

## WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS 05/24/2015

### Attendance

*Bruce* is amazed to realize that he's starting his session summary file almost 12 hours ahead of time. Surely this is just the start of an excellent new trend of responsible gaming! Or, perhaps not.

*Tim* sends ahead word that he will be hanging out with Reavers and Hippos in the mud rather than showing up to the game. Everyone else very much hopes that he will survive the experience with only the minimum of mental transformation. *Paul* suggests, "As long as he comes back to us without a taste for human flesh, I'll be happy."

*Chris* notes that Bruce sounds surprisingly like a dolphin on the video call. Or, more likely, unsurprisingly – the first time he calls in he *always* sounds like a dolphin. A quick reconnect fixes the problem.

*Matt* shows up to report that he no longer has power at home. The others are saddened to hear of his lack of influence in his personal relationships. He clarifies that the problem is with the *electrical* power. He goes on to describe how Austin Energy reports that some electrical poles might have snapped in the storm.

The conversation verges over to the Pathfinder carnivorous flying squirrel (which doesn't actually fly). Apparently they are tiny pack animals with a +5 attack bonus and pounce, easily able to take out commoners and 1<sup>st</sup> level adventurers. "Beware the squirrels! They run in packs!" Bruce looks out his window at the front yard and shudders.

*Patrick* appears in time to respond to *Chris*' enthusiastic endorsement of the *Mad Max: Fury Road* movie. *Chris* is pleased to note that it included no more than ten minutes of useless dialogue in between the truly excellent car chases.

*Ernest* shows up somewhat later, triumphant in having enjoyed a crawfish boil for lunch. Mudbug delight!

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Tabregon	Bruce	Male Half-elf Oracle of Iomedae, Touched by Divinity	11M6

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
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

## And Now the Abyssal Harvester

The last time around the characters spent some time taking out the (draconic) trash on behalf of the slimeacious *Queen Mesmera the Fulsome Queen*. She thanked them for their efforts and pointed them to the whereabouts of a local abyssal harvester, a bad citizen who has been pulling down property values in the Fulsome Queendom for quite some time. The characters had previously encountered parts of the very same harvester, around a huge menhir on the shore of *Colyphyr's* island. They had been rather surprised by the fact that the harvester was able to manifest in the Abyss, as the creatures normally only send their tentacles to other planes.

Queen Mesmera explains that the menhir where the characters first encountered the tentacles of the abyssal harvester is a Qlippolitic Runestone, a leftover fragment of the original creation of the Abyss. Colyphyr was a mere demon until he was struck by the stone – at which point he was promoted to demon lord! When he was killed by *Nocticula*, the stone remained a part of his island.

The abyssal harvester lives in the bottom of the massive sinkhole at the center of Queen Mesmera's chamber. The slope down is composed of loose dirt and scree, treacherous footing leading directly to the harvester's maw. The characters prepare carefully. *Tabregon* casts *air walk* upon all present (including Queen Mesmera; she has wings, but apparently they are only for show). *Tsuguri* casts *blessing of fervor* and *freedom of movement* on the group to keep them safe from tentacular crushing.

The characters descend to the bottom of the sinkhole to confront the immense, grotesque bulk of the abyssal harvester. Against all expectations, Queen Mesmera comes along. She wasn't much help in dealing with the dragon before. The characters' expectations are set appropriately now. Along the way she summons in some *babau* demons, leading the characters to somewhat up their assessment of her potential contribution.

*Trystan* invokes *smite evil* upon the harvester. He rattles arrows down upon it, but only one strikes home.

The harvester surveys the area and lashes out at *Tsuguri* (he is the tastiest!). The creature shudders with frustration when it realizes that it cannot grapple him. Instead, it merely pounds him over and over with its tentacles. *Shawanda* moves into the way and takes the force of one of the blows. Her anger burning, she advances upon the creature and pierces its side with *Radiance* leaving a gash as big as a man. The harvester, of course, is only lightly wounded.

*Tsuguri* casts *chains of light* to hold the harvester in place. The creature is locked in place, unable to perform extradimensional travel. It is also paralyzed, which puts a crimp in its movement-based fighting style.

*Tabregon* uses a combination of *cure serious wounds*, *energy body* and mythic power to cure *Tsuguri*. Meanwhile, Queen Mesmera's pack of three *babau* demons flies in to execute coup de grace strikes on the paralyzed abyssal harvester. They stab clean through its brain. It is quickly dead, sent on that shadowy path into the night-shrouded marsh where none are spared eternal loneliness.

The characters *air walk* their way back to the top and then head towards the mining operation.

## **Anteroom of the Mine**

The characters swiftly come to understand that Baphomet's demons started mining in the Queen's cavern and (being unburdened with the mobility issues affecting mortal miners) simply kept on mining straight down without any of the safety or structural concerns that would burden mortal miners. The characters use *air walk* to make their way down the 1000 foot shaft. At the bottom, the characters find a dimly-lit

chamber. The cavern walls are decorated with countless carvings of a demonic goat-headed figure. Eight passages (including one very impressive sealed door) lead from the cavern to other places within the mine.

Most important, there are six *kalavakas* demons in the cavern. The brutes are muscular and violet-colored. They have spurs upon their forearms, four horns each, and gorilla-like features. *Antonius* knows that they are also called “horned” demons and work as slavers in the Abyss. They can *enslave the soul* of any mortal creature. A mortal with an enslaved soul is weakened when fighting the demon that enslaved it. If the demon is able to slay the mortal, it can carry the mortal’s soul off to the Abyss.

Tsuguri uses his *mythic advance* trick to position the group, and then moves to engulf three *kalavakas* demons in his *aura of madness*. Two of them fail to resist the spell and their minds are consumed by rammeling voices and deranging sights.

Trystan opens fire upon a *kalavakas*, leaving the creature crippled and pierced through with arrows. The good-aligned arrowheads burn awful smoking wounds in the creature’s body. *Antonius* tears into a second *kalavakas*, shattering the creature with sheer physical prowess. Shawanda charges a third, bearing *Radiance* in her hand, leaving it crippled.

Two *kalavakas* demons attempt to attack Trystan. Neither of them really injures him. Tabregon burns one and blinds the other with a *mythic holy smite*. Shawanda and *Antonius* lay about right and left, destroying two more demons as they do. A moment and a flurry of arrows later, all the *kalavakas* demons are destroyed.

### *Demonic Reinforcements*

The characters have a brief celebration, but *Antonius*’ victory dance is interrupted when another pack of opponents teleports in: a *glabrezu* demon and trio of succubi! *Antonius* grumbles something about interrupting his parties, but his words are cut short as the succubi cast a volley of *dominate* spells at Trystan, Shawanda and Tabregon. Only Trystan is affected by their magic, but even then the effect is only temporary. Shawanda shows her opinion of their spell-casting trickery by advancing upon them with purpose and good-inspired malice.

The *glabrezu* demon casts *reverse gravity* on the area, creating a certain level of chaos in the group – but less than he might have hoped, as most of the group is using *air*

*walk*. Antonius and Trystan respond by pouring damage into him, tearing him apart and leaving his body dripping smoky demonic ichor to the stone floor. As he passes away into that lightless cavern of twisting passages from which none are able to escape, Antonius recognizes that his name was *Kralisk*. At one time he was the Foreman of the Mine.

One of the succubi turns to Trystan and starts screaming the names of fruits at him in Abyssal. Trystan deduces that she has fallen victim to Tsuguri's *aura of madness*. Another one attacks him with her claw-like fingernails. Trystan reflects that the claws are less painful than hearing about fruits in Abyssal. The third succubus starts to scream out the names of nuts in Abyssal. Trystan looks around for release.

On Trystan's flanks, Shawanda slashes the nut-screaming succubus in half. The Abyssal din in the chamber lessens somewhat as she is gathered up to that endless black garden where no plant ever blossoms and no fruit ever drops.

Trystan recognizes that none of the succubi can be allowed to escape. He and Shawanda take up the war cry, "No witnesses!" Antonius takes them up on their word and pummels a second succubus into the ground.

The last succubus, after taking a punch in the snoot from Antonius, leaves off chanting fruit names and attempts to kill him. She has no significant effect, and doesn't last much longer before Trystan shoots her down like a demoness.

### *The Amber Lens*

The characters search the chamber. On one wall they find an unusual blood-flow along another wall. Trystan concludes that it is merely mineral-laden water that *looks* like blood. Demons have some very interesting ideas about appropriate decorating styles.

On the opposite wall the characters find a 3' diameter disk, glowing amber. It is clutched in the mouth of a metallic demon head mounted upon the wall. The characters examine both the disk and the demon head at length, hoping to learn what it is. It has an overwhelming aura, strong enough that characters must make saving throws to avoid being stunned when they cast *detect magic* on it. It is clearly an evil artifact, though nobody can tell exactly what it is. Tsuguri is at least able to recognize that it is a major artifact (CL35). Tabregon asks *Arueshalae* if she knows what it is. She doesn't know, but she offers to find a *legend lore* scroll for it.

Antonius (grumbling as Tabregon casts *ant haul* upon him and advises him to “lift from the legs, not from the back”) wrenches the thing off the wall and puts it into the group’s *portable hole*.

## The Chambers of the Daughter of Baphomet

One of the eight passages out of the chamber is marked with the carving of an inverted pentagram, a symbol that is often used by worshippers of Baphomet. The door itself is magically trapped – it holds a *mythic glyph of warding* containing an *augmented mythic harm*. Tabregon identifies the trap and then dispels it away.

The group breaks through the lock and passes through. Behind it a finely appointed room dominated by four fantastic wall tapestries showing maps of a world made of mazes and ruled by a bull-headed demon. A massive purple crystal on a stand dominates a central workbench carved with the images of the damned wracked in their suffering.

A large female creature with half-minotaur appearance turns to the characters and yells, “I’m busy! I am not to be disturbed!” Before the characters can respond she leaps to the attack, using *faith’s reach* to cast *augmented mythic harm* on Shawanda (with the *poison* side-dish). Shawanda survives the assault, though she is wounded almost unto death.

Antonius steps up to the cattle-demoness and strikes her twice. She shrugs off the blows, barely even noticing his stunning fist powers. Then she swings her *large adamantite heavy pick +4* at Trystan, gouging him badly.

Antonius uses his mystic insights to understand that the characters are facing a Nephilim. Such creatures are normally the result of a pairing between a godly parent and a mortal. In this case, they face the child of Baphomet and a minotaur mother.

Trystan calls upon the powers of Shelyn to *smite evil* and strikes the daughter of Baphomet once. The arrow sinks deep in her side, the arrowhead biting down serpent-wise. Shawanda *smites evil*, striking from the other side. Tabregon and Tsuguri work to heal Shawanda’s wounds and cure her of the magical poison.

*Hephzamirah* (for it is she who the characters face) casts an *augmented vertical blade barrier* and sweeps it across the room, shredding Tabregon and injuring Trystan (who is partially protected by *shield other*).

Antonius executes a *dispelling strike* that evaporates harmlessly against *Hephzamirah*'s defenses, then two more hits that leave her badly wounded. Tsuguri casts another *greater dispel magic*, eliminating her *stoneskin* and her *air walk*. Trystan follows up with two arrows that fly true and leave her critically wounded. Shawanda steps in to deliver the death-strike with *Radiance*, severing nerves in the arm and driving the blade directly into her heart. She falls with a shocked expression upon her face, "Father!"

As *Hephzamirah* falls her body splits open, the vaporous form of a goat-headed demon bursting free from her carcass. The vapors coalesce into the awful shape of the demon lord Baphomet. The characters cower before it.

Baphomet's soul-shattering voice booms down upon them, "Mortal worms! You have destroyed my daughter, but even in her death she has been of use to me! While she was distracted in the Midnight Isles I stole the Herald of your patroness Iomedae! And now I shall destroy you!"

Baphomet moves to extinguish the group, but he is stopped by an unseen force. One of his horns breaks off. Skin and flesh starts to flay from his bones. He screams out as *Nocticula* takes shape from the darkness and drives him off. His manifestation becomes foul-smelling ash and blows away on a wind that none can feel but him.

Shrouded in shadow, her shape only partly visible, *Nocticula* addresses the characters. "You have done it! You have forced a demon lord out from a place of power! Truly I did not think that you were equal to the task. Yet you have made a mighty enemy today, so you should not congratulate yourselves overmuch upon your victory. But I shall show mercy upon you. Merely step into my shadows to be on your way home!"

The characters quickly grab the four tapestries of the Ivory Labyrinth from the wall, a large chest from the floor, and whatever they can wrench from *Hephzamirah*'s body. They smash the giant purple crystal upon her workbench, reasoning that it is probably a refined Nahyndrian crystal. All told the characters gather up:

- *Vasiculus Labyrinthum*
- *Large full plate +3*

- *Blancher*, a large adamantine heavy pick +4 (damage as a huge weapon)
- *Amulet of natural armor* +2
- *Belt of thunderous charging*
- *Headband of inspired wisdom* +6
- Powdered diamond (800 gp worth)
- 8050 gold pieces
- 45,527 silver pieces
- 16979 gold pieces
- 410 platinum
- 5 matching topazes (650 gold pieces each)
- *Potion of tongues*
- *Oil of stone shape*
- 3 scrolls of *commune*
- 1 scroll of *true resurrection*
- *Wand of restoration* (11 charges)
- *Decanter of endless water*
- 4 tapestries of the Ivory Labyrinth (5000 gold pieces each)

Their treasure in hand, they step into the folds of Nocticula's cloak. When they step out they are back in the Fane of Midnight in the middle of the Worldwound. Arueshalae and *Queen Galfrey* are still there, waiting for them. Queen Galfrey has the characters teleported back to Drezen.

### *The Rewards of Victory*

Defeating Hephzimirah counts as a mythic trial and facing Baphomet is another mythic trial. This is enough to bring the characters to the 7<sup>th</sup> Mythic Tier. In addition, the characters all rise up to 12<sup>th</sup> level.

## **The Artifacts of Evil**

Back in Drezen the characters investigate the book they took from Hephzimirah and the amber lens they removed from the wall of the main chamber of the mine. The book is a slim leather-bound volume with the rune of Baphomet upon its cover, titled

*Vasiculus Labyrinthum*. It is a minor artifact in its own right, containing instructions on how to operate the *Imago Lens*. It also describes how to build a new *Imago Lens*, given sufficient time and resources. Holding the book provides a +4 profane bonus on saves vs. insanity and confusion. It also includes significant details upon the rituals and proper worship of Baphomet. It is technically not evil, though it does provide a profane bonus and could easily be said to include evil contents.

The great amber disk (and its demon-head mount) is the *Imago Lens*. It is a chaotic evil artifact with great powers of divination. It is able to function as a *crystal ball* with *telepathy* and *true seeing*. It may project an image of the user into any location the lens can observe. Though the image cannot move about, the user may speak (and hear) through it and may cast spells through it. If the image is destroyed or dispelled, the user may suffer negative side effects.

## The Stolen Herald

Remembering Baphomet's words, the characters inquire in the Temple of Iomedae after the whereabouts of the Herald. They learn that *Erridan*, the Hand of Venegance, the Herald of Iomedae, has vanished.

Trystan *communes* to find out what has happened to him. He learns that a desperate priest called upon him during an attack upon the demonic city of Raliscrag. Raliscrag is in the Worldwound, upon the Sarkoris River. It stands in the Riftshadow region. Baphomet sent *Tadeshka*, The Warden of Baphomet's prisons, to face Erridan. They met in titanic conflict but at the end she overpowered and captured him. Their battle broke the Crusader army in half and crushed the siege of the city.

## The Drezen Marketplace

The characters see that the citadel of Drezen has continued to become stronger and larger while they were away in the Abyss. There are more people around, more goods for sale in the marketplace, and many, many more Crusaders stomping about in neatly ordered formation.

The characters open up the *portable hole* and the *bag of holding* and sell off many of the items and trinkets that they have gathered in their recent adventures. Each character's share amounts to some 38,239 gold and 3 copper coins.

Notable items for sale in the marketplace include:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>
<i>Dust of disappearance</i>	
<i>Bag of flames</i>	
<i>Clear spindle ioun stone</i>	
<i>Dragonhide plate (blue)</i>	
<i>Eternal wand of blur</i>	4420
<i>Bladed crossbow (M47)</i>	4660
<i>Eternal wand of invisibility</i>	4420
<i>Toxic gloves (M144)</i>	6000
<i>Scroll of raise dead</i>	
<i>Rod of defiance (M56)</i>	7312

Tabregon reminds the others that he does have the ability to make magical arms and armor, and now can make items of up to a +4 bonus.

## **The End of the Session**

The session ends with the characters back in Drezen, safely returned from their venture into the Abyss. They have defeated Hephzamirah, the Daughter of Baphomet, and have gained the direct ire of the demon lord as a result. They have also advanced to 12<sup>th</sup> level and the 7<sup>th</sup> mythic tier.