evita stands, God Touched. "Praise the power of Nuruúgal!" the cultists cheer. The pirates aren't impressed. Wogan heals her some, mainly so he doesn't have to see the woman wandering around with her lips all burnt off.

Tommy manages to dredge the elephantaur's large, masterwork axe out of the moat. The pirates saw the man-beast's tusks off... they must be valuable! The creature's corpse is used to help bridge the moat. The moat is only a foot deep, but the blood is assumed to be lethal to mundane flesh.

THEY PRESS ONWARD

The group enters the ziggurat's front entrance. They loot the first room (treasure: 4 gold sconces and 4 everburning torches). Wogan passes the first shadowy curtain blocking a doorway with a Positive Energy Burst, gaining them entrance to the room where the giant Azlanti

chariot beetles (now dead since their previous visit) buried their victims in times past. Wogan uses a Positive Energy Burst to open the second dark curtain in this room. The group passes through into the pit trap room. The cultists are warned, "Stay away from the false stone door." Last the pirates knew, there were still mummies trapped in the pit trap under the room.

Tommy finds a path through the next room that prevents the "infinite dart" trap from activating. He marks the path with a tube of lipstick given to him by Serpent. No one questions why Serpent has his wife's lipstick.

The group works its way along the path after Sindawe tells them what to expect in the next few rooms. The far door opens before they have gone very far. Saeng Ki steps into the room and says, "I was hoping the elephantaur would rape more of you to death. Bangkok! Eat them!"

Bangkok, the vampire tiger, charges across the room activating the dart trap. Six of the eight cultists are hit by the poisoned, constitution draining darts. The poisoned darts also rain into the tiger, but since it's a vampire the poison means nothing to it. Sindawe screams at Tommy about the trap just before Bangkok leaps upon him - it bites, claws, and rakes the poor monk (62pts). Sindawe falls unconscious. Serpent beats on the vampire tiger with his *shillelagh*-ed, silver staff (13pts). Three cultists leave the safe path to rush the creature; they hit it with overlapping *Burning Hands* (23pts). The vampire tiger collapses, then rises as a cloud of mist which escapes under the far door.

Another shower of darts hits the group before everyone can return to the safe path: Tommy and three of the cultists have been poisoned. The second cultist finally shakes it off. The third one, Knearin, only survives when Wogan and Serpent intercede with a Heal check (to aid his poison save) and a Lesser Restoration. Wogan restores Sindawe's broken flesh.

THE ZURA IDOL ROOM

Wogan places *Fire Breath* on himself, Serpent, and Sindawe. Then the group enters the Zura Idol room. Understanding that it is *Unballowed* (and *Silenced* to non-Zurans) they will try to pass thru it as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, Saeng Ki is playing it smart; she and her minions (several spider swarms) are waiting in this room. On the altar is Nariel, Tommy and Lil's elf slave. As they enter, Saeng Ki cuts out Nariel's heart and swallows it whole. Her vile laughter echoes thru the chamber while Nariel's death scream goes unheard.

Serpent uses his first *Fire Breath* to burn the spider swarms to ash. Saluthra slithers through the ashes toward the vampire. Saeng Ki hits Serpent with a ray, sickening him. Wogan shoots the bitch with a *Searing Light* (31pts). Sindawe charges her with his magic and silvered spear (12pts). The cultists pour into the room; several shoot at her with *Searing Light* (21pts from a single hit).

Serpent rages and charges with his *shillelaghed* silver staff. Saeng Ki attempts to dominate Sindawe; a vision of idyllic vampiric life with his mistress Saeng Ki flashes across his eyes. He resists. She hisses in anger and fries her enemies with a *Negative Energy Burst* (14pts).

Sindawe is surprised that the negative energy affects him and demands, "I'm evil! This shouldn't hurt me! What use is there in being evil if negative energy can hurt you?"

Serpent replies, "You never have to say you are sorry!"

Wogan casts *Align Weapon* from a scroll onto his rail gun. Sindawe burns the vampire with *Fire Breath* (20pts). Tommy follows that with his own *Fire Breath* (14pts) but also hits Serpent. Burnt flesh peels from her body until her skeleton collapses. A red mist rises from the bones and flees. Wogan captures her mist form in a *Wind Wall*.

Sindawe and Serpent spill into the next room, where the mist was heading. Sindawe tells Serpent, "Track to her coffin." The room still contains the four sarcophagi with some alterations, mostly of Saeng Ki's face replacing those of other figures, Saeng Ki striding over fallen foes, and Saeng Ki feeding off of Lavender Lil.

Serpent checks for tracks and decides that one of the sarcophagi has been recently disturbed. They open it to find an unconscious and naked Lavender Lil. They leave her there and rush downstairs into the ancient crypt.

Several new coffins are in the room. One is carved in the countenance of Saeng Ki, the other is plain and large enough for a tiger. Serpent rips open the tiger coffin and stakes the reforming tiger within. Sindawe concentrates on Saeng Ki's coffin, breaking it apart and throwing the earth within about the room, then finally toppling it over.

Saeng Ki's mist form enters the room, finds no succor and disperses. Her belongings rain down: an outfit sufficient for a stripper, a brassiere that turns into a breastplate (+1 glamered), a weird sword of two parallel jagged blades (+1), and the Azlanti Sealstone.

The cultists tumble into the chamber, reporting that Wogan and Tommy are above tending to Lavender Lil.

CLIFFHANGER

Sindawe and Serpent look at the other coffins and wonder what treasures they might contain.