

Sorting the Smugglers with Samdar Saydar's Son

By Roderigo the Scribe - (Michael McFadden)

Session 1

The party is as follows:

Rez - a self-proclaimed master of everything who is tall and handsome and well dressed. He is our military scientist.

Melisande - an elven witch with a magic sword. She is our leader.

Sam the Friendly Orc - who doesn't like to fight

Jazmyn - a Star mage who rides a broom & claims to be able to turn into a tiger (this information seems to invoke excitement in Sam the friendly orc)

Pym - a hobbit sneak - allegedly a boy & owner of a smooth skinned strawberry roan alleged pony with stumpy legs and no perceivable mane. Apparently knows a few e & e spells.

Roderigo - (I) a garishly dressed & much less handsome than Rez, (in fact even less handsome than Sam) hobbit sneak who knows a few e& e spells and looks like he could skulk about a bit.

Cournot - an elven fire mage - apparently of nicer disposition and appearance than Sauté

Melisande is declared our leader, Roderigo the scribe.

Our Employers: (Both Inactive Guild members) are:

- Saydar, Baron of Erewhon (an orc) & necro.
- Turf, Sheriff of Erewhon (an elf)

We are told as follow s

Our Mission:

- Find the Endless Wine Jug that was stolen from the sealed cold iron room.
- Identify smugglers and shut down their operation or point them out for the guards to come in and shut them down. But if the guards do the killing we get minimal salvage rights.
- Same for possible slavers operating in the area - may be the same people as smugglers or may be rumour.
- Establish informants for Turf/Saydar if we can.

Payment:

- 6,000sp each up front in the form of a Rk 11 "Greater" or in coin.

- 4,000sp each in coin on completion.
- Good retrieved / salvaged from pirates & smugglers will be costed and charged the appropriate excise/customs duty and we will get 20% of this value as our share.
- General loot items will be party treasure as per normal guild practise.

e.g. if we raid a smugglers hideout and find 50000sp of goods such as wine/beer/silks etc we will get 10000sp to share between you all. If in the same place we find a few swords, shields etc then they are our party loot.

If we find smugglers and deal with them ourselves then we are entitled to the 20%, if we find them and pass the job to the guards of dealing with it then we will be given a substantially less value for the goods recovered and none of the loot.

Everyone except Rez takes a greater enchantment as payment up front.

We agree to meet Turf at the Skull Tavern. In the mean time provisions & equipment including

We get camping equipment

Taros

Sleeping rolls warm winter furs 1 x 4 person tent

1 x pack horse

2 x 2man leather tents

cooking gear

At the tavern the booze & food flows freely. Various mighty feats of eating, drinking & boasting are performed. The party does however manage to make it to the ship which is ready for us. The ship, called the Grinning Shark, has 2 x cabins - one commandeered by the women folk & Pym (the sneak) and another one. There are three days sailing in which we practice weapons & study or learn to sail. Turf teaches the silent tongue.

We are told about the endless wine chalice by Turf. It was kept in the basement of a farmhouse. The wine flowed through steel tubes to where undead servants in a cold iron surrounded room barrelled the wine which flowed to them. The magic chalice was switched for a non magic one. We will get a chance to see this. We will arrive at Fleecemount whereupon we will commence a 40 mile ride through the barony, which is run down, to Castle Erewhon.

Day 4 Frost.

We arrive at 5.00 a.m. There are 7 horses including Pym's "horse" & also a large warhorse(Turf's) & a packhorse waiting for us.

We ride all day eventually hitting the hills before the castle. It is a 30' wide path through the woods.

Saydar is expecting us in the throne room - 100 long. With him are two bowlegged mean looking tribes men from the Lunar Empire. We encounter a 9 foot tall heavily armoured bone gollom who announces that he is the "voice of Samdar" - very grand. The party introduces themselves- Rez as a fearless vampire slayer & Roderigo as the voice of Roderigo.

Saydar tests us to see if we are worthy of receiving certain invested items. The men all fail initially and then the women are whittled down to Pym. Saydar provides him? with a 2 charge rank 20 necrosis ring, rk 2 scouring terrain, 2 x rk 2 agony, putrescence x2 . He gives us a scroll of rank 16 quickness and offers us all bone armour.

He then plays a mean trick on us by giving us a drink alleging that it will increase our endurance. What it really does is make us all spew! Very funny ha ha !

Our rooms upstairs are good quality double suites and very clean - unnaturally so for an orc. The chalice room is 10 miles away. We dress in our best clobber for dinner and are served by a butler who speaks eleven & orcish. An enormous feast is laid on & we all pig out big time.

Accompanied by some very big guard is a 5' orc well dressed followed by a 4'8" less than impressive grungy orc who introduces himself as Saydar. We talk about guild rumours and the latest with the dark circle.

He has been unable to use a locate spell on the chalice. He suspects that the smuggling operation is in the South West at Gullet Hollow. An agent who works in a bar believes that the smugglers use ships (wow - he is doing his job well!) The smugglers have a cave up the coast. There are the usual rumours of slavers, ghosts & pirates...

Session 2

The next day, Rez & Jazmyn duel while we eat breakfast, with Raze, the self proclaimed Master, extracting a succession of alarmingly larger & larger items from his seemingly flimsy rapier scabbard. Rez then insults Turf saying he is Saydar's consort. They duel. The result is, it appears that Rez is no mere windbag.

We discuss a plan. Sam decided that he is in fact really "Samdar" (son of Saydar). A spell is cast & it is determined that this is not in fact correct & despite the voracious proclivity of orcs there is no blood relationship. However we do now have a cover story. Rez then describes a very elaborate & confusing plan wherein we break out from Saydar's palace, with Samdar. Apparently this will make the pirates/smugglers like us & explain our feasting in the Palace. We will pretend to mug Turf & Saydar.

Barak, a Lieutenant of Saydar invests our life force so that they can trace where we are if there are problems. This is a kind of binding magic involving a large black sphere, which we all put our hands on.

We are told that the pirates have a number of mages in the smugglers employ.

We are given the name of a contact - Jim McLeod at the Laughing Gibbet bar. Inexplicably he is known as "Lucky Jim" despite being bereft of one leg & one eye. The passwords: We ask about the spring tide. Next we ask if Swallows come by.

Sam casts strength of Stone on us all and lesser enchantments. We eat grub & then plan our "escape". Cournot casts a smoke spell on the stable - thick black smoke & flames everywhere. We leap aboard horses & the "strawberry roan" (which as planned are saddled & waiting for us) with varying degrees of success. We then charge across the courtyard in a fearsome manner. Melisande casts a spell causing various guards to drop their weapons. Sam attempts a spell, which backfires & turns his hair into a small furry animal, which then runs off. He is as bald as a badger - literally! He then gets off a wall of stone across the gate. No one follows us.

We note a large winged creature overhead - 20' across. Rez, the Master, covers our tracks with lots of doubling back and so forth. We get to Gullet Hollow. There are about 50 buildings around a small port with various fishing boats and a pier. We leave the horses and the "strawberry roan" and we find the Laughing Gibbet and sit at a corner table, where we discuss our Plan in a very loud manner hoping to be overheard by the inhabitants - who we hope will then tell us they are smugglers. Brilliant! The barman reveals there are in fact three Lucky Jims around but the amputee one works here at a later shift. Ale is ordered until some of the more travelled in the party - Jazmyn & Sam? decide to order "Champen" from some backwater no one else has heard of - called Frans. The bottles are very old and dusty & 10 GP each. Some of the more astute party (Rodrigo?) members are horrified to discover that they are attempting to foist old stock on us at some quite extortionate rates & demands new Champen.

In the bar are various races & persons. Roderigo and Rez approach a group of persons - possibly merchants and after nudging, winking suspiciously and hinting

that we are up to no good and wish to avoid the attention of the guard, agree to meet us aboard a boat at 12 a.m. at the dock and transport us. (we are not sure where we want to go)!

Pym & Roderigo decide the best thing is now to sneak after our new friends and suss them out. Pym goes invisible. Rodrigo walks unseen and follows them to a warehouse. Sam throws a false trail by visibly pretending to follow but giving up. Pym sneaks unsuccessfully & breaks a small window - she then wisely bails out being a bit more experienced than her co-sneak. Roderigo, less captious, decides to continue sneaking about but does not do it very well & is busted by someone who apparently has a see invisible spell (and also notes his hobbit footprints everywhere in the mud). He flees. He is ordered to stop but flees still & is zapped by some serious magic spell for all his fatigue. He is taken inside the building & accused (rightfully) of sneaking & (wrongfully) of busting a window. Despite his attempts climb upon a high horse (difficult for a 9 pb hobbit) and to appear outraged, they don't buy it & charge his money for the window, threaten to call the watch and now refuse to transport us as arranged.

Roderigo, feeling as sick as a dog, skulks bag to the Laughing Gibbet where he tells the party that he has successfully concluded that the "merchants" are an untrustworthy bunch & advises that under no circumstances should we meet them tonight. The party concurs with this startling wisdom.

So, Plan B. -it is all down to Lucky Jim. We make contact and he drops a note that we are to meet at the blasted oak on the other side of town in 2 hours. Directions are given including that there is an inn nearby called the Dark Sabbath which is full of werewolves.

After going on a round about route for about 45 mins we arrive. There is a half ruined all nearby and a beach. Lucky Jim arrives & he tells us there will be pick up by smugglers bout 6 hours from now. He gives us a map of their meeting place at sulphur bay. Another ma reveals how the smugglers have down from the cliff top to waiting boats. They include "Alfred the Earthmage & an air mage - several small bands of smugglers have come together. S

Suddenly a number of arrows come out of the darkness - several hitting & killing the allegedly "Lucky" Jim. His dying words are: find the hill door...be ware the web of..." and then.. "I leave everything I own to Roderigo.."

Roderigo determine that there is some poison - probably sea snake on the arrows. The fletching is purple and gold - some sort of vanity signature arrow. The assassin cannot be seen. We all remain under cover.

We search Jim's body & find various things including:

A new map, a gold ring with the symbol of a dolphin on it, an earring, 10 sp, a silver dagger in his hollow leg, a gem hidden behind his patch (24 gp), a key.

We go to where the boat is. It is guarded by a number of orcs. The boat is 40' long. It is 10 30 pm.

Session 3

Sergeant Balsan the Orc - a special guard of Saydar will come with us on the boat. The boat is a smugglers boat with sneaky hideouts - notably two hideouts at the back. It is big enough for 10 people.

Boat order: J & M
S & C
Orc & P
R & R

It is damned cold so the furs are worn by all. I sail across the bay doing 6 knots according to Sgt Balsan, passing gullet hollow headland.

Reapsday (day 6)

Sam blackens the sail with Cantrips & we pad the rowlocks to avoid noise. We see cliffs- about 100' high. We manage to clamber by ropes to the top eventually with Sgt Balsan staying to guard the boat. Pym & Roderigo turn invisible & sneak ahead of the party - c. 150' while we advance along the coastal cliff top - there is a slight inconvenience in that they cannot see each other. Roderigo gets zapped by an arrow. Three are at least two persons hidden in trees ambushing us. Turns out there are about 5 of the F\$#kers.

There is a bit of a scuffle. Pym sleeps one. Roderigo very unnecessarily slits its throat. Sam jumps on top of one - yelping when someone dies - this does not make him happy at all. Jazmyn chases one on her broom. Master Rez shoots arrows. Cournot zaps off a lightning bolt. There is one survivor who we threaten with torture. He says there are three roving patrols. Sam tortures through a most cruel & unusual method - licking him! He then tells us there is ship coming and that there are trip wires near the point. Alfred the Earth Mage is in charge of Guard detail. Today they are dropping off gold, perfumes and bringing in brandy . The smuggler pleads for his life. Roderigo wants to cut off his toes so he cannot run away. This is vetoed. He is bound & gagged. We find another 20 sp.

At about 1.20 a.m. Pym sneaks over to where we believe their lair is. A trip wire is triggered by mistake. Pym hides successfully. Sighting a boat she/he takes the opportunity to cast a locate spell on it. We watch the boat leaving the coast.

Session 4

We plan how to attack the smugglers. Jazmyn elects to turn into a tiger. This prospect arouses some interest as to do so she must first take her clothes off. We sneak forward to where we believe the smugglers are - various members invisible & our rangers following tracks that head north. (Sam- "they went North! Which way is that/").

There are six sets of tracks. 200 yards in the distance, 7 voices can be distinguished & 7 cloaked figures seen. We front them & Rez demands they surrender. They demand we surrender. After a stand off & various sneaking & skulking & the odd spell or two we determine that they are from Customs & so we have the same boss - Samdars dad. They have been on patrol. Coming from the other direction they have not noticed any smugglers.

Pym has a spell backfire & suddenly becomes a man hater temporarily. Our prisoner has had his throat slit - apparently expedited by smugglers. On the way back to our boat we find a man and a woman. We jump them & they confess to the crime of gathering herbs illegally, but claim to not be smugglers. In their sacks are herbs - hmm apparently an impregnable disguise! But they do have a dagger with blood on it. Despite some serious threats they do not fess up. It could be that they are telling the truth... Or maybe not. Rodrigo leaves a note stating that they are smugglers. They are tied up.

We get to our boat & Pym activates the "Find" spell & sail off. Someway during the night Pym suddenly stops being a man hater. Eventually we hit a stretch of coast that is as per the detail on our map. We beach the boat & then go off to explore after a rest to re-energise & strength of stone from Sam the friendly orc.

Pym, Rodrigo & Rez skulk about but Pym unfortunately sets off trip wire. A sphere of darkness is cast by someone. Pym wizard yes and sees that there are about 5 persons after us with dogs. We get back to camp. Rodrigo has a backfire which he believes has stopped him from having spell using abilities as when he tries to cast nothing happens.

Session 5

We battle with 5 men and three dog. There is also one assassin type who is able to burrow underground and a great rate who kills Sgt Balsan before we overbear him. He has 4 rings a necklace and a pouch of coins.

We bump them all off except for one prisoner and at the end flee to the sea in boats. There is a storm coming. Roderigo & Pym turn the party invisible....

Session 6

We arrive up the coast and have camped out. There is a bad storm on its way at force 10 or so - 47 to 50 mph. It is cold and wet and miserable. We DA the treasure. 1 ring - tunnel spell - 1 charge, 95%, 2 ring invisible - 2x charges, 3. darkness 5 charges, 4 ring fear - 3 x rank 5 base 50%. Necklace - witchsight

The prisoner is persuaded to talk following a number of threats including the nefarious method of dripping hot smelly cheese on him. He tell us the following: There are 5 ships in total - the Barons revenge, Dockers Dream, The White Rabbit, Wave Rider, the Tanned Eskimo. We correctly guess he is fibbing about this and use it as an excuse to make more even stronger threats.

Mages

Capt. Frederick Errand is the Boss - E & E

Alfred - Earth

Lawrence - Water

Castor - Air

Buckler - Mind

Shade - Celestial

There are fishermen in huts - 10

The base is on the cliff. There is a door on the hill and also an opening from the sea on the other side which ships are able to sail into. Currently there are three ships in Port.

There is a spy called Alfred in the village who masquerades as a fisherman. He has a limp, missing teeth and looks fairly like any other old codger who frequents bars by the port.

The signature arrow is from the Black Squad - an elite enforcement unit. In the Black squad are:

Shade - the celestial,

Blade an Elf,

Flash - Human,

Gordon

and Crush an orc.

There are 3 -4 other assassins including Sirius who we have killed.

There are a number of rings & necklaces which the smugglers are provided with.

At the moment scouts are probably looking for us.

We rest up & then skulk off toward their lair. The wind and rain provide cover in terms of being noisy and providing limited visibility.

We discover that the trip wires are rigged to platforms set in the trees. We trace them back and end up knocking off a number of guard posts mostly using Sam's Control Plat Spell, Rez's deadly arrows, Pym's skilful sleep spells and lots of general action from everyone. We find some sp, 2 more necklaces and a ring that gives witch sight.

The session ends with us discovering a set of trails that head towards the hideout.

Session 7

There is one hideout left.. . Before we explore this, those with Witch sight of the appropriate level see a small glowing object - apparently a wizard eye unmasked - quelle horreur! - we could have been busted...

So we head to the door of the smugglers hideout like cowards and ghosts in the night with righteous greed and (lawful) murder in our hearts... they shall feel the soft caress of our steel across their throats slowly like the many legs of a drunken caterpillar with gout meandering...mmm what a luvrly thought... I digress...

Any how we head toward the door in the hill realising that if we muck around any longer we are sure to definitely be busted - due to all the incapacitated guards everywhere. It is 11 p.m. and there is still a major gale blowing.

... AHAH - Lucky Jim's key - it slides in as if it were made for the lock which it is. A 30' rough-hewn chamber is revealed which opens into a larger chamber... there is a bronze door with a slot in the top & a lock in the top right hand corner. Meilisande picks the lock though it be of the most cunning artifice.

There is a room with four 4 uh oh 5 fell badsters, kin of Saydars son Sam if I not be mistaken. There are 4 chests in the corner of the room. We attack although Rez the Master Elven warrior greedily keeps them all to himself. They are incapacitated & so Roderigo seeking an appropriate token & souvenir de-ears one of the orcs. Sam is quite bizarrely annoyed at this in spite of these orcs being associates of known criminals and therefore bereft of rights in regard to personal items - maybe a matter for his father Saydar the necromancer to explain to him. The Orc was in fact still alive when (I) Roderigo did de-ear it - and so given what he could have done the orc got off damned lightly - and it was

only one ear - the orc could easily turn its head a little and use the other one and I have heard of healers who can regrown parts of the body such as ears. I be sure that Sam is of good heart will render the appropriate apology later as we drink at a tavern and regale our exploits as worthy and successful in our quest... meanwhile my feelings run tender and raw before his unjustified and cruel anger....

Then solely to appease Sam and deflect his unexplained ill temper, I Roderigo bear the full brunt of the trap set on the chests whilst the others be engaged otherwise..

Everyone is paralysed by sleep gas except Pym and Sam who air out the room and drag us too safety. Oh fair fortune for Sam that I Roderigo stood in his place!

We go back in and tie up the prisoners.

A secret door is discovered behind a wooden panel. There is another one with a lever. WE walk in but Rez falls down a hole with water in the bottom, possibly their privy. Valiant Sam the expendable orc hauls Rez from the pit. There are 5 chests.

We go down the other way into a very large gallery be shrouded with web like draping - ah hah - Lucky Jim again and his dying words - or at least the other ones not the ones than where he bequeaths me all his earthly possessions - anyway we suspect spiders and by the rope like strands sizeable ones at that... Pym the Clever boy/girl like halfling casts slow spells & Cournot rousts them with jets of flambé which spring form his fingers in the manner of orange and smoky fountains has them scurrying cowardlike to the nether regions of the room. 40% of the web is destroyed. We sprint across the room avoiding the 8-legged doom above...

We go down a down ward sloping tunnel & see a door and another. Bursting in, we surprise big room still in tis solitude. It appeareth empty, apparently a storage room.

There is a door which to those that can tell appears to have a strange aura. In it there is an office with a couch and another door. On the desk nicely surrounded by a pool of blood is a figure resting. There is a pile of cards that seem to be the fortune telling type known as tarrow. Melisande looks at them . There is a silver coin in the dead ones hand. It looks like he has done a reading for someone else and the verdict is not a good one... It is deduced that this is a high mana room.

For some obscure reason Sam feels tempted by the dark side.... We search the room and discover 2 x pouches and some 20 bottles of wine, 2 x vials 1 x magical

healing 20 point, 1 x waters of healing rk 20, 2 x pouches, barrels of wine and one magic dagger apparently with magic poison on it... (my heart skipeth a beat...how useful indeed)

Pym sneaks ahead we hear voices ahead and burst in on a room with 7 fishy smelling human persons. We deal to them. Sam kills one by mistake....

Session 8

Poor Sam the valiant un-orc with his morbid fear of death collapses sick-like, while the prisoners are tied & I send them to sleep with blows from my sap.

Another small blue object - a wizard eye in the flesh appears - we have been discovered. Our secret entry is no more.

We kick in the door to reveal a rough-hewn room full of barrels. Next door in a room two lie sleeping - in deference to poor Sam and his most terrible condition I sneak in & deliver knock out blows from my sap.....though their throats lie exposed & easy to the discerning eye - rather like plump new mushrooms in the field - left unplucked...

Suddenly there is the noise of doors opening and many feet enter a corridor ahead. We hear voices in orc asking our surrender - it does seem traditional to greet the guild thus - we respond in the traditional manner by ignoring them. There are 7 - 3 humans & 4 orcs - several in heavy armour. We now hear chanting & note 4 humans at the end of the tunnel - humans one of whom is chanting a spell.

Clever Pym, scourge of cream-buns casts a quickness on us all and then slows on them & then a wizard eye, her obsidian dagger is like a blurr.. She casts one of the terrible spells provided by Saydar

Tigerish Jazmyn, flashing her eyes cat-like in the gloom, casts many walls o light spells & other magics - perilous to orc-flesh & Samdar creates giant 7' hands in a wall ready to grasp all that pass by.

Brave Rez the masterly elegant and nimble elf leaps into the midst, heedless of the cruel blows aimed toward he, entertains their flesh with an incisive & cunning display of weaponry whilst providing cool advice on the course of the combat.

Cournot unleashes fiery jets that shrivel and roast those in contact & wrestles to the ground assisted by un-orc Samdar wrestles many of the villains to the floor who I be -sap.

Melisande our wise & noble leader delivers cunning spells of the wiccan college
the clumsify our wicked foe and be-fuddle them.

The enemy are for the most dispatched tho' many of the cowardly scum flee our
wrath & we smell burning. Smoke shrouds the corridors.

Resourceful Cournot leads the charge and we follow down corridors till we come
across a large cavern-like room where there be a ship on fire - the door is open -
to the sea.....the remainder of the foe has fled coward-like in the face of the
Barons vicarious wrath. Cournot quells the flame but it be too late in the piece....

The Black Swan, their ship has escaped

Jazmyn mounts her broom and flies off to get Turf and Saydar who return
eventually with naval representatives.

Prisoner are bound and questioned . We loot & plunder.

We find copious money and:

A wolfskin magic cloak - speed & shape change

A magical rapier

A magical sabre

3 x potions - 1x Potion heal, 1x Potion walk unseen & 1 other

4 x flasks unused paralysis gas

4 x magic books - all trapped, warded cursed.

Invested items

2 x charges rank 20 tunnel

2 x rk 13 flash of light

2 x rank 10 wind walk

1 x rank 19 darkness

a set of bronzed orc plate

some paintings that look really crap & modern - I go to slash them but others
more knowledgeable stay my hand - I never understand why these so-called
artists have abandoned the great tradition of chained naked andalusian dancing
girl-slaves fighting giant snakes or dragons or even spiders on black velvet. I
guess this must be too difficult but for the very masters ...

40 barrels brandy

200 bottles of wine

We look again at the tarrow reader & note a dagger in his back as we pull it out of the tarrow readers back, it makes a lovely slurping noise just like when you suck the sausage bit out of a sausage roll. It turns out that he was a she due to an illusion to protect her from the amour of orcs - Sam being a case in point. There was a spectral force there that talked to us and told us all this..

The dagger is magic - a soul trapping dagger that pins the soul when you stab it into the person..

She cuts a deal - she will be resurrected in exchange for service to Saydar to tarrow for him for many years

A note is found from the smugglers saying we know where you live - hmmm - obviously they are familiar with the bars, dives doss-houses, greasy spoons, of Seagate...

Everything is put in a pile and we assess it lest there be defect in my notes. The money is all added up and counted carefully. Not an Erewhon sheckel shall remain unaccounted for....

I be thinking that there be:

1979 gold
36 true silver
73,859 copper
743 silver
7 gems x 100 sp

in chests 141 true silver, 67 true silver, 54760 copper

lots & lots & lots - quickly my finger & toes become too few to account proper-like.

This be looking like the end of the adventure and for sadly a parting of the ways as we will return to Seagate and on further adventure continue. There be a tear in my eye and all overcome with sentiment I be ... our task is semi completed -tho the flask undiscovered - the progress of smugglers is impeded - & liquor recovered but for I the joyous reunion of Samdar with his father Saydar be the highlight of this sojourn.....

The End