

## WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS 04/26/2015

### Attendance

*Bruce* and *Georgina* call in with important news! They have adopted a new kitty, now named *Kaylee* (for that geeky *Firefly* cred). Of course, *Kaylee* is still in the “terrified” stage, so she is unwilling to emerge from underneath the armoire.

*Ernest* describes how he shows *Aoife* random old cultural items to find out if they’re actually good, or if he just thought they were because he didn’t know any better. She isn’t enthusiastic about *Thundercats*, but she very much grooves to Frank Sinatra. The Chairman of the Board!

*Tim* is curious about *Ernest*’s comments about friends who want him to watch gay porn. *Tim* then brings up Obama’s Anger Translator, which defuses the conversation nicely.

*Chris* suggests that using the handle RichWhiteGuyWhoJustGotDivorced is not an effective way to get rid of online stalkers. *Paul* and *Matt* appreciate the insight, though they really spend more of their time stalking rich white guys online.

*Patrick* does his level best to ignore the conversation. Until *Chris* mentions salty watermelon flavored vodka. Then he’s all ears.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Tabregon	Bruce	Male Half-elf Oracle of Iomedae, Touched by Divinity	11M6
Tsuguri Chiba	Chris	Male Cleric of Tsukiyo, Child of the Crusades	11M6
Antonius	Ernest	Male Tien Monk/Paladin of Irori, Stolen Fury	11M6
Trystan	Matt	Male Half-elf Paladin of Shelyn, Touched by Divinity	11M6
Shawanda	Patrick	Female Mwangi Paladin of Iomedae, Exposed to Awfulness	11M6
Calanthe	Tim	Female aasimar Sorcerer of Shelyn, Riftwarden Orphan	11M6

## The Terrace of Favored Mistresses

Last session, *Nocticula*, the Queen of Evil beamed a message directly into the characters' heads. She invited the characters to an informal visit at the Vault of Graves. Assuming, of course, that they are able to overcome her various guardians. Clearly, anyone who can be slain by mere guardians is not interesting enough to have a conversation with. It really makes a body wonder what the purpose of guards is, if the folk they guard are so much more personally powerful. Of course, a figure like *Harrek the Berserk* might be surrounded by Wolf Pirates but nobody would make the mistake of thinking that he needs them for personal safety. In fact, much the opposite is true. At least for those Wolf Pirates who avoid displeasing him.

The characters know that the Vault of Graves is on an island off the shore of the Terrace of Favored Mistresses. The Vault of Graves is rumored to contain the complete chronicles of all those assassinated by *Nocticula*.

## A Gift for Nocticula

The characters decide that they would like to bring a present to *Nocticula*. Given her status, buying a gift isn't a realistic possibility. They decide instead to try and capture the demoness *Minagho* and bring her as a gift. This isn't even an evil act, because *Minagho* is evil.

The characters spread some rumors around and set themselves up in a warehouse. They wait for *Minagho* to show up. Soon enough, a demon teleports in. A demon who isn't *Minagho*. The demon explains that *Minagho* has lost much of her power and some of her father's favor.

*Trystan* attempts to negotiate with the demon *Nazirius*. His attempts are complicated by the fact that the demon isn't really interested in anything that looks like an acceptable deal ("You pay me 50,000, I kill you, and then I show you where *Minagho* is hiding. Deal! You are a shrewd bargainer!"). With *Calanthe's* help, they manage to cut a deal: the characters give *Nazirius* a magical item worth 50,000 gold in exchange for the information.

*Nazirius* tells the characters that *Minagho* is in a cave on the island of *Vasglar*, the Island of Ruins, where the characters arrived in the plane.

## Traveling Demon-Style

Nazirius *teleports* the characters to Vasglar. He points at a nearby cave and indicates that it where Minagho hides. Calanthe casts *mythic invisibility* upon Trystan, assuring him that he is undetectable through any means except *true seeing*. Trystan asks, “*True seeing?* Like all demons including Minagho probably have? That’s really helpful! Thanks!” He sneaks off, using his mundane stealth skills. But Minagho sees him anyway, because she has *true seeing* like all demons.

The others recognize that something is wrong when Trystan cries out, “She sees me!” For her part, Minagho simply uses *telekinesis* to try to wrench Trystan’s bow away.

Calanthe casts a *quicken*ed *mythic haste* on the group, rushes up to the cave, and launches a *dimensional anchor* at Minagho. Minagho evades the beam and grins at Calanthe. Antonius rockets up to her with inhuman speed and strikes... but she evades with equally impressive reflexes.

Tsuguri storms in and invokes his *aura of madness*, infecting Minagho’s mind with spreading insanity. He learns that she is not mythic – she either lost that trick when she lost the favor of *Baphomet*, or the characters are facing a patsy while the real Minagho laughs at them from far away.

Trystan regains hold of his bow. He shoots arrow after arrow into the *confused* demoness. Tabregon runs up as fast as his little legs can carry him, then tries to *dimensional anchor* Minagho. She effortlessly deflects the effect with her spell resistance. *Shawanda* unleashes *Radiance* and stabs Minagho clean through. She survives the strike, but the impact is enough to distract her so Calanthe can finally *dimensional anchor* her.

Antonius uses his *imprinting palm* to learn her greatest weakness. He is surprised to find that it is Baphomet’s displeasure! She is under a curse, suffering 10 permanent negative levels, losing most of her demonic abilities, and suffering constant pain. She has also been blinded. She has incurred Baphomet’s anger for allowing the characters to destroy the remains of the Kenabres wardstone. Antonius files this information away and proceeds to pummel Minagho into unconsciousness, inflicting a 1 INT bleed effect as he does. Minagho collapses like a sack of spoiled potatoes.

The characters know that *greater teleport* only has a verbal component, so Minagho must be prevented from speaking. Or, optionally, from thinking enough to be able to speak. She is carrying several interesting magical artifacts:

- *Dust of disappearance* (3 doses)
- *Potion of cure serious wounds*
- *Heavy fortification studded leather armor* +3
- *Amulet of mighty fists* +2
- *Portable hole*

After some debate on the best way to transport Minagho around, Antonius kicks her body into her own *portable hole* and folds it up again. Problem solved!

Calanthe carries the characters back to Alushinyrra with three *teleport* spells, without incident.

## Reaching the Vault of Graves

The characters need to find a boat to take them across the River Styx to get to the island. The *thanadaemons* provide boating services, but they demand souls as a fare. Most of the folks the characters talk to suggest, “Just buy a slave and hand him over to the thanadaemons! It’s almost the same as paying in money.” They don’t understand why the characters aren’t willing to do this.

The characters finally find a very questionable old man willing to ferry them across in his extremely questionable boat for only 50 gold. *Tsuguri* cuts the deal. *Tabregon* suspects that the old man will attempt to betray the characters, so he casts *water walk* on everyone before the group embarks.

### *Boat Trip with the Serial Killer*

The deranged old man who rented his boat out to the characters turns out to have been a serial killer (and a boatman) in life. He notes that most souls don’t remember their mortal lives, but he remembers everything. And he spends the entire journey telling the characters about his various crimes. He is quite content with his afterlife: when he isn’t peddling his boat, he has a very nice bridge that he sleeps under. Plus, ever so often there is a bit of tasty murdering!

The journey lasts four hours. *Tabregon* is glad for the *water walk* precautions.

The island of the Vault of Graves is a small island choked with twisted purple vegetation. The Vault of Graves is a small building with heavy double doors. The anteroom of the Vault is guarded by four advanced fiendish greater shadows. The interior of the vault is completely dark. The shadows swirl to the attack. Calanthe meets them with a *flame strike* while Tsuguri invokes his *death ward* effect.

Trystan fires a cone of *light arrows* from his *starbow* at two of the shadows. Tabregon strikes one with a *searing light*. Its shadowy train starts to fray under the strength of the attacks.

Shawanda thinks about attacking the shadow before her with a featherduster, but relents and uses *Radiance* instead. She swings three times and strikes three times. The shadow weakens. Antonius follows up. His magical fists devastate the creature, sending it back to the darkness.

The shadows strike back, draining strength away from Tabregon and Shawanda.

Calanthe unleashes a wave of *mythic magic missiles* at the shadow attacking Tabregon. Her force missiles shred the creature, sending it down that bright path over which the sun never blinks. Tsuguri follows up with a wave of positive energy that burns the survivors. And Trystan obliterates one with his *starbow*. Fast-fading flickers spray from the fatal wound as it vanishes. Shawanda destroys the last of them.

With the fiendish advanced shadows destroyed, Tabregon casts *lesser restoration* on himself and *restoration* on Shawanda, restoring both to full health.

The characters move further into the vault. They find a 50-foot high tower lined by rank upon rank of books. Tsuguri determines that while the books themselves are not magical, they are protected by strong abjuration magic.

### *The Shrine and the Scribes*

The characters move on. They find a small shrine with a single porphyry statue of Nocticula watching over it. Two *coloxus* demons with their gruesome fly heads sit at desks, writing away.

Trystan calls out, "Hey, demon guys. The mistress is expecting us."

One demon buzzes back, "The mistress did tell us that you are coming. We are expecting you!" The two of them buzz to the attack. The characters wonder if Nocticula assigns her underperforming demons to work the Vault of Graves, and then sends an

endless succession of adventurer parties there to “trim down the bottom 10%”. Apparently, being chaotic evil means never needing to talk to Human Resources.

The *coloxus* demons cast aside their robes and unfold their mesmerizing wings. Tsuguri uses mythic powers to protect everyone else with his own mental fortitude, eliminating the demons’ mesmerism. Then he casts a *mythic silence* that only affects the demons – protecting the characters from the droning of their wings.

Trystan opens fire on the demons. They are quite well-defended, able to deflect a surprising number of his arrows, at least until he remembers all of his bonuses. Then he drills his target four times, sending star-burning arrows through arm, chest, throat and guts. The *coloxus* demon buzzes in silent agony.

Antonius calls upon his powers as *Champion of Irori*, floating into the air whirling around like a tornado, then unleashing sacred power against both of the demons. The two demon librarians expire. Shawanda steps into the next chamber, finding a scriptorium. Apropos to two librarians.

## **An Audience with Nocticula**

Beyond the double doors is a large cathedral-like hall. A shrine to Nocticula and two massive towers of bookshelves stand at the far end. Nocticula sits in a massive throne on the balcony above. She has bat-like wings with red runes upon them and three spiked tails. Her presence is unbelievably powerful, all of the characters are stunned by her beauty except for Trystan, who is of course the scion of the goddess of beauty.



### *1. Nocticula*

Nocticula tells the characters that the Worldwound was always a place of power of the demon lord Deskari. She explains that there has been no massive outpouring of demonic invaders into Golarion because any such act would prompt a massive celestial response. Preferring not to tempt the forces of Good, Deskari has been playing the long game, luring crusaders in and at the same time sending out a few demons to infiltrate their numbers. Unfortunately, the Wardstones interfered with the demons' ability to send out infiltrators, so Deskari formed an alliance with Baphomet and his Ivory Templars after the second crusade. The Ivory Templars are expert at infiltrating and suborning hierarchical organizations, picking away at their mental fortitude and running them through with corruption.

Nocticula indicates that Deskari thinks he is smarter than other demon lords, but he will eventually incur the wrath of the heavens. And when this happens it will interfere with some of Nocticula's ongoing plots.

For his part, Baphomet covets power, territory and revenge against his mother Lamashtu. And the approval of his mother as well, because he is a demon lord.

Having provided something of a soliloquy upon the subject of demonic politics, Noctacula offers each of the characters a boon, either information or a minor magical object.

Calanthe requests a magical gift, a *rod of lesser maximize*. Her request is granted.

Antonius asks, “How can we slay Deskari? Or Baphomet?” Noctacula indicates that a demon lord cannot be slain by merely killing his body. If a demon lord is slain, must retreat to the center of his own realm to be reborn. If he is slain again within a year and a day then he is permanently slain, but this is not an easy task, because during their time of vulnerability demon lords typically take refuge in a deeply protected holdfast.

The Abyss is divided up into many different realms, each ruled by a different demon lord. Deskari’s native realm is the Rasping Rifts. Baphomet’s realm is the Ivory Labyrinth. The heart of the Ivory Labyrinth is Baphomet’s Dread Tower at the center of the city of Blackburg. It is impossible to approach the center of the city by mortal means.

The characters ask how to close down the Worldwound. Noctacula explains that it was originally created by the *Lexicon of Paradox*, a powerful artifact. After the Worldwound was created, the *Lexicon* was severed, torn in half. Queen Galfrey quested to recover the second half, but what she has may be useless without the other half. The greater problem is that the *Lexicon* provides instruction on how to open the Worldwound. The ritual it describes needs to be reverse-engineered to understand how to close it.

Tsuguri asks Noctacula for a map of the Worldwound. Noctacula gives him a map showing all the local landmarks.

Tabregon asks Noctacula about the health effects of Nahyndrian crystals. She explains that they are very deadly, poisonous to everyone. As soon as you touch one, you will begin to go insane as flashes of horrific anguish flood your mortal mind. Even carrying one in an extradimensional space will weaken you. Demons are less affected. The more you carry the weaker you will get before you die. They also cannot be teleported. The crystals currently in circulation are mined from the corpse of *Colyphyr*, Lord of Jungles, Poisoned Water and Dragons. There is nothing special about him – the

crystals are just the crystallized blood of the demon lords, and could be mined from other demon lords as well.

Nocticula doesn't care about the mining of Nahyndrian Crystals from her demon lords, but if the characters want to stop it, she will transport them to the appropriate island.

## **Zap! Arrival on Colyphyr!**

The characters are surrounded by a whirling of Abyssal energy. A moment later they appear upon a small rock outcrop next to a foully poisoned pool. Splash! Beyond the pool, a beach of powdered bone leads down to a sea of dark water. Dense jungles clot the land and reach out to the sea. A sixty-foot wide river flows down across the beach. The characters' outcrop is right next to a boiling, poisonous waterfall. Calanthe and Tabregon are both nauseated. The characters drag, fly and teleport themselves away from the cascade and get to the beach.

The sky above roils with thunder and lightning flashes. There are thousands of *vrock* demons flying high above, endlessly patrolling. Everyone understands that flight is not an option for the local environment.

### *Horrid Locals*

Not far away stands a giant stone obelisk. Calanthe approaches it to memorize it as a teleport location. Antonius muscles by her to just draw a big "D" on it. As they approach, multiple small portals open up around the obelisk and giant tentacles extend from it. To compound the situation, a headless angel with a huge sword flies down from the sky to hover above the obelisk.

A huge tentacle grabs hold of Calanthe and squeezes, inflicting horrible rib-crushing damage. Antonius leaps to attack the tentacle, striking and using his *imprinting palm* to understand that he is dealing with an abyssal harvester, an enormous creature that normally injects its tentacles into other planes to pull other things through to be consumed. Chopping off tentacles will help deal with it, but will not actually harm the main creature. He pulls Calanthe out of the tentacle's grasp and runs away from the obelisk with her.

Calanthe immediately casts *mythic dimension door* to create a one-way portal to the top of the cliff. She and Antonius dive through the portal. Trystan drags Tabregon through. Tsuguri provides a *mythic advance* and uses it to drag Shawanda through.

This takes the characters out of the reach of the abyssal harvester, but the headless angel (once a planetar) can fly upon them. The thing flies directly to Calanthe, striking her with its greatsword.

Tabregon invokes *mythic cure critical wounds* and *energy body* to completely heal Calanthe, evading an attack of opportunity from the headless angel in the process.

Shawanda steps up and slashes the headless angel twice, wounding it and splashing both her and Calanthe with burning sulfurous blood splatter. Antonius steps in, strikes the angel more, and causes everyone to get sprayed with even more burning blood. Shawanda cuts again and destroys the creature. It was carrying: nothing more than a *large greatsword +3*.

### *A Moment of Respite*

Calanthe brings up her Sanctuary and proposes spending an hour to recover spells and such. She places the headless angel's sword over her mantelpiece.

The characters discover that everything on the island is poisonous, and that everything they are wearing that has contacted local plants (or the ground, for that matter) is slightly poisonous. After Tabregon uses *neutralize poison* to detoxify everyone's laundry the group spends 8 hours resting and regaining mythic power.

### *The Banks of the Nameless River*

After resting the characters continue on the banks of the Nameless River. The water of the river exudes a foul sulfurous stench that makes the eyes water and throat sting. Tsuguri casts *communal slow poison* on the group to help push off the effects of the vapors. Progress is slow, as the riverbanks are overgrown with poisonous underbrush. The weather is hot and humid, making the full covering needed to avoid the poison desperately uncomfortable.

The characters discuss better approaches. Their solution is for Trystan to fly ahead of the group, pulling them all as they float under the effect of *mass levitate*.

The characters see a pair of young fiendish green dragons frolicking in the poisonous water ahead. Trystan tries talking to them. He calls out, “Greetings! How are you? Are you native to this place?”

The dragons speak among themselves, in Abyssal. They are confused, “Why is food talking to us? Does it not know that it is prey here in the land of the Dragon Lord?”

Calanthe ignores their conversation. She casts *quickened mythic haste* on her friends, and then *persistent mythic slow* on the dragons. The dragons immediately slow down as if they were moving through swampwater.

Tsuguri calls out (in Abyssal), “Everyone protect Shawanda! Everyone knows she’s the most delicious of all of us!” He points at Shawanda.

Trystan simply shoots one of the dragons down. It falls into the river in slow motion. He tells the other dragon, “Run away! We are not prey!” The dragon turns and flees, very slowly. The jungle plants themselves separate to make space for it as it flaps down to the jungle level.

## **The End of the Session**

The session ends somewhere after when Bruce logs off to have some dinner. What other adventures and misfortunes might befall our heroes? We will never know, unless someone else provides the detail.