

Excerpts From The Personal Journal of Speaks With Wind

Session 21 – January 20, 2012

Crow Moon - 12th day

Winter 55

We transported ourselves to the Lengian tribal village, where we met with D'ah'aug. Instead of engaging in a ritual hunt with them, he had an alternative offer. He introduced us to a man in a black robe and said he was a scholar and teacher from another world. The wizard said that he was Professor Laban Shrewsbury from Miskatonic University in the nation of Massachusetts. The professor needed assistance in recovering a rare tome.

The deal was that if we assisted the professor, the Lengians would give us the 400 rubies in advance, so that we might then go and purchase the armor and weapons. Then we would transfer the weapons to them. In addition, the professor also promised us a "ton of gold." When Caylx asked how much was a ton using his system of measurements, Laban Shrewsbury pulled out a black cloth and laid it upon the ground, revealing an extra-dimensional space. Inside the portable hole were 15 bars of gold stacked upon another layer of bars. The professor said that there were five more layers, for a total of 90 bars.

Each bar looked to weigh about 1 ½ stone, so the professor was offering us more than 120,000 aureii, more than the trade deal was worth by itself. Suffice it to say, we accepted the offer.

The book the professor was seeking was called the Necronomicon, written by a madman called Abdul Al'Hazred. According to the Professor, who had seen the book in his dreams, the Necronomicon was in a labyrinth underneath the Mountains of Madness, which were to be found at the edge of the Plateau of Leng. Or at least, that is the way I understood it – the directions and location were disjointed. The labyrinth was supposed to be full of monsters and nearly impossible to navigate. However, the professor had a crystal orb which showed a multidimensional map through the maze to the room where the book was stored. I looked in the crystal, and my head began to ache after a few moments.

After some consideration, we decided not to bring the Abidos and Scratch with the group as

there was some doubt how well they would do in the labyrinth. We were joined by one of the slaves of the Lengians, a human sorcerer named Quorlorth, who had been offer his freedom for his assistance. In addition, two Lengian warriors, B'eh'tel and J'ah'an, joined us. They had been outfitted with plate armor, composite long bows and long spears. As we had not yet engaged in our trade deal, I am wondering where they obtained them. It is possible that they traded with the tribe the Empire outfitted.

Leaving the animals in the village of the Lengians, we took a couple of the unusual coaches used by the Denizens and arrived at the foothills of the mountains within a couple of hours. We entered the maze through what looked like a sinkhole. As the descent looked nearly unclimable, we used magic to fly or float ourselves down into it.

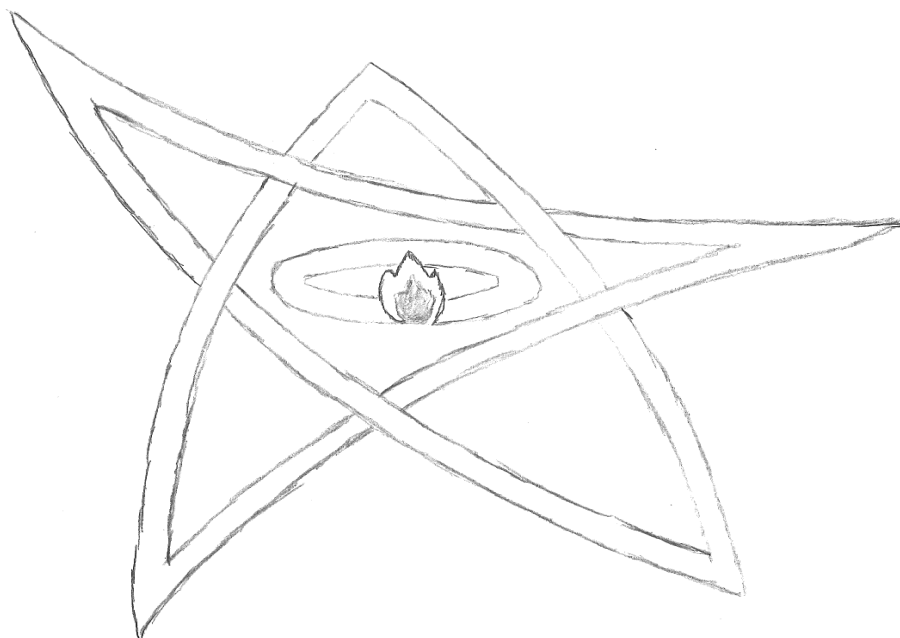
Immediately upon entering the maze, Dawn Flower fortified the party by invoking the ancestors, asking The Mountain to envelop us in a Cloak of Bravery¹ and to strengthen our Conviction² to our task, fortifying our mental and physical resistance to bad medicine.

I quickly became lost, but the Professor seemed to know how to navigate using the orb. After about an hour in the maze, we encountered a group of strange aberrations that appeared to be similar to the undersea monster known as the aboleth. Several members of our party said that they appeared to people as people we know and care about, but I was unaffected. Fortunately, they were easily killed.

Shortly after our first encounter, we arrived at a door sealed with a strange, five-pointed star made out of a greyish-green stone similar to soapstone. I checked the stone for magic, and it possessed a most potent aura of abjuration and protection. The professor said that this was one of the Elder Signs, also known as a Star Stone of Mnar. They are supposed to be potent wards against aberrations and creatures of the Dark Tapestry and Nightmare Worlds. Caylx managed to remove the Elder Sign from the door without breaking it, and based up Laban Shrewsbury's advice, placed it upon his person. I have sketched the sign below:

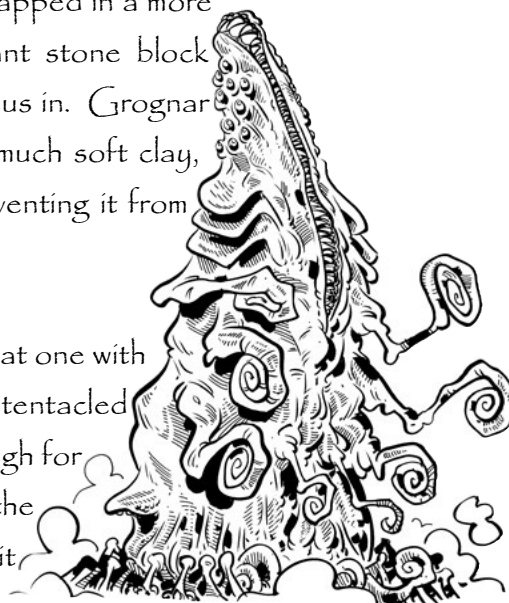
1 *Cloak of Bravery*

2 *Mass Conviction*



It also appeared that the room beyond the doorway was trapped in a more mundane manner. From what we could determine, a giant stone block would fall down behind us after we went through it, sealing us in. Grognar bent the stone of the walls and ceiling, shaping it like so much soft clay, using it to form large shelves underneath it the block, preventing it from falling.

The room contained nine statues.³ I tossed some lightning at one with a static discharge. It animated, turning into some sort of tentacled horror. Its form was constantly shifting and changing, although for the most part it appeared like a conical structure about the size of man, with a toothy maw and eight or so tentacles it extruded and took in from its body constantly.

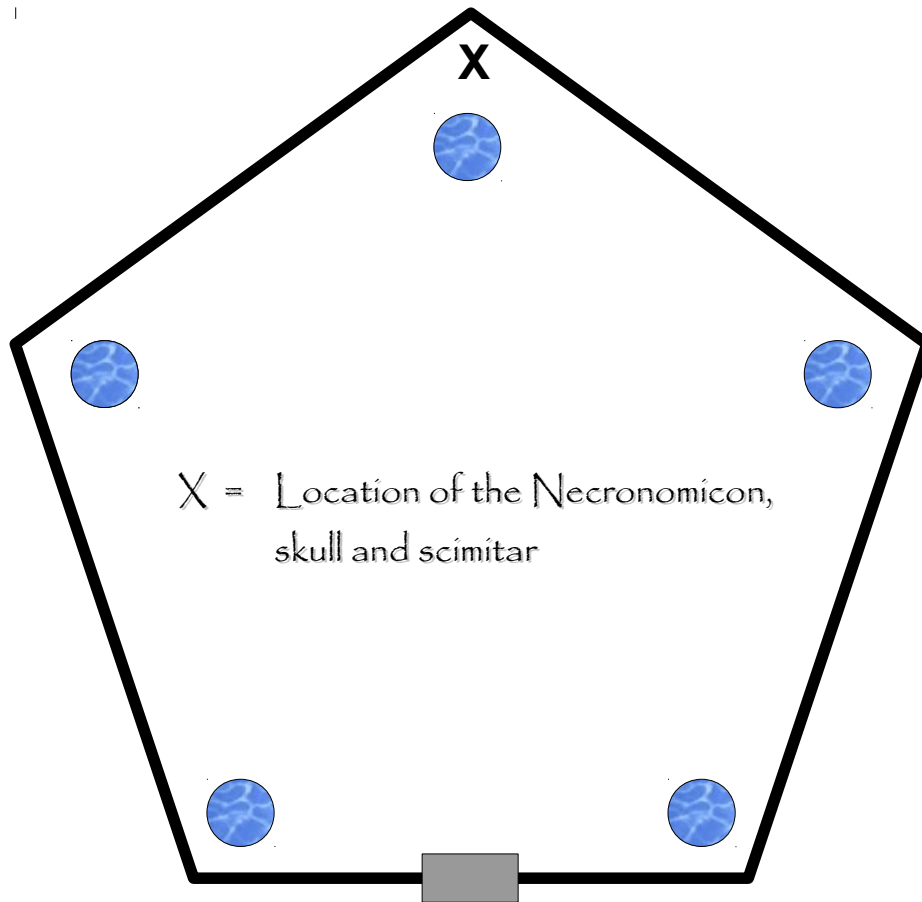


Tentacled Horror

These protean creatures were not that difficult to slay. When they died, they dissolved into a strange glass, mirrored cube. The nine cubes needed to be put into a specific order into a recess on the far door so the reflections created a specific image. The room also contained a great deal of writing on the wall. While Dawn Flower and I examined the mirror puzzle, Caylx read some of the

³ Tentacled Horror artwork by Chris Schweizer and may be found here:
<http://www.curiousoldlibrary.blogspot.com/2010/10/halloween-countdown-t-2.html>

writing. We heard him mutter things himself, that he "understood now" and "it was so simple" and the like. Professor Shrewsbury said these were likely writings from the Necronomicon.

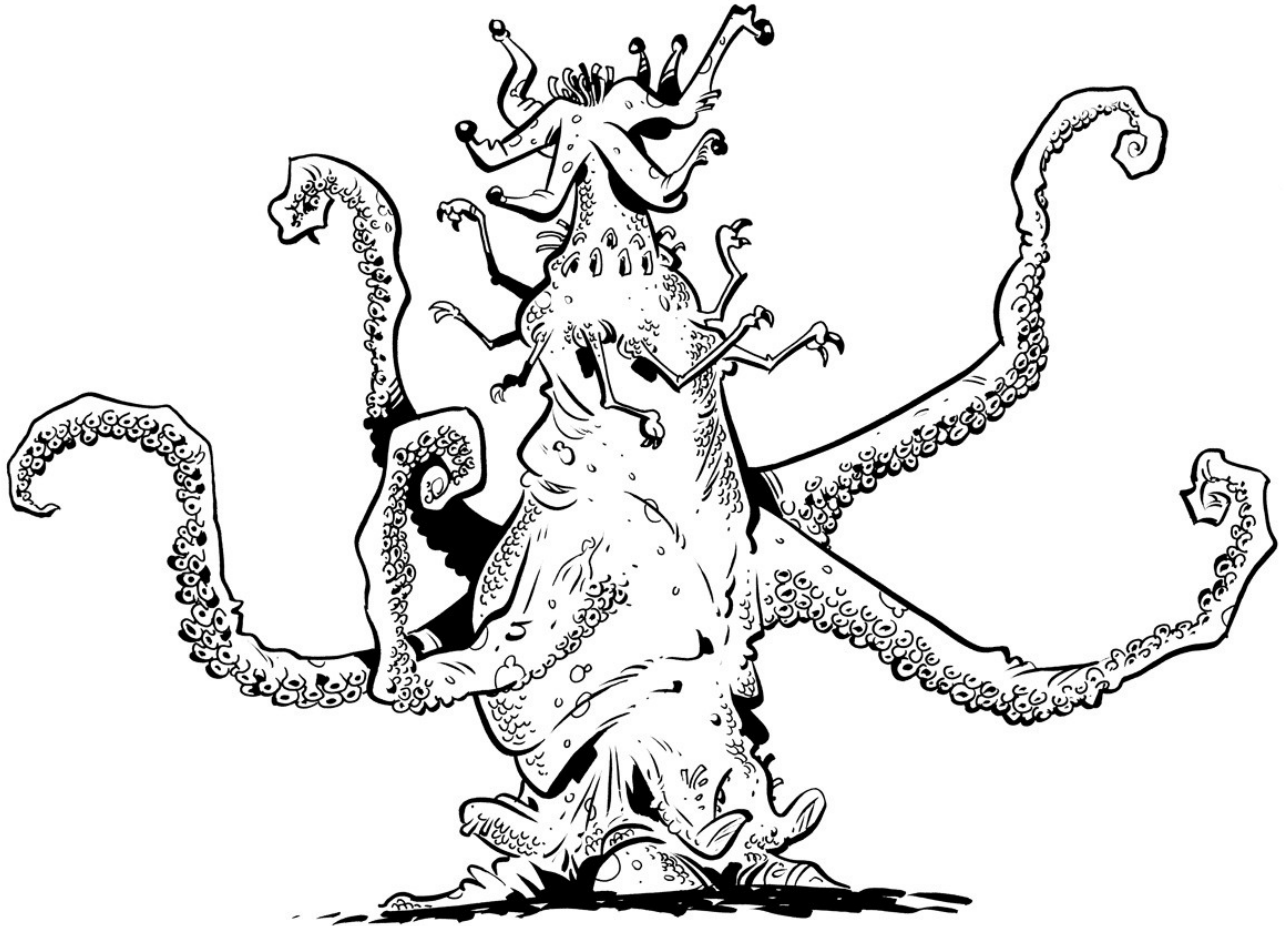


When we did solve the mirror puzzle, it opened to reveal another door, again sealed with an Elder Sign. Caylx again removed the sign without damaging it and this time gave it to Grognar. This door was not trapped. Upon opening it, we found a pentagon shaped room. Each corner had what looked like a pillar of a water in it, held together by unknown means.

Caylx used a spell to levitate a cup over to one of the pillars and scoop out some. All of the pillars then collapsed, releasing five creatures from stasis.

They stood roughly eight feet tall and had the appearance of a huge, oval-shaped barrel with starfish-like appendage at both ends. The top appendage was a head adorned with five eyes, five eating tubes, and a set of cilia for "seeing" without light. The bottom appendage was five-limbed and was used for walking and other forms of locomotion. The beings also had five leathery, fan-like

retractable wings and five sets of branching tentacles that sprouted from their torsos. Both their tentacles and the slits housing their folded wings were spaced at regular intervals about their bodies.⁴



Elder Thing

Laban Shrewsbury said these were "Elder Things". They had strange powers, similar to the neothelid. One of them overwhelmed Dawn Flower with its will and attempting to get her to call down Holy Fire upon Grognar, Quorloth and myself. Her love for me strengthened her resolve against this command and she managed to break the enchantment⁵. Another one of them struck down Varos with a mental blast⁶. They also used a stange noxious gas that sickened Mordin and Quorloth.

4 Artwork by Chris Schweitzer. It may be found at: <http://www.curiousoldlibrary.blogspot.com/2010/10/halloween-countdown-t-4.html>

5 *Dominate Monster* spell-like ability. She failed her first Will save, but as the action was "against her nature" she received a second save at a +2 bonus, which she made.

6 *Psychic Crush* ability. This is the second time Varos has been brought to -1 by this. The first was in session 19, by the Neothelid.

We summoned allies from the Sky World⁷ and Earth World⁸. In addition to call forth Balls of Lightning empowered with the Heart of the Storm⁹, I used a spell to disintegrate¹⁰ much of the body of one of them and another spell¹¹ to rip the air from the lungs of another, suffocating it. Quorloth conjured black tentacles, such as I used in our initial battle with the Denizens of Leng, while Professor Shrewbury threw a fireball at them. They were apparently immune to the fire, but it did clear out most of their gas cloud.

We killed all of the creatures, and took their treasure:

- Each elder thing had some sort of 5-pointed crown on their heads. They don't appear to be magical, but I would like Hadron to look at one.
- A scimitar with a cat's head on the hilt
- A human skull, which the professor believed to be that of Abdul Al'Hazred
- A book - the Necronomicon

After we defeated them and recovering what we came for, we fled the area and returned to the village.

This and my other game recaps may be found at www.launchpadzero.net.

7 Air Elemental

8 Two Earth Elementals

9 Enhanced with a custom meta-magic feat called High Voltage, which bypasses Electricity Resistance.

10 *Disintegrate* for 91 points of damage

11 *Suffocation* from the Advanced Player's Guide.