

Game: Gloomwrought Campaign, D&D 5e

Date: September 14th, 2019

Characters:

Ping the Vile, half-elf ranger - 9 (Dan Gilbert)

Bartleby, gnome hedge wizard - 4 (NPC)

Trogdor, human barbarian/bard - 7/2 (Nate Grim)

Vlad, lizardfolk pugilist - 4 (NPC)

Rear Admiral Nigel Ramsbottom, half-elf rogue/warlock - 5/4 (Quinton Laughman)

Ellie Finnbuckle, gnome wizard - 9 (Kayla Nicholas)

Duck Newton, half-orc cleric/fighter - 5/4 (Justin Nicholas)

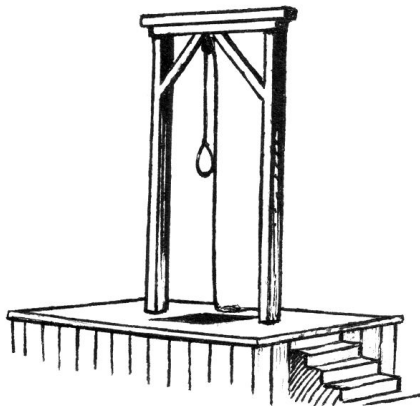
DM: Andrew Smith

Log:

The group travels to Salt Temple. Along the way, they meet with a few nomadic tribes and pass through groups of military companies training to conquer the Plaguelands on behalf of Salt Temple.

The Prelate commands a large army including a half-dozen mercenary units such as The Devil's Own. The forces are so big that there may be no way to prevent a holy war between Salt Temple and the greater Plaguelands. Even if Prelate Garcarlin's plan to take on the mantle of godhood is stopped, the Plaguelands are headed for conflict. That could mean death and worse for the rustic tribes such as the one Duck and Trogdor are from.

The police of Erathis in Salt Temple have some pretty aggressive means of scrying and divination. There is a saying that "someone is always watching." There are street-level secret police that pose as everyday citizens. Duck has heard that they are able to read people's motivations and act on thought crimes.



The party has heard horror stories about entire communities of gnomes and halflings systematically driven out of Salt Temple through campaigns of bigotry, terror, and murder over the past twenty years. The current leaders of the Church of Erathis have convinced the remainder of the population that the small folk are to blame for all their woes.

Salt Temple is quiet and mirthless. There isn't even a sewer system. Instead, public works regularly creates mindless undead to scour the streets nightly removing refuse, garbage, and excrement. There are always fresh bodies for the government to use as a resource. The punishment for

any infraction against the byzantine laws of the city state is eternal undead service. There are regular ritual executions at the gallows used to create this source of free labor.

Ellie makes sure to cast nondetection on the party. The party adopts some aliases to keep from raising suspicion. Ellie climbs up on Bartleby's back, and puts on a trenchcoat to keep from being stopped by the secret police. Ellie calls herself, "Anastasia". Trogdor goes by "Jack Black", Duck and Ping choose names of the saints of Erathis "Steve" and "Bob" respectively. Finally, Nigel goes by "J.J.J. Schmidt" or "J.Q." for short.

As the party approaches Salt Temple they encounter an older woman making her way through the main gates of Salt Temple. She is being confronted by the guards and a secret police member. The party convinces the guards that the woman is with them, and they make it into the city once Nigel agreed to submit to a strip search.



Several members of the party had heard of Garcarlin, the Prelate of Erathis. He came from a tragic past within the priesthood to assume the mantle of the Prelate. Earlier in his career, Garcarlin was blessed with a child - a girl. The priest had a strong bond with his concubine and his child, one that would sustain and strengthen his love of his deity.

One day, a villainous Fey grew bitter at this happiness. The faerie visited the family and demanded a gift. When she was turned away, she cursed the child and her mother. They fell still, locked in a supernatural sleep. This tragedy drove Garcarlin on a quest for power to make right what was wrong.

Many of the faithful of Erathis put their trust in Garcarlin out of sympathy for his loss. His rule replaced a government that was flaccid and corrupt, galvanizing the population in a xenophobic fervor. There is nothing like a populist to move people to violence.

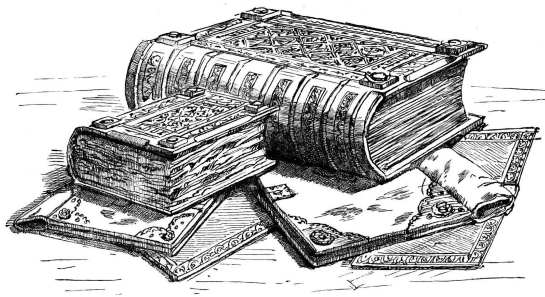
There is a lot of gossip about the upcoming ceremony known as the coronation. Few are invited, but once the ceremony is complete there will be a celebration culminating with the forces of Salt Temple attacking all of the Plaguelands.

As thanks for saving the village of Abernacht from the ravages of Salt Temple, a simple older gentleman named Preet took Duck aside and thanked him for saving his family. Preet made an offer to Duck. If Duck was ever forced to return to the city of Salt Temple, his brother Shurk would take Duck into his establishment - a wine emporium named "Fruits of our Labors" - and do his best to shelter Duck and his companions.

The party makes their way to the wine dealer's shop. There they discuss their next move. They decide that they will do some recon, and try to learn some more about the Sacred City and the upcoming ceremony.

The crab gardens of Erathis feature gigantic hermit crabs, some with shells over three feet in diameter and weighing over 500 pounds. The hermit crabs who live in the great Salt Lake are sacred animals to the citizens of Salt Temple. Earlier, Ellie had converted her owl familiar "Owlie" into a small hermit crab. She sends it scuttling around inside the Sacred City to scout. He identifies the main buildings as well as a door to the Sacristy where the Prelate is accepting supplies for the upcoming coronation.

They find a few seats at a mirthless eatery across from the Sacred City, but there are several secret police there both on and off duty. In order to keep from drawing unwanted attention, Duck Newton decides he will give a fake sermon on the glory of Erathis.



"Ladies and Gentlemen, we are gathered here in the cradle of civilization where all is ordered...and definitely not super-lame. Have you heard about the holy paperwork of our divine bureaucracy? Is not the rigor of documentation the true measure of our worth within the ultimate organizational chart? Please direct your attention now to your holy operations manual form thirty-four, subsection B."

Nigel responds to the sermon, "Thirty four, subsection B! Allelujah!"

They watch as two merchants with a handcart come up on a dozen guards and secret police just outside the Sacristy. The merchants are patted down and questioned before entering. Ellie sends her hermit crab familiar with the handcart into the Sacristy to learn more. Inside, the merchants are subjected to several detection spells. They must have three sets of papers, and each must match those the guards hold at the Sacristy.

Duck continues the jingoistic and bureaucratic witness about the "power of civilization" featuring a discussion of The Eternal Queue of Erathis. Duck administers the test after. Nigel and Ellie do great on the test. Trogdor scores at about a "C" while Ping turns in a test with just the words "fuck you" scrawled in the space for "name."

The party learns of another wine delivery to the Prelate. They intercept it, and take the delivery and the papers paying off the merchants. It is a simple pushcart with two barrels of magical wine in it. They decide that Ping and Nigel should pretend to be the merchants, and the rest of the party will infiltrate the Sacristy door invisibly. They put all their magic items into the barrels because the papers specifically say that the delivery is for magic wine. The party approaches the Sacristy door. Trogdor and Duck get wrapped up at the door - they can't see each other

since they are both invisible. However, after some confusion Ellie casts fireball and burns all the guards and secret police to death. The party proceeds into the sacristy.

They happen on Plague Lord Ickalaback and two members of Cabala Kick as they pass through the halls. He is working on a contract provided by Bezos to defend the Prelate along with his followers. The party surprises them and crushes them. Both Platinum Penguin and Homestar are slain. Lord Ickalaback escapes in a cloud of greasy black smoke. The party decides that it is not worth going after Ickalaback right now.

An explosion rocks the sacred city. The heroes rush toward the chapel. The roof of the tabernacle is blown apart, and the floor of the grand cathedral cracks apart, revealing the chapel below. There, the Prelate directs a choir of ghostly saints associated with artifacts as well as a choir of undead monstrosities. Three necromancers command the undead from the ruined tabernacle above, and two score champions of Erathis and secret police are on hand. [The coronation has begun!](#)

Just as they planned, the barbarians that Trogdor met on their way appear on the scene. They attack the necromancers positioned above the Prelate in the ruins of the tabernacle. Trogdor conjures a wall of fire, creating a barrier between the undead horde and the party. Ghouls and undead are burned to cinders, but others plunge through the fire to engage the troublemakers. Nigel downs a potion of speed. Duck conjures his spiritual guardians and Ellie casts Bigby's Hand and tries to push the Prelate off his perch, only to have it dispelled by one of the necromancers later. Ping fires off a volley of ensnaring strikes on the Prelate to stop him from directing the ghostly saints and the choir of undead.



Trogdor climbs up on a ruined block of masonry and begins to play his music. Proteus changes form to reach the other artifacts and link them back through to Trogdor.

There is a contest of magical music as the [Prelate and Trogdor struggle mightily](#). A ghostly band springs up around him. Duck holds the line, offering guidance and defending his brother. The Prelate looks up from his music, angered at the attack.

Ellie and Nigel dimension door to the platform of the Prelate. Nigel stabs the Prelate in the kidneys, igniting a divine smite at the same time burning the Prelate and angering him.

The secret police try to curse Vlad and Duck, slowing Vlad. The Prelate uses both his actions to cast a necrotic harm spell on both Nigel and Ellie. Trogdor counters the spell against Ellie, while the power of Aurora helps Nigel survive. Nigel stabs the Prelate again with his rapier, skewering him with the blade all the way through. The Prelate coughs up a mouthful of blood on his stiff white robes.

Ping and Duck are swarmed by a wave of undead, secret police, and champions of Erathis. The necromancers cast blight and the Prelate lands two necromantic death spells, critically harming Ellie. Ping slips away from the pack and drives more arrows into the chest of the Prelate.

Trogdor sees his companions risking certain death. His brother is surrounded. Vlad is slowed. Ellie and Nigel are standing toe-to-toe with the Prelate. He plays his heart out, [pulling more of the power of the fallen god Olidimarra to him](#). The Prelate is shocked, and feels his long-awaited godhood slipping away. He turns back toward apotheosis himself!

Ellie falls unconscious, and Nigel is almost overwhelmed by the necromancer's attacks but Nigel rallies and once again critically stabs the Prelate, this time through the neck. Bartleby is surrounded, but he manages to fend off the champions of Erathis with a well-timed shield spell. Duck locks up with the warlord of Erathis.

With a crash of divine music Trogdor wins the battle of godhood. His apotheosis is complete, and he disappears in a column of white hot light. All the ghosts of the artifacts are also pulled into heaven. Trogdor's song continues to play triumphantly. No longer buoyed by the coronation, the Prelate is slain by Ping's arrows. Vlad steps into the column of light. He becomes the first cleric of Trogdor - the master of tunes and revelry.

The armies of Erathis realize that their leader has fallen. The undead are in disarray, and the secret police call out in pain. As the party stands amongst the rubble of the tabernacle, they realize that soon the forces of Erathis will be on top of them. There is no escape.

A flash of bright light blinds the party. Trogdor appears before them in angelic form. He looks exactly the same as he did in life except with wings and a choir of angelic women behind him. He strums his axe. With a single chord, everyone in the party is teleported to the places they most desire to be.

Epilog

Over the next few months, the party spends some downtime and says their goodbyes. Ellie takes her place alongside Professor Liadon at the Arcane Academy. Duck Newton spends some time in Blackangel, spreading the word of the Traveller. Vlad's musical ministry takes root in the Jorba Lynde district of Blackangel. After an introduction from Ellie, Bartleby woos and settles down with Evie - Ellie's sister in Highport. Trogdor settles into his new existence as a demigod, sharing a fist bump with none other than the Traveller himself.

What of Ping and Nigel? More adventures await this odd couple in a new story that starts in the Feywild and winds through another corner of the Prime Material Plane.

Appendix: Bad Guys

The Prelate

Lord Garcarlin

Armor Class: 20 (Full plate & shield)

Hit Points: ∞ (20d8 +60)

Speed: 30ft (9m / 6 sqr)

Proficiency: +6

STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA

(+2) (+1) (+3) (+1) (+5) (+5)

Skills: Religion +6 Insight +11

Saving Throws: Wisdom +11 Constitution +9

Actions

Mace. Melee Weapon Attack +8 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2D8 +2) bludgeoning damage.

Spells

Spellcasting. Prelate is a 20th-level cleric. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks)

Cantrips (at will): Spare the Dying, Chill Touch, Thorn Whip, Shillelagh, Druidcraft,

1st level (4 slots): Cure Wounds, Bless, Inflict Wounds, Cure Wounds,

2nd level (3 slots): Spiritual Weapon,

3rd level (3 slots): Glyph of Warding, Animate Dead, Plant Growth,

4th level (3 slots): Dominate Beast, Banishment, Guardian of Faith,

5th level (3 slots): Flame Strike, Hold Monster

6th level (2 slots): Harm

7th level (2 slots): Fire Storm, Regenerate

8th level (1 slots): Earthquake, Holy Aura

9th level (1 slots): USED AS WISH

Special Abilities

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the Prelate fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Legendary Actions (3/turn):

The Prelate Heals someone within 60' for 25hp

The Prelate allows another attack from a follower within 60'