

MUMMY RUSTLERS - SESSION SUMMARY II/20/2016

TODAY'S EPISODE: RAID ON GAUNT CADAVER

Our heroes are tomb raiding in Wati's necropolis under the permissions of the Church of Pharamasma and have completed their second assignment, the House of Pentheru. They have just met up with a rival yet friendly team, The Scorched Hand, to plot --- namely, to get assigned the Erudite Eye as their next tomb raid assignment. This just requires quietly breaking into a church vault and switching some tiles around.

Our heroes are:

- Patrick as Usif bin Adeen, Osirian human Immolator 4
- Tim as Denat, ifrit Cleric 3
- Chris as Murdus Sangaree, Osirian human Fighter 4
- Ernest as Khaled, Keleshite human Burglar 4

The Plan to Bend Rules

The Mummy Rustlers (the PCs) and Scorched Hand membership have plotted in the streets of the necropolis to stack the deck in the favor for the next day's tomb raiding assignments. Velriana Hypaxes, leader of the Scorched Hand, has used divination to ascertain that neither group will receive the plum Erudite Eye assignment. So she has proposed that both teams pool their resources to break into the Church of Pharamasma and switch out the pre-selected tiles.

Idorii (Scorched Hand elf guard/burglar), Khaled (Mummy Rustler human burglar), and Imanish (doru div Devourer of Secrets) are the likely A-team for this mission with Velriana Hypaxes and Azaz Arafe supplying wizardly invisibility and concentrating on those from outside. The remaining team members would supply loud distractions as needed.

The groups split up and set off for the necropolis gate. En route the Mummy Rustlers come across a large group of khopesh armed humans coming out of a villa. All of them have funeral masks on.

Khaled greets them. “Hello... Fellow tomb raiders? How’s it going?”

“Oh we are funerary mask enthusiasts. Do you have any such masks? We would like purchase them.”

Khaled displays one of their looted masks. The masked leader inspects it and declares, “Sorry, not one of the masks we are after.”

Suspecting they may not be a licensed tomb raiding band, Khaled inquires, “Who are you?”

“The Forgotten Pharaohs.” The PCs don’t remember a group by that name, but then again, they’re not sure they know all the other teams.

Murdus doesn’t want the parley to end peacefully. “Yes, give us something to not rat you out now before you go.”

Usif poses menacingly, calling on the powers of his necromancer circlet to aid Murdus’ demand for a bribe. The masked leader demands, “Very well, but put away your weapons first to prove you don’t intend to kill us.” Murdus begins to agree, yet he reads the situation that the masked band intends violence.

Murdus attacks screaming, “They mean to murder us!”

The masked leader hits Murdus with burning hands, then again with shocking hands. Usif sets fire to one masked man as another backstabs him. That one is backstabbed in turn by

Khaled – that man dies with punctured kidneys. Murdus slices the masked leader from clavicle to groin – the two parts flop to the ground. Usif burns the last one down.

The masked men are de-masked revealing ordinary humans.

Loot: a potion of undetectable alignment * 3, scrolls of whispering wind * 3, oil of tagit * 3, bronze masks * 3, kopesh * 3, spell books * 3, thieves tools * 3, and some minor valuables (40gp in gems, 12 gp in coins).

Murdus declares, “Well, given these masks and equipment and some new robe purchases, we have our patsies for tonight’s distraction.”

Denat comes upon his companions looting the dead men. He asks, “What happened?”

Khaled replies, “These men attacked Murdus unprovoked.”

“They were coming right at me!” confirms Murdus.

Denat nods, “Fine. There’s a church patrol heading this way.”

Khaled ventures, “Hey... Since we still appear to be in a murdering mood, there’s that bad guy dark folk necromancer that we should off to get in good with Unwrapped Harmony, the dark folk leader...”

The entire group heads as one toward Gaunt Cadaver’s hideout. The hour may be late, but their thirst for blood is yet unslaked!

En route Denat explains, “I was called away to help deal with poisoned food stores. I blame Pox Boy.” (This explains his absence last game session.)

Gaunt Cadaver's Hideout

Gaunt Cadaver's base of operations is a large villa surrounded by high walls. They open the gates and enter the grounds, which include low, hardy, and green vegetation.

The earth rumbles quietly. Then dirt explodes beneath Khaled as an acid spitting insect emerges and bites him. Seeing this, Murdus has time to slam his ax into the ground, yet the second insect bypasses this attack and bites him too.

Usif throws a volley of fire brands at an attacking insect – it burns. Denat rushes to heal Khaled, taking an insect's acid spit to his shield. He quickly removes the holed and burning shield, then jams his shield into his maw. It retreats into the earth as Khaled slashes at it.

Usif volleys fire brands at the remaining insect, while Murdus attempts to penetrate its hide with his ax. This one also retreats into the ground, then bursts out of the ground at Denat's feet. Khaled throws himself into the path of that attack, allowing Murdus a good swing on the horse sized insect.

The other insect bursts from the ground and bites Usif, interrupting his summoning of another burning brand. Denat casts a blessing on Khaled, demanding, "Look out for him!"

Khaled's dagger kills the bug and takes an acid spray in return. He writhes around on the ground, Aliens style.

Denat heals the wounded, then the group decides that Khaled will climb to the roof and scout it out. He throws a grappling hook, climbs the rope, and then covers the tiled roof to the center which opens into the villa's interior courtyard. A large cracked fountain spits heavily silted water into the air. More hardy, low vegetation dots the ground. A large, rotting, and very smelly man slowly limps around the yard.

Khaled returns and reports, “A beast of Lepidstadt is in the courtyard.” They look at him blankly. “You know? Like from Ailson Kindler’s novels?” He describes a Frankenstein to them.

The group decides on Khaled’s plan: everyone gets onto the roof and shoots at the monster from the south end. And while that distraction is going on Khaled throws open the doors on the courtyard’s north end. And then monster will enter the main compound and kill everyone inside. Easy peasy.

The plan works until Denat fires his second arrow, slips on an old tile, and plunges to the courtyard. Usif’s fiery brand volley burns the monster slightly... and slows it down allowing Murdus and his rope to haul Denat back to the safety of the roof. The creature narrowly misses grabbing Denat’s dangling legs. Its stench washes over the trio causing much gasping for air.

Meanwhile, at the north end Khaled climbs down via rope and goes to work on the northern doors. He pries the doors open to reveal a kitchen converted to make shift surgery. A tall man wrapped in dark rags uses long knives to “operate” on a corpse. It hisses unhappily at the open doors, Khaled, and the sunlight!

Seeing the northern doors open, the trio leads stops attacking the large undead and runs along the roof line north. The monster follows them slowly, then sees the open doors. It runs through. The adventurers are treated to crashing noises and screams – clearly the large undead doesn’t like hospitals! Take that, Obamacare!

The Mummy Rustlers regroup at the courtyard’s southern doors. They enter a dining hall, apparently empty of life. Tracks lead east and west. They can hear scuttling noises, as if many short dark folk are hiding inside the room.

Khaled loudly announces, “The golem is killing Gaunt Cadaver! Surrender now in the name of Mistress Harmony!”

A voice argues, “You come with weapons! Are you here to assassinate us? And why isn’t Mistress Harmony here!”

Usif sets fire to a large central table while Murdus throws open a second set of double doors that bring more sunlight into the room. A dark folk cuts Usif who in turn sets the man’s rags on fire. Murdus spikes the screaming creature to the table.

Khaled demands, “Does anyone else have stupid questions? Ready to go see Mistress Harmony and beg for your pitiful lives?”

A voice replies, “We cannot travel in the day.”

“Oh, we’ll get back to you. Stay here.”

The mummy rustlers move east and out of the room where Murdus kicks open the first door they come too. It is an ancient store room full of rotted items. They work further along a long hallway, kicking open doors and finding only empty sleeping quarters.

They finally arrive a door that likely opens into the makeshift hospital room. No noise emits from there. Khaled picks the lock and Murdus rushes in.

Gaunt Cadaver stands over a corpse, bathed in a purple nimbus of energy. Several dark creepers stand around him, clearly undead. The rotting golem lies unmoving on the floor with several broken dark creepers dead around it.

Denat uses his *turn undead* power to daze the zombie dark creeper. Usif rushes up and burns the creature, realizing it is fire resistant. Murdus closes the distance quickly and disembowels Gaunt Cadaver, who touches Murdus with a purple clad hand that robs him of life.

Khaled remains hiding outside the room and shoots an arrow at Gaunt Cadaver just after the necromancer casts bane on his enemies. Murdus cuts the necromancer twice more. Denat hits with an arrow that bounces off the purple nimbus... just as Khaled's arrow did earlier.

The zombie dark creeper unleashes a cloud of darkness that brings all but the sun lite areas of the room into complete darkness. Gaunt casts a *fear* spell on Khaled, who enters the light which is like shadow to the dark creepers who can only see in the dark. Denat casts *light* on the darkness around him.

Murdus sets into the sunlight and uses his ax's reach to yank Gaunt into the light, where Khaled back stabs him. Gaunt explodes in a ball of searing light that briefly blinds the adventurers. A carved stone lies on the ground where he stood.

Usif runs from the zombie and its stabbing dagger until a deep cut poisons him and leaves him without strength. Denat throws himself between the two and gets cut. The pair exchange blows until Murdus' ax bites into the zombie and propels its broken body into the courtyard.

Denat heals the wounded while the others prop up the unmoving Usif. Denat uses medicines from an abandoned healers kit to get Usif moving again.

Khaled picks up the dark folk's "gutstone." "Hey guys! He suffers without his stone!" They groan at the famous line attributed to the historical figure King Malkovich.

Loot: Gaunt's carved stone (the gut stone), a shield, scroll, surgeon's tools, and a healers kit. Also found is a three pound jar of royal honey, ten funerary servant statuettes, a bolt of silk, and onyx ear rings.

The group searches the rest of the villa finding little more of value. The fountain water is indeed silty but potable. They find several sealed rooms used to store mummified servants. Khaled makes mental note of this location as possible base for the Fading... for the right price.

And then they collect the surrendered dark creepers – two – who are told to surrender to Unwrapped Harmony. They again complain that they can't travel in the sunlight.

“Sack or barrel?”

“Uh, sacks.”

Unwrapped Harmony

The group plus the bagged dark creepers journey's to villa held by Unwrapped Harmony's people. Her “hand maidens” greet them at the gate.

Khaled whispers to Murdus, “Try not to kill anybody.”

Murdus replies, “OK.” Then to the hand maidens, “Take us to her so we can parley!”

The hand maidens lead them in to meet Unwrapped Harmony and her weirdo people.

“You have truly done a service to Clan Xotl,” the leader says. To her wayward dark folk, she says “The two of you will be reprimanded harshly but you will be returned to the fold.”

Both prisoners grovel and then depart.

“They are good at heart. We will rebuild them.”

The gut stone is handed over too. No one really wants to ask what will be done with it.

Khaled pulls out a Forgotten Pharaoh mask and asks, “Who are these guys?”

The Forgotten Pharaohs. They work with the Silver Chain (a thieves guild). They steal things here and sell them on the gray market.

Unwrapped Harmony produces the golden cones promised: 1 for Gaunt Cadaver, plus two more for the surviving dark creepers. Each is worth 250 gp.

“We consider you friends now and will help in whatever way we can.”

The hand maidens produce roasted beetles and alkaline water. Denat stares at his uncertainly. Murdus slurps the beetle shell clean and then drinks the water.

Unwrapped Harmony points out the Erudite Eye’s location on their map.

“Is the disease that originally savaged Wati still here?”

“No, it seems to be long gone. The danger is mainly from the restless undead. If you see others of our kind in this city, they will be an allied clan called the Ten Iron Coins. Do not bother them though you would be lucky to even spot them.”

Everyone says a formal good bye. The Mummy Rustlers exit the Necropolis with loot and return to the *Tooth and Hookab*.

The Erudite Eye Tile

The Scorched Hand meets up with them in their *Tooth and Hookab* room. The plan is gone over again to establish the time line.

The plan is re-worked:

- Valriana will enter the church for her team's next token.
- When the priest departs to get the token, Imannish and Khaled, both invisible will follow.
- The pair will switch the tokens.
- Valriana will cause a minor distraction by making a big stink.
- Azaz will maintain the invisibility on Khaled.
- The others will prepare distractions outside the church.

And that is the plan. Denat works several hours to start a "block party" in the street near the Pharasmin Church. This starts to build until Neb Croc shows and explains, "All this noise is disturbing the albino crocodiles." Denat moves his party to the opposite side of the church, where he is fined and driven off by the guards.

Murdus, Khelru, and Usif buy uniform robes from the "secret cult" store.

Khaled and Imannish arrive invisible with Valriana. Their plan starts off well. The invisible pair follow the priest to a room guarded by a single man. They try an illusion of a flirty acolyte to lure the guard away, but the guard hears voices that distracts him.

Then they try having Imannish tries being the “voice of Pharama”, which the guard isn’t buying either. He runs for help, crying out, “Foul magic!” Khaled has to knock him unconscious, then pick the lock.

Imannish drags the unconscious guard into the room where Khaled ties him up. Imannish returns to the hall to maintain an illusion of a much stupider looking guard... guarding.

Khaled works furiously to find the token. With it in hand, he hears a conversation outside the door where Imannish is attempting to convince two other guards via his illusionary guard that nothing happened earlier when he screamed, “Foul magic!” “Sorry! I am a stupid human and sometimes blurt out stupid things!” The other guards aren’t totally buying it.

The robes cost three coin which Murdus pays then seek out Denat’s street party. Not finding the Denat or the party they decide to launch their distraction. From an alley, Usif sets fire to temple manner (exterior wall). Then the trio burst out the alley screaming, “Forgotten Pharaohs! Free the Mask!” They run thru the streets and past the guards collecting fines from Denat. The guards tell Denat, “Stay out of trouble!” then chase after the trio.

Inside the church, Khaled hears the ruckus outside then Imannish uses *suggestion* - “You two should investigate that disturbance.” The two guards run off. Khaled wipes mumia (fantasy crank) on the unconscious guard’s nose and mouth, then exits the room. The pair make their way to an exterior wall and jump down.

Everyone meets up later at their Tooth and Hookah room, with Murdus, Idorii, and Usif being the latest. Everyone celebrates their victory by eating, drinking and hooking up: Khaled and Velriana, Murdus and Idorii, and Denat and the entire Daughters of the Desert group. Usif seeks out like minded cultists in the Veins.

Hetshepsut Takes

Usif purchases incense for a sacrifice. In the Veins he is given a small oven to perform his divinations. He sees Murdus' sister, Hetshepsut, sleeping in a small room with her blue ice lizard. Her sleep becomes dream as the Fiend Pharaoh demands of her, "Go to the sanctum of the Erudite Eye, locate the one who killed me, and make sure he does not come back!"

Usif returns to the inn. Just outside he spots Hetshepsut, her lizard, and six of her thugs heading into the building. They turn to confront Usif.

Hetshepsut says, "Well, you will be proof that my brother can have nothing."

Usif replies, "I'm the best. I can best you and all of these guys."

Hetshepsut pulls her bow taunt and aims at Usif, "Surrender!"

Usif nods and allows her minions tie him up.

Usif watches the minions depart to kill or kidnap his friends.

Khaled and Velriana are interrupted in their fourth or fifth inning to their room door being kicked open by minions. The oiled men demand, "Surrender! Hetshepsut your pharaoh waits outside!" Khaled nods and strides out of the room without clothes and, using the distraction, then stabs one of the men in ribs. The three of them fall to floor, tussling for control of the

dagger. Velriana casts a strength robbing spell on one man, allowing Khaled to get his dagger free and viciously stab one of their attackers to death.

Meanwhile, Murdus' room door is kicked open. The first man is thrown out the window. The second jumps upon Murdus. The pair wrestle until Murdus gains the upper hand and starts strangling the man. Idorii ends that one's life with a dagger thrust. "I must reach Velriana and protect her!" she says as she runs out the door. Murdus grabs up his ax and runs after Idorii.

Denat's room door is also kicked open at the same time. The intruding pair are greeted by Denat and four women engaged in acts even unusual in Osirion. The twin witches cast a curse on one while the barbarian seizes up an ax and attacks the other man. Denat's "weaponized orgy" takes out the two attackers handily.

Outside, Usif says, "Why do you hate your brother?"

Hetshepsut replies, "Because I am the rightful pharaoh."

You two could co-rule... and marry. (he hears gagging noises in the distance as if his words were emotionally scarring someone).

"In the ancient days the pharaoh and consort shared a magic rapport. It was meant to strengthen them but in the end it meant that when one was poisoned the other also died from poison."

"Usif describes his vision then demands, "What is your desire?"

To expand my empire into the greatness that it was, to be served, to see my enemies defeated and nations kneel at my feet."

While listening to this Usif summons flames to burn his rope bonds... that is until the ice lizard wanders over and absorbs that flame. It huffs in a self-satisfied manner.

A window shatters and one of Hetshepsut's cupid-men falls to his death.

The Mummy Rustlers and Scorched Hand all rush outside, except for Khaled and Velriana who decide to snipe from their upstairs room's window.

Murdus berates his sister. "Now all of your followers are dead!"

"Oh well, the night is young."

Hetshepsut summons down dark clouds that form a huge beast with roiling claws. It emits a maddening squeal that horrifies everyone with their worst fears and phobias. Usif feels freezing, Murdus feels restrained, and one of the witches screams, "My familiar!" The huge beast lashes out, wounding many, and seemingly unbeatable.

Murdus demands a vision from his axe, and it is granted. In time immemorial the Kirin and this demon's race fought a war that the Kirin won. The surviving demons cursed the Kirin that they could not return to their home in the Elemental Plane of Air as long as one demon lived."

Meanwhile the demon cloud displays a new trick, it can emit a noise, pleasant notes to lure victims to their doom.

Murdus screams out the Kirin portion of the information. Upon hearing about the Kirin, Denat attempts a summoning via his god. He pops open the royal honey and demands of his weaponized orgy, "Eat!" Many hands reach into the jar and scoop out honey. On a metaphysical plane of foodstuffs, a lone Kirin demands words from Denat. Denat says, "Your racial enemy is here. Come help us fight it and I will owe you a boon."

A demon maw swallows up the barbarian and pulls her into the maelstrom.

Velriana throws a fire spell at the giant demon. Khaled is happy to find that his iron arrows hurt the demon. Velriana screams out in pain; Khaled turns to see a green scorpion withdrawing its stinger from her neck.

Velriana says, "Azaz... betraying me!"

Khaled stabs the scorpion dead then carries Velriana to the bed. It is indeed the green scorpion the young sorcerer has as a familiar.

Usif cuts himself free with fire. He looks up to see Hetshepsut busy controlling the demon. He uses his foot to keep the ice lizard at bay as he throws a volley of fire daggers at her. All three daggers are intercepted by the lizard.

From a nearby room Azaz and Khelru argue.

"She was going to betray us and keep all the secrets for herself."

"I'm pretty sure you are over reacting. This is unforgivable."

"I can't talk to you now, her hold on you is too great."

Azaz casts a spell and Khelru's demeanor turns 180 degrees, "Yes, let's go."

Murdus attacks the demon with his ax and is bitten horribly in turn.

Usif drives off the ice lizard and burns off the ice clinging to him. Hetshepsut turns on him and directs the demon to attack him – its bite almost ends his life.

Khaled ignores the demon fight to attack Azaz. He jumps out the window and lands gracefully on the ground. He lunges at Azaz and is intercepted by Khelru, who he tries to knock out with dagger pommels. Khelru casts *sun weapon* on his staff and swings it widely, driving Khaled back. They retreat thru the demon's maelstrom.

Denat continues his argument for intervention by the kirin. It finally agrees, in return for a service from the entire group at a later time. The kirin appears on the physical plane. And another. And another. And another. The demon's claws and maws withdraw in fear. It casts a mighty whirlwind spell to cover its escape, but the kirin win through that and slay it. Everyone clings to buildings and wagons as the winds attempt to drag them into the sky.

The winds die down slowly. Everyone picks themselves up. Hetshepsut, her ice lizard, and her new allies Azaz and Khelru are gone.

Denat examines the poisoned Velriana, determining that the familiar's poison is worse than expected. The barbarian woman is gone forever, eaten by the demon.

Usif shares his vision with the others. They must beat Hetshepsut to the Erudite Eye.

End of the Session

- Bonds
 - Usif's worry over Denat's bravery has been resolved.
 - Denat's worry over Usif's spirituality has been resolved.
 - Murdus got Denat to use a recipe to help the group.

- Khaled closed the deal with Velriana.
- Alignments
 - Everyone fulfills their alignments.
- Did you learn something new and interesting about the world (Yes/No)?
 - Giant Kirin / smoke demon war.
- Did you overcome a notable enemy (Yes/No)? Giant smoke demon.
- Did you loot a notable treasure (Yes/No)? Erudite Eye token.

Usif levels from 3rd to 5th. Denat levels to 4th. Khaled levels to 5th.