

Session/Game: Krondor, D&D5e 19 **Date:** August 19, 2018

Episode 19: "Blessings and Petrification"

Campaign Date: Fifth-Month, Days 1-14, 1174 of 12th Age

Characters:

Sir Roderick of Heston, human, paladin - 6, lawful good (Dave Nelson)

Berengar the Herald, commoner (henchman)

Aldric the Dogsbody, commoner (henchman)

Wun Hung Lo, wood elf, kensai monk - 5, neutral (Jason Liebert)

Big Ron, warrior (henchman)

Small Ron, warrior (henchman)

Langston Ford, human, swashbuckler rogue - 4, neutral (Bob LaForge)

Preacher Lightning, human, ranger - 5, chaotic neutral (Marlon Kirton)

Crusher Stan, warrior (henchman)

The Mighty Destroyers, warriors (henchmen group)

Drag, half-ogre, barbarian - 4, chaotic neutral (Miles Trout)

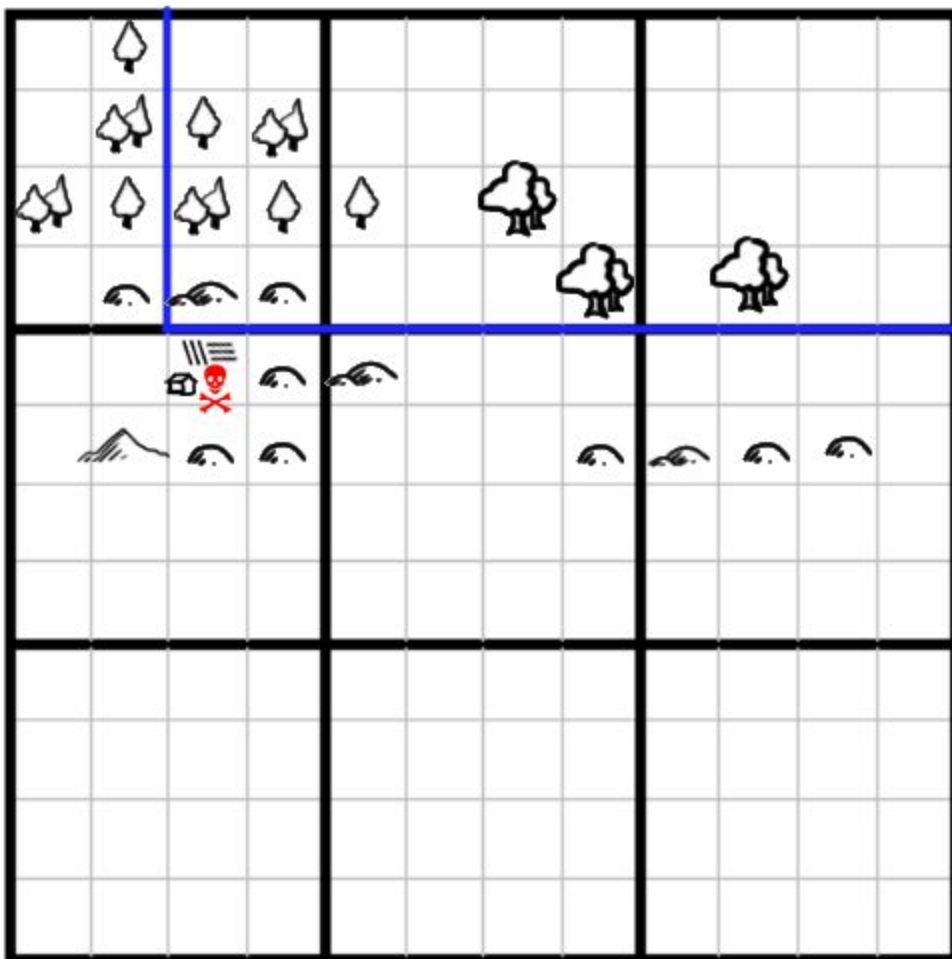
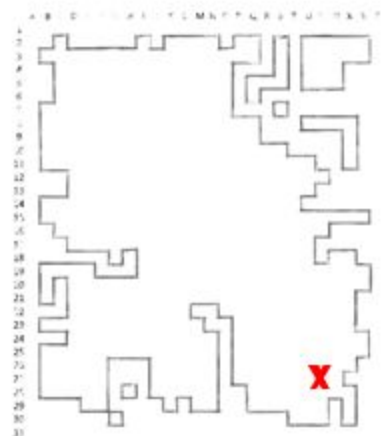
DM: Andrew Smith

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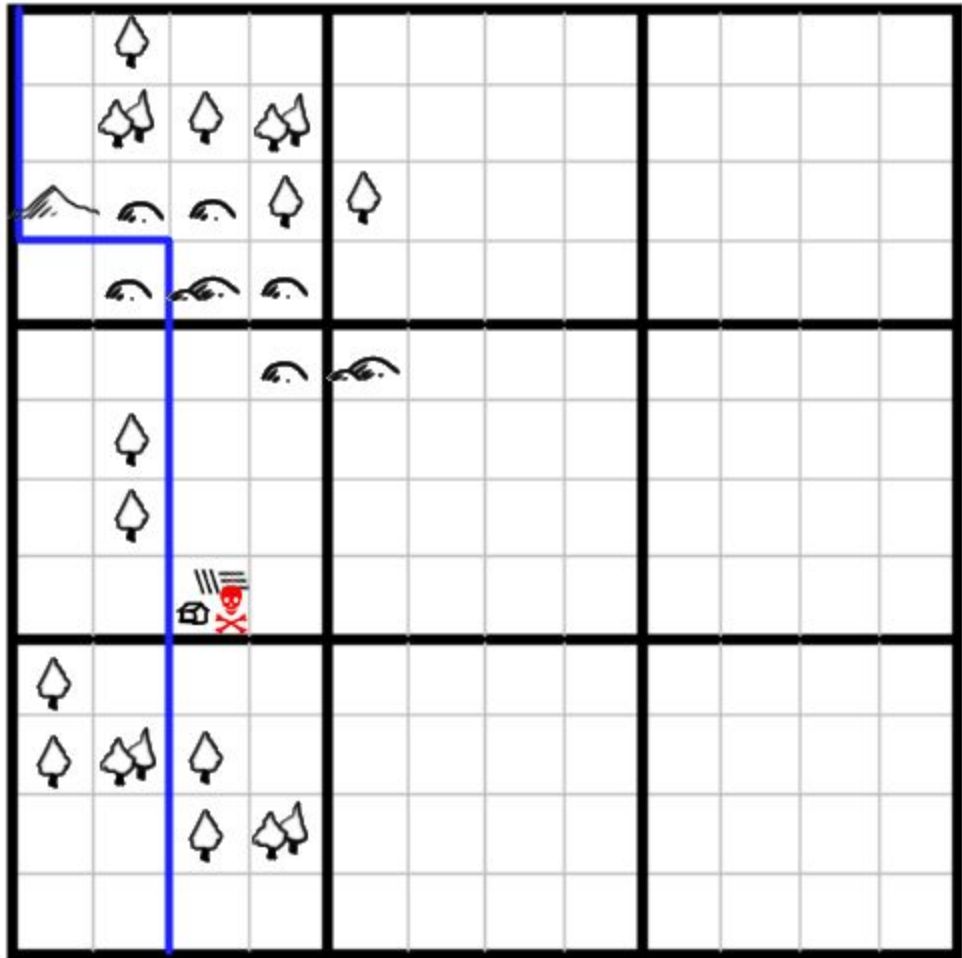
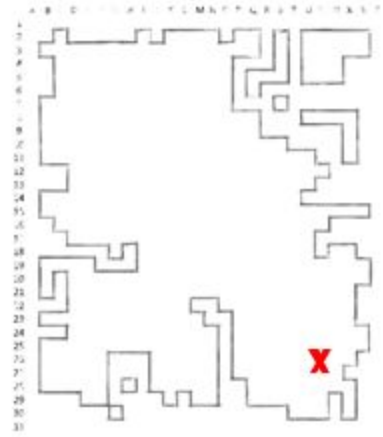
Days 1 - 5 - Travel from Newport

The Castaways make a return trip north to check on how to help free those enslaved by the gnoll attack on the village of Cumbervale. They travel three more provinces to the North, bearing witness to at least two settlements left completely burned to cinders with all the inhabitants either kidnapped or slain. All food stores that might be available has been carted up and marched back to the North by gnoll warriors.

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Day 6 - Herculaneum

Led by Sir Roderick's charge, the Castaways plan a daring attack on another captured village just North of the Ginsterflow known as Herculaneum. This village is built in the shadow of a stout keep dating back to the days of Old Krondor. It seems to be usable, although in poor repair as the gnolls have fouled the noble structure. It sits by the shore of a shallow stream of water running toward the Ginsterflow to the South and a sacred grove featuring a mysterious old wooden temple structure. Using slave labor, the gnolls have started a stockade built around the keep. So far they have created a corner and two sides. A number of small cottages and a barns just outside the stockade hold food and house the slave population. Several more slaves driving carts and wagons arrive from the South, triggering the Castaways' attack.

From the far side of the water, Sir Roderick leads a charge from the back of Mr. Righteous his mighty steed. Following in his wake, Langston sneaks up and makes stabbing attacks while Wun Hung Lo locks up with gnolls and beats them to a pulp. Atop the open-air temple, Lightning targets the gnoll leaders on the top of the keep with arrows.

Not only human villagers have been enslaved by the gnolls. Several families of wood elves and a clan of ogres have also been captured. Drag discovers his mother within the compound and sneaks in to surprise her and save her. She sees him and breaks down in tears, but the attack is on. Drag and Mum team up to fight off some of the gnoll leaders.

Sir Roderick faces all challengers, smiting them with his holy strikes and trampling them with the help of mighty Mr. Righteous. Small Ron and Big Ron support with their short and longbows respectively. Crusher Stan and the Mighty Destroyers push across the stream on a wing trailing the Castaways.

Just then, the gnoll Pack Lord leads a formidable sally from the keep. This wedge of bloodthirsty gnolls rush right at Langston, Roderick, and Wun Hung Lo threatening to crush them. However, the wedge is broken when Sir Roderick slays the pack lord and the remaining gnolls are picked apart before they can mount any sort of coordinated resistance. The settlement of Herculaneum is freed!

Following the battle, the Castaways take stock of the settlement. Agapius, a cleric of the mighty Hercules leads the peoples of Herculaneum. He immediately tells Sir Roderick that his people have long awaited his arrival foretold by stories told by wandering prophets. He tells his new master that he is the caretaker of the nearby open-air temple dedicated to the god of strength himself in honor of his visit when he was a mortal.

The remaining human slaves have been taken from the countryside near the two destroyed settlements the Castaways passed. They are led by a man who identifies himself as "Mayor Gold." The group refers to themselves as "the golds" to distinguish themselves from the

Herculeans, and they grudgingly say they will follow anyone who can guarantee safety and security.

The elven slaves led by Hi Chin all decide to fade back into the nearby wood. There is a grove with a wood-elf settlement hidden there. They have little use for the tribulations of men, and were simply unlucky enough to have been captured by the gnolls when they should have simply escaped. They express concern to Wun Hung Lo that his style of martial arts will not be accepted in the grove. They say that the panther once roamed freely teaching all the elves who wanted to know the way of the "Puma Style" martial arts now "the spirit of the ox" is in power.

Sir Roderick leads the entire settlement in an elaborate and extended rite of fealty, binding the peasants to his service in return for their safety and protection. Langston and Roderick both pledge a gold coin to each and every family to seal the oath. At the direction of Drag, the clan of ogres also joins the citizens of Herculaneum. They half-heartedly give their allegiance to the human knight, but in reality they all love and follow their champion Drag.

To the north, a wizard's tower stands empty as a reminder of the days of Old Krondor. The Herculeans insist that it is functional, but haunted.

Day 7 - Herculaneum

Sir Roderick and the Castaways sort out the peoples' jobs and set up regular guards. Between the ogres and the two factions of humans, there are about 60 families they can choose for work tasks. They assign 50 families to building the stockade and another 10 families farming.

Day 8 - Herculaneum



The Castaways clear out the basement of the Old Krondite keep. They open the vault and discover old foodstuffs as well as several trapped stone chests with various treasures. A summoned demon tries to drive them away from the loot, but the traps left by the Old Krondites to keep undesirables from their stores is no match.

Sir Roderick visits the open-air temple to Hercules. There, only he sees a shadow of the hero he now worships as a god as he once was as a man. Hercules takes the lion skin from off of his back and offers it to Sir Roderick. "Be strong for my people," he tells Roderick and disappears.

Day 9 - Elven Grove

The Castaways travel to the Elven Grove to the North. It was once dedicated to the Panther, but it had been taken over by the spirit of the Ox. The Castaways are met by two elves of the grove, Hi Chin and Shi Chin. They explain that they must leave immediately or else they will be attacked by the green mossy and bony spirit of the Ox. As the Castaways continue to talk, an ox spirit emerges from the underbrush and charges the group. The monster is dispatched most easily, and it never even draws blood. However, its death groan wakes a larger spirit. This ox monster is instead clad in iron, and moves menacingly and purposefully. The Castaways have a little worse time with this monster, and it manages to gore and trample a few of the group before it moves to disengage and billows a cone of green and gold from its mouth. The Castaways then pummel the ox-beast until it dies. Sir Roderick gets a facefull of caustic breath from the metallic ox, and is petrified by the blast. He and his horse Mr. Righteous are entombed as stone forever, or at least until the Castaways can find a way to undo this foul magic.



Following the battle, Wun Hung Lo learns more about the grove. With the ox spirit defeated, the grove may return to its study of the “Way of the Puma.” Approximately thirty families of wood elves pledge their service and rulership of the hidden grove to Wun Hung Lo. However, they fear that their food stores are running out and they cannot farm far from the sacred grove for fear of being found by the marauding gnolls.

However, once the Castaways return to Herculaneum they realize that the fragile fealty relies on the monarch. Mayor Gold is crushed to learn that Sir Roderick has “abandoned” his people “leaving only a fancy statue just like all tyrants do.” The Herculans are even more crushed by this turn, and decide that fate has forced them to abandon their home and retreat back to Newport.

Day 10-14 - Travel from Herculaneum to Newport

With the fall of their champion, the citizens of Herculaneum collapse into disarray. The army of the masters is already on the march, so the former slaves quickly gather as much as they can of value and make their way back South toward Newport and safety. Ironically, it was the payment of gold to the peasants that gave them the ability to feel comfortable about leaving their prior lives and move to another place of relative safety.

Epilog:

The other castaways spent the next two weeks busying themselves with the following downtimes.

Gorgon Zola: honest work

Sparkle Rainbrite: honest work

Walter: honest work

Bocephus: honest work

Yul Gibbons: make potions

Ragnar: pit fighting (1 win, 2 wins)

Thunder: fishing

Midnight: made 2 middle class contacts

Milosh: honest work

Helen: gambled away all money and a cat

Edwan: Edwan uses the "key" given to him by his comrades to seal the portals to the "Danger Zone" for good. They return to being simple monastic huts. He spends the rest of the fortnight hiring workmen to brick up the "key" in the center of his new temple and help set up the temple to be self-sufficient. He sends a petition to the Marquis of Newport requesting rental of the land formerly part of the abandoned monastery in exchange for his fealty.