

The Ankh of Chephren Campaign Log

Session 13: 24:6:08

Murder in the Cathedral

Edward Cholmondley – John

Dr. Karl Gustav Magnus – Gord

Joe Jenkins – Tom

Damon Toyler – Karl

Place Unknown, Noon-ish

So you were nearly at the top of the jagged hills that overlooked the bay, and you could see, on the other side of the water what seemed to be a human settlement of some kind. It was surrounded by a palisade and there was smoke rising from it.

You also contemplated the strange area you were in, with an horizon that seemed to curve up at the edges instead of down, and a sun that never seemed to move from the centre of the sky, not to mention the anachronistic fauna.

You made your way down to the shore, still wary of the pterodactyls that glided far above you. You headed for an area of the coast from where you hoped to be able to see the rest of the bay, and work out how far you might have to travel to go around, by land, or if it would be worth you crossing the water somehow. The water was calm and warm, with only the tiniest waves being blown up by the gentle breeze. But the sight of huge long-necked dinosaurs erupting from the water of the bay soon made you think twice about making a raft.

At the behest of his colleagues, Edward went into a trance and floated his perceptions over to the village. He could see that it was set in a sheltered inlet, and there were a couple of rowing boats tied to a wooden jetty. There was a low fence surrounding the village which had tusky boar like animals running about in it, and a higher fence surrounded the village itself. There were some corn-like crops growing in the clearing around the village, too.

The dwellings were round buildings made of verticle logs, with some sort of thatch for the rooves. It all looked a bit ramshackle but there were bits and pieces of more finely crafted wood, which looked like it could have been salvaged from an old ship. In the centre of the village was a stone building, which could only be a church, though very badly constructed, it dominated the settlement. There was also a stone campanile next to it with a proper metal bell in it.

There were a number of people in the place, dressed, as far as Edward could tell, mostly in late medieval dress, with the addition of makeshift furs and leathers. They looked moderately healthy, too, though not overflowing with vigour.

Edward spotted a lookout with a telescope on a rocky outcrop above the village. Edward moved his perceptions up to him so he could see what the lookout could see, and he made a note of a good place, on your bank, where you could be seen by him.

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Meanwhile, looking for raft components, Damon wandered into the forest. He noticed a troop of large-ish monkeys that seemed to be intently watching him. He decided to climb a tree and made some monkey noises so they would not be scared of him. They gradually approached, clearly very curious. Then suddenly Damon felt something at his waist; one of the cheeky monkeys had grabbed his machete and made off with it through the trees. Damon tried to lure the monkeys back using some fish hooks, as they seemed to be attracted to shiny stuff, but there was no sign of his machete.

You got back together and decided to make your way back round the bay a bit so the village's lookout would be able to see you, and investigate you, hopefully saving you the trouble of making a raft.

On the way there Damon wandered back into the forest. He found some small yellow fruits which looked like they might be edible. He also noticed more monkeys. He managed to entice one across, and he gave it the fruit. The monkey ate the fruit, and so Damon, now sure that they weren't poisonous, picked a whole load of the things for you. He was aided the Pharaoh who was gradually becoming a bit more useful and less withdrawn.

You wondered whether to light a fire to attract the lookout's attention, but in the end Edward, not wanting the villagers to know that he knew about them, sent him the suggestion that he look in your direction. He did and saw you, and ran excitedly down to the village bell and rang it. Soon, about a dozen villagers had launched one of their long boats and were rowing out to get you. Edward was a bit wary of the villagers and was anxious that they not consider you witches or dangerous, so he hid all his artifacts at the bottom of his bag.

The boat arrived at your beach without having had any trouble from the Plesiosaur-like dinosaurs in the bay. The leader of the party called out to you in Portuguese. You did not speak it, but some of you spoke some Latin and Italian and he spoke some English, so you managed to get by. His name was Henrique and he seemed to have some authority at the village. He briefly told you about the villagers and you told him about you and he invited you aboard the boat.

Henrique managed to get across that they had left Lisbon in the 13th year of king Sebastian's reign, and Magnus knew that must be about 1570. And judging by his age, and what he said about his daughter who was born here, you worked out that he must have been here about 30 years, even if there was no proper means of measuring such time.

He seemed to be very religious, and seemed to think that they were all here by the will of god, and that this could be the biblical Eden, or perhaps a new Eden god had provided for them. He told you they originally had three ships on an expedition to join the war against the Moors, but two had been lost, and the final ship had sailed off last year in an effort to go back to Portugal, and had not returned. He hoped they would return soon, and add force to their claim for the land in the name of the king of Portugal.

Henrique did notice Magnus' Mauser and had a look at it, but couldn't make it fire because the safety catch was on. He wondered where you put the powder and so you showed him a bullet shell. He was very impressed.

You managed to cross the bay without any Plesiosaur sightings, although the villagers were clearly worried about the possibility, and kept attentive lookout, though it was not clear what they might do about it, if a dinosaur did decide to attack.

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Arriving at the village, the villagers seemed pleased enough to see you, though they were rather reserved. You did get the distinct impression they were not keen on the Pharaoh, which you thought might be because they thought he was a Moor. There was a boar roasting on a spit in your honour and they were going to throw a festival for you. They also had a barrel of small beer on the go (which tasted like crap).

There was a lot of interest in your guns, and you could see that they were only armed with knives and wooden spears. Damon told them your guns were good for hunting and there was an immediate enthusiasm for a hunting trip. Hauptmann and Edward joined Damon and the villagers. After about an hour's travel they came to the hunting ground, and over a ridge you could see a whole flock of turkey-like dinosaurs grazing. Henrique told Damon that they tasted a bit like chicken but they had only managed to catch one, all year.

Damon made a wager with Lieutenant Hauptmann over who could shoot the most. Damon immediately fired off a couple of shots with his pistols and killed one and winged another, sending the whole flock into a panic. Hauptmann managed to bring his Schmeisser to bear and quickly mowed down three of them before the animals could flee to the safety of the forest. The villagers were very pleased, and rushed back to the village for a feast. On the way they showed Damon some green cucumber-bean-like plants that they said were good to eat. Edward could not help noticing, however, that Henrique was now especially covetous of these new firearms, especially Hauptmann's Schmeisser.

Meanwhile Joe and Magnus were enjoying some pork and corn and some beer. A villager called Celia served them. She seemed to be especially keen on Joe. She told them what she knew of the history of her village. It seemed that when they first arrived in 'Eden' they confronted a giant lizard, which was the biblical serpent, which they drove out. And then they were confronted with a tribe of Moors which they also drove out. Eventually they sailed to this area, and built the village of New Lisbon.

They were clearly very religious. Celia told them that they based the design of their church on the Se Cathedral in Lisbon. Celia told you that Father Fernando was in charge of the village and that god tells him what to do and what is best for all the villagers. She said he was away exploring and hunting but would be back soon. She seemed convinced of Father Fernando's authority from god, and like a lot of villagers, took all this rather unquestioningly.

The villagers were excited to see all the food the hunting party had brought back, and they immediately began preparing to cook one of the turkey-dinosaurs. Henrique seemed to be in charge in the absence of Father Fernando.

One villager, called Joao, made a point of talking to Joe about your prospects of getting back to civilisation. Joe admitted that he had no idea how they were going to get back and this made Joao angry. He said that you were no better than Father Fernando and his deluded leadership. You were pleased to see at least one villager didn't seem to be following the priest blindly. Damon went to have a talk to Joao, explaining that you did have one or two things in mind for a return to Europe, but it was too early to discuss them at this point.

Then suddenly you heard a shot ring out from the church.

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Everyone piled inside to see Lieutenant Hauptmann, looking pleased with himself, standing over one of the villagers, Luger in hand. The villager was bleeding profusely, and Henrique and another villager were trying to help him, badly. A Schmeisser machine gun (Hauptmann's) was laying by the villager's side. Edward rushed across to give first aid to the dying villager. He did his best but it looked hopeless. Hauptmann told you that the villager had been trying to steal his gun. Worried that things were going to get out of control, Joe told Hauptmann to drop his gun. Magnus shouted at Hauptmann that he deserved to be shot like the dog he was, and Damon promptly shot him. Hauptmann fell backwards onto the altar, with blood pouring from a head wound, and died.

The villagers were clearly shocked, and scared. You told the two remaining Germans to drop their weapons which they quickly did. You managed to grab one of the Schmeissers, but a hand emerged from the crowd of villagers and grabbed the other before you could do anything.

Edward ordered everyone out of the church. You managed to herd them all out except for Henrique who wanted to stay with the dying Carlos. Damon distracted Henrique while Edward fished in his bag for the Ankh of Chephren. He focused on the artifact and soon a green light shot from the ankh and enveloped Carlos, healing him miraculously. You told Henrique that Carlos would be alright, and he was delighted. He picked him up and began to carry him back to his hut. As soon as he was gone, you ransacked Hauptmann's equipment to get what you could.

Meanwhile outside, Joe, Magnus, Pharaoh and the Germans were being eyed suspiciously by some of the villagers. You kept an eye out for the one who had grabbed the Schmeisser but couldn't find him. You asked Celia if she knew who it was. She denied everything, but you had your doubts.

Damon asked Celia what they did with the dead in the village and she told him of the graveyard up on the hill, so Damon took Hauptmann's body up there and prepared to bury him.