

TIDES OF FATE

PART 2

AN 8TH LEVEL ADVENTURE IN
FOUR 2-HOUR SESSIONS
BY ASH LAW

TIDES OF FATE

PART 2



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LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA

INTRODUCTION

The Dragon Empire has been plagued with attacks by strange creatures called star-masks, monsters that fall from the stars themselves. The adventurers have been dispatched to retrieve a legendary flying ship in order to take the fight to the enemy.

The ship Ostulti is a legend — created in the age of the Wizard King, a flying fortress able to ascend to the highest heavens to which the living star-mask dungeons were long ago banished and from which they have now returned.

In order to reach the star-mask dungeon planet (known to many as 'The Archmage's Comet') the Ostulti will be needed. The only problem is that it was lost when the Wizard King fell.

The adventurers have been dispatched to an island hidden in the Iron Sea to retrieve the Ostulti and return it to the Dragon Empire. To reach the island they are travelling a magical pathway under the deadly Iron Sea. What could go wrong?

INTO THE OCEAN

The adventurers have passed into a watery tunnel through the ocean, a passageway of air kept open by the magic of the Temple of Time (see Tides of Fate part 1: Time and Tide). The tunnel winds across the ocean floor, the water rippling as the adventurers pass by. The tunnel is permeable to solid objects — the adventurers can stick their hands out into the ocean, and sea-life can enter the tunnel.

This is a montage. Turn to a player and ask them to describe a problem that the party initially faced in its first few miles of the tunnel, but not how the problem was solved. Turn to the next player and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem, and everybody has had a chance to describe how their character solved the issue. There is no need to roll dice during a montage, it

is purely a narrative device to get the players warmed up and give everybody a chance to introduce their character.

OVERSIZED UNDERSEA URCHINS

As the adventurers walk deeper under the sea, their way lit now only by luminous jellyfish that drift past the tunnel (and occasionally fall wetly through its invisible walls), they encounter a carpet of spinney creatures.

These deep-sea dwelling animals are harmless except for their poison spikes intended to discourage the predators of the deep from eating them. Unfortunately, the adventurers must walk through this area. Each adventurer faces one of the following hazards, one of which may have lingering effects until the next battle (soon, in other words!):

BLUE URCHIN	ORANGE URCHIN	GLOWING URCHIN
Difficulty to avoid: DC 20 Freezing poison +15 vs PD—4d6 cold and poison damage Miss: Half damage	Difficulty to avoid: DC 20 Hallucinogen +15 vs MD— when the target next rolls initiative they become confused until the end of their first turn	Difficulty to avoid: DC 20 Corrosive toxin +15 vs PD—4d8 acid and poison damage

FIGHT IN THE BRINY DEEP

The undersea creatures that surround the watery tunnel are curious, and cluster about the party. However, many of them flee when dark shapes glide into view.

Are they sharks? Are they squid? Yes!

Fight!

The squid-sharks prefer to stay out of the tunnel and pull people into the ocean's crushing depths.

Adventurers pulled into the water take 1d6 damage the first turn they start on the ocean floor, 2d6 damage at the start of their next turn, 4d6 damage the turn after, 8d6 damage their fourth turn in a row, 16d6 damage on their fifth consecutive turn, and so on. The water is cold, but really it is the pressure that is hurting the characters.

Added to the crushing pressure is the fact that the luminous jellyfish that have been giving light to their journey are toxic.

Getting back into the tunnel is a move action. Swimming about in the water deliberately is a move action, and requires a DC 25 skill check or the adventurer ends up disoriented and swimming someplace they did not mean to go.

Number of PCs	Luminous Jellyfish	Squid-Sharks
3	3	2
4	5	2
5	3	3
6	5	3

LUMINOUS JELLYFISH

8th level mook [BEAST]

Initiative: +10

C: Drifting tentacles +18 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies who are in the water, but not if they are in the tunnel)—13 poison damage

AC 23

PD 21 HP 28 (mook)

MD 17

Mook: Kill one luminous jellyfish mook for every 28 damage you deal to the mob.

SQUID-SHARK

Large 8th level spoiler [BEAST]

Initiative: +10

Grinding maw +12 vs. AC (+14 vs AC if the target was just pulled into engagement with the shark immediately before this attack)—40 damage, and 12 ongoing damage

Natural even hit: As a free action, the squid-shark can make a second *grinding maw* attack against a different enemy with a -2 attack penalty. If it gets another natural even hit, it can make a third (and final) *grinding maw* attack against a different enemy with a -4 attack penalty as a free action.

[quick action, once per round] C: Thrashing tentacles +12 vs. AC (1d3 nearby enemies)—24 damage and the target is pulled into engagement with it

Natural even miss: The squid-shark pulls the target into engagement with it.

Land & sea: Squid-sharks can briefly emerge from water, but take a cumulative -1 penalty (-1, -2, -3, -4, -5, etc) to their attacks and defenses for each of their turns that start out of water until they are completely high and dry. Once they are back into the water the penalties go away.

AC 23

PD 21 HP 200

MD 17



OUTRUNNING THE COLLAPSE

The fight with the squid-shark has caused the walls of the tunnel to begin to destabilize. Jets of briny water gush out from cracks that spread across the liquid walls. Up ahead in the distance is a glimmering light—perhaps the exit? The adventurers must be quick, or suffer the consequences.

Adventurers must succeed on DC 25 skill checks relating to outrunning the collapse of the tunnel. Those that fail the check face one of the below hazards:

VORPAL CORAL	ORANGE URCHIN	RED AND BLACK URCHIN
Difficulty to avoid: DC 25 Toe-removing sharpness +20 vs AC—4d8 damage	Difficulty to avoid: DC 25 Hallucinogen +25 vs MD— when the target next rolls initiative they become confused until the end of their first turn	Difficulty to avoid: DC 25 Morphic colonization +25 vs PD— until their next full rest the target cannot heal normally, magical healing works fine though

HOARD SPIRITS

The light up ahead comes not from the yellow sun, but from a glittering wall of gold that blocks the underwater passage.

Long ago a treasure barge sank beneath the waves, and now it blocks anybody attempting to traverse the underwater tunnel that leads to the lost island.

The light reflected from the gold comes from magic items scattered among the treasure.

Loot.

There is an epic tier magic item for each party member here.

Before the party can begin looting, however, angry spirits rise out of the treasure.

Fight!

Sorry, no looting mid-fight. Oh, OK. Maybe. If the player has unspent icon relationship dice and it is dramatically appropriate for them to grab something from the treasure barge and use it as an improvised weapon only to find that the thing they grabbed is glowing or talking to their mind. So maybe. Your call GM.

Number of PCs	Hoard Spirit	Blood Tide
3	10	2
4	10	3
5	10	4
6	10	5

HOARD SPIRIT

9th level mook [SPIRIT]

Initiative: +15

Hoard-fueled strike +14 vs. AC—35 damage

Natural 16+: The target is stuck under a pile of treasure until the end of its next turn.

AC 24

PD 22 HP 50

MD 18

Mook: Kill one hoard spirit for every 50 damage that you deal to the mob.

BLOOD TIDE

10th level blocker [SPIRIT]

Initiative: +15

C: Greedy gaze +15 vs. PD (one nearby enemy)—50 damage

Natural even hit or miss: 10 ongoing damage, and every time the target takes the ongoing damage the blood golem heals 10 hp.

Natural 16+ hit or miss: Target is stuck (save ends).

AC 26

PD 20 HP 180

MD 20



ESCAPE ON FLOTSAM

The instability of the tunnel has finally caught up with the adventurers. The ocean rushes in to drown the party.

As the sea rushes in, the adventurers find that the treasure barge that they are fighting on is lifted upwards. Though the mounds of golden treasure are lost to the depths, enough of the wood of the ship rises to the surface that the adventurers can cling to the ship and escape the clutches of a watery grave.

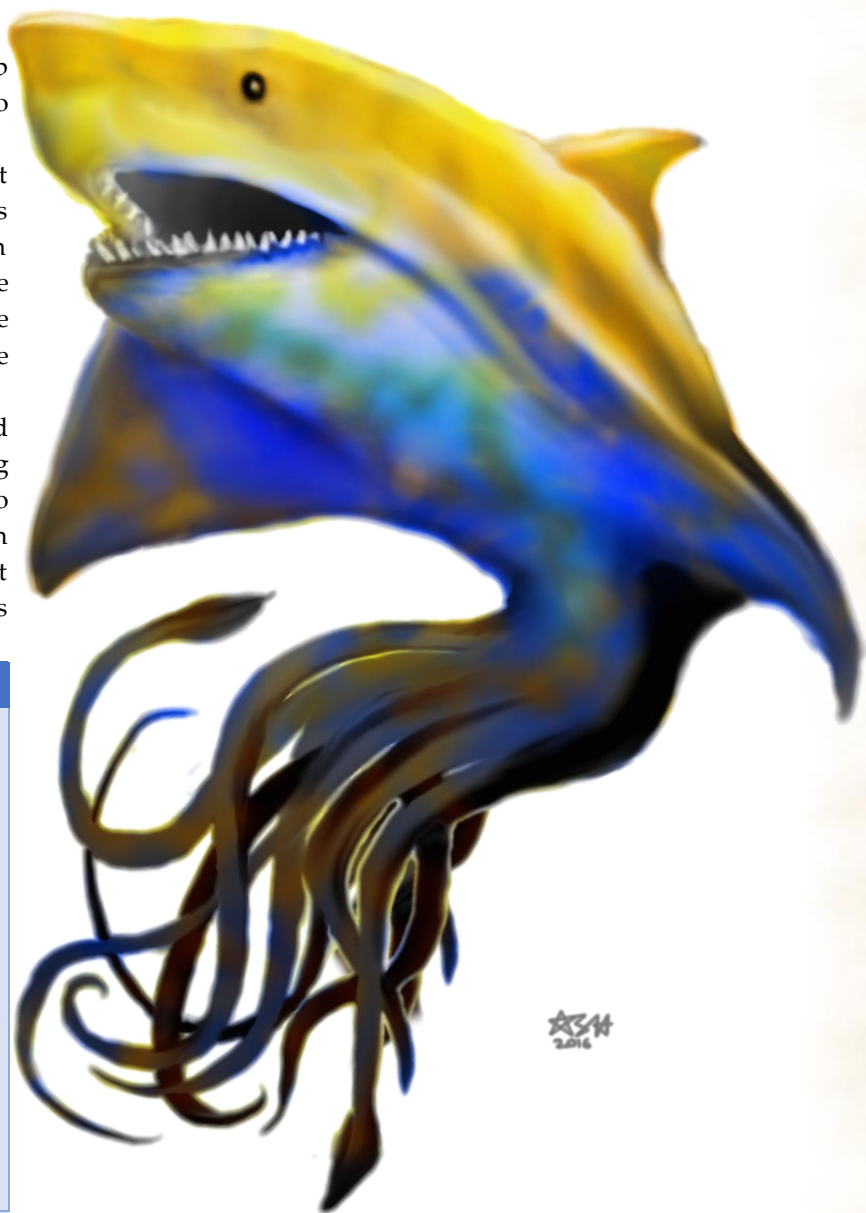
Some might think it odd that a waterlogged treasure barge would suddenly start floating when disturbed. Maybe it has something to do with the treasure? Actually it has a lot to do with that, and although the adventurers won't find out about it until later, this was a hoardsong dragon's treasure.

Lost treasure.

The millions of gold coins, hundreds of gold bars, and innumerable pieces of jewelry are lost to the ocean. Adventurers trying to cling to the heavy gold rather than riding the disintegrating ruin of the barge upwards are surely doomed to follow the gold down.

If a player *really* wants to try to hold onto some treasure let them. They can gain 1d20x100 GP worth of random treasure BUT they start the next session with two fewer recoveries than normal.

Of course the magical treasure that the adventurers looted from the barge comes with them regardless.



Don't forget – At the end of every session characters should receive an incremental advance.

THE LOST ISLAND

INTRODUCTION

The Dragon Empire has been plagued with attacks by strange creatures called star-masks, monsters that fall from the stars themselves. The adventurers have been dispatched to retrieve a legendary flying ship in order to take the fight to the enemy.

The ship Ostulti is a legend — created in the age of the Wizard King, a flying fortress able to ascend to the highest heavens to which the living star-mask dungeons were long ago banished and from which they have now returned.

In order to reach the star-mask dungeon planet (known to many as 'The Archmage's Comet') the Ostulti will be needed. The only problem is that it was lost when the Wizard King fell.

The adventurers have been dispatched to an island hidden in the Iron Sea to retrieve the Ostulti and return it to the Dragon Empire. Of course, nobody has been to the island in living memory, and so the adventurers do not know what to expect.

STORM-TOSSED WRECKAGE

The party was travelling through a magical undersea tunnel that collapsed, causing the ocean to rush in. However, the adventurers escaped the Iron Sea by clinging to the wreckage of a sunken treasure barge. While most of the treasure was lost to the briny depths, the adventurers survived and are now afloat on the storm-tossed Iron Sea.

This is a montage. Turn to a player and ask them to tell you something that happened to the party as it tried to escape the crushing depths by clinging to wreckage, or that occurred on the storm-tossed surface of the Iron Sea. Turn to the next player and ask them to describe how their character solved the problem and saved the day (or at least saved the minute). Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to prepare, describe a problem, and solved a problem. There is no need to roll dice during a montage, it is purely a narrative device to get the

players warmed up and give everybody a chance to introduce their character.

A DISTANT AND STORM-WRACKED SHORE

Surf's up! The adventurers are being carried by a wave toward the lost island that they seek, but need to survive landfall. Each adventurer faces the following hazard:

RIPTIDE LANDFALL

Difficulty to avoid: DC 30

Razor-sharp rocks +20 vs AC—2d20 damage

Miss: 2d10 damage.

Help, I'm dead!



If an adventurer is killed on this adventure some GM Gymnastics may be required narratively to introduce new characters. Maybe the Priestess foresaw this and sent another party, and the new adventurer is the last survivor of the other party. Or maybe the Archmage has been watching the adventurers, scrying on them, and has teleported in a replacement. Or maybe this 'new' adventurer has been there all along in the background, and only now steps forward into the spotlight.

ELEMENTALS

As the adventurers shake off the effects of the storm and their abrupt landfall, but before they can properly recover the Iron Sea sends a nasty surprise their way — angry elementals sent to kill those that escaped its clutches.

Fight!

These elementals shift form mid-fight — watch out for that as it changes the character of the fight when it happens.

The elementals want to drag the adventurers back to the sea and drown them. That probably isn't going to happen, but it'll scare the players and make for a more memorable fight if they *think* that the monsters are about to do that.

The epic water elemental is close enough to the Iron Sea for *liquid empowerment* to be a constant factor so I've gone ahead and bumped up its attacks and defenses as per that ability. If the adventurers can lure it far enough away from the Iron Sea that it loses that, drop the changed numbers back down.

Number of PCs	Epic Water Elemental	Iron Sea Storm Elemental
3	2	2
4	2	3
5	2	4
6	2	5

EPIC WATER ELEMENTAL

9th level blocker [ELEMENTAL]

Initiative: +14

Surge ~~+13~~ +15 vs. AC (up to 2 enemies) — 22 damage

Miss: The elemental heals 9 hp.

Great wave transformation: Roll a d6 at the start of each of the water elemental's turns. If you roll less than or equal to the escalation die, it shifts into great wave form until the end of the battle. While in this form, each enemy engaged with the elemental is hampered (and you stop rolling great wave transformation checks).

Liquid empowerment: The water elemental gains a +2 bonus to attacks and all defenses while it's in contact with a body of water, or while it's nearby a sizeable body of water. If the water elemental moves far away from the body of water the empowerment ends.

Resist weapon damage 16+: When a weapon attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 24 26

PD 22 24 HP 170

MD 18 20



IRON SEA STORM ELEMENTAL

Large 8th level wrecker [ELEMENTAL]

Initiative: +14

Storm strike +19 vs. AC—40 lightning damage

C: Squall winds +19 vs. PD (1d3 random conscious nearby enemies)—20 ongoing cold damage

Natural even hit: The target pops free from the elemental if it was in engagement with it.

Waterspout flight: This elemental can fly, but only while above or near water. If it ends its flight in engagement with an enemy, the enemy takes 2d8 thunder damage.

Resist non-spell damage 16+: When a non-spell attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

Maelstrom transformation: Roll a d8 at the start of each of the iron sea storm elemental's turns. If you roll less than or equal to the escalation die, it shifts into maelstrom form until the end of the battle. While in this form it gains the following improved attack (and you stop rolling maelstrom transformation checks):

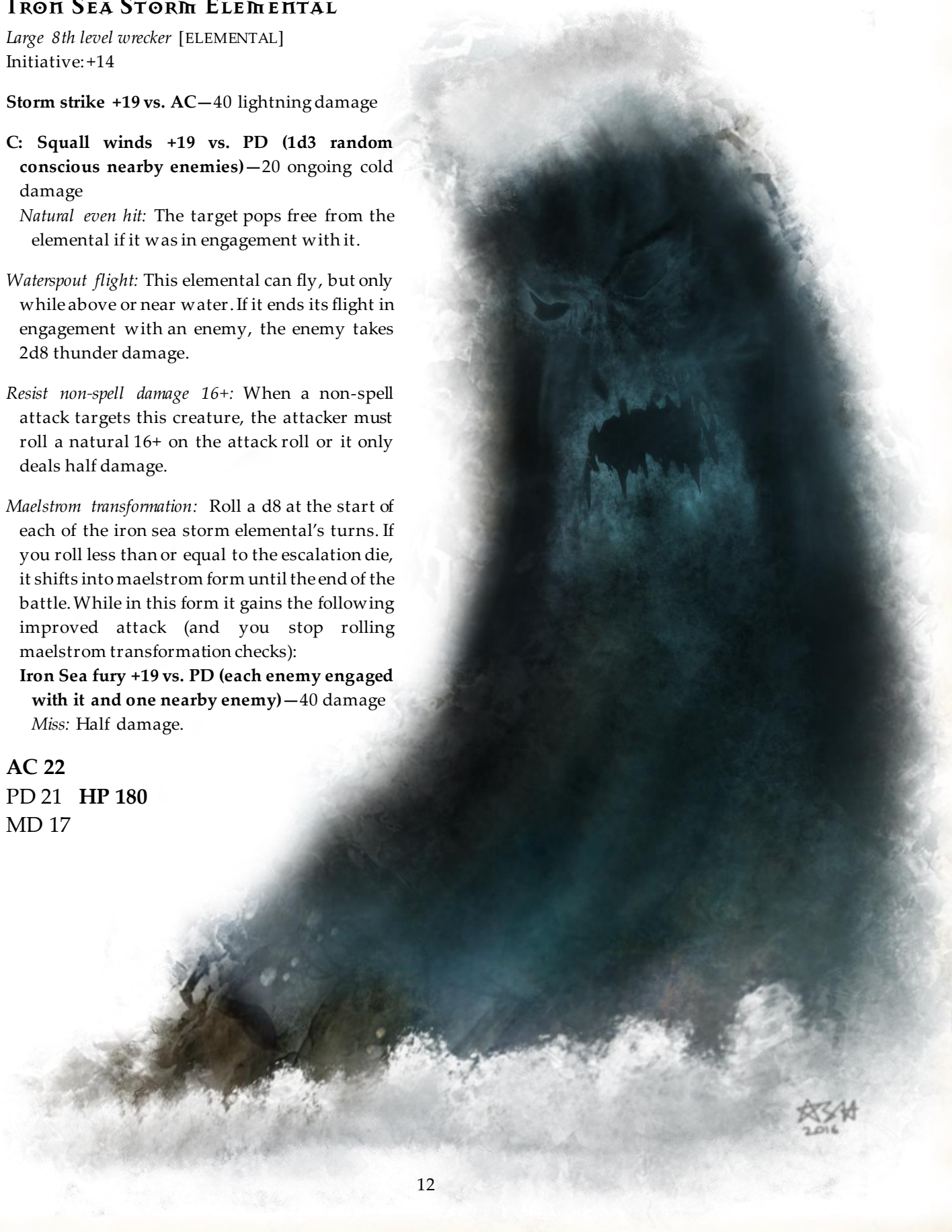
Iron Sea fury +19 vs. PD (each enemy engaged with it and one nearby enemy)—40 damage

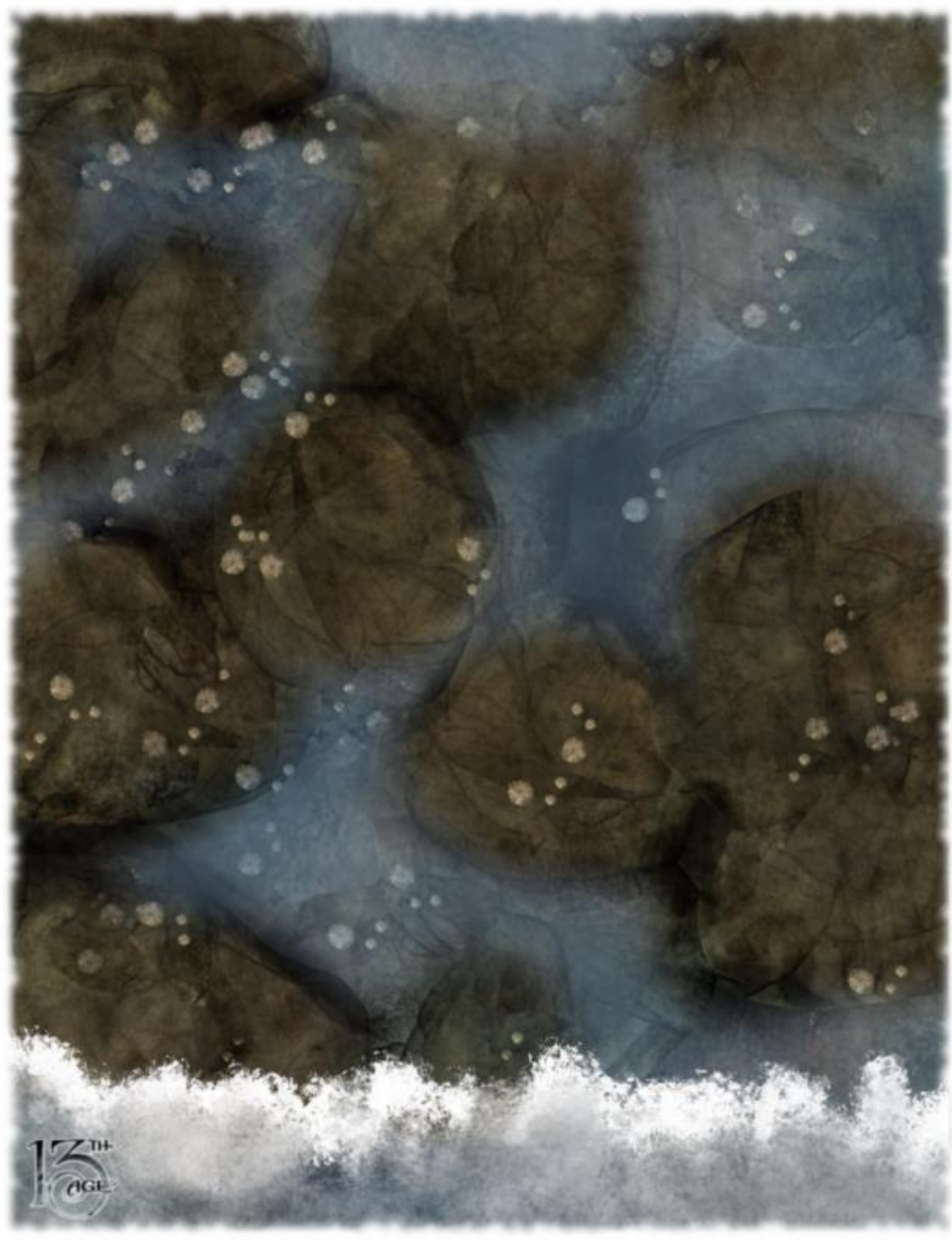
Miss: Half damage.

AC 22

PD 21 HP 180

MD 17





EXPLORATION

The adventurers need to find some basic necessities: food, water, a way to get dry, and most importantly shelter from the eternal storm of the Iron Sea.

The interior of the island is covered in dense jungle, and is dominated by an active volcano—for now the adventurers are on the island's periphery (exploring the interior of the island is the focus of next week's adventure).

This is a free-form skill challenge. The adventurers need to accrue three DC 25 skill check successes. Failing a skill check means that one of the adventurers chosen at random loses a recovery. Once the adventurers have accrued three successes or four failures the skill check ends—either the adventurers have found drinkable water, shelter, etc. or they have ascertained that there is none to be had.

Let the players take the lead in deciding how to explore the shoreline, and tailor the skill checks needed to their decisions. A natural 20 on a skill check means that a character actually gains temporary hit points equal to a recovery roll, hit points that last until the end of the next battle.

Adventurers who roll a natural 1-5 on their skill check face the following hazard:

EXPOSURE

Difficulty to avoid: DC 20

Enervation +10 vs PD—lose a recovery and take 3d6 cold damage

Miss: 3d6 cold damage.

GIANT ALBINO APES

As the adventurers start to build a shelter (or give up and huddle together for warmth in a cave that they found) they hear sounds of movement from within the trees.

From the darkness at the edge of the jungle intelligent eyes peer out at the adventurers. Humanoid shapes move in the darkness.

Lumbering hesitantly out of the undergrowth is a giant white gorilla.

At first the beast seems merely curious, reaching forward to touch the face of the nearest adventurer (*like they would let a strange monster touch them*). However, within moments everything changes as the giant ape screams in rage and attacks the adventurer. Other beasts charge out of the trees.

Fight!

The *seize the intruders* attack of the king of the giant albino apes? Yeah, that's a fun one. When setting up this battle include a tall piece of terrain that the king of the apes can climb up.

Number of PCs	Dwarf Star-mask Cultist	Mutant Star-mask Egg
3	2	10
4	3	10
5	4	20
6	5	20

GIANT ALBINO APE

Large 8th level spoiler [BEAST]

Initiative: +10

Powerful fists +13 vs. AC (two attacks)—40 damage

Both attacks are natural 16+ hits: The target is stunned until the end of their next turn.

R: Hurled bolder +13 vs. AC—50 damage

Natural even miss against a nearby target: The huge rock bounces, and the attack is made again against a far-away enemy if there is one.

AC 24

PD 22 HP 300

MD 18



KING OF THE GIANT ALBINO APES

Huge 8th level wrecker [BEAST]

Initiative: +10

Stone club +10 vs. AC—100 damage

C: Thunderous roar +12 vs. MD (1d4+1 nearby enemies)—60 thunder damage

Natural even hit: The target pops free and is pushed back a little further from the king.

Seize the intruders: Once per battle as a quick action the king seizes one creatures that it is engaged with and climbs the nearest tall object. At the end of its turn it throws the grabbed creature as a weapon.

C: Rag-doll throw +12 vs. PD (one nearby or far away enemy, and the enemy that it has grabbed)—60 damage

Miss: The grabbed (now thrown) enemy still takes 60 damage, but the target of the throw doesn't.

AC 27

PD 22 HP 460

MD 19

GIVE ME SHELTER

The adventurers have now set up a base from which they can explore the island. Their base of operations is a place that they can rest in, and they can use it now for a full rest. It might be a crude lean-to that they built, a dripping sea cave, or maybe a full hut—it depends on how well the party rolled earlier. Whatever the shelter, the adventurers rest there now.

Once rested they will need to venture into the island's interior, but that is a problem for the next session...

Don't forget – At the end of every session characters should receive an incremental advance.



THE TEMPEST

INTRODUCTION

The Dragon Empire has been plagued with attacks by strange creatures called star-masks, monsters that fall from the stars themselves. The adventurers have been dispatched to retrieve a legendary flying ship in order to take the fight to the enemy.

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In order to reach the star-mask dungeon planet (known to many as 'The Archmage's Comet') the Ostulti will be needed. The only problem is that it was lost when the Wizard King fell.

The adventurers have been dispatched to an island hidden in the Iron Sea to retrieve the Ostulti and return it to the Dragon Empire. The island has been cut off from the mainland for long ages, and has grown wild and strange.

THE JUNGLE'S TERRORS

The adventurers are searching the island for any signs of the legendary ship that they seek. However, the island is covered in wild jungle and the adventurers face many problems in traversing the landscape.

This is a montage. Turn to a player and ask them to describe a situation or obstacle that blocks the party's way or hampers their progress through a jungle unlike any they have previously encountered. Then turn to the next player and ask them to describe how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem, and everybody has had a chance to describe how their character solved a problem. There is no need to roll dice during a montage, it is purely a narrative device to get the players warmed up and give everybody a chance to introduce their character.

DANGERS AND JEOPARDIES

The dark interior of the island is illuminated by lightning flashes from the eternal storm of the Iron Sea, and the baleful glow of an active volcano.

As the adventurers move inland they will each face one of the dangers of the jungle:

GLASS SPIDER COLONY	BLOWDART PLANTS	SIREN BIRDS
Difficulty to avoid: DC 20 Glass-sharp webs +15 vs AC—2d20 damage	Difficulty to avoid: DC 25 Poison darts +20 vs PD—3d20 poison damage	Difficulty to avoid: DC 30 Piercing shells +25 vs MD—target makes a basic attack against their nearest ally

HOARDSONG DRAGON

The party picks its way inland, only to hear a blood-chilling howl from the direction of the beach.

Half an hour later the adventurers smell smoke, and hear something huge crashing through the trees and sniffing for them.

During their journey under the sea the party encountered a sunken treasure barge, which blocked the passage under the ocean. Though they didn't know it at the time, the barge was the hidden hoard of a hoardsong dragon. When the passage opened the dragon would descend from the lost island to its hidden hoard, returning before the magical tunnel collapsed once more.

However, the adventurers inadvertently caused the tunnel to collapse in such a way that the treasure barge was destroyed, and the gold scattered.

The adventurers hear the dragon long before it sniffs them out (giving you a chance to role-

play the dragon's angry ranting and roars) but the jungle distorts the sound so that it is hard to say which direction the dragon is approaching from.

Fight!		
The hoardsong dragon spends most of the fight cursing the adventurers, promising to eat them slowly, and so on. It refuses to listen to reason—after all it is a dragon and the adventurers were (in its eyes) responsible for what happened to its treasure. If any party member is carrying a magic item from the dragon's hoard it is especially incensed.		
Number of PCs	Hoardsong Dragon	Hoard Spirit
3	1	13
4	1	20
5	1	27
6	1	33

HOARD SPIRIT

9th level mook [SPIRIT]

Initiative: +15

Hoard-fueled strike +14 vs. AC—35 damage

Natural 16+: The target is stuck under a pile of treasure until the end of its next turn.

AC 24

PD 22 HP 50

MD 18

Mook: Kill one hoard spirit for every 50 damage that you deal to the mob.

MORTENIS OF THE GOLDEN CLAWS, THE HOARDSONG DRAGON

Large 9th level spoiler [DRAGON]

Initiative: +13

Vulnerability: cold

Fangs and claws +14 vs. AC (3 attacks)—30 damage

Natural 16+: The target takes 15 extra damage from a precise strike.

C: Hoardsong +14 vs. MD (one nearby enemy in the dragon's lair)—10 psychic damage, and the target is confused (save ends)

Limited use: 2/battle, as a quick action (once per round).

C: Precise breath +14 vs. PD (1d4 + 1 nearby enemies, or one enemy)—20 fire damage, and 10 ongoing fire damage; OR 80 fire damage, and 20 ongoing fire damage if used against a single enemy

Natural 18+: If the breath targeted multiple enemies, the target takes 20 ongoing fire damage instead of 10. If the breath targeted a single enemy, the target takes 40 ongoing fire damage instead of 20.

Intermittent breath: A hoardsong dragon can use precise breath 1d4 times per battle, but never two turns in a row.

Known to an ounce: The dragon knows where every treasure in its hoard is located, including exactly where the treasure that the adventurers stole is (and thus where they are).

Resist fire 16+: When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

Nastier Specials

Hoard minions: The dragon's connection to its hoard is so strong that it has some control over the souls of those it previously killed who owned the treasures. Once per round as a quick action, the hoardsong dragon can summon 1d4 hoard spirits that take form by surrounding themselves in coins, wear empty suits of armor, etc., and defend the dragon's hoard. Roll initiative for the minions once and use that count for all additional minions.

AC 25 (26 in lair)

PD 24 HP 360

MD 18



THE RUINS OF THE VIZIER'S CASTLE

The adventurers see dark shapes in the distance, illuminated by a river of lava that flows through the jungle into the sea. Overgrown with plants, a massive castle stands in the jungle, the towers and walls reaching high above the canopy.

In fact, now that the adventurers look around they notice evidence of masonry all around them—they are walking through the ruins of a mighty castle and the huge structure that they see in the distance is only the central keep.

As the adventurers realize the scope of the ruins that they have entered, the seemingly permanent storm that surrounds the island closes in overhead, and lightning begins to arc down into the jungle all around them. It is as if the Iron Sea has noticed their presence and seeks to destroy the land-dwellers.

The party needs to find cover, and quickly! Each adventurer must pass a DC 25 skill challenge or face one of the following hazards:

ANCIENT CARVINGS	RUNE OF DEATH	ALMOST-BOTTOMLESS PIT
Difficulty to avoid: DC 30 Knowledge not meant for mortal minds +20 vs MD—3d20 psychic damage	Difficulty to avoid: DC 35 Death magic +25 vs PD—4d20 negative energy damage	Difficulty to avoid: DC 25 The bottom +15 vs PD—2d20 damage

Who was the Vizier?



That rather depends on the needs of your story. Personally I figure that he was a lieutenant of the Wizard King that disagreed with that icon becoming undead (turning into the Lich King), and was exiled to this island as punishment. Indeed—the adventurers might know that story.

Of course that is not the only story that is told about the Vizier. The elves say that the Vizier was a powerful elven mage who set up a nation of his own out in the Iron Sea but was cut off from the mainland when the Wizard King turned the Iron Sea against the land. Dwarves claim that the Vizier was an evil ogre king who advised the first Dragon Emperor. The dragons probably say that the Vizier was a dragon—but then again they would.

If you want to introduce clues in the ruins of the castle that play into the backgrounds and uniques of your group go ahead. I've tried to write this lost island as to not contradict anything that you invent.



THE OGRE MAGES

The castle isn't as uninhabited as it first appears. A nation of ogres lives deep in the jungle, and they use the castle as a place of worship. They are xenophobic, detest other humanoids, and attack the adventurers on principle.

However, they are cunning. At first the ogres invite the adventurers to talk to them, acting like they want to discuss the adventurer's reasons for being on the island. It is of course just a ruse so that the ogres can properly get into position to attack.

Fight!		
If the ogres lull the adventurers into a false sense of security treat the battle as an ambush.		
Number of PCs	Ogre Lightning Mage	Prismatic Ogre Mage
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	4	1
6	5	1

OGRE LIGHTNING MAGE

Large 8th level caster [GIANT]

Initiative: +15

Naginata +14 vs. AC (2 attacks)—40 damage

Miss: 15 damage.

R: Lightning from torn sky +14 vs. PD (up to 2 nearby enemies, plus one far away enemy, if any)—52 lightning damage

Limited use: 1/battle, but the ogre lightning mage regains the use of this attack if it's expended each time it uses its naginata attack.

R: Past master's judgment +14 vs. MD (1d3 nearby enemies)—25 psychic damage

First natural even hit each attack: The ogre lightning mage can cancel one spell or magical effect created by the target.

Flight: The ogre lightning mage flies well using the sheer power of its superior mind.

Invisibility: While not engaged, the ogre lightning mage can turn invisible as an at-will standard action. It becomes visible when it attacks. The

ogre mage takes 1d10 damage each time it uses invisibility while it's staggered.

Resist exceptional attacks 16+: When a limited attack (not an at-will attack) targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

Trollish regeneration 20: While an ogre mage is damaged, its uncanny flesh heals 20 hit points at the start of the ogre mage's turn. It can regenerate five times per battle. If it heals to its maximum hit points, then that use of regeneration doesn't count against the five-use limit. When the ogre mage is hit by an attack that deals fire or acid damage, it loses one use of its regeneration, and it can't regenerate during its next turn. Dropping an ogre mage to 0 hp doesn't kill it if it has any uses of regeneration left.

AC 24

PD 20 HP 230

MD 22

PRISMATIC OGRE MAGE

Large 9th level caster [GIANT]

Initiative: +16

Horns and claws +15 vs. AC—75 damage

Natural 2–5: The prismatic ogre mage can use prismatic blast as a free action without provoking an opportunity attack.

Force shove +15 vs. PD (each enemy engaged with ogre)—10 force damage, and the target pops free from the ogre mage

Quick use: This power only requires a quick action (once per round) instead of a standard action when the escalation die is odd.

R: Prismatic blast +15 vs. PD (1d3 nearby or far away enemies in a group)—Roll a d8 against each hit target to determine the type of ray and effect

1. *Red:* 75 fire damage; Miss: 40 fire damage.

2. *Orange:* 50 damage, and the target is confused (save ends).

3. *Yellow:* 40 ongoing poison damage.

4. *Green*: The target loses a recovery, and the prismatic ogre mage heals 70 hp.
5. *Cyan*: The target is stunned (save ends).
6. *Blue*: 60 lightning damage, and make a secondary attack:
+15 vs. PD (one enemy near the target)—20 lightning damage.
7. *Purple*: The target is dazed and confused (save ends both). When the target saves, it takes 40 psychic damage.
8. *Magenta*: The target is transported into the future. Remove that creature from play, returning it to the battle in (or near) its previous location at the end of its next turn. No time seems to pass for the target while it's gone.

Resist exceptional attacks 16+: When a limited attack (not an at-will attack) targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

Warp: The prismatic ogre mage warps reality with its presence. Each character hit by the prismatic blast attack during battle must write down one true personal trait or preference about their character such as: "Yellow hair," "Afraid of spiders," "Prefers white wine to red," or "Tattoo of a halfling on left bicep." These personal traits are shuffled and randomly distributed equally by the GM after the battle is over. Whichever trait each player receives is now true for their character as well as for the character of the player who wrote it down (unless there has somehow turned out to be a swap...). These traits don't alter game mechanics (feats, powers, backgrounds, icon relationships, attributes, bonuses, etc.). They are personal details that have been warped and scrambled by the prismatic ogre mage's magic.

AC 25

PD 22 HP 360

MD 18

BACK TO BASE—OR RESTING IN RUINS

The adventurers need to rest. They are weary from travelling through dense jungle, and are doubtless injured and exhausted from their battles.

The adventurers have two choices: they can return to the shelter near the beach that they constructed (see last session), or they can rest in the ruins of the castle deep in the jungle. Either way they get a full rest.

Next session the adventurers will explore the other half of the island, continuing their quest to find the Ostulti (the legendary flying fortress/ship of the Wizard King).

A side quest?



A lost castle from a forgotten age in a dark storm-wracked jungle on a lost island? Well that is just crying out for a side-quest or two. We know that there are ogres here, so those might be encountered. The hoard dragon probably has a lair on the island. What of the giant apes—are there other giant creatures here? What about dinosaurs?

If this were a longer adventure I'd have created a couple of sessions of side-quests involving the castle and its secrets. However, exploring the castle is just that—a side adventure and not *really* relevant to finding the flying ship. If you are running this for your own group at home and want to improvise a series of side-quests with tomb raiding, lost jungle civilizations, and monsters go for it.

Really this lost island could be a whole campaign (or at least a tier of a campaign) by itself. The adventurers journey across the island only scratches the surface of the secrets that it doubtless holds.



SHIP OF HEROES

INTRODUCTION

The Dragon Empire has been plagued with attacks by strange creatures called star-masks, monsters that fall from the stars themselves. The adventurers have been dispatched to retrieve a legendary flying ship in order to take the fight to the enemy.

The ship Ostulti is a legend — created in the age of the Wizard King, a flying fortress able to ascend to the highest heavens to which the living star-mask dungeons were long ago banished and from which they have now returned.

In order to reach the star-mask dungeon planet (known to many as 'The Archmage's Comet') the Ostulti will be needed. The only problem is that it was lost when the Wizard King fell.

The adventurers have been dispatched to an island hidden in the Iron Sea to retrieve the Ostulti and return it to the Dragon Empire. Unfortunately, the star-masks are here too, and getting to the ship means tangling with them!

THE UR-JUNGLE

The adventurers are travelling through the jungle on the nameless lost island that is reputed to hold the resting place of the flying ship / flying fortress that the Dragon Empire needs to take the fight to the star-masks' home. The jungle contains many strange creatures and unfamiliar flora, things unfamiliar to the adventurers. Giant albino apes and lost cities are just the tip of the iceberg!

This is a montage. Turn to a player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced on its way through the jungle. Turn to the next player and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem, and everybody has had a chance to describe how their character solved a jungle-related issue. There is no need to roll dice during a montage, it is purely a narrative device to get the players warmed up and give everybody a chance to introduce their character.

SEARCHING FOR THE SHIP

The adventurers have had a chance to rest, and the storm that surrounds the island seems to have abated slightly, allowing in sunlight. This is the adventurers chance to search for the ship that they seek, the legendary Ostulti.

Finding the ship in the jungle will be difficult. This is a skill challenge. The party needs to accrue four successes on DC 25 skill checks. Each failure means that one party member loses a recovery due to exhaustion or mishap. If more than half the party loses more than half their recoveries they still find the ship, but in the party's next combat the escalation die starts at -1 due to the adventurer's collective exhaustion.

STAR-MASK BRAINS

The adventurers finally find the ship. It is massive, more of a castle than a ship. Overgrown with vines and surrounded by rubble, the ship is still a true marvel.

Then the adventurers spot a huge star-mask brain crawling out of a hatch in the ship. The star-masks have found the ship and are clearing vines and rubble away from it. It is good that the adventurers found the ship when they did, or the star-masks would have taken it as their own.

Fight!

The star-mask brains here are accompanied by a star-mask infested giant albino ape.

Also here are lesser star-mask creatures (star-masks, star-mask eggs, etc), but at epic tier we aren't going to bother with those as more than background color. Mention them as getting stepped on underfoot during the fight, and scuttling away afterwards.

Number of PCs	Star-mask Intellect Explorers	Star-mask Albino Ape
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	4	1
6	5	1

STAR-MASK INTELLECT EXPLORER

It's a huge brain!

Huge 8th level spoiler [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +12

C: Caressing tentacles +13 vs. AC (1d3 nearby enemies)—13 acid damage and 12 ongoing psychic damage

Target a fails save against the ongoing psychic damage: The target must use its next action to move into engagement with the star-mask intellect.

[quick action, once per turn] C: Psychic supremacy +13 vs. MD (one nearby enemy)—
The target becomes confused until the end of its next turn.

Natural 1-5 hit or miss: The target is immune to *psychic supremacy* until the end of the battle.

Psychic contamination: Targets engaged with the star-mask intellect that have fewer than 46 hp cannot target the star-mask intellect.

Perceptual warp: Enemies who make ranged attacks against the star-mask intellect that roll a natural 1-5 reroll their attack against a creature engaged with the star-mask intellect.

Nastier Specials

Absorb: Enemies who are engaged with the star-mask intellect who roll a natural 1-5 on a disengage check are absorbed into the flesh of the star-mask intellect. Absorbed characters are stuck, weakened (-4 to attacks and defenses), and move with the star-mask intellect (hard save, 16+, ends all). Natural 2-19 attack rolls against the star-mask intellect do half damage to the star-mask intellect and half damage split evenly between the absorbed creatures. It is a standard action skill check (DC 15) to free an absorbed character, with a natural 1-5 failure meaning the character trying to free their friend becomes stuck!

AC 22

PD 15 HP 440

MD 25

STAR-MASK ALBINO APE

Large 8th level spoiler [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +10

Powerful fists +13 vs. AC (two attacks)—40 damage

Both attacks are natural 16+ hits: The target pops free and is knocked back a short distance away from the monster (see *barbed tentacles*).

C: Oily tentacles +13 vs. AC (one far away enemy or 1d3 nearby enemies in a group)—50 damage and the target is pulled into engagement with the star-mask albino ape

Sticky tentacles: Enemies engaged with this monster have a -4 penalty to disengage checks.

Nastier specials

Barbed tentacles: Enemies that pop free of the star-mask albino ape or move away from it without first disengaging take 10 damage.

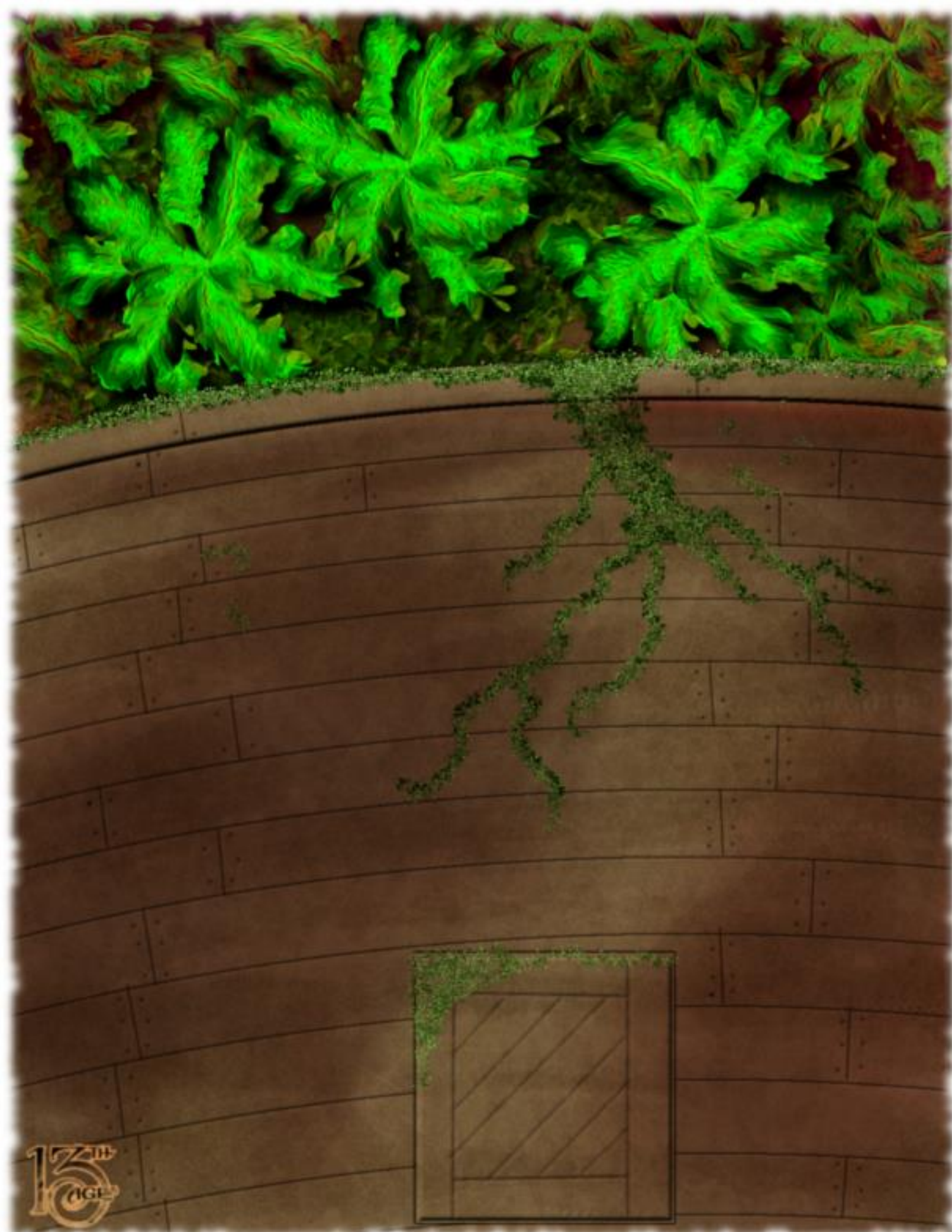
Group mind: Provided there is a star-mask intellect around, all the star-mask albino apes gain +4 MD and know everything that the others know.

AC 24

PD 22 HP 300

MD 18





WE FLY!

The adventurers have located the ship, fought off the star-mask things investigating it, and have boarded it.

Of course all they need to do now is get the ship to fly. The ship is massive, with many controls both mechanical and arcane. The star-masks had only cleared the rubble from the ship, so much of the ship is choked with vines and creepers still. Getting the ship airborne is going to be tricky.

The adventurers had better get the ship into the air quickly, because the Iron Sea has gathered its might and is about to throw a massive storm against the island.

The adventurers must succeed at three DC 25 skill checks to get the ship airborne. Each success means that another critical system of the ship (its steering, its magical sails, its mystical power-source) is fully operational. Failure means that the ship's system becomes only partially operational, with the following results:

- **Sluggish steering**—The party has -1 to their defenses during the next battle.
- **Sparking power**—Any adventurer who rolls a natural 1 attack roll or save in the next battle takes 2d20 force damage.
- **Poor stabilization**—Adventurers who double move on their turns or try any fancy footwork must spend a quick action or take 3d6 damage.

ATTACK OF THE FIFTY-FOOT PSYCHOPOMP

The storm has reached the island just as the ship takes flight. However, this is no ordinary storm—it takes on a humanoid shape and attacks the ship and the adventurers onboard.

The storm is preventing the ship from leaving the island, sending winds to blow the Ostulti back to the ground. While the living incarnation of the Iron Sea's fury lives the ship cannot return to the Dragon Empire!

Fight!

The incarnation of the Iron Sea is not onboard the ship but rather flying in the sky beside it; really in a lot of ways it is the sky.

Those who want to engage the elemental in melee combat must either fly off the ship, or jump overboard with ropes attached to them.

Those onboard the ship are far-away from the elemental, and must rely on ranged attacks. Alternately those who are onboard the ship can hold their actions until they are attacked by a *storm fist* and attack the huge fist.

Number of PCs	Number of attacks that the Incarnation of the Iron Sea makes each round
3	1
4	2
5	2
6	3

INCARNATION OF THE IRON SEA

Huge 11th level blocker [ELEMENTAL]

Initiative: +18

C: Storm fist +10 vs. AC (2 different nearby or far away enemies)—60 thunder damage

C: Thunderbolts and lightning +12 vs. PD (1 nearby or far away enemy)—50 lightning damage 10 ongoing thunder damage

C: Reap the whirlwind +12 vs. PD (1d3 nearby or far away enemies)—35 damage and if the target is dangling from the ship on a rope they are hampered (save ends)

Flight: This creature is mostly animated wind, so yes it flies fast and true.

Fear aura: Enemies engaged with the elemental who have 96 hit points or fewer are dazed (-4 to attack) and can't use the escalation die.

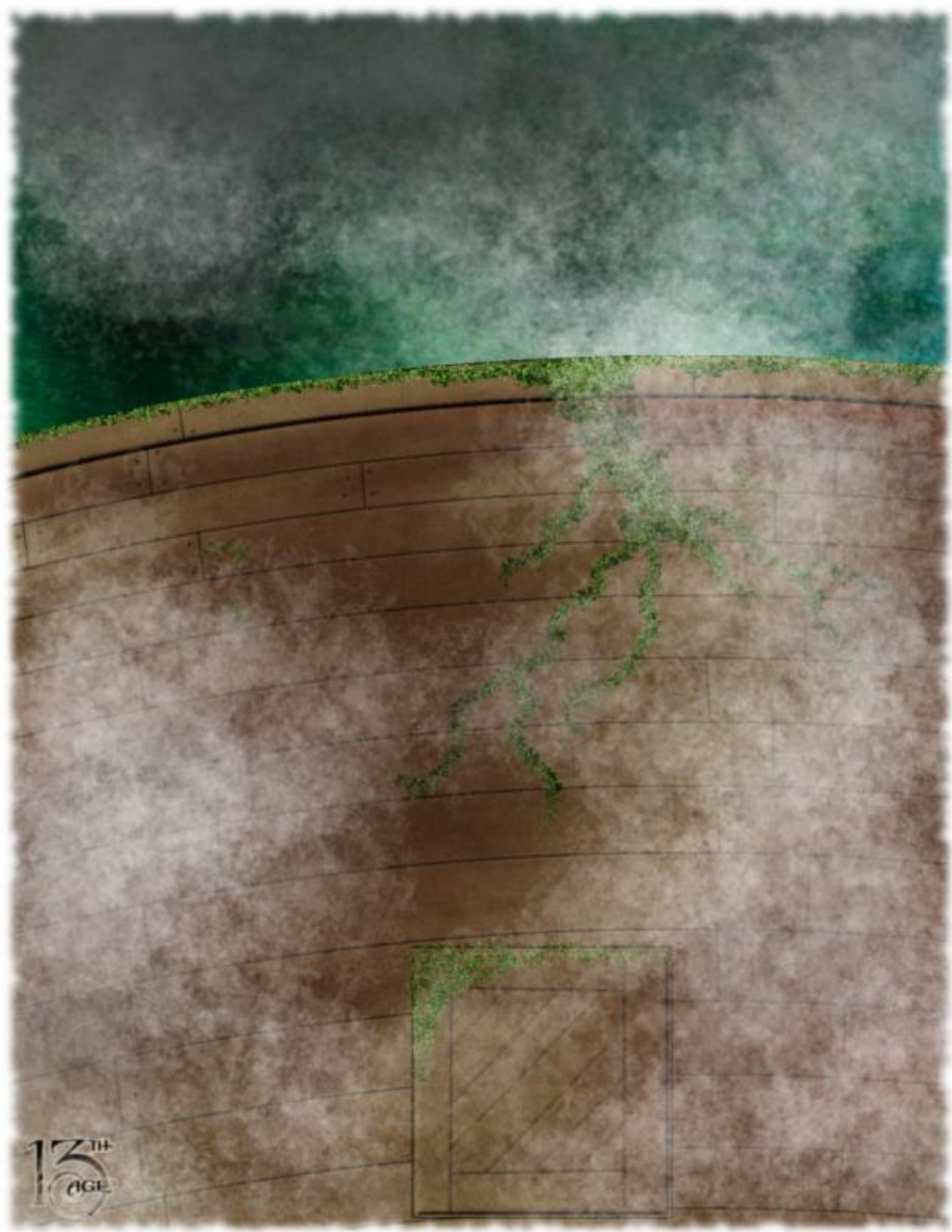
Flying debris: Enemies engaged with this monster take 10 damage at the end of their turns.

Resist non-spell damage 16+: When a non-spell attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 27

PD 25 HP 800

MD 25



OSTULTI: THE SHIP OF HEROES

With a final roar the storm-monster dies, and with it the storm-winds holding the ship in place release their grip. The Ostulti soars upwards at breakneck speeds, leaving the storm clouds far behind and below it.

The ship is obviously in poor repair though, and parts are starting to fall off. The whine of overstretched magic fills the air. Though the Ostulti has lasted long ages hidden on the lost island, it has still suffered the depredations of time.

The adventurers have no choice but to land, and soon. Thankfully they can see the Dragon Empire's familiar shape stretched out below them, and can guide their ship to a landing near a major city.

The navigation of the ship seems to *want* to go to a major city. Even if the adventurers wanted to, they don't yet have enough control of the ship to land elsewhere.

As soon as the Ostulti lands it 'powers down', having exhausted the last of its magical reserves in escaping from the lost island. Of course the icons will be able to get it working once more, and the plan is that it is turned over to the Emperor so that the forces of good can take the fight against the star-masks to the heavens from which they originate.

The adventurers will receive a different reward depending on which city they land near (remember, they are supposed to take the ship to Axis).

NEW PORT

The adventurers touchdown on a beach just outside of New Port. The locals are amazed by the heroes and their flying ship, and summon the local imperial governor who in turn calls out the garrison. After the adventurer's identities are confirmed and messages are sent to and from Axis, a great public holiday is held in the adventurer's honor.

Reward: Fame

The traders of New Port are keen to ally themselves with heroes such as the adventurers. Soon the party discovers that their likenesses are being used

to sell everything from boot polish to fine wines. Each time the famous party members roll icon relationship dice and get a 4 they can count it as a 5 if being well-known would help the situation. This lasts until the end of the character's career: it is a permanent reward.

SANTA CORA

Paladins rush out of the city to surround the depowered Ostulti. After the initial hullabaloo that the adventurer's landing causes the party is visited by a delegation of bishops who take charge of the ship and bless the adventurers.

Reward: Blessing

Each blessed character adds 1 to all saves against save ends effects, death saves, and last gasp saves caused by undead creatures. This lasts until the end of the character's career: it is a permanent blessing.

HORIZON

The ship skids to a halt outside Horizon, several wizardly towers magically moving aside to avoid being crushed by the Ostulti. The ship is soon surrounded by wizards and enchantresses of all stipes, each failing to restrain their curiosity. A mental message from the Archmage summons the adventurers to his tower, where they are suitably rewarded.

Reward: Enchantment

Each blessed character adds 1 to all saves against save ends effects, death saves, and last gasp saves caused by magical spells or effects. This lasts until the end of the character's career: it is a permanent enchantment.

AXIS

As soon as the ship clears the Spray islands flights of dragons surround the Ostulti, guiding it in to a landing. The imperial dragon riders form an honor guard for the adventurers where they are taken to the Emperor's grandest palace. There in a ceremony on a balcony overlooking cheering crowds, the adventurers are rewarded.

Reward: Titles and lands

Each character gains titles and lands—each time they roll icon relationship dice and get a 4 they can

count it as a 5 if having lands and titles would help the situation. This lasts until the end of the character's career: it is a permanent reward.

GLITTERHAEGEN

The ship skids to a halt on the imperial road outside Glitterhaegen. The merchants of the extraordinary 'City of Coins' each vie to be the first to congratulate the adventurers and shower them with luxurious gifts.

Reward: Riches

The citizens of Glitterhaegen are keen to ally themselves with the party, and offer to start businesses with the heroes. All the heroes have to do is lend their fame to the businesses, and the burgomeisters and factors of Glitterhaegen will put up the money and run the day-to-day affairs of the businesses. Each time a party member rolls icon relationship dice and gets a 4 they can count it as a 5 if being rich would help the situation. This lasts until the end of the character's career: it is a permanent reward. Note that this definitely doesn't mean that the character has a lot of instantly available spare cash, but they do get to live comfortably off the profits of their share of their businesses.

CONCORD

The people of the 'City of Spires' rush out onto the plain where the Ostulti came to a stop. What at first is a scene of chaos quickly resolves into a massive open-air party with the adventurers as the guests of honor.

Reward: Remembered in song

The bards from as far away as Twisp, Forge, and even the Court of Stars begin writing epics celebrating the adventurer's lives. From now on when any character is fighting in spirit they can do so twice a round. This lasts until the end of the character's career: it is a permanent reward.

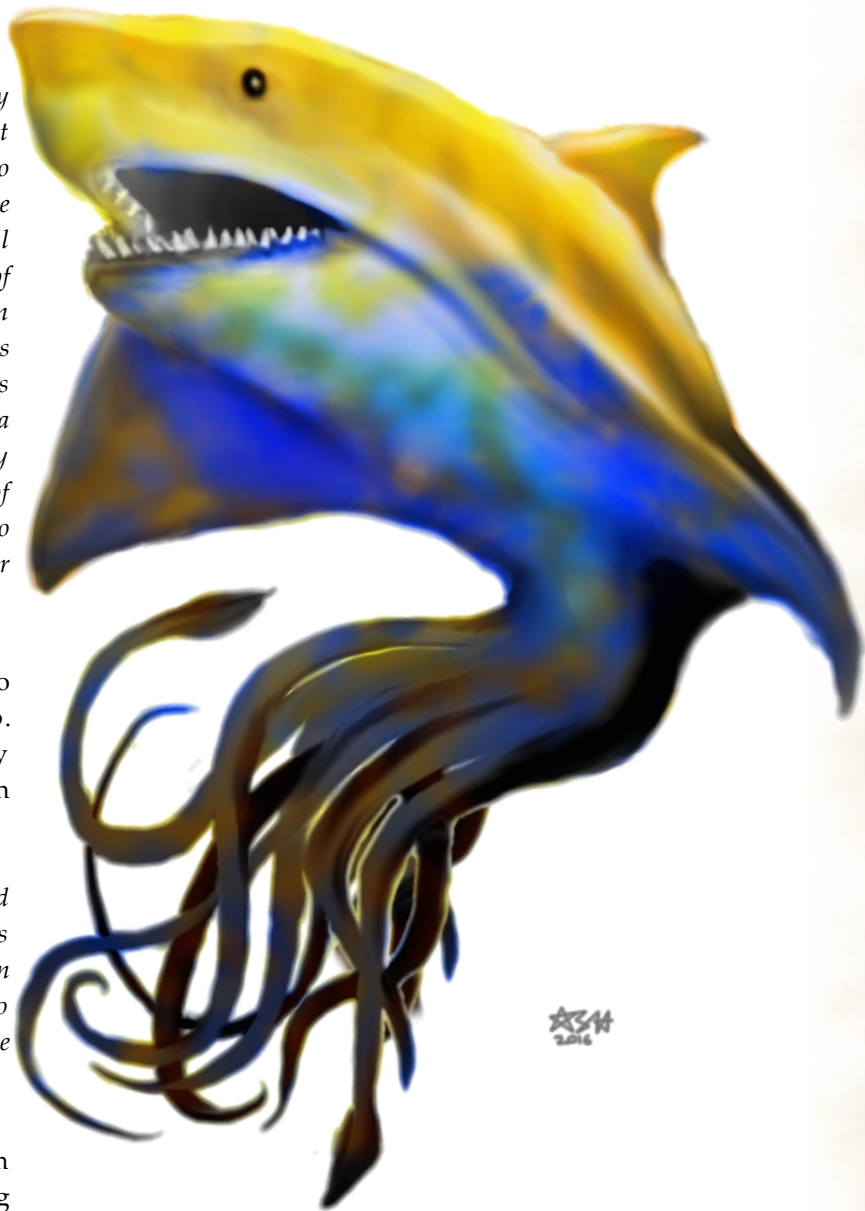
DRAKKENHALL

Dark flapping shapes circle up from Drakkenhall to meet the enormous flying ship. Even as the ship crashes and skids to a rest in the city (flattening a goblin neighborhood) the imperial governor herself is making her way in procession from her tower to meet the adventurers; she's even

gracious enough to assume her slightly-less-terrifying-than-normal humanoid form.

Reward: Treasure

Each character is paid off by the Three in treasure. Everybody gets an epic tier magic item.



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