

Session/Game: ACKS/Gatavia III #33 **Date:** January 4, 2015

Episode 33: "TOTALLY METAL!"

Campaign Date: September 7, 1431 AY

Characters

Exorcist Rinaldo, human, cleric-8, neutral (Robert Swan)
 Decius, human, explorer-6 neutral (henchman)
 Beavis, gnome titan-6 neutral (henchman)
 Manfred, human, mage-6 neutral (henchman)
 Sindrain, elf, ranger-5, neutral (henchman)
Tiberio, human, mage-8, neutral (Tim Moyer)
 Helpful Bill, human, fighter-6, neutral (henchman)-**bed rest**
 Muttering Osborn, human, shaman-5, neutral (henchman)
Pontifex Amicus, human, cleric-9, neutral (Andrew Smith)-**bed rest**
 Louise Impetuous, human, fighter-2, neutral (henchman)
 Sister Helena, human, blade-dancer-5, neutral (henchman)
Whang, human, fighter-7, neutral (Marlon Kirton)
 Granny Web, human, witch-1, neutral (henchman)
 Yengenal of the South Deserts, human, mage-1, neutral (henchman)-**bed rest**
 Fortenbras, human, fighter-2, neutral (henchman)-**bed rest**
Masked Archer of the Apocalypse, human, assassin-8, neutral (Dave Nelson)
 Hackamore, human, thief-6, neutral (henchman)
 Trusty Nixon, human, lackey-6, neutral (henchman)
Gorna Liquortitty, human, shaman-8, neutral (Bob LaForge)

Judge: Jason Leibert

Prologue: September 7th

Exorcist Rinaldo sends the explorer Decius and elf ranger Sindrain after his former henchman Edwulf, in an attempt to recover money and items from his former henchman. However, the normally skilled trackers mysteriously get mixed up, and end up tracking the newly reincarnated form of deceased Skull Collector Rotwang, who is now known as the shaman Gorna Liquortitty. The two woodsmen decide this is a sign from above, and escort Gorna back to Yoeville.

Meanwhile, Pontifex Amicus is recovering from his return from the dead, but that is not enough to keep him from lighter duties administering to the running of his stronghold. A cavalry scout reports to him that a small (yet curiously wealthy) village on the western edge of his domain known as Primal Village (apparently named after a wizard of some sort who killed a dragon there, saving the village) is under attack by a swarm of strange, dart spitting spiders. The cavalry scout quotes section 1 of the army code, 'Orcs, goblins, bandits, wolves we can handle...weird shit we report back for the boss'.

Pontifex Amicus decides that this looks like a job for...the Skull Collectors. His first order is to light the Masked Archer signal, calling the Masked Archer and the rest of the Skull Collectors together. His second action is to nominate Sister Helena to accompany the Skull Collectors in his stead.

September 8

The Skull Collectors journey to Primal Village, and decide to send the Masked Archer to scout the village. He finds the village swarming with huge, totally metal, spiders of varying sizes and metal types. He sees copper and steel spiders (each roughly 4 feet across) in abundance, with a very few silver spiders apparently supervising, and a handful of hulking iron spiders (roughly 10ft across, and as tall as a horse) tearing down large sections of the village.

The Masked Archer withdraws to inform the group of what he saw, and they discuss how to deal with the problem. The Skull Collectors come up with a plan to lure a nearby group of copper and steel spiders (who are apparently dismantling a nearby wooden fence) into an ambush point of their choosing, with the intent of capturing one of them intact for study.

The Skull Collectors use plan berserker-lure one to draw the clockwork horrors into their ambush zone, and make fairly quick work of them with only minor injuries. One of the copper horrors is captured by being flipped on its back, stuffed into a bag, and having a tanglefoot bag smashed inside.

A quick field study of the machines indicates that they're perfectly vulnerable to all weapon types. The copper horrors turn out to be armed with a dart launcher, and it turns out they're worth 50gp each for their copper value. The steel horrors have some sort of built-in arbalest, and are worth 100gp each for their scrap value.

The group plots and schemes, and it's the Masked Archer who comes up with the idea of resting overnight, and then using a massive charge of summoned creatures to soften up the clockwork horrors in the village, followed up by the Skull Collectors either invisibly sneaking, or outright charging into the monsters.

September 9

A hydra is summoned by Tiberio, and send charging across the empty farm fields from the tree line, accompanied by a group of berserkers. Gorna Liquortitty calls for a dragon to attack the clockwork horrors, and Decius decides to snipe from the back of the dragon.

The hydra starts across the field, and the entirety of the clockwork horrors respond as one, the copper horrors lining up in a skirmish line, while the steel horrors line up on roof tops, and all along behind the coppers. The iron horrors position themselves to where they could grab boulders to throw, and the mysterious silvers arrayed themselves in the mass.

The hydra briefly held the massed fire of the steel and copper horrors, taking down a few copper horrors before it succumbed. The dragon's first breath attack killed a great many copper horrors, but it was quickly marked as a target for the iron clockwork horror's boulders, as well as the now-revealed lightning bolt launchers of the silver horrors. The

second breath from the dragon was answered with even more boulders, lightning bolts, and a huge number of arbalest shots from the steel horrors. The dragon had time to drop Decius off in safety before it was finally put down.

Gorna summons storm clouds, and a massive lightning strike is called down into an untouched mass of clockwork horrors that was due to receive a charge from Whang on his horse. That is when a further ability of the clockwork horrors is revealed, their immunity to lightning. Whang is quickly surrounded by scuttling, dangerous steel horrors, where he mostly spends the rest of the battle.

The group of steel horrors that surrounds Whang leaves a silver horror and a few iron horrors open. Following up a fireball which wounded the clockwork horrors there, the Masked Archer makes his move, sneak-attacking the silver from invisibility with Trusty Nixon, Hackamore, and Sister Helena. They put down one of the silvers, but quickly discover that the remaining silver horrors have no compunction against firing their lightning-casters through their own troops (who are immune to the damage) just to get at the party. Sister Helena uses her spade of colossal excavation to build a wall breaking the line of sight, but it is much too late as she is quickly knocked down. The massively injured Nixon and Hackamore grab her unconscious body and flee with it back to 'Rendezvous Point Alpha 1', also known as Yoenville, while the Masked Archer quickly quaffs a potion of invisibility, and runs around the corner of a building to get away from the horrors.

Rinaldo (after casting a few spells) and Mighty Beavis approach the village invisibly, while Gorna casts winged flight to approach the village. Mighty Beavis (giant blinking gnome) engages a crowd of steel horrors on the roof of one the houses in the village. He puts down one steel horror, but is blasted again and again with lightning, before falling.

The group decides that this is not a battle they can win at this point. They blast a hole for Whang to retreat through the steel horrors surrounding him, while the rest recover their fallen, and retreats under cover of obscuring spells. Whang is knocked unconscious while retreating, and only his Herkimer Battle-Saddle saves his body from falling off his horse.

The Skull Collectors retreat to sort their wounded, leaving the remaining villagers to be carted off to whatever fate was in store for them, and the village itself reduced to scraps of wood and stone marking the ground. In the end Whang, Mighty Beavis, and Helena were all taken down, but all recover without serious injuries.