

MUMMY RUSTLERS - SESSION SUMMARY 12/18/2016

TODAY'S EPISODE: AUCTION OF SOULS

Our heroes have been tomb raiding in Wati's necropolis under the auspices of the Church of Pharama's official "We Love Organized Tomb Raiding" contest. They have made friends with the Scorched Hand team and completed several raids and side missions successfully. During a celebration of their joint success, Usif had a vision of betrayal which was carried out by the Scorched Hand member Azaz with aid from Hetshepsut, Murdus' sister, and a giant demon. The betrayers fled with their strength intact to the Erudite Eye temple inside the necropolis, hoping to gain the favor of a Pharaoh's spirit. Our heroes gave chase, carefully blundering into every monster and trap, confronted the villains, and killed them all. Now they must push onward and claim the prize... a conversation with a Pharaoh's spirit... or horrible, horrible death.

New leveling rules have been implemented this session. Cost was "current level + 7 xp", now cost is "(current level + 7 xp) * 2".

Our heroes are:

- Patrick as Usif bin Adeen, Osirian human Immolator 5
- Tim as Denat, ifrit Cleric 4?
- Chris as Murdus Sangaree, Osirian human Fighter 4
- Ernest as Khaled, Keleshite human Burglar 5

Traitors and Sister Are Dead

Idorii, Khaled, Murdus, and Usif have cleaned up after the battle with Hetshepsut, her followers, and the traitors Khelru and Azaz.

- Corpses are wrapped for later proper funerals: Khelru, Azaz, and Hetshepsut.

- Loot, mundane and interesting, is distributed amongst the victors.
- Murdus claims Hetshepsut's magical bow, her counterpart to his axe.

Murdus consults the spirits with his magic ax. In an ancient Osirian city, he stands with the Fiend Pharaoh who tells him: "You must prevent Hakotep from reuniting his soul. If he succeeds the dead will walk and he will rise and rule again. This cannot be permitted; the divider of my soul cannot rule. Find his *ka*, and his *ba* will seek you out." Murdus agrees that letting another pharaoh rise is a bad idea; he agrees to strangle Pharaoh Hakotep's plot in the cradle. The Fiend Pharaoh is pleased and blesses Murdus. When Murdus comes out of his mediation his skin is a gold hue, such as some tieflings possess.

Khaled is able to provide context; he knows about all the bizarre Osirian beliefs about parts of the soul. "Osiriani use every part of the soul," he explains. Translation: If Pharaoh Hakotep cannot recover his *ka* he cannot live again. If Pharaoh Hakotep cannot recover his *ba*, he will never truly be Pharaoh Hakotep.

Everyone decides to clear out the Erudite Eye then off to crush Pharaoh Hakotep's plot.

They push eastward and eventually find a tomb room belonging Djedihepet, the founder and first high priest of this Nethyan temple. He was also a good friend to the pharaoh. Usif examines the canopic jars; they are clay and sealed with wax. Great effort and time is spent to pry the heavy sarcophagus open. Inside is a mummified man and rat, perhaps a familiar to the man. Neither is adorned in riches though the man wears a simple onyx funerary mask and holy symbol (20gp each), so the inside of the container is searched revealing a hidden button.

The button is pushed – stone slides back revealing a hidden chamber... and electricity arcs across the sarcophagus. Khaled and Usif leap clear and take only minor wounds. Murdus takes the brunt with his metal axe head. Denat heals the wounded.

The hidden chamber contains ancient spices, which Denat claims for religious uses... This is what the Food God is pleased when a ceremony involves ancient spices (2000 years old) and that are rare (buried beneath a long forgotten tomb for 2000 years).

They return to the battle chamber to find a skeleton garbed in armor and armed with a spear. “I am Senenmerek; I guard this chamber.”

They wave their Nethyan holy symbols. “We’re fine. We’re all fine here now, thank you. How are you?”

“I won’t be fooled again!” the skeleton moves to the attack.

Denat stuns Senenmerek by turning the undead creature, which opens him up for Khaled to sneak attack with dual kukris. Unfortunately, Senenmerek’s mithral armor turns the worst of the damage. Murdus swings and hits with an adamantite flail. Senenmerek recovers and heals himself with negative energy. Alchemist fire is thrown, singeing him slightly. Khaled dodges a spear thrust while the others press their attacks. Senenmerek staggers back then counterattacks with a burst of negative energy that burns them all. And then he is set aflame by Usif’s burning brand then crushed by Murdus’ swung flail.

Denat heals the wounded and then Senenmerek is looted: magical strengthened bronze tipped spear (alter the properties for bludgeoning, silver, cold iron, or slashing once a day), a wooden Nethys holy symbol, and a mithral shirt (2pts of armor without clumsy drawback). Denat claims the spear. Usif claims the shirt.

The rest of the temple basement complex contains some minor undead and little more treasure. Denat uses discern reality through his new magic spear and aides Khaled in finding the keystone that will allow them to control the temple's guardian. It is clear from the wizardly debris in that area that Azaz had seized control of the akhat. Denat does the same, fueling his magic with ancient spices.

An elemental creature of hieroglyphic marked stone appears before them. Denat orders it to continue keeping the temple clean and guarded. And allow anyone announcing they work for Pharaoh Murdus. Otherwise, it is free to give atomic wedgies to any who enter.

The temple's library is checked again. The useful bits are gathered up carefully and cataloged; they will read later through the ancient Osirian and its complexities to find clues in pursuing Pharaoh Hakotep's plot.

Research, Merchantilism, and Sacrifice

Velriana is able to read ancient Osirian more easily than Murdus. She finds no sign of the Forgotten Pharaoh or Hakotep in pages looted from the library of Nethys. She hands over scrolls detect secret doors and remove paralysis to prove her honesty. She offers to buy the collection for 300 gp; Khaled agrees for the party.

Velriana is learned about ancient Osirion, and tells the group that there is no known Pharaoh Hakotep and that he was probably purged from the historical records (a forgotten pharaoh). I suggest you go to a place with extensive records, perhaps even the library at Tefhu (fantasy Alexandria). And that city is located across the great river from here.

Murdus tells Khaled, “Your woman has fire. You should get her with child soon!”

Khaled shudders. This is why he usually prefers pursuing other men’s wives.

The group takes inventory of their acquisitions from the temple. More loot is pulled out of the team’s trapped treasure chest, whose iron cobra occupant waits patiently to bite a trespasser’s hand. One pass is made to distribute some useful gear amongst the team. The great auction for the necropolis loot will be held in two days, so the Mummy Rustlers decide that they will sell most of their ‘gear’ loot and simple valuables now in hopes of getting a stake so they can do research at Tefhu.

The sold goods net each team member 311 gp. Denat uses his share to buy a feast for purposes of carousing. He uses his party as an opportunity to research the necromancer Nebta-Khufre, who we believe may be the person who got to the Erudite Eye first. His prominence grew quickly in Wati as his ability to speak with the dead opened the doors of the wealthy. From there he built a death cult that recruited from the cities wealthy and important citizens. His crimes and public successes drew the attention of Pharasmin inquisitors who investigated with blade and fire, driving him and his remaining followers underground. Nebta-Khufre now lives on the run, rumored to be hiding in the necropolis and less frequently in the hidden rooms of the city’s elite.

Usif uses ritual fire magic, fueled by the sacrifice of Hetshepsut’s pharaoh bow, to tie Hetshepsut’s spirit and ghost to Murdus. The effect is a companion who is advisor, an extra set of eyes for Murdus... plus, the twins will be together forever.

An identify scroll is read to determine that Akhentepi’s cloth armor has the following qualities: 1 armor, plus 1 vs surprise, anti-bleed, and plus 2 on last breath checks. Khaled is pleased.

The Auction

The antiquities auction is held an hour after sundown at The Canny Jackal. In attendance are professional auctioneers (middle men), necropolis raid teams (sellers), and buyers (rich people and potentially super villains).

The auctioneers request that each team put their goods into lots and then on the sly suggest the team members circulate amongst the buyers and talk up their goods. The Mummy Rustlers build the following lots:

- A collection of funerary masks
- A collection of jewelry
- A collection of silver plates and goblets
- Akhentepi's chariot, spear, and khopesh – the latter two items are turned in by Denat and Murdus as they have gained better items.

Waiters circulate with platters of seafood, 100 year old royal jelly, and other delicacies. Notable in the crowd is a plump noble woman with a refined palate, a coffee merchant who stinks of wealth (i.e. coffee), four Andoran adventurers, a young noble man seeking weapons, a humorless woman representing a large trading house, an older noble woman with her granddaughter, a young armor smith, and a crew of Abadaran clerics.

Denat introduces himself to the plump gourmande, explaining, “We both enjoy the delicacies from forgotten times.” She is intrigued by his heritage, he explains that he is an ifrit and has some genie bloodline in him. He studiously ignores Khaled, who is frantically signing “Tell her

if she rubs you she'll get a wish" at him from nearby. She offers him the chef's position in her household, which he politely declines. The pair arrive at an agreement – she will bid on their goods and if she wins, Denat will cook a grand meal for her and her friends. She also points at the young noble man, Kaeled Oketi, who is famous for spending his family's money on weapons and harlots.

Usif introduces himself to Kaeled Oketi and introduces him to the Akhentepi Collection. And he sweetens the deal by allowing Kaeled to copy his Akhentepi military books. Then he gets permission from Murdus for that act... Murdus is disappointed that Kaeled only wants the Akhentepi Collection and military books for his own collection and not for military conquests. But he agrees – empire always requires coin.

Velriana introduces Khaled to Mishtotens, the elder noblewoman and her granddaughter, who are after ancient jewelry, fashions, and "forbidden" scrolls (i.e. naughty pictures). A social gaffe, invisible to Khaled, ruins the hobbing and nobbing.

Murdus introduces himself as the next pharaoh to the coffee merchant, inquiring "What are you here for?" The merchant explains he is after geneological documents so he can trace the human side of his heritage (the man is half-elf). This gets the Mummy Rustlers to get their "stack of Akhentepi papers" entered as a late arrival lot.

Murdus and Denat attempt to hobnob with the humorless merchant woman. Denat does poorly, Murdus much more poorly.

Khaled talks to the Andorans who are known as the Four Lanterns. They are looking for masterwork weapons and other adventuring gear. He sells them on the lot of Akhen-tepi's weapons and chariot. They're dubious about the chariot until he tells them the tale of Harrieteb

Ptubman and her Underground Chariotway used to spirit slaves away from under the noses of the old pharaohs. They are then extremely enthusiastic about it.

Usif and Denat successfully talk up the funerary gear to the Abadarian priests. Khaled tries to interest the armor smith, who is looking for a centerpiece for his shop, in the chariot but he's not interested.

The auction goes well and every group sells most of their lots. The Mummy Rustlers earn 244 gp and 6 sp per team member in the form of a promissory note backed by the Sanctum of Silver and Gold.

Usif, who pines for Akhentepi's shield, sees it sold to the grandmother / granddaughter noble team.

Zombie Apocalypse

A frantic pounding comes from the Canny Jackal's front door, which is firmly locked and barred to keep out the dirty people. The pounding ends with tearing lumber as a flood of zombies pours into the room. A pair of Canny Jackal employees fall to their claws first. Murdus throws one of those to safety and Denat's healing before he is pulled into the zombie flood. Khaled pushes a table into their path then hurls holy water at the zombies mobbing Murdus. Usif summons a massive burning brand and slashes at the horde which threaten to overwhelm him too.

The zombies gripping Murdus are burned by holy water. He whirls his ax madly driving zombies back out the front door. Denat brandishes his holy cornucopia to turn undead; zombies turn and flee!

Murdus and Khaled prevent the grandmother and daughter from fleeing out the front door, shouting the explanation, “Zombies go that way! You! No! Go! That way!”

Usif uses flames to calm the crowd with the message, “Fire will consume the zombies! Safe here where it is safe!”

Khaled peeks out the shutters and is horrified to see a cabal of hopping, severed hands rapidly approaching the inn. He and Murdus barricade the doors and windows with the help of guards. “Get upstairs!!!” he yells to the civilians.



Usif and Denat retreat to the kitchen in search of cooking oil for an impromptu siege weapon. Their search is interrupted by a confused and oddly attractive female mummy, which Usif recognizes from one of the auction lots. Denat stuns the mummy with *turn undead*, while the mummy paralyzes Usif. Denat frees Usif from that, so he in turn can set her on fire with a burning brand. The burning mummy proves to be even more dangerous, forcing the pair to work together. Denat pins the creature with his spear while Usif flails at it with his burning whip. The mummy bursts

completely into flames, which Usif seizes control of and drives it out the kitchen's chimney.

The zombie flood pounds on the buildings front, partially collapsing the inn's front. Severed hands pour in through the gaps. The Mummy Rustlers note that the hands are going somewhere, so they allow the lead hand through. Khaled follows that hand. Usif strokes the inn's hearth to high heat. Denat turns undead, driving the hands into the hearth. Murdus kicks and knocks hands into the fire.

Khaled runs up the stairs after the halfling-sized severed hand, which heads straight toward the terror stricken armor smith. That young man screams, "No! That is the hand of the halfling thief I caught in my shop last week." The hand confirms this analysis by seizing the young man by the throat. Khaled wrestles it off and tosses it in the fire.

The zombies come flooding back inside. Our heroes fight back: Murdus chops with his axe, Usif with fire, Denat with turn undead, and Khaled with thrown knives. Some zombies are destroyed. Others are driven into the *grease* spells and the hearth fire.

The common room is cleared of zombies. More zombies moan outside. Murdus chops with his ax to make a barricade of debris with one approach which he holds. The others seek a safe exit from the building. The back alley is a no go, but the nearby building is intact AND fire free. They commandeer a table to bridge the gap between the buildings. The auctioneers and buyers move rapidly across.

Khaled steals portable items from the auction storeroom in the kitchen, then urges Murdus to flee. He pitches an alchemist fire into the gap left by Murdus. They flee to the roof together and cross the makeshift bridge. The bridge is withdrawn as the zombies approach; their own numbers push those at the front off the building's roof.

The refugees look out over the city. Buildings are burning. Screams are frequent. Zombies are everywhere. People fight, flee, and die.

The Mummy Rustlers decide to take the refugees with them and travel rapidly toward the Tooth and Hookah inn. From there they will grab a boat. Then arguing ensues.

They change their aim for the temple of Pharama where they can see the guards and priests destroying undead and helping people escape. Everyone agrees that charging over there is the best course.

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Necropolis

Then they realize there is a birthing complex in their current city block; they stop in there to gather more refugees. They make the Pharamin temple in reasonable order.

A Pharamin priest asks them to join a deputized scratch force to fight the zombies. They agree, then head off to the necropolis with the plan, "That's the source of all our problems."

They encounter a pair of dead eyed priests who are also undead. The two groups charge each other. Usif suffers a slight bite wound while Khaled chops his attacker from behind. Denat gets clawed while driving his spear thru one. Murdus chops a big chunk out of the speared one. Usif destroys the last ghoul with a thrown burning brand.



The necropolis gates are securely shut to a horde of slaving skeletons, zombies and ghouls. A small contingent of Pharasmin guardsmen stab thru the bars while their priest leader urges them on.

That priestess demands, “I need you to return to the main temple and get holy water and symbols. My men need help! Tell them Balthemm sent you!” She pounds her mace and shield together for emphasis.

An incorporeal undead oozes thru the bars and flies at the priestess. She and Denat hit it with turn undead at the same time, Murdus chops it with his ax and is clipped by its negative energy body. Khaled draws the incorporeal undead’s attention to himself, allowing Murdus and Usif to destroy it.

Denat uses a scroll of whispering wind to notify the main temple. The Mummy Rustlers rush back to get the supplies, which are ready when they arrive, and rush those back to Balthemm. As they depart, Murdus notes “I admire a woman with strong thighs.” Khaled cannot gainsay this bit of wisdom.

A thunderclap washes over them from the east in the Asp section of town. They climb a three story building to see what the deal is.

A wagon, a woman standing atop it, and a crowd confronting her. They rush back down and toward the confrontation. They find the half-elf woman standing atop a wagon with a person tied up in the wagon bed.

The woman screams, “Stay away from my husband!” She threatens the crowd with spells.

The crowd yells, “She’s a witch! See! Her husband is a zombie and she’ll make us all zombies!”

Denat uses *turn undead* and sees that the bound husband struggles furiously against his bonds to escape. Murdus cows the crowd by beating a man down.

Usif produces a strong flame that grows into a bonfire, which forces the crowd further back. Denat uses the fire and trail rations to prepare a quick funerary spell that will put zombie husband to rest. The wife helps hold her zombie husband down while Denat feeds him the funerary stew. The husband ceases to struggle.

She introduces herself, “I am Sayhosetp Anonm. I didn’t want to kill these pig farmers so I limited myself to sound spells.” She drives her wagon away intent on burying her husband properly. “So, what odds do you give that she’s behind this and we just helped her?” muses Usif as she departs.

A trio of zombies attack a lone woman. The Mummy Rustlers rush to her aid, but are headed off by a pack of hybrid creatures – bear bodies, feather manes, and crocodile skulls for heads. The pack smashes into the zombies, tears them apart, consuming flesh and negative energy. In their enthusiasm, one claws the woman. Khaled drags her clear while Denat heals her.

Usif yells, “They’re esoboks! They are hounds of Pharama and prey upon undead!”

The esoboks ignore the Mummy Rustlers and charge into another group of zombies, ripping flesh and soul apart. Then they disappear to the realm from whence they were summoned.

Usif, Denat and Murdus escort the distraught woman to her brother’s house. Khaled goes off to recon and finds and confronts the summoner, who is a haughty Pharasmin who says “Yes well sometimes common people get in the way of righteousness.” Khaled decides that the man should have kept tighter rein on his creatures... and vows punishment on him later.

They return to the temple. The weird golden bird that’s some kind of psychopomp familiar to Ptemenib the Pharasmin priestess appears to them, excitedly explaining that her mistress was kidnapped by the Silver Chain. Also, the local priests tell us some judge has been raised from the dead with his staff of execution and is popping the eyeballs out of everyone in a one block radius of the courthouse. The group mulls over which of these problems should be addressed first.

End of the Session

- Bonds
 - Usif taught Murdus sacrifice, Hetshepsut’s bow.
 - Denat combined ritual magic with Usif.
 - Murdus convinced Denat to fast for a day.
 - Khaled helped Murdus prove his pharaohness.
- Alignments

- *Almost everyone fulfills their alignments by stealing, defending the weak, and endangering themselves to heal others.*
- Did you learn something new and interesting about the world (Yes/No)?
 - *Esoboks, zombie apocolypse, and mob justice.*
- Did you overcome a notable enemy (Yes/No)? *Oddly sexy female mummy and Skeletor*
- Did you loot a notable treasure (Yes/No)? *Magic spear and mithral sbirt from Sethen?!?*

Murdus levels to 5th.