

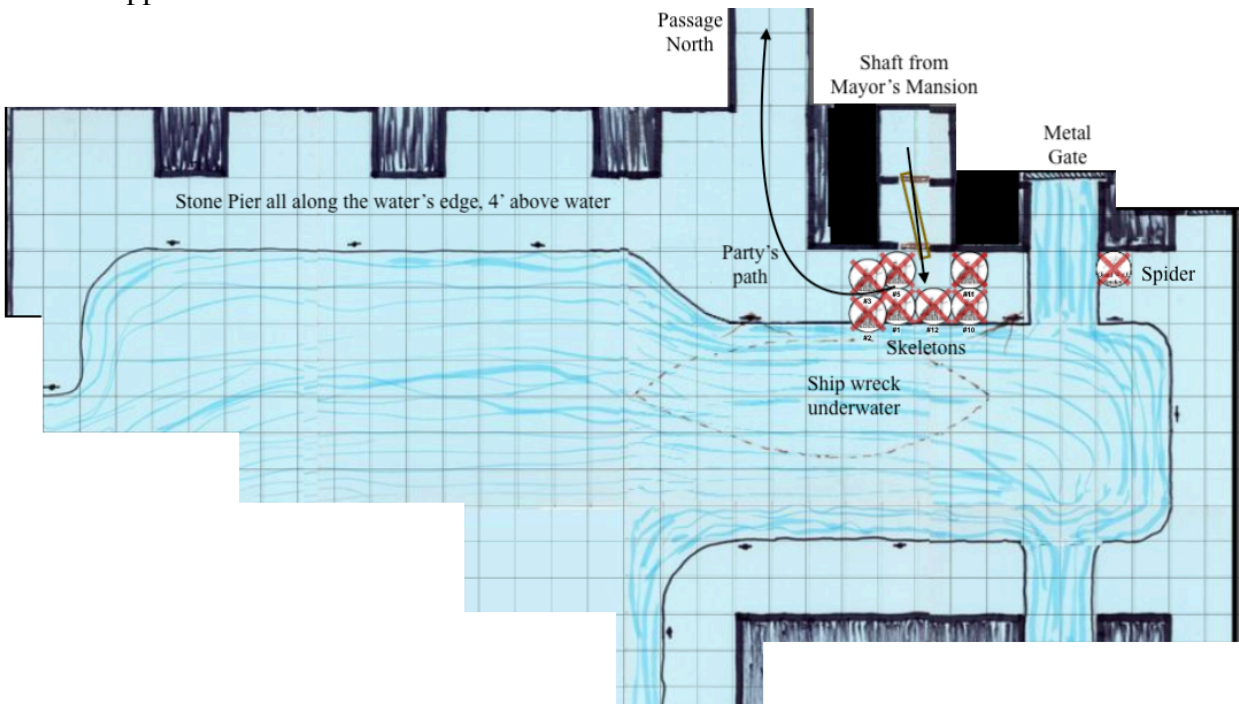
Episode 14: Down under Sundown

Morning of Saturday, March 18th: light breeze

1. The party, at least Doil in particular, was summoned to the Mayor's Mansion, where Father Benaiah planned to examine the Evil Amulet taken from the priestess captured in Dervish. The amulet had not been allocated when treasure was divided, and by default was being held by Doil. The previous evening, he had been unwilling to let it go. Father Benaiah was not prepared to do a Divination on it then, but he was prepared now. All of the party members, Oliver, melodious, Groa, Veylann, Doil, Slippa and Belfor went. The Captain of the Guard, Trudue, was there, along with Father Benaiah.
2. Trudue asked that proceedings wait until Limnis, a Priest of the Sun, could be present. The messenger girl had been sent for him too. Calypso might be with him. Meanwhile, Doil was still unwilling to give up the amulet. Father Benaiah determined to do the Divination with Doil still holding onto it. Soon, three came from the Temple of the Sun, not just Limnis but also the Priest Calypso and Priestess Canopus. Limnis demanded the amulet, but Doil wouldn't give it up. Limnis cited his standing as senior priest, but Calypso pointed out that Hight Priestess Vega was actually of highest standing.
3. Father Benaiah explained that he was doing the Divination as a ritual; it would take some time, maybe as much as half an hour. Melodious started to pull out his bagpipes to offer some music, but Benaiah said, "Please Don't; I have to concentrate." So, there was a wait, during which Father Benaiah did some chanting, mumbled some prayers, and sometimes was silent. Doil did nothing problematic, allowing Benaiah to touch the amulet. Finally, Father Benaiah opened his eyes. "Yes, it is magic, and evil," he pronounced. "A symbol of Seth, a god of evil, destruction and trickery. This amulet seeks to pervert the wearer to the ways of evil, chaotic evil at that. While offering certain protections. The evil magic needs to be dispelled. I'm prepared to do that now."
4. Melodious asked if perhaps the evil could be dispelled but the beneficial magic effects retained. Father Benaiah replied that such a separation was possible only by consorting with "Maxwell's Demon." There had been a wizard who successfully created a number of magic items along those lines, but the secrets of what he had done were either lost or hidden, and he was certainly not able to do such things. No, dispelling the magic, if possible, should neutralize the harm that this item might cause.
5. Without warning, Father Benaiah suddenly stepped back and cast the spell, allowing no opportunity for Doil or anybody else to prevent him from doing so. The magic was dispelled. Father Benaiah verified that with "Detect Magic" and "Detect Evil" spells. It did retain an aura of evil. Doil reacted by pausing, saying, "What happened?" Then saying something like, "I don't need this. Here, take it." Limnis took it, but decided that it didn't seem particularly important to him either, after all. Still, it was connected to the Way of the Sun, so he would retain it for the Temple. So, that settled the issue of the amulet.

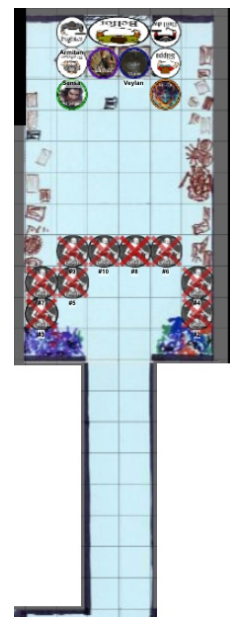
6. There was now some discussion of the “portal to hell” thought to be under Sundown. Trudue said that, yes, there was said to be such under Sundown, and that there was an access shaft down to the Pool there at the Mayor’s Mansion. But, it was dangerous, and might best be left alone. Father Benaiah said that the existence of that supposed portal was the reason he had been assigned to Sundown. He too had been cautioned not to disturb things unnecessarily. He did offer to do a Divination for the party if they wanted, as that might answer some question concerning the matter. He was not asked to do so. Trudue warned that if nothing else, “The Lurker” was dangerous. Some sort of large tentacled creature. Oliver suggested that it might be a form of kracken.
7. There was some question whether the party was strong enough for a venture to look for the portal. Oliver pointed out that they might want to be prepared to run if necessary. Groa suggested that some mercenaries might be hired. To that, Slippa said that she was pretty sure Sensa would be willing to join the party, and maybe someone else. Ultimately Sensa was recruited, as well as Armitan, Ladlissa’s son. (He had been in the battle with the Orcs at Gold Mine Camp some months ago.) Both were happy to join “for a share of the treasure.” (That would have been clarified to “a full share of the treasure”.) So, the party was ready to go within an hour, about mid-morning.
8. Trudue led the now expanded party to a basement store-room in the Mayor’s Mansion. In the NW corner a trap door about 8 feet square opened to reveal a deep shaft, about 65’ down. There were some old ropes and convenient anchoring points there in the room. The party carefully descended without anyone falling. It was crowded at the bottom, with 9 characters packed into an 8’ x 8’ room. There was a door to the south. But Trudue warned that there was a trap just beyond the door. Using the ropes he and some guardsmen lowered a plank about 10’ long that could be used to bridge the trap.
9. While most of the party stayed back close against the north wall in the shaft, Doil and Veylann opened the door. Veylann found that, yes, there was a pit trap, with doors that opened into a shaft below. He triggered the trap safely, revealing the drop was about 4 feet into water. The long plank was then maneuvered across the pit to the lip of the shaft at the far door, which was also closed. Veylann crossed on the plank, but couldn’t get the far door open. He could see dim bluish light under the door, and there was enough space at the stone floor for the door to open over the plank. It was stuck at the top. Armitan crossed over after Veylann retreated, and was able to open the door.
10. Armitan found himself facking a squad of skeletons. They were simply standing there waiting for the door to open. He retreated quickly, and various party members started shooting at the skeletons they could see. Melodious moved up to the door and cast a “Thunderwave” spell that swept four of the skeletons into the pool of water ten feet beyond the door. Others moved up and out onto a stone pier to fight skeletons to the left and right. There had been eleven skeletons originally, and soon there were seven crushed sets of bones remaining. Two of those in the water tried to climb up a rotting rope from a shipwreck next to the pier, but were smashed by Doil and Oliver.

11. The party found themselves in a vast cavern dimly lit in a blue glow by phosphorescent fungi or such. Melodious used his “Mage Hand” to add illumination with a held lantern. Groa added light from her “Dancing Lights” cantrip. The walls of the huge cavern were cut rock, with a far wall some fifty or so feet away. There was a channel preventing the party from moving east, but the cavern was open some considerable distance west. The water was about 4 feet below the stonework pier that seemed to bound the water on all sides. Doil noticed that the nearby channel to the east led to a rusting metal door or gate. He could hear running water, a splashing. Maybe from beyond. Otherwise, the water was still, except for the recent disturbance of the skeletons hitting the water. A giant spider approached from the east and started climbing over the channel to reach the party, but was shot dead by Oliver, Veylann and Slippa.



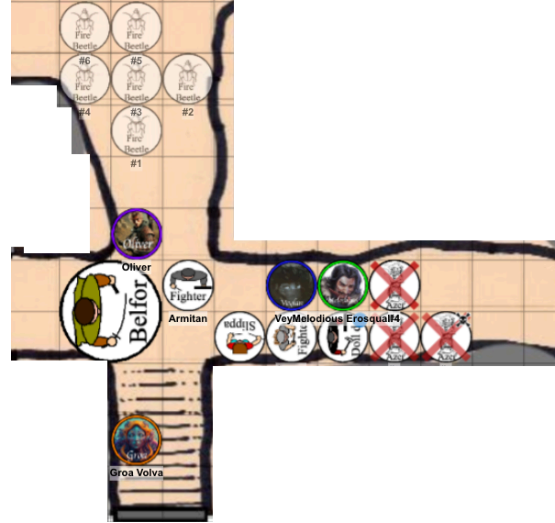
12. Sensa reminded people to stay away from the edge of the water; the lurker was surely out there somewhere. A nearby passageway led north away from the water, so the party went that way, with the Dancing Lights leading the way. In a room to the north was a ghastr (thought to be a ghou) gesturing toward a door behind him, seeming to signal “No.” The party approached, and as they got to the room the ghastr changed his signal and a bunch of ghouls attacked. The party got the jump though, and the ghouls and the ghastr were quickly killed.

13. The door at the north end, a rusty metal double door, was hot. Steam was escaping from beyond into the room, explaining the room’s relative warmth. The ghastr’s throne was a pile of boxes and chests. The room had dozens of other crates, boxes and chests, many apparently used by the ghouls, as well as fabric and scraps of sails and other rotting cloth remains. The party searched through the chests gathering treasure that the ghouls no longer needed. Then they assembled before the iron door.



14. Doil and Armitan managed to get the iron bar out. The doors blew open suddenly from pressure beyond, hitting Belfor (who had assumed bear form to fight the ghouls). It didn't hurt him, and the party ventured forth down some steps into rough corridors filled with mist and condensing steam. There was more of the steam coming from a passage to the east. It was blowing up the steps and into the ghoulish room. Visibility was limited to about 30 feet.

15. Belfor as a bear was leading the way. He was attacked by several fire beetles from directly ahead, but overcame them after suffering a few bites. But, then here came something from the east. Four humanoids of some sort, wearing bronze armor and having a flamelike aspect, their faces glowing. Belfor got out of the way to avoid blocking others' shots after growling a warning. Melodious used Thunderwaves effectively, everybody who could was shooting, Groa using magic. Doil moved to the front to fight with his war hammer and shield. He was a melee specialist, and that's what this was. The fight went to the third round. These things were tough and hard to hit, their armor deflecting blows often. Eventually Doil went down, having been hit hard, but Belfor, dropping bear form, was able to do a healing word spell that got him up about the time the last of these four bronze clad warriors went down.



16. The party, especially Doil, had taken hits. Sensa, Oliver, and Armitan had taken hits along the way. The party retreated to the ghoulish room to rest, dragging the metal armor and weapons, still hot, behind them. The remains of whatever creatures those had been was nothing but ash now. Each had a shield and a big warhammer, but what had looked like armor was a very hard skin surface. The doors were closed and the bar replaced. That required several people to push on the doors to keep them closed against the pressure while Doil and Armitan replaced the bar.

17. This is where the session ended. It will be about noon on Saturday, March 17th when play resumes. The party is taking a “short rest.”

Experience:	Oliver	Melodious	Groa	Veylann	Doil	Slippa	Belfor
Amulet neutr. (F.B. primary) 100xp.	+20	+20	+20	+10	+10	+10	+10
11 skeletons(OMG)(VDSBSA)550xp	+92	+92	+92	+46	+46	+46	+46
10gho.gha(OMG)(VDSBSA)550xp	+375	+375	+375	+188	+188	+188	+188
6 f.Beetles(B(OMG)((VDSBSA))60xp	+8	+8	+8	+4	+4	+4	+16
4 Azeri (OMG(VDSBSA))1800xp	+300	+300	+300	+150	+150	+150	+150
Adventure(Ep. 14) Totals	+795	+795	+795	+398	+398	+398	+410
Previous totals:	4977	4779	4388	2357	2326	2388	2418
Current totals:	5772	5574	5183	2755*	2724*	2786*	2828*

Treasure: Ghouls: 18 cp., 10 sp., 7 gp. (KoS), 8 figurines (gods?) (@25gp), a potion, and a ring. 4 creatures (“Flamers”): 1 large bronze Warhammer, 1 bronze shield, 2 garnets each