

Bark at the Moon - 07/17/09



This Week's Recap

Tse wakes up, shaking his head but still wanting to duel. Ming convinces him to press ahead for now, as Brug has told them that if the bonfire is allowed to devour Arvia, it will become attuned to her essence. He's not sure what will happen, but with her being the child of Glorious Jade Branch, God of Chanta, they're pretty sure it's not good.

Through the golden archway lies a blasted heath laid out almost as it was in Lily's vision. Arvia is there, as are her tormentors, but they each hold a chain rather than her being tied to a post. Lilac is also there, and as predicted, she cracks apart the Freehold and wraps it around her as a wyld-shaped engine of destruction. As she does, she breathes out a hideous sigh like a serial killer who has just found his moment's peace. Born from that sigh is a large two-headed hound, one side that of a slaving wolf and the other a copy of Lilac's own.

As the scenery fragments around them, Lily holds out her hand and says, "We have come far together, let us go farther still. I swear to work with you and not against, to bring peace between us. Who swears with me?" Ming quickly puts his hand on hers, and it is joined by Brug's a moment later. Tse abstains, having

already been mind-fucked enough and not trusting this Fae.

As they touch flesh, their spirits also entwine. For a moment each is the other, and sees clearly how best to help. When their hands part, the Oath and the fellowship remains, wrapped around their arms in silvery tattoos. These are not Moonsilver though, and are not written in any language.

Ming leaps atop a twirling house and over to the ledge which is the one point of near-stability left. He lashes out with a claw and kills one of the six hooded figures dragging Arvia towards the fire. Tse dive bombs the hound, his wings taking him safely through the maelstrom, and his war club smashes down repeatedly. Brug leaps onto Tse's back and rides the large man-beast through the chaos, a sorcerous howl rising in the back of his throat. Lily reaches out her arms and her will, commanding the chaos to abate and the Freehold to reform, but she is unable to match her sister's power when on a battlefield.

Lilac, her club a dark mirror of Tse's own but twice as big, hurtles through space and smashes it down, but the

Lunar dodges behind the hound forcing her to retract the attack or risk crushing it. Brug releases his howl and it becomes a physical thing, smashing three of the hooded hobgoblins to pieces, leaving just two to drag Free Spirited Arvia towards death. The hound bites at Tse twice, its two sets of teeth equally sharp. As they sink into his flesh, he feels his life essence being drawn out. The feeling is similar to what he felt in his fight with the Abyssal and her soulsteel scythe. Ming kills another of the hooded hobgoblins, all but assuring that Arvia will survive.

Again Lily grabs hold of the fabric of the Wyld around them and pulls, but again Lily's grip is too strong.

Lilac's club slams down and knocks Tse unconscious with a single blow, only his gem of adamant skin saving him from death. The hound, free of its target, moves towards Ming. Brug calls to Lily to counteract Lilac's armor if she can, while Ming slaughters the last of the hobgoblins and simultaneously cuts huge gashes in the side of Lilac's armor with his claws. Lily reaches into the Wyld and pulls out a tiny shimmering ball of sorrow for the way her sister's life turned out, and lets that ball float gently towards the cataphract. When it reaches her, the sadness wraps itself around her in a melancholy grey light, eating away at the armor's anger with the unstoppable certainty of deep depression. Lilac tries to flee the glamour but only manages to get high enough to unleash the last of her rage as a ball of bright green flames, engulfing Lily, the behemoth, and the two conscious Lunars.

Tse, slowly regenerating, pulls himself to his feet and strikes out at the dog of war but misses. Ming steps up and channels every ounce of his conviction into a strike that tears open Lilac's stomach

and sprays her dark sap across the flying scenery.

With her sister dead, Lily easily manages to pull everything together. She thinks for a minute about what she should do in regards to the impending destruction of her home, but with her two oaths in her heart she needs only a minute to decide she will travel the world with these wonderful new creatures she has found.

As Darik and the minions of the eyeless face get the monolith ready for placement, she discusses the ways of the Wyld with them. Explaining that she can craft their hearts into reality and thereby teach them to shape the Wyld as Brug shapes Creation through sorcery, she offers them all this gift, and symbol of the strength of their new Creation / Wyld bond. Brug refuses, but not adamantly, and Ming says he will think about it. Tse wants none of it.

After the work of destroying the bonfire is done, and the demesnes is capped by the jade monolith, they head back to Black Branches, taking the armor and its two hearthstones with them. Lily asks that she be allowed to take one, as it will help her survive in Creation, and Ming takes the other.

Though it looks exactly like the Gem of Adamant Skin Tse wears, it is actually a stone that allows the control of earth, stone, and mud. When they get back to their Pack's home, he immediately uses it to craft a humble abode for him and his new wife, far from the prying eyes of the pack. There the two plan their human wedding, having already had a Raksha one with the exchange of oaths.

For his wedding gift, Lilac reaches into Ming's heart and pulls forth his courage in the face of adversity. She forges it into a pair of perfect silver tiger claws, and explains to him how he can use these,

and the Grace they represent, to force martial themes on the Wyld. She is unable to fully teach him though, as they need to go out into the Middle marches where the world is more malleable.

His assistance rendered, Brug asks for the aid they promised, and the group heads towards River Blossom, where his contacts in the Crossroads Society have told him a manse known as The Throne of Sajaukts sits. This manse belonged to a prior incarnation of his, and may still contain useful tools.

They ride a conjured storm for over thirteen hours to get there, and once they have arrived they spend many hours searching. The forest around the manse continually shifts and slides, misleading them with tricks of the eye and true movement.

After they have explored it for several hours, and are about to make camp, a face grows on a nearby tree and tells them they are free to leave.

Brug explains that he has come seeking his heritage, and wishes to gather an army to hold back the Wyld, but the spirit again tells them to leave, this time assuming its true form: the elemental dragon Sajaukts.

Brug asks if there anything troubling the dragon that they can deal with to prove their worth. It thinks for a moment and points them northeast to Yseult, a Fair Folk noble who has recently begun preying upon the beastmen and

humans. The treaty with Halta no longer stands, and she apparently was never fond of it anyway.

Either way this ends, a bothersome pest is gone, and Sajaukts wins.

Again aboard the storm winds, they scour the area north and east of River Blossom, and soon come across a band of snakemen refugees. This tribe, once over five hundred strong, has been



reduced to less than thirty men, and half-again as many women and children. They move forward on the wake of Yseult's wyld barbarians and hobgoblin armies, headed for

Resplendent Peak, where they hope to find shelter.

Brug brings them aboard the whirlwind and takes them towards Resplendent Peak. But when they get close, they see plumes of smoke and shattered towers. Resplendent Peak has been sacked and is now occupied by an army of hobgoblins, barbarians, and a few winged humans: relics of the past known as people of the air.

With the ground might of the barbarians, siege engines of the hobgoblins, a fifty foot tall war elephant, and air support from the people of the air the city was overrun. A few short scouting missions reveal the presence of a rebel force that strikes from the sewers and quickly retreats.

When war is discussed, Lily urges diplomacy. Brug summons the best demonic diplomat he can think of and sends the crying woman to meet with Yseult. Less than a week later, the No is received.

While she was gone, Brug prepared for the worst. Summoned Firmin craft spears from the tarry ooze they excrete, while faceless craftsmen connected hardened-ichor armor plates and made bows from the surrounding forest.

Intrigued by the preparations, it takes Lily almost a week to mention that she can help. Though she has been coming to Ming nightly in his dreams as a lover, she is capable of using the landscape of his imagination as a foundry.

Sajaukts

Sajaukts' rise to dragonhood was rapid, some say exceptionally so.

He began his days as a Forest Walk near Halta a mere Forest Walker, and through sharp resource management and a silver tongue he rose to a position as Scribe in the Bureau of Nature after a mere 150 years. Uncovering Ozumi the Brown, God of White-Tailed Wolverines' Wyld addiction promoted him to Aide to Overseer of Wyld Affairs, and when the overseer ascended, he slid easily into the position.

However, after only twelve seasons in that position he began to chafe at the ineffectual nature of the bureaucracy around him. When he was awarded dragonhood three years ago he used his newfound power and freedom to separate himself from the Bureau of Nature and become a free agent. Though this meant returning to Creation, it also struck a chord with many of the younger Gods and elementals, who had yet to become mired in the politics and red tape that keeps Yu-Shan both on track towards and distant from perfection.

In Creation, Sajaukts took up residence at an abandoned manse, and began creating his network. Through his years as a scribe he had taken frequent vacations to Creation, masquerading for short but eventful lifetimes as a martial artist, god-blooded thaumaturge, and even a nomad agriculturalist. Returning to those places now, he revealed himself to those who knew him, and to those who knew his legends when all who had known him were dead. Thus his organization grew slowly but steadily.

Now Sajaukts aims his eyes skyward again, and hopes to use his earthly allies and heavenly admirers in a bid to become Censor of the East, for he feels that none care for the East as much as he. Given his extended absence, he's not considered a good candidate for that important position. Still, the dragon is now *very* agitated by the state of the world—and certain no one else can see it. He's been gathering allies, and will soon attempt to become Censor by virtue or (if necessary) force. Once he's in charge, he promises, the East will change.

And recently a band of Lunars has made their way to his domain, invading the manse he guards and offering up an opportunity to show how only his keen eye and firm hand can help Creation help Itself.

Yseult

[Yseult](#) (ignore the stats portion. Fair Folk changed a lot in 1e and 2e)
[Glamour Sorcery](#) (similar to what Lily can do, but on a grander scale)

OOO Status

Ming:

Ming is still incumbered, having not resisted Lily's advances at all as of yet.

His marriage and the Oath combine (see below) to make Lily a 2 dot Ally.

Ming, Brug, and Lily:

Ming, Brug, and Lily have entered into an oath similar to the Dragon-Blooded spell Sworn Brothers' Oath. They each have a 5-die pool which refreshes every story and can be spent to assist any actions which would aid another of the Oathsworn. They also can sense the location of the others perfectly when within 50 yards, and can make an Essence roll to determine location information if outside this range. Finally, they must each score 5 successes on an extended Conviction roll in order to take any action which would knowingly harm another of the Oathsworn. Doing so lowers the rating of that person's oath by one, and breaks them from the brotherhood if the rating is reduced to 0.

Tse:

Tse's incumbrance has been broken.

Rules of the Game (house rules introduced, rules questions raised and answered, etc.)

Regaining Willpower:

Exalts roll their highest virtue every day in order to regain Willpower, instead of always rolling Conviction.

Mass Combat:

Unless one side is immune to fatigue, we're ignoring the extra rolls created by the fatigue rules in mass combat.

Gem of Adamant Skin:

In accord with the flavor text, this only protects from wounds. Damage taken from poison or other non-external sources is not reduced.

Creature Stats:

Creatures from the core book are not in line with those from the setting books in terms of stats, so are not allowed. Creatures from other books are available, and can be re-skinned as desired.

Attack Speed:

Attack speed has a minimum of 3.

Combos:

Adding a charm to a combo d require relearning it, just paying the difference in cost between the two.

High Dice Pools:

If a pool goes over 10, extra dice can be divided by 2 instead of rolled, leaving just 10 or 11 dice to roll. If it's a damage pool, divide by 3 instead.

Craft:

For Exalted (and some supernatural creatures), combine all elemental crafts into a single skill.