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# INTRODUCTION

*Tides of Blood* is an adventure designed for 4 or 5 characters of 6th level, although it provides scaling suggestions for weaker or stronger parties. The adventure focuses on all three pillars of play: social interaction, exploration, and combat. The characters will have to face the horrors of the Blood Sea, and, through their own grit and a bit of luck, may live to see Ghelspad's shores once again.

The module might serve as a starting point for adventures in and around Mithril, the beginnings of a seafaring campaign, or simply as a standalone adventure inserted into a larger campaign on Ghelspad. See Concluding the Adventure for ideas on how to continue the story.

Scarn is a dangerous place and the Blood Sea is one of its deadliest regions. This adventure is difficult and may feel impossible at times. If the characters see the other side of their journey, they will have truly earned the title of hero.

The following sections offer background information, a synopsis of the module, notes on preparing for and running the adventure, and hooks to help you get the adventure started.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

**Menthias Dolgutha** (LG human **priest** of Corean) has received a vision of the Silver Bastion, a fortress used by the knightly Order of the Silver Shield during the Divine War, rising from the Blood Sea. Searching Mithril's libraries, the priest discovered the fortress was built before the titan Kadum was defeated and imprisoned at the depths of the sea. The Silver Bastion was overrun with titanspawn as the last remaining knights stayed behind, allowing others to retreat to the mainland.

The crimson tides are unusually low and the gleaming fortress can be seen once again. Menthias believes the fortress still holds the *Brightshield*, a magical item thought to be touched by Corean himself. Meanwhile, the Heartseekers of Kadum, a cult loyal to the titan, have secured the fortress. They know the ruin still houses powerful relics and fear they may embolden Corean's faithful if recovered.

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The adventure is broken into three chapters:

- Chapter 1: Gleaming Visions. The characters meet with Menthias Dolgutha, a Coreanic priest, in Mithril. The priest has received visions of a lost fortress rising from the bloody waters.
- Chapter 2: On Waves of Blood. Under the employ of Menthias, the characters board The *Bloody Grin* and begin a journey on the Blood Sea. The characters must contend with dangerous titanspawn and the sea itself in order to arrive their destination. A crewmember hatches a treacherous plot to inform the Heartseekers of Kadum of the characters' plans.
- Chapter 3: The Silver Bastion. Arriving at the Silver Bastion, the characters find the fortress invaded by piscean and human cultists loyal to Kadum, the Bleeding One.

# PREPARATION

You should read through this module before running it. While the first and third chapters are straightforward, the seafaring second chapter has many random events that could occur. Becoming acquainted with these ensures a smooth experience for everyone at your table. Remember, this is your story to tell. Everything herein is merely an idea for you to mold.

This adventure assumes you have access to the corebooks for the 5th Edition of the world's greatest roleplaying game and the *Scarred Lands Player's Guide (SLPG)*. Creature and nonplayer character names appear in **bold**. Magic items and spells appear in *italics*. Magic items found as treasure appear in both *bold and italics*.

Many encounters have scaling suggestions for Weak or Strong parties. If you have 5th-level characters or a party of 3, consider using the Weak scaling suggestions. If you have 7th-level characters or a party of 6, consider using the Strong scaling suggestions. Random encounters at sea do not have scaling suggestions due to the presence of allied NPCs.

Appendix A contains stat blocks for new creatures and NPCs. Appendix B contains information on magic items. Appendix C contains maps used in the module.

*Text that appears like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased.* 

Text that appears like this speaks directly to the Game Master (GM). These sidebars contain rules reminders, roleplaying hints, and other information.

For general information on Corean, Kadum, and Mithril, see the *Scarred Lands Player's Guide*, chapters 1 and 8. For detailed information on Mithril, see *Mithril: City of the Golem*, a sourcebook for version 3.5 fantasy roleplaying. For detailed information on the Blood Sea and the Heartseekers of Kadum, see *Blood Sea: The Crimson Abyss*, a sourcebook for version 3.5 fantasy roleplaying.

# ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are a few ideas to engage your characters with the adventure. Feel free to use these or create your own.

*Low Tides, High Risk.* While traveling on Ghelspad, the characters hear reports of the Blood Sea suddenly shifting to a lower tide. Blood Sea mutants and other titanspawn have been washing ashore as adventurers and treasure hunters flock to coastal cities, such as Mithril, in search of gold and glory.

*Tales of Silver.* A Coreanic missionary approaches the characters after hearing of their recent deeds. She tells them about Menthias, a priest in the holy city of Mithril, and his quest to uncover a lost holy relic. He is in need of brave souls and strong sword arms.

*The Bloody Shield.* A good-aligned character receives a holy vision. They see a gleaming silver shield emblazoned with Corean's holy symbol awash in blood. Its light fades under the crimson deluge. The vision ends with a scene of Mithril, Corean's famed golem resting in the distance.



# GLEAMING VISIONS

This chapter details the characters meeting Menthias Dolgutha, the Coreanic priest seeking the Silver Bastion, and an attack on the Harbor City docks.

Mithril is a city built on opposition. The Temple City, alight in the gleaming radiance of Corean's mithril golem, is home to the learned and affluent priesthood of the god's Adamantine Church. Below, along the Blood Sea's shore, the poor citizens of the Harbor City answer to lawless thugs and corrupt merchants looking to squeeze every copper from Mithril.

As the characters travel through the sections of the city, note how the atmosphere changes. In the Temple City, priests stand in the streets debating the finer points of Coreanic theology and squabble over political minutiae as paladins in unmarred plate mail guard the wealthy. In the Harbor City, the poor beg for coppers from one another, drunks fight in the street, and crimson waves crash on the shoreline.

The characters may want to learn more about Menthias. If the characters spend a day asking about the priest in Mithril and make a **Charisma (Investigation) check**, they learn the following information based on their result. Each level is cumulative:

- **10-14.** Menthias is well known in the Westside (or Stormside) of Harbor City for tending to the poor. He is known to minster even to those who outwardly speak against Coreanic values. He keeps a small temple near the pier. He recently placed *The Bloody Grin*, a privateering ship, on retainer for reasons unknown.
- **15-19.** The priest is called Old Goldheart for his generosity toward Mithril's poor. He carries a wicked scar across his face; a parting gift from a titanspawn.
- 20 or higher. A decade ago, Menthias routed a corrupt priest from the Temple City who was funneling mithril to the Calastian Hegemony. Soon after, Menthias was transitioned to Westside. Many believe he still has unseen enemies within the Adamantine Church.

# MEETING

The adventure begins as the characters approach Menthias's humble temple in the Harbor City. When you are ready to begin, read or paraphrase:

The bustling streets of Harbor City are laden with shouting merchants and the smell of fish and blood. A squat temple stands before you, its iron doors, engraved with Corean's symbol, are flung open. Inside is a middleaged human man with dark, sun-beaten skin and more white than black in his hair who tends to the altar.

**Menthias Dolgutha** (LG male human **priest** of Corean) and 4 **acolytes** tend to this small temple in Harbor City's violent Westside. At any time there is a 50% chance there are 1d4 **commoners** and 1d4 **thugs** praying in the temple. Menthias happily meets with the characters if they express interest in helping him, guiding them to his quarters behind the sanctuary.

**The Offer.** Menthias pays each character 250 gp and gifts the party 2 *mithril weapons* (SLPG 163) if they travel to the exposed ruin and return with any Coreanic relics. The priest is interested in items of religious or historical significance. The characters are welcome to claim any other treasure, as long as its retrieval does not disrespect the holy site.

If the characters try to haggle with Menthias and succeed on a **DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check,** he offers to scribe a single *spell scroll* containing a 2nd-level cleric spell. If the characters succeed on a **DC 20 Charisma** (**Persuasion) check**, they convince Menthias to part with half of the gold immediately. Characters who worship Corean have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made against Menthias.

*The Silver Bastion.* Menthias is forthcoming with what he knows about the Silver Bastion. His knowledge of the lost fortress includes:

- It was home to the Knightly Order of the Silver Shield, whose ideals would later form the Order of Silver. The order dedicated themselves to training the commonfolk to be soldiers in the Divine War.
- The fortress fell before the end of the war, overrun by a lesser titan and its titanspawn. Several attempts were made to reclaim the Silver Bastion, but all failed.
- After Kadum was imprisoned, the rising waters of what is now the Blood Sea engulfed the Silver Bastion. The Adamantine Church has not led a serious effort to explore or recover the ruin.

**The Brightshield.** Menthias does not mention the *Brightshield* by name unless the majority of the party outwardly worship Corean or are known for acts of heroic valor. If the characters succeed on a **DC 18 Intelligence** (History or Religion) check they recall that a shield said to be used by Corean himself was kept in the fort.

*Braving the Blood Sea.* Menthias tells the characters he has commissioned *The Bloody Grin* to ferry the characters to and from the Silver Bastion. He claims that while the privateer crew does not fit the Coreanic ideal, they have protected Mithril's harbors for years.

The priest provides the characters with a map approximating the Silver Bastion's location and says it should take four days at sea, but the Blood Sea is often unpredictable.

# ROLEPLAYING MENTHIAS

Menthias plays a significant role in *Tides of Blood* and may become a recurrent NPC in your campaign. Use these notes to help bring him to life.

**Description.** Menthias is a middle-aged human male with short, cropped hair reminiscent of a militaristic life. His black beard, highlighted with streaks of silver, is broken by a thick, raised scar running along his left cheek.

*Characteristics.* Menthias always carries a warm smile and greets everyone with a firm handshake.

*Ideal.* Duty. The greatest aspiration is to serve others with honesty and courage.

Bond. I will die for the Adamantine Church.

*Flaw.* I hold Corean's faithful, including myself, to an impossible standard.

### DEVELOPMENTS

Just as the meeting is coming to a close, the temple doors fly open as a panicked dock worker shouts, "Help! Help us! Blood tainted are attacking the docks!" Menthias draws a gleaming mithril longsword from a weathered scabbard resting against his desk and rushes out of the temple.

# MUTANTS AT THE DOCKS

As the characters approach, read or paraphrase:

A throng of sailors, dockworkers, and merchants rush past you, clamoring and shouting. Along the pier you see a group of sea devils with blood-red scales shove a commoner into the water. In a flurry of fins, teeth, and gore, the man is pulled underwater.

The main pier is 80 feet long and 15 feet wide. It is 10 feet from the water's surface. If a character falls or is pulled from the pier, they take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. The water is 15 feet deep.

The water here has trace amounts of blood contamination and is not an immediate danger. Many smaller docks branch out from the central pier. Large crates and merchant stalls litter the area, providing ample opportunities for cover. A variety of ships, from small fishing boats to large galleons, are docked here, most only with a skeleton crew onboard.

### CREATURES AND TACTICS

Five Blood Sea mutant, sahuagin and 3 Blood Sea mutant, reef sharks (see appendix A) are attacking the pier. The sharks are in the water, waiting for prey to fall off the pier. There are 1d10 + 2 commoners still on the pier when the characters arrive.

Sensing a formidable enemy, the mutants attack the characters. The sahuagin attempt to Shove characters off the pier. Menthias fights alongside the party, but prefers to tend to injured commoners.

The mutants fight to the death. If the characters retreat, the mutants continue attacking commoners.

### DEVELOPMENTS

Menthias is familiar with blood fever (see the sidebar below for more information) and cures as many characters as he can using *lesser restoration*. He urges the characters to meet captain Eurybia Tenthos of *The Bloody Grin* as soon as possible.

If the characters save all of the commoners on the pier, a group of Harbor City merchants rewards the characters with 20 gp and a *potion of healing*.

Proceed to chapter 2 when you are ready to introduce the ship.

# ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

Weak. Remove 1 sahuagin and 1 reef shark.

Strong. Increase the sahuagins' hit points by 7 each.



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# ON WAVES OF BLOOD

This chapter details *The Bloody Grin* and provides a system to determine encounters on the Blood Sea. The encounters herein are meant to present the Blood Sea as a significant challenge to overcome, emphasizing the exploration pillar of play. It is the author's opinion that meticulous bookkeeping in regards to travel pace, ration stores, and other details causes many players to disengage from the gameplay. Those mechanics have been left purposefully simplistic. As always, the mechanics in this module are merely suggestions. If your group enjoys more detail-oriented exploration, alter these mechanics to match their tastes.

The open sea has many dangers: sudden squalls that tear a ship asunder, roving pirates looking for an easy mark, and the threat of becoming lost, dying slowly of starvation. When the waves run red with a titan's blood, it transcends from a force of nature to a malignant entity that seeks only to destroy.

### NAVIGATING THE BLOOD SEA

Traversing the ocean is handled similarly to overland travel. With a map, such as the one Menthias gives the characters, and *The Bloody Grin's* skilled crew, becoming lost should not be a concern. However, if the map is lost or the crew loses its navigator, the remaining crew or characters must succeed a **DC 13 Wisdom check using navigator's tools** every day to keep the ship on course. If the crew or characters have access to Menthias's map, they have advantage on this check.

While fully crewed, *The Bloody Grin* can sail twentyfour hours a day, operating in two twelve-hour shifts. The route to the Silver Bastion requires three days of coastal sailing and one day of deep sea sailing, if the ship travels at full speed using both shifts. If half or more of the crew is unable to work, the ship sails at half speed. If twelve or fewer crewmembers are able to work, the ship operates with a skeleton crew, sailing at half speed only during the day. Note that sailing speeds are an average. During specific times a ship may travel at half or double speed due to wind conditions. These conditions rarely persist long enough to impact overall travel speed.

### WATCH WHATYOU (AT

Eating fish caught from the Blood Sea can be dangerous or even deadly. Merchant and naval ships, such as *The Bloody Grin*, carry enough provisions for their time at sea, often choosing to carry a surplus to account for unforseen circumstances (see The Bloody Grin below for more information on cargo and provisions). Some crews supplement their unappetizing provisions with line fishing when off duty. If a character succeeds on a **DC 12 Wisdom** (**Survival**) check, they catch enough fish to feed one person for one day. There is a 25% chance the fish carries blood fever if caught in coastal waters, or 50% if caught in the deep sea. If a character succeeds on a **DC 13 Intelligence** (**Nature**) check, they realize the food is contaminated.

# THE BLOODY GRIN

When the characters first approach the ship, read or paraphrase:

The sailing ship's hull is patched in sections with various sturdy timbers and carries the marks of many voyages. The bow of the ship is painted in faded paint to resemble a toothy grin. The blood-saturated waters of Kadum's ocean have stained it, giving the grin a menacing appearance. Flying high above the deck, a smiling human skull with a bloody knife in its teeth whips in the wind.

The *Bloody Grin* was once a pirate vessel based out of the Toe Islands renowned for hunting down smaller merchant vessels from Termana. Six years ago, Eurybia Tenthos, then the first mate, overthrew her captain and wrested control of the crew. Wanting to move away from the dangers of piracy, Eurybia struck a deal with Mithril. Eurybia and her bloodsoaked crew now protect the shores of Mithril as privateers.

### THESHIP

The *Bloody Grin* is a sailing ship capable of transporting sixty passengers, is fully crewed by twenty sailors at a time, and travels two miles per hour under fair winds. The ship can carry a maximum of 150 tons of cargo.

As it leaves Mithril, the ship has enough provisions for twelve days. Some events on the Blood Sea may cause cargo to be lost or damaged. If an event impacts the ship's provisions, it is expressed in terms of days of rations. For example, a storm may cause the ship to lose half a day

# BLOOD FEVER

The disease known as blood fever has taken more lives than any monstrosity the Blood Sea has spawned. The disease is transmitted in a number of ways, including food contamination, exposure to blood barnacles, bloody storms, and by some Blood Sea mutants. Note that under typical conditions, Kadum's blood is not concentrated enough to infect creatures by simply swimming in the ocean.

If a creature comes in contact with the disease, they must succeed on a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** or contract blood fever. Blood fever incubates for 6d4 hours, after which the creature begins to convulse and sweat blood, taking 3 (1d6) necrotic damage every hour. When a creature takes damage in this way, it must make a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or fall into a homicidal rage. The creature's alignment magically changes to chaotic evil and the creature attacks any creature it can see. This maddened state lasts until the creature recovers or the disease is cured.

Every 24 hours thereafter, the infected creature must repeat the Constitution saving throw, suffering the effects above on a failure. Three successful saving throws in a row indicates the creature has recovered from the disease. If their alignment was changed, it shifts back to its original and any ongoing madness ends.

Anyone coming into contact with a creature infected with blood fever risks contracting the disease. If an uninfected creature touches an infected creature after the incubation period, the uninfected creature must succeed on a **DC 10 Constitution saving throw** or contract blood fever. If the uninfected creature takes precautions, such as wearing gloves and a mask, they have advantage on the saving throw.

Blood fever is identified during the incubation period with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Medicine) check or after with a DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check.

Prolonged blood fever causes mutations and permanent madness. Most Blood Sea sailing crews quarantine or dispose of infected individuals before the disease reaches its final stages.

of rations. Provision calculations always assume a fully crewed ship and should be adjusted if the ship has lost a significant number of its crew.

### THE CREW

The ship is crewed by 40 skilled sailors. Every crew member is proficient in water vehicles and can add their proficiency bonus to any ability check made to maintain the ship. The crew consists of 30 **bandits**, 7 **scouts** who

## THE BLOODY GRIN AT A GLANCE

Use these notes to assist in arbitrating mechanics concerning *The Bloody Grin.* 

**Damage and Repair.** The ship's hull has AC 17 and 30 hit points for each 10-ft.-by-10-ft. section. The hull has a damage threshold of 10. The hull is immune to necrotic, poison, psychic, and radiant damage. It is resistant to piercing damage and vulnerable to fire damage.

If one 10-ft.-by-10-ft. section of hull is destroyed, the ship must anchor for 8 hours to conduct repairs. If the destroyed section was under water, the ship begins to rapidly take on water and sink in 1d8 hours. Reduce the time it takes for the ship to sink by 1 die type for each section of hull destroyed. For example, if two sections are destroyed, the ship sinks in 1d6 hours.

**Speed.** The ship travels at two miles per hour while traveling. During combat encounters, the ship moves 10 feet a round in a straight line. Turning the ship is a process that requires the crew to be alert and actively working the sails and helm. For purposes of combat encounters, this is not possible.

**Crew.** Each twelve-hour shift is manned by twenty crew members while the others are at leisure or sleeping. If ten or fewer crewmembers are able to work a shift, the ship travels at half speed.

**Defending the Ship.** The Bloody Grin is built for speed and does not have ballistae or other crew served weapons. However, if the ship is attacked, half of the active crewmembers defend the ship using crossbows from the deck. It is recommended you make 1 attack roll for every five crewmembers and use average damage to speed up combat encounters.

If a battle goes poorly or the captain or first mate orders the rest of the crew to defend the ship. They take 1 minute to prepare and arrive on deck.

are proficient in navigator's tools, and 3 officers, detailed below. The crew is predominantly human, but other races are represented as well. Those with darkvision serve on the night shift. You are encouraged to flesh out the personalities of the crew.

Crewmembers spend twelve hours a day working on the ship. This consists of tending to the rigging, making minor repairs, serving as lookout, cooking, and cleaning. If the ship is attacked, the crew follows either the captain or first mate's orders and defend themselves and the ship to the best of their ability. **The Captain.** Eurybia Tenthos (see appendix A) leads *The Bloody Grin's* crew. Born and raised at sea, Eurybia was destined to tame the crimson tides. She is respected amongst the crew, who know that, under her impossible demands, is a worthy leader.

Eurybia has dark brown skin and short, black hair. She eschews the loud, flamboyant dress many sea captains favor for more functional gear.

**The First Mate.** The ship's first mate, **Saraj Jutaka** (CN male slitherin **spy**), was a stowaway on *The Bloody Grin* for ten days before the crew found him. Rather than throw him to the sharks, Eurybia gave him a spot on the crew; the redeemed slitherin quickly rose through the ranks. He keeps a close eye on the crew and serves as Eurybia's unseen hand.

The pale gray slitherin is missing most of his right ear, which he claims his sister chewed off. His tail is adorned with dozens of gold rings and is pierced in several places.

**The Sea Witch.** Many Blood Sea crews employ a spellcaster capable of dealing with the harsh environment. Druids of Denev, Enkili's clerics, and learned wizards are all welcomed. Two months ago Eurybia hired on **Narkissa Dendros** (see appendix A) in Mithril. The druid keeps to herself, speaking only directly to the captain.

Narkissa is secretly a member of the Heartseekers of Kadum, a cult dedicated to restoring the titan. See Treachery at Sea below for more information on how Narkissa's allegiance influences the characters.

### ROLEPLAYING EURYBIA

As captain of *The Bloody Grin*, Eurybia appears throughout this chapter. Use these notes to help bring her to life.

**Description.** Eurybia is a young woman, no older than thirty, but the Blood Sea has matured her beyond her years. Her angular face and wiry, muscular frame denote a life of labor and hardship.

*Characteristics.* Eurybia has a commanding presence. She looks everyone in the eye, from novice seamen to pirate kings.

*Ideal.* Freedom. At sea we forge our own paths; I am my own master.

*Bond.* My crew is my family. I love them, even when we are fighting.

*Flaw.* I have not abandoned the ruthlessness of pirate life. I am not above violence and deception.

# TREACHERY AT

Narkissa is an initiate of the Heartseekers of Kadum, a cult dedicated to serving and healing the titan. The cult is comprised of Circle of the Fallen druids, giants, and ancient leviathans such as the kraken. Initiates must consume a deadly amount of Kadum's blood before they are brought into the cult. Most do not survive, ensuring that each cultist is a formidable foe.

The cult was formed by a druid who received a vision of Kadum's still-beating heart. He worked to gather initiates throughout Ghelspad, who opposed the followers of Belsameth and Corean for their role in imprisoning the titan. Even though its founder, whose name has been forgotten to history, died decades ago, the Heartseekers of Kadum still search for the heart and serve their bound lord.

### SERVING THE MOUNTAINSHAKER

One day after setting sail from Mithril, Narkissa sends an *animal messenger* (cast as a 3rd-level spell) to a group of piscean Heartseekers. She informs her comrades that a Coreanic priest knows of the Silver Bastion and has hired the characters to investigate. The aquatic Heartseekers have guarded the fortress and the *Brightshield* for centuries, fearing the relic could shift the tide fully in the gods' favor.

**Caught Red-Handed.** Narkissa does not confront the characters or otherwise act suspiciously during the voyage. Still, if the characters suspect her of something, they might discover her plan. If the characters succeed on a **DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check** they sense that Narkissa has been studying them from afar. If they are able to steal her spell component pouch or other magical implements and succeed on a **DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana)** check, they realize that her magical components are carved with symbols sacred to Kadum.

If caught, Narkissa attempts to lie her way out of the situation. If she is given a moment alone, she summons a **water elemental** to cause havoc on the ship while she escapes. If backed into a corner, she casts *call lightning* and jumps overboard, polymorphing into either a bird or shark to escape.

### BLOODY ACCUSATIONS

Eurybia, Saraj, and most of The Bloody Grin's crew side with Narkissa if the characters accuse her of wrongdoing. Eurybia tells the characters the druid has performed her duties well and without complaint. If the characters are



persistent, Eurybia commands the characters to bring her proof of Narkissa's treachery or risk punishment themselves. Without evidence, persuading Eurybia to turn on Narkissa requires a **DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion)** check or a **DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check** with evidence, such as her spell component pouch.

If Eurybia turns on Narkissa, she attempts to restrain the druid in manacles until they arrive back in Mithril, where she is turned over to the Adamantine Church. If Eurybia attempts to arrest Narkissa, the druid attacks and attempts to flee.

If the characters and crew apprehend Narkissa, they must keep her sedated throughout the journey or risk her turning into a beast and escaping. Luckily, every good seafaring ship has an ample supply of rum.

## ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

*Weak.* Reduce the Wisdom (Insight) check DC by 2 and reduce Narkissa's hit points by 10.

**Strong.** Sensing she has been discovered, Narkissa summons the **water elemental** before the characters confront her. It is hiding just below the ship in the water.

# COASTAL WATERS

Coastal waters are the relatively shallow (10 to 50 feet) regions within 10 miles of shore. These are the safest areas of the Blood Sea, but even with shore in sight many ships are lost to storms or monster attacks. *The Bloody Grin* travels for three days in coastal waters, sailing south from Mithril.

The shallows of the Blood Sea represent a tension between life and death, risk and reward. Areas where freshwater rivers flow into the ocean create zones of fertile, untainted life. This bounty is a blessing to Scarn's divine races, but also lure the vile monsters born of Kadum's blood.

### WEATHER

Roll on the Blood Sea Weather table below every day the characters are at sea. If you want to emphasize the danger weather represents, roll every twelve hours, but be warned this greatly increases the likelihood of deadly consequences. The adventure does not presume a particular season. Pick whichever best fits your campaign.

D%	SPRING	SUMMER	WINTER/ FALL
01-25	Clear	Clear	Clear
26-34	Fog	Clear	Fog
35-45	Rain	Fog	Rain
46-60	Rain	Rain	Thunderstorm
61-75	Bloodsurge	Rain	Windstorm
76-85	Thunderstorm	Thunderstorm	Bloodsurge
86-93	Windstorm	Windstorm	Squalls
94-98	Squalls	Bloodsurge	Hurricane
99-00	Hurricane	Squalls	Hurricane

### BLOOD SEA WEATHER

*Fog.* Fog on the Blood Sea takes on a reddish hue. A wind of at least 10 miles per hour blows the fog away in the area of the wind effect. The fog heavily obscures the area it fills. Ships sail at half speed due to low visibility.

**Rain.** Rain lightly obscures the area and causes minor annoyances, such as the inability to use torches at night. The deck is slippery during a rainstorm, creating difficult terrain. Characters have disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws made to remain standing. Ships sail at full speed during rainy conditions.

There is a 20% chance the rain is bloodrain. If this occurs, roll a d4 for every hour a creature is on deck and exposed to the bloodrain. On a result of 1, the character ingests the bloodrain and must save versus blood fever. At the GM's

discretion, creatures who take careful precautions, such as wearing heavy masks or helms, may negate this chance.

**Bloodsurge.** Wind conditions cause a surge of concentrated titan's blood in the area. The chance of food being contaminated is doubled during bloodsurges. Furthermore, being in the water for more than 1 minute forces a creature to make a saving throw against blood fever.

**Thunderstorm.** A thunderstorm has the same effects and bloodrain chance as rain but creates a heavily obscured area and may cause damage to the ship. Roll d100 + 10 and consult the Storm Damage table below. Ships sail at half speed due to low visibility.

*Windstorm.* A windstorm does not affect visibility but may cause damage to the ship. Roll d100 and consult the Storm Damage table below. Ships sail at full speed during windy conditions.

**Squalls.** Squalls are localized storms that bring intense rain, sleet, and hurricane force winds. They can appear suddenly and last anywhere from minutes to hours. Squalls are particularly dangerous to sailing crews as they are impossible to predict, difficult to spot, and as deadly as a hurricane.

If you roll this result, have whomever is on deck make a **Wisdom (Perception) check**. Roll for NPC crewmembers as a group. Rather than rolling against a specific DC, halve the highest result. This is the distance of the squall from the ship. If the halved result is 4 or less, the squall suddenly surges and overtakes the ship. The squall moves at 1d10 miles per hour. For purposes of presenting an interesting challenge, assume that any squall spotted as a result of this weather event is moving toward the ship.

If the squall is spotted 8 or more miles away, the navigator can make a **DC 18 Intelligence or Wisdom check using navigator's tools** to successfully navigate around the squall. This adds 1d12 hours to the journey. If the squall is spotted 7 or fewer miles away, the crew does not have adequate time to react. The captain, first mate, or other commanding voice (such as a player character), must make a **DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check** to rouse the crew to action. On a success, the crew is able to anchor in place and prepare the ship for storm damage. Roll d100 + 30 and consult the Storm Damage table below. The squall lasts 1d10 x 10 minutes. During a squall, all ability checks are made at disadvantage.

**Hurricane.** Hurricanes easily sink even the sturdiest ships. Luckily they are rare, even in the Blood Sea. If you roll this result, have the crew and other characters make a **DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) check.** On a success, they know a hurricane is forming and can prepare the ship for storm damage or take other measures. The hurricane makes contact with the ship in 1d10 + 1 hours.

Hurricanes are so large that they cannot be circumnavigated by nonmagical means. When the hurricane makes contact with the ship, roll d100 + 40 and consult the Storm Damage table below. The hurricane lasts for  $1d6 \times 2$  hours. During a hurricane, all ability checks are made at disadvantage.

## KEEPING THEM ENGAGED

Weather events, although potentially deadly, can feel passive to some players. Keep them engaged by describing the chaos severe weather causes amongst the crew. There will be a flurry of activity and, unless the characters themselves are accomplished sailors, they will feel out of their element, which creates tension.

Encourage the players to find creative solutions to problems. For example, a *mending* cantrip might speed up repair time or a *gust of wind* spell could clear fog during a monster encounter. *Create food and water* is often all that stands between life and death. For characters without spellcasting, consider allowing them to lead repair or preparation efforts. As tier 2 characters they have an undeniable heroic (or villainous) aura, which attracts followers.

Remember that random encounters still occur during severe weather. What better way for the characters to shine than fending off titanspawn in a squall?



#### ENCOUNTERS

Although not as dangerous as deep sea regions, the coastal shallows still contain many threats. Roll on the Coastal Encounters table below every twelve hours the characters are in coastal waters. Reroll duplicate results if they do not fit your campaign. You are encouraged to vary when these encounters occur, creating new challenges, such as fighting in the dark or being roused from sleep. If the characters lose a lot of travel time due to severe weather, consider adding to these encounter suggestions.

PREPARED* D100	UNPREPARED D100	DAMAGE RESULT
01-75	01-50	Shaken. Cosmetic damage only.
76-85	51-70	Battered. Lose half a day of provisions.
86-90	71-80	Minor Damage. Lose 1 day of provisions. Speed is halved for 1 day while under repair.
91-93	81-85	Significant Damage. Lose 2 days of provisions. Ship requires 1d2 days of repair before capable of sailing.
94-95	86-90	Severe Damage. Lose 4 days of provisions. Ship requires 1d2 days of repair and then moves at half speed until dry docked. 1d4 crew (excluding officers) die.
96-97	91-94	Adrift. Lose 4 days of provisions. Ship is adrift, incapable of moving without magic. Ship requires 1d6 days of repair and then moves at half speed until dry docked.1d4 crew (excluding officers) die.
98-99	95-98	Sinking. Lose 5 days of provisions. Ship sinks in 1d8 hours. 1d8 crew (excluding officers) die.
00	99-00	Destroyed. Lose all cargo. Ship sinks in 2d10 minutes. 2d8 crew (excluding officers) die.

### STORM DAMAGE

\* A ship is prepared when it is anchored and the crew has spent at least 1 hour securing cargo.

**Encounter Distance.** On a clear day, lookouts on deck spot monsters when they are 60 feet from the ship. In rainy conditions, they spot monsters 30 feet away. In heavily obscured conditions, such as fog and thunderstorms, they cannot spot monsters until they are on the ship without the aid of magic. At night, encounter distance is limited by available light sources or a lookout's supernatural senses.

### COASTAL ENCOUNTERS

D100	ENCOUNTER
01-09	Adrift ship
10-25	Blood barnacles
26-35	1d4 Blood Sea jellyfish
36-41	1d2 Blood Sea mutant, giant octopuses
42-52	1d8 + 2 blood zombies
53-63	1d8 + 1 dire petrels (giant vultures)
64-72	1d10 + 3 lizardfolk
73-83	Merchant vessel
84-89	Pirate ship
90-00	1d4 windriders

Adrift Ship. The crew spots a ship adrift on the open ocean. There are no crew on deck and no signs of life below deck. If the characters investigate and succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (History) check, they recall similar attacks being attributed to pisceans.

The ship's cargo is mostly stolen; only items that would not survive underwater remain. *The Bloody Grin's* crew can salvage 1d2 days of provisions from the cargo hold. If the characters succeed on a **DC 15 Intelligence** (**Investigation**) check while searching the ship, they find a hidden compartment in the captain's quarters containing 4 *potions of healing*, 4 *potions of water breathing*, and a *periapt of health*.

**Blood Barnacles.** Blood barnacles are a constant threat to Blood Sea sailors. Their presence can invoke a rage similar to blood fever. If you roll this encounter, check all characters' and crewmembers' passive Perception scores, unless they have not been on deck for 12 hours or more. If none have a **passive Perception of 18 or higher**, the crew fails to notice the blood barnacles clustering against the hull. The blood barnacles remain until cleaned off, requiring 1d12 x 2 hours of work while the ship is anchored.

Once per day, the blood barnacles invoke rage in the crew. Every living creature on the ship must make a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw** or fly into a rage for 1d6 minutes. On a failure, the target attacks the closest creature to it until the rage ends or they are incapacitated. While raging, the target deals +2 damage on any melee weapon attack. Attack rolls against the target have advantage. A successful

**DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check** determines the sudden bloodlust is due to blood barnacles.

**Blood Sea Jellyfish**. 1d4 **Blood Sea jellyfish** (see appendix A) attack creatures on the deck. The jellyfish flee if brought to 10 or fewer hit points.

*Mutated Giant Octopuses.* 1d2 Blood Sea mutant, giant octopuses attack with supernatural cunning, retreating under water after each attack. If brought to 20 or fewer hit points, an octopus uses Ink Cloud and flees.

**Blood Zombies.** 1d8 + 2 **blood zombies** (see appendix A) are lying in wait along the shallow sea floor. Sensing a passing ship, they swim up and attempt to scuttle it using Warp Wood. If the zombies successfully use Warp Wood 5 times, the ship is adrift. If they are successful 7 times, the ship is sinking (see Storm Damage table above; provisions are not lost and crew do not die due to damage caused by Warp Wood). The blood zombies carry 1d10 x 3 gp in coins.

**Dire Petrels.** 1d8 + 1 dire petrels (use the **giant vulture** stat block) swoop down from the sky, swarming targets. The birds flee if half of their number are slain.

*Lizardfolk.* A patrol of 1d10 + 4 *lizardfolk* warriors from a nearby island sneak aboard the ship and prepare an ambush in the cargo hold and crew's quarters. The lizardfolk swim 120 feet away from the ship until nightfall, when they use the darkness to sneak on board.

**Merchant Vessel.** The crew spots a merchant vessel from Termana. If the captain or characters hail the ship, succeeding on a **DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check**, the vessel trades with *The Bloody Grin*. The merchant vessel has all mundane adventuring gear from the core rules on sale at +25% of the listed value. There is a 50% chance the ship has 1 uncommon magic item for sale at 550 gp. The merchant ship sells 1 day of provisions for 2 gp, to a maximum of 1d4 days.

The ship is crewed by 1 **noble** (the captain), 1 **knight** (the first mate), 1 **mage**, and 37 **guards** (half of which are asleep when encountered). If attacked, the mage targets *The Bloody Grin's* sails with a *fireball* while the captain orders the ship to flee. Eurybia does not attack the ship unprovoked and becomes hostile to the characters if they attack the merchants. The merchant vessel has  $1d10 \times 100$  gp in currency and  $1d10 \times 50$  gp worth of gemstones onboard.

**Pirate Ship.** This pirate crew from the Toe Islands is looking for easy prey, primarily small merchant vessels sailing between Ghelspad and Termana. It does not engage similarly crewed ships, but may attack if *The Bloody Grin* has been weakened through storms or other encounters.

The pirate ship is crewed by 1 **bandit captain**, 2 **veterans** (officers, including the first mate) and 20 **bandits**. They attack using crossbows for 1d6 rounds until *The Bloody Grin* is close enough to grapple and board. The pirates

attempt to flee if 12 or more of their crew are slain. The bandit captain wears **a ring of storm sight** (see appendix B). If defeated, *The Bloody Grin's* crew salvages 2d10 x 100 gp in stolen currency, gems, and art objects and 1d6 days of provisions.

If the bandit captain is captured alive and returned to Mithril, the Adamantine Church rewards the crew and characters 900 gp. Eurybia negotiates for half of the bounty and half of any loot salvaged from the ship for her crew's part.

*Windriders.* 1d4 windriders (SLPG 309) sneak into the crew's quarters through portholes while invisible. They cast *suggestion* on as many crewmembers as possible, telling them to steal from their comrades, start fights, or refuse to work. The windriders fly above the ship while invisible, delighting in their trickery as the crew are punished or fight amongst themselves. The windriders repeat this for 1d2 days before leaving to seek out new targets. If discovered and attacked, the windriders prefer not to fight and flee immediately.

# DEEP SEA WATERS

Deep sea regions are the most dangerous parts of the Blood Sea. Shore is typically 10 or more miles away and depths can range from 70 to many hundreds of feet. The pisceans, an evil aquatic humanoid race that look like twisted, beastial merfolk, rule much of the underwater environment. Legendary leviathans such as kraken, seawrack dragons, and dragon turtles are known to inhabit the deep sea. Wise sailors make haste through the deep sea or try to avoid it altogether.

For encounter distance rules, see above.

### WEATHER

Roll on the Blood Sea Weather table above every day the characters are at sea. If you want to emphasize the danger weather represents, roll every twelve hours, but be warned this greatly increases the likelihood of deadly consequences. The adventure does not presume a particular season. Pick whichever best fits your campaign.

### ENCOUNTERS

Deep sea regions are home to some of the Blood Sea's most fearsome abominations. Creatures living in this region have large domains, sometimes hunting in an area miles wide. Encounters in deep sea regions are less frequent but often more deadly than coastal areas. Roll on the Deep Sea Encounters table below every day the characters are in deep waters. Reroll duplicate results if they do not fit your campaign. You are encouraged to vary when these



encounters occur, creating new challenges, such as fighting in the dark or being roused from sleep.

### DEEP SEA ENCOUNTERS

D100	ENCOUNTER
01-15	Adrift sailors
16-24	Blood barnacles
25-29	1 Blood Sea mutant, giant shark
29-33	1d3 Blood Sea mutant, killer whales
34-40	1d2 flayed giants
41-50	Foamer ambush
51-70	Merchant vessel
71-79	Pirate ship
80-95	Piscean extortion party
96-00	1d4 windriders

Adrift Sailors. The crew spots 1d6 + 1 bandits floating on large pieces of wood. If brought aboard, they thank the crew profusely and say their ship was destroyed by Kadum's leviathan, a colossal undead whale spawned from the deepest reaches of the Blood Sea. They work on *The Bloody Grin* for passage to Mithril. The sailors are proficient in water vehicles.

Blood Barnacles. See above.

Mutated Giant Shark. The Blood Sea mutant, giant shark (see appendix A) attacks the ship's hull. Any creature

standing on deck within 5 feet of the shark's attack must make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or fall overboard. The shark flees if brought to 45 or fewer hit points.

Mutated Killer Whales. 1d3 Blood Sea mutant, killer whales (see appendix A) are migrating to an area with higher concentrations of Kadum's blood. They feel threatened by the ship and attack the hull. Any creature standing on deck within 5 feet of the whales' attacks must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall overboard. The whales flee if one of their number are slain or, if there is only one whale, if it is brought to 30 or fewer hit points.

*Flayed Giants*. 1d2 flayed giants (SLPG 267) swim up from the depths and attack. The giants cling to the boat and use an action to make a **DC 20 Strength check**. If successful, the ship keels over, turning on its side into the bloody waters. Every creature on the ship must make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** (roll for NPCs in groups of 10). On a failure, a creature falls into the water if they were on deck or slams into a wall, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and falling prone if they were on the lower deck. On a success, the creature is able to grab ahold of something to prevent falling. If a giant takes more than 25 damage from a single source while holding onto the keel, it releases the ship. If the ship has keeled over, it is righted in 1d6 rounds if no giants cling to it.

If the giants are unsuccessful in capsizing the ship, they attack the hull with their tridents, hoping to sink the ship. The giants fight until slain.

**Foamer Ambush.** The crew spots a sailing ship adrift on the sea. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (History)** check reveals the ship is nearly a century old. The ship is actually a floating Unredeemed slitherin colony inhabited by a tribe called the Bloodbathed. Hiding throughout the ship are 8 giant rats, 5 foamers (SPLG 298), and a slitherin cult fanatic. Add the following traits to the cult fanatic's



stat block: climb and swim 20 ft., Contortionist, Disease Resistance, and Rodent Empathy. The cult fanatic also has a Bite attack (+4 to hit, 1d3 + 2 piercing damage). The Unredeemed ratfolk have not lured a ship into their trap for several days and are starving. They attack recklessly, hoping for an easy meal.

If the characters succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check while searching the slitherin ship, they find 220 gp in currency, 2 *potions of healing*, and a *heavy crossbow +1*, which the slitherin never identified.

Merchant Vessel. See above.

Pirate Ship. See above.

**Piscean Extortion Party.** 1d10 + 2 green pisceans (see appendix A) and 1d2 + 1 hunter sharks encircle the ship. One of the pisceans uses a *feather token (anchor)* to magically anchor the ship. This piscean speaks some Common and demands 2,000 gp worth of coins, gems, or other valuables that are not ruined when brought under water. If the demands are met, the piscean releases the ship and swims into the depths. If the crew refuses or attempts to deceive or intimidate the piscean, the extortion party attacks. The pisceans attempt to pull creatures off the deck using their harpoons. The sharks attack any creatures other than the pisceans in the water.

Windriders. See above.

# THINGSARE

The Blood Sea is deadly and has a strong chance of claiming NPC and character lives. The Scarred Lands are not an easy place to live and the Blood Sea is perhaps its most challenging environment. Veteran sailors often say that only half of the ocean is Kadum's blood, the other half is from those it has claimed.

You know your players the best. If they enjoy visceral, deadly encounters, then hold nothing back from this chapter. Impress upon them that, while they are heroes, the Blood Sea can easily wash over them. If your table is uncomfortable with regular deadly challenges, consider scaling back some of these encounters. Reduce the number of monsters or reduce their hit points by 25 or 50%. As always, this is your story to tell.

# LAND HO!

Once *The Bloody Grin* has completed three days in coastal waters and 1 day in the deep sea, proceed to chapter 3.



# THE SILVER BASTION

This chapter details locations within the Silver Bastion, which houses the *Brightshield*, and is controlled by cultists loyal to the titan, Kadum.

Use these details to help you bring the island and the Silver Bastion to life.

*Sights, Sounds, and Smells.* Puddles of Blood Sea water dot the small, recently exposed island. Barnacles, dying in the blazing sun, cover exposed rocks and coral. Clumps of crimson seaweed have washed up on shore and hang from rocks and the Bastion's ramparts. The Silver Bastion stands vigilant atop the island's lone rise. Its once gleaming magnificence is tainted with decades of rust and barnacles.

The island has attracted a flock of seabirds, who squawk and fight over dead fish that have washed ashore. There is a constant crashing as wayes break against the sharp cliff faces of the island. The smell of blood and rust is so thick the characters taste copper. Dead fish and other marine life have washed ashore, causing the breeze to carry rot and death.

*Weather.* The island is subject to the same weather rules detailed in chapter 2.

**Terrain.** There was once a road that led to the Bastion, but it fell to the ravages of the Blood Sea long ago. The island's rocky terrain is pitted with small chasms and holes big enough to turn an ankle. The ground here is difficult terrain. At your discretion, allow characters with a **passive Dexterity (Acrobatics or Athletics) of 12 or higher** to ignore this difficult terrain, as they deftly move over the rocky ground.

The lack of tree cover and structures other than the Bastion make cover difficult to find on the island.

*Lighting.* Lighting on the island is dependent upon the time of day and weather conditions. Due to the lack of

cover on the island, assume that any uncovered lightsource, such as a torch, is easily noticed from the Bastion's walls.

**Doors and Walls.** Unless stated otherwise, all doors within the Bastion are unlocked and made from steel reinforced wood. The wood has rotted and the steel rusted over the centuries. The doors have AC 13 and 15 hp.

Unless stated otherwise, the Bastion's walls are made from solid stone masonry. Exterior walls are 20 feet tall and 6 feet thick, whereas interior walls are 10 feet tall and 2 feet thick. Climbing the smooth exterior walls requires a successful **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**. If the characters secure a grappling hook and rope, they have advantage on this ability check. At your discretion, if the characters take damage while climbing either the cliffs or fortress walls, have them make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failure, the character loses their grip and falls.

**Resting and Returning.** The characters may decide to retreat from the Bastion and return to *The Bloody Grin* to rest. The Heartseekers of Kadum will pursue them to the shore, but will not leave the island. If the characters retreat for more than 8 hours, however, the Heartseekers reinforce themselves. If any pisceans are left alive, they persuade a **Blood Sea mutant, giant shark** (see appendix A) to attack the characters as they return. The shark destroys the character's rowboats as soon as possible, prefering to fight them in the dangerous waters. If Narkissa escaped to the island and is left alive, she calls on two dire petrels (**giant vultures**) to guard area 5. They attack the characters on sight and fight until one of their number is slain.

### DEALING WITH NARKISSA

If Narkissa has not been discovered and dealt with during the journey, she makes her escape to join her allies after the characters set off to the island. She Wild Shapes into a **giant vulture** and flies to area 5. She remains in this form, periodically circling the Bastion to spy on the characters. See areas 3 and 5 for more information on Narkissa's interactions.

Narkissa urges her piscean allies to call up guardians from the depths of the Blood Sea if she arrives to the island at least 1 day before the characters. If this occurs, a pack of 4 **Blood Sea mutant, reef sharks** (see appendix A) patrol the waters near the island's shore. There is a 25% chance the characters encounter the sharks anytime they move to or from the island.

# APPROACHING THE BASTION

As the characters approach the island, read or paraphrase:

A small island juts out of the water like a titan's thumb. The crimson waters break against the cliffside, creating a foul, froth that clings to the rocks. Atop the stony mount is a fortress, its sturdy walls still intact.

The Bloody Grin must anchor at least 1 mile offshore. If the characters suspect that there are enemies waiting for them, Eurybia anchors the ship 10 miles from the island, well out of sight for prying eyes. The captain also recommends the characters wait until night to approach the island, if they fear enemies. She provides the characters with enough rowboats to ferry themselves and their personal gear to shore. The characters can convince Eurybia to send one crewmember (a **bandit**) with each rowboat if they succeed on a **DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. These crewmembers do not willingly accompany the characters onto the island or into the Bastion. The crewmembers prefer to keep the rowboats near the island's cliffs and watch for the characters to return. They defend the rowboats if necessary.

Sentinels on the Walls. The Heartseekers of Kadum have stationed cultists in the Bastion's towers (see areas 2 and 7). If the characters approach the island in clear conditions or during the day, make a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check for the cultists nearest the characters' approach. On a successful ability check, the cultists notice the characters' rowboats and shout a warning to their allies. If Narkissa successfully joined the Heartseekers earlier in the adventure, the cultists have advantage on this ability check. Characters who observe the towers for at least 1 minute and succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notice the cultists.

**Using Stealth.** The approach to the main gates is clear of large boulders and other objects to use as cover. Taking the Hide action in this area is impossible without the aid of magic or similar features.

*Climbing the Cliffside.* The cliffs along the northern, western, and southern sides of the Bastion are craggy and slick with water and seafoam. Climbing the cliffs requires a successful **DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check**. The cliffs are 30 feet high.

## AREA 1: MAIN GATES

As the characters approach, read or paraphrase:

Towering above you are two gleaming doors forged from solid silver flanked by watchtowers. Etched into the doors is a scene depicting a horde of titanspawn breaking against the fortress. Standing atop the walls is a woman clad in plate mail, bearing a blazing shield.

The large silver doors are unlocked and unbarred but difficult to open. In order to open the doors, a character must use an action and succeed on a **DC 14 Strength check** to push them open. A length of steel chain connected to a series of pulleys hangs from the inside of the doors. A character can pull the chain with a successful **DC 10 Strength check**, opening the silver doors. The silver doors emanate an abjuration aura if observed using *detect magic* or similar magic. They are immune to nonmagical weapons and tools, such as rams. If the doors are removed from the Bastion, the enchantment ends.

Past the silver doors is a rusted iron portcullis. The characters can lift the portcullis enough for a Small or Medium creature to roll under if they use an action and succeed on a **DC 17 Strength check**. The portcullis has AC 19 and 25 hit points and is immune to poison and psychic damage. If reduced to 0 hit points, a Medium-sized hole is opened in the portcullis. Furthermore, a Small creature can squeeze through the bars with a successful **DC 13 Dexterity check**. A crank on the inside of the portcullis operates the gate (see area 3 for details).

Attacked from Above. If the characters approach the main gate from outside the Bastion, it is possible they are spotted by the cultists in the watchtowers. See area 2 for more information on their statistics and tactics.

## AREA 2: WATCHTOWERS

The Heartseekers of Kadum stationed the bulk of their force here. The towers are 35 feet tall (15 feet taller than the top of the curtain wall) and topped with a steeply sloped roof. Climbing the towers follows the same rules as climbing the fortress walls.

### CREATURES AND TACTICS

There are 3 Heartseeker **cultists** in each tower. The cultists have these changes:

- They are neutral evil.
- They speak Common and Titan Speech
- They have an additional trait: **Blood Frenzy**. The cultist has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all of its hit points.
- They are armed with scimitars and light crossbows (*Ranged Weapon Attack*: +3 to hit, range 80/320, one target. *Hit*: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage).

If the cultists spot the characters approaching, they take up positions behind the arrow slits and begin firing. The cultists prefer to target lightly armored characters. After making an attack, they move away from the arrow slit, gaining total cover from characters outside of the tower. The cultists have three-quarters cover (+5 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws) while firing from the arrow slits. Tactically minded characters may choose to Ready an action to use a ranged weapon attack or spell while the cultists are firing.

If the characters pass the silver doors, 1 cultist remains in each tower and continues firing on them from above, using the arrow slit overlooking the area. The other cultists Dash down the stairs and out of the tower, taking up positions in area 4. They Ready actions to attack the characters with their crossbows when they enter area 3. If the characters pass into area 3, the last remaining cultist in the tower Dashes down to join their comrades.

The cultists do not leave area 4 unless commanded by a piscean or Narkissa. They defend this area to the death, should the characters enter.

### ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

Weak. Remove 1 cultist from each tower.

Strong. Increase the cultists' hit points by 5 each.

### TREASURE

Each group of cultists carry 10 gp. The cultists constructed a crude altar to Kadum in the southern watchtower. On it rests a coral holy symbol to Kadum worth 10 gp and a *cold iron dagger* (SLPG 159).

#### DEVELOPMENTS

Loud combat with the cultists alerts Narkissa in area 5, if she is present. She moves to set a trap for the characters in area 3. See area 3 for details.



### AREA 3: THE KILL BOX

As the characters enter, read or paraphrase:

Bas-relief sculptures depicting knights defeating titanspawn adorn the walls of this chamber. Looking closely, you notice many of the knight's breastplates or shields conceal small openings into a room beyond. Two large wooden doors, stinking of blood and rot, lie on the stone floor.

The two large doors fell off their hinges many years ago and do not pose a challenge for the characters. The arrow slits here provide three-quarters cover, similar to those in areas 2 and 7.

**The Silver Tenets.** The inscriptions above the sculptures are the core tenets of the Order of Silver. Characters who pass a **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** recall that these tenets are sung when a knight is brought into the Order of Silver and are found throughout the Order's iconography. Clerics and paladins of Corean automatically succeed this check. Laying a Trap. If Narkissa escaped to the Silver Bastion and is aware of the characters' presence, either through noticing them approach the island or hearing combat in areas 1 or 2, she prepares to engage them here. She Readies an action to cast *hold person* as a 3rd-level spell if at least one cultist from area 2 is still alive. If it is obvious the cultists have been killed, she Readies *ice storm* instead. After casting the spell, she retreats back to area 5.

# AREA 4: <u>ARMORIES</u>

As the characters enter, read or paraphrase:

Rusted iron bunk frames are bolted to the floor along the walls of this room. Rotted wooden footlockers lay broken and discarded throughout the room alongside spearheads and other weapons.

These rooms served as both weapon caches and barracks for the Bastion's soldiers. The cultists in area 2 have barred the doors from the inside. They require a successful **DC 14 Strength check** to force open. The doors have locks, but they have rusted beyond usefulness over the years.

### TREASURE

The northern armory contains a secret weapon cache undiscovered by the Heartseekers. If the characters succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check while searching the room, they discover that a stone in the southwestern corner is not cemented in place. Underneath the stone is a small silver chest inlaid with beautiful etchings depicting Corean's clergy working massive forges. The chest is locked, requiring a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to open. The Blood Sea claimed the key long ago. The chest contains a *clasp of the blade* (SLPG 159) and a *figurine of wondrous power (silver raven)* with Corean's symbol engraved on its chest. The silver chest is worth 125 gp.

# AREA 5: BAILEY

The northern section of the courtyard is 10 feet higher than the southern portion, connected by a single stone staircase. The walkway along the northern wall is 10 feet above the bailey floor. The stairs in the southeastern corner descend 15 feet, leading to area 6.

#### CREATURES AND TACTICS

A large mass of blood-red kelp, given life and an insatiable rage from Kadum's blood, wanders the southern area (use the statistics for a **shambling mound**). The monster took up residence in the fortress when it was still submerged. Confused by its current circumstance, it lashes out at anything in its domain. The Heartseekers forced several of cultists to fight the monster while the pisceans pushed further into the Bastion. The shambling mound attacks the nearest target and attempts to engulf the largest threat. It holds no loyalty to the Heartseekers and will attack cultists, pisceans, and Narkissa as readily as the characters. It fights to the death defending its domain.

If **Narkissa Dendros** (see appendix A) escaped *The Bloody Grin* in chapter 2 or at the beginning of this chapter, she is in this area. She prefers to stay on the northern wall, out of the shambling mound's sight. The druid is familiar with shambling mounds and understands its strengths and weaknesses. She Hides in the area, waiting for the characters to engage the shambling mound. Once they are engaged, she casts *call lightning*, using the spell to both heal the shambling mound and damage the characters. Narkissa flees to area 10 if brought to 25 or fewer hit points.

## ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

*Weak.* Reduce the shambling mound's hit points by 40 and Narkissa's hit points by 25. Narkissa does not understand the shambling mound's Lightning Absorption trait and does not purposefully heal the creature.

*Strong.* Increase the shambling mound's hit points by 15 and Narkissa's hit points by 10.

#### TREASURE

If the characters search through the shambling mound's kelp tangles, they find a large pearl worth 75 gp. Narkissa carries 12 gp and an eel skin scroll case with *spell scrolls* of *flame blade* and *pass without trace*.

#### DEVELOPMENTS

If combat breaks out in this area, the cultists in area 7 are alerted and respond. They prefer to stay in their turrets and attack with their crossbows from cover.

### AREA 6: POSTERN GATE

If the characters approach from the exterior, read or paraphrase:

This iron door is covered in rust and barnacles. Pools of sanguine seawater have pooled in large puddles at the base of the doorway.

If the characters approach from the interior, read or paraphrase:

The stone stairway leads down to a pool of dark, bloody water. The smell of old blood heating under the sun makes you nearly wretch.

The postern gate is 15 feet below the main gates, concealed by a rock outcropping that levels out further from the fortress. Likewise, the interior section of this area is 15 feet below the bailey. The door is sealed shut from rust, grime, and barnacles. Five-foot-deep water has pooled in the low-lying interior area. Small and Medium creatures must swim through the water. Any creature that dives or falls into the water without taking special precautions to cover their nose and mouth must save against blood fever (see chapter 2).

**Stuck Door.** Due to the water on the interior, the door is impossible to open from the outside without magical assistance. Spells such as *stone shape* can help bypass the door. If the characters destroy the door or magically cause an opening to appear, water rushes out. Any creature within 5 feet of the door must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or be knocked prone. If a character is knocked prone in this way, they must save against blood fever as seawater washes over them. Opening the door from the interior, whether it is submerged or not, requires a **DC 12 Strength check**.

### TREASURE

A long-dead Order of Silver knight lies at the bottom of the pool, locked in a grapple with a titanspawn skeleton. The knight's armor and weapons have decayed, but if the characters succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check**, they find a **bolt of titanspawn slaying** loaded into a ruined crossbow. At your discretion, this is a magical arrow rather than bolt.

# AREA 7: TURRETS

These small towers are watchposts and firing platforms for defenders. Each turret is level with the curtain wall and topped with a sharply sloped roof. The arrow slits provide three-quarters cover (+5 AC and Dexterity saving throws) to creatures inside the turret.

### CREATURES AND TACTICS

Each turret is occupied by 1 **cultist** with the changes detailed in area 2. The cultists scan the horizon and attack the characters with crossbows if they discover the intruders. If they are overrun, the cultists Disengage and retreat to area 4. There is a 50% chance the fleeing cultists are attacked by the shambling mound in area 5.

### ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

*Weak.* No change as this encounter is already weak.

Strong. Increase the cultists' hit points by 5 each.

### TREASURE

Each cultist carries 4 gp. One cultist (chosen at random or your discretion) carries a *potion of water breathing*.

### DEVELOPMENTS

Loud combat in this area alerts Narkissa in area 5, if she is present. She Readies an action to cast *ice storm* on the characters when they emerge from the turret. See area 5 for Narkissa's tactics.

# AREA 8: LIBRARY

As the characters enter, read or paraphrase:

Bookshelves cut into the stone walls stretch to the high ceiling, while old, long reading tables lie broken throughout the center of the room. Two monstrous aquatic creatures, their muscular bodies covered in green scales make wet, guttural noises at one another and level barbed harpoons toward you—pisceans.

This area housed both historical and religious texts as well as tactical manuals on combating titanspawn and maps of the region. The walls in this area are 15 feet tall.

**Sacred Tomes.** The books in this area have been ravaged by time and the Blood Sea. All but a few that were chained to their shelves have been claimed by the sea. Those that remain are decayed and are destroyed with even the slightest touch. If the characters are able to preserve these tomes and wrest them from the pisceans, Menthias offers an additional award (see Concluding the Adventure, below).

### CREATURES AND TACTICS

There are 2 green pisceans (see appendix A) searching the library for answers concerning the *Brightshield* (see area 9). They have not discovered the secret alcove in the northern room, described below. The pisceans attempt to separate weaker characters from the party using their harpoons.

## ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

Weak. Reduce the pisceans' hit points by 10 each.

*Strong.* Add 2 cultists with the changes detailed in area 2.

### TREASURE

In the northern room, inset into the western wall, is a 2-foot-diameter silver symbol of Corean. Scanning the room with detect magic or a similar effect reveals a magical evocation aura coming from the symbol itself as well as a transmutation aura from an item behind it. If the characters investigate or tamper with the symbol and succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they discover it recedes into the wall but there is not a mechanical switch or other mundane means to open the small door. If a good or neutral-aligned character recites the Order of Silver's tenets (see area 3) while in the room, the symbol slides away to reveal a small alcove. A successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or destroying the stone around the symbol reveals the alcove beyond, but triggers the trap (see below). The trap activates if an evil-aligned creature touches the symbol.

Inside the alcove is a large tome, called the Silver Annals, with hundreds of pages made from thin silver sheets. This book recalls the Order of Silver's history from inception to just before the Silver Bastion's fall. It is rumored that Corean himself etched the earliest entries. The tome is warded against corrosion and nonmagical weapons. The writing etched on the silver leaves only appears to goodaligned characters. The tome is priceless and considered a holy relic of the Adamantine Church. See Concluding the Adventure for more information.

**Trap.** If the trap is triggered, blinding light erupts from the holy symbol. Each creature in the room must make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed save, creatures take 22 (4d10) radiant damage and are blinded for 1 hour, or half as much damage and are not blinded on a successful one. If *dispel magic* is cast on the holy symbol, the trap is deactivated for 1 hour. The trap resets after 24 hours of being triggered.

# AREA 9: THE BLESSED FORGE

As the characters enter, read or paraphrase:

A large forge made of white stone, untarnished by the Blood Sea, dominates the northwestern wall of this room. Discarded tools and weapon components litter the ground. A piscean, its scales black with Kadum's blood, bares a maw of sharp, needlelike teeth. A pool of blood nearby rises up, taking on a humanoid shape.

If there is a devout worshipper of Corean, a cleric or paladin of similar beliefs, or someone under the effects of a holy boon or similar divine magic in the party, also read or paraphrase:

A woman's voice fills your ears, distant but unwavering. "Serve Corean, the Shining One, and strike down the abomination! My lord still gives me strength, even from beyond."

This area was the spiritual heart of the Silver Bastion. While it appears to simply be forge and workshop, the process of creation is sacred to the Adamantine Church. Here priests of the Order obeyed divine commandments to create arms and armor anathema to the titanspawn. According to the Silver Annals, Corean himself lit the forge's fire, which burned until the Bastion's fall. The walls in this area are 15 feet tall.

**Forge.** In the southern room, Jenira Ocheas, the Bastion's commander, still clings to the sacred forge from beyond the veil of death. While she cannot manifest a physical form, she is able to sense divine power in the area and will aid righteous adventurers. If she chooses to aid the party, the forge's fire roars to life. At your discretion, she may speak through the forge-fire and manifest other minor effects. Every round on initiative count 10, choose one effect below. Jenira cannot use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- A gout of flame springs forth from the forge. A creature within 20 feet of the forge must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage.
- A large piece of metal or other heavy implement flies through the air. Make an attack at +5 against one creature in the area. If the attack hits, the creature takes 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The forge blazes with holy radiance. Any evil-aligned creature within 50 feet of the forge that can see the forge must make a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw** or be frightened until the end of their next turn.
- A spectral gauntleted hand reaches out from the forge and touches one creature within 5 feet of it, healing the creature. The forge has a pool of healing power equal to 35 hit points. Jenira can restore a number of hit points up to the maximum amount remaining in her pool.

### CONTROLLING JENIRA

To relieve some pressure on yourself during the combat encounter, consider allowing the players to control which effects Jenira uses.

**Reliquary.** The room to the north houses the *Brightshield*. The door is unlocked and unstuck, having been recently pried open by the Heartseekers of Kadum. As the characters enter, read or paraphrase:

This chamber houses a masterfully sculpted marble statue of an angelic warrior. Its sword arm has broken away and lies shattered on the floor. Its gleaming silver armor and shield, however, have turned back the ravages of time. A green piscean lies at the base of the statue, its face burnt to the skull.

The green piscean was struck down by Jenira's spirit when it attempted to remove the shield. Its comrades fled the room until a solution presents itself.

### CREATURES AND TACTICS

Dakootha, a **black piscean** (see appendix A) and a **bloodman** (SLPG 240), a servant the piscean created in a dark ritual, are in the southern room. Dakootha leads this contingent of Heartseekers and is fiercely loyal to Kadum and the titans in general. He fights to the death against the characters.

Dakootha begins combat by casting *inflict susceptibility* (SLPG 136) on a character who seems to be a spellcaster, then attacks them with *mana spear* (SPLG 138). Dakootha prefers to stay at range and attack using his spells. If forced into melee combat, he protects himself with *aegis* (SLPG 129) and attacks with his bite and claws.

The bloodman attempts to attack and grapple heavily armed and armored melee combatants, preventing them from reaching Dakootha. It will release its grapple to defend the piscean if another character closes the gap.

### ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter for your group.

*Weak.* Reduce Dakootha's hit points by 13 and the bloodman's hit points by 10.

*Strong.* Add 3 cultists with the changes detailed in area 2.

### TREASURE

Dakootha carries 2 **blood pearls of hopelessness** (SLPG 157) in a small sharkskin pouch, wears a coral and motherof-pearl torc worth 125 gp, and an adamantine bracer engraved with a depiction of Kadum toppling a mountain worth 270 gp.

The southern room houses the **Brightshield** (see appendix B), which Jenira allows the characters to remove if they have shown they are in opposition to the Heartseekers. The statue is wearing **mithril plate mail** engraved with a scene of Corean hammering the titan Thulkas on Golthagga's forge. In addition to its normal effects, the armor sheds dim light in a 5-foot-radius when a titanspawn is within 40 feet.

### DEVELOPMENTS

If Jenira assisted the characters in the fight, she thanks them and implores them to return the Order's relics to Corean's clergy, only then can her spirit leave the fortress. If the characters engage her in conversation, use the notes below to answer commonly-asked questions.

*Who are you?* I was Jenira Ocheas, commander of the Order of Silver and servant of Corean.

*How did you die?* A lesser titan called Doldris the Hundred-Handed, a servant of Kadum, led an army of titanspawn from below the earth to the Silver Bastion. The fort fell after three days and I died defending this forge.

*Who are these pisceans?* I do not know, although they serve Kadum, the Father of Monsters.

## AREA 10: GREAT HALL

As the characters enter, read or paraphrase:

A large silver table rests in the center of this large hall. The table's surface is carved to depict a map of Ghelspad before the conclusion of the Divine War. An alabaster throne that once rested on a dais to the south has been broken and thrown against the wall.

This large hall served as the commander's seat and council hall, where the Order of Silver would plot their fight against the titans. The walls in this area are 15 feet tall.

*Silver Table.* The magnificent 20-foot-long table dominating the hall was once a powerful relic, enchanted with ritual magic by Corean's clerics. Its power has waned, however, without constant attention from the Avenger's faithful. If the characters succeed on a **DC 15 Intelligence** (Arcana or Religion) check, they are able to discern the

table's magical nature and the command word necessary to activate it. Additionally, using *detect magic* or a similar effect reveals the table is enchanted with abjuration and conjuration magic. An *identify* spell or similar effect reveals the command word. The table weighs 3,500 pounds and is secured to the floor.

The table has 5 charges and cannot be recharged in its current state. If the character's discern the command word, any non-evil creature who touches the table and speaks the command word can choose from one of the following effects.

- By expending 1 charge from the table, the creature is healed for 1d8 + 4 hit points. Expending additional charges increases the healing received by 1d8 per charge.
- By expending 1 charge from the table, the creature begins to glow with faint radiant light, shedding dim light in a 5-foot-radius. The creature gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour. If the creature is struck with a melee attack while they still have the temporary hit points, the attacker takes 5 radiant damage.
- By expending 2 charges from the table, the creature's skin is sheathed in a thin layer of magical silver. The creature gains +2 AC for 1 hour.
- By expending 3 charges from the table, one weapon of the character's choice is adorned with Corean's holy symbol. The next time the character hits with a melee weapon attack using the weapon, there is a burst of holy light. The target takes an additional 1d8 radiant damage. Additionally, enemies within 5 feet of the target take 5 radiant damage. If a target takes radiant damage, they must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of their next turn.

### CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With the *Brightshield* in hand, the characters will likely return to Mithril to receive their rewards and a much-needed rest from the Blood Sea. At your discretion you can either play through the return trip to Mithril, using the guidelines in chapter 2, or allow it to pass offscreen.

If the shield is returned, Menthias makes good on any arrangements he agreed to in chapter 1, delivering the characters' rewards within a day. The priest becomes a trusted ally and will assist the characters in the future. He can provide lodging for the party as well as cast one cleric spell of 1st through 3rd level once per day free of charge. Depending on their actions throughout the adventure, the characters may receive additional rewards, in the form of both wealth and allies.

**The Brightshield.** If the party includes a cleric or paladin of Corean, or a character pledges to take the Adamantine Church's oaths (in the form of gaining either cleric or paladin levels), Menthias agrees to entrust the holy shield to them. The *Brightshield* is a relic of the church and carries with it great responsibility. Should word of ill deeds committed by the bearer or their close allies reach Mithril, the Adamantine Church seeks to reclaim their treasure. At your discretion, the shield may confer advantage on Charisma checks made against Corean's clergy.

**The Silver Annals.** Returning the Silver Annals is met with praise and fanfare by The Shining One's faithful. The church hosts a feast, parade, or similar celebration honoring the characters' success and vow to add their deeds to the Silver Annals. For the next week, the characters have advantage on Charisma checks made in Mithril.

**The Bloody Grin.** If the characters were friendly and helpful to Eurybia and her crew, the privateer offers her ship's services to the party. The ship regularly patrols the eastern shores of Ghelspad and the waters between Mithril and the Toe Islands. Eurybia gladly carries the characters along her patrol routes free of charge.

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

*Tides of Blood* is meant to be a self-contained adventure, but there are plenty of threads you could use to create a follow-up adventure. If you want to explore the Blood Sea or the Heartseekers of Kadum more, consider one of the hooks below or use them to inspire your own idea.

**Dakootha's Revenge.** Clinging to life, the black piscean was able to pull himself to the sea, where he drank deeply of Kadum's blood. The piscean transforms into a hulking monstrosity and his mind torn asunder, bent with rage and revenge. The mutated piscean believes he is Kadum reborn and begins to gather allies to hunt down the characters.

**Tarnished Church.** Menthias' success at recovering the Order of Silver's relics propels him to newfound fame within the Adamantine Church. A jealous priest frames Menthias by planting evidence that he has made deals with a hag, allowing her to infiltrate the church. Old Goldheart is imprisoned and awaiting trial.

# APPENDIX A: STAT BLOCKS

#### **BLOOD SEA JELLYFISH**

Large beast, chaotic evil

#### Armor Class 8 Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12) Speed 0 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
12 (+2)	6 (-2)	15 (+2)	2 (-5)	10 (+0)	2 (-5)

Senses sea sight, passive Perception 10 Languages –

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

**Jet.** The jellyfish uses a bonus action to travel 60 feet in a straight line while underwater.

**Sea Sight.** The jellyfish has blindsight out to 120 feet while under water.

Water Breathing. The jellyfish can breathe only underwater.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The jellyfish makes three attacks with its stinging tentacles.

**Stinging Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute; the target is paralyzed while poisoned in this way. At the end of each of its turns, the target can make another Constitution saving throw. On a success, the effect ends on the target.

#### BLOOD SEA MUTANT, GIANT OCTOPUS

Large aberration, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor) **Hit Points** 68 (8d12 + 16) **Speed** 10 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
19 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5 Damage Resistances acid, cold Damage Immunities poison Condition Immunities poisoned Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11 Languages – Challenge 3 (700 XP)

**Amphibious.** The octopus can breathe air and water. **Magic Resistance.** The octopus has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Underwater Camouflage.** The octopus has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while underwater.

#### Actions

**Spines.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/80 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute.

**Tentacles.** Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the octopus can't use its tentacles on another target.

Ink Cloud (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest): A 20- foot-radius cloud of ink extends all around the octopus if it is underwater. The area is heavily obscured for 1 minute, although a significant current can disperse the ink. After releasing the ink, the octopus can use the Dash action as a bonus action.

#### **BLOOD SEA MUTANT, GIANT SHARK**

Huge aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor) Hit Points 181 (11d20 + 66) Speed 0 ft., swim 50 ft.

# STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA 25 (+7) 11 (+0) 23 (+6) 3 (-4) 10 (+0) 5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances acid, cold

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 13

#### Languages –

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

**Amphibious.** The shark can breathe air and water. **Blood Frenzy.** The shark has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all of its hit points.

**Magic Resistance.** The shark has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

#### Actions

*Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 23 (3d10 + 7) piercing damage.

Acid Breath (Recharge 5-6). The shark exhales acid in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

#### BLOOD SEA MUTANT, KILLER WHALE

Huge aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor) Hit Points 150 (12d20 + 24) Speed 0 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances acid, cold Damage Immunities poison Condition Immunities poisoned Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 13 Languages – Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

**Amphibious.** The whale can breathe air and water. **Echolocation.** The whale can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Hold Breath. The whale can hold its breath for 30 minutes.

**Keen Heating.** The whale has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**Magic Resistance.** The whale has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

#### Actions

*Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (5d6 + 5) piercing damage.

**Tentacles.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the whale cannot use its tentacles on another target.

#### **BLOOD SEA MUTANT, REEF SHARK**

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor) Hit Points 30 (4d10 + 8) Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

# STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA 16 (+3) 13 (+1) 15 (+2) 3 (-4) 10 (+0) 4 (-3)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Resistances acid, cold

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

**Amphibious.** The shark can breathe air and water. **Pack Tactics.** The shark has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the shark's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't Incapacitated.

#### Actions

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or contract blood fever.

#### **BLOOD SEA MUTANT, SAHUAGIN**

Medium aberration (titanspawn), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor) Hit Points 30 (4d10 + 8) Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +5 Damage Resistances acid, cold Damage Immunities poison Condition Immunities poisoned Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15 Languages Sahuagin Challenge 2 (450 XP)

**Amphibious.** The sahuagin can breathe air and water.

**Blood Frenzy.** The sahuagin has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all of its hit points.

**Magic Resistance.** The sahuagin has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Shark Telepathy.** The sahuagin can magically command any shark within 120 feet of it, using a limited telepathy.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The sahuagin makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws or spear.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or contract blood fever.

*Claws. Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Spear.** Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

#### **BLOOD ZOMBIE**

Medium undead, neutral evil

#### Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9) Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА	
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)	

Saves Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8 Languages Understands any languages it knew in life but cannot speak Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

**Rage.** Upon suffering hit point damage from any source, the zombie enters a rage. While enraged, the zombie gains the following benefits:

The zombie has advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.

When the zombie makes a melee weapon attack using Strength, it gains a +2 bonus to damage.

The zombie has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

The blood zombie's rage last for 1 minute. Once the zombie has used this feature, it cannot use it again until the next sunset.

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

#### Actions

*Slam. Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Destroy Wood.** The blood zombie touches one nonmagical wooden object. If the object is being held or used by a creature, the zombie must succeed at a melee weapon attack against the creature. The object splinters, cracks, and breaks, becoming useless. If this ability is used on a wooden object larger than 5 feet by 5 feet, then a 5-foot by 5-foot area, centered on the point the zombie touched, begins to splinter., crack, and break. If used on a wooden door, this renders the door useless. If used on a sailing ship at sea, this ability can prove devastating.

The blood zombie originally appeared in **Worse Than Death**, by Travis Legge. It is used here with permission from the author.

#### **EURYBIA TENTHOS**

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather) Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20) Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft. (while wearing ring of swimming)

# STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA 13 (+1) 18 (+4) 14 (+2) 12 (+1) 14 (+2) 14 (+2)

#### Saves Dex +6, Cha +4

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Athletics +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +6, Persuasion +4, Stealth +6, Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Piscean, Slitherin

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

**Expert Sailor.** Eurybia's proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability checks made with navigator's tools or water vehicles.

**Fancy Footwork.** Eurybia can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of her turns.

**Ring of Swimming.** Eurybia wears a ring of swimming, granting her a 40-foot swim speed.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* Eurybia makes three attacks: two with her rapier and one with her hand crossbow.

**Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

*Hand Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

#### Reactions

**Parry.** Eurybia adds 2 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, she must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

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#### NARKISSA DENDROS

Medium humanoid (human, titanspawn), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (hide armor) Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28) Speed 30 ft.

### STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA 15 (+2) 14 (+2) 14 (+2) 13 (+1) 17 (+3) 11 (+0)

**Saves** Int +4, Wis +6 **Skills** Insight +6, Medicine +6, Nature +4, Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 16 Languages Common, Druidic, Elvish, Piscean, Titan Speech Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Bowl of Commanding Water Elementals. Narkissa possesses a bowl of commanding water elementals. Once per day, Narkissa can fill the bowl with water and summon a water elemental, as if she had cast the conjure elemental spell.

**Spellcasting.** Narkissa is an 8th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, guidance,* poison spray, produce flame, resistance 1st level (4 slots): fog cloud, healing word, thunderwave

2nd level (3 slots): animal messenger, bleeding sickness\*, enhance ability, enlarge/reduce (enlarge only), heat metal, hold person

3rd level (3 slots): call lightning, dispel magic, protection from energy, water breathing

4th level (3 slots): *ice storm, lightning shield*\*

#### Actions

Spear. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used in two hands to make a melee attack. Sling. Ranged Weapons Attack: +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage. Wild Shape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Narkissa magically polymorphs into a crocodile, giant vulture, or reef shark, remaining in that form for up to 4 hours. She can revert to her true form as a bonus action. Her statistics, including actions, are the same as her new form's. She chooses whether any equipment she is wearing of carrying falls to the ground, merges into the new form, or is worn by it. Narkissa reverts to her true form if she dies.

#### **PISCEAN, BLACK**

Large humanoid (piscean), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor) **Hit Points** 93 (11d10 + 33) **Speed** 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saves Con +6, Cha +7

**Skills** Arcana +5, Athletics +7, Nature +5, Perception +7

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17 Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Common, Piscean, Titan Speech

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

**Amphibious.** The piscean can breathe air and water. **Spellcasting.** The piscean is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The piscean has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): acid splash, mage hand, message, poison spray, shocking grasp 1st level (4 slots): fog cloud, force blast\*, magic

missile

2nd level (3 slots): *aegis\*, shatter* 

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, lightning bolt* 4th level (3 slots): *inflict susceptibility\*, mana spear\** 

5th level (1 slot): cone of cold

Voice of the Sea. The piscean can speak with all aquatic creatures.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The piscean makes one attack with its bite and one with its claws.

*Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, plus 5 (2d4) damage if enlarged.

*Claws. Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage, plus 5 (2d4) damage if enlarged.

Scion of Kadum (Recharges after a Long Rest). The piscean calls upon its connection to Kadum, growing larger for 1 minute. While enlarged, the piscean's size doubles in all dimensions and its weight is multiplied by eight. This growth causes the piscean to become a Huge size creature. If there isn't enough room for the piscean to double its size, it attains the maximum possible size in the space available. Until the effect ends, the piscean has advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws. While enlarged, the piscean's weapon attacks deal an extra 2d4 damage.

#### **PISCEAN, GREEN**

Large humanoid (piscean), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (shark bone armor) Hit Points 52 (7d10 + 14) Speed 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saves Str +6, Con +4 Skills Athletics +6 Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning from nonmagical attacks Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11 Languages Aquan, Piscean Challenge 2 (450 XP)

*Amphibious.* The piscean can breathe air and water. *Voice of the Sea.* The piscean can speak with all aquatic creatures.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The piscean makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws or harpoon.

*Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

*Claws. Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**Envenomed Harpoon.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must succeed on a Strength contest against the piscean or be pulled up to 20 feet toward the piscean. The target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute; the target is paralyzed while poisoned in this way. At the end of each of its turns, the target can make another Constitution saving throw. On a success, the effect ends on the target.

# APPENDIX B: MAGIC ITEMS

### THE BRIGHTSHIELD

Armor (shield), very rare (requires attunement by a good-aligned creature)

This silver heater shield's boss is Corean's holy symbolfour longswords forming a compass rose, each adorned with a small diamond. The shield depicts Corean forging the Mithril Golem.

While holding this magical shield, you gain a +1 bonus to AC for every two allies within 10 feet of you (up to a maximum of +3). Additionally, you can use the shield to cast the hand of justice (SLPG 135) spell. After using the shield in this way, you must finish a long rest before using it again.

### RING OF STORM SIGHT

#### Ring, uncommon (requires attunement)

This iron band is engraved with scenes of stormy skies. The clouds twist and turn magically, often taking on the appearance of humanoid faces. The inside of the ring is engraved with a simple prayer: "Trickster, favor me."

While wearing this ring, you do not suffer any penalties related to sight from nonmagical fog, rain, snow, and other weather effects. Additionally, whenever you are outdoors at night and can see the sky, you have darkvision out to a range of 60 feet.

# APPENDIX C: MAPS



### THE SILVER BASTION



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