

Campaign/Game: The Sanguine Succession: D&D 5e
Episode 2: Sanguine Secrets
Campaign Date: Verdance 25th- 28th 931 (Summer)

Date: June 17th, 2021

Characters

Barackus "Boomer" Doomhammer, Dwarf Wizard Evoker - 6 (Tim)

Bo, Human Beast Conclave Ranger - 6 (Chel)

Arro, Canine Animal Companion (NPC)

Desdemona, Dragonborn Moon Druid - 6 (Camille)

Taurianus the Bull, Human Berserker Barbarian - 6 (Jamin)

Shae, Changeling Lore Bard - 6 (Ryan)

DM: Andrew

Prolog:

In ages long past, the Avatar of Alkir - a god of lust, pain and death dwelt upon the face of Kyor. It's priests and priestesses trafficked in human sacrifice of the most horrible kind. The most attractive young people were married to the god; the best warriors fought madly for its amusement. The ancient tieflings who suffered under this demon-lord cried for release.

Eventually, someone responded. The white sorcerer Avanrakash, last of his kind, formed the Circle of the Right-Hand Path and entered into a pact with the Nine Old Gods. Beggar, Blacksmith, and Child offered him defenses against the Avatar of Alkir. Farmer, Judge, and Mariner gave the white sorcerer uncanny faculties and constitution. Finally, the Mariner, Traveller, and Warrior combined their might to create a magic weapon - a staff of great power.

A titanic battle raged. Mountains were formed, rivers moved, deserts made, seas consumed. All died except Avanrakash and he was mortally wounded. With the staff of power he drove Alkir from the body it used on the mortal plane and sealed him from the world of Kyor. Avanrakash then presented this staff to the remaining tieflings and disappeared into the mountains, presumably to die, though none knew his true end.

A dynasty of tiefling monarchs took up the staff and created the city-state of Sanguine which has lasted for millennia. First, struggling against the other ancients. Then, opposing the might of the alien Masters. Over the ages, the city also pushed back against the worst colonialism of each of the three heritages, and then most recently struggling through the great war that enveloped the entire continent of Radavan against Corvax and his soldiers.



Log:

After Darios and Katos unexpectedly file out of the Bull and the Boar, the Privateers see a terrible sight. Darios has fallen, his head blasted open leaving naught but a blackened hole where his face once was. Four tiefling thugs surrounding Katos move in to cut his throat as well. Shaking in fear, the halfling antiquarian shouts out, "Two-hundred gold if you save me this night! And more! I have magical artifacts! Help! Save me!"

Bo immediately fires an arrow enchanted by a note tied around its shaft. The arrow falls at Katos' feet, magically protecting him from the attacks of the thugs. Tauranius charges the thugs, engaging them in combat. The thugs crowd the barbarian, swinging blow after blow with club and machete. Arro drives into the fray, breaking ankles with his savage bites.

Just then, more thugs emerge from the darkness. It's a trap! Julia and Desdemona are engaged. The druid transforms herself into a bear and bites the head off of one of the marauders. Shae inspires and heals the group, attempting to drive the thugs off with dissonant whispers. Bo climbs the street obelisk to get a better vantage of the battlefield. From the darkness, a hedge wizard working with the thugs launches a barrage of magical knives. Barackus easily knocks aside the magic with a gesture. The hedge wizard pulls out a poisoned blade and attempts to stab the dwarf, but is constantly blocked by Boomer's weapon.

Shae is caught flat-footed by three thugs who catch him with a lucky attack. The bard collapses into unconsciousness, but does not transform from the form of the tiefling. Desdemona summons a flying fox which teams up with Arro to neutralize the thugs. Tauranius' mighty blade cuts several of the villains down, then he crosses the battlefield swiftly to join Boomer, knocking the hedge wizard unconscious.

Following the battle, Shae is healed. Katos remains terrified. He promises access to his library of magic items if they bring Darios and stay the night in a secret room he has in the slums of the Serpentine. At first, Shae is reluctant to go out into the night. It has already been a dangerous evening, and the buck-toothed man is nowhere to be seen. The party accepts the offer in the end. Julia makes arrangements for Torali and then gingerly carries Darios' body. Bo trusses up the unconscious thug for the trip.

Katos and Darios' room is little more than a secret room at the bottom of a stairs covered by a secret sliding door. It is reached when Katos turns an empty torch sconce. It is a tight fit for a single room used by two halflings, but everyone fits. It is filled with a number of tiefling artifacts from across the continent of Radavan. A number of magic items and weapons are offered along



with the payment. Desdemona helps Boomer reclaim the single use of blade poison that the thug had used. Bo and Shae interrogate the thug, but only learn that he was hired by a “masked tiefling woman.” Katos takes another heavy iron ring from Darios’ finger and puts it on his own. He explains more about the threat that once was the dead god Alkir, and how the legend is that the mage Avanrakash defeated him with a staff created by the nine old gods themselves. Katos cuts a scroll from the lining of Darios’ cape, and offers it to the party. He believes that the thugs were in search of these blasphemous words:

Lo, call to the great god, entreating him, and set before the image the succedaneum, the bridge between worlds, as a beacon to glorify the way of the god to thee.

The next day, the party emerges from the safehouse. They find their way slowed by a procession led by the haughty General Iskandrian featuring a litter that carries what is left of the mortally ill King Valdric.



QUIRE



While the majority of the party heads toward the palace of Baron Timeon, Bo returns to the Gate of Avanrakash to learn more about the missing person that the guards were worried about. Sergeant Karbok was very pleased Bo returned. He tells the Inquisitor about the young nobleman Baron Burio. According to Burio’s man Quire, Baron Burio was just leaving the Royal Palace of the King after a discussion about the noble’s rank in the succession. Despite by all accounts being far from the throne, Burio was attacked soon after leaving the palace and has gone missing. Karbok remarked that “the last hound was not nearly as charitable.” When pressed by Bo, details about the other Inquisitor emerge including the fact that his name is Rakke and that he has decided to work for the wealthy Baron Claudes instead of the guard.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the Privateers arrive at the wealthy yet tacky palace of Baron Timeon. They are first greeted by a servant named Vanemoth who entreats them to come back at a later time. However, soon they find Baron Timeon is in fact there, but severely intoxicated in a mid-day bender. There is a negotiation, and the drunkard agrees to pay each of the Privateers 350 gold a week for their service and protection. Timeon makes a point of ordering the heroes to assemble by morning light for a top-secret trip out of Sanguine. He thanks Katos for bringing the new help, and disappears with the halfling into the palace.

The Privateers have the remainder of the day to do as they wish. Taurianus unsuccessfully gambles with the Baron's regular guards in an archery competition. Shae explores the gaudy palace, looking for clues. Boomer and Desdemona do some shopping.



The next morning, the Privateers queue up outside Baron Timeon's palace. There is no sun and their breath hangs in the air. They wait for over an hour after sunrise when a team of twenty mules with empty packs trudges up. A full two hours later, Baron Timeon emerges finally all hungover and angry. "I do not yet trust you. I do not intend to tell you where we are headed until we leave the city, and in addition, I require a hostage."

Timeon uses Torali to threaten Lady Julia into staying behind. Julia is unimpressed, pointing out that the Privateers don't care whether she lives or dies. Timeon sneers and orders the Privateers, fifteen guards, and the mule team to move out.

Along the way to the Anvil Hills to the West, the caravan is approached by another Inquisitor like Bo. He is also a member of the Fellowship of the Black Hound. He introduces himself as Inquisitor Rakke. Bo has actually met Rakke in her past. During her training in Mistburg, Rakke lobbied hard against Bo joining the order, claiming that someone as old as she couldn't accept the rigors of training. From that time, Bo believes that Rakke represents everything that is bad and problematic about your order. He is vain and cruel, and often turns down or ignores those in need who are below him or don't have anything to offer in return.

Rakke calls Bo “puppy” and asks if he can interrogate “the party’s dwarf.” He has word that the ransom note to recover Baron Claudes’ partner and children was delivered by a dwarf named “Doomhammer.” Bo dismisses Rakke, but not before he vows to track down Doomhammer with his trusty three-legged dog, Scraps. For the remainder of the trip, Bo sees glimpses of Rakke following them

INQUISITOR RAKKE



Bo is dismissed from serving Baron Timeon. It seems that he prefers his own privacy even above his own safety. The Privateers attempt to eavesdrop, with Desdemona transforming into a spider or other magical means but they learn nothing out of the ordinary. Timeon meets briefly with the mine captain and directs that they fill up the twenty mules with the raw gold ore from the ancient mine before they move out next morning.

The next day, after packing up the mules, the Privateers lead the expedition back to Sanguine. Soon after leaving the mine, they are shadowed by a number of shadowy figures. Bo trails them and learns that they are undead. Baron Timeon orders the Privateers to go investigate while he and the mule team continue on. The party loses track of the undead, but passes right by the hut of a blind old woman. “I saw no one pass, but I sensed an unholy presence pass by this spot. The poor ground shook in her terror. Beware!”

JHEBBEL



The woman seems to know more than she lets on about the state of Sanguine. “Worry not yourselves with gold. The earth herself is in fear. The crucible which will forge him anew has been exhumed, taken in the night by foul necromancers! For millennia my order have watched it, and now it is gone!”

The Privateers press her on what the Order of Avanrakash does. She replies, “With Alkir’s return all hope will be gone. None can escape his will. He is impervious to puny magic such as yours. Only the Staff of Avanrakash can destroy him. He is not far away! His purpose is at hand! At nights now I hear his servants calling to him. They lacked yet the crucible, but now that it is in their sight the last right will be performed and all of Sanguine doomed.”

The Privateers move off from the blind tiefling woman in the direction the wights passed. With Bo’s help, the Privateers realize that the undead wights are luring them into an ambush and make preparations to counter-ambush the monsters themselves.