

Session/Game: D&D Wilderlands 2

Date: January 31, 2016

Episode 2: It's Not Our First Rodeo

Campaign Date: March, 4433 BCCC

Characters:

The Pastor, human, mystic-2, neutral (NPC for Marlon Kirton, run by Tim)

Kurt Crowbane, human, bard-3, neutral (Chuck Fleurie)

Guide Tarvindulus, human, cleric-2 (Gnosophim), neutral (Tim Moyer)

Blastocles, human, magic-user-2, neutral (Jason Liebert)

Wandering Frank, human, fighter-2, chaotic good (NPC)

Judge: Dave Nelson

Log: (Shardis Province, March 13-27, 4433 BCCC)

Part 1: Preparations in Viridistan, March 13-15

It seemed like an easy job. What could possibly go wrong? Tarvindulus, The Pastor, Kurt Crowbane and their old pal Blastocles agree to sign a contract to deliver 40 horses to Millo Fortress by April first. They will receive 20gp a head for delivery, but are on the hook for 350gp each for every horse that's lost or ruined. They interview 3 guides to join them for a cut: Wandering Frank, Nino the Greaseman, and Squinty Joe (a goblin). They decide to hire Wandering Frank. They consider spending a week looking for henchmen and guards, but realize that their cash reserves wouldn't support the expense.

Frank tells them that there are three ways to cross the large Leander River into Shardis Province. First, take a ship down to Bradoll (fast, safe, but expensive, 5gp per horse). Second, take the Imperial Bridge (direct, less expensive, but still pricey at 3gp per horse) or go up river a bit and take Rangoon's ferry (1gp per horse, you can't go wrong). They decide to cheap out and ride out immediately for Rangoon's ferry.

Part 2: Rangoon's Ferry, March 15-18

When they arrive at Rangoon's ferry, they find a ramshackle barn and a depressing pile of lumber that serves as the ferry itself. They agree to hire the ferry, but as it is a 2-hour round trip and the ferry will only hold 2 horses at a time, they are looking at a 3-day crossing.

Progress is slow and steady. At one point, one horse attempts to bolt off the ferry into the river, but Wandering Frank, alone on the boat at the time, apart from the ferrymen, manages to miraculously calm the animal down. Later, near the end of the transfer, two horses on the ferry take a dislike to one another and begin to fight, potentially destroying the boat in the process. Tarvindulus intervenes by spilling their food-bags on the deck and manages to distract them and calm them down. Finally, the crossing is complete and the party and their horses head southward to catch the imperial road to the west.

Part 3: The Road to Millo Fortress, March 19-21

Making their way down the west bank of the Leander, the party encountered a foreign nobleman and his retinue who offered to buy their horses, after briefly discussing taking a fat bag of cash and fleeing the country, they decided to refuse the offer and keep moving. Reaching the road, they were confronted by an angry kid looking for his uncle, Nino the Greaseman, whom the party had refused to hire.

On the road itself, south of the Imperial Bridge, they were stopped by a patrol. Armath the Beedy-Eyed, captain of the IX cavalry, asked "Who is in charge here?" Kurt Crowbane replied "I am." To which Armath responded, "Wrong Answer, I am." And he ordered his men to beat Kurt for a bit. After finishing the beating, he accused the party of being horse thieves, but was convinced by their contract from Captain Himset (who is such a pussy).

The party spends the night camped out just beyond the walls of the port-village of Bradoll. They stake down the horses, and take watch in 2 shifts. There is no trouble overnight and they head out first thing in the morning.

They travel west along the road all day until they reach the village of Gashmu at nightfall. Here they are cordially welcomed by the lord of Gashmu, Taltar (Taltar!!), who seems very friendly and welcoming, allowing them to pen the horses inside the walls for free. Early the next morning they set forth for the long last leg toward Millo Fortress.

In the morning they are ambushed by a party of 8 horse thieves in the hills west of Gashmu. The bandits drop several trees cutting off Wandering Frank and 10 of the horses from the rest of the party. They make a brief attempt to kill Frank but he manages to defend himself. The bandits then concentrate on each stealing a horse and riding off. Blastocles manages to overcome five of the bandits with a sleep spell, while the other three begin to make their escape. Frank charges them down, engages 2 of them, killing one. The Pastor leaps over the felled trees onto a horse and catches up with and kills another. Tarvindulus attempts to leap his horse over the barrier, but it stops short, throwing the cleric overtop and flat onto his face. He manages to struggle to his feet and kill the last bandit with a sling stone. Hoping for a reward, they tie up the sleeping 5 bandits and sling the bodies of the other 3 onto horses. Searching the bandits, they find 100sp, some short swords and an ancient scroll case, sealed with an imprint of a scarab. Inside they find a mysterious magically encoded map.

After spotting a giant falcon hunting for humanoid prey in the bogs along the road, the party rides quickly to the south along the road. They reach Millo fortress just before dark on the 21st, just as their rations and the grain for the horses give out.

Part Four: Shenanigans in Millo Fortress (March 21, late, to March 24)

Arriving at Millo Fortress, they immediately send word to Mant Fildoo, the Clerk of the Stables, that they have arrived with their delivery. After delaying for some hours, Fildoo arrives at the gate and shows the party to a corral nearby for the horses. He attempts to depart without signing the receipt, but is confronted by Blastocles. Fildo uses his magical scarab focus to charm Blastocles. He fobs him off by signing "CLARK" on the signature line, and does not send the receipt to be sealed by the Padishah's office. Convinced that Fildo is a fine fellow, Blastocles convinces the rest of the party

that all is well. The party rents some floor space at the Sandy Sword Inn for the night, and Kurt earns some cash performing for the patrons.

The next day, Blastocles spends the day in the marketplace selling the 8 short swords they had taken from the bandits, and purchasing rations for the return trip. Kurt and Tarvindulus decide to see if they can turn in the captured and slain bandits for a reward. They spend the afternoon in the waiting room, but are not seen by the Grandee and are told to return in the morning. Kurt once again performs in the Sandy Sword.

On the 23rd, Kurt and Tarvindulus meet with one of the Grandees, who is singularly unimpressed with them. He tells them to leave their names and dwelling places with the clerk and they will be summoned to testify and perhaps gain a reward when the bandits are put on trial in a few weeks. They leave and start looking around for some more possible work. Kurt hears rumors about Werebears ravaging the area around the fortress and a 30 foot giant spider that has eaten 3 caravans. Blastocles examines the magical map and realizes its coordinates and directions are based upon astrological secrets about which he knows little.

However, in the afternoon of the 24th, Blastocles shakes off the charm person spell and realizes that they need proper signatures and seals on their receipt or they are liable for thousands of gold pieces for the horses. Filled with rage, the party questions various people about town and discover that Mant Fildoo has a house and office near the cavalry stable and barracks in the fortress. They hurry off to confront him.

After Mant's apprentice summons him to the front door, Mant pretends that he's never seen the party before and that he's received no delivery of horses. He attempts to charm Blastocles again, but the spell fails. Blastocles responds with a sleep spell that knocks out Mant and his apprentice. The party rush into the house, closing the door behind them and ties up their two prisoners.

After much discussion, they steal Mant's scarab and use it to charm the evil magic-user. They discover Mant has a racket involving stealing horses and supplies, defrauding merchants and drovers and shifting the blame elsewhere. Under the charm, Mant is convinced to properly sign the receipt and send it to be properly sealed. He then is convinced to write a letter of resignation, including a confession of his crimes and instructions to where the horses have been moved. The party loots his house, has him pack up his stuff and prepares to depart.

As Blastocles leads Mant through a departure that will seem genuine, including instructions to the apprentice, Tarvindulus and Kurt purchase a half-dozen medium riding horses and other supplies for the ride home. Blastocles, remembering that the ancient map was sealed with a scarab symbol similar to Mant's focus, questions the clerk who reveals he is part of the Scarab Society, an ancient evil order who dream of succeeding to rule when the last Green Emperor is dead. The map leads to the Cavern of Endless Scarabs and its fabulous treasure.

Part Five: The Trip Home (March 25-27)

At sun-up the party (plus Mant) ride out on the northern road back toward Viridistan. In the hills they come across a wagon with dead horses and driver, but with an ominously rustling canvas cover. The Pastor is sent forward to investigate, but is surprised when a horde of 12 giant centipedes rush out of the wagon. They attack

Pastor, Frank and Tarvindulus. While several fall to a sleep spell from Blastocles and a color spray from Kurt, Frank, Tarvindulus and Pastor kill the rest, but not before the Pastor keels over from the last of a series of poisoned bites. Luckily, Frank looks around desperately, and finds a white lotus blossom in Mant's suitcase. They apply the lotus to the Pastor and it revives him from the effects of the poison before he dies. The party recovers some treasure from the wagon, burns it and the cargo and buries the driver.

Nearing Gashmu, the party kills Mant at last and dumps his corpse in the bogs. Luckily, the scarab focus does not die with its master and Blastocles takes it for his own. The party is once again hospitably treated by Taltar (Taltar!!) at Gashmu.

They quickly speed to Bradoll and spend the next night there. Then early the morning of the 27th, they ride quickly back to Viridistan. There they cash in their receipt with Captain Himset for their full fee, divide their takings and split up for a good long weekend of rest and relaxation. Kurt Crowbane offers to take Wandering Frank on as a permanent henchman, and he agrees to take service.