Reavers on the Seas of Fate Session Summary
01/17/2010

Attendance

Ernest tells Chris (Sindawe), “Hey, Chris! Pass me some of the braised weasel flank. I can’t get enough of that stuff.”

Chris shoots back, “Did you just call me Bruce? I won’t stand for that level of disrespect!”

Paul (Serpent) defends Ernest, “No, I’m certain I heard him say Chris. I’m absolutely certain of it. By the way, did you know that they have to season the weasels to get the right consistency? First you slit their throats and drain them, then you hang them head-down until the flanks just peel right off the carcass.”

Bruce (Ox) chokes up a particularly large and succulent mouthful of braised weasel flank. He reflects upon how his life had been richer before he understood where the food he eats comes from.

Kevin (Blacktoes) offers, “You want a new subject for conversation? Let’s all share stupid customer stories. I’ve got a whole service base full of them. Oh, and whatever you do you’ll want to steer clear of Plano.”

Patrick (Wogan) enters, confused as to why everyone is shouting at each other. And why the whole room smells of weasel. Mmmm… weasel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Class / Level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruce</td>
<td>Melako “Ox” Chaalu</td>
<td>Barbarian 2</td>
<td>Formerly-enslaved ship crew from Rahadoum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>Tommy “Blacktoes” Burrowbank</td>
<td>Rogue 2</td>
<td>Riddleport halfling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>“Serpent” Ref Jorenson</td>
<td>Druid 1</td>
<td>Northerner human with a southerner snake pet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ranger 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Sindawe H’Kilata Narr</td>
<td>Monk 2</td>
<td>Mwangi-Bonuwat (human) monk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Player | Character | Class / Level | Comments
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Patrick | Wogan | Cleric 2 | Human priest of Gozreh

**Saul’s Latest Genius Plan**

*Saul Vancaskerkin* sends the dwarf floor manager *Larur Feldin* to gather the characters to his office. As they arrive, they note that *Bojask* is leaving with a foul look upon his face. The characters find Saul kicked back in his big chair, relaxing.

*Blacktoes* asks, “What was wrong with Happy?”

“You know, with things changing around here, sometimes it takes a little bit for all the people in the organization to hit their stride.” Apparently he’s feeling put out because the characters are doing so many of the tasks that he used to handle. Vancaskerkin goes on to explain that the Swag Day holiday is approaching. It used to be an impromptu celebration when successful pirate captains returned to port, but now it has turned into a more general community festival. Vancaskerkin expects that he’s going to announce his big return to operation at Swag Day, and to punctuate this announcement with the best Festival Grog anyone has ever seen. That’s what the good liquor the characters brought in from the docks is intended for.

Vancaskerkin’s plan involves leaving only a skeleton crew at the *Golden Goblin* for the festival, especially since there’s enough free booze available during Swag Day that few people are willing to pay for it. *Hans* and *Beyar* will keep an eye on the bar while the characters join Vancaskerkin to organize festival activities.

A lot of people wear masks and costumes for Swag Day and the Gendarmes generally back off and let things just go so long as nobody is getting hurt. The event more or less shuts Riddleport down for two days: one day of festival and one day of cleanup.

Vancaskerkin has *Durt* and *Wendt* putting together a stage and a pavilion out on the square. He’s going to have food, drink and entertainment ready there. He wants the characters to keep things under control for the event. He also advises that the characters keep an eye upon the Pit, to make sure that nobody dies down there. The Pit is a twelve-foot diameter hole in the street near the square that is routinely used as a place to drop folks who are misbehaving.
Serpent muses, “I'll bet that the Pit normally gets used as an open air urinal. And Riddleport is a pretty wet town, so the Pit probably doesn’t have really good drainage.”

Vancaskerkin agrees, “You’re starting to understand why getting tossed in the Pit is a punishment. And why I need someone to make sure nobody drowns down inside.”

The characters agree that Ox has no sense of smell, and no common sense, so they nominate him for Pit-watching duty.

Ox announces, “I like this holiday. The People’s Republic of Rahadoum could never afford to put on things like this. I'm going to the costumier!”

Sindawe starts mocking Ox, “I think it’s pronounced cos-tyume-er. Fruit!” Ox doesn’t let any of this stop him from spending 10 gold on a costume of a Chelaxian gentleman with ram’s horns and a glittery mask.

Serpent indicates, “I think that my normal style of furs and a giant snake is quite exotic enough.” Ox refuses to let him alone until he agrees to dress up as a goblin, complete with a giant paper-mache head.

Serpent is not too happy until he realizes that Ox also got a female goblin costume for Wogan. Ox explains, “You’re more delicate than Serpent is.”

Sindawe prepares for the event by having some of the female employees of the Golden Goblin dress Durt up to look like the imp Old Scratch. Poor Durt takes this with remarkable good humor, in part because it gives him a chance to be fussed over by several attractive young women. Satisfied, Sindawe heads out into the town to find the materials to set up a dunking pit arrangement over the Pit – he understands clearly that drunk people will pay for the privilege to throw stones and knock a miscreant off his perch and into the Pit. After a couple of failed designs, he settles upon a balance beam combined with a padded stone hanging from a tripod: contestants get the privilege of swinging the stone at a person trying to stay on the balance beam. Ox, previously none too enthusiastic about having Pit-watching duty, agrees to work security on this. He procures an old fishing net to haul folks back out of the Pit when it’s time. He also arranges for a few underemployed longshoremen to work the net.

Deliver the Head
Sindawe and Wogan pick up the head the *Splithog Pauper* delivered to the *Golden Goblin*, drop it into a pickle jar, and take it over to the crimelord *Avery Slyeg*. They tell him that it is actually the head of the Splithog Pauper. Slyeg buys it and indicates that the characters’ debt to him is repaid.

To celebrate, Sindawe buys a handful of the cheapest necklaces he can find on the way home. He expects to distribute them to comely wenches on Swag Day.

**HOLIDAY IN THE SUN**

Serpent looks over the crowd, “I know I’ve been drinking directly out of the barrel, but is there actually a blue chick with flaming wings out there?”

Sindawe reassures him, “Yes, it’s just a really good costume. No wait, she’s actually got blue skin and fiery wings, but she’s wearing a milkmaid costume.”

*Samaritha Beldusk* shows up just after Serpent has been pushed into donning his goblin costume. She tells him, “Oooh, cool costume. Hey, I think I can go get the Cyphermages to help with that underground serpent temple. That’s where I’ll be during the festival, because I’m not much of a drinker. And I don’t feel like dressing up as some kind of half-dressed fiendish gnoll matriarch with eight breasts.” She doesn’t realize that Serpent has become non-verbal.

Blacktoes has a special guest: he fetches out *Lavender Lil*, costumed so nobody can recognize her. Most especially, disguised so her enemy *Clegg Zincher* can’t identify her. He tells the characters to call her *Tasha*.

Saul Vancaskerkin comes out dressed up as a pirate captain with a velvet coat and a big hat. “Arrr!” For the occasion, he’s wearing a hook instead of his normal key upon his missing left hand. Durt follows him out onto the stage, where he blows a moderately-horrible imitation of a note on a horn (“That music is so bad, only an imp could play it!”). Vancaskerkin howls out a greeting, and then the drinking and celebrating begin. By the end of his spiel the crowd has become loud enough that almost nobody can hear him anyway.
Wogan and Blacktoes notice something strange happening in the curtained backstage area. Wogan alerts Serpent and Sindawe, then does his best to clamber up behind the curtains. Serpent follows him straightaway. Sindawe follows the two of them, and notes that from atop the stage, there's nothing unusual.

Blacktoes sneaks behind the stage to see a mysterious woman. He attempts to intercept her. For his trouble, she shoots him with something poisoned, taking him down like a sack of unenthusiastic potatoes. Wogan sees her taking a bead upon Saul Vancaskerkin. He starts waving his hands and yelling at Ox, who eventually catches on that something is wrong. Serpent simply rushes across the stage and jams a quarterstaff into her midsection. She seems a bit confused to be under attack from a giant paper-mache goblin. And then Sindawe hits her from the other flank with his fist.

Noticing that her cover has been thoroughly blown, the female assassin tries to run for it. She takes a hit from Sindawe, then Saluthra wraps around her and stops her cold. Then Serpent knocks her out.

Wogan clambers up onto the stage to heal Blacktoes and stabilize the assassin. The others figure out that the altercation was subtle enough that none of the festival-goers really noticed anything.

Once he comes back awake, Blacktoes picks up and claims her shortsword. Wogan casts Detect Magic long enough to verify that the assassin's vest and boots are both magical, then heads back to his job manning the booze tent. Later effort proves that she possessed:

- A Cloak of Escape;
- Boots of Elvenkind;
- A masterwork shortsword;
- A masterwork chain shirt;
- A bandolier of nine darts coated with giant wasp poison

Blacktoes, Serpent and Lavender Lil drag her back to the Gold Goblin and lock her in one of the underground cells. Normally, a giant goblin-headed man dragging an unconscious, half-stripped girl through the streets would attract some attention. On Swag Day, nobody even notices.
**Interrogating the Assassin**

Serpent starts out, “Who hired you?”

“No one hired me.”

“You were trying to kill Saul!”

“You mean that pirate guy? I just slipped behind the stage to sniff some happy dust.”

“You didn’t have any happy dust, you just had weapons. Poisoned weapons!”

“I used all the happy dust! I was just there behind the stage and that halfling attacked me. I stabbed him, but then what are you going to do?”

Sensing that she is not cooperating, Blacktoes sends Lil upstairs then jabs the swamp bear in the next cage into a rage with a stick. Then he starts heating his knife over an open flame, challenging the bounds of civilized alignment.

Blacktoes bends to his vicious work with an intensity that even Serpent finds chilling. The assassin finally admits that she was hired by Saul’s ex-wife. Serpent is amazed, “She’s alive!”

“Yeah, she’s been lurking and saving money to get someone to kill him. She paid me to take him out.”

“What do you know about the backstory between these two crazy kids?”

“He did something bad to her, she’s all burned and scarred.”

“Yeah, that would match what I’ve heard. So, let’s say Saul wants to pay you to take her out, how much would your loyalties cost?”

“Well, I’m not foolish. I’m not one of those assassins with a code of honor who always sticks with the original client. She’s not tough, I’ll do it for 500 gold.”

“We’ll pass that along to Saul, but in the meantime we’re going to keep you down in this cell.”

“Hey!”

Blacktoes and Serpent go back to the festival.

**One-Eyed Jack Rides Again**

Back at the festival, it is time for the Stand of One-Eyed Jack. The event comes from the story of a sailor who fought off a fish-man attack armed with nothing
but a belaying pin. The modern variation involves tying contestants to a mock mast and arming him with a padded club. The contestant is then attacked by waves of sailors in the role of the fish-men. Each contestant’s score is determined by the number of fish-men he can knock out. Ox volunteers immediately.

Three fish-men circle around Ox. He swings his club back. They land a couple of blows, then he knocks one out. They pummel him badly, he responds by knocking another one down. Then a fish-man sneaks up behind him and cracks him over the head. Ox goes down for the count. Sindawe drags him over to the booze table to recover.

Sindawe is the next to play One-Eyed Jack. He starts off with a stylish toss of the club into the air, followed by an array of martial arts poses that do not lead him to any actual hits. The crowd goes wild! Then he knocks one fish-man clean off the stage, taking another hit to the head in the process. He clears out three more fish-men, prompting the remaining ones to come in four at a time and pummel him to the ground.

Serpent is next to step up to the stage. He leads out by knocking one down as soon as the man steps into his strike zone. People far from the stage are able to hear bones crack. A call goes out for a cleric. By the time Wogan responds, Serpent has knocked out three more. The remaining fish-men try to mob him. By the time they club him to the ground he has taken out six of them total.

By the end of the day, Serpent’s score of six still stands. He wins Jack’s Eye, a jewel worth 25 gold pieces. He also attracts the interest of two very drunken women who suggest all sorts of things they could do on his behalf in an alley. He explains to them in the clearest possible terms that he is only attracted to intellectual, emotionally distant women. It takes them a while to get the message.

Miscellaneous Vermin

Once the One-Eyed Jack prize is given out, Vancaskerkin takes the stage. “Aye, me hearties! We pirate captains chase the fat rats up and down the sea lanes, and now it’s your turn!” He reaches into a bag and draws out a dire rat by the tail. The thing is three feet long and squirms. “The first one to bring back the fat rat wins a prize! It’s worth more alive than dead!” He flings the rat into the crowd, raising a series of screams. Chaos erupts.
Sindawe joins the pack of youngsters chasing the rat. He isn't the first to reach the creature, and as a result he has the chance to see a couple of local youths get savaged by the angry rat as they fruitlessly try to grab it. As Sindawe tries to bring his unarmed combat talents to bear another local grabs him from behind. Sindawe wriggles free and runs after the rat.

Sindawe follows the rat into an abandoned building only to find that the rat is caught in a huge web. He looks around and sees several wrapped cocoons, some of them still wriggling. Sindawe backs out immediately, proclaiming, "I would like to announce that my innards are not very tasty no matter how liquefied they are!" A silken noose wraps around his ankle. Looking around, he realizes there are several dreamspiders in the room. Their venom can induce strange visions, but they're not normally particularly dangerous. Unfortunately, the strange purplish spiderlike creature that scuttles up towards him, hissing, is much more likely to be dangerous. It opens its mandibles and gurgles.

Dreamspiders scuttle towards Sindawe, who works upon the web trap frantically with a knife. Sindawe takes a spider bite. The dreamspider colors start to change and run, swirling and twisting and moving. Sindawe thinks, "In-tense..." He starts dreaming about his alternative life as a Repo Man. Then he falls unconscious.

Back at the square, the characters see the various locals who had chased after the rat come straggling back. A couple of them look worse for the wear. Nobody knows where he went. The characters start attempting to trace him.

An hour after the spiders knocked him out, Sindawe comes back to consciousness. He's hanging upside down, wrapped in webs. Then he feels himself being dragged upwards. He looks and sees the face of the Splithog Pauper.

The characters find him in an alleyway, with a note tacked to him: "Courtesy of the Splithog Pauper." Strangely, he hasn't even been robbed.

Wogan grumbles, "The Splithog Pauper! He's back in town! That means he's breaking the agreement! I hate that guy!"

Sindawe mumbles something about the Black Windows of Webminster Abbey. Wogan decides that he's had enough venom injected into him that he's hallucinating something severe.
Later in the evening, a masked man approaches Blacktoes. The man indicates, “I work for Clegg Zincher. I have a business proposition. My boss sent me to say that we’re willing to offer a bounty for some missing goods that we think you might be able to locate.” He offers 500 gold, no questions asked, for a certain suit of armor. Blacktoes negotiates with him and manages to talk him up to 1000 gold for the whole package of armor, sword and shield.

It’s All So Complicated

Even later in the evening, Saul Vancaskerkin pulls the characters aside, “Hey, I need you to work something for me.” By this time, Sindawe has demonstrated that he is now more able to distinguish reality from fantasy. Vancaskerkin explains that some guys are trying to lure Lixy Parmenter to another casino. He wants the characters to convince her to stick with the Golden Goblin, without offering her more money.

Blacktoes and Vancaskerkin head back to the Golden Goblin to talk to Lixy and interrogate the assassin locked up in the basement. Meanwhile, Ox runs into Selene. He almost didn’t recognize her because she’s disguised in a fez and a feather boa. She indicates that she’d like to talk, so they follow the others to the Golden Goblin. She came across some interesting information: the orc ship Bloody Venegance is in town. The captain is planning on using the post-Festival disarray to load aboard some human slaves, mostly Varisian, and take them somewhere. Boss Croat’s men captured them, and she’d like him to do something about it. They will be loading tomorrow evening. Ox promises to get his murderous, sadistic, amoral colleagues to deal with the situation.

It is at this point that Aisha shows up and starts acting uppity. Ox yells at her and tells her to go up to her room. Flustered, she scuttles off. In the background, Blacktoes whispers, “And you call me the misogynist...”

Blacktoes and Vancaskerkin go down to the basement to check on the assassin. They find the cage door open, with the key in the lock. The assassin is nowhere to be seen. Blacktoes comments, “Well, it’s clear that someone let her out. Here’s what I think – one day after Bojask was upset, an assassin shows up claiming to be working for your presumably dead ex-wife...”

Vancaskerkin offers, “I really don’t think it was Bojask. I sent him off on a job.” Blacktoes starts asking questions about Vancaskerkin’s personal life and the
likelihood that his wife (whom he claims to have seen buried) might still be around and hungering for revenge.

**IT'S A TRAP!**

A passerby tells Serpent that some guys are hassling the elf chick he hangs with. He gathers the others and heads to solve the situation. They head down the alleyway looking for any sign of Samaritha when three men step out of the shadows in front of them. All are in armor, and they carry yellow shields.

Wogan comments, "I knew this was a trap. Who are these guys?"

Blacktoes offers, "Oh, they're just local mercenaries."

At this point, Sindawe notes, "By the way, I just looked into the future. There are crossbowmen above us." He clambers up the alley wall like a spider. Everyone else decides that Sindawe is still deeply under the influence of weird drugs and fevers. But there really are crossbowmen! One of them shoots Serpent in the back while the other backs away from Sindawe as quickly as possible.

To complete the trap, two more guys emerge at the other end of the alley. One carries a polearm and the other is some kind of caster. The caster calls out, "Himiny himiny jiminy!" and something happens, though the characters aren't that sure what.

Serpent charges forward at the shield-bearing men. His staff strike breaks a collarbone, but the man stays up. Ox charges another one, stabbing him twice and inflicting fantastic damage. The mercenary collapses. Then Wogan flings up an *Obscuring Mist*. The mercenaries move forward; Sindawe takes advantage of this to smash the wounded mercenary's head in with his staff. His snake lunges forward and takes a bite out of the last mercenary.

Blacktoes clambers up the opposite side of the alley and conceals himself near the second crossbowman just as Sindawe steps to engage the first. The crossbowman's chainmail absorbs his strikes. The man steps back and drills Sindawe with a quarrel.

Blacktoes, confident in his concealment, slips up behind his crossbowman and stabs him. He is gratified to see blood, real actual blood! He cuts again, delivering a shallow slash. And again, cutting the man's arm. The crossbowman is still standing, but slowly being drawn down one cut at a time.
Wogan sees Ox and Serpent engaged with one remaining mercenary. He takes careful aim with his blunderbuss and blasts away, tearing bits of brickwork away from a nearby wall. The mercenary responds by cleaving through both Ox and Serpent, leaving Serpent staggered.

Sindawe drops down from the roof to stand between the mercenary and Ox, but the man’s armor stops his attack. The mercenary answers by cleaving both Sindawe and Saluthra.

Wogan decides that his efforts to use guns have been pretty bad, so he hits the mercenary with an icicle instead. Everyone is glad to see him inflict some damage. The mercenary is starting to look fairly injured, but he presses forward to attack Ox, returning blood for blood.

Serpent heals himself and swarms forward, distracting the mercenary and giving Ox a chance to stab the man cleanly through the chest. The mercenary falls. Seeing their ally fall, the two crossbowmen run for safety. Ox pins one of them to the wall with his boarding pike as he tries to let himself down off the roof. The other manages to escape.

When the mist finally vanishes, the other two attackers are long gone. The characters swiftly search the fallen mercenaries, finding:

- 4 suits of chainmail
- A heavy crossbow
- 3 large steel shields
- 3 longswords
- 44 gold coins

The lead mercenary has a list of the characters’ names in his pocket. At the bottom of the list there is a comment, “Say that Samaritha is in danger.”

Serpent muses, “Maybe we should form our own mercenary company. It looks like these guys get paid better than Saul pays us!”

Blacktoes offers that crimelords typically do not hire mercenaries, as they generally have their own goons. Mercenary involvement speaks towards “civilian” involvement.
The characters stagger back to the festival, then later that night pack it in and go back to the Golden Goblin. And Vancaskerkin gives the characters a 1000 gold piece bonus for saving him from the assassin. Blacktoes takes the assassin’s masterwork shortsword and the Vest of Escape (+6 to Escape Artist, +4 to Disable Device). Serpent takes the assassin’s Boots of Elvenkind. Ox takes her masterwork chain shirt. Serpent sells off the other random treasure. Each character’s share amounts to 94 gold and 3 silver.

Ding!

Overnight, everyone goes to third level. Things on the burner: slaves delivered tomorrow night, keeping Lixy Parmenter at the Goblin, and Vancaskerkin says Larur Feldin the floor manager didn’t show up to work today – his one-bedroom flat has a broken door and is completely emptied. Suspect he may have run afoul of one of our business associates, perhaps a moneylender he was supposed to visit. Apparently Vancaskerkin has some loans, and had sent Feldin with 500 gold to Lymas Smeed, but he’s gone missing. Smeed lives down on Rat Street.

THE FLAT ON RAT STREET

The characters head down to Rat Street the next afternoon. Rat Street Loans is a solid building with a metal door. The characters knock, but receive no response. There is a sliding window in the door, shuttered closed. There are some barred windows on the second floor.

Eventually the metal plate slides open to reveal two piggish eyes, one of them with a painful-looking sty. They squint and regard the characters. Sindawe leads, “Hi, we’re here to inquire after our friend...”

The window slams shut. The person inside yells, “I know you work for Saul Vancaskerkin! Tell him to stop bringing his goons around! Or he’ll owe double!”

“You answer our questions or I set the building on fire.” Sindawe picks up an empty bottle and announces, “First bottle of alchemist’s fire to the roof!” He flings the bottle.

The characters hear a lot of strange noises inside, including (according to Serpent) some odd monkey noises. Sindawe and Ox clamber up to the roof while
Blacktoes, Wogan and Serpent go around to the back. The roof has a chimney, but not a large one. There is a back door, plus a pile of old barrels, crates and garbage nearby.

Blacktoes starts working on opening the lock on the back door. There is rummaging and shrieking going on inside. Ox and Sindawe both climb back down to join him.

Blacktoes finally opens the door, revealing a filthy small room and a hostile baboon which immediately springs toward them. Ox stabs it with his ranseur, leaving it incapacitated. The characters move in carefully, observing that the front door is defended by a lockable cage and that Lymas Smeed is upstairs. “Get out of my house! Gendarmes!”

Sindawe tries to talk, “We just want to know if you saw the dwarf?” Serpent leads the group up the stairs. Lymas Smeed shoots at him with a crossbow, but his armor takes the hit.

Serpent runs straight at Smeed, screaming, “We only want to talk!” Ox follows along and slams the entire blade of his ranseur into Smeed’s body cavity. Sindawe steps up, knocks out Smeed, and orders Ox, “Check out the next room for the monkeys!”

Ox pulls his ranseur free and howls, “Yaaaa!” He slams into the next room and finds that it is only a bedroom, a very cluttered bedroom. An empty potion bottle is discarded on the floor. Sindawe curses, “Damned NPC’s drinking up our treasure…”

Serpent wonders, “When did Ox join the Marines?”

The overall impression is that the place is pretty sleazy for someone in the moneylending business. The characters tie Smeed up and search him, finding:

- A potion bottle;
- An empty vial containing traces of the material now smeared on the tips of his crossbow bolts;
- A scimitar;
- A light crossbow;
- Studded leather armor;
- A necklace worth 200 gold pieces;
• A package of five Qadiran cigars;
• A belt pouch containing 25 gold coins and 5 platinum coins

The characters also find a storage area intended for short-term collateral. Sindawe cautions the others against robbing the man. He sets everyone to looking for paperwork that might explain what happened to Larur Feldin. The characters manage to find a packet of papers stuffed into a box; on examination they turn out to be a few days’ worth of IOU’s. Smeed doesn’t seem to have any more permanent records available.

Convinced that there must be records somewhere, Sindawe tries searching through the baboon filth for a ledger. He finds an earring, still attached to a partially digested ear.

Sindawe also searches through Smeed’s bed for something other than lice. He finds a folio of tiefling porn, though all but two of the pictures have been torn out. He decides that he’d prefer not to know what happened to them.

By the time the search is done, Smeed is regaining consciousness. The interrogation resumes. Most of this involves Sindawe beating Smeed with a phone book while Smeed insists that he doesn’t know anything. Sindawe is convinced that Smeed is holding back. Smeed finally admits that he works for Boss Croat. He also knows where Boss Croat is keeping his slaves, and does tell the characters. But he is completely unhelpful on what might have happened to Larur Feldin. He also spills the names of Boss Croat’s bagmen: Jasper Gantz and some half-orc cronies. It turns out that Saul still owed Smeed 2000 gold.

Sindawe cuts one of Smeed’s arms free. The characters let themselves out, locking the back door behind them.

On the way out, Blacktoes notices some nice green fabric in the rubbish pile behind the house. He motions to Sindawe. They find a green cloak trimmed with sable, all slashed and bloody. They recognize it as belonging to Larur Feldin.

Sindawe tells Ox, “Okay, time to kill us a moneylender.” They go back into the house in time to see a bloodied Lymas Smeed going for the deadbolt on his front door. Blacktoes hits him with a staff sling bullet, downing him instantly. His body falls out into the street. The characters hear Gendarme whistles. They drag the body back inside and bar the door in the faces of a Gendarme patrol.
The characters flee out the back. Wogan covers their escape with an Obscuring Mist. Everyone gets away from the Gendarmes.

**THE END OF THE SESSION**

We end in media res as the characters high-tail it back towards the Gold Goblin, avoiding all known donut shops.