

REAVERS ON THE SEAS OF FATE - SESSION SUMMARY 06/28/2015

TODAY'S EPISODE: THE EYE OF THE STORM

Our heroes are on Mediogalti Island for repairs and supplies; while that was happening the pirates enjoyed shore leave. A small group rescued the *Sea Queen's Pearl* from the pirate Captain Tarin. And now they are ready to sail south for further adventure, including a foray into the Sodden Lands to recover a Chelaxian war machine.

Our heroes are:

PCs:

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

NPCs:

- ▲ Samaritha, a serpentfolk wizard in the guise of a pretty half-elf and Serpent's wife.
- ▲ Ship's Surgeon Hatshepsut, monk and high priestess of a lost civilization and her cobra Naja.
- ▲ Bosun Tommy Blacktoes, the staff-slingin' sneaky halfling rogue.
- ▲ Lavender Lil, a buxom tiefling ex-prostitute, and Tommy's girlfriend.
- ▲ Plus a crew of professional pirates, escaped slaves, and adventure seekers.

Leaving Ilizmagorti

The Teeth of Araska is in Ilizmagorti harbor. The crew takes on 4 weeks of supplies, plus 1 extra week courtesy of Serpent's wallet (he distributed all the loot to the point that the ship's treasury was tapped out at 4 weeks of stores, so he makes good on it himself), then sets sail. They navigate the harbor's many reefs and shoals using a chart Sindawe and Mase made when they entered the harbor with a trained guide. Serpent handles the sounding, spotting a reef that isn't on their chart and narrowly avoiding it.

At sea the pirate officers discuss whether to take a course through the Eye of Abendego, a giant permanent stationary 600 mile wide hurricane, or swing wide of it. The former is fast and has dangerous storms while the latter is slower, safer and offers chances at piracy. The objective of this trip is a pre-Eye Chelaxian admiral's estate, now located in the *Sodden Lands*. Once there they will search for a Chelaxian war machine that Mase Venjum describes as a remote controlled submarine ala Captain Nemo's Nautilus. That means the last day of travel must absolutely take place in the Eye.

A coin is flipped deciding for traveling through the Eye's edge for maximum speed, which offers many challenges: storms, high winds, wave action that pushes ships onto land, and monsters. It is decided that the ship will be sailed approximately one hundred miles into the Eye (two hundred miles from its center), then ride its winds counterclockwise south. Such a trip will take three days to arrive at the southern edge of the Eye, plus another day to arrive at the admiral's estate. Entering/exiting the Eye is easily eight hours of sailing under ideal conditions; there will be no exiting the Eye until it is truly time to leave. 2nd Mate Tasty Mike sets up two crew shifts, one for sailing during the day and a second for sailing "in place" at night.

Sailing to the Eye

Day 1, at sea: Moderate temperatures and light wind and rain. Clubbreaker Cordell yells down from the crow's nest, "Longship to starboard!" The ship changes course for a closer look. It is an Ulfen longship (*The Kraken's Spite*), with a single mast, double-headed dragon prow, shields, and oars. The pirates decide to pass on by. The Ulfen row after them.

The Ulfen vessel's speed with their oars in play is a match for the pirate vessel, placing it starboard and aft. Serpent recognizes a raised flag as Ulfen code for "parley". The pirates

decide, “What the hell.” The vessels exchange flag signals, slow, then stop. There are 40-50 Ulfen crew, plus a notable looking captain and a female cleric of Gorum. The ship appears to have been pieced together from other ships by an expert ship builder.

An Ulfen, utilizing *clarion call*, yells out across the waves in Ulfen then again in non-Ulfen dialects, “We have a messenger that requires passage south. *Steermaster Kjell Snarribrand* commands this vessel.”

Serpent yells back, “Captain Sindawe N’arr commands here.” Peaceful passage is requested and granted. The Ulfen captain, cleric, and Marr Eiderson board the pirate vessel.



Figure 1: Maar Eiderson

Kjell declares, "Marr Eiderson is a skald (bard) and seeks passage to the southern lands."

Serpent asks, "You are a messenger? Where are you going?"

Eiderson replies to him, "In the name of Linnorm King Estrid the White I require passage of you as far south as you are bound. I have been given a message to travel south as far as there are civilized men to tell of *White Estrid's* deeds. Three others are doing the same in the other cardinal directions."

Sindawe asks him, "You promise to follow orders, behave, and not provoke new troubles or enemies?"

Eiderson states, "Yes, of course. Ulfen are famous bringers of civilization."

Several pirate officers snicker and exchange bewildered glances. Despite that an agreement is reached.

Serpent brags, "The entertainment quality will go way up."

Olgvik, the only other Ulfen pirate aboard, is impressed that Eiderson is a skald. He offers the man his bunk.

There is a brief exchange with Steermaster Snarribrand and Valgerda Thread-Cutter his cleric, but the pirates are not looking to linger and the steermaster looks relieved to have rid himself of the skald. They pull away singing hearty Ulfen rowing-songs.

Sailing the Eye

Day 2, at sea: starts out warm and clear. The pirates are able to see the storm clouds that form the perimeter of the 300 mile radius of the Eye in the distance. It makes them unhappy that they are about to head into the storm.

But only after breakfast, rum and Eiderson's recounting of *White Estrid's* raid on Nisroch
- *The Battle of the Two Dragons*. He stands astride the deck and regales the crew with his tale in
verse.

*As the fleets of the Northmen reaved into Nisroch harbor
Estrid's Pet wreaked destruction on the darkling city
When an ebon tower rove asunder and a great shadow wyrm arose
The two huge beasts circled each other and darkened the ground
Boiltongue spoke first and his maw sprayed ice across the blackness
The other replied in a cacophony of shadow that drained the icy one's might
But then the ice hardened and it fell like a mountain to earth
The crash was felt throughout the bay
As darkling buildings were crushed to gravel
But Boiltongue raged aloft, blinded by the shades
As the dark one tried to free itself from the frost
The linnorm's vision cleared, and he followed the shade to ground
And snapped at its flitting flanks, as it shook free of the encircling ice
The dark dragon's eyes blazed as it uttered a dark word of destruction
That caused the bravest men's hearts to quake
But Boiltongue the linnorm is beyond such magics
And continued to press his attack unslaked
The shadow wyrm pulled together the shadows to encircle him
But Boiltongue struck unerringly through the darkness*

*The shade spoke again and shadows spilled out, covering the wyrm of ice
Whose claws and fangs lashed out but could not find purchase
The shade took to the air with frightening speed
Its wings blew building walls down, like a storm from the north
As men and darklings fought and died around
But Boiltongue followed it into the twilight sky
The shadow wyrm called upon its dark magic and became faster still
Like a shadow flits across a wall, it darted by Boiltongue and each
time opened a rent
In the great linnorm's side. But the linnorm's wounds knit
Almost as speedily as they opened; and he bode his time
And iced its wings again as it approached
The shade fell into the bay, and the wave it made as it smote the water
Raised up boats a dozen feet; the ice wyrm followed right after
But the shade broke free of the ice and turned his full fury onto Boiltongue
Ripping into the linnorm with fangs and claws and pinions again and again
Till Boiltongue's blood stained the dark waters oil-black
The linnorm coiled around the dragon and dragged it down into the icy waters
It burst free and shot out of the waters into the darkened sky
And circled enraged looking for its opponent
But Boiltongue lurked below, the icy waters knitting his wounds
The shadow wyrm descended on a longship, and shadows vomited from its maw
Draining the life from a dozen Ulfen warriors*

*Boiltongue surfaced by Estrid's flagship and the king saw he was weakened
By the shadow wyrm's foul darkness
She ordered her war-priest to restore his strength and enchant his fangs
That they might find purchase on his ghostly foe
And the Lord in Iron's blessing was given unto the linnorm
The umbral dragon's fiery eyes espied this and he spoke his word of
destruction against the priest
Whose ears bled, and quaked in agony
Boiltongue surged from the waters to answer this offense
And the dark one eagerly met him
Determined to rip him asunder once and for all
Boiltongue's fangs sank into the shade in turn
And their serpentine bodies coiled about each other in a death-knot
The shadowy one broke free of Boiltongue's embrace and shot away
Boiltongue coiled up into the sky proudly awaiting its charge
It paused, muttering draconic magic, and then advanced
But turned aside, hurtling down towards Estrid's ship
The linnorm ignored this, and charged and struck at air
Whence the real dragon commanded its shadowy double
Taken aback, it again breathed out its shadows on the linnorm
But prepared for its tricks, Boiltongue was barely affected
And his mighty jaws crunched down on the shade's neck
It roared as the linnorm's feared venom, the black blood of the earth*

Flowed into its veins. In a frenzy it tore into Boiltongue
As Boiltongue replied fang for fang
But the shadow dragon's pinion struck to the heart of the great linnorm
And this time it was Boiltongue that fell from the heavens
Into the icy heart of the bay; the dragon roared in triumph and followed
Him down to finish off his victim; but in the chaos of the spray
He missed the linnorm's throat with his claws
And Boiltongue, his wounds healing, lashed from the waves
And raked his foe with poisoned fang; the umbral one raged
And slashed and battered his wounded foe into icy hunks of flesh
Then tried to rise, but the venom in its blood found
Its dark heart, and it fell again into the waters
And sank into the depths alongside the linnorm.
Men on both sides sbrank from the fray
To see such destruction wrought by the massive titans
Upon each others' colossal frames
Ice and shadow unleashing their might
To finally take each other in their death-spasms
But the linnorm is no mere beast
He is a part of the arctic primeval
Even as the battle between Ulfen and darklings swelled
His corpse began to come together
And knit itself back into its ancient shape

*Ice gripped the hearts of the Nidalese scum
As Boiltongue rose again from the waves
The umbral scourge defeated
He devoured its dark heart And his roar was like the north wind
And the howl of the wendigo in winter
The defenders quailed and fled from the fight
And thus did the men of Halgrim, led by White Estrid the Linnorm King
Sack Nisroch again.*

This gets a general “Woo! Fuck yeah! Screw the Nidalese!” from the men. Serpent shares his semi-bardic description of the *Teeth of Araska's* escape from Chelaxian warships with the skald.

Sailing the eye is dangerous. Navigation at night is difficult due to the constant storm clouds, which means the ship needs to beat in place to avoid going deeper into the Eye or hitting some obstacle. The pirates decide to try weathering the 250-200 mile range band. Four hundred miles will get the vessel around the southern border of the Eye and to their destination in the Sodden Lands. At full speed with the Eye's winds behind them the ship will cover 130-140 miles/day. Several spellcasters in the crew have *alter winds*. Wogan has three *feather tokens of the winds*.

First is a navigation check (31) to chart a course. Then the ship sails into the Eye. Luckily, the *Teeth of Araska* is an Abendego tricorne; its broad beam is designed for the Eye's awful weather (+4 seaworthiness).

Day 3, in the Eye: The air is hot and there is a wind storm (50 knot winds) from the northeast. Six sailing checks are needed, one per hour:

- Hour 1, Profession: Sailor roll of 25 – Luca Caletti is washed overboard. Serpent flies to the rescue, until giant crab claws grab him. Wogan summons a *celestial dolphin* to rescue Luca, while Serpent deals with the crab. He finally tears free (after spending an Infamy Point coin to escape) with a single claw attached to his legs. The claw goes to the ship's galley.
- Hours 2-6 are uneventful: 37, 35, 34, 32, and 31

That night Mase Venjum is charge of the night shift and “treading water”.

Day 4, in the Eye: The sky is black and lightning lights the clouds. It is a real tropical storm that slams the ship about for nine hours. All twelve hull sections take 1d6 damage.

Day 5, in the Eye: Rough seas, but no storm. More sailing rolls bring the ship through the waves without mishap.

Day 6, in the Eye: Severe tropical storm with very high winds! Medium sized creatures must use rails or ropes to negate wind challenges. Small creatures can be blown away. Wogan deploys a feather token to reduce the winds. It does not change the wave action but it does make sailing easier (winds reduced by 25% for eight hours). The storm lasts for hours – at hour 5 the ship's hull is lightly damaged again, but otherwise the crew manages to keep her together. At hour nine the feather token ends and the storm grows worse immediately. A rogue cannonball breaks a crewman's foot. The ship leaps upon the sea as torrential rain washes across the deck.

At hour eleven one of the ship's boats is knocked loose. It slides across the deck slamming into Samaritha, Tasty Mike, Slasher Jim, and Ansis. Boat and victims are washed overboard.

Samaritha casts *animate rope* to anchor the boat to the ship. This provides a dangerous drag on the ship and a way for those thrown overboard to climb out. Samaritha misses the broken boat debris; she disappears in the distance. The others are able to grab and cling to the overturned and canvas-covered ship's boat. Serpent and Sindawe dive overboard to help their crew.

Wogan takes command of the vessel, shouting orders that will compensate for the anchor of boat debris on the port side. The storm lessens slightly yet the ship still handles like a drunken pig. He orders crew to help those thrown overboard... and to be ready with boarding axes to cut the debris loose. Extra sailors are brought up on deck to assist.

It takes several long minutes for Serpent and Sindawe and those thrown overboard to climb back up the single rope. The line is cut when the last man is aboard, immediately improving the sailing situation.

Cliffhanger

In the warm, stormy waters Samaritha finally manages to cast *fly*. She is a skilled flier, yet the high winds batter her down backwards and even once back down into the water. She flies after her ship but does not catch up. She is lost in the distance.

The storm ends at hour eleven. The ship is halted. Continual light torches are strung up to help guide the missing wizard back.

Serpent declares, "We have to find her."

Sindawe replies, "I can't risk the ship and sixty-plus crew waiting for her."