

DRIFTWALKERS

Play Session: 11-17-2018

Episode 07: "Unexpected Treasures"

Scene: The Battle with the Zone Ghouls Continues

We pick up with **Ken'yu**, **Hank**, and Doc's loyal canine **Ogre** seriously hurt from the unexpected explosion of what we think was some type of grenade-like device.

Three enemy slingers still remain, the good news being they look extremely frail compared to their male counterparts that now lie in heaps of blood at our feet, one of their heads taken completely off by a wicked spiked bat strike from our Enforcer.

Carver manipulates one of the slingers – threatening her and demanding her complete surrender. His ability to manipulate her is so effective that he sows enough doubt to completely break her remaining morale. **Carver** tries to make her drop her weapon, surrender, and talk her friends into surrendering also.

Although he can't see her behind the rocks he is using as physical cover, he hears what sounds like her weapon drop and immediately moves to where he can see his target; confirming she is disarmed and is on her knees with her hands behind her head. He is a convincing bastard.

Ken'yu calls upon his knowledge of The Zone and determines that these enemies are in fact Zone Ghouls. He knows from recalling his studies that Zone Ghouls are free mutants that make their way in the wasteland with no affiliation to any large collective like our **Ark**, and that don't normally come out of their hiding places during the day, preferring to make their way at night. It is mostly believed they are severely mutated humans with life expectancies of 35 years if they are extremely lucky. They generally lack any form of education or social graces whatsoever (*lower Empathy and Wits stats*) - but tend to be either quite strong or agile to compensate. **Ken'yu** recalls reading a theory that If they are encountered at a young enough age, they can be rehabilitated back from their savage nature. (*As we soon find out, this particular piece of knowledge becomes extremely important*).

With their companion's dead, the remaining ghouls realize they are separated, and take their turns to gain cover behind the natural rock formations and reload their slings. **Lilith** takes the opportunity to very quickly heal **Hank**, at least enough to stop his immediate bleeding all over the sand.

Hank quickly nods his appreciation and returns to the act of smashing these enemies that would harm his friends. A slinger goes down fast and without mercy to his bat.

Then **Doc** yells at the last remaining slinger to surrender, and he watches as she promptly uses her turn to run away as fast as she can. **Hank** wastes no time giving chase after her.

The slinger that surrendered her weapon is now held in a grip from **Carver** as he decides what exactly to do with a helpless, savage, yet surrendered Zone Ghoul. His decision is somewhat made for him as the female opens her mouth and begins to let out a screeching sound that has every sign as being a either a call for help or a warning signal of some type. Being extremely quick-minded, **Carver** wastes no time in snapping the woman's neck, silencing her immediately before any real effect from the sound can take place. So much for questioning her, if that is indeed what he had planned in the first place.

The battle officially ends as **Hank** and **Doc** catch up to the running slinger and **Hank** buries his spiked bat into her frail body. There will be no escaping enemies or prisoners today it seems. Considering our mission, that is probably a fortuitous outcome.

Scene: The Search for Calisto

With the fight over, we collect ourselves and take stock of our injuries and situation. We still do not know where **Calisto** is - but **Hank** is extremely winded, **Ogre** is banged up and suffering from dozens of minor cuts from the grenade shrapnel, and **Ken'yu** is nursing a wickedly injured arm.

Everything seems to be quiet at the moment, with **Doc** and **Carver** doing a very tight perimeter search as **Lilith** gets to work on **Ken**.

It's obvious **Ken'yu** is favoring his elbow and looks to be in extreme pain. **Lilith** checks him out and tries to judge the injury. The Chronicler realizes that the damage is severe and appears to be a fractured elbow. The dangerous part is the internal bleeding she believes the fracture and probable dislocation has caused, and she knows she needs to set the bone before it reaches the point of no return. On top of that, **Ken'yu** on the whole is a bloody mess, shrapnel lodged in his body in numerous locations.

Consulting **Ken'yu** as well, **Lilith** decides to address the skin punctures and bleeding first, at least removing the things that could result in infection if they stay untreated for too long.

- **Lilith: Heal – Mend the Broken** check – (1 Success) - She manages to remove the shrapnel and for the most part stop the external bleeding. She even manages to wrap his now grotesque ear.

Group looks around the area. Checks the tents and the building.

Tent 1 – right side of the area – nobody inside. Old rags used as bed of some sort?

Tent 2 – left side of area - **Carver** goes in and carefully looks around. Looking for anything sharp. Finds nothing but rags, again maybe a makeshift bed? This tent is in terrible shape.

The building structure itself is made of stone with a modified A-Frame construction design, probably close to 25 feet high and appearing to be solid from our vantage point. The door is made of the same white wood we see surrounding the building. It is closed and latched.

There is an animal skin drying outside. It looks like it may be ready for use. It could be turned into a suitable piece of leather armor if someone can sew and stitch the skin correctly without ruining it.

Doc tries the door. It opens inward and **Doc** peaks inside. He notices that the only light is from the door crack. The roof is intact and there are likely no windows or light sources; at least none that are visible. **Doc** opens the door further. *(Luck roll for squeaky hinges – they do not squeak)*

When about half way open, the door seems to be getting stuck on a ramshackle bearskin on the floor.

Notables: Wooden table and chair; lots of cobwebs; long, worn table in good shape; a smaller room.

Ken'yu uses his mechanical eye, an artifact he acquired from an incident in his past *(a future flashback story for sure)* to see in the dark inside the room. He is surprised with how intact the building is.

Another long table. Some sort of pitcher, cup, and piece of paper inside a plastic case on some sort of half-broken stand.

Nothing seems to be in the webs. *(No giant spiders in this room!)*

Ken'yu – not real loud, calls out: 'Calisto' – but gets no answer.

From the outside of the structure **Hank** sees double-doors on the building's side, and wastes no time kicking them open, focused on finding **Calisto** as quickly as possible.

- **Hank: Athletics test** – (failure) – As he kicks the doors open, he immediately hears a loud click – pushes roll – (1 success) with 1-point fatigue (agility trauma).
- **Result:** When he heard the click, **Hank** reacts with a dive off to the side. This is followed immediately with a **Boom!** - and a bunch of shrapnel comes flying out the door, **Hank** deftly springing to safety.

We keep the doors open and that provides a good amount of light into the structure as a whole. **Hank** can see another room with a door inside the main building. Looks like there was a wire across the outer doors that triggered the trap. 'Booby-trap' he mutters to himself. Trap was some sort of can with a string. Some sort of trigger that shot out the material from the can. Not far in concept from a stationary, mechanical slingshot hurling lots of scrap metal at someone.

Hank checks the small room inside trying to find **Calisto**.

Ken'yu and **Lilith** and **Doc** head into the building from the N door.

Carver is checking around outside. *(Carver is still looking for a sharp object, unbeknownst to the group)*

Hank pulls the door open on the small room and he hears a kind of shuffling inside.

He peaks inside – sees a very young mutant with a shiv held to the neck of **Calisto**. The werewolf has her ankles and hands tied – and they look to be very tight and extremely restrictive.

Young mutant looks to be shaking or scared. The kind of scared that if **Hank** does anything too abruptly, it could cost the werewolf her life. **Hank** waves to **Doc**, beckoning him to come close.

Hank asks **Doc** to talk to what appears to be a very young zone ghoul. Hopefully to the point it relaxes.

Ken-yu' – checks paper/plastic on desk – it is some sort of menu, maybe from an ancient restaurant.

Lilith is checking the round table/chair – good condition. Under the table she finds something duct-taped to the underside of the wood.

Carver is moving around outside and collecting stuff. He then goes to the front door. *(While outside, Carver is forced to use a piece of thick string he found to accomplish his secret task, as he could not find any sharp object. He walks over to the zone ghoul he was forced to kill and uses the string to constrict and remove the dead slinger's tongue. Watching to ensure no one noticed, he looks in disgust at the bloody string and tosses it to the side as he deposits the appendage into a small pouch in his pack.)*

Doc looks into the small room, opens the door gently, and tries to open a dialogue with the child. His first concern is whether what appears to be a young girl will understand him, so he begins with a very simple greeting while holding his hands up as if to gesture he means her no harm.

Carver, oblivious to this tense and important scene says: 'Hey, you should see the cool stuff I found!'

Ken-yu', now approaching after searching the long table asks **Hank** if he found **Calisto**. Trying to keep the girl calm, **Hank** tries to shush **Ken**; which of course does not go over well. **Ken** approaches to see what is going on and why he's being shushed.

Lilith, crawling underneath the table identifies the taped item as a small brass key. Interesting...

Doc – general approach and intent: To speak to the child in a calm, relaxed, pleasant tone in order to achieve an end result of establishing dialogue that will make her not feel threatened. Starts talking, gives her his name, and tries to ensure she knows that he will not hurt her. Child looks to be roughly 14 years old, with a small and petite frame. She also seems to understand him.

Child: 'Where's Mommy and Daddy?'

Doc lies to the child and says: 'I think I saw them on some sort of hunting trip.'

Doc: **Manipulate check** – (Unsuccessful) – About half way through, it is obvious the young zone ghoul is not buying it - **Doc** pushes the roll – (1 Success).

Result: **Doc** keeps talking. As he embellishes a bit more and makes references to the people the Driftwalkers just killed, the girl seems to believe his story, as she remembers them saying they were going to scout to see if any other creatures like this wolf-thing were around. She then starts peppering **Doc** with questions like, 'When are they coming back? What is this creature that invaded our home? and 'Why aren't they back yet?'

Doc: 'Well, they said they would be out for a while, but said that I should give you some food because they knew you were hungry.' (The girl looks malnourished). He offers, and she devours the ration of food.

Girl: 'Where are you from, you don't look like us? You are... cleaner. Are you wanderers like us?'



Doc: *'I am from the other side of the cliffs. I am a trader, I deal in goods with some of the tribe in that area.'*

Girl: *'Oh. Do you have any toys?'*

Doc: *'I could check my packs, but don't think I have any on me at the moment.'*

Girl: *'OK. I will wait for you to get the toys.'* She seems to be warming up to him a little and doesn't seem to be nearly as "feral" as the older zone ghouls.

Carver can hear that **Doc** is having a conversation. **Hank** asks **Doc** to introduce him as Doc's bodyguard.

Doc: *'I am Doc, what is your name?'*

Girl: *'Everyone calls me Jennifer.'*

Doc: *'Well Jennifer, as a trader I have some people that guard my stuff. This is my guard, Hank.'* He pulls **Hank** over and shows her that he is one of his people.

Hank greets her and offers to take guard duty over on the big wolf creature if she would like.

Ken, listening intently from outside the door uses his Telepathy mutation power to figure out what Jennifer is thinking to try and help **Hank** with his idea.

Ken quickly senses she is uncomfortable, trying to be brave, but is scared guarding this thing. (+2 mod die on anyone trying to manipulate the girl related to that topic)

Hank uses Doc's guidance and Ken's information to try and get Jennifer to give up **Calisto** to **Hank**.

- **Hank:** **Manipulate check** – (2 Successes)
- **Result:** Jennifer nods her head at **Hank** – *'That would be great, I want to go with Mister Doc and see the toys while I wait for Mommy and Daddy.'*

Hank says that sounds like a good idea, takes the shiv and stands over **Calisto** while Jennifer leaves the room with **Doc**.

Hank unties **Calisto** and apologizes that he lied to the child, but seemed to be the best way to not let anything go sideways in a situation like that.

Calisto understands and expresses regret that she got caught scouting out the tents.

Jennifer runs to **Ogre** as soon as she sees him, forgets about the toys entirely, and seems visibly upset that **Ogre** is hurt and no one is helping him.

Doc explains that **Ogre** will be alright. He points to **Lilith** and explains she is kind of a doctor, and will be taking care of **Ogre** very soon.

Scene: Heaps of Supplies and Loads of Lies

Looking around the room, **Ken** finds a bag with supplies.

Lilith pulls Jennifer and **Ogre** over and begins to check the young girl for injuries. **Lilith** motions with her hand for **Hank** to move **Calisto** out of the building while Jennifer is distracted, and he does. **Hank** and **Calisto** sneak out and begin to quickly hide the bodies so the girl will not see them when she comes out.

Lilith moves on to **Ogre** to attempt to clean the major wounds and stop bleeding the dog is suffering from.

- **Lilith: Heal test** - using an old Med kit found amongst the supplies. (3 Successes!).
- **Result:** The canine is feeling much better.

Jennifer is in awe of Lilith's skill and that she is healing **Ogre**. Jennifer is very happy, and **Lilith** gives her another ration of food which she greedily wolfs down.

Carver goes out to scout around and look to see if he can identify the girl's parents.

Lilith then moves to **Ken'yu** and tries to stabilize him. *(This is a BIG deal. Like... BIG.)*

- **Lilith: Heal – Save a Life test** – (2 successes) on a pushed roll!
- **Result:** 1 empathy damage, 1 gear damage. **Ken'yu is stabilized.** No longer dying!

Lilith hands **Ken** the key she found and asks him quietly, “Do you know what this is for?” Unfortunately, it means nothing to **Ken'yu**. Perhaps later it will become obvious.

Ken decides he is going to now spend some time salvaging for scrap, seeing as he is no longer internally bleeding to death.

- **Lilith: Inspire check** – (Failure) but no negative effect
- **Ken: Salvage Scrap check** – inside building zone – (2 Successes) – A pushed roll.
 - **Result:** Roll for parts found: 6 scrap and a Eureka! stunt. Found a bearing for **Pontiak**!
- **Ken: Salvage Scrap check** – outside building area – (3 successes!)
 - **Result:** Roll for parts found. 4 scrap and a Plan! {How to use scrap steel to make a **Fortified Fence with Electricity**} - In the absence of electricity, can still construct a fortified fence.

Ogre goes over to a corner of the building inside and seems pre-occupied. *(GM rolled random Luck dice to see if the dog picked up scent of a secret area. Result: Very good luck)*

Doc goes and looks at the area. He sees nothing obvious. He is convinced *something* must be there.

- **Doc: Observation check** – (Failure) – pushes roll – (Success) with a single skull.
- **Result:** **Doc** sees that **Ogre** smells something and finds a hard-to-spot secret compartment in the floor. Searching it, it does not look dangerous.
- **Doc** pulls up the bottom and finds: (1) An old but relatively intact ballistic type shield (Prot level 3). (2) A cool leather jacket (+1 Gear: Manipulate play). (3) An ornate lockbox the size of a small book.

Meanwhile outside, **Hank** and **Calisto** moved the bodies and cleaned up the area. Covered the blood with sand as best they could.

Carver comes back in to try and convince Jennifer that her group is gone, and that she needs to come with us. We are part of a big family and will give her a home. Also tries to convince her that **Calisto** is friendly and will guide us to a place to trade for more food and clean water.

Also tells her that her family was found (a hunting party of 6) - all dead. Tells her they appear to have been jumped by something. He tries to convince her that **Ogre** would be safer with her around as well.

- **Lilith:** **Inspire check** – (2 Successes)
- **Carver:** **Manipulate check** – (5 successes!)
- **7 total successes!**

Carver also employs the use of his Mutant power called Muddle. This prevents Jennifer from being able to succeed on her ability to resist the Manipulate test and she falls for the story wholly and completely. Not even a hint of disbelief or doubt.

The Fabricated Story:

Carver walks in the door somberly. He approaches **Jennifer** with a sad face and gets down on a knee. *‘Jennifer, I am sorry to say, but I have some possible bad news.’* He pulls out the weapons and puts them on the floor. *‘While I was out scouting, I found the bodies of some people who were jumped in the wilderness, but not too far away. Do you recognize these weapons?’*

Jennifer: *‘Yes, I recognize them.’*

Carver: *‘I think I found that your parents are dead. Now, I did my best to bury them, but they appeared to have been killed by bandits. Their bodies were in a gruesome state. You should come with us and be safe.’*

Jennifer: *‘It can’t be! It can’t be! They always come back!’* She is quite distraught.

Carver: *‘These are their weapons, I buried them so nothing can get to them. They will sleep peacefully.’*

Jennifer runs over to **Ogre** with teary eyes and hugs him. She says: *‘Looks like you’re my family now.’* **Ogre**, oblivious to what she is saying, but thinking her face tastes good, gives her some sloppy licks on her cheek.

Hank then peaks his head out of the back room. *‘Jennifer, there is someone here who wants to talk with you. There is a misunderstanding with the creature. If you would come to the door, she would like to talk with you and explain things.’*

Jennifer walks over to the door, sees **Calisto**, and shrinks back a little. **Calisto** is calmly sitting there and **Hank** sits next to her – both of them trying to look unimposing. *(Good Luck!)*

Calisto does her trademark stare thing, after a bit she says very softly *‘My name is Calisto, I am sorry you were so frightened of me, I was simply scouting and stumbled upon your group. My appearance seemed to be startling to you and yours, but I cannot control that. I have a tribe near here. I know these people are a good people. I have a way to sense if people are good and can sense that you are good, that the zone has not gotten*

to you. I would like to take you all to my tribe, get some supplies, and figure out where to go from there. Will you travel with us?’

Jennifer looks around at everyone. She then looks to **Ogre**, who licks her again, bounces around happily now that he’s feeling better, goes over to **Calisto** for a tummy rub, and then comes back over to the girl.

Jennifer: ‘Well, I am very sorry for how I treated you. I was very frightened.’

About 15 minutes pass and **Jennifer** calms her crying and seems to accept her new lot in life.

Jennifer: ‘Now that you are my new family, you should have everything we had.’ She goes over to the corner and pulls out the stash that **Ogre** had smelled out earlier.

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Ken checks out the box. Looks at the key **Lilith** gave him earlier and tries it in the lock.

The box unlocks – he opens the lid.

Inside the box is a pouch, about the size of a hand.

There is something small but heavy in the pouch. **Ken** looks inside – a rock??

Dumps the rock onto the table. About half the size of a fist, it is actually a green gem. Almost round. It has a very odd and unrecognizable symbol on it.

Lilith sees the symbol and her eyes go very wide. The gem’s symbol looks exactly like the symbol on the book that she owns but has been unable to open for as long as she can remember. It is the same book that was in her safebox when she awoke from the experiment. *(This is a flashback episode for a later date)*

Lilith places the gemstone in an indentation of her book cover. A natural fit!

Looks like 3 places that can accept some sort of stone or gem – this is the middle spot. The book accepts the gem, then the book lights up. Lines start moving along the book as if it is made of energy???

The latches on the book open. The book glows with a greenish hue.

Lilith opens the book – she is very shaky and anxious!

Hank and **Ken** move up to look. **Ken** tries to understand what he’s looking at with Hank’s help.

- **Ken:** **Comprehend check** – (1 Success).
- **Result:** **Ken** and **Hank** open the book – as we flip through the pages, it looks like about 1/3 of the pages have writing on them while 2/3 of it are blank cream-colored stationary. There are still spots for 2 more keys, and it is likely that the next 2/3’s will open up when the other gems are found and placed in their rightful slots.

As we page through the book, we realize some interesting, even fascinating things... It is a titled writing:

~ **The Book of the Icons** ~

Ken and **Lilith** explain the meaning to the others: What most of the people believe in now are the **Icons**, at least from a quasi-religious standpoint. Nearly all of the older religions of ages past are no more. **The Icons** are deity like. Many people in the world's Second Age prayed to and worshiped them. But as the Third Age has dawned, there are no books in the Ark that talks about them. All current knowledge of these beings is passed down through stories, hymns, and tales; sort of an oral history.

This Book seems to have instructions laced within its exposed contents, among other things like songs, hymns, poetry, and proverbs. Perhaps most interesting is that inside the book is some sort of star map. It looks to be incomplete, but if we assume this is the first of three pieces, it looks like it may be leading to some type of location. It will take a great bit of study to compare the map to the night sky.

Whereas **Ken'yu** seems the expert on the *historical* nature of the book, it is **Lilith** who is familiar with its legends and mythical stories. The one legend she speaks about to the group is one in which a Great Hall to the **Icons** exists. It is said that if you can find this hall, you can unlock the truth and power of the **Icons** themselves, and some of that power will be bestowed upon the person or people that unlock the truths.

She also remembers that there are seven **Icons** in total. Her specific knowledge is weak, but her book has a picture of one of the Icons. **"The Traveler"**

At this point we establish another piece of the puzzle of who the Driftwalkers are and how they think.

Hank – Unlike the more stringent views of Doc, **Hank** acknowledges the scientific thoughts and beliefs as remote possibilities, but also that there are things beyond science; things he has seen. There are certain things that just require faith. He believes there are many gods from the natural world perspective. Different deities have different responsibilities. He feels that he will eventually have to pick one of these **Icons** to follow, swear fealty to, or some other type of adherence or choice.

Lilith – believes that there is a higher calling. She believes there is something beyond and more powerful. She is a strong believer in the Truth of the **Icons**. She believes she is guided by them in ways she doesn't quite yet understand. **Lilith** is very excited that her book is finally open and plans on studying it intensely.

Carver – believes that every book written that is not about technical stuff is written to try and manipulate people. The stories told are for leverage and control of the masses. But he does question this voice he occasionally hears in his head. He is interested to see if the voice is the presence of one of these so-called **Icons**, or something more curse-like and sinister. He is more than a little confused but thinks as a general rule that most stories are intended to be manipulative. He is skeptical.

Ken – believes that the **Icons** are not actually deities, but incredibly advanced people. A product of Science.

Doc –takes more of a spiritual view; but his view is that there are not really 7 deities but One that takes the 7 different forms. The forms are cyclical. He feels that it has been proven to him that we need more of these stones to gain the truest wisdom, and he is becoming somewhat zealous. He is becoming convinced that finding this gemstone was a sign, and his calling is to find the remainder of these stones to fully open the book and gain the ultimate truth.

..... END SESSION