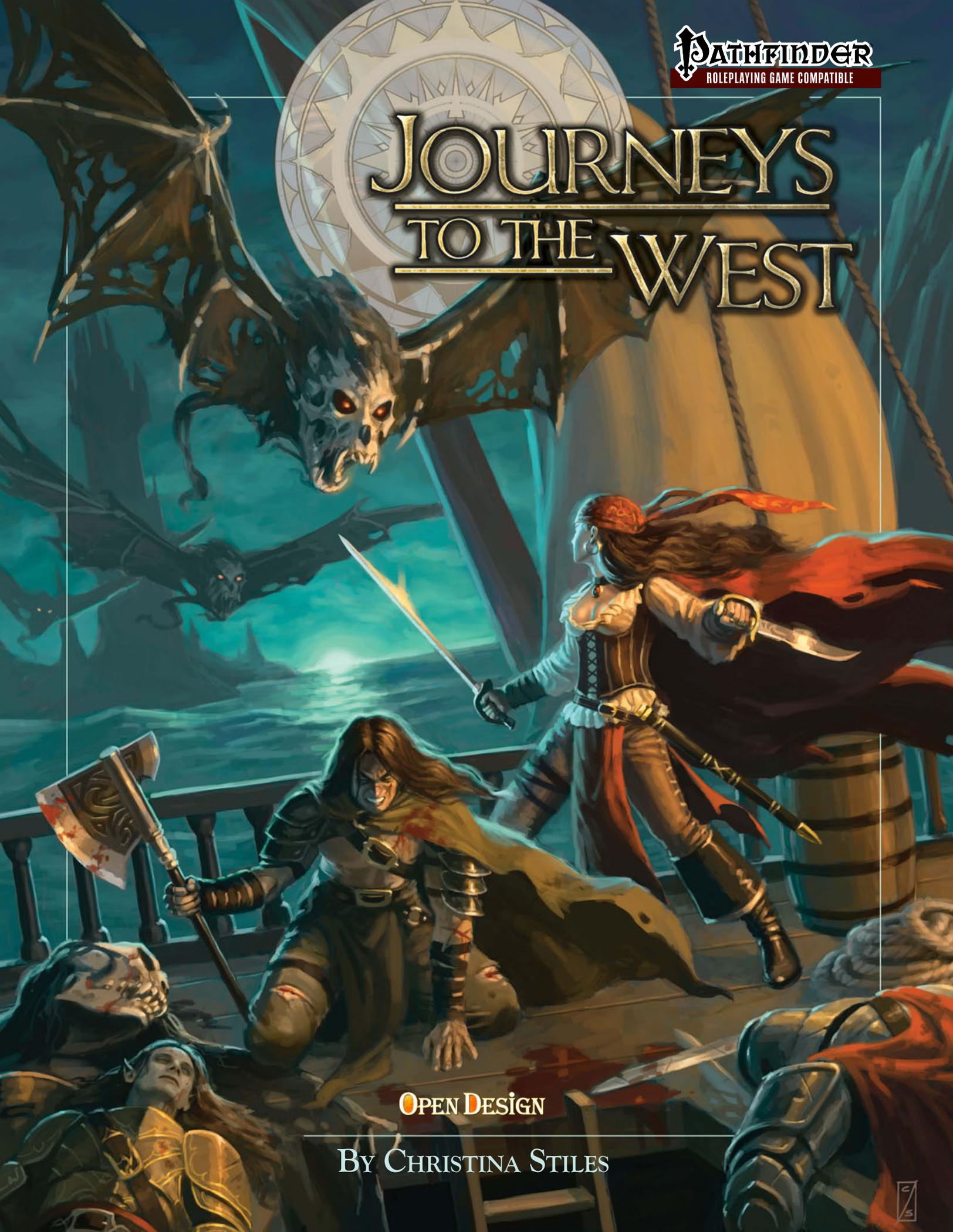


Pathfinder
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

JOURNEYS TO THE WEST



OPEN DESIGN

BY CHRISTINA STILES



JOURNEYS TO THE WEST



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INTRODUCTION



In antiquity, distant islands were the source of mystery, magic, and riches. The Greeks jealously guarded their legendary Tin Islands, the source of the ore which, when combined with copper, creates the bronze that fuelled an entire age of man. The mythical Hesperides held the garden of the gods and the immortality-granting apples Heracles sought in his labors. The island of Djerba was home to the Lotus Eaters, whose sweet fruit was enough to make men forget their homes and families, abandoning the world beyond to live in soporific bliss.

And as long as man has stared out at the horizon, he has sought to explore beyond it. The Phoenician king, Hanno the Navigator, took a flotilla of 100 ships beyond the pillars of Heracles, pushing south until boiling seas and savage jungles forced him to turn back. The eunuch admiral Zheng He commanded a majestic fleet of enormous ships through out the Indian and Pacific oceans, stopping in Ethiopia, Madagascar, and some claim the western coast of the Americas. The Polynesian culture took to the waves with an insatiable drive, colonizing every habitable island throughout the Pacific by

1280 AD and perhaps even reaching the coast of Chile. And of course, there is Eric the Red, the viking outcast who pushed the boundaries of the western world through the colonies established on Iceland and Greenland.

The expansive waves remain a lure few explorers can resist. The promise of what lies beyond the edge of the map, hidden in isolation and awaiting discovery, is simply too great. The potential glory, wealth, and excitement have always drawn adventurous souls into the dangers of the unknown.

That promise lies at the very heart of *Journeys to the West*—within its pages you'll find lost civilizations, necropolises, slavers, secret magics and chained gods. There are islands to discover and strange cultures to explore. Magic and gold arrive hand in hand with both danger and certain death.

So take the chance. Leave the safety of harbor and take to the seas, seek out the unknown places on the map and either bring back legends of exotic treasures or become another whispered warning of foolhardy explorers claimed by the seas. Either way, the journey is certain to be a tale worth telling!

PATRONS

Adam, Akiazoth, Alisa, Andrew, Anonymous, anthrorob, Arioch, Capellan, dafadu, dunbruha, elandys, elorebaen, HiddenJester, IronWolf, jarodsky1, Jeff, kbedan, nathan, Nikolay, NumberTenOx, Omote, praeton, Ray, razamataz, Riverwalker, Rschmahli, sev, SS, Stebehil, Stossel, Terrell, thorr-kan, TojuX, Tryll David Ackermann, Jason Alexander, Michael Alkema, Eric Andres, Johnny Anonymous, Ben Armitage, Andrew Baggott, Mike Baker, Jerry R Baker, Chris Banks, John Beattie, Annette Beatwell, John Murda Beddoe III, W. Birchler, Allen Billings, Iyar Binyamin, Robert Biskup, Matt Blackie, Martin Blake, Jayson C. Block, Morgan Boehringer, Jason Bostwick, Alain Bourgeois, Terence Bowlby, Sean Bradley, Raf Bressel, Maarten Broekman, Ray Brooks, Stan! Brown, Jonathan Brown, Daniel Brumme, Benjamin F. Bullock, Jesse Butler, Jarrod Camire, David Campbell, Diane Camper, Cory Case, Paul Cavanaugh, Greg Chapin, Nathan Christenson, Andrew Christian, Aric Christopherson, Andrew Church, Patrick Ciraco, David Clark, Skip Clarke, Jez Clement, Wayne Clemmer, Weston Clowney, Jim Clunie, Jeremy Coffey, Andrew Collett, Steve Collington, Brad Colver, Ashley Cook, Eric Coplin, Ronald Corn, Bryan Creehan, Kyle G. Crider, Adam Crossingham, James Crowder II, Brian Curley, Adam Daigle, James Davies, Mark Daymude, Adam Dean, Evan Dembskey, Aaron Derer, David DeRocha, Bob Doherty, Adam Dray, Andrew C. Durston, Frank Dyck, Brett Easterbrook, Justin Edwards, Peter Engebos, Jeffrey Erwin, Jarrod Farquhar-Nicol, Nicholas Faubert, Mark James Featherston, Jesse Fehrenbacher, Ben Ferguson, DeAnna Ferguson, Garret Fields, Dawn Fischer, Brian Fitzpatrick, Gary Francisco, Mike Franke, Erik Freund, Dale Friesen, Mark Gallicchio, Christopher Gautrau, Eddie Gioffre, Seth Goad, Peter Goeders, Thilo Graf, Mark Greene, Patrick Grogan, Dave Gross, Josh Gross, Norman Gross, Jim Groves, Brian Guerrero, Anthony Guillothe, Gary Hackathorn, Chris Harris, David Haselbauer, Ed Hawkins, Christina Yu Hawley, Lyle Hayhurst, Matthew Hewson, Ryan Hiller, Lutz Hofmann, Sean Holland, Ronald Hopkins, Will Hopkins, Miranda Horner, Maggie Hoyt, Cathy Hoyt, Nathan Huck, David Hudak, Chad Hughes, Tracy Davis Hurley, Michael Jacobs, Jonathan Jacobs, Josh Jarman, Paco Garcia Jean, David Jenks, Jeremy Jennings, Anthony Jones, Michael Jones, JB Joyner, Alex Kanous, Tom Kee, John Kelbaugh, James Kraus, Ben Krauskopf, Dawson Kriska, Thomas Ladegard, Joe LaFerlita, David Lai, Michael Lane, Claus Larsen, Troy Larson, Chris Lauricella, Kevin Lawrence, Thomas LeBlanc, Andreas Lenhart, Brian Liberge, Debra Lieven, Carter Lockhart, Sean Louvel, David Lovely, Sean Macdonald, Adrian Maddocks, Kevin Malone, Matt Maranda, Daniel Marshall, Scott Maynard, Jonathan McAnulty, Rob McCreary, Ian McDougall, Ben McFarland, B.A. McLean, Joe Medica, Adam Meyers, Francois Michel, Chad Middleton, Robert Miller, Ben Miller, Paul Millsaps, Olivier Miralles, Mike Mistele, M. Sean Molley, Matthew Monteiro, Adam Montgomery, Sean Mountcastle, Ernest Mueller, Paul Munson, Charles Myers, Frank Myers III, Juan Natera, Phil Nicholls, Graeme Nimmo, Shawn "Bran Ravensong" Nolan, David Nolan, Andrew Nuxoll, Shane O'Connor, CJ Ovalle, John Overath, Jeff Oyler, Chris Page, Michael G. Palmer, Pierre Parent, Robert J. Parker, James Patterson, Daniel Petersen, Otto Pfefferkorn, Markus Pfeil, Patrick Plouffe, Louis Porter, Jr., Ed Possing, Doug "Dhoma!" Raas, Stefan Radermacher, Ernesto Ramirez, John C. Randall, Gary Ray, Ted Reed, Colman Reilly, Trent Revis, Kevin Reynolds, Paul Rimmer, Jonathan Roberts, Stephen Robinson, Wade Rockett, Jan Rodewald, Karl Rodriguez, Tim Rudolph, Steven D. Russell, Paul Ryan, Ed Sagritalo, Edward Schmidt, Steven Schopmeyer, Kevin Scott, Ben Sennitt, Tim Shadow, John Sharp, Philip K. Sharp-Garcia, Will Shattuc, Pearce Shea, Mark Shocklee, Sean Silva-Miramón, Dan Sinclair, Joey Smith, Douglas Snyder, Arthur Soares, Hugo Solis, Mark Somogyi, Dalewin Speed, Oliver von Spreckelsen, David L. Sproull, Austin Stanley, Lisa Stevens, Christina Stiles, Matthew Stinson, Jared Strickland, Paul Sudlow, David Sullivan, Stephen D. Sullivan, Brian Suskind, Maria White Swygert, John Tanzini, Constantin Tertont, Scott Thede, Karl Thiebolt, James Thomas, Chris Thompson, Seth Thomson, Eric Tillemans, Rob Trimarco, Alan Turnquist, Keith Unger, Steven VanDyk, George Vasilakos, Giorgio Vergani, W. Vernon, Caytlin Vilbrandt, Jani Waara, Michael Waite, Tobias Walbridge, Stephen Wark, Matthew Wasiak, Eric Weberg, Mike Welham, Tim Werner, Donald Wheeler, Brian Whitcraft, Neill Whyborne, David Wickham, Daniel Winterhalter, Simon Withers, Henry K. Wong, Paul Woods, Jacob Young, and the most estimable Stephen Zelonis

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THE GREATER ISLANDS

BARSELLA, THE CITY AT THE END OF THE WORLD



Isolated from Midgard's magocracies by the inhospitable Ghostlight Forest, the Pytonne's rough passes, and the unpredictable giants, Barsella has long nestled along the coast of the Western Ocean, the last free city before a vast stretch of water with no known end. Barsella is one of the few accessible centers of civilization this far west and has its own unique culture and heritage. The "city at the end of the world" has grown to house adventurers and explorers of all stripes, who flock here to seek the great unknowns the Western Ocean conceals.

Barsella is a free city, ruled by a representative council of old seagoing families who understand the wealth that comes from the strange ocean. These families are well entrenched and canny enough to remain elusively out from under Bemmea's thumb. The city thrives on importing and exporting adventure, and many use its busy port to organize expeditions into the Haunted Lands, Allain, or onward into the Wastes as well as over the waves. A constant and popular debate rages in taverns and hiring halls over where more lives are lost—east over land or west into the unknown dangers of the Western Ocean.

Barsella serves as a port of call for those heading north to trade with Bemmea and does a brisk, if illicit, traffic in vril artifacts heading for the Seven Cities. Nothing of value changes hands here without the ruling families getting a piece. The taxes on equipment, bulk supplies, fodder, cordage, docking, ship repairs, and more, are considered extortion by merchants plying these waters with little other alternative. Gambling halls line the streets of Barsella, beckoning the lucky and foolish. The city offers more than diversions and ways to lose money, however. As a hub of trade and adventuring, it houses talented shipwrights, well-stocked brothels, efficient provisioners, and arguably operates the best-run port in Midgard.

For all the riches such enterprises provide, the fortunes of Barsella wax and wane with the obsession and competitive desires of the ruling families seeking treasure and new lands across the Western Ocean. Few ships return from these long, dangerous, and expensive expeditions. Years of revenue can vanish over the horizon, and fewer than one-in-ten ships return. However, when a ship does reappear—sometimes years later—the wealth it brings returns such investments a hundredfold, with holds full of exotic spices, gold, magic metals, exotic beasts, and strange artifacts. This influx of wealth flares brightly for a brief period, and Barsella's streets roar with festivals and celebration. Talk of the next expedition begins well before these parties end, and such ventures rarely lack for money or volunteers. This leads to booms and busts for Barsella as its citizenry celebrates one week and despairs the next.

Perhaps the most startling feature of these journeys remains the utter lack of consistency between them. Over the many of expeditions to the

west, they have yet to receive a single consistent report of what lies over the horizon. Hundreds of documents exist—bottled messages, captains' logs, magical communiqués—describing radically different destinations on similar headings. Tales of ghost ships, giant merfolk, strange lands, cannibals, leviathans, burning islands, shadow currents, and worse all exist, but none ever agree and are wildly inconsistent in ways that perpetually puzzle scholars. The high death rate of the journeys makes the successful ones stand out starkly. Sailors are hailed as heroes, yet the unreliable reports do not give the expeditions' sponsors any confidence for planning settlements, conquest, or even the next voyage. Rather, the adventurous spirit lives on, and in every month of fair weather a new ship sets out over the horizon. Those aboard, more likely than not, never return.

OVER THE HORIZON

Exploration is "coin and king" in Barsella. Ships of all sizes launch weekly from the port city for unknown realms in the Western Ocean, while caravans of adventurers and mercenaries depart for parts of Allain and the Haunted Lands in search of lost treasures. Very few ships or caravans ever return, of course, but that fact stops none from answering the call of gold and glory. Several founding families, in fact, have lost wealth and members in support of such endeavors, but as fortunes wax and wane in Barsella, such families' prosperity and fate are ever in flux.

Barsellan ocean expeditions pique the interest of more than just the founding families and treasure hunters, of course. The morphoi and their shapechanging lamia Mnemosynian matriarch leaders (from the Isle of Morphoi) infiltrate the businesses and families funding them to gain firsthand knowledge of any discoveries—and, in the case of the lamias, to search individuals' memories for information regarding the tragedy the Kammaens reaped upon their goddess Mnemosyne and her husband Nethus. The lamias welcome travelers to Morphoi, allowing explorers to seek the island as desired, and sometimes they even assist them in locating it. The more visitors, the more information the Mnemosynian cult can cull, after all, and thanks to Mnemosyne and her faithful, true tales of the Western Ocean rarely, if ever, return to the mainland.

In addition to Morphoi's spies, the sea-touched also infiltrate expeditions, but they prefer to travel in the caravans to explore the inland territories their titan kin have no access to. They bring back information and technology useful to their kin. The titans do like to keep a tab on what the other races are up to.

BARSELLA, THE CITY AT THE END OF THE WORLD

Symbol: A silver galleon on a calm blue sea

Rulers: The Founders' Council, representatives of the nine Founding Houses of Barsella

Population: 84,900 (80,000 humans, 2,000 minotaurs, 1,400 gnomes, 900 halflings, 600 dwarves)

Capital: Barsella, population 18,000

Major Cities: None but Barsella, with outlying settlements confined to the immediate area.

Great Gods: Charun, Thor, Sarastra, Seggotan, Nuberu the Cloud Master (Azuran)

Trade Goods: imported silks, exotic spices, lumber, ships, and gold

BARSELLA, THE CITY AT THE END OF THE WORLD

LN metropolis

Corruption +4; **Crime** +4; **Economy** +7; **Law** +3; **Lore** +4; **Society** +3

Qualities insular, notorious, prosperous, rumormongering citizens, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +20; **Disadvantages** cursed (obsessed with the sea)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government Founders' Council, a council of old pirate and merchant families' representatives

Population 84,900 (80,000 humans, 2,000 minotaurs, 1,400 gnomes, 900 halflings, 600 dwarves)

Notable NPCs

Founders' Lord Speaker Muros Anthor (LN male minotaur fighter 7/aristocrat 5)

Admiral Ulrich Donarsson, Barsellan Naval Commander (LN male human fighter 9/cleric 4 (Donar))

High Commander Bertolf Rimeholdt, Garrison Commander (LN male dwarf cavalier 10)

Harbormaster Yvaine Talis (LN female gearforged cleric 7 (Rava))

Simez Rothgazzi, Master of the High Order of Geomancers (LN male human geomancer wizard 6/geomancer 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 35,693 gp; **Purchase Limit** 225,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 8th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

GOVERNMENT

The Founders' Council, consisting of members or representatives of the nine Founding Houses, rules Barsella.

One among them acts as Founders' Lord (Lady) Speaker, delivering down their decrees to city officials, a seat reminiscent to most cities' mayoral position. The city maintains a navy, city watch, and houses a garrison in Founders' Castle in Founders' Den. Additional barracks are kept within the walls of Money Town

FOUNDERS' COUNCIL MEMBERS

Founders' Lord Speaker

Muros Anthor

Councilwoman Coraline

Carravicci

Councilwoman Kirza Carfen

Councilman Bjorn Donarsson

Councilman Talbot Sulla Pavonis

Councilwoman Norda

Rimeholdt

Councilman Endoro Rothgazzi

Councilman Asper Uundergoss

Councilwoman Yvaine Udfarsin

THE NINE FOUNDING HOUSES

1. House Anthor

A long-standing family of minotaurs, the Anthors have worked as captains, shipwrights, and merchants since Barsella's founding. The Anthors are notable for their penchant to carve runes in their horns, dip their horns in mithral, or sport expensive facial tattoos. Many in the family line are stark white, which often indicates they are marked with a gift of seeing similar to the kariv soothsayers and crab diviners.

2. House Carravicci

Galla and Buono Carravicci of Friula in the Seven Cities, sibling adventurers from a renowned family of explorers, helped found Barsella in its earliest days. Galla Carravicci later ended Northland excursions on the small town when she personally bested their infamous captain in hand-to-hand combat and requisitioned his ships for the city's navy. The city grew and prospered under their protection.

The Carravicci's still maintain their wealth to this day, being some of the luckiest individuals Barsella has ever seen. Their luck is so noteworthy that sailors often say, "If you want to stumble upon gold, sail with a Carravicci," for indeed, many of their successes have been based on just that—haphazardly stumbling upon something of value, like their well-known finding of Langenboccker's gold. The Carraviccis always post a lesser house member to the ruling Council, as the others are too busy exploring the Wastes and the Western Ocean to be bothered with governance. The house secretly has ties to the Friulan Incunabuli.

3. House Carfen

While not one of the oldest, House Carfen prides itself on being of the "old-guard." Currently fallen on hard times, this genteel-but-eccentric family holds many physical specimens of fauna and flora in its stores. Information on the Western Ocean may be lacking, but their collection cannot be denied.

4. House Donarsson

The Donarssons are the descendants of the Udfarsin (see House Udfarsin below) expedition from the Northlands. While not amongst the wealthiest or the most influential houses, they are well-respected, skilled shipwrights. Many of their descendants also serve in the Barsellan navy. Naturally, the family has strong connections with the church of Donar. Morgan Donarsson (see Inhabitants, page 15) is the family's most famous privateer captain in Barsella.

5. House Pavonis

One of Barsella's oldest families, House Pavonis began as pirates who became reputable and wealthy. Recently, their fortunes have diminished. Hoping to revitalize operations, the current patriarch, Talbot Sulla Pavonis, a balding, rat-faced man with a nervous facial tick, schemes and plots while suspecting everyone of conspiring against him. Currently, he gambles on a desperate alliance with three pirate captains and fences their stolen goods for a hefty cut. However, he does not trust them in the least.

6. House Rimeholdt

This dwarven family specializes in trading perishable goods and delicate merchandise. Their ships and caravans are uniquely designed and packed with ice, a commodity which potentially sells for nearly as much as the goods it keeps from spoiling. House scions tattoo their hands and feet frostbite-black, a sign of solidarity with the employees of their ice-rimed ships.

7. House Rothgazzi

A founding house from old-money merchants from Kammae and Capelon, the Rothgazzi own a small merchant fleet in Barsella, and boast three ambassadors in the Seven Cities. Councilman Endoro Rothgazzi, the family's patriarch, also owns the Gaming Den casino in Whores' Lot, where he spends a great deal of his time.

The Kammaen branch of the family, which Guiono Rothgazzi leads, deals in magic, artifacts, and perfumes. This family branch counts many geomancers among its number, and Simez Rothgazzi (see *Inhabitants*, page 15), a prominent philanthropist and member of the Sons of the Arches, heads the Order of the Geomancers in Arch Town.

8. House Uundergoss

Uundergoss is an old Rothenian family from southern Vidim. They have long ties with kariv gypsy magic, and some say its family members are witches and necromancers. Over the last decade, this house has fallen on bad luck, and currently struggles to maintain any position within the city. Additionally, four of their family members have been found murdered over the last few months, and all magical inquiry has offered no answers. The family feels they are under some curse, and are seeking answers from various sources, some not so legal. Asper Uundergoss is a thin, pale man struggling to keep his House from collapsing. Fearing for his life, he is rarely seen in public, but offers money and favors to any who can cure what plagues his family.

9. House Udfarsin

Arik Udfarsin, a feared Northlands captain from the Donnermark, sailed down the straights of Nieder and into Barsella on various excursions, attacking the fledgling city. The skilled swordswoman, Galla Caraviccis challenged him in personal combat and bested him, forcing him to be her slave as punishment. Udfarsin's crew became the growing city's navy, and the men settled down to start families. Galla later married Arik, so the Caraviccis and Udfarsins have had a strong tie since the early days, and the Udfarsin's fortunes have risen with the Carraviccis's.

The Udfarsins own several outfitter shops, ships, and wagons; they advertise services as captains or guides to wherever you wish to travel.

OTHER INFLUENTIAL HOUSES

1. House Portia

A seriously influential house in the city, House Portia runs several prostitution and gambling halls in Whores' Lot, which the Caraviccis, Rothgazzi, and Anthors originally bankrolled. House Portia now has turned the tables with many admirals, lords, and nobles owing them money. Additionally, many lords have lost secrets to the Portia's special jade-eyed companions.

2. House Soudar

Considered brash upstarts, the Soudar family unapologetically trade in flesh, managing brothels and press-ganging others into slavery. Uncouth and committing all of the social atrocities of any nouveau-riche, the Soudar are, however, powerful, and suffer trifles. They own the Puckerfish and Sailors' Rest brothels, which cater to sailors.

3. House Zumtrezi

The Zumtrezis arrived in Barsella but 25 years ago from Kammae, and almost immediately, they launched several expeditions on the Western Ocean. Two of these enterprises proved very lucrative, enabling them to quickly gain great influence in Barsella. They remain unhappy, however, for, not being a Founding Family, they cannot acquire a seat on the city's Founding Council. They've settled for gaining a councilman in their pocket, controlling Talbot Pavonis' vote.

GEOGRAPHY OF BARSELLA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Barsella rules a long, narrow stretch of green flats between the Pytonne Mountains to the south and east and the terrors of the deep Ghostlight Forest to the north.

The flats descend to the Western Ocean in a series of gradual steps, the last abutting the ocean. The edge features narrow beaches, cave-pitted cliffs and rocky spits all encircled by enough stone to form a usable harbor.

Once a cluster of huts about a break leading down to the breakers, she grew north, south and inland up the terraces. Newer, larger and richer buildings look down upon the old and broken.

Districts

Being blunt people, the Barsellans call their ten districts by what is found therein: Arch Town, Founders' Den, Money Town, Port, Saints' Lot, Shanty Town, Ship Town, Trade Town, the Wash (undercity), and Whores' Lot. The common sailor spends most of his time at Port or Whores' Lot where entertainment of other types is also found.

Cartographers with arcane knowledge realize Barsella's major city streets are laid out to mimic the ancient aboleth glyph of avo-yrleth (See Aboleth Glyphs in *Journeys: Pirates of the Western Ocean*), a glyph both indicating the presence of strong ley lines and protecting them. Barsella is said to be the one area in the Wastes still having a few ley lines, though these have weakened over time.

ARCH TOWN

Arch Town, the centermost section of the city, is one of the more clean and safe areas of Barsella. Stepping into Arch Town is almost like stepping into a refined, cultured city. The Sons of the Arch have done much to beautify this area with their public park, and see to the upkeep of the famous Arch of the First Mariners, the city's largest piece of artwork which is both visible from Port and the icon of the district.

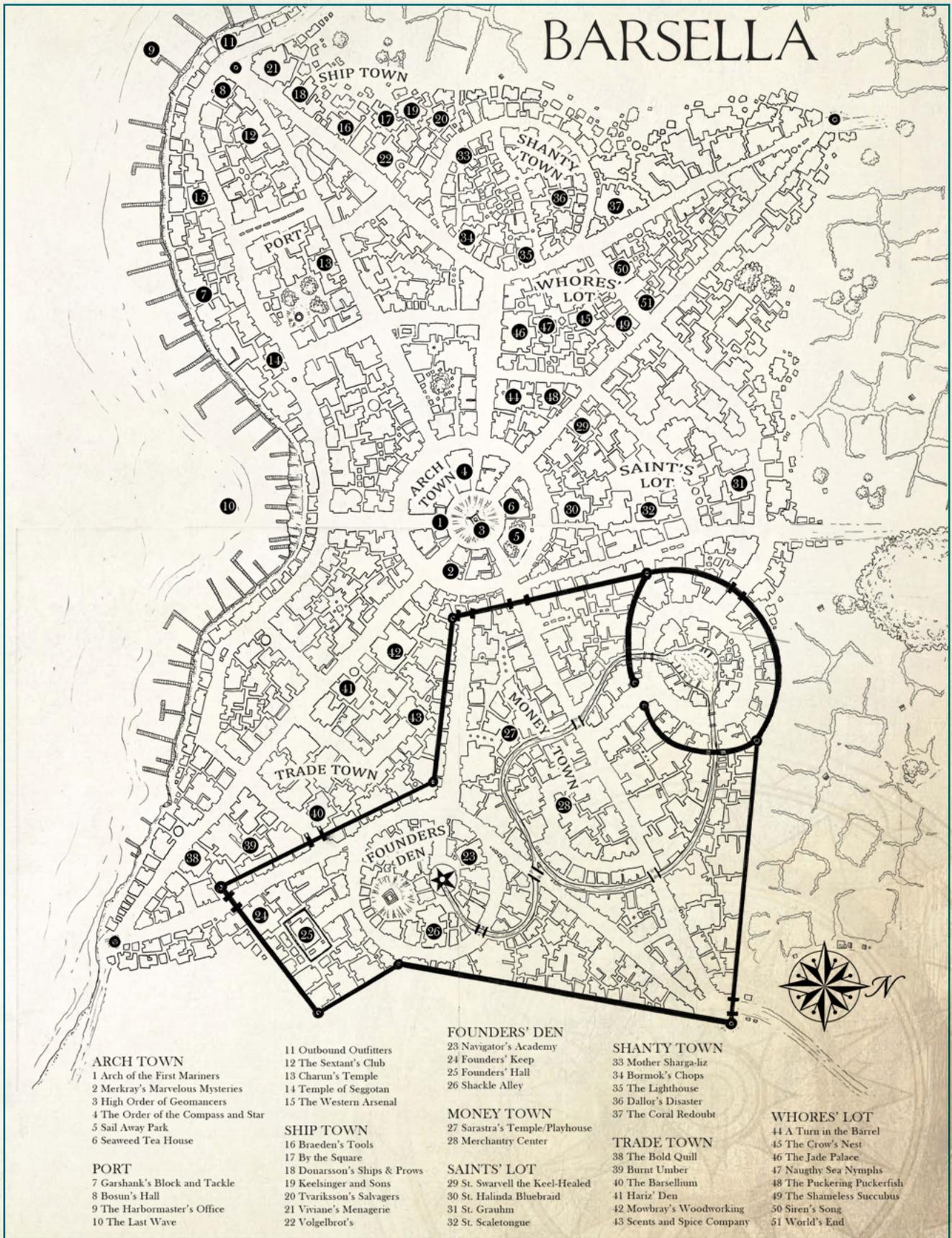
1. Arch of the First Mariners

This imposing monument of marble, located just beyond the harbor, commemorates the first sailors to have successfully brought back treasures from the Western Ocean after five years at sea. Many sailors pray at the foot of this arch before embarking on their travels, and many claim to feel quite refreshed after doing so.

2. Merkray's Marvelous Mysteries

Built to appear as an upside down building, Merkray's is best known for the oddities housed within, including mummified bodies, shrunken heads, stuffed sea creatures, and unusual trinkets. Entrance to view the curiosities costs 2 sp. Merkray Carfen, a wizened bard, has travelled far and wide and claims to have seen sights that turned his hair prematurely grey at the age of 22. He'll speak of most of these things for a few drinks and a fat pouch—though there are subjects even he shies away from. He willingly buys oddities from explorers, though he has a good eye for fakes, which he refuses.

BARSELLA



ARCH TOWN

- 1 Arch of the First Mariners
- 2 Merkray's Marvelous Mysteries
- 3 High Order of Geomancers
- 4 The Order of the Compass and Star
- 5 Sail Away Park
- 6 Seaweed Tea House

PORT

- 7 Garshank's Block and Tackle
- 8 Bosun's Hall
- 9 The Harbormaster's Office
- 10 The Last Wave

- 11 Outbound Outfitters
- 12 The Sextant's Club
- 13 Charun's Temple
- 14 Temple of Seggotan
- 15 The Western Arsenal

SHIP TOWN

- 16 Braeden's Tools
- 17 By the Square
- 18 Donarsson's Ships & Prows
- 19 Keelsinger and Sons
- 20 Tvariksson's Salvagers
- 21 Viviane's Menagerie
- 22 Volgelbröt's

FOUNDERS' DEN

- 23 Navigator's Academy
- 24 Founders' Keep
- 25 Founders' Hall
- 26 Shackle Alley

MONEY TOWN

- 27 Sarastra's Temple/Playhouse
- 28 Merchantry Center

SAINTS' LOT

- 29 St. Swarvell the Keel-Healed
- 30 St. Halinda Bluebraid
- 31 St. Grauhm
- 32 St. Scaletongue

SHANTY TOWN

- 33 Mother Sharga-liz
- 34 Bormok's Chops
- 35 The Lighthouse
- 36 Dallor's Disaster
- 37 The Coral Redoubt

TRADE TOWN

- 38 The Bold Quill
- 39 Burnt Umber
- 40 The Barsellium
- 41 Hariz' Den
- 42 Mowbray's Woodworking
- 43 Scents and Spice Company

WHORES' LOT

- 44 A Turn in the Barrel
- 45 The Crow's Nest
- 46 The Jade Palace
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3. High Order of Geomancers

Located on a ley-nexus point, the last remaining in the Wasted West, the eight-story High Order of Geomancers' tower rests upon a tor; it rises above the surrounding buildings, commanding a 360-degree view over Barsella, the coast, and out into the Western Ocean. Only the Navigator's Academy in Founders' Den is taller. The tower's pale sides are inscribed with esoteric sigils resistant to the most earnest graffiti, and geometric paraphernalia covers its topmost observatory level; some of the outward items on that level clang and toll with slight changes in ley energy.

Simez Rothgazzi is the master of the High Order, which boasts over 200 other geomancers and dabblers in Barsella as members.

4. The Order of the Compass and Star

Here, the lords of the sea gather to drink fine wines while sharing maps and discoveries, eat fine meals, and swap stories of adventure in a Gentlemen's club of Adventurers that is a navigators' guild for the Lords of the city. In Barsella, to be a trained navigator is to become a lord of the sea. To enter the guild, one must be a trained navigator, and one must be initiated in the rituals and mysteries of the club, whereupon one gains the advanced mathematical training of cartography, algebra, drawing, painting, vanishing point, sextant, astrolabe, and even magics, if one has the necessary abilities.



5. Sail Away Park

This public park, a gift of the Sons of the Arch organization, is a curious labyrinth, a succession of green hedges and ancient masts still supporting remarkably immaculate sails of all sizes and shapes. The place is a cool haven, with many pools that citizens of all social classes frequently visit. Well-maintained marble statues of the Founders lie along various paths. The park is quite peaceful, and many geomancers can be found ruminating on benches beside the center pool, where a spinning coin hovers five feet above the water. Sometimes a few geomancers can be heard discussing whether or not the coin seems to be slowing down, and they speak of the possibility with dread in their voice.

6. Seaweed Tea House

This small salon is announced by a nondescript sign and a simple green door. Here one can taste seaweed tea and mixtures from as far as the distant orient, but also some of the rarest and strangest varieties, like a drow blend from the world below.

PORT

Port is the rowdiest section of the docks, and is where most of the sailors hang out in search of ale or work. In addition to cheap taverns, locals can find flop houses, pawn shops, and open-tent markets selling fish and trinkets along the docks.

The city's watch keeps a keen eye on the goings on in Port, as do many cabals and gangs.

7. Garshank's Block and Tackle

On the surface a general store for outfitting sea voyages, in actuality, Garshank's offers safe harbor for all manner of stolen goods. The proprietor, Willie Garshank, hides his extra-planar origin behind three hundred pounds of fat.

8. Bosun's Hall

A rough-hewn, tumble-down hall of considerable proportion, Bosun's Hall is where the poorest of sailors congregate and seek work. Competition for a spot on a ship is fierce, and many an unlucky soul has been stabbed, clubbed, or simply crushed underfoot on the way to enroll.

9. The Harbormaster's Office

The Harbormaster's Office above the main harbor gates is akin to a small fortress. Through a complex gear-and-pulley system, the Harbormaster can close all official entrances to the harbor and even raise the "Titan's chain," closing the port entrance. And it's rumored the gears can do even more... Gearforged Yvaine Talis is the current harbormaster.

10. The Last Wave

A waving mermaid figurehead prominently identifies this dockside tavern as the Last Wave. Sailors looking for work frequent the place, as captains and first mates patronize it in search of crews. There is a +4 bonus to Diplomacy checks to gather information on prospective voyages here. A surly halfling named Ulof Guttersfoot owns the tavern.

11. Outbound Outfitters

Dunk and Dran are purveyors of all manner of unusual expedition gear. The price is usually right and their timing peculiarly good. However, it is best left unasked where the

tattooed dwarves find the sometimes-soggy merchandise sold from a back-alley warehouse.

12. The Sextant's Club

An exclusive officer's club, this three-story structure is a garish blue, bedecked with oily red curtains. The tables are never quite clean, and the gold and silver flatware is plated so cheaply that a firm bite leaves metal flakes in your teeth.

13. Charun's Temple

Orcana Bebelu (Human cleric 5/expert 3) oversees this temple, which is built right on top of a pier at the outermost edge of the western docks. This temple decommissions both ships and people. The clergy here recycle old ships, give burials at sea in specially constructed slips they burn in the bay, and they patrol the shoreline entrances to the Wash for undead.

14. Temple of Seggotan

This massive galley of imperial design sits in the bay and dominates the docks with its mere presence. Lucan the Barnacled (Dragonmarked cleric 10/sorcerer 3, aquatic bloodline) holds services at every changing of the tide, and provides blessings for new ships, grand voyages, and risky ventures.

15. The Western Arsenal

This fortified structure contains armaments for the city's fleet, and it is heavily guarded at all times. Rumors claim the city fortress houses a vast room brimming with clockwork sailors awaiting orders from the Founders' Council, and that another room stores a ship that can be folded and carried in a sea trunk.

SHIP TOWN

Ship Town lies just north of Port (the main docks area), and it is home to the shipbuilding companies, shipbuilding-support businesses, coopers, net makers, and numerous warehouses—and breweries. It has its own dock access on the western edge of Port. Beasts of burden and fine horses can be purchased in this district, as well.

16. Braeden's Tools

Blocks and tackles, crowbars, hammers, ladders, miners' picks, and more articles besides can be found in Braeden's Tools. Old Braeden (human com3) can get anything, and he buys and sells brand new and second-hand tools. He never asks sellers where the merchandise comes from. Still, while he buys anything available, he does not pay much—but at least you'll have a place to fence such things.

17. By the Square

The place to go for canvas regardless the purpose: backpacks, bags, sails, a convenient shroud, or tents. The toughest women and the widows of many sailors work here under the supervision of Mother Cotton Duck (human exp4), a severe matron with an iron hand but a kind heart.

18. Donarsson's Ships & Prows

The Donarsson's are some of Barsella's best shipwrights. Their sorcerers are also known for their magical prows. Hrogarth Donarsson is the best of the shipwrights present, and it is difficult to gain his personal attention, as he is kept very busy, and he has no patience for small talk. His daughter Berta is just as skilled, but she prefers to spend her time crafting the magical prows.

19. Keelsinger and Sons

In a long workshop by the docks, father and sons take long trunks of the eldest iron-hard wood and lovingly sing them into the backbone of ships small and large. Although expensive, the quality of this ancient, arcane technique is unmatched in all of Barsella.

20. Tvariksson's Salvagers

Farholm Tvariksson and his crew run a brisk salvage business in the Western Ocean, selling artifacts rescued from the depths and occasionally salvaging wrecks on commission. Recent buyers have noticed an overwhelming majority of Ankeshel relics, suggesting that Tvariksson is looking for something specific.

21. Viviane's Menagerie

This ramshackle building near the docks is filled with cages and glass tanks holding poisonous snakes haphazardly stacked in-between old statues. Some pretend that the blind-folded proprietress, Viviane Carfen, who's surrounded by kobold servants is a medusa exiled from The Seven Cities while the rest swear she's some disguised naga. Still, she bears the Carfen name, and they are an odd lot.

22. Volgelbrot's

Master Marcel Volgelbrot (doppelgänger assassin 5/aristocrat 3), a cut-throat businessman who sometimes cuts throats for real, operates this private banking and shipping insurance company. He funds many voyages, and he seems to profit no matter whether the ships return or not. Marcel has some connections to Seekers of the Scale cabal (see page 14); helping them come to their doom is a form of entertainment for him, and he can't help but smile to himself when he thinks of the hundred or more individuals he's helped meet their end—though not necessarily their desired one.

FOUNDERS' DEN

This district houses all the government buildings, many of which are made of imported stone. The domed, star-shaped Founders' Hall is the centerpiece of the district, with all cobblestone roads leading to it. A series of patrolled canals run through this district and Money Town beyond. This district is walled, and the wall extends around Money Town. Ballistae, archers, and soldiers protect this area at all times.

23. Navigator's Academy

Influential retired admirals, captains, and seafaring wizards run the Navigator's Academy, which sits on a large hill in Founders' Den. The structure is actually the tallest in Barsella.

The academy's students learn fencing, geography, leadership, mathematics, monster lore, navigation, sailcraft, survival, and spellcraft. The noble Houses send their children here to study, and the Navigator's Academy is so well-respected outside of Barsella that other nations pay handsomely to train their noble children here.

24. Founders' Keep

This walled keep houses a garrison of 50 foot soldiers, 30 Perunalian archers, and 20 cavaliers. The defenders rotate shifts throughout the day and night. The keep's towers are large enough to house the immediate family members of the most prominent Founding Houses, while their relatives may seek shelter within the bailey in times of trouble.

25. Founders' Hall

This three-story stone building houses a courtroom on the first floor



for criminal trials. Its basement is a dungeon, which houses the worst criminals (those requiring more punishment than the shackles). The second floor contains offices for the judicial officers of Barsella's government: six magistrates, four judges, and six barristers have office space here. Two clerks assist them with their paperwork. The topmost floor contains meeting rooms for the Founders' Council.

26. Shackle Alley (aka "Red and Rusty")

Barsella can be a wild city, and wanton drunks, would-be pirates, and petty thieves abound. Rather than waste precious jail space for these louts, the earliest Founders' Council decreed petty criminals should just be shackled outside the prison's walls, in the alley running beside it.

To this day, such chained criminals line both sides of the open-air, 20-foot-wide passageway named Shackle Alley. As most prisoners receive lashes as a part of their punishment, the dirt street here exhibits many deep-red patches from blood. The weather also rusts the prisoners' chains, which the city watch rarely replaces. For these reasons, "Been to Red and Rusty" has become a local expression used by those who've been chained and whipped in the alley.

MONEY TOWN

The rich live in small mansions in this section of Barsella, and the difference in the quality of its structures compared to large sections of the city is like night and day. A series of patrolled canals run through this district and Founders' Den. Both districts reside within a series of protected walls.

27. Sarastra's Temple of Stars/Nightsky Playhouse

Sarastra's Temple is also the Nightsky Playhouse, a three-story amphitheatre located in Money Town. The retractable sail-cloth roof is midnight black and sewn with thousands of pearly shells that glisten like stars from the torchlight below. It is night within, regardless of the sun without, and High Priestess Lucinda Sommoerill (tiefling cleric 6/bard 6) and her priestly players provide enchanting performances within.

28. Merchantry Center

In center of Money Town, surrounded by a moat-like canal, are the adjoining circular buildings of the Merchantry. In the center, rests the Hall of the Merchants, where business mingles with Houses. It's where explorers seek charters and sponsors for the points unknown. A central meeting hall fills the inside from floor to roof, surrounded by balconies leading to side offices and meeting chambers.

To one side, beyond a narrow hallway and massive doors, the Hall of the Houses, the offices of the major Houses of Barsella, full of opulence and promise, heavily warded and watched. Each House, when in power (as seen by the other Houses present), uses a "wedge" of the Hall as their own, usually featuring an audience chamber, offices, House vaults, and temporary quarters.

To the other side, down another well-defended passageway, rests the Hall of Exchange, where the mysteries and treasures of the West are examined, stored (in vaults underneath), and auctioned to the highest bidder. Magicians, seers, and alchemists may be contracted to divine the nature of retrieved relics.

The fourth building, in the back, is the Hall of Respite. It contains a grand auditorium serving for affairs of state, such as dinners, dances, and the like. The floor in the center can be raised like a stage. The outer floor

can rise and form bleachers. Complex dwarven clockwork mechanisms gracefully reshape the chamber on command. Around the outer sides rest kitchens, dressing rooms, and other rooms needed to support the regular events.

SAINTS' LOT

This district seriously resembles Shanty Town, with its shacks made of salvaged materials, but these shacks are of slightly better quality—at least they are not as drafty—and belong to the over 200 “Saints of Barsella.” In Barsella, individuals surviving a wreck that scuttles their ship or overcoming any extreme hardship of any kind gain the title of “Saint.” Unknown to Barsellans, a true saint of Nethus lives among the residents here: a magically disguised nethysule named St. Valen.

St. Halinda Bluebraid will soon join him in this ascension, as many downtrodden whores pray to her for strength.

29. St. Swarvell the Keel-Healed

This scarred, former galley slave has the distinction of being executed no less than 23 times for nearly every maritime crime known, and has been proven justified or innocent after surviving each. She is considered blessed by all the gods and by a few demons, as well. The Temple of Seggotan maintains Swarvell's shanty, and the priests keep her fed and clothed. She survives on the kindness of others, and always advocates justice for the downtrodden in Shanty Town, where she grew up.

30. St. Halinda Bluebraid

Halinda Bluebraid was a high-priced whore who was abducted from her brothel in Whores' Lot years ago to serve as bunk mate for a Captain Federiq Gales. To punish her for her unwillingness to succumb to her enslavement, Gales alternately sold her to sailors, privateers, natives, and slavers, as his whim took him. Through all this, Halinda persevered, surviving on her wits and skills, and was eventually able to return to Barsella. Because of her ordeal, House Portia, for whom she worked, set her up with a hovel in Saints' Lot. The wanton women of Barsella look to her and her writings for strength in overcoming adversity.

31. St. Grauhm

The Children's saint, the minotaur Grauhm was born into the gladiator pits, and fought his way to many victories and ultimately, freedom. Though physically scarred, Grauhm's heart is unsullied. His orphanage accepts youngsters of all races, and schools them in letters, arts, mathematics, and martial arts. Many of his protégés are funneled into the Pauper's Brotherhood or become bodyguards for patron families.

32. St. Scaletongue

Thuungy Scaletongue, a kobold known as the Riggers' Saint, died manning the crow's nest during a hurricane. While watching for a lighthouse beacon, debris crashed into him, paralyzing his small body; and with only the use of his mouth, he hung onto the railing with his teeth, knowing that when calling out the warning, he would be swept into the gale-force winds. He saved the ship and crew that night at the expense of his own life. The captain and crew gave up their wages to pay for his resurrection.

SHANTY TOWN

The houses here are made from the wrecks of old abandoned buildings, garbage, ship parts, sails, and rocks. The people in the refuse are just as derelict, from human to humanoid: dwarf, kobold, minotaur, and even goblinoid. Abandoned children, the forgotten old, the infirm, the insane, thieves, and witches can all be found within.

While life is difficult in Shanty Town, the loss of many family members to the sea has forged strong ties among many residents, making them as close-knit as families. Those who are not too shady in nature generally look out for one another. They also keep sharp tabs on strangers in their midst.

33. Mother Sharga-liz

This shanty is somewhat better than its neighbors, and it is covered in sea shells, crab shells, and sails. The kariv oracle and crab diviner, Mother Sharga-liz, lives here, and her neighbors and kariv compatriots keep her shanty standing. Inside, she maintains a massive tank of garrote crabs, which kariv travelers bring to her home from the Rothenian Plains and Zobeck. This is an offering of respect, and the kariv believe it brings them good luck to supply a seer.

Mother Sharga-liz is said to be hag-blooded, and is tall and thin with a greenish tint to her skin. She is often seen walking along the docks and down to the Wash, where she sometimes disappears for days.

34 Bormok's Chops

Bormok, a grizzled, scowling minotaur, and his two sons run this unsanitary butcher shop. Locals recommend against inspecting their wares too closely. Bormok hunts his own meat (sometimes with gaffs in the minotaur mazes below his shop), and he does not discriminate between various types of vermin. More sinister rumors suggest that he takes “requests.” Still, the meat is fairly cheap, and some families brave the product to add a bit of protein with their gruel.

34. The Lighthouse

A replica lighthouse stands 30 feet high in this district. The Sons of the Arch donated this public work as an icon of hope in the community, but the locals merely find it amusing. Graffiti and excrement covers the formerly-white structure. Its glass has been broken out. Rumors claim thugs have tried to tear it down, but all such attempts have proven futile, and its would-be vandalizers have gained severe shocks for their efforts.

36. Dallor's Disaster

Eight years ago, a powerful typhoon dropped this dwarven stonship into one section of Shanty Town, squashing numerous hovels and killing 15 innocent people. Devastated by the disaster, Captain Dallor Bonesnapper and his surviving crewmen did what they could to make amends to the community and helped them recover from other typhoon-related damage. They have lived on the ship in Shanty Town ever since. In times of severe weather, Dallor opens his ship's hull as a safe haven to the Shanty's residents.

Dallor would eventually like return his ship to harbor, but he and his sailors have yet been unable to devise plan to move a stone caravel through Barsella's streets, especially not without creating more disaster.

37. The Coral Redoubt

Rodocqiz, an eccentric (some say gear-loose) gearforged wizard from Zobeck, came to Shanty Town over a decade ago. During that time, near the center of this district, he erected a tower made from coral. Several years later, he shut himself in, and no one has seen him since. Occasionally, the structure emits strange noises, and some people claim to have seen unusual lights flickering from within.

TRADE TOWN

Almost any type of business can be found within Trade Town: General stores, weapon shops, smithies, glassblowing shops, etc. The following highlights just a few of the shops herein.



38. The Bold Quill

The Bold Quill is the home of the Draftsman's League, the only guild of cartographers in Barsella, and the only licensed map-makers in the city. The League never turns down a customer, though you get what you pay for; many of the more affordable charts are outright fictitious, and the cheaper cartographers, entirely illiterate.

39. Burnt Umber

A small and dirty alchemical shop producing pigments, tindertwigs, and sunrods. Customers can't expect to find special substances or items above 10 gp here. If you ask, the Hills brothers – Jeffrey, Small Jack, and Thierry – they simply tell you to go elsewhere in a straightforward manner.

40. The Barsellium

This coliseum, the largest this far west, lies on the border near Arch Town. Staffed and manned by minotaurs, the Barsellium features gladiatorial bouts between all kinds of races and creatures. The interior right side of the coliseum houses a menagerie for public entertainment, while the interior left side holds artisan baths, steam rooms, and gymnasiums for the richer members of the public. The building itself is many stories above and below ground. The lowest levels host the gladiators, gyms, baths, as well as the monsters and animals used in the arena.

41. Hariz' Den

In a back alley, through a backdoor leading into a dark basement, lies a den filled with alcoves lined with cushions where strange men in turbans serve hookah pipes to vacant-eyed men and women of all kinds. Here, a few gold pieces will steal away your worries for a while...

42. Mowbray's Woodworking

A small, out-of-the-way furniture and carpentry shop, Mowbray's is completely unexceptional except for the fact that owner, Carpeus Mowbray, takes special orders for masterwork pieces such as puzzle boxes, floating sea-trunks, boxes with secret panels, or chests with poisoned needle traps in their masterwork locks....

43. Scents and Spice Company

The Scents and Spice Company has acquired the right of first refusal for any herb, plant, or essence brought back to Barsella and sold within the city's limits. The resulting monopoly pits them against the perfumeries of Bourgund and leads to an alarming number of "deadly accidents" on both sides.

WHORES' LOT

This district is brimming with drug dens, gambling halls, and brothels. The establishments vary widely in appearance, but members of the noble houses generally own and operate the more prominent brothels. In all, about 30 bordellos exist within this district, and obviously, not all of them are included below.

44. A Turn in the Barrel

Lillit Craver, a banished darakhul noblewoman, runs the Barrel, a house of debased debauchery. Its "girls" run the gamut of humanoid races, from goblins to roachlings, and it is the most popular meeting spot for less-than-human visitors to Barsella. Monstrous clientele, monstrous acts, monstrous plans.

45. The Crow's Nest

This brothel is peculiar even by Barsellan standards. Mermaids, huginn, halflings, and elfmarked have all worked here, mostly providing the lure of the exotic. The madam is the remarkable Arienna, a gearforged woman with a heart of steel. Some say her eye for captains and commodores leads her to choose a few clients of her own.

46. The Jade Palace

The Jade Palace is so named because all the uniquely beautiful girls working here have green eyes, as does its ageless madame, Jade Portia of the House Portia, who runs the establishment. Rumors in Port say the ladies are elfmarked (spies for Arbonesse and the River King) or dragonmarked (spies for the Mharoti Empire).

47. Naughty Sea Nymphs

Here naked ladies frolic about or entertain guests in one of the heated pools scattered across an important domain commonly referred to as The Nymphaeum. Many of the so-called "nymphs," which include two genuine mermaids known as Pearl and Coral, are also clerics of Seggotan.

48. The Puckering Puckerfish

Madam Kit Soudar's raucous dive of slaver girls is known as a reliable

source of sordid details about outgoing ventures. Ever since Kit took up with Farholm Tvariksson, her girls have been pressing their clients for information on Ankeshellian finds. However, some rumors hint that the obsession is actually Kit's.

49. The Shameless Succubus

Many wrongly believe that every prostitute of this grandiose bordello filled with obscene statues possesses an infernal ancestor. The fact that every girl wears a false set of small ivory horns truly helps to hide the nature of some, including Maëlys Vandella, the brothel's madame.

50. Siren's Song

This brothel caters generally to the nautical set, including minotaurs. The interior resembles a ship's hold, the salon is the captain's quarters, and the rooms are cabin-style. Proprietress Akari Bandarq is a comely white minotaur of great renown (minotaur bard 5/rogue 6).

51. World's End

This glamorous, upscale brothel caters exclusively to humans. The establishment's "courtesans" command a clientele from all the "best" houses and shipping companies. Proprietress Ahriva Innae (Mnemosynian lamia matriarch sorcerer 9) keeps many delicate secrets, and as a Mnemosynian agent, she steals many as well.

THE WASH

The relentless tides have cut caverns in the rock beneath the streets of Barsella. The Wash hides many things from the city above.

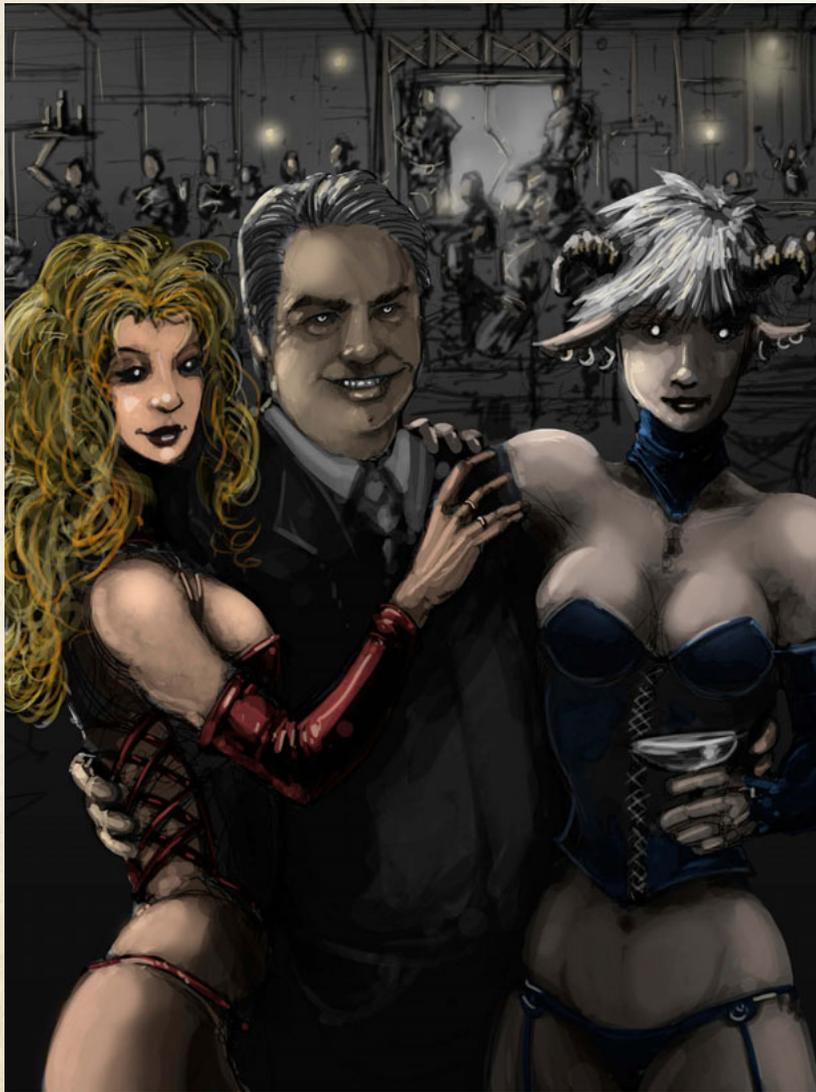
52. Briny Sheets

This series of tunnels is filled with line after line of sheets and old sails, hung up to soak in the tide when it comes in. Equally crusty servants and slaves scrape and crumble sea salt from the fabric for sale in markets far and wide. It is dangerous work, sometimes things other than salt get caught up in the ropes' maze-like patterns.

53. Drift Bone Shores

As the high tide washes under Barsella, the ocean's victims come ashore to mingle with unfortunates tossed into the sewers from above. The remains sometimes settle in the furthest caverns from the oceans, where they are picked clean by nearly blind scavenging worms. What remains are piles of bone mixed with debris and dried seaweed. Alchemists and necromancers alike are fond of dispatching apprentices on dangerous trips to sift through the detritus. Sometimes the mixtures animate, forming horrible mindless, magical undead creatures the locals call detritus ghouls. They rise and seek out the life forces of nearby creatures to feed their hunger.





54. The Hole

Deep in the Wash lies a deep pit extending well beyond normal eyesight range. Nobody knows how truly far or deep it reaches, and those who've entered it to investigate it have never returned. Although the hole rests beyond the areas affected by the tide, individuals have claimed to hear unearthly screams and strange noises coming from the hole during low tide, but only silence during high tide.

55. The Murder Maze

Enterprising minotaurs have built a warren of similar twisty passages in this area of the Wash, and they have sealed their entrances. From built chambers above, they can look down into the maze, where they place wandering humans and halflings for their own entertainment and gambling. Argus the demented, a deranged minotaur with fiendish blood, lives in the maze, and this brute prowls his construction, mauling and eating every living thing he encounters.

56. Forgotten Temple of Nethus

Deep in a partially collapsed tunnel of the Wash lies a gutted temple. Its living coral friezes have been cut away, and its mother-of-pearl sconces shattered. Salt cakes its pews. Grindylow and Goblin-sharks call Nethus's temple

home now and worship things far less glorious. Vilthalas (elfmarked cleric 10), once High Priest of the temple rests here in a statue-like pose, magically preserved and encased in salt since Nethus' imprisonment—or perhaps before.

CABALS

The Fragmented: These Barsellans, all victims of unusual memory loss, claim their recollections have been interfered with for some nefarious purpose. Although they can't pinpoint what was taken from them (obviously), they instinctively know some piece of their lives is missing. For others, holes and contradictions have come to light, making them question how much of anything they know or have experienced can be considered "true."

Some of the group's more vocal members, like the self-named prophet, Josiah Rizer, formerly a prosperous ship captain, claim little grey men are stealing memories from everyone and planting new ones in their place. Every day, he travels from one street corner to the next, shouting this revelation: "Wake up, people. There's a plot afoot to take over Barsella. We must pull together to ferret out these menaces. Else we will become their sheep!"

Many of the Fragmented's membership are not so public as Josiah, but instead meet in secret to discuss methods for recovering what is missing and uncovering the cause behind the fragmentation.

This diverse, paranoid membership seeks to regain their true histories and put an end to such meddling, but against an enemy who can erase all memory from them, progress has been painfully slow. All members of the cabal have the Fragmented One trait (see page 15)

The Paupers: This brotherhood is something of a "monastery without walls" in the city, whose members consist of a large portion of the city's beggars, all of them monks with the Path of Poverty (from the Kobold Quarterly Blog). They each have something of a unique style, encompassing many different monk variants, but one thing they share is an uneasy respect among the citizens, and any experienced citizen of Barsella will tell you: Never pick a fight with a drunk beggar.

The Seekers of the Scale (AKA Enders): A mystery cult of priests and followers who seek the World Serpent and the last city truly existing at the end of the world. They long to reach the fabled island of Terminus and to gaze out upon the scaled boundary. Their acolytes volunteer for any and all expeditions to the West. Many of the cultists carry pet snakes with them, and others speculate these creatures are somehow important to their mystery rites.

Sons of the Arch: The Hidden Council, being six lords from Kammae who were directly involved in the chaining of Nethus, rule this cabal—most from afar. The six are geomancers, and through the cabal they control 150 dedicated and geased cavaliers, inquisitors, and mages. Indirectly, they also control some of the city's more patriotic members, including House Rimeholdt.

The Sons of the Arch outwardly act as both as a civic brotherhood, funding hospitals, orphanages, and parks; and as a domestic police

force. In fact, they are a mystery cult with their own rites related to the geomancy many of their members practice. The organization's earliest leaders erected the Arch of the Mariners, and they point to it as a symbol of city pride, but in truth it is a prison for a kyton demagogue. The Sons actively pursue and repel any threats to the landmark, wanting to protect their secrets. They also prevent others from exploring the Wash, as they do not wish for others to stumble upon their temple and prisoner below. The cabal's mages study the creature, attempting to learn how its struggles under the Arch affect the rise and fall of Barsella's fortunes above.

GANGS

The Bilge Rats

Leadership: Triad of Nilthing Surrson, a reaver dwarf were-shark barbarian 8; Kkrassra, goblin-snake oracle 5; and Noam Cooper, human rogue 10.

Membership: 50 rogues, rangers, warriors, and sorcerers of the human, goblin, goblin-shark, kobold races and associates of this core group.

Goals: The Bilge Rats seek to take over the Wash, Barsella's undercity, and establish a dominant presence under the waves around the city. To this end, they operate protection rackets on dockside businesses, burgle ships at dock, smuggle goods through the Wash, and ambush undersea travelers in the waters around the city.

The Organization

Leadership: Sasha, unknown female assassin 11

Membership: 60 orphans, beggars, and thieves

Goals: This network of no-name orphans, beggars, and thieves report all they see and hear to a rising and potentially powerful assassin named Sasha. They pass along overheard tidbits of gossip, news, and rumor for Sasha to sell or trade out for favors. Stealing and killing are part and parcel of the business, and many of the beggars are trained assassins.

INHABITANTS

Bellalucca Caravicci, Bard Explorer

A charming, dark-haired beauty of the Caravicci clan, Bellalucca has caught the family bug and joins expeditions heading out to the Western Ocean whenever she can. She's been trying to capture her travels in journals and songs, but has been having a difficult time recalling all the details of her experiences. Some very odd experiences do come to mind, but she can't explain them all. She's a Fragmented One, but has yet to realize it. Bellalucca can be encountered singing in a few of the upscale taverns, and she has great connections to other Founding Houses.

(Human female; Bard 7; hp 49; Wis 16, Con 14, Cha 17; +6 dagger (1d4+1), +4 unarmed strike*; Bluff +12, Profession: Gambler +12; *provokes AoO)

Morgan Donarsson, Privateer Captain

Adopted son of the Donarsson family, Morgan was literally born at sea, a foundling taken in after a shipwreck. Tenacity, a gift for navigation and armor tattoos make Morgan a fearsome foe and respected captain. Morgan is a mercurial mix of gruff moodiness and lighthearted banter. His crew members respect his firm-but-even-handed leadership.

Brave but not foolhardy, Morgan leads from the frontline, rallying

his crew and reveling in puissance at arms. Morgan brooks no mutinous intent, and he has an especial hatred for bullies, nobility, and cowardice. Also known for his unorthodox approach to rank, his bosun and first mate are female minotaurs.

(Human male; fighter 4/ranger (guide) 7; hp 99, Str 17, Dex 14, Con 15, Cha 16; +15 bastard sword (1d10+4/17-20), +14 unarmed strike*; Craft: Tattoo +9, Intimidate +15; *provokes AoO)

BARSELLAN TRAITS

CASTAWAY (Regional Feat)

You have been casted adrift or ashore on the Western Ocean and survived to tell the tale.

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on your Survival and Swim checks.

FORTUNE'S CHILD (Regional)

The weal and woe of Barsella is in your blood.

Benefit: At the beginning of each day, you roll a d6. On a 1-3, you gain a +1 bonus to your Fortitude saves for a 24-hour period; on a 3-6, you suffer a -1 penalty to Fortitude saves for a 24-hour period.

FRAGMENTED ONE (Regional Trait)

You've had your mind manipulated, and you know it.

Benefit: Any time you are given a second save to resist a mind-affecting or compulsion effect, you gain a +1 trait bonus to the roll.

NOBLE PIRATE

A veneer of civility doesn't hide the fact that you are a cutthroat.

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on your Intimidate and Knowledge (nobility) checks.

WESTERN SHIPWRIGHT (Regional Trait)

Many ships go into the west, and you built most of them.

Benefit: You gain a +2 competence bonus on your Craft (carpentry) and Craft (ships).

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Aiding the Soudar

The Soudar family has been experiencing pirate attacks on their ships. They'd like someone to look into the matter discreetly, as their business tactics (enslaving others for nefarious purposes) are not on the up and up. The Soudar believe the Umbrascan pirates are behind the attacks, as they've had run-ins before, but do not know for sure. Regardless, they want the problem solved.

Demon in the Wash

The Sons of the Arch appear to be very protective of the Wash. What are they hiding down below? Certainly they seem benevolent with all their good public works, but those pesky rumors float about saying they practice strange rites. Some say they have a bound demon in the Wash. Why else would they be so protective of the place? Of course, the PCs have to bypass any detritus ghouls and marauding minotaurs seeking maze rats.



THE GREATER ISLANDS

ISLE OF MORPHOI



When the rage of Nethus failed to quench the divine fires of Kammae Straboli's empowered soldiers, it was not without consequence. The battle enslaved and chained the sea god, but inflicted other casualties more subtle and no less earth-shattering. The wife of Nethus, a deified siren queen named Mnemosyne, who holds dominion over memory and time, was also assaulted. Failing to kill the goddess, the Kammaen inquisitors' bindings removed from her mind any trace of their crime or the methods they used to capture Nethus. So Mnemosyne—the very embodiment of memory—suffers a memory gap. She cannot recall the events or even any thoughts of Nethus himself, but she knows something is missing. The handmaidens who sought to protect her were cursed into horrid forms, the first lamias to walk Midgard. No one knows how they arrived on the Isle of Morphoi.

The isle itself is lush, but tall cliffs and no ports mean most consider it uninhabitable and nigh unapproachable by sea. Monstrous creatures guard its waters, with chuuls, charybdises, dire sharks, and even scyllas reported by those brave enough to venture close. These same sailors describe cliff-side homes and dangling canoes hanging like swallows nests with beautiful women among them. Such sightings give rise to improbable tales of an island of enchanting amazonian seductresses; such tales are closer to the truth than most know.

Further from the coast, monasteries and spectacular gardens punctuate the island. A grand temple built in classical columned style stands proudly at the isle's center. Within, Mnemosyne holds court among her lamia handmaidens and devoted servants. The goddess is consumed with reclaiming the memories she knows remain lost. As a result of this obsession, her dominion over time slips, causing temporal instability on the island. Each new morning, explorers are as likely to encounter ancient beasts, from dinosaurs to mega-fauna, as they are strange metal constructs, primitive cavemen, cyclopes, and unusually-dressed men wielding strange, vril rifle-like weapons. Those enjoying the goddess's favor remain stuck in time, even as it shifts around them, and while buildings are unaffected, thick patches of jungle often spring up overnight, only to be dry desert the next day.

Servants of Mnemosyne include the lamia matriarchs—once beautiful nymphs now twisted in mind and body—serving her every need. Her worshipers include the island's original inhabitants, the morphoi. Also known as ugothols or faceless stalkers, entire tribes of these strange, shapeshifting creatures are enthralled by the goddess and devote their lives to her service. Most take the forms of beautiful women, as this pleases Mnemosyne, and all strive to retrieve her lost memories, restoring her to her rightful place as the unblemished goddess of memory.

To accomplish this, her handmaidens and morphoi servants disperse throughout Midgard, infiltrating courts and whorehouses alike, in hopes of capturing those with some knowledge of the events that led to Nethus's

capture and their goddess's painful forgetfulness. The Wisdom damage inflicted by the lamia matriarchs manifests itself as memory drain. Many servants and nobility among the Seven Cities forget entire spans of days after keeping company with a strange visitor.

Mnemosyne's servants also employ terrible crab-like creatures known as Neh-Thalggu, powerful sorcerers who rip memories from the harvested brains of those they suspect know something of the events that waylaid their queen. When such agents return to the island, they sit with the goddess and recount all they know in startling detail. Should the goddess ever discover the secrets behind the imprisonment of Nethus, Mnemosyne would move immediately to free her husband, and the wrath of the sea god toward his captors will be mighty indeed.

GEOGRAPHY

Morphoi is a 5-mile long island of mountains and tall cliffs. It has no natural harbors or bays, and so is difficult to travel to. In the middle of the island lies a lush valley of plains, hills, and forest. The Temple of Mnemosyne is the island's centermost structure. Monasteries rest upon several mountain tops.

A. THE MORPHOI VILLAGE OF MEME

Area A1 The Cliffside Bay and Tunnel System

On the northeastern side of the island stands a cliff ridge dotted with canoes tied to thick ropes and held at various heights. Caves pepper the outer wall at heights of a 200 feet and higher. The holes are man-made tunnels large enough for two Medium-sized creatures to walk abreast. The morphoi use these tunnels as access points for their launches. Prismwings sometimes nest in the tunnels.

Area A2 Topside Meme

Over 60 adobe huts and larger structures encircle a pool filled with various plants. Young, beautiful, human-appearing women with various shades of hair move about the village. The women carry staves and bows. The largest structure houses Meme's leader, Torza Cree. The women surround any intruders, but do not offer any violence unless attacked. The morphoi, after all, prefer to interrogate their visitor's memories rather than kill them outright. They willingly trade with visitors, and ply them with drink. A morphoi may ask to accompany them on their return trip to further infiltrate the PCs' society.

The Isle of Morphoi



Meme

LN village

Corruption -3; **Crime** -1; **Economy** -3; **Law** -5; **Lore** +1; **Society** -7

Qualities Tourist Attraction, Strategic Location

Danger +20; **Disadvantages** Hunted

Demographics

Government Magical

Population 82 (morphoi)

Notable NPCs

Elder/Leader Torza Cree (LE morphoi enchanter 9/bard 4)

Sage Fess "Whiptongue" Haud (LN morphoi witch 6)

Chief Hunter Chanda Sawl (N morphoi ranger 7)

Marketplace

Base Value 550gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500gp; **Spellcasting** 4th

Minor Items 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** -

B. THE OBELISK OF FOREVER

This obsidian obelisk rises 200 ft. into the air from Morphoi's highest point, and is visible from far out to sea. Images twirl along its sides like a snake made of moving scenes. Many of the depictions seem archaic, like they have somehow captured a piece of history. Cracks mar the obelisk, and its dark body fizzles and snaps with electricity.

The Obelisk is an artifact Mnemosyne created soon after she took up residence on Morphoi. The structure rests on the island's strongest ley line, and it captures memory and history across all Midgard. It funneled many of these images to the blind recorders whose souls were connected to it. When they were killed and when Mnemosyne's memory was stolen, the structure cracked. Now, it sometimes radiates memories out into the ocean, erasing the minds of those encountering its magic.

C. ZULE, THE NETHYSULE MAZE-GARDEN VILLAGE

The gardens here are a maze of hedges and tall trees. Within the maze lies a pool of solace with healing properties. The garden has several flower beds of daisy-like flowers that stand well over 10 feet tall each. Many nethysule live in treetop houses within the taller trees. Over 100 of them live throughout the maze. The druid Noros leads their unusual village.

Zule

N Village

Corruption -1; **Crime** -2; **Economy** -1; **Law** +0; **Lore** -3; **Society** +3

Qualities Insular, Pious.

Danger 0

Demographics

Government Druidic Council

Population 146 (nethysule)

Notable NPCs

Noros, Nethysule leader (Nethysule N Drd 10)

Laugren, Priest of Nethus (Nethysule CN Clr 11)

Village Elder Meruette Hekkar, (Nethysule LN Oracle 4 /Adept 2)

Guard Monitor Olensar Ull (Nethysule N Fighter 6)

Apothecarist Besh Feskit (Female Kobold CG Alchemist 2/Bard 4)

Marketplace

Base Value: 500gp **Purchase Limit:** 2,500 gp **Spellcasting:** 4th

Minor Items: 2d4 **Medium Items:** 1d4 **Major Items:** -

D. THE LAMIAN PLAINS

These flat grasslands claim a circular mile within the center of Morphoi. The Temple of Mnemosyne rests upon a hill in their very center. The Mnemosynian lamian matriarchs can often be seen running playfully about the plains, chasing one another, and singing joyfully at the top of their lungs. From a distance they easily pass for teenage centaurs, and they do seem childlike in their games. However, like many deadly creatures, their looks can be deceiving.

E. WARDHALLS OF MEMORY (MONASTERIES OF THE AEON BROTHERHOOD)

These monastic centers are home to the Aeon Brotherhood, a caste of eunuchs (usually human or morphoi, though other races are occasionally accepted) tasked with combing through old chronicles and recording "new histories," oral reports and studies of the Obelisk of Forever (Area B). Each Wardhall watches over a timeward of the Isle, and an Aeon Prime Brother oversees each; he answers to an Aeon Warden, a lamia (cleric, time domain 9/chronomancer 6 or time warden 6) responsible for her timeward and directly answerable to the Court of Mnemosyne.

A Wardhall's lay members (various monk archetypes, levels 2-5: flowing monk, master of many styles, for example) are divided into three groups - one each for Past, Present and Future - these assist the Aeon brothers as notaries and general aides. A complement of Aeon Hounds/Warders (morphoi inquisitor 7/ chronomancer 2) serves the Wardhall as bodyguards, operatives and hunters.

Area E1 Grottoes of the Buried Past (Underground Monastery)

Aeon Prime Brother Vartain Cordola (M human monk 11) leads this monastery, answering to Aeon Warden Venda Torai. Cave paintings cover the walls of these ancient caverns and man-made rooms filled with rock engravings can be found everywhere. The Monks of the Order of the Buried Past collect ancient scrolls and tablets, and record the visions obtained from The Obelisk of Forever. Members read all such accounts to Mnemosyne, so she might remember Midgard's history and the events leading to Nethus' imprisonment. Agents sometimes travel elsewhere to gather relics for this collection. Some consider this place the safest on the island, but the monks know better. Morphoi have known various pasts, and continue to experiment with different stories and the repercussions of new backlashes throughout time as well, but at least all these events remain fixed here once they have occurred.

Area E2 Monastery of Current Days

Aeon Prime Brother Adrau Heln (see page 20), a human oracle, leads this monastery, answering to Aeon Warden Amiric Tessin. This monastery is located on the second highest point of Morphoi and is accessible by a secret stair that runs from the cliff's base to reach Today's Chamber, a highly secured room at the very heart of the abbey which knights, monks and caryatids guard. Huge baskets can also be lowered and act as "official" access points. This zone is barely affected by the waves of change that sweep the island, and represents a haven in the turmoil of time.

Area E3 Abbey of Myriad Roads

Aeon Prime Brother Aster, a nethysule, leads this monastery, answering to Aeon Warden Karza Sene. This temple is consecrated to the renewal of Mnemosyne and a place that is inhabited and visited by all kind of diviners. Possible futures and prophecies are interpreted by the loremasters, monks, clerics, and diviners. The debates get quite heated regarding the possible consequences of what tomorrow might bring and what Mnemosyne will become depending on all the possibilities. The fact that the future is in a perpetual state of flux doesn't facilitate their arduous work.

MNEMOSYNE

The Universal Voice, She Who Has Always Been, Wife of Nethus, Mother of the Titans, Patroness of the Morphoi, Lady of Sirens, the Eternal Memory, Sister-Wife of Veles

Domains: Birth*, Knowledge, Plant, Song*, Time*

Subdomains: Fertility*, Growth, Life*, Memory, Past*, Future*, Thought

Alignment: Lawful Neutral

Favored Weapon: Staff

When the elemental dragon Seggotan came into existence, long before the other gods, one other was among him: Mnemosyne. She was but an essence then—pure thought, pure memory—but she had been there before him, and he knew she would be there long after him. She was the true Keeper of Time, though he claimed the title. The aloof Mnemosyne offered up no resistance, nor did she seem to care.

Mnemosyne took her time in choosing a form, and did not appear in humanoid form (a female humanoid resembling a fey-like, teenaged siren) on Midgard until the other gods had come forth, selected their masks, and chosen their heavenly and earthly domains. She spent some time in the Southlands, and the people there came to call her Yemaja. But, in due time, she fled the Southlands and settled in the little-traveled Western Ocean, away from the busyness of the mortal races. Her chosen island was populated, however, with plant-like creatures, some of whom could shapechange. The shapechangers embraced the lonely divine spirit as their queen, and soon began worshipping her. The other plant creatures mostly ignored her, offering up their attentions to a being lording over the seas.

When the sea lord discovered her presence, joy filled his heart at her beauty and he became smitten with the coy woman-child. For years, he wooed her with his ocean song and bid his servants gift her flowers as beautiful as she and with an enormous marble temple. Nethus' courting eventually won her over, and they wed. For a very long time, they were happy, and even produced several offspring, chief among them the titans and Charun.

Then, 15 years ago, tragedy struck. The Kammaen Oracle's soldiers attacked and kidnapped her husband, chaining him as a prisoner in their Theocracy of Straboli. The attack was twofold: The Oracle also sent her aggressors to capture Mnemosyne's memory and to steal her newborn daughter as she was in the midst of childbirth.

Now, Mnemosyne does not recall her lost child, though she knows "something" besides her husband is missing. Her servants have all been cursed, and do not recollect the truth of the events, either.

Worshippers

Mnemosyne is worshipped in the Western Ocean as Mnemosyne. In this area, her faithful include the morphoi, Mnemosynian matriarch

F. MNEMOSYNE'S ACROPOLIS

A large hill dominates the center of the Lamian Plains, a massive white marble building with tall columns stands upon it. In the front and back of the hill are two gates guarded by titan-sized warrior statues carrying strange weapons (ancient vril weapons). Other buildings rest upon the hill. A road leads to the forest to the west, and another snakes toward the village of Meme in the northeast.

Area F1 Temple of Mnemosyne

The rectangular marble structure rests atop the hill and stands 80 feet

lamias, lamias, sirens, merfolk, harpies, locathah, lorelei, and maereans. A few nethysule and humans have since joined her flock in the West.

In the South, Mnemosyne is worshipped as Yemaja, the protectress of women and children. Humans, minotaurs, and a few other races form her worshippers. Temples to her exist in the major cities of the South.

Mnemosyne once believed she drew no particular strength from the numbers who worship her, but being laid low has made her realize how important her worshippers are to her. She is also trying to maintain Nethus' clerics on Morphoi, who can no longer truly commune with their god or gain more powerful spells from him. This has made his priesthood beholden to her. While her aim is to protect her husband, her actions are, in fact, further weakening him. Because she is currently addled, her control of memory and time is precarious. Many of her faithful are naturally immune to time effects, however, so they have not suffered, but places immediately around her do experience time fluctuations.

Symbols and Books

The most common symbol of Mnemosyne is the figure eight, the symbol of infinity. Mnemosyne has no books of doctrine of her own. She transcends doctrine. Formerly, eight blind recorders (cousins to the Norns) filled never-ending tomes of information within her temple, but the Kammaens killed them. The assassins could not read the strange language of the recorders' tomes (even with magic), but stole a few before burning the remaining ones.

Famous Shrines and Priests

The Temple of Mnemosyne of the Isle of Morphoi is the largest one, and it remains unknown throughout greater Midgard. Temples exist to Yemaja in the Southlands.

Masks

Mnemosyne is a mask of the universe. Some believe she is a mask of the World Serpent. She is also Yemaja, and Yarilla and Porevit and Hermes-Thoth are often assumed to be her masks.

Other Faiths

Mnemosyne's only true allies are Nethus and Charun. Some of the other faiths, especially Seggotan's, know of Mnemosyne's existence, but none of them interact with her flock. Hecate's followers despise her, but know they cannot kill her, lest they unravel the threads of their own world.

What the Goddess Demands

She demands her flock sift through the memories of others in search of the truth that has fled her. They must seek to free Nethus and unravel the mysteries surrounding the events of his kidnapping and imprisonment.

tall (tall enough for Mnemosyne's titan children to visit). The temple is simplistic in its beauty, with doric columns and hanging gardens.

Area F2 Amphitheatre of Mnemosyne

The amphitheatre is submerged into the hill southeast of the temple. Priestesses favoring song perform for the goddess and the morphoi several times a year.

Area F3 Lamian Quarters

The lesser priestesses and servants reside in the separate quarters, also made of marble.

G. THE TEMPLE OF NETHUS

Along a short stretch of western coastline (one of the few beaches in existence on the island) and backed against a cliff wall rests a pink and tan conch shell the size of an ancient dragon. Its opening lies near a short beach with a small dock leading out into the water. Two small dingies are tied to the dock, and each rocks back and forth with the rolling of the waves. All around the short pier, various creatures can be seen moving about the water, including dolphins, chuul, morphoi hulks, and nethysule.

The temple, which has an attached underwater component made from coral, is home to 30 of Nethus' most devout priests, most of whom are amphibious blue-grey-skinned nethysule. Laugrun (male nethysule cleric 11) is the high priest. The temple's priests also include a merfolk, a siren, two lorelei, a dragon turtle, and a titan (the latter two travel about the Western Ocean).

INHABITANTS

The Isle of Morphoi can be a very dangerous place, as its inhabitants are not your run-of-the-mill commoners. They have considerable levels in their specialties.

Shelayne, High Priestess of Mnemosyne

Shelayne became the high priestess of Mnemosyne after the Kammaen attack on her goddess, which left the former high priestess dead and her body stolen. Shelayne is greatly concerned about the events that shattered her goddess and wiped her memory, but, like her goddess, she cannot recall what occurred either. She is desperate to regain the peace and tranquility that formerly reigned over Morphoi.

Shelayne (Mnemosynian matriarch lamia) Clr 12; HP 131 ; Int 17 , Wis 20, Cha 18; Two +3 scimitars: +12/+12/+7/+7/+2 (1d6+6/16-20, plus 1d4 Wisdom drain on 1st atk each round); Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +20, Knowledge (religion) +20, Knowledge (local - Morphoi) +24, Profession: Courtesan +16, Sense Motive +12.

Hinesskala "The Betrayer Betrayed", Priestess of Mnemosyne

Before Mnemosyne, Nethus wooed and courted Hinesskala, a locathah priestess, but eventually he tired of her fawning habits and familiar ways. Intrigued by Mnemosyne's grace and bearing he left Hinesskala without so much as a goodbye. Tortured Hinesskala has paid the ultimate price for her betrayal - she shares the same curse her sister priestesses received from the Kammaen inquisitors, though her form is more aquatic and serpentine than centauran. Maddened and enraged at Kemmaean duplicity, she turned her attention toward those very arts of the inquisition. Now a haunt of waterways, she engages locathah, sahuagin and agents of the Sea Titans to overthrow the Court of Mnemosyne.

Hinesskala (Mnemosynian lamia matriarch) Clr 14/Inq 4; HP 158; +4 trident of warning: +19/+14 (1d8+7/18-20, plus 1d4 Wisdom drain on 1st atk each round); Int 19, Wis 18 Cha 17; Acrobatics +8 (Jump +12), Bluff +14, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +16, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (local - Morphoi) , +14 Profession: Courtesan +12, Sense Motive +10, Swim +20

Torza Cree, Leader of Meme, the Morphoi Village

Torza resides in the largest adobe building in Meme. She is a youthful-looking woman with a mane of dark hair and disconcerting silver-purple eyes. She wears very little clothing, and is quite buxom. She is somewhat taller than the other ladies of the village, and she is perhaps the most charming of them all. Torza is a staunch supporter of Mnemosyne, and she does what she can to bring visitors to those who can investigate their memories. Like all morphoi, Torza has eyes in the back of her head.

Torza Cree (F Morphoi); Ench 9/Bd 4; HP 54; Str 13, Wis 16, Con 14, Cha 22; +3 dagger of venom (1d4+4/19-20+ venom) +10/+5; Bluff +12, Knowledge (local - Morphoi)+24, Profession: Farmer +12, Perception +14, Diplomacy +13, Stealth +14 (+24 in vegetation), Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +9

Noros, Nethysule Leader

Grief-stricken Noros shares the pain of its god, unapologetically blaming Mnemosyne for the loss of Nethus. Unwilling to see Nethus in anything but a blameless state, Noros has become a fanatic with limited vision for his order. Though nominally owing fealty to the Court of Mnemosyne, Noros flouts their rule, and secretly bids other nethysule to do the same. Memories and thoughts do not inspire Noros - actions and experience do. Noros will be swayed to aid any creature that demonstrates a simple and brave desire to see Nethus freed, or even an intimation of rebellion against the Court.

Noros (M Nethysule); Drd 10; HP 51; Int 14 , Wis 18, Cha 16; +3 Staff of Earth and Stone (1d6+5) +9/+4; Bluff +16, Climb+12 (+22 in vegetation), Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (local - Morphoi)+14, Profession: Herbalist +20, Sense Motive +14

Laugrun, High Priest of Nethus

In sharp contrast to bud-sibling Noros, Laugrun favors an open view of causality and bemoans the rantings against the Court of Mnemosyne Noros so willfully espouses. Gnarled and bent by youthful adventures, Laugrun travelled to Barsella, Bemmaea, and even the South before returning to the Isle of Morphoi and taking up vows of the priesthood. Laugrun's sojourns have taught it that the many-view often offers more than the one, and like waves on the shore, new ideas replace old ones just as easily. Laugrun is fiercely protective of the Nethysule people and the sacred nature of Nethus' worship and domain.

Laugrun (M Nethysule); cleric 11; HP 56; Int 14 , Wis 19, Cha 18; +2 Staff of Defense(1d6+2) +13/+6; Bluff +16, Climb+10 (+20 in vegetation), Diplomacy +16, Knowledge (religion) +18, Knowledge (local - Morphoi)+22, Profession: Gardener +16, Sense Motive +10

Prime Brother Adrau Heln

Adrau's young aspect and beatific countenance is in stark contrast to his internal struggle - past present and future are all one to him. Upon first meeting adventurers, he is just as likely to remark on how glad he is to see them again as he is to meet them.

Plucked from obscurity for his messianic powers Adrau's young age is no impediment to his organizational skills or his ability to manage both his underlings and his demanding superiors.

Adrau Heln (M Human); Oracle 8 (time curse); HP ; Int 14 , Wis 16, Cha 18; +2 Staff of illumination (1d6+2) +6, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +18, Knowledge (History) +18, Knowledge (local - Morphoi)+16, Profession: Architect +14, Sense Motive +12; Spellcraft +18

ENCOUNTERS

Potential encounters range from carnivorous blobs, to sea drakes, to merrow or neh-thalguu. The temporal anomalies often affect the creatures encountered, leaving them vulnerable to surprise.

ENVIRONMENT AND MECHANICS

Temporal Rifts

Areas of unstable temporal energy, the time rifts form randomly across Morphoi and the Aroan atolls. They vary in size from small bubbles only a few feet across to large areas the size of a town. The rifts only last 1 round but the effects can last much longer (see below).

A successful DC 20 Spellcraft or DC 25 Perception check detects a tingling in the air that heralds the presence of a forming time-rift. When a rift forms, the resulting release of temporal energy immediately affects anyone caught within the radius, in addition, once the field dissipates it leaves behind a secondary area effect. These personal and area effects are detailed below.

Table 1: Personal Rift Effects

01-05	One random item suffers advanced age, receiving the broken condition.
06-10	1d3 items slip backward in time. Items return in 1 hour*, in a devolved state, losing one ability or enhancement bonus**
11-14	One random item devolves, losing one ability or enhancement bonus **
15-18	Creature becomes 1d10 years younger, effect wears off after 1 day.
19-24	Future self of creature appears, wounded and bloodied, then disappears. Will save DC20 or receive staggered condition for 24 hrs
25-29	Younger self of creature appears then disappears. Will save DC20 or be shaken for 24 hrs
30-35	One random item is replaced with a primitive version, receiving the fragile condition.
36-38	All gear slips forward in time. Returns to area of Temporal Rift in 1d3 hours* as normal.
39-45	One random item replaced by future version, gains an ability or enhancement bonus**
46-54	Creature ages 1d10 years, effect wears off after 1 week.
55	Creature ages 2d20 years, effect is permanent.
56-60	1d2 random item replaced by future versions, gaining an ability or enhancement bonus** AND 1d2 random items devolve, losing an ability or enhancement bonus**.
61-64	Character gains a temporal duplicate of one item (randomly chosen). Any effect (damage, draining...etc.) or use of consumable portion that happens to the original also happens to the duplicate but not vice versa. After 24 hours, the original item vanishes.
65	Creature become 1d20 years younger, effect is permanent.
66-75	1d2 random items slip forward into time. Returns to area of Rift in 1 day* in an evolved state, gaining one ability or enhancement bonus**
76-85	1d2 random items slips backward into time. Returns to area of Rift in 3 days* in a devolved state, losing an ability or enhancement bonus**
86-95	Creature travels back to time of catastrophe (K'karoan cataclysm, Mage-Wars...etc.) and then returns. Fort save DC20 or be fatigued for 24 hrs.

96-97	Creature slips backward in time. Returns to area of Rift in 1 day, Will save DC20 or be staggered for 24 hrs.
98-99	Creature passes through a time-rip, living through many timelines simultaneously. Fort save DC20 or be exhausted for 24 hrs.
00	Creature slips forward in time. Does not return, but may reappear in the future.

*unless creature leaves the Aroan triangle, in which case item(s) appear on the Atoll of the Lost, detailed in part two of The Plagued Seas on page 94.

** GM's choice. Devolution/evolution lasts for 24 hours before items revert to normal, or if the items are taken outside the Aroan triangle (Optional rule – Generous GMs may opt to allow characters to make a DC20 Fort save to avoid the personal effects of Time Rifts.)

Table 2: Area Rift Effects

Typically, when Temporal Rifts dissipate they leave behind terrain, creatures and/or weather from the past or the future. While the creatures drawn through time do not return to their natural times, and subsequently make the islands their homes, the terrain changes only last a few days before reverting to the natural landscape of the islands. GMs are urged to use terrain guidelines in the Pathfinder Core Rulebook to reflect the changes to terrain and to adjust the number of summoned creatures as appropriate for the Party's level.

01-05	Cataclysmic terrain (earthquakes, steam geysers, wild-magic effects) for 1d4 days
06-10	Creature from the past - Random angry Mega-fauna (Bestiary 3) or Dinosaur (Bestiary 2)
11-15	All plants within Rift radius wither and die. Release of toxins as stinking cloud (DC 20)
16-25	Ice Age terrain (snowfields, ice slicks, hypothermia) for 1d4 days
26-35	Creature from the future - 1 brain ooze (CR 7, Bestiary 3)
36-45	Random weather change
46-55	Primordial terrain (swamps, humidity, diseases rampant) for 1d4 days
56-65	Creature from the past - 1 devolved neh-thalggu (CR 8, Bestiary 2)
66-75	All plants within Rift radius experience exponential growth; as entangle (DC 20)
75-85	Future terrain (broken city wasteland, clockwork traps litter the area) for 1d4 days
86-95	Creature from the future - 1d4 Vril-tech Clockwork Soldiers (Bestiary 3)
96-97	Volcanic storm (as per spell in Ultimate Magic) for 5 hours; or forest fire for 5 hours
98-99	Oceanic terrain (300 feet deep, whirlpool and/or waterspout) for 1d4 days
00	Creature from the past: Thunder Beast (CR 18, Bestiary 3) appears, it is not happy about it.

NEW DOMAINS

Life Domain

Granted Powers: Your body is bolstered by the fire of life. You add ½ your Wisdom modifier to Constitution checks to become stable when dying.

Abundant Aura (Su): You generate an aura that grants any creature standing adjacent to you a +1 sacred (or profane) bonus to Fortitude saves. This bonus increases by +1 for every five levels that you possess beyond first. Additionally, adjacent creatures, as well as yourself, gain additional hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier when subjected to any healing effect, including natural healing gained from rest. This ability is constant but may be suppressed or renewed as a free action.

Font of Life (Su): At 8th level, you may channel positive energy through yourself as a standard action and gain fast healing equal to your Wisdom modifier for a number of rounds per day equal to your cleric level. These rounds need not be consecutive. At 12th level, you may confer this ability upon a creature with a successful touch attack; undead under the effect of this ability are wounded at the same rate.

Domain Spells: *1st – invigorate, 2nd – grace, 3rd – heroism, 4th – grove of respite, 5th – breath of life, 6th – life bubble, 7th – regenerate, 8th – clone, 9th – mass heal*

Birth Subdomain

The Mother's Curse (Sp): You inflict the pain of childbirth contractions upon your target. Your target must make a Will save (DC 10+ ½ your level+ your Wisdom modifier) or gain the Sickened condition and take 2d4 non-lethal damage per round. You may spend a swift action each round to continue the effect for a number of rounds up to your cleric level. At 12th level, you may inflict the pain of actual childbirth upon someone already affected by this power. The target makes another Will save at the same DC or falls prone, suffers 2d4 + your cleric level of non-lethal damage and is Nauseated for a number of rounds equal to your Wisdom modifier. This ends your ability to maintain the effect on the target. You may use this power a number of times per day equal to 3+ your Wisdom modifier. This ability replaces the 'Abundant Aura' power of the Life domain.

Replacement Domain Spells: *4th – good hope, 5th – reincarnate*

Fertility Subdomain

Speed the Cycle (Sp): With a touch, you spread the seeds of destruction upon your target, and of new life. A number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier, you may attempt a touch attack against a non-living target (undead and constructs count as non-living). Success deals 1d6 points of damage per every two cleric levels you possess, bypassing hardness. Creatures or objects reduced to zero hit points in this manner immediately decay into a pile of base material and are destroyed. In the following round a plant or fungus grows from the mound and bears a number of fruit equal to your Wisdom modifier. Any creature that uses a move action to consume a fruit gains the benefits of the spell good hope for one minute. This ability replaces the 'Font of Life' power of the Life domain.

Replacement Domain Spells: *3rd – remove disease, 4th – restoration, 6th – heroes' feast*

Song Domain

Granted Powers: Your voice carries the power of the god of music, inspiring allies and charming foes.

Song of Courage (Su): Your singing grants your allies a +1 bonus to saving throws against charm and fear effects and on attack and damage rolls. You can sing the song of courage a number of times per day equal to 1 + your Charisma bonus. This power is otherwise similar to a bard's inspire courage ability.

Song of Suggestion (Sp): At 8th level, once per day you can sing a powerful song and make a suggestion (as per the spell) to a number of creatures equal to your Charisma bonus. A Will save (DC 10 + ½ your cleric level + your Charisma modifier) negates the effects. This power is otherwise similar to a bard's suggestion ability.

Domain Spells: *1st—silver tongue, 2nd—song of rapture, 3rd—sculpt sound, 4th—song of discord, 5th—music of the spheres, 6th—sympathetic vibration, 7th—irresistible dance, 8th—holy aura, 9th—wail of the banshee.*

Time Domain

Granted Powers: You gain a small bit of mastery over time itself.

Timely Insight (Sp): You can imbue a target with a small glimpse into the future. For the next round, anytime the target rolls a d20, they receive an insight bonus of one-half your class level (minimum 1.) This ability may be used a number of times equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

Freedom from Time (Su): At 8th level, a cleric no longer ages (although effects of age remain in place.) Additionally they gain immunity to slow effects.

Domain Spells: *1st—true strike, 2nd—delay poison, 3rd—displacement, 4th—slow, 5th—haste, 6th—contingency, 7th—delayed blast fireball, 8th—temporal stasis, 9th—time stop*

ISLAND ADVENTURES

Recovering A Lost Memory

The party seeks assistance from a monk to recover a lost memory vital to their current mission. In order to extract the lost memory, the monk must inject a serum, taken from the mysterious dreamweed, directly into a character's brain. Of course, the PCs need to retrieve the dreamweed for the serum. The process proves difficult, since the dreamweed grows near the Obelisk of Forever, and approaching it increases the risk of memory loss. Once the PCs harvest the dreamweed, they must return to the monk, who must administer and survive the remedy.

Alter the Past

Enter the Obelisk of Forever to go back in time and alter vital events like:

- Return a scion of a Barsellan house for questioning and trial
- Bring back to glory lost fortune of a Barsellan House by rescuing a doomed expedition or preventing it from departing.
- Repel Kemmaean Inquisitors and deny the loss of Nethus.

Petition the Norns

Under duress or free-will, travel from the Isle of Morphoi to the Norn Tower to request aid from the Norns in returning Memory to its "proper" place.

THE LESSER ISLANDS

THE ACCURSED ISLE OF MESHONG-LIR AND THE SAVAGE ISLES



In the far distant past, the world almost came to an end on the island of Meshong-Lir. A Great Old One called Noth-Nyarthogu invaded this dimension from the Far Beyond. According to ancient prophecies Noth-Nyarthogu was destined to destroy existence. In its brief period of freedom, it wrought unimaginable ruin. Some say it devoured the world's western half, leaving only the great cataract where the Western Ocean now plummets into oblivion.

Gods of old united to battle the Great Old One. Their conflagration ended on the levitating island of Meshong-Lir, slaughtering the Elysian titans and destroying their dazzling city. When the gods found destiny prevented them from killing or banishing Noth-Nyarthogu, they appealed to the Three Fates, the Great Norns who weave destiny's tapestry. The Great Norns rewove fate's strands to slow time around the otherworldly horror to a virtual stop, plunge it into a deathlike sleep, and bind fast its horrific form. The gods then imprisoned the abomination and its minions deep within the desecrated ruins. They installed guardians, warded the blasted city's wreckage against intrusion by Noth-Nyarthogu's servitors and Far-Beyond scions, opened the deepest trench in the Western Ocean, and sank the accursed isle into it.

On a rocky promontory five miles south, the dead titans' kin built the Great Norns a mile-high tower to oversee the dark waters where Meshong-Lir sank. Millennia passed. The Norns and titans moved on. The spherical chamber adorning the Norn Tower's pinnacle held the Norn's greatest magics. When time finally cracked its walls, hounds of Tindalos entered to gnaw at fate's tapestry, and half the Tower fell.

Now, in its sunken tomb, the Great Old One stirs, and its servitors' scattered descendants sense its call. Shoggoths crawl into Meshong-Lir's submerged remains to claw at sealed doors. Aquatic chaos beasts and gibbering moutthers follow. Noth-Nyarthogu's agents travel the Western Islands, teaching others sacrificial rites to raise Meshong-Lir and spells which unravel wards—spells and rites the gods' ancient magic prohibits Noth-Nyarthogu's minions from performing themselves.

On moonless nights, when silhouettes dance abhorrent rituals, Meshong-Lir rises. While the island usually submerges before dawn, rituals have recently kept it surface-bound for a full day. Within, labyrinthine crawl spaces spiral into mind-bending gulfs of blackness, the cyclopean ruins warping into ever-deepening nightmare. Beyond the harrowing guardians and insane titan ghosts, symbols of blasphemous power pulse like living things across treasures unimagined. And throughout, unspeakable abominations haunt the echoes.

Yet they—the eager, the foolish, and the damned— come, people seeking abandoned wealth and secrets to alter destiny or bind the gods.

One by one, they open forbidden doors. And somewhere far below, the Great Old One waits.

GEOGRAPHY OF MESHONG-LIR

The Elysian titans built their oceanic civilization's crowning jewel on the northernmost island of the archipelago now known as the Savage Isles. The titans' rituals tapped the region's unique magic to levitate numerous islands into the sky. Meshong-Lir itself once dwelt often among the clouds, lowering to sea level when desired.

Meshong-Lir is 13 miles across at its widest point. Most of the time, the island sits seven miles down in the frigid blackness of the ocean's abyss. It rises when summoned at 10 miles per hour. The vast water volume displaced creates tidal waves when it rises and a vortex when it sinks (see Environment and Mechanics, below). Its bedrock foundation always remains submerged. Blasphemous runes shiver and flicker across the island's underside, filling the dark water with an otherworldly glow visible for miles.

Across Meshong-Lir's entire surface, the Elysian titans erected tier upon towering tier of palaces, temples, and resplendent living structures until their glorious city climbed miles high. Magic elevated their fanciful architecture. They also dug astonishing structures deep into the bedrock. With titans standing over 12 times human height, all their structures were colossal.

The maelstrom of blasphemous magic Noth-Nyarthogu unleashed not only slaughtered the titans and collapsed their city, it melted, twisted, and warped the ruins into macabre and fantastic shapes no mortal hand could craft. The gods imprisoned the Great Old One in a tomb-like vault deep below the rubble mountain. They then passed through the horrific internal landscape, erecting and warding doors and seals separating chambers and sections. Over the ensuing millennia, Noth-Nyarthogu's influence further corrupted the ruins, deforming the interior into incomprehensible shapes.

Doors

"Doors" mean any barriers between areas which can be opened and closed and which are protected by magic and traps. From mammoth to tiny, most bear fantastic shapes, and some simply astonish. A curtain of eldritch fire, a black pool of antipathy suspended in a ceiling, or a raging waterfall of bound water elementals can be a door.



MESNONG-LIR

Mesnong-Lir
A1 Island Expanse
A2 Outer Circle
A3 Middle Vast
A4 Inner Depths

DAKARA-NOR
(FLYING)

B2 THE NORNTOWER

B. Архипелаго

B1 The Savage Isles

AZ'SKARA-TOR

LAZEN-TOR
(FLYING)

NORTHERN REACHES OF THE
SAVAGE ISLES

GORMEN-FEN

MALIK-SAR

CARRAZABAC-NOR
(FLYING)

A. THE ACCURSED ISLE

Area A1 Island Exterior

Meshong-Lir surfaces as a black, twisted mountain of ruin several miles high. Torrents of water cascade from numerous fissures and openings for an hour or more before diminishing to rivulets.

Except in the eastern harbor, one approaching by boat must navigate through hundreds of yards of colossal debris before reaching the island's mass. Rows of broken pillar columns rise from the water hundreds of feet, and looming wall sections lean, threatening collapse. No natural beaches exist. To land, most visitors must climb the listing side of some ruined structure straight from their boat's gunnels. Along the harbor's face, however, the island's bedrock drops sheer into the abyssal depths. A deep-draft ship can sail right to the island's front.

To cross the exterior, one must climb over, under, and through a wasteland of tumbled edifices, stone blocks, and fallen pillars of seemingly impossible scale. This mantle suffered the least warping from Noth-Nyarthogu's aura, remaining a wilderness of shattered, mammoth architecture.

Openings riddle the surface, from claustrophobic chutes to cyclopean tunnels. Most twist through fissures and cavities before terminating in dead-end sumps. Several dozen open into the interior structure's Outer Tier, perhaps most easily identified by the water volume they disgorge when Meshong-Lir rises.

For several thousand years, no treasure-seeking creature could reach the submerged island's mantle. Gems and gold filigree worked into the titan's architecture linger in dark corners.

Gargantuan building and tower segments rise from the waters around the island to drift through the air, supported by vestiges of titan magic and the power raising Meshong-Lir from the deep. Uncanny blue runes flicker across their lower surfaces.

Area A2 Outer Tier

Exterior passages open into the Outer Tier, the outermost of Meshong-Lir's three interior layers. Large areas offer nothing more than tangled crawl spaces through the ruins. These claustrophobic warrens expand suddenly into massive cavities and jaw-dropping voids.

Many of the Outer Tier's exterior and interior doors and wards have been breached. When Meshong-Lir rises and sinks, huge volumes of black water roar through many sections. Strange crustaceans encrust the terrain with unsettling patterns, and abyssal ocean creatures distorted into monstrosities pulse and drip foul fluids from oblique surfaces. Submerged areas which never drain are common, alive with eerie, bioluminescent bottom-dwellers.

Although the architecture comprising all Outer Tier surfaces twisted and fused during the binding battle, some areas warped more than others. Many buildings, though deeply buried, possess largely intact interiors. One can squeeze through narrow vents opening into a grand courthouse listing 35-degrees sideways, or stumble into the nave of a vast cathedral over 12 times larger than human scale, now upside down and half flooded. Elsewhere, corrupting forces perverted the masonry so one must struggle to recognize staircases, statues, and mammoth pillars fused into floors, walls, and ceilings.

Area A3 Middle Void

The Middle Void begins thousands of feet in from the exterior. Few of the doors barring entry from the Outer Tier have been breached. Golems still stand sentry, and magical traps work.

Water floods few of the Middle Void's regions. While small passages and chambers exist throughout, cavernous cavities predominate. This is

an empty land of echoes in vaulting, hollow spaces. Noth-Nyarthogu's corrupting aura mutated surfaces here more pervasively than in the Outer Tier. Architectural elements can still be seen in places, and some chambers still resemble mammoth-building interiors, but all are grossly distorted.

Area A4 Inner Depths

The Inner Depths delve into the island's central bedrock, its lowest regions entirely flooded. Here, Noth-Nyarthogu's malignant influence rules all. Nothing resembling architecture remains. Hollows have deformed into mind-defying shapes. In some, gravity effects shift. In others, sounds don't exist or take too long to echo back. Down here, shadows multiply, cavort, and threaten without regard to light direction, and appalling fluids run up walls. Some cavities and basins mutate over a period of minutes, elongating, shrinking, or buckling into entirely new configurations. Elsewhere, surfaces turn flesh-like, and pulsating membranes stretch across voids like webs of muscle, tendon, or grotesque organs. Regions closest to the Great Old One's prison-tomb pervert to manifest whatever would most unhinge those caught within them. The gods alone know the prison-tomb's true location or the nature of its wards.

B. ARCHIPELAGO

Area B1 The Savage Isles

Rugged islands teeming with life comprise the archipelago to Meshong-Lir's south. Islands grow larger southward until they dwarf Meshong-Lir. Cliffs hang over rocky coves on most. Steep mountains adorn many. Most are heavily forested or lush with lowland plants. On some, overgrown remnants of titan ruins remain, hinting at grandeur long lost.

Ten percent of the islands levitate, some mere yards up, others over a thousand feet. Waterfalls from their rivers are wonders in the sky. Most drift yards yearly, but some move faster. All orbit back over the archipelago, bound by ancient magic. Sky-island shadows darken lands beneath, withering plants and forcing animal migrations.

Area B2 The Norn Tower

The pale, opalescent Norn Tower stands on a jagged promontory five miles south of Meshong-Lir, where long lines of massive pillars rise from the waves. Before it fell, the Norn Tower rose over 5,000 feet from its 400-foot-wide base, tapering elegantly to a spherical, crystal chamber, 200-foot wide. Its sides formed a rising spiral, like the whorls of a nautilus shell. A free-standing spiral staircase of 8-foot-high steps rose around it, 15 feet away from its exterior walls.

When its top half collapsed, rubble smashed the remaining interior floors, choking them with debris. Now, a yawning rent plunges 2,000 feet down the tower's south side. Although rubble destroyed segments of the surrounding staircase, these breaks are surprisingly narrow. The broad sweeps of magical stair still float in space. No doors or windows are visible on the tower's exterior. The ruins conceal relics showing the Great Old One's battle and binding, and great items of power and magics forgotten.

The tower's foundations rest on a 50-foot-high promontory with sheer sides. On the south side, broken masonry forms a steep ramp from the sea to the Tower's base like a giant's causeway. Deep among the submerged tunnels and grottos, an entryway leads to the hemisphere of the tower's topmost crystal chamber, still half filled with air.

INHABITANTS

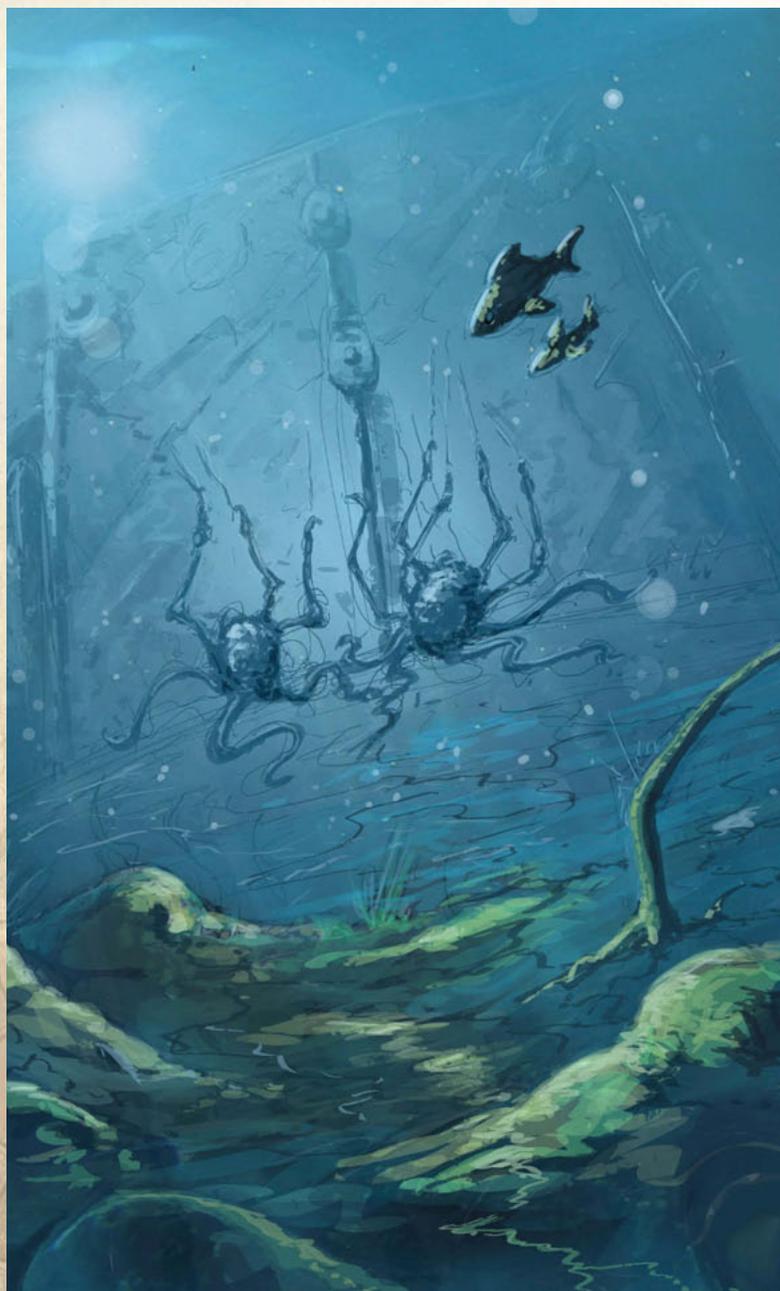
Heralds of Darkness

Heralds of darkness are Noth-Nyarthogu's foremost emissaries. Noth-Nyarthogu unleashed these horrors into the Western Islands millennia

ago. They are brilliant, devious, and malicious beyond measure. They excel as spies, assassins, torturers, liaisons to the dangerous, and whisperers of terrible secrets.

They masquerade as stunning and charismatic members of other races to offer forbidden lore to the ambitious and foolhardy, luring them into ever-deeper evil. Their veil magic, however, works perfectly only against good observers. After repeated interaction, little by little, those descending into evil catch glimpses of the true horror beneath:

Shrouded in darkness like billowing vapor, the silhouette of this figure seems human until it unwraps four sinuous tentacles from around its body to brush the ground. It undulates forward on a knot of similar limbs roiling under its glistening, colorless torso. Instead of a head, it has a seething clot of fleshy coils. Numerous inhuman eyes bulge and blink from seemingly random locations scattered across its body and limbs.



Herald of Darkness

CR 7

XP 2,400

CE medium outsider (aquatic, chaotic, evil, extraplanar)

Init +2; **Senses** see in darkness; Perception +15

Aura darkness (30 ft., dismissible)

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 85 (9d10+36)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +12

DR 10/lawful or good, **Immune** cold, disease, poison, **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30, swim 30

Melee 4 tentacles +12 (1d8+3 plus grab plus accursed eyes curse)

Space 5 ft., Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+3)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9, concentration +14)

Constant—*comprehend languages, read magic, tongues, undetectable alignment*

At will—*detect thoughts* (DC 17), *veil* (self only, see Parting Veil, below) (DC 21)

3/day—*charm person* (DC 16), *suggestion* (DC 18), *touch of idiocy* (DC 17)

1/day—*contact other plane* (see Teach Blasphemy, below) *charm monster* (DC 19), *mind fog* (20)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 20, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

Feats Alertness, Iron Will, Magical Aptitude, Persuasive

Skills Bluff +17 Diplomacy +17, Disguise +17, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (planes) +15, Knowledge (Religion) 10, Linguistics 17, Perception +15, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +12, Swim +17, Use Magic Device +17, Racial Modifiers Disguise +4, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Linguistics +4, Swim +8

Languages Aklo, Common

SQ amphibious

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Far Beyond)

Organization solitary, pair, or delegation (3–12)

Treasure Standard plus 1d3 spell-trigger magic items

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Accursed Eyes (Su)

Type curse, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 19 when injured negates

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect Each day, 1d2 alien eyes emerge somewhere on the victim's body. The victim cannot control his accursed eyes, but he sees through them, and they have the see in darkness special quality. Within one mile, all heralds of darkness and those they serve can see through these accursed eyes too. Whenever an accursed eye is covered so it cannot see, the victim's own eyes go temporarily blind. If an accursed eye is destroyed or permanently blinded, the victim's own eyes go permanently blind. **Cure** Remove curse and similar effects stop the curse's

progression, but each casting removes only one eye.

All-Around Vision (Ex) A herald of darkness sees in all directions at once. It cannot be flanked.

See in Darkness (Su) A herald of darkness sees perfectly in normal and magical darkness.

Teach Blasphemy (Su) Although heralds of darkness cannot cast spells, they assiduously study both spells and horrific rituals to teach to the corruptible, advancing their doom. They can use their contact other plane spell-like ability only on behalf of requesting fey, humanoids, monstrous humanoids, or non-evil outsiders. They can teach, but cannot perform, complex sacrificial rites to produce greater planar binding effects to summon powerful, chaotic-evil outsiders.

Parting Veil (Su) Each time a non-good creature learns magic or something secret from a herald of darkness concealing itself with veil, he gets a DC 19 Will save to glimpse some aspect of its true appearance.

Titan Ghosts

The horrific slaughter of tens of thousands of Elysian titans left countless ghosts. Millennia of exposure to Noth-Nyarthogu's corrupting aura destroyed most of them. Those remaining suffer severely degraded capacity. Moreover, corruption unhinged most of those remaining, perverted many to evil, and drove some dangerously insane.

Corrupted Elysian Titan Ghost

CR 9

XP 6,400

CG, CN, or CE Colossal undead (chaotic, outsider, incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., Perception +25

DEFENSE

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 6 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex, -8 size)

hp 178 (21d8+84)

Fort +10, **Ref** +15, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation;

Immunities undead traits; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +16 (9d6, DC 24 half)

Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

Special Attacks any 2 of the following (each DC 24): corrupting gaze, frightful moan, malevolence, telekinesis

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +14)

3/day—*bestow curse* (DC 18), *break enchantment*, *divination*, *sending*

1/day—*scrying* (DC 17), *suggestion* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str __, **Dex** 16, **Con** __, **Int** 11, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +21; **CMB** +32; **CMD** 42

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +22, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +25, Sense Motive 17, Spellcraft +18, Stealth +8; **Racial Bonus** Perception +8, Stealth -2.

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common

Savage Isles Pygmy

The Savage Isles' only indigenous humanoids are demon-worshipping, cannibalistic pygmies. Thousands of years of devolution under Noth-Nyarthogu's influence produced these violent tribes littered with the deformed and insane. The largest tribes erect villages in titan ruins, surrounding them with hundreds of totem pole golems, carved with

demonic heads, to ward off tyrannosaurs, rampaging greater cyclopes, and more degenerate cannibal tribes. Prodigious breeders which mature swiftly, numbers are their strength. In their native tongue, the word for a single pygmy also means "meal."

This wiry, three-foot-tall humanoid has an oversized mouth with sharpened teeth. Its gray skin is covered in bestial tattoos featuring leering demonic faces and festooned with piercings made of bones and teeth.

Savage Isles Pygmy

CR 3

XP 800

CE small humanoid (pygmy)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception+6, low-light vision

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short spear +7 (1d4+3 plus poison) and bite +4 (1d4+1), or bite +9 (1d4+3)

Ranged blow gun +9 (1 plus poison) or short spear +9 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks opportunistic biting, swarming

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 20, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Attack +3, **CMB** +4, **CMD** 19

Feats Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short spear)

Skills Perception +6, Profession (Sailor) +6, Stealth+12, Survival +10;

Racial Modifiers Stealth +4, Survival +4

Languages Pygmy

SQ Track

ECOLOGY

Environment any temperate or tropical

Organization solitary, hunting party (2-10) or war party (11-30 plus 3rd level barbarian chieftain or 5th-level adept shaman)

Treasure NPC Gear (short spear, blow gun, 10 darts, clay vial of large scorpion venom, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Opportunistic Biting (Ex) Whenever a pygmy is considered to be flanking, it receives a +4 rather than a +2 flanking bonus on its bite attack.

Swarming (Ex) Up to two pygmies can share the same square at the same time. If two pygmies in the same square attack the same foe, they are considered to be flanking as if they were in two opposite squares. Four pygmies attacking the same foe gain +1d6 precision damage on successful melee-weapon attacks. This increases to +2d6 for eight pygmies, +3d6 for 12, to a maximum of +4d6 for 16.

ENCOUNTERS SERVITORS

"Servitors" refers to monsters Noth-Nyarthogu's dreams compel to aid it, whether through complex schemes or, for the unsophisticated, simply drawn to delve towards Noth-Nyarthogu's tomb. Non-servitors bear a † symbol when mentioned below.

Aquatic Minions

Many servitors are deep-water variants of ordinary monsters. All monster names on the Encounters Table bearing an asterisk have:

- the aquatic subtype
- the amphibious special quality
- darkvision 60
- cold resistance 10, and
- can survive deep-ocean pressures

Agents throughout the Western Islands

Heralds of darkness travel the Western Ocean, attempting to lure creatures to Meshong-Lir to raise the island, open its sealed doors, become food for servitors, or serve darker purposes. Worms that walk, made from corpses of chaotic evil spellcasters who delved deeply into Far-Beyond lore, do the same. Many travel in disguise by ship. Others ride the night skies on shantaks or vargouille-drawn flying chariots.

These emissaries whisper blasphemous lore about shattering dimensional traps to the Burning Shores azers. They promise Karn'lothra vampire lords the sunken island contains secrets to the Yithians' origins. In the Savage Isles, they teach cannibalistic pygmies sacrificial rites to raise Meshong-Lir.

Encounters across the Savage Isles

The Savage Isles teem with life. The surface isles' overly-abundant flora supports herd animals, megafauna, and massive, herbivorous dinosaurs. Fish of all kinds fill island streams and surrounding reefs. The bountiful game nourishes a prodigious predator population.

Each flying island has its own ecosystem. Winged creatures of all kinds thrive, and great flying predators often drop from these isles to hunt sea-level isles. Shantaks and a colony of vargouilles lair in cliffs on the levitating isle Dakara-Nor, crossing the water whenever Meshong-Lir rises.

Pygmy tribes infest many islands, traveling among them by outrigger canoe. Of late, heralds of darkness have found such fervent disciples among pygmy shamen that these heralds have revealed their true form to cannibal tribes and been received like gods. They teach their new-found cultists sacrificial rites to raise Meshong-Lir, and they ferry cannibals to the island to try ward-breaking spells. The pygmies view all humanoid trespassers in the isles as blood stock for their rituals.

Ogbanje stalk pygmy-populated isles for victims whose corpses they animate in their macabre gardens. Pygmies tie prisoners to stakes canted out over the water to appease these vile aberrations.

Doom-eyed mothmen lair in the isles' least accessible peaks, watching the dark northern waters. In the Norns' absence, they deem themselves the hands of destiny. They watch for fate's instruments, destined to repair fate's tapestry, to appear. They could decide newcomers are such instruments, becoming unpredictable and dangerous allies.

When heralds of darkness discovered the mothmen's presence, they dispatched minions to eradicate them. Shantaks and vargouilles fell upon the mothmen's aeries only to find them abandoned, as if the mothmen knew they were coming.

Hounds of Tindalos frequent the Norn Tower. They butchered several mothmen delving through detritus for Norn relics and the legendary threads of fate. Heralds of darkness visit, seeking secrets for their own plans. At least one brain ooze, bound to Noth-Nyarthogu, lingers here. Aquatic gugs*, decapuses*, and the occasional Ogbanje* lair in the tower's submerged rubble.

Encounters on Meshong-Lir

A wide variety of creatures occupy the island, such as aberrations, ghosts,

golems, gugs, hounds of tindalos, oozes, shoggoths, or yithians. Consider if the creature is something "man was not meant to know," then it likely roams Meshong-Lir. Aquatic monsters dwell in Meshong-Lir's surface niches and hollows. Those less intelligent view all non-servitors as food or macabre entertainment sources.

Inside the island, individuals and factions battle for desirable locations as they seek Noth-Nyarthogu's tomb. Heralds of darkness induce pygmies to try their luck at sealed gates. Lone Yithians and Denizens of Leng study warped walls of collapsed libraries and ancient laboratories for lost arcana. Mothmen linger in shadows, pursuing unfathomable ends.

Whenever anyone uses a teleportation subschool spell in the Outer Tier, there is a 4% chance per spell level that 1d3 hounds of Tindalos appear to investigate.

The towering hollows of the Middle Void imprison ghosts, haunts, and will-o'-wisps. Many haunts plaguing the Middle Void represent Far-Beyond perversion of this world's essence. Others stem from the titans' slaughter or their ghosts' corruption thereafter. Most manifest 5th- to 9th-level conjuration, enchantment, evocation, necromancy, or transmutation spells, appearing with macabre or horrific sensory and physical features.

In the Inner Depths, shoggoths tunnel through the island's underbelly, waking ancient mu spores and qliphoths as they breach doors. As external access becomes available, escendants of neothelids and moon-beasts collect outside creatures as slaves, food, and blood-and-soul sources for rituals.

Door Guardians

Most doors have or had golems,† caryatid columns,† tophets,† or other construct guardians† in the following CR ranges: Outer Tier CR 4-9, Middle Void CR 8-12, Inner Depths, CR 10+. Noth-Nyarthogu's aura has corrupted some into rampaging slaughter machines.

ENVIRONMENT AND MECHANICS

Tsunamis and Tidal Waves

Ten minutes before Meshong-Lir surfaces, a 15-mile-diameter surface area above the island bulges and begins moving out from its center. If resisting the flow, ship driving, Profession (sailor), and Swim DCs increase as follows:

	10 Min. Before	5 Min. Before	Island Surfacing
Over Island	A	B	C
0 to 3 Miles Offshore	--	A	B
3-6 Miles Offshore			A

- A: Driving and Profession (sailor) DC +5, Swim DC +10
- B: Driving and Profession (sailor) DC +10, Swim DC +20
- C: Driving and Profession (sailor) DC +15, Swim DC +30

Meshong-Lir's rising creates a series of broad tsunami waves which only increase DCs by +5. Along shorelines, tidal waves 10 feet high or higher hit the Savage Isles, with varied effects.

Vortex

When Meshong-Lir sinks, it creates an hour-long maelstrom. All ships

within a mile of Meshong-Lir's shores need to make DC 20 Profession (sailor) or ship driving checks to avoid being pulled into its quarter-mile wide cone. Once inside, the DC to escape is 25, which increases by +5 every minute as the ship circles lower. Failure by more than 10 requires a new check modified by the vehicle's CMB modifier against the same DC to avoid capsizing. After 10 minutes inside, the vortex sucks ships straight down.

Swim check DCs to avoid or escape the vortex are 15 higher.

Dimensional Lock Effects

A dimensional lock effect seals the outer walls and outer doors of both the Middle Void and the Inner Depths from any dimensional travel. Within each layer's interior, however, the dimensional lock effect seals walls, but can be bypassed through breached doors.

Blasphemous Lore

Noth-Nyarthogu embodies a terrible reality utterly incompatible with this dimension. Even in deathlike slumber, alien truths bleed from it, curdling existence. The festering nightmare of the Inner Depths' incomprehensible physical structure is an evolving manifestation of this otherworldly reality, but not the only one.

In the Middle Void and Inner Depths, macabre runes crawl up walls like flickers of ghost light or stains of darkness. In the Inner Depths, surfaces contort into profane glyphs and grotesque symbols. A combination of read magic and high Linguistic checks deciphers blasphemous arcana, like:

- spells enhanced by metamagic feats have no level cost but damage or drain the caster's abilities or induce gradual mutations;
- rites opening gates or summoning dimension-traveling steeds at the cost of one's own or loved ones' souls.

All manner of forbidden lore awaits those willing to risk madness. Though mothmen quake, Yithians and Denizens of Leng are drawn to the promise of this knowledge like moths to flame.

Noth-Nyarthogu's Corrupting Aura

Mental Corruption

After 24 cumulative hours inside Meshong-Lir, particularly harrowing experiences require Will saves to avoid acquiring mental disorders. DCs are 16 in the Outer Tier, 18 in the Middle Void, and 20 or higher in the Inner Depths, although the extent of the horror experience could elevate these. Mental disorders developed in the Outer Tier are temporary phobias to darkness, close confines, heights, deep water, specific creature types, or other threats, leaving the victim shaken in their presence. In the Middle Void, temporary phobias are more severe, like fear of food, drink, sleep, or divination, transformation, or healing magic.

The Inner Depths can make disorders permanent and intensify their initial response condition to frightened. Phobias developed here are especially debilitating, like fear of being touched, seen, or adjacent to allies. One can develop compulsive behavior like repeatedly rechecking supplies, constantly interrogating allies to confirm their identity, igniting unnecessary fires, or being unable to stop attacking dead foes. Prolonged exposure can cause Wisdom drain, memory loss, periods of confusion, or any of the insanities in The Pathfinder Game Mastery Guide's Sanity and Madness section.

Physical Corruption

After 24 cumulative hours inside Meshong-Lir, severe injuries from horrifying sources require Fortitude saves to avoid acquiring physical

mutations. DCs are 16 in the Outer Tier, 18 in the Middle Void, and 20 or higher in the Inner Depths, although the severity of the injuries or the horrors inflicted upon them could increase these. Most mutations take days to develop fully. Outer Tier mutations are temporary and superficial, like hair loss, eye color changes, skin color or texture changes, or facial distortions. Middle Void mutations last longer and are more debilitating, like limbs distorting, backs hunching, facial features moving and changing shape, or skin hardening into scales or producing a slime coating. Inner Depths mutations are horrific, like massive restructuring of body parts, growing tentacles or extra eyes through which aberrations can see, or suffering a chaos beast's corporeal instability. Only complex magic can remove these.

Spell Corruption

On Meshong-Lir, 10% of divination spells focusing on Noth-Nyarthogu's domain or creatures benefit from an unexpected, cost-free metamagic feat. Each such glimpse into the insane, however, increases the likelihood or severity of mental corruption, particularly deeper inside the island. Likewise, 10% of transformation spells benefit from an unexpected, cost-free metamagic feat, increasing the likelihood or severity of mutation.

ISLAND ADVENTURES

Rescue

When storms, pirate-battle damage, or short supplies force landing on Az'Sakara-Tor, pygmies with totem-pole golems kidnap several crew members. They tie some to ogbanje stakes, ferry others to the Norn Tower, prepare some for a Meshong-Lir-raising sacrifice, and keep some for island activity. At the Norn Tower, a herald of darkness offers the crew to a brain ooze guarding the tower and zugs in the submerged dome. At the island-raising ritual, another herald of darkness reveals its true form. If the ritual isn't stopped, pygmies and a herald sail the surviving crew to Meshong-Lir to cast into door wards as test victims.

Forbidden Lore

Karn'lothra yithians vanished while mapping Middle-Void routes and studying blasphemous sigils on walls. Their kin enlist the PCs to rescue the missing and recover their priceless maps. They provide an earlier, incomplete map with instructions to copy the last chamber's markings, which may explain the vanishing. The PCs must learn to raise Meshong-Lir — from pygmies, heralds of darkness, or other sources — then evade servitors, guardians, traps, haunts, and ghosts to reach their destination. They discover the blasphemous runes present an island-sinking ritual with an unspeakable cost. Yithians want it as leverage over Umbrasca, Morphoi, and even Ilnora herself.

Escape the Inner Depths

With Far-Realms arcana, heralds of darkness master making a levitating Meshong-Lir tower section, with several airtight chambers, fly and cruise underwater. They captain a faceless-stalker crew backed by several zugs and nyogoth qliphoths. The tower crushes the PCs' ship to gather captives and, submerging deeply, returns to Meshong-Lir. The PCs are captured or must pursue to rescue shipmates or valuables. Prisoners are driven into the Inner Depths through submerged shoggoth tunnels and delivered to a moon-beast seeking to awaken a mu spoor, still bound in stasis, with a rite requiring a thousand humanoid screams. The PCs break free or rescue the prisoners only after Meshong-Lir sinks. They must find and perform an island-raising ritual to escape.

THE LESSER ISLANDS

AROA, THE FAR-FLUNG ATOLLS



Once known to its intelligent, crab-like k'kin inhabitants as the archipelago of K'karoa, this fractured realm exists now as Aroa, the far-flung atolls. K'karoa was the pinnacle of k'kin cultural attainment, and while not technologically advanced, the k'kin had made great strides in art, botany, mathematics, astronomy and, above all, geomancy. A bitter split between the beneficent followers of La'kaia (a mask of Lada) and a more war-like, imperially minded caste, (followers of Rakkehn, a twinned Rava-Volund mask) led to a terrible conflict utilizing sorcerous and divine magics. These Rakkehni sought to eradicate the worship of La'kaia – by unleashing terrible plagues, raining fire from the sky and flooding settlements with boiling water, until a final, desperate attempt by the followers of La'kaia to wield ley-energy caused a ripple in the fabric of the ley-lines. A ley-tectonic catastrophe ripped through K'karoa, sundering the archipelago into fragments that were flung across the Western Ocean, these interconnected atolls still pulsating with erratic, spatially displacing ley-energy. Primitive k'kin descendants still reside in small enclaves throughout Aroa, and they also exist in the Western Ocean generally—their diaspora coinciding with the destruction of their civilization.

Time, space, and life essence— these were the three key ingredients needed to operate the ley-portals or “Wells” the ancient k'kin utilized to

manage their vast island nation quickly and efficiently. The basic design of the Wells rarely differed—appearing as raised mounds surrounding a deep pool, the mounds ritually infused with positive essence and etched with a spiral pattern intersected by an eight-armed star. The pools (especially appropriate for an amphibian race) centered in each pattern became the gateway, while the spiral contained the information required to travel—the interaction of the eight-armed star with the spiral tapped the global ley-line network and provided the destination's coordinates. Interestingly, no two Wells needed to be linked, thus the traveller did not need to jump from one Well to the next, though one could choose to do so, if desired.

Initially, the k'kin had many ley Wells, and they only needed a few drops of their own blood to activate them. Now, with fewer Wells in operation, opening them requires greater sacrifices: mortal blood sacrifice of intelligent beings is now necessary. Furthermore, while it is possible to create a new Well, the present k'kin poorly understand the technology of their forebears—currently, the massive deaths of numerous sentient beings would be required to provide enough blood sacrifice to craft a new ley-Well.

Ley-portals are sensitive to negative channelling and the arcane magic of the conjuration, divination, evocation, and necromantic schools. Using these energies provokes a greater chance of spatial disturbance—intelligent undead with level-draining powers would be reluctant to use them near a portal. (See the Spatial Rift Effects table below).

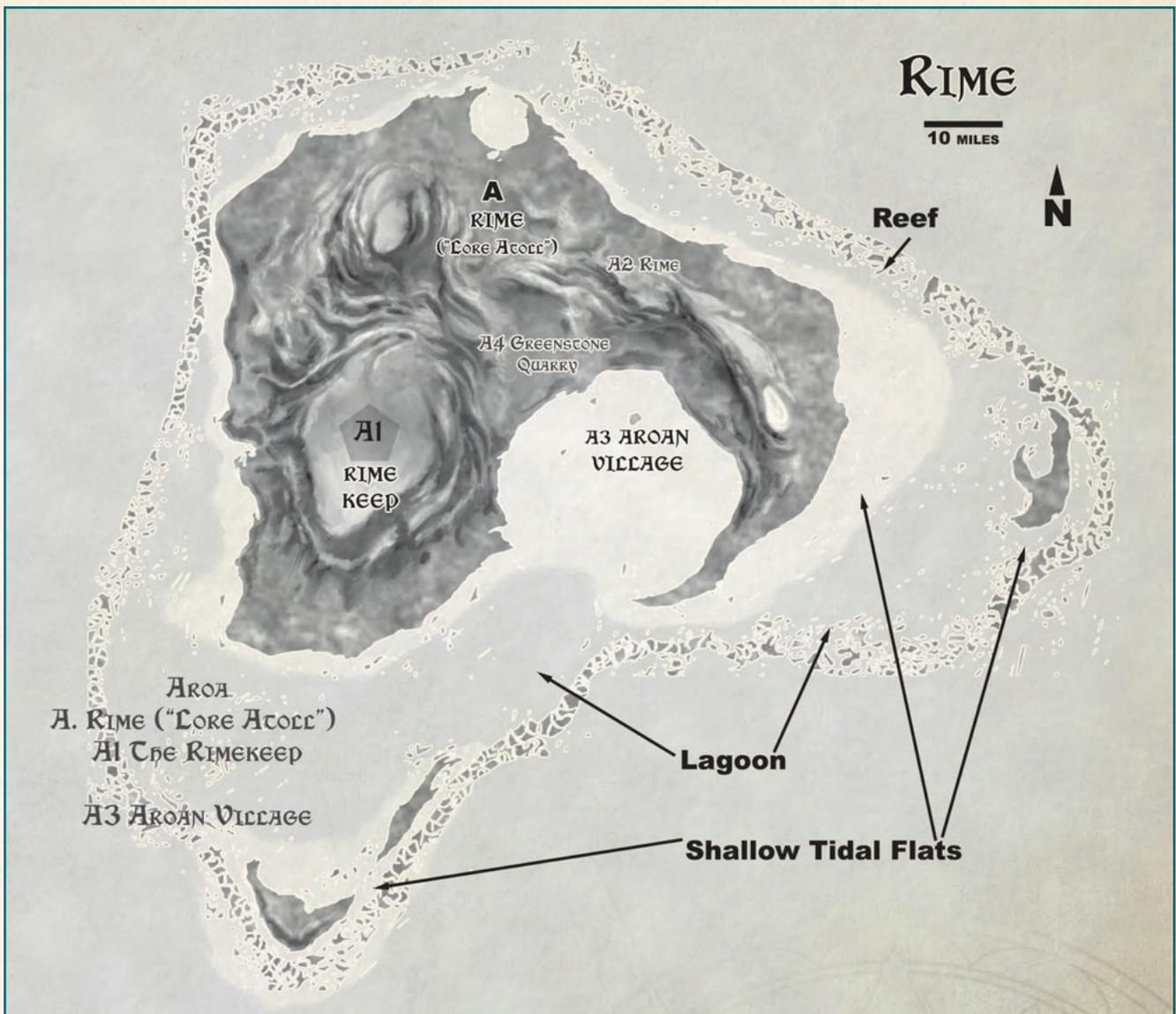
AROAN MASKS OF MIDGARD DEITIES

La'Kaia (mask of Lada): La'kaia is known by the following names: Dawntide Mother of Thought, Regeneration, and the All-Encompassing Sea. A k'kin representation of Lada, La'Kaia is depicted as a soft, limber female k'kin, with over-emphasized swimming limbs and one pincer appearing freshly regrown. La'kaia encourages both inner personal growth and outer social awareness, particularly with regard to familial bonds and environmental responsibility. Coral and sloughed shells are her altar-dressings, and an eye within a wave is her symbol.

Rakkehn (a twinned mask of Rava-Volund): Rakkehn is known as the Great Laborer and the Great Mother/Father. Rakkehn appears as a steaming, heavily scaled, laboring k'kin, with a tool in each feeder limb and each pincer. S/he desires fecundity in progeny and demands hard work and prosperity from his/her followers. A flaming k'kin is Rakkehns symbol.

GEOGRAPHY

Aroan fragments commonly appear as reef-bound atolls, verdant islands or land strips accompanied by strings of smaller islets hugging relatively shallow lagoons. The atolls have widespread tidal flats around the shore, which the primitive sea-going Ankeshelian descendants, referred to hereafter as Aroans, often inhabit. The atolls share unique flora and fauna, though due to diverse parallel evolutionary forces, each supports wildly differing examples: that which is gigantic on one isle may appear dwarfed on others. K'kin ruins proliferate, though their rough nature and semi-underground design make them hard to discern. Finely crafted sculpture and statuary, though timeworn and often broken, point to a rich material culture obsessed with geometry and astrology. So far, three isles have been definitively categorized by various Barsellan scholars as belonging to the Aroan group:



A. RIME (“LORE ATOLL”)

The first Aroan atoll “rediscovered,” Rime appears as a small island with some protected port/bays and a smattering of smaller islets to the south and west of the lagoon. On the northeastern edge sits a man-made opening in the reef, leading to a protected bay. A ramshackle settlement, Rime sits on the shore of the bay; a greenstone fortress and tower, the Rimekeep, lies in the background. No trees remain on the atoll, as all have been used for fuel or construction; a guarded greenstone quarry exists on the far north fringe of the “mainland.” Rime’s beaches are coarse and pebbled; its sands are black and thick. Birdlife and oversized vermin are the only fauna remaining after hundreds of years of settlement, apart from domesticated fowl and crustaceans the captive Aroans farm intensively.

The Rimegaard, self-styled “soldier-sages” and denizens of the keep, cultivate an air of mystery, cruelty, and power. They appear dark and grim, favoring exceptionally detailed and archaic armor and clothing, and full demon-faced helms. Sitting astride imported stallions covered in barding in the form of demonic nightmares, drakes, and dragons, they seem out of place on the mud flats and pebbled beaches. In reality, they are the

descendants of a caste of mercenary soldiers and their sage-brotherhood masters that were shipwrecked here generations ago and settled on the atoll—the discovery of plentiful greenstone enabling the construction of the Rimekeep, and the establishment of the town serving their day to day needs.

Having partially deciphered the K’karoan technology of the Wells, the Rimegaard seek in vain to use them to travel to other islands in the Western Ocean, or even to Midgard’s mainland. Encounters with savage races on Vamue and the loss of an entire expedition to the barren waste of Kanqui has done nothing to improve their fortunes. A small logging encampment on the southern islets of Vamue (see Area B3) gives Rime its timber, but other than that, the Rimegaard have received little material or strategic benefit from their control of the Wells, relying on Rime’s trade, their Aroan serfs and piracy to sustain them.

Area A1 The Rimekeep

Sitting on a bluff stretching north to south sits the Rimekeep, a crenellated, pentagon-shaped fortress topped by a squat, triangular greenstone tower. The Rimekeep radiates heavy magic, and is itself resistant to scrying or

divinatory magic. Entrances and exits to the Rimekeep are assiduously scrutinized and excessively secure, reflecting Rimegaard paranoia that others will seek to wrest control of the ley-portal. (Ironically, the Rimegaard high-lieutenant, Baan, is a morphoi agent of Mnemosyne's court, and wears a greenstone torc of protection against detection and location that has so far kept it from being discovered).

The Supreme Erudite, Lord Jorute Akay, last in a long line of eccentric and moody sages, rules Rime and longs to create an empire in the Western Ocean. As a safeguard, the Supreme Erudite has a sigil tattooed on his back, a replica of the ley-portal base design. If Jorute is slain, the sigil activates (being a blood sacrifice both on creation and upon his death), opening a temporary whirling ley-portal that randomly teleports all creatures within a 30-foot radius, as per Table 7-7: Spatial Rift Effects.

The Rimekeep consists of three levels (ground level: dungeon/stables/stores; middle level: main hall, kitchens, barracks; upper level: ranked Rimegaard quarters, Castellan's apartments, treasury), while the tower has four levels (lower level: vril-tech cache/armory; ground level: ley-portal and guardian cage; middle level: guest quarters and receiving room; upper level: Supreme Erudite's sanctum, celestial observatory). Ruins of a K'karoan library lie below the keep, and it is here the first soldier-sages stumbled upon knowledge of the Wells.

Area A2 Rime

Rime

CN Large Town

Corruption +2; **Crime** +3; **Economy** -1; **Law** -10; **Lore** +0; **Society** -8

Qualities insular, notorious, strategic location; cursed (spatial rifts), hunted (Rimegaard) Danger +35

Demographics

Government secret syndicate

Population 4000 (3000 humans, 500 minotaurs, 350 halflings, 150 others)

Notable NPCs

Rimegaard Supreme Erudite Jorute Akay (Male HumanCN expert 12/wizard 3/geomancer 8)

Aroan tribe-leader Enkura (NG male human warrior 6)

Tavernkeeper Barago (N male minotaur fighter, gladiator 4/rogue 3)

Marketplace

Base Value 2,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 15000gp; **Spellcasting** 5th

Minor Items 3d4; **Medium Items** 2d4; **Major Items** 1d4

The depressingly seedy and sprawling settlement of Rime exists as the Rimekeep's filter for information, visitors, and material. Its many wooden stores and tattered canvas dwellings are dominated by the stone-built Exchange, equal parts tavern, import/export clearing house, slave-auction, and general den of iniquity. Run by the capable but de-horned minotaur Barago, the Exchange is openly operated as a concern of the Rimegaard. Pirates visiting Rime deal exclusively with Barago; he takes care of their "stock" and keeps more malleable captains on retainer as an ersatz "fleet".

Area A3 Aroan Village

On the southern shores of the main island reside the indigenous Aroans. Kept in pitiable serfdom, they live much as they always have, albeit with greater technology and fewer freedoms. An impressive platform village spreads out over the tidal flats. It is here the Aroans cultivate sea vegetables and farm crustaceans. A few select families are allowed to fish

further out in the lagoon, but all Aroans are forbidden to leave the atoll.

The Aroans know the Rimegaard occasionally sacrifice their people to the Well, and so are always hostile to the encroachers, who ride into their settlements bristling with weapons and soldiers. Occasionally, hot-blooded youths attempt to escape Rime, but these young Aroans either become lost at sea or the Rimegaard capture and utilize them for the Well.

Area A4 Greenstone Quarry

Located on the western shore of the main island, this scar in the land is heavily guarded by the Rimegaard and worked by indentured slaves, unfortunates pressed into service after arriving at Rime as prisoners of piracy or through misfortune at the hands of the Exchange's Barago. The Aroans refuse to work the greenstone, regarding the quarry as an abomination and perversion of a sacred resource.

B. VAMUE ("SACRED ATOLL")

Vamue is a broad, heavily forested strip of land, with open stands of giant trees, ferns, creepers, and lianas. Broad and pristine golden beaches lie on either side of the main landmass, and its equally forested islets appear far to the south of the atoll's lagoon. These round islets are, in fact, the missing "craters" that appear as Kanqui's lakes (see area C2). Although Vamue is located far to the north of the Western Ocean, its flora and fauna are more representative of an equatorial or tropical climate, albeit now acclimated to a colder existence. Two warring tribes, one vegepygmy, the other lizardfolk, dominate the main landmass, though other more wild and dangerous beasts abound. Birdlife and large arboreal marsupials are abundant, though their colors are never wild or bright, as if the colder environs have muted and thickened their plumage or coats.

Area B1 Temple Compound, Upper

This temple was dedicated to the observance of the k'kin goddess La'kaia, the Dawntide Mother, a mask of Lada; and much of it has survived the catastrophe that splintered K'karoa. As Vamue and Kanqui form two halves of one original island, the temple compound exists partially on both atolls. The upper temple is situated on the southwestern tip of Vamue's crescent, located within a sinking depression.

The entrance is above ground, facing northwest, giving way to a down-sloping corridor leading underground to the temple proper. Its layout, with open galleries and spiralling ramps replacing true levels and stairs, reflects the decapedal nature of its inhabitants. The "lay areas"—main hall, guest barracks, chapel—are relatively undisturbed. The two deeper levels, including the cerementory (lair of the wight k'kin Arch-Botanist), scriptorium, and shrine, are partially submerged or, like the trapped passage to the "Great Seal" leading to the lower temple, completely underwater.

The lizardfolk tribe known as the Skoggmadr dwell in the ruined guardhouses before the temple's entrance. Descendants of outcasts from an island they refer to as "Old Uru," their cult of the Dark Mistress reflects the perversion of the Earth Mother worship of their original people. Spiral motif tattooed, and wearing sharktooth necklaces and whalebone torcs, they ride kamodo lizards (treat as monitor lizard) and live by foraging, hunting, and fishing. The balance they have maintained over generations with the vegepygmies has now shifted due to the latter's taming of the aurumvorax. They do not recognise the malfunctioning ley-portal near the temple's entrance (proximity to this Well incurs a frequency roll for spatial displacement at -10), and have instead erected their own non-functioning portal, and this spiral-etched henge structure figures heavily in their rituals. They have defaced La'kaia's statues and mosaics to better represent the cult of the Dark Mistress. The lizardfolk regard the temple as taboo and unlucky, as those tribemembers who were foolhardy enough to enter have never returned.

VAMUE ("SACRED ATOLL")

10 MILES



OCEAN



OCEAN

The ley-tectonic catastrophe and the subsequent widespread placement of the Aroan atolls has led to the creation of an "Aroan Triangle," an area of the Western Ocean in which ley-line distortion and space-time fluctuations occur; these instances of instability confuse navigation and travel in the region. Bound by Vamue in the north, Kanqui in the south, and Rime in the east, this area is fraught with spatial displacement, which causes ships, crews, creatures, and objects to miraculously appear, disappear, or reappear elsewhere. Timeslips also occur infrequently, causing sailors to drift along timelines; forgotten incidents or memories of events from timelines that may have never been or never will be create more fodder for Mnemosyne's information-hungry Court. Mnemosyne's clever and esoteric-minded neh-thalggu agents are also tasked with attempting to control the Aroan Triangle, for if Mnemosyne could somehow control the Aroan timeslips she might be able to travel consciously to a point where she could reunite with her own memories, or more importantly, her lost beloved.

The "Great Sister," who uses a mix of guile and bullying to hold sway, rules over the lizardfolk. She relies on her witchcraft and her lizard familiar and triceratops companion (leadership feat) to maintain "proof" of her communication with the Dark Mistress. She rewards adventurers if they "deal" with the vegepygmies. Her brother, Kuhl the Stripe (Barbarian, true primitive 5/Ranger, wild stalker 2), has disappeared, and if returned to her, she similarly rewards his deliverers.

Area B2 Burial Mound Complex

Spread over a roughly circular area 5 miles in diameter, the complex contains dozens of small, near unrecognizable burial mounds, hidden as they are by the undulations of the forest floor and overgrown by giant trees, shrubs, fallen logs, moss and ferns. Most are dusty tombs of petty k'kin functionaries containing non-magical wealth. Tombs found intact are often dangerous, white dust-spore, ruddy virus, and greymist gas being common perils contained within. Eight larger interconnected mounds, easily recognizable and marked with K'karoan symbols, are concentrated in the complex's center. A central mourning hall (haunted by a greater tentamort) leads to the tombs, which are protected by a trapped entrance corridor (variously: spiked pits, gas, spear traps, poison bolts) and a pair of guardians - skeleton k'kin - in the crypt itself. Two of the crypts' inhabitants have become wight k'kin. Treasures consist of magic greenstone weapons, wondrous items, occasionally rods, wands, or a staff.

The vegepygmies, who call themselves the Guardians of La'kaia, protect the burial mounds, and make their encampment among the eight large hills. They fanatically defend the complex from any grave-robbers or explorers. The Guardians are descendants of creatures raised by La'kaia's devotees from russet mold and various other cultures, then grafted, spliced, cross-pollinated, and interbred to create intelligent, advanced vegepygmies as temple guards. Having survived the K'karoan catastrophe, they sought to continue their guardianship of both the temple compound and La'kaia's memory; even today, many generations later, they utilize the archaic honorifics of their forebears: "Sacred Doorward-captain" and "Divine Hall-sergeant," for instance. Ousted generations ago by the lizardfolk, they seek the lost mother spore, the original mold cultures they were spun from, believed to be located in the cerementory (in the Upper Temple, 2.1). They have recently succeeded in domesticating an aurumvorax, and they keep it as guardbeast and totem.

Area B3 Rimegaard Logging Camp

The Rimegaard maintain a logging camp on one of the southern islets, and both the lizardfolk and the vegepygmies keep a close eye on the

intruders. Smoke from the loggers' activities can be easily seen from the main island. An intact K'karoan tradehall lies undiscovered to the north of the encampment.

Area B4 Mudflats

This mangrove is inhabited by outcast mangrove vegepygmies and primitive k'kin who have formed a mutually beneficial alliance based on fishing and raiding of the Skoggmadr (further inflaming relations between the Guardians and the lizardfolk), and, more recently the Rimegaard across the lagoon at area B3. The mangrove vegepygmies, once related to the Guardians, are now an offshoot reproducing from drench moldspore.

Area B5 Ashfields

This 15-mile ashen wasteland is the resulting aftermath of the lizardfolk's attempt to banish the vegepygmies by setting fire to the forest. Only tiny rodents, insects, bulletes, and other vermin inhabit the Ashfields. Hazards in the ashfields include the polluted water, ash dustspore storms, and a mated pair of ash-stained bulletes.

Area B6 Lost Well

A working ley-portal, silted over and overgrown with lichen and moss, lies hidden in an unassuming grove among ruins on the northern side of the atoll. The Well is currently attuned to the abandoned settlement (areaC3) on Kanqui. The Rimegaard would pay handsomely for information regarding the whereabouts of this Well, or for an accurate sketch of its size and configuration.

C. KANQUI ("ATOLL OUT OF TIME")

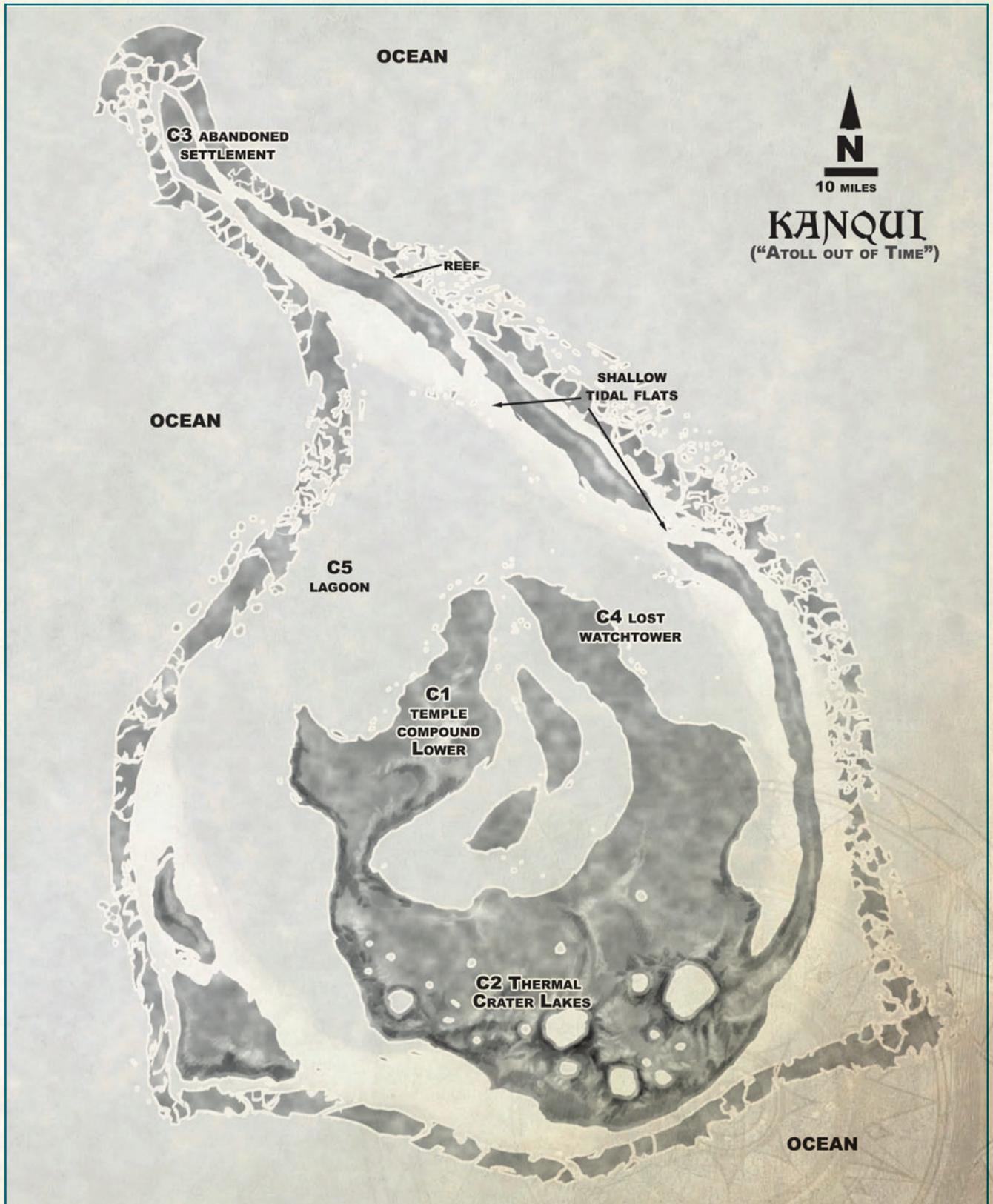
The other half of the original island that also contained Vamue, Kanqui's thermal crater-lakes, tiny trees, and heath-like shrubs give the place a bare, windswept feel. Migratory birds dominate the beaches and inland fens, and few mammals survive here. Locathah roam the dunes along the edge of the main isle, eager to sight shipwrecks and bring survivors to the watchful eyes of their neh-thalggu masters, while primitive k'kin haunt the ruins of their lost civilization.

Kanqui's ultra-fine, bright white sand and erratic windstorms lend the place an extra eerie feel. Waves seem to back away from Kanqui's shore, and time here is stretched and erratic. Battered shipwrecks thrust upwards over the reef on the eastern spit. Their splintered remains float as driftwood onto the beaches. Occasionally, these shipwrecks replay out near the island, with their maddened passengers endlessly unable to avert destiny. The PCs may attempt to change the course of these shipwrecks' history.

Due to ley-portal tampering by the neh-thalggu known as the Coterie, Kanqui's spatial distortion is minimal, though a side effect of the Coterie's fumbblings has been an erratic chrono-temporal fluctuation. Time-slips cause events to replay, or for people and objects to wink in and out of their usual place on any given timeline (see chrono-temporal flux below).

Area C1 Temple Compound, Lower

This deeper, lower half of La'kaia's temple complex lies beneath the lagoon. Still airtight, these levels beyond the Great Seal include the ley-ritual library, sacred crypts, elder priest's hospice, and, on the deepest level of all, La'kaia's fane, inhabited by a corrupted morphoi hulk who guards a large treasure cache. Timeslip ague is rampant, and occasional timeslips are strong in these lower levels of the temple, leading to possible encounters with ancient K'karoan clergy and their attendant bodyguards, though generally they will be confused and have little to offer adventurers except fear and possible battle. Note that if the Great Seal is broken, water



from Vamue floods into the temple, causing some disruption to the lowest levels (and Kanqui generally), and possibly opening a gate to the Elemental Plane of Water.

Area C2 Thermal Crater Lakes

The neh-thalggu Coterie, agents of Mnemosyne, feign collaboration, but in reality, they strive against one another to be first to unlock the shifting nature of Aroa. Sensing a shared kinship with the ancient crab-like K'karoans gleaned from archaeological finds, the Coterie keep k'kin as favored bodyguards, occasionally taking their brains in vain attempts to access deep cellular and memetic memories.

A small village of locathah (usually 10-40 members) serve each neh-thalggu. The locathah attempt to befriend visitors to Kanqui, feigning a desire for help in overthrowing their oppressors. This is a ruse, as they take all visitors to the neh-thalggu to be interrogated and eventually de-brained.



The Coterie consists of the following individuals:

Monitor is obsessive about information and watches his locathah warily; *Seer* is contemplative and the least fanatical; *Keener* is crazed and keens when delighted or distraught; *Finder* is an avid collector; *Eater* is greedy, gluttonous, and obese; *Provoker* is clever and cruel; *Rager* is unstable and vicious. The young female, *Scrivener*, seeks to ally with any adventurers and to possibly escape, as she wishes to leave the atoll and see the world. Those of the Coterie likely to be encountered on the atoll's surface studying K'karoan ruins, are Monitor, Provoker, Finder, Seer, or Scrivener. There is a much higher percentage chance (3%/spell level) that use of ley-sensitive sorcery near a neh-thalggu will cause a future or past neh-thalggu to appear near its current twin.

Provoker's locathah guard the one ley-portal discovered (and tampered with) so far. It lies on the edge of the southernmost lake

Area C3 Abandoned Settlement

On the outflung northern tip of the sandspit lies a forlorn and deserted Aroan settlement, which the locathah avoid, as it is still contaminated by coraldust contagion and timeslip ague. Usually a quiet, bleached place, there is a 10% chance per day that adventurers may enter a time-slip and meet with the past inhabitants of the abandoned settlement, the Cormorant-folk. These long-dead Aroans have some knowledge of Kanqui's history, the K'karoan sundering, and other tidbits; they were, at one time, coterminous with the neh-thalggu, but managed to escape the atoll. They are eager to talk with adventurers, knowing these "futurefolk" may need their help, and also because they want to find out if their outrigger canoes ever made landfall elsewhere....

Area C4 Lost Watchtower

Watching over the endless ocean, a mound-fort sits dilapidated and decaying on the northeastern edge of the main island. Once overlooking the burial mound complex on Vamue, the watchtower was wrenched away with the rest of Kanqui. Khodek, a skeleton k'kin (fighter 4/synthesist summoner 3), dwells here. Khodek was the fort's Wyrd-captain. He is well-read, polite to the point of sufferance, and completely insane. He is attended by imagined soldiers on the ramparts and servants in his study, so time spent with Khodek is informative and eerie indeed, especially during a time-slip, when Khodek appears somehow unaffected.

Area C5 Lagoon

A venerable dragon eel, named "Old Bitterscale" by the locathah, claims Kanqui's lagoon as his domain. During electrical storms, he has been known to prey upon foolish locathah on the shore. Wiser than others of his kind, he enjoys basking near the surface and flipping clams for sport, and he can be bribed for information or aid with large quantities of protein.

INHABITANTS

Smelling heavily of the ocean, this tall, crab-like creature waves its pincers menacingly. It carries a weapon in two smaller arms near its mouth, revealing itself as both tool user and a ready foe.

K'kin

CR 5

XP 1,500

N Medium magical beast (aquatic)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60ft; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

HP 43 (6d10+10)

Fort +7 Ref +5 Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40ft, swim 30ft

Melee longspear +6 (1d8+3) or 2 pincers +6 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks: constrict (1d6+2) and scuttling run

Special Qualities: Amphibious, limb regeneration

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 6

Base Atk +6; CMB +8 (+10 grapple); CMD 18 (30 vs trip, bull rush)

Feats: Improved initiative, Weapon Finesse, Stalwart

Skills: Craft +2, Climb +4, Swim +10; Racial Modifiers +2 Craft

Languages: Aquan, Common

ECOLOGY

Environment: Any aquatic, islands, atolls

Organization: solitary, pair or colony (2-24)

Treasure: NPC gear (longspear, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arcane School Sensitivity (Ex): -2 to saves against divination, evocation, necromancy and conjuration.

Flanking Vulnerability: Flanking attacks against k'kin receive a +1 circumstance bonus.

Limb Regeneration (Ex): Amputated limbs regrow in 1d3 weeks.

Scuttling Run (Ex) Mobilizing all of its locomotive limbs in a charge action applies a +1 bonus to weapon attacks and CMB, and increases the k'kin's speed to 50 feet for that round.

Evolutionary offshoots of giant crabs, the k'kin developed an upright stance and articulate feeder limbs that have led to technological and cultural advancement. Adept crafters and skilled geomancers, the k'kin once commanded a vast island archipelago that was sundered in the ley-tectonic catastrophe that created Aroa. Now most are primitive tribes people on Aroa, though a few civilized k'kin still exist in small enclaves in the Western Ocean.

Able to fight with both their pincers and weapons held in their feeder limbs, the k'kin are feared adversaries, combining armored defense with multi-limbed maneuverability. The k'kin have lost the water dependence of their ancestors and can function just as well on land as in the water, making them valued ocean and island guides. By nature a cautious and peaceful race, the k'kin battle slaves and the feared barnacle-covered monk Shellblade mercenaries give the k'kin a dangerous reputation. Kariv crab-diviners especially prize captured k'kin for their vulnerability to divination.

Sensitivity to the arcane school of necromancy has led to the proliferation of skeleton and wight k'kin with the following alterations:

Skeleton: undead traits; AC 22; HP 33; DR 5/bludgeoning; Dex 16; Con 0; Base Atk +4; no Craft; feats: improved initiative only.

Wight: undead traits, HP 40; Con 0; resurrection vulnerability; Melee – add energy drain (1 level, DC 16) to constrict; Blind fight feat replaces Weapon Finesse; create spawn.

TIME AND SPACE!

The GM should feel free to assign the spatial displacement and chronotemporal flux effects as she sees fit, disregarding the frequency rolls on the provided tables to better enable plot, tempo, and personal whim. Certain effects on those tables involve splitting the party, which some players dislike and some GMs find to be an operational headache. Also, time-based mechanics offer their own difficulties based on causality and plotting – both of these more complex situations should be handled with discernment and care, with an eye toward greater player enjoyment and GM's ease.

NPCs

Rime *Enkura* Aroan tribe-leader (Male HumanNG warrior 6); *Baan* Rimegaard lieutenant (NE morphoi inquisitor 5/ranger 3); *Jorute Akay* Rimegaard Supreme Erudite, (Male Human CN expert 12, wizard 3, geomancer 8), *Barago* Rime tavernkeeper (Male Minotaur N fighter, gladiator 4/rogue 3).

Vamue: *Great Sister*, lizardfolk Priestess, (Female Lizardfolk CG witch 6); *Awn*, vegepygmy Clade-captain (Male Vegepygmy LG paladin, divine defender 7); *Arch Botanist* (NE skeleton k'kin Druid 8)

Kanqui: *Shishukh*, locathah “rebellion” leader (Male Locathah NE barbarian 3/rogue 2); *Scrivener* neh-thalgggu (Neh-thalgggu N expert 6); *Khodek* skeleton k'kin (Skeleton k'kin CN fighter 4/summoner, synthesist 3).

ENCOUNTERS

Commonly Encountered Creatures include:

Typical Rimegaard: LE Human Fighter 3, AC 18, 26 hp, +6 glaive (1d10+3/x3) or +6 heavy crossbow (1d10/19-20 x2), Perception +5, Ride +6, Power Attack, Mounted Combat.

Advanced Vegepygmy: as Vegepygmy (PF Bestiary) except, CR1, XP 400, Medium (5' tall) plant, hp 15 (3d8+1), AC 18 (+5 natural), Melee +2 longspear (1d8/x3), Str 13, Int 10, Bas Atk +1, CMB 0)

Mangrove Vegepygmy: as above but amphibious, swim 20, sharktooth shortspears (1d6/x2) laced with coralcut infection.

ENVIRONMENT AND MECHANICS

General - Aroa:

Walking or falling on Aroan reefs is extremely dangerous, as coral cuts are nasty and infectious: Coralcut Infection – (injury, save Fort DC 18, frequency 1/day for 10 days, effect 1d2 Con, cure 3 saves).

Inextricably linked by ley-lines, the fragmenting of K'karoa has left spatial rifts common throughout Aroa:

Roll a % frequency check once per day on Vamue, every two days on Rime, and once per week on Kanqui. On a roll of 01-05, a spatial rift occurs; roll again, consulting the effects of the Spatial Rift Effects table on the following page:

Table 3: Spatial Rift Effects

01	All creatures within 100' teleport to the Atoll of the Lost
02-05	1d3 k'kin appear*
06-10	All within 30' teleported 3 miles**
11-15	One item of gear teleports to the Atoll of the Lost
16-30	One creature teleported 3 miles**
31-35	All within 10' teleported 5 miles**
36-40	1d2 items from each creature within 30' teleports to the Atoll of the Lost
41-45	1d3 creatures within 30' teleport to the Atoll of the Lost
46-50	One creature teleported 5 miles**
51-54	One creature teleported to the Atoll of the Lost
55-60	1d6 lizardfolk appear*
61-65	Two random creatures within 30' teleported 3 miles**
65-70	One creature teleported 10 miles**
71-75	1d6 locathah appear*
76-80	Half of all creatures in 30' teleported 5 miles**
81-90	Random creature from random atoll*** encounter list appears within 10'
91-95	Random creature from random atoll*** encounter list appears within 30'
96-97	All within 10' teleported 100' ** minus gear
98	All within 20' teleported to random islet of an Aroan atoll***
99	One creature teleported to random atoll***
00	All within 30' teleported to random atoll***

* All creatures are shaken as well as disoriented and bewildered.

** (Roll 1d8 for random clockwise compass-point directions, i.e., N=1, NW=8)

*** Roll d6: Kanqui (1-2) Vamue (3-4) or Rime (5-6)

The Atoll of the Lost is detailed in part two of *The Plagued Seas* on page 94.

(Optional rule—Generous GMs may opt to allow characters to make a DC20 Fort save to avoid the effects of the Spatial Rift Effects table.)

Additionally, there is a 1% chance per spell-level cast (of conjuration, divination, evocation, or necromancy schools), or d6 of negative channelling, that a spatial rift will occur.

Atoll-Specific:

Rime:

Greenstone construction dampens divination within 5 miles of the Rimekeep, +5 DC on all divination attempts.

Vamue:

Ash dustspore - (inhaled, save Fort DC 18, frequency 1/rd for 5 rounds, effect 1d2 con, cure 2 saves)

White dustspore - (inhaled, save Fort DC 20, frequency 1/rd for 5 rounds, effect 1d3 str, cure 3 saves)

Drench moldspore - (inhaled, save Fort DC 17, frequency 1/day for 3 days, effect 1d2 Con, cure 3 saves; *special - if the moldspore causes death, or if an infected creature dies the body will produce 1d6 mangrove vegepygmy within 3 days)

Ruddy virus - (inhaled, save Fort DC 17, frequency 1/day for 5 days, effect 1d2 Con, cure 2 saves)

Greymist Gas - (inhaled, save Fort DC 16, frequency 1/day for 3 days, effect temporary blindness, 1 con, cure 1 save)

Kanqui:

Coral dust contagion - (inhaled, save Fort DC 17, frequency 1/min for 6 min, effect 1d3 con, cure 2 saves)

Timeslip ague - (contact, save Will DC 18, frequency 1/day for 3/days, effect +10 to chronotemporal flux effect table, 1d2 Wis, cure 1 save)

Timeslips are common on Kanqui - Roll a % frequency check once/day throughout Kanqui, every half day in the temple (area C1) or at the abandoned settlement (area C3). On a roll of 01-05, consult Table 2: Area Rift Effects (see *Isle of Morphoi*, page 21), replacing the following results:

86-95: 1 neh-thalgnu appears, confused and angry.

96-97: 1d6 ancient k'kin appear, shaken and confused.

(Optional rule - Generous GMs may opt to allow characters to make a DC20 Will save to avoid the effects of any temporal effect.)

(Also: As life-essence is inextricably linked to the ley-portals, any creature slain on Kanqui may reappear, alive, within 1-3 days. Treat the creature as confused and apply a -2 morale penalty to attacks, skills and AC. The creature will disappear within a similar period. Proximity to a time-slipped creature is dangerous, and if slain again, a ley-distortion occurs as per the Spatial Displacement Effects table.)

ISLAND ADVENTURES

Beyond the Great Seal

Whether hired by a Barsellan family, in tow with a Rimegaard or Cassadegan expedition, or allied with the vegepygmy Awn, the adventurers must bypass or neutralize the Skoggmadr lizardfolk, gain entry into the temple proper, overcome/neutralize the Arch-Botanist, and attempt the trapped, underwater passage to the Great Seal. Once there, they must unlock the seal and pass through the one-way portal, unknowingly travelling to Kanqui and exploring the lower temple, crypts, and the fane of La'kaia. Returning from Kanqui becomes its own adventure...

Stowaway

Kuhl the Stripe (brother of Vamue's lizardfolk Great Sister) appears miraculously out of thin air on the adventurers' vessel. He pleads to be returned to Vamue, promising great rewards should his rescuers succeed in returning him home. He has knowledge of the temple (2.1), the ruined tradehall (2.3), and the lost well (2.6). Once Kuhl is returned, adventurers are confronted by a pitched battle between the Skoggmadr and the Guardians. Will they choose sides, or play them off against each other and use the resultant conflict as a means to explore the temple compound and burial mounds uncontested?

The Lost Well

The biggest secret of Aroa is its fractured state and the ley-magic throbbing all around its splintered atolls. If more than a handful of ley-portals are returned to normal functioning, the cost of sacrifice diminishes and their accuracy increases. There are those in Barsella, Cassadega, Rime, and the court of Mnemosyne who understand this, and wish to attempt a recalibration of the "lost Well" of Vamue. This could lead to the appearance of the atoll of Quamain, a largely uninhabited and roughly square line of thin reef and a deep lagoon. The heavily cratered outskirts of the K'karoan capital rest at the lagoon's bottom. Once travellers arrive on Quamain, will they discover more functioning Wells?

THE LESSER ISLANDS

THE BURNING SHORES



The Burning Shores is the largest in a chain of volcanic islands in The Western Ocean. The island teems with geothermal activity, including hot springs, magma pools, boiling mudflats, and thick lava flows.

To the west, a giant caldera covers half of the island with tall cliffs circling a bay to the west and the island's interior. The eastern side of the island is covered with magma fields and scattered pools of water and acid.

The first known inhabitants of the island belonged to a human culture responsible for sculpting giant statues to forgotten gods to watch over their crypts carved into the obsidian cliffs of the north shore. The humans disappeared hundreds of years ago, and the island stood uninhabited until a century ago, when the azer came to settle the western bay.

GEOGRAPHY

The Burning Shores appears ominously on the horizon when travelers approach it. During daylight, smoke and steam billow from various locations, hiding the isle in a smoky haze until ships near its shoreline. At night, the island glows with orange, hellish fires throughout its landscape; these are visible through drifting smoke. Three distinct geographic regions make up the island.

The caldera of a massive volcano dominates the western half of the isle. The seaward side of the caldera flooded with ocean water long ago, creating a large body of water known as Boiling Bay. The volcano includes at least one known rift to the Plane of Fire on the northern rim. Another rift exists in the halls beneath the Forge of the Last Ember.

Halfway across the caldera, the land rises into rough terrain marked by hardened lava fields interspersed with scattered areas of intense geothermal activity. Hot springs and geysers lie throughout the region, some unexpectedly coming to life on unwary travelers.

Beyond the high caldera's rim, the lands flatten in an area known as the Badlands. Here, the geothermal activity is less intense, but no less deadly. Ponds and lakes periodically interrupt the burning landscape. On closer inspection, some prove to be vast pools of acid, where water mixes with poisonous gases that bubble up from below the earth. Even the lakes hold the potential for death, as they release vast clouds of poisonous gas which kill unsuspecting creatures.

FORGE OF THE LAST EMBER

The Azer of the Last Ember command a stronghold in a maze of lava tubes where they toil, making magical wonders. The secretive and xenophobic azer journey from island to island in pumice dugout canoes and outriggers.

Here, they also plot their return to their homeland. Rumor holds they seek to release a great prince of the divs from a timeworn Ankeshelian trap to lead an assault on their efreeti enemies back on the Plane of Fire.

Forge of the Last Ember

LN village

Corruption +0; **Crime** -3; **Economy** +0; **Law** +2; **Lore** +1; **Society** -2

Qualities holy site, insular

Danger +0

Demographics

Government overlord

Population 112 (97 azer; 15 humans)

Notable NPCs

Bijan Khizarni (LE male azer ranger 10)

Marzieh Mokari (LN female azer inquisitor 7)

Marketplace

Base Value 500 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 5th

Minor Items 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** —

A. THE MAIN ISLAND

Area A1 Boiling Bay

On the western shore of the island, the cliffs part to reveal a large inlet known as Boiling Bay, so named for the hot-gas-releasing vents below the bay which cause its water to bubble and boil. While not hot enough to cause ships to combust, the waters may be lethal to overboard sailors. The bay forms part of an enormous caldera extending over much of the western half of the island. A towering volcano, Emberfloe, home to a clan of azer rises on the southern side of the bay; hardened lava flows connect it to the shore. Towering cliffs cup the seaward edges of the bay, while a more gradual rise greets travelers in the direction of the island.

Area A2 Black Sand Beach

At the base of the volcano, a 30-foot-wide lava tube meets the bay's waters. A wide, smooth beach of black sand surrounds the entrance to the Forge of the Last Ember. On either side of the lava tube, rest 10 beached pumice outriggers. Beyond the beach sits a great circular bronze gate with glistening brass trim. A pair of azer guards with an obsidian drake and two statues of bronze dogs stand in front of the gate, protecting the entrance. At the guards' command, the statues transform into hell hounds and attack. Peaceful visitors coming to trade with the azer receive an escort from additional guards summoned with three notes from a guard's horn.



Area A3 The Brass Market

Following the lava tube past the entrance to the Forge of the Last Ember leads to a roughly circular, 100-foot-wide chamber mined out of the intersection of five lava tubes. The azer do not permit most visitors (see area A6 below) to the Forge past the Brass Market, their trading post, and bronze doors inlaid with brass designs depicting the azer homeland on the Plane of Fire bar the tunnels leading deeper into their fortress.

At the Brass Market, the azer mostly seek trade for information about the surrounding islands, particularly the location of ruins and ancient monuments showing evidence of the Plane of Fire. Azer inquisitors weigh the truth of visitors' words, and are merciless with liars, capturing and imprisoning them in their diabolical sky cages for a year and a day. They reward true tales, however, with a variety of goods—their ultimate value being dependent upon the azer's perceived worth of the traded information. The azer love bargaining, and their trade goods include magical obsidian blades, thoqqa-plate armor, trained drakes, basalt and brass statuettes that animate into fierce animals, and charms offering protection from the island's hazards.

Area A4 The Forge

Deep in the Forge of the Last Ember lies the forge itself. Here, deep within Emberfloe, the azer work with a variety of materials to make both their

own arms and armor and goods to trade with those bringing secrets to the Brass Market.

Area A5 The Rift

One thousand steps below the Forge, the mightiest door in the fortress stands between the azer and their abandoned stronghold on the Plane of Fire. The azer have warded with the rift with their greatest magic to prevent their efreeti foes from following them into Midgard. Once they free the prince of divs, they intend to march their army through the rift to reclaim their homeland.

Area A6 The Council Chambers

The azer permit only one in 100 visitors to the Forge of the Last Ember past the Brass Market to entreat with their nobles in the council chambers. The council chambers, located in a room high above the main stronghold, overlook the volcano's crater. Here, not far from the nobles' living chambers, the azer leaders plot exploration of the island chain to uncover the secrets regarding the whereabouts of their lost prince.

Area A7 The Sky Cages

The azer imprison those running afoul of their plans in diabolical sky

cages, cells floating on hot gases high above the island. The sky cages are made of thin pumice shells, cleverly hollowed out and enchanted to make them as light as possible. Finished cages hang on brass chains suspended above the hot gases venting from the magma in the volcano's crater. Not only are the prison cells nearly impossible to escape, but few prisoners survive the terrible heat.

B. THE MAGMA POOLS

Area B1 Entrance to the Magma Pools

A strong sulfurous smell permeates the staggered magma pools along the stepped rise. Magmins (Pathfinder Bestiary 3), natives to the Plane of Fire, call this magma-suffused area home. They cultivate their pools for a variety of purposes—cooking, scrying, and creating substances they trade with the azer and the people of Umbrasca. Visitors must approach cautiously, for the magmins distrust strangers and are known to push perceived troublemakers into their pools.

Area B2 The Welcome Pool

The magma pools bubble up from a series of stepped outcroppings staggered across a rock strewn hillside. The first magma pool is only 20 feet from the entrance to the Magma Pools. If the magmins expect visitors or detect unwelcome arrivals, they send a group of three to five magmins to the Welcome Pool to head them off. Here, they query visitors about their purpose, how they learned of the magmins, and what they might have to offer in trade. They herd visitors with unsatisfactory answers into the nearby pools.

Area B3 The Thoqqua Pool

Past the Welcome Pool and 10 feet up the slope, the magmin allow a pair of thoqqua to live in this pool. The thoqqua burrow through the stone surrounding the pool, consuming minerals and fertilizing the pool with their droppings. As they grow, the thoqqua shed their plates into the pool. The magmins harvest these plates for trade with the azer. Although the azer hate dealing with the unpredictable magmin, they require the plates for armor. The azer would gladly bargain this task to any visitors offering to take it on.

Area B4 The Radiant Pool

This pool glows nearly as bright as the sun, day or night. Its content represent a precious resource to the people of the Lanternholds of Umbrasca. Expeditions from the island arrive like clockwork each month to trade with the magmin for another month of fuel for their beacons. From Umbrasca, the expeditions bring casks of mineral-laden waters from the dark tide. The magmins mix the waters into their pools with ingredients from other visitors and their own collections to spice the pools to their requirements.

Area B5 The Scrying Pool

This pool's glowing orange magma is interlaced with twisting, roiling, silvery metallic filaments. This pool contains the secret to the magmins' uncanny ability to anticipate visitors, for the Scrying Pool may be used to spy on most locations on the Burning Shores. But, the Scrying Pool may also be turned on other islands in the same volcanic chain. Little do the azer know the key to piecing together the clues to their prince's prison may lie not far from their own abode.

C. THE TOWER OF ALLISTER DORN

From a rocky promontory overlooking the sea, the red copper tower of the mage Allister Dorn perches like a cormorant preparing to dive for a fish. Dorn is one of the last Sons of Caelmarath, a loose organization of wizards who fled the Great Mage War to take refuge in The Western Ocean. Only those the mage personally invited ever find him home, while those seeking to plunder his secrets find the doors to the mage's tower rarely opens where one would expect.

Area C1 The Docks

The most prominent feature of the eastern coast of the Burning Shores is a long, wind-swept peninsula curving to the south at the far end. Here, a small, sheltered cove serves as the easiest anchorage for visitors seeking the reclusive Allister Dorn. A pair of piers made of deep-black basalt stretches hundreds of feet out into the ocean. Every 10 feet, obsidian goblins in seemingly endless poses provide a means for crews to lash their ships. The obsidian goblins are also one of Dorn's tricks to anticipating visitors. Approaching ships or creatures trigger the permanent alarm set on the goblins, allowing Dorn to scry on visitors from the privacy of his tower.

Rarely is more than one ship docked at the piers. Typically, there are none at all. But, if a ship is present, it most likely belongs to Dorn himself. Dorn's caravel, the Stormbane, possesses three masts and a dragon turtle figurehead of prowess. One of the mage's first attempts at toying with extradimensional space, a command word opens the ship's cabin to a richly decorated, multi-story dwelling. Failure to speak the command word drops the unfortunate victim into the sea off the ship's stern.

Area C2 The Tower Entrance

Above the docks, rugged obsidian cliffs rise over 200 feet and are nearly impossible to climb. Dorn crafted a 10-foot-square iron lift to raise visitors and cargo from sea level to the tower. Bound water elementals power a water wheel at the top of the cliff. The turning wheel raises and lowers thick chains attached to iron rings on top of the lift. Fortunately, Dorn accommodated squeamish visitors by constructing the lift as a cage with a sliding grate on each side.

At the top of the cliff, the land opens into a narrow plateau seemingly made of perfectly smooth, volcanic glass. To the west, extraordinarily rugged terrain with spitting geysers surrounds Dorn's home, hedging in the tower, which rises another 100 feet above the glassy plateau. The tower's surface is made of the same smooth glass as the rest of the plateau. Twenty-one identical doors of opaque golden glass ring the base of the tower, but no windows or doors are visible further up. The 21 doors automatically open when touched, but unfortunately for intruders, none open into the tower unless Dorn opens them himself. Instead, each provides an entrance into one of the mage's crafted demiplanes, whose environs range from thick, humid jungles to unreal scenes reflecting primeval chaos. For Dorn, the demiplanes afford a means to deal with unwelcome visitors and a place to stash his collections of creatures and objects he's discovered since he first sailed into the West.

Area C3 The Tower

For those invited beyond the doors, a richly appointed waiting room awaits guests. A sumptuous deep-red carpet adorned with Dorn's crest—a dragon turtle shell surrounded by stars. Finely crafted sofas ring a circular fireplace. Shelves of books surround the room, and no signs of the exterior doors exist within the room. Dorn's majordomo, Arael, waits on visitors until the mage (see *Inhabitants*, page 43) deigns to make his appearance. Visitors rarely get beyond this room. A variety of rooms, both magical and mundane, fill the rest of the tower. Dorn's fondness for

demiplanes extends to the rest of his tower, as well. Invited guests spending extended periods of time stay in fully inhabited inns, or secluded towers, or whatever other environment might be required.

D. THE OBSIDIAN CLIFFS

Sheer obsidian cliffs from 80 feet to well over 200 feet in height cover the northern coast of the Burning Shores, making a landing impossible.

Area D1 The Statues

On top of the cliffs from end to end, miles of massive humanoid statues carved from the cliffs stand watch over the seas. Each statue is a uniform 50 feet in height and is separated from the next by a tenth of a mile. Most observers believe the statues represent humans, but some contend they represent some other race, perhaps now extinct. No two statues are identical, and the depicted figures are clearly both male and female in form. No seams, doors or other openings exist in the statues, and none radiate magic. The exact origin of the statues is unknown, but records found in most seagoing cultures of the Western Isles prove their existence goes back thousands of years.

Area D2 The Caves

Behind the statues, caves leading to an extensive tunnel system under the island riddle the cliffs. Unadorned bronze gates with puzzling locks

stand between the caves and the interior. Some contend the same culture crafted both statues and tunnels. Others claim a forgotten civilization constructed the statues to protect the world against something deep within the island. Over the years, a handful of explorers penetrating the gates found primeval tombs and returned with gold and magic. Others vanished or emerged insane, babbling tales of strange flames searing memories from their minds. Strangely, each door seems to lead to its own set of tunnels, and fully half the gates remain sealed.

Five Starters for Tombs

- The fiery-orange glow of magma pouring through black stone channels lights this chamber where a crystal idol floats amidst roaring flames.
- Steam from a vent in the floor jets out, turning a mammoth gear. An apparatus with nine smaller gears surround the mechanism, but which should be engaged?
- The center of this tomb is lit by complex circles of intertwined symbols made of opaque glass and lit from beneath with an incandescence hinting at a pool of lava beneath the floor.
- You enter to the song of thirty clockwork birds perched on petrified wooden stands. A mural of notes blankets the walls, an encoded song that will open the next chamber if deciphered.
- The wall opens to reveal a chamber of impossibly smooth obsidian. A step within brings hounds of volcanic glass bubbling up from the floor, attacking as long as someone stands within.



E. THE BADLANDS

The central region of the island is a wasteland of broken ground including treacherous canyons, salt flats, and deadly acid and magma pools with a few larger lakes, no less dangerous for they turn over unpredictably to release large clouds of carbon dioxide and methane. This is a land where the only inhabitants are beasts adapted to survive such as fire beaks and swarms of salt mice. Intelligent residents are limited to loners, travelers and wanderers. Still, some take their chances in the Badlands. Fortunes are made trapping salt mice and the right rare materials can be bartered with the magmins in exchange for products of their pools.

Area E1 Emercroak

Northeast of the Magma Pools, the difficult terrain opens into a valley containing a large lake with a jagged shoreline. From the surrounding hills, sharp-eyed travelers can spot rocky structures on the lakeshore, clearly constructed and not naturally formed. These are the remains of Emercroak, once a community of horned lizardfolk adapted for life in the difficult conditions of the Badlands, but susceptible to the gas clouds released by the exploding lake. In the ruins, the spectral guilt-ridden remains of the village's shaman remain to warn of the danger and prevent the theft of the tribe's relics.

Area E2 The Teakettles

Near the eastern edge of the Badlands, high-pitched whistling breaks the silence of the desolate surroundings. Visible over the crest of the hills ahead, several clouds of steam rise into the sky before dissipating. Those that cross the hill into the basin find a strange landscape where multiple cones belch steam into the air. Now closer, it is clear that the whistling comes from different cones in a wide variety of pitches, cutting on and off as the vents start and stop. These are the Teakettles, source of the Barsellan bard Tillerak's inspiration for the Teakettle Symphony. It is said that Tillerak bartered a simple folk song to the steam mephits of the Teakettles in exchange for his masterpiece. Perhaps more songs can be learned for the right price.

INHABITANTS

Bijan Khizarni, the Azer Warlord

Bijan Khizarni (LE male azer ranger 10) seized control of the azer 13 years when his father died recovering the third key to the Ankeshelian prison holding their prince. Under Bijan, the azer recovered three more of the nine keys, most of any azer ruler since they came to the Forge of the Last Ember. This success has come at a price, however. Under the rule of the heavysset warlord, the azer cracked down ever more fiercely on their own people and travelers to the Burning Shores. It was Bijan who conceived of and implemented the sky cages and expanded the role of the azer inquisitors to seek out secrets among both visitors and their own people. Aging and growing fatter by the year, Bijan still leads many raids, but his people begin to grow restless under his hard rule.

Marzieh Mokari, the Azer Priest

Marzieh Mokari (LN female azer inquisitor 7) grows increasingly restless over the darkening rule of Bijan and worries the azer are mirroring their efret enemies. She prefers not to foster discord with the current regime, but she fears worse elements could come to power if Bijan falls. She is deliberate and struggles whether to provide counsel to Bijan or to pull together her own faction from the many favoring her.

Tholoseene, the Magmin Leader

Tholoseene (CN male magmin witch 9) is the latest in a string of crazed visionaries seizing control of the Magma Pools. Under Tholoseene's dubious leadership, the magmins became more active on the island, sending individuals or small groups out in search of new minerals to season the pools. Tholoseene's queries of visitors from the azer or Umbrasca may seem nonsensical, but, in fact, the witch seeks to learn more about neighboring islands. Tholoseene toys with the idea of colonizing other islands to form a magmin empire. To this end, Tholoseene attracted a fire mephit familiar and the magmin cultivates a growing relationship with a small group of fire mephits dwelling around the Magma Pools and using them to spy on his fellows and increasingly to scout beyond the Burning Shores.

Allister Dorn

Those encountering Allister Dorn (CG male human wizard 17) away from his tower would never guess the tidy, fidgeting man is a survivor of the Great Mage Wars. Over 400 years ago, he fled into the Western Isles. Stumbling across a rival's scheme to rebuild on a volcanic isle in the same archipelago as the Burning Shores, Dorn forsook his own destructive ways; allied with the monadic deva, Arael (now his majordomo), to end the threat; and joined the Sons of Caelmarath, seeking to ensure threats like the Great Mage Wars never occurred again. Dorn has watched the azer since they claimed the Forge of the Last Ember, but distractions elsewhere in the isles prevent him from fully seeing the growing threat Bijan Khizarni poses.

Arael, Allister Dorn's Majordomo

For 300 years, Arael (NG female monadic deva fighter 5) has served Allister Dorn since their original campaign to root out a scheming mage hiding in the Abyss. Today, she is always on hand when Dorn travels among the isles, providing a strong mace to stand with his magic. Her mace is named Ardor, and those meeting her in combat learn Arael's ardor is for battle. At Dorn's tower, she takes a more peaceful role, greeting visitors and running a tight household.

ENCOUNTERS

Many fire-dwelling creatures call the Burning Shores home.

Ash Drakes

Ships bound for the Forge of the Last Ember watch the skies carefully. Several flights of ash drakes (Book of Drakes, page 30) nest in the crags surrounding the bay. The drakes delight in harassing ship's crews, particularly the helmsman and lookouts.

Azer

Outside of the Forge of the Last Ember, the azer (Pathfinder Bestiary 2) exist in small war bands, paddling from the Burning Shores to other islands seeking lore to release their div prince. Small groups may also be found trading with the magmins or hunting drakes to sell at the Brass Market.

Flame Drakes

From the eastern rim of the caldera, a small pack of flame drakes soars over the Badlands, hunting fire beaks when they aren't squabbling with one another. Flame drakes are among the few natives to the Burning Shores with the range to visit other islands in the archipelago.

Fire Beaks

Fire beaks are a variant of the axe beak (Pathfinder Bestiary 3) with the flame-spawned template (Tome of Horrors Complete). Several flocks of the black and red-feathered fire beaks roam the Badlands, where they hunt lizards, vermin, and the occasional unwary azer.

Fire and Magma Elementals

Uncommon, but cruel, fire elementals (Pathfinder Bestiary 1) and magma elementals (Pathfinder Bestiary 2) are both found on the Burning Shores in pools of magma or where lava flows from the earth. Both delight in the environment and take great amusement in tormenting visitors from cooler climes. Magma elementals also dwell in the tunnels behind the Obsidian Cliffs.

Fire, Magma, and Steam Mephits

The most active mephits on the Burning Shores are the fire mephits with whom Tholoseene has cultivated an alliance. But magma and steam mephits are also found on the island. The azer employ magma mephits as servants to work their forge, and wild mephits dwell in several locations. Brash steam mephits live a more solitary existence around hot springs. They particularly delight in playing in geysers and steam vents.

Magmins

Magmins (Pathfinder Bestiary 3) make their home at the Magma Pools, but they do travel the island seeking minerals and salts to mix in their pools. Fearing only the flame drakes and large elementals, the magmins travel alone or in groups of 2-3, and they may be found collecting ingredients in most areas of the island. Magmins encountering strangers act more cautious than in their home, attempting to hide if possible.

Obsidian Drakes

Looking closely at the crack in the dark cliff, you spot a small, lean drake with glossy black scales. Its delicate body stretches out as its jaw opens, revealing a mouth filled with razor-sharp teeth.

Obsidian Drake

CR 5

XP 1,600

N Tiny dragon (material)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, +2 size)

hp 45 (6d12+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

DR 10/adamantine; **Immune** magic paralysis and sleep, dragon traits;

Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (good)

Melee 2 claws +11 (1d2-2), bite 11 (1d3-2)

Space 2.5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon (30 ft. line, 6d6 piercing [obsidian shards], Ref DC 14 half, usable every 1d4 rounds)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6; concentration +6)

3/day—*heat metal*

1/day—*meld into stone, spike stones*

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7 **CMD** 15

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +11, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +17, Survival +5, Use Magic Device +4

Languages Common, Draconic

SQ camouflage

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate and warm mountains

Organization solitary, pair

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflage (Ex) The obsidian drake can make itself unseen. As a swift action, the drake blends with its surroundings, gaining a +8 bonus to Stealth checks as long as it does not move. Obsidian drakes outside of their natural environment gain only a +4 from this ability.

Obsidian Shard Spray (Su) The obsidian drake's breath weapon is a line of razor-sharp obsidian shards. The attack deals 6d6 piercing damage. A successful reflex save (DC 14) halves this damage. A creature suffering damage from this attack receives a number of shards embed in the creature and work their way deeper into the creature's flesh to internal organs. One hour after the attack, the victim suffers 1d4 Constitution damage. The remnants of shards stuck in its skin grant a natural armor bonus equal to half the Constitution damage dealt. Each hour afterwards, the creature must make a Fortitude save or take the Constitution damage again. A successful save halts the penetration of the shards. The shards can be removed with a successful DC 20 Heal check, with a +7 to the DC for every failed Fortitude save. All positive and negative effects fade 2d20 minutes after removing the shards. Healing the Constitution damage removes the natural armor bonus.

The reclusive obsidian drakes are thought to be unique to the Burning Shores. The drakes are most common in the Obsidian Cliffs and in other areas where there are large exposed deposits of obsidian. Long and thin with delicate bodies, the obsidian drakes prey on birds and fish, supplemented by their beloved obsidian. These drakes are not difficult to train and highly-prized due to their rarity. Azer drake trainers capture the drakes and train them to support azer raiding parties and guards.

Salamanders

Two groups of salamanders (Pathfinder Bestiary 1) live on the Burning Shores. The first lair on the north shore of Boiling Bay, where they maintain a small forge in a ruined temple where a forgotten mage summoned them long ago. Stranded on Midgard, they hope to find a way to return to the Plane of Fire, but outside their lair, even the Burning Shores are too cool for their preference. A larger group resides deep under the Obsidian Cliffs, preventing further exploration of the tunnels beyond their lair.

Steam Drakes

Less common than ash drakes, the steam drakes (Book of Drakes, page 47) dwell in several areas of hot springs, particularly on the eastern side of the island. Subsisting on their beloved vapor and rats caught in the Badlands, several have been lured off the island in exchange for better habitats.

Thoqqua

Uncommon on the Burning Shores, the thoqqua (Pathfinder Bestiary 2) are believed to exist only in the magmins' cultivated pools, but a small number live in other places, including the tunnels behind the Obsidian Cliffs and the lava fields on the eastern rim. The azer treasure armor from their plates and would like nothing better than to find a more reliable source than the mad magmins.

ENVIRONMENT AND MECHANICS

The environment of the Burning Shores presents a hazard to visitors making a home someplace other than the Plane of Fire. Always different and changing, hazards can appear where they didn't previously exist. For further information on hazards, see the Pathfinder Core Rulebook.

Acid Pools

When rains fall on the Burning Shores, it often does not remain as water for long. Water mixes with toxic materials, including gases and mineral salts to form pools of acid. Eerily beautiful, the pools consist of spectacular green acid surrounded by calcified crystals in colors from bright yellows and orange to white, brown and red. Contact with acid does 1d6 points of damage per round of exposure. Full immersion does 10d6 damage per round.

Boiling Water

The danger of boiling water is ever present on the island. While some hot springs are safe to bathe in, there are numerous areas of boiling water from Boiling Bay to geysers. Even formerly safe bodies of water may suddenly heat up in response to hot gases or magma venting into the water. Contact with boiling water does 1d6 points of damage per round of exposure. Full immersion does 10d6 damage per round.

Exploding Lakes

A handful of lethal lakes exist across the interior of the Burning Shores. Deadly and unpredictable, these lakes may suddenly release large volumes of carbon dioxide and methane without warning. The deadly gas covers an area 1d4 times the diameter of the lake. Any characters within the gas' release range are subject to suffocation. Larger releases can result in a tsunami hitting the lakeshore; see GameMastery Guide. Exploding lakes are rare and recognizing the danger requires a DC30 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check.

Fresh Water

Fresh water is a serious concern for visitors to the Burning Shores. Knowledgeable visitors bring their own or ensure the presence of clerics and other spellcasters with the ability to create or purify water.

Geysers

Geysers are present in several locations in the interior and eastern side of the island. When geysers erupt, any characters caught in the stream of a

geyser take 1d4 points of force damage and suffer the effects of exposure to boiling water—1d6 points of damage for contact and 10d6 of damage for full immersion.

Heat

Heat is a constant on the Burning Shores. Very hot conditions exist around boiling water and in areas where magma is at Long range. When magma is at Medium range, heat is considered to be severe. When magma is at Close range, the heat is considered extreme.

Magma

Lava is present in several locations on the island, particularly in the Forge of the Last Ember and along the north rim of the caldera on the eastern half of the island. However, smaller lava flows are present in several locations on the island.

Poisonous Gas

Toxic gas is a danger in several locations on the island. Anywhere there is significant volcanic activity, there is the risk of poisonous gas.

ISLAND ADVENTURES

The Prisoner

A young nobleman of Barsella, seized while attempting to negotiate trade with the Azer of the Last Ember, languishes within a cell among the sky cages. His family hires the characters to retrieve him.

Saving the Lanternholds

The last mission sent from the Lanternholds to the magmins disappeared. Can the characters navigate the whims of the magmins and prevent disaster for a small settlement on Umbrasca? What tasks might the magmins set in exchange for their fuel?

The Summons

An invitation arrives for the characters at their residence in Barsella to visit Allister Dorn at his tower. A fragment of the Viridian Codex (*Midgard Campaign Setting*) surfaced on one of the isles. Before Dorn can send the characters to retrieve it, they must find a protective box to store it. Unfortunately, Dorn can't recall which of his demiplanes holds the box.



THE LESSER ISLANDS

LEVIATHAN ISLAND



Legends say Hagos the Tyrant, the lich-king of the magocracy of Vael Turog, first called up the Leviathan when the summoners of Uxlon forced the Turogian wizards to retreat during the Mage Wars. The beast appeared one day in Barsella's harbor, banners flying atop its towers and peculiar constructs on its back. Barsellan wizards went aboard with familiars, summoned servants, and 10 caravans of supplies—never to be seen again.

Others say an unknown summoner brought forth the beast from the Eleven Hells or the Astral Ocean, or that he raised it with magic as a means of escaping the Great Old Ones unleashed on the Western Wastes. Its origin matters little, though, but at least six races controlled it before the humans and tieflings did: the sahuagin pirate princes held it as a harbor for a time; as did the shoggti and cnidari alliance; the neg-thalgu; the aboleths of the time of Ankeshel; and a race of strange celestials, the star bearers, who appear nowhere else.

Most recently, the nobles and wizards of Vael Turog used the Leviathan Island 400 years ago to wander the oceans for years on its back, building great towers and shelters, carving tunnels and hidden spaces within its flesh, and then disappearing entirely. Whatever wiped out the Vael Turog settlement, the island has been rediscovered and reported several times since then. None have mastered its circuit of ocean voyages, or learned to steer it yet.

Its inhabitants are wary and few: A tribe of fishmen (mongrelmen), a settlement of sahuagin, and a clever group of pirates who use the

leviathan as a floating base of operations—plus ghosts, oozes, shadows, and aberrations.

The Leviathan can still be summoned through magic, but few know the secrets of calling or guiding the beast.

LAND HO! FIRST SIGHTING

You see an island, perhaps a mile long, with a small mangrove forest along one shore. The waters here bubble with fish and small predators, and the currents are treacherous. A few sea caves dot the shoreline.

A reef sheltering a small-but-clear harbor lies a half-mile from the mangroves, near a ruined town. Ancient fallen towers are mixed with a few thatched huts, but there are no signs of inhabitants, and no smoke billows from fires.

GEOGRAPHY

The Leviathan Island is somewhat akin to other giants of the deeps, with a heavily protected outer shell, two steering fins and a long propulsive tail, and a vast maw capable of eating whole schools of tuna or baitfish at a time. It has gills and a form of blubber, and entire reefs, a small forest, and various odd structures are built on its back. The Leviathan Island is fully a mile long and capable of swimming great distances, but it spends much of its time in a torpid, resting state.

A single tall hill (where the towers stand, down to the harbor) crowns the island; the island has a lower, trailing swampy region where the Moonflower Grove (area B1) stands and other strange trees are sheltered from the breeze. The coconuts in the Moonflower Grove and the hidden spring in the Comet Tower (area A4) are the two known sources of fresh water on Leviathan Island.

A. THE TOWERS OF HAGOS

These towers are the most recent constructions on Leviathan Island, though numerous races, even those older than the Ankeshelians, have all built or rebuilt the island's towers.

LORE OF THE SEA

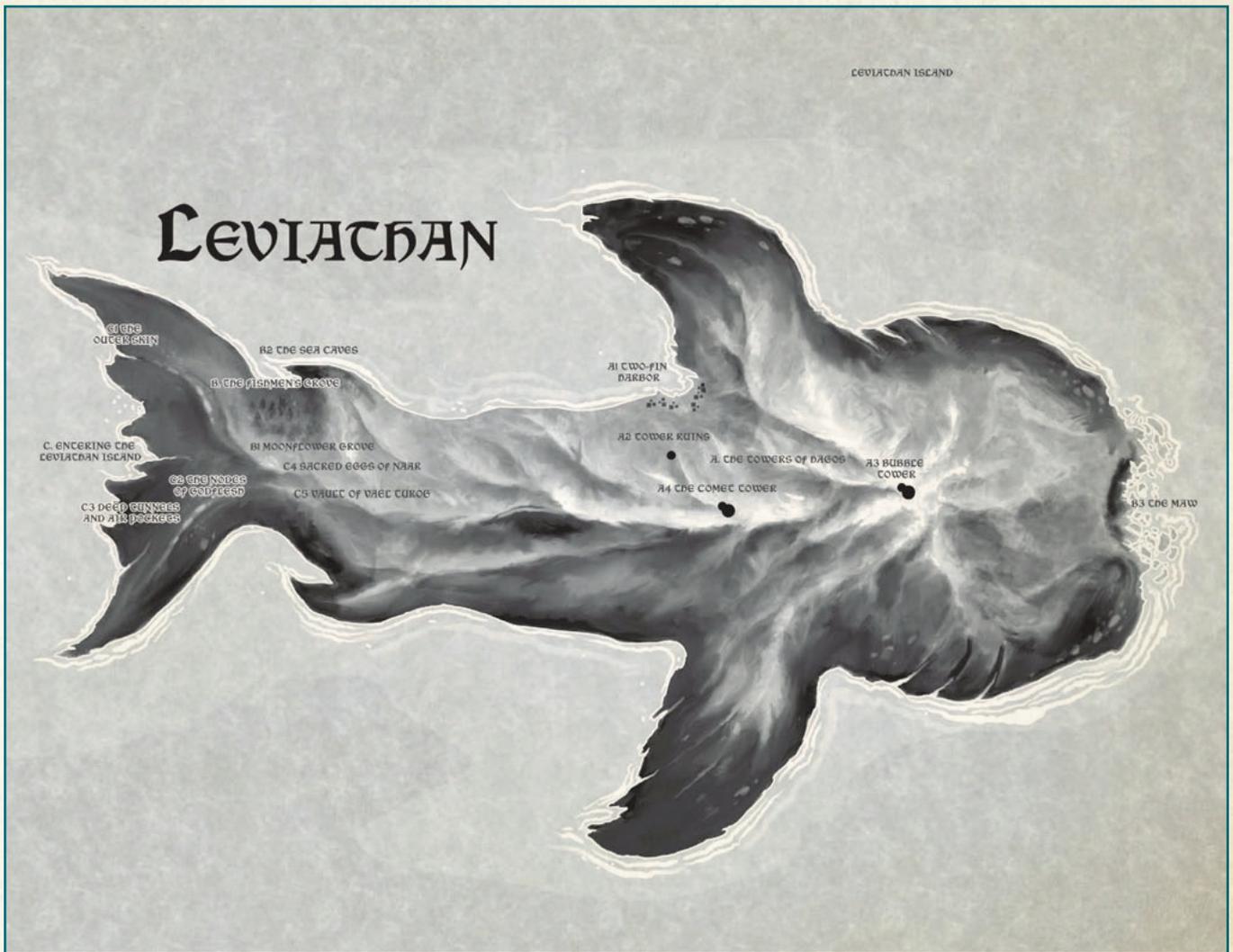
A character may make a Bardic lore or Knowledge (geography) or (history) skill check to learn more about the Leviathan Island.

DC Result

- 10 or less No information gained
- 11-15 A moving island has long been rumored on the Western Ocean.
- 16-20 The wizards of Ankeshel and Vael Turog, as well as pirates, qliphoth, and a sahuagin prince, previously tamed the moving island.
- 21-25 The moving island is a leviathan that dives into the ocean depths when provoked or when compelled with magic to do so.
- 26+ An ancient Ankeshelian-made tool, the Bridle of the Leviathan, can control Leviathan Island. The Bridle formerly passed from hand to hand for aeons, but it has been lost for centuries.

MOONFLOWER COCOONS

The Moonflower Grove helps some creatures survive the island's dives: creatures spun into a moonflower's cocoon shortly before the dive enter hibernation until the island resurfaces. The mongrelmen know the trick to generating such a cocoon, but they only share it if Intimidated (DC 18 check), or bribed with exotic food, magic, or weapons; they might also share the information with fellow druids.



Area A1 Two-Fin Harbor

The approach to the leviathan is easy enough, with docks sheltered by a reef or breakwater (actually a fin). Schools of small fish and some reefclaws inhabit the harbor.

Area A2 Tower Ruins

The city resembles a set of abandoned ruins, and its harbor seems smashed, as if a great wave had destroyed much of it. Anyone going ashore can find signs of habitation, though: discarded mussel shells, a shredded net, and a few misshapen footprints.

The island houses 15 battered stone towers, all built in a similar style, and many huts and small buildings made of woven seaweed mats and thatched with leaves. Various island transients (see Encounters, page 50) inhabit some of the huts, while ghosts haunt several others (see Inhabitants, page 50).

Most of the towers are empty shells, but three or four still have stone stairs, and powerful magic seems to keep them watertight and furnished with tables, cabinets, chairs, and carpets, all of antique design; unseen servants maintain these still-functional towers.

Area A3 Bubble Tower

This one tower has round glass windows in its walls, and a breeze blows from within it (DC 25 Perception to notice the wind only blows out). It is enchanted to provide a safe harbor for airbreathers when the Leviathan dives. Those within the tower are spared the effects of cold and pressure, and have portholes to view the depths. Food is another matter, of course.

Area A4 The Comet Tower

Its stones marked with stars, whorls, and comets, a fusion of the sky and the sea, this tower is largely collapsed and has no magical defenses. However, it contains a magical spring of elemental water, a freshwater supply that has sustained the humanoid populations here over time. Visiting the spring often involves meeting various monsters as well.

B. THE FISHMEN'S GROVE

Area B1 Moonflower Grove

Various unrelated, dissimilar trees—symmetrical pines, a mangrove swamp, strange sour-smelling trees (ginkos), coconut palms, and a few very peculiar spiky crowned hemispheres (dragon trees)—cover this

region of the Leviathan. Moonflowers, ready and eager to eat anything, hide among these exotic trees. They are enchanted not to eat the Leviathan (and thus not mongrelmen or PCs who have eaten godflesh within the last 24 hours—See the Eating Leviathan Godflesh sidebar on page 48). At the center of the grove rests one of the Leviathan's nodes, the Barnacle Node. See "Communicating with the Leviathan" on page 48.

Area B2 The Sea Caves

Three caves along the shore below the Moonflower Grove provide shelter for the fishermen (mongrelmen) when the Leviathan dives. These are similar to the Bubble Tower in that they can be sealed to protect airbreathers during a dive, but the caves have no visibility to what goes on outside. The fishermen defend them from unwanted visitors.

Area B3 The Maw

The Leviathan sucks in a large volume of water to filter out fish and krill by the ton. When the Leviathan Island is resting, a slow-moving current carries water into a sea cave the natives call the Maw—for obvious reasons. Swimming near the Maw requires a DC 20 Swim check to avoid being sucked inside the creature's mouth.

C. ENTERING THE LEVIATHAN ISLAND

The Leviathan Island seems mostly normal from the outside, and it is difficult to enter its "underground" levels. The three entrances to its interior are the Sea Caves (area B2), the Bubble Tower (area A3), and the Maw (area B3). There may be others.

Area C1 The Outer Skin

It's possible to carve a path through the coral, through stony shell, and into blubber and flesh to an interior passage (see Outer Rock Shell, page 51). If the shell is attacked consistently, the GM should make a Dive Check (see Environment and Mechanics, page 51).

Once inside, movement is minimal through breathing spaces, parasite-dug tunnels, and along lymph-like "ooze tunnels." The area is filled with acid and poison traps, and a few self-sealing pits that may divide the party. The locked "doors" are simple buoyancy chambers that automatic nerve pulses seal. Opening them requires using alchemical means (healing or sleep potions) or spells (knock works, but so do cure spells and sleep).

EATING LEVIATHAN GODFLESH

The druid cult of Baitfish eats the Leviathan's flesh to commune with its god. This allows those devouring the flesh to commune as described below, but the Leviathan's flesh also turns living things into mongrelmen over time. This is an attempt to incorporate its parasites into itself; in the case of most fish or reptiles this works, but it goes awry with humans and mammals. However, it does fill visitors with visions of distant oceans, the edge of the world, pursuing schools of fish, titanic thoughts of enormous complexity and a lethargic slumber, punctuated with deep dives.

Anyone attempting to steer or influence or question the Leviathan may trigger its dive reflex, or may convince it to move as the pilot wishes. This requires a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check for every change in direction.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE LEVIATHAN

It is possible for other creatures to hear the Leviathan's thoughts, though conversing with a creature whose thoughts are vast and slow, on an oceanic scale, is impossible. Its sense of time is much slower, and much of its thinking seems concerned with matters incomprehensible to human minds.

Sample thoughts a PC might hear are listed below; have the PC roll a Will save when the character eats something from the node of godflesh (area C2). Druids gain a +3 circumstance bonus to this saving throw, due to their close connection to other minds and species.

LEVIATHAN THOUGHTS	
Will Save	Possible Results
11 or less	Incomprehensible Madness: The PC is shaken for 1 hour and mildly deranged. If this happens a second time, the character becomes insane for 1d6 days (curable by heal spell or limited wish) and any mongrelman deformities or mutations become permanent unless removed by a heal spell.
12-15	The Leviathan's flitting subconscious and peculiar viewpoint is briefly visible to the PC. It thinks small creatures are itchy but entertaining, and the PC senses the thoughts of a host about its parasites, scabbling and humorous. The parasites' peril is amusing, washing them away a mild sadness. To dive? Or to retain them, and be entertained a bit longer?
16-20	The PC senses the ocean's status at a distance: Ice floes in the north and rich feeding to the south suggests a southern course, the currents to the world's edge are strong now, and ley lines gather not far away, at a site of sunken stone glyphs and ruins. The flow of magic is soothing, and may in time lead to a great migration to another world.
21-25	Great visions directly through the Leviathan's senses, seeing all ships, fish schools, islands, whales, currents, ice floes, and other oceanic elements within 100 miles in all directions. Also visible: all ley lines and shadow roads appear as blazing trails of power across the ocean, clearly visible (the character permanently gains the Ley Line feat from the Midgard campaign setting).
25+	Understanding of the Leviathan island's interior body and disjointed memories, with some sense of the way that mongrelmen are being absorbed into the Leviathan, as they should be. Some nodes or fishermen may spawn new Leviathans. Some deeper memories lurk in the Leviathan's mind as well, such as the ancient horror of the Bridle, and a little of the Leviathan's startled response to fire and lightning, driving it into the depths. Also a sense the Leviathan has a greater purpose, though that purpose seems alien and world-spanning.



Area C2 The Nodes of Godflesh

This chamber pulses with a deep bass sound, like the rower's drum on a galley, and the walls are slick with black slime. In a line along the floor is a set of three white stripes marked with dozens of small blue nodes, each shining under a silvery membrane. These can easily be removed from the striped frond (a strip of magically-empowered nerves).

Area C3 Deep Tunnels and Air Pockets

The thick outer shell contains many smaller passages and a few larger ones, all of the same yellowish stone, and many pulsing with strange life: luminescent seaweed; black rivulets of cold fluids; and circular and oblong caverns and air pockets, some entirely filled with noxious or flammable gasses.

Beyond the outer layer is an inner region of flesh and blubber and hard-but-spongy surfaces where it is clear that the material dug out is organic, more akin to clay and meat than stone. Much of it is in good condition and bleeds a thin, milky grey blood when cut. Cuts seal themselves very quickly.

Coral oozes (see page 66 and charda (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2*) defend the deep tunnels. Other defenses include standard oozes and acid traps. The island has four large hollow interior spaces or vaults, and one tiny one, the Hidden Vault of Vael Turog. Parasite species, such as the cnidaria, the shoggti, and the neh-thalguu, use the large hollows when they visit.

Presumably, they come to communicate with the Leviathan's strange consciousness. Narrow passages connect the vaults.

Area C4 Sacred Eggs of Naar

This region contains thousands of shining jade-colored eggs, each about the size of a horse and each protected by a thick shell. The cnidari and neh-thalguu tend them lovingly; the eggs are clearly either their own offspring in some larval form, or perhaps they are future Leviathans growing into a larger stage.

LEVIATHAN STONES

These purple-red crystalline deposits resemble garnets, but they are more valuable than any gemstones, as Leviathan Stones contain temporary ability score boosts.

Those absorbing a Leviathan Stone's mass under their skin (via a DC 18 Heal check) gain a +2 bonus to any one ability score for 24 hours. They must also make a DC 22 Fortitude saving throw, or gain 1 mongrelman attribute (loss of hair, or the growth of gills or eyestalks, etc—at the GM's discretion).

These mongrelman attributes disappear within 1 week of leaving the Leviathan.

Area C5 Vault of Vael Turog

Somewhere within the beast lies the Vault of Turog, where the magical treasures of the magocracy are said to be hidden, including the spellbooks of archmages, staves of power, ooze familiars, and a remarkable library of arcane scrolls combined with volumes of lore about the Great Old Ones of the Wastes and the secrets of the enemies of Vael Turog, such as the magocracies of Allain and Caelmarath. But the exact location of this vault remains unknown, and some believe it is entirely fictitious, the same disaster that destroyed most of the Towers of Harog having washed it away long ago.

INHABITANTS

The Leviathan attracts a wide range of peculiar creatures from the sea and the realms beyond. These include the creatures listed below, but the primary inhabitants are the Fishmen (aquatic mongrelmen). They are a strange mélange of humanoid, sahuagin, crab, fish, seal, otter, dolphin, and sometimes seagull or demon. All have some form of gills or blowholes, webbed feet, and so forth; and they worship the Leviathan as the Great Island-God Yatan and are quite protective of it; they rarely welcome visitors, though they sometimes grudgingly accept druids and sailors.

Baitfish Telbador (see below) leads them. He threatens visitors, and any interlopers failing to leave after his warning suffer attacks from a squadron of mongrelmen or a few boreworms. And sometimes the fishmen plant a moonflower just outside a stubborn party's camp.

The Mongrelmen's Secret

The mongrelmen partly breed among themselves, and partly replenish their numbers through the eating of "godflesh" (the flesh of the node at area C2). They trade with pirates and do some small piracy themselves. Captain Razorfish (LE male mongrelman fighter 9) commands their single ship, the barnacle-encrusted caravel Fortune.

Perhaps the mongrelmen have been there for so long that the Leviathan's natural defenses ignore them.

The Lich-King Hagos

The lich-king and two of his greatest lieutenants, the Black Sorceress Melathea Stross and the tiefling summoner Raldespan the Vile, exist as ghosts and are invisible by daylight. Melathea and Raldespan willingly approach visitors on the island's surface to beg them to find the hidden Vaults of Vael Turog. So far no one has succeeded in finding it.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Baitfish Telbador, Leader of the Leviathan's Cult

Baitfish is a hideous mongrelman with crab-like eyestalks, hands with tentacled fingers, and a voice like a raging storm. He worships the ocean and the islands as part of his druidic teachings, with an emphasis on strange visions of the deep and voices he claims speak to him from the island.

Baitfish approaches all visitors like a wild-eyed street preacher and claims that "Yatan is alive." He warns all: "You trespass on sacred ground, the flesh of the god," and he gives visitors 24 hours to leave, or else they will "feed the god's hunger."

Baitfish: Mongrelman; LN druid shark totem 8; 54 hp; Wis 16, Con 16, Cha 15; +6/+1 scimitar (1d8+1); Diplomacy +11, Heal +11, Knowledge (nature) +12

Ghost of Hagos the Tyrant

The ghost of Hagos the Tyrant has wispy white hair, a robe filled with moving stars and comets, and eyes that burn like fires in the deep. Hagos wishes he could reach out and strangle those fools seeking to plunder his vaults. He refers frequently to "my shining city" and "my Bridle," but he never explains himself or really answers questions. He is very much a megalomaniac and still full of himself.

Instead, he taunts the unworthy, incompetent, utter fools who even attempt to find his vault. And he threatens to call in the charda, the mongrelmen, or other foes if the party does not offer him what he wants: bits of blood and bone that sustain him. The ghost can be attacked, but he always reforms within 24 hours.

Ghost of Hagos; HP 59; Int 21, Cha 18; +4 withering ghost touch* for 2d12 damage and 1 point Con drain; Intimidate +16, Knowledge (History) +20, Sense Motive +10

Ghost of the Star Druid Undaros

Undaros is a star-bearer ghost made entirely of tentacles and strange glows. It is a druid and a friend to the Leviathan, and it asks for the PC's help in destroying the Leviathan's enemies, the Shoggti and Cnidari that wiped out its race.

Unfortunately, it speaks entirely in an alien tongue, and can only be understood through the use of magic, such as a tongues spell. It is, however, truthful and full of ancient information: if the PCs invest some magic in communicating with it, they will learn about the Leviathan Stones or the Godflesh node.

Ghost of the Sahuagin Prince

The sahuagin prince Mano Maika speaks several languages, including Common, and happily tells the PCs that the Leviathan is one of the great servants of the sahuagin shark-god, and that the shoggti were his race's allies and compatriots. He promises to tell the PCs where the Vault of Vael Turog lies, if only they will slaughter all the mongrelmen on Leviathan Island.

Ghost of the Black Sorceress Melathea

The Black Sorceress Melathea Stross, one of Lich-King Hagos' lieutenants, was a tiefling and an ally of Vael Turog, but the horrid Nyogoth and Shining Children that came to assert some ancient pact with the Leviathan surprised and killed her. She assures the party that the Leviathan is a creature of evil, and that it is best destroyed. If asked about the Vault, she claims a pirate wizard named Larreck (now a ghost, see below) looted it centuries ago. Whether any of this is remotely true is open to question; her historical reputation (DC 15 bardic lore or Knowledge (history)) is of a demagogue, liar, vile practitioner of diabolism, and a victim of ley line corruption. But those are the stories her enemies tell.

Ghost of the Pirate Wizard Larreck

The pirate wizard is said to have been a weather mage and one of the few humans to worship dark gods openly and defiantly. He murdered captured innocents, slaughtered troops sent to capture him, and kept his entire crew in terror of him for the best part of a decade. For a while, he seems to have been the human ambassador of the cnidari to coastal communities, but eventually seems to have sailed off to the Astral Sea and returned to Leviathan Island a changed and chastened wizard. Some believe he plundered the Vaults of Vael Turog, but then died before he could make use of its treasures.

ENCOUNTERS

The most common encounters on Leviathan Island are its ghosts, various oozes and parasites, and its mongrelman and alien visitors. The creatures of the surface and tower ruins are listed in the first set of 8 creatures below; grindlylow, reefclaws, and bone crabs are all common on the beaches and harbor area; the mongrelmen and moonflowers are found in the island marshes; and the merrow nest in the sea caves and ruins, where ghosts can also be found.

The second set of creatures is found within the Leviathan Island, in the vaults, tunnels, and caverns. The amoeba swarms are almost like white blood cells, attacking sleeping intruders or those caught in small spaces. The cnidari and neh-thalggu defend the Leviathan's most important nodes. Gelatinous cubes (more cylinders than squares, really) slither through the interior as cleaner-parasites.

The third set of creatures is the special high-level encounters meant for the Vault of Vael Turog or other important sites deep within the island.

ENVIRONMENT AND MECHANICS

Leviathan Island has some unique and dangerous elements, primarily the flesh hidden under its barnacles and its porous white stone shell. Movement, diving, and the living interior spaces are all unique elements of a Leviathan Island visit.

CREATURES OF LEVIATHAN ISLAND

Name (Source)	CR
Grindlylow (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	½
Mongrelman (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	1
Reefclaw (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	1
Bone Crab (<i>Sunken Empires</i>)	1
Ghost	N/A
Coral Ooze (page 66)	6
Merrow, Salt Water (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	6
Moonflower (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	8
Amoeba, Giant (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	1
Amoeba Swarm (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	1
Gelatinous Cube	3
Albino Cave Solgifugid (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	4
Cnidari (<i>Sunken Empires</i>)	4
Bore Worm (<i>Sunken Empires</i>)	7
Charda (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	7
Qlippoth, Shoggti (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	7
Black Pudding	7
Neh-Thalggu (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	8
Qlippoth, Nyogoth (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	10
Shining Child (<i>Bestiary 2</i>)	12
Golem, Cannon (<i>Bestiary 3</i>)	15

Leviathan Speed and Navigation

When the Leviathan Island is moving (usually by night, resting during the day), it makes a modest speed of about 5 mph: faster than a swimmer, but not outrunning swift galleys or magical flyers by any stretch.

The Bridle and Song of the Deep

The mages of Vael Turog discovered the same tools that prior civilizations did: a magical bridle set on the godflesh node (area C2) keeps the Leviathan Island from diving, and the Song of the Deep (a magical cantrip known among seafaring bards as a way to predict waves and weather) helps set the island's course and speed. Without these two tools, the Leviathan does as it pleases. The bridle is not currently to be found anywhere on the island.

Feeding Time

When the Leviathan feeds, all fish and ships not tied up drift toward the Maw. A simple DC 15 Swim or Profession (Sailor) check should keep PCs out of trouble (DC 20 once they get near the Maw). If their ship is sucked in, it is quickly destroyed.

Outer Rock Shell

The island's exterior does not resemble skin or whale flesh, or a shark's rough skin. Digging through the stone and shell outer layer of the Leviathan Island is possible, but very difficult. This requires a 10-foot-

A DOZEN ELDRITCH REMNANTS

These encounters are meant to be used whenever the players are stumped, or when you want to throw them a twist. Roll d12, or choose an item from the following list.

- A rotating, mid-air rune or glyph that reads "Forbidden" in an ancient language.
- A single coin of orichalcum, dating back to Ankeshel.
- A small grave marker marked with the runes of Vael Turog, and containing the bones of Hagos the Tyrant.
- A clutch of cnidari eggshells, recently hatched. Next to them, a dead, stripped seagull carcass.
- A greenstone wand, broken in half, marked with a spiral containing magical writing, and apparently of non-human construction.
- A small seachest poorly buried that contains pearls, a ship's log, a map to other islands, and/or other treasures of sahuagin pirates, but also a horrible ooze or slime creature.
- A set of rusty, spiked shackles containing a desiccated tentacle.
- A leviathan stone (see page 49) that pulses with energy.
- A bright red toad with a single eye that follows the party and watches it carefully. If attacked, it jumps into cover and disappears.
- A scroll case, empty, but with a lead seal still attached. The seal is marked with the Skull & Wands emblem of Larreck the pirate-wizard.
- The corroded gears of a magical construct of some kind. It includes one memory gear (see Kobold Quarterly#16 or the Midgard Campaign Setting) containing memories of exploration and a violent death at the hands of a Shining Child.
- A black bracelet of some exotic star metal. Touching it releases a moaning, demonic cry. Shoggti jewelry ain't healthy for humans.

deep hole through material with Hardness 10 and 200 hp. It's possible without siege weapons, but rather difficult. Ships with catapults and mages with passwall or dig will have little trouble. Others may just decide it is worth looking for an easier way inside.

NOTE: This sort of digging is likely to trigger a dive reflex (See Dive and Breach Checks below).

Dive and Breach Checks

Using fire spells, call lightning, dig, and similar highly destructive spells to carve a path through the Leviathan's flesh is very effective—and may spark a dive reflex.

Roll a d% against the amount of damage caused (or 3x the level of the spell, if it causes no direct damage like dig). If the roll is less than the damage inflicted, the Leviathan undertakes a Short Dive. If the roll is under 05, or if the damage inflicted is greater than 50 points, the Leviathan undertakes a Long Dive.

Short Dive: The Leviathan Island stays underwater, feeding and moving at 5 MPH, for 1d6+1 times 10 minutes. It stays at a depth of 1d4 times 50 feet. Light remains visible, and the pressure is uncomfortable but not damaging.

Long Dive: The Leviathan goes deep, 1,500 feet or more into the ocean's depths, chilling its blood. All light disappears into darkness, and the charda awaken and become very active. All creatures suffer the effects of pressure and depth: hypothermia is a real risk for unprotected creatures, dealing 1d6 cold damage/minute of exposure. Depth pressure is crushing, dealing 1d6 damage/minute/100 ft. of depth to unprotected creatures.

Breach Check: Damaging the Leviathan while it is underwater is treated exactly like a dive check, but if the check succeeds, the Leviathan Island has a 50% chance of returning to the surface and a 50% of going deeper underwater.

The Diving Island

The Leviathan's dive, at first, resembles the tide coming in slowly: the waves come up higher, the trees sink under salt water, and the cave entrances take on a little water. Then the Moonflower Grove (area B1) wraps itself in cocoons, the sea caves (area B2) seal up, and the Bubble Tower (area A3) blows like a spouting whale (the Leviathan is releasing gasses to reduce its buoyancy). Slowly, the island sinks into the ocean;

this takes about 30 minutes for an unhurried dive, but it can happen in as little as 6 rounds if the Leviathan feels threatened or alarmed.

Returning to the surface is similar. The Bubble Tower breaks the surface first, then the grove and some older towers. The harbor and sea caves open last.

Party Survival During Dives

Though a diving Leviathan Island might seem like an invitation to a total party kill, it need not be. The PCs could find a rowboat or teleport away, or use a ring of water walking or an air seed (see Midgard Campaign Setting). A passing pirate ship might rescue adrift PCs (or they might take the PCs for slaves). Or, the Leviathan might dive when a small island is nearby.

Most of all, the island sinks fairly slowly the first time, giving PCs time to react, and there are at least three ways to survive on the island itself (moonflower cocoons, the Bubble Tower, and the sea caves), plus the option of going into the island's interior vaults.

ISLAND ADVENTURES

The Vault of Vael Turog

The fabled Treasury of Vael Turog, a vast cache of magical treasure from an age-old magocracy, is said to lie on the island. Wizards of the magocracy smuggled all the platinum, the finest magic items and scrolls, and all their masterworks off the mainland and brought them here, where constructs, traps, and lethal magic continue to guard them. Where are they hidden? Deep within the beast, of course!

The Bridle

A powerful magical gem set in spikes of adamantium and chased with gold is found in a treasure somewhere off the island, but investigation reveals the bridle can control the Leviathan's movement. Can the item be restored, and will it indeed control the island? What happens in the power struggle afterward?

The Haunts of Vael Turog

The island contains dozens or hundreds of ghosts, each a danger and a spirit in torment. Most live in terror of the ghost of the Lich-King Hagos, but all secretly wish him permanently dead. Can the PCs find a way to question one of them, and lay the ghosts to rest?



THE LESSER ISLANDS

TERMINUS ISLAND



Along the entire horizon, north to south, the Western Ocean cascades over the lip of the world. This colossal cataract flows around an immense standing stone known only as Terminus Island—the last land at the edge of the world.

Green Coven

Before the aboleth rose from the waters to teach the early humans of civilization, magic, and technology (see Open Design's *Sunken Empires*), the Green Coven ruled the people, as the sacred guardians of the Verdant Vessels, fruit-bearing trees of divine provenance.

When the aboleth arrived, the Green Coven realized the danger the amphibious aberrations represented—an insidious evil with pretty baubles to tempt the children. Despite warnings, the people took to the aboleth, and they soon founded the ancient cities of Ankeshel. The Green Coven went into hiding, taking the Verdant Vessels with them. Unfortunately, a trusted ally betrayed their confidence, resulting in the near-annihilation of both the Verdant Vessels and the Green Coven.

The few who survived infiltrated the corrupt Ankeshel bureaucracy while keeping their identities secret. Biding their time and whispering inciting words, they fomented insurrection. Finally, the people rose up against the corrupt government and tossed their leaders to the sea—accursed as merfolk. The Green Coven infiltrators had a plan and accepted this curse alongside the truly corrupt.

Over the Edge

The Green Coven survivors rescued the pits of a single Verdant Vessel—the Ruby Plum Tree—and sought an impenetrable fortress to protect the last vestige of their ancient protectorate. Despite quietly waiting, they had not been idle. The Green Coven clandestinely funneled Ankeshel's public taxes into an exploration fund; knowing the world was flat, they searched for a mythical island at the edge of the world. Coincidentally, they received word of this island on the eve of the first signs of the well-documented public revolution.

The Green Coven conspirators stole away from the other newly cursed and confused merfolk, swimming far out to sea. Few survived this harrowing and taxing journey, but their efforts were not in vain. They found their mythical island, upon which they planted the rescued sacred pits of The Ruby Plum Tree. The new Verdant Vessel flourished, but they feared they would be discovered, and so they sought even more protection.

Negotiating a pact with the World Serpent and invoking the greatest rituals, the Green Coven pushed the island over the edge of the world. They forced it along the face of the world's edge until it rested many leagues down from the surface of the Western Ocean. Their last stone druid carved the World Descent Staircase and led the ritual that raised a standing stone, now known as Terminus Island, from the ocean's bedrock.

The descendant merfolk of the Green Coven still jealously guard The Ruby Plum Tree from any who try to pilfer its sacred riches.

GEOGRAPHY

Two separate and distinct geographical locations divide the island at the edge of the world. A large standing stone comprises the upper half, and is known as Terminus Island. The lower half, largely unknown by explorers from the east, rests on a large shelf protruding from the side of the world, and is known as World Descent Island. The two islands are connected by a five-mile staircase.

A groove carved into the western face of Terminus Island continues down the edge of the world, ending at the World Descent Pier, while a staircase descends in a switchback pattern on the inside surfaces of the groove. Several smaller protrusions create a series of ledges that protect the staircase from the torrents of the ocean's fall. The staircase ends at a pier that juts into a large pool of water that splits in two around World Descent Island, forming the north and south branches of Descent River. The two rivers eventually spill lazily off the edge at their western confluence.

A rope ferry allows access from the pier to the fog-enshrouded World Descent Island. The ghostly shapes of monolithic trees can barely be seen amongst the briny mists. Sparse ground-cover grows between the trunks of these gentle giants and then tapers out at the base of the barren Kongamato Peak. The Ruby Plum Tree sits in its glade in the middle of the tall forest.

A. TERMINUS ISLAND

Terminus Island is a giant menhir, approximately one-mile tall, with a flat top approximately one-third its height. Using ritual magic, ancient merfolk druids of the Green Coven grew or raised the island from the bedrock of the ocean floor. Although the rock has withstood the elements fairly well, it appears weatherworn in places and is missing a dragon-bite-sized chunk out of its top northwestern corner.

COSMOLOGY

Midgard, a flat world, sits in the coils of the World Serpent. The serpent's coils contain the world's oceans, although some leakages do happen. The lower coils of the World Serpent recover any water falling off the edge of the world, and its undulating body slowly returns the liquid back into Midgard's oceans.

TERMINUS ISLAND



**Eastern Face View
With Setting Sun**

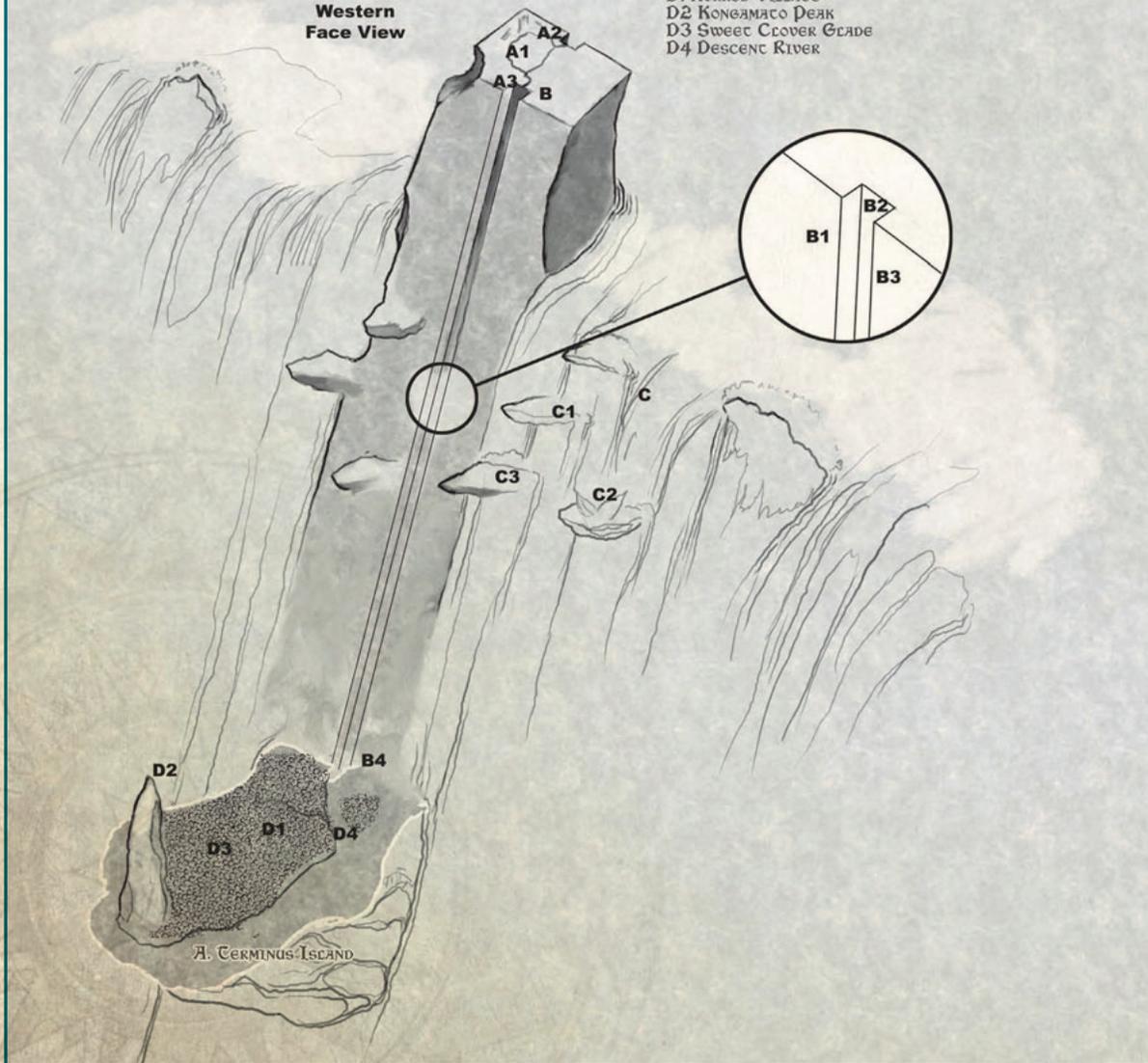
- A1 MOORING DOCK & STAIRCASE
- A2 MERFOCK DENGE
- A3 LANDING ABOVE THE WORLD DESCENT STAIRCASE

- B. WORLD DESCENT
- B1 WORLD DESCENT STAIRCASE
- B2 REAR SHELF
- B3 ROPE BRIDGE
- B4 WORLD DESCENT PIER & ROPE FERRY

- C. CASCADE LEDEES
- C1 THE LEDEES
- C2 SHIPWRECK
- C3 MEDIC BASE

- D. WORLD DESCENT ISLAND
- D1 KORRED VILLAGE
- D2 KONGAMATO PEAK
- D3 SWEET CLOVER GRADE
- D4 DESCENT RIVER

**Western
Face View**



Area A1 Mooring Dock & Staircase

The stark image of Terminus Island inspires awe as the dark block of stone superimposes over a colorful sunset. At water level, in the center of the standing stone's eastern face, a small pier juts into the frothing ocean—visible only during low tide. Once an extremely experienced sailor has successfully moored their craft (Profession [sailor] DC 30 check), the departing crew must climb a staircase carved into the side of the rock. Sea water slickens the salt-encrusted steps, making ascension a slow and dangerous prospect. Consider the stairs difficult terrain. If moving half speed, an Acrobatics check (DC 15) is required to maintain balance on the wet stairs. If moving full speed, add 10 to the difficulty. See the environment and mechanics section on page 58 for difficulties in navigating the currents of the oceanfall.

Area A2 Merfolk Henge

After cresting the staircase and achieving the top of Terminus Island, a recently used henge becomes visible. The henge is a series of menhirs and trilothons arranged in a pattern reminiscent of the Ankeshelian glyph representing both a guardian and fortress (Knowledge [arcana] DC 25). Similar glyphs cover these large slabs of stone, and anyone with knowledge of ancient Ankeshel, or who can speak the language, can make a Linguistics check (DC 30) to learn the history of the merfolk and Terminus Island. The glyphs include vague references to a guardian beast requiring monthly feeding (the gargantuan catoblepas in area A3 and detailed on page 58). During each month's new moon, a group of adaro can be found ritualistically dancing and singing amongst the henge.

Area A3 Landing above the World Descent Staircase

A sunken portion of the Terminus Island mesa, 400 feet squared, rests just before a staircase descending down the western face of the rock. The mesa drops 20 feet into this huge, carved basin, and a small staircase leads down the northern inside edge. The western edge of the pit opens to a sheer drop down the cliffs of the edge of the world. A gargantuan catoblepas paces within the pit, chained to a huge spike driven deep into the stone. The creature must be defeated before accessing the staircase.

B. WORLD DESCENT

Area B1 World Descent Staircase

The groove carved, 50 feet deep by 100 feet wide, into the western face of Terminus Island contains a staircase descending all the way to World Descent Island. The strong winds blowing brine mist straight up and down the shaft make the stairs quite slippery and reduce visibility. See the environments and mechanics section for World Descent Island on page 59 for how to handle the visibility. These stairs, also considered difficult terrain, require the same Acrobatics checks as the stairs on the eastern face in section A1 above. The full height of the staircase descends approximately 5 miles before reaching the World Descent Pier.

Area B2 Rear Shelf

The stairs start at the northern edge of the groove and switchback about three-quarters of the way down Terminus Island. There, they end at a 20-foot-deep ledge set across the entire back face of the shaft. This ledge can be used as a good campsite during the long descent down the staircase.

The stairs then continue down the southern face of the groove, until reaching a second ledge. Except for the rope bridge, this pattern continues another four times for a total of six ledges, each equidistant from one another. The final ledge extends only halfway, and the remaining stairs lead switchback down the rear face.

Area B3 Rope Bridge

Roughly halfway between the third and fourth shelf, the stairs end at a rope bridge extending across the open face of the groove. Windstorm conditions affect the bridge, causing it to sway dangerously back and forth. In addition to the standard Strength checks required to move against the wind, Climb checks (DC 20) are required to maintain a grip on the slick rope rails. The stairs continue descending on the other side of the bridge. The bridge displays no sign of rot or decay.

Area B4 World Descent Pier & Rope Ferry

At the bottom of the World Descent Staircase, a pier sits within the protected shaft. A large, flat raft, 30 feet long and 20 feet wide, bobs quietly next to the pier. Two steel poles topped by steel loops jut up from the starboard corners, and a 6-inch-thick rope, anchored securely to the back wall of the shaft, extends through the loops toward World Descent Island. The raft can be moved through the cascading waterfall and across the pool until beaching on the distant island. This process is slow, taking approximately 4 hours to cross the mile between the pier and the island. Like the rope bridge above, the raft and the rope both appear to be maintained.

C. CASCADING LEDGES

Area C1 The Ledges

A latticework of large ledges protrudes from the edge of the world, protecting the island below from the cataract above. These ledges range in size from approximately 5 feet to 100 feet squared, and the vegetation thriving on these ledges is completely inedible. Eating the plant matter results in being nauseated for 10 minutes and sickened for 24 hours unless the consumer makes a successful Fortitude save (DC 25, +2 per previous check). This vegetation is highly salty, as it partially filters the salt from the ocean water before it cascades onto the next ledge. Because of this filtering process, the pool and Descent River below remain potable. Additionally, the ledges are typically no closer than 50 feet from one another, and are constantly under windstorm conditions, making it extremely difficult to access them.

Area C2 Shipwreck

The shipwreck of *The Cretin's Revenge* sits broken on one of the larger shelves. A salt mouse swarm inhabits the ship as the only survivor of its deadly plummet. See the island adventure section on page 59 for further history on *The Cretin's Revenge*.

Area C3 Mephit Base

This large ledge houses a base camp for a group of mephit. Worraedra, their obsessed marid leader, does her best to ensure the mephits remain hidden while on the ledge, as they make frequent raids onto World Descent Island. They have yet to successfully navigate the confusing mists below, however. See the Inhabitants section on page 56 for more information.



THE RUBY PLUM TREE

The Ruby Plum Tree produces 1d3 magical fruit per year with varying properties dependant upon what the eater truly requires. The Ruby Plums can cure any conditions normally requiring a miracle or wish, in addition to conferring the normal effects of a heal and greater restoration. If a Ruby Plum is squeezed over a dead body or eaten by an undead (even those normally unaffected by or immune to resurrection magic), they are affected by a reincarnation spell, minus the negative levels and any Constitution drain (i.e., it works like a true resurrection spell but creates an entirely new body). If a creature eats a Ruby Plum and no obvious need exists, the creature gains an effect having some element of destiny. Possible effects include immortality, eternal youth, good luck, forbidden knowledge, or a revelation of specific secret knowledge. Twin fruits are particularly auspicious, spiritually connecting the two individuals who partake.

D. WORLD DESCENT ISLAND

World Descent Island supports a strange collection of giant and prehistoric flora and fauna. Coniferous trees, averaging 400 feet tall with trunks nearly 60 feet in diameter at ground level, cover most of the island. Giant ferns and crawling ivy make up the sparse ground cover, while the standard assortment of birds, insects, and rodents do not inhabit this island. The brine-mists enshrouding the island inhibit visibility, allowing normal sight out to 20 feet, and granting partial concealment to anything at an additional 20 feet. The mist confers total concealment to anything beyond 40 feet.

The ritual that created the island completely removed it from the grid, meaning the World Descent Island currently has no connections to Midgard's ley lines. The boundary between Midgard's atmosphere and the ethers surrounding the world have become incredibly close and intertwined near the edge of the world. Indeed, the sun and the moon seem close enough to touch.

Area D1 Korred Village

The korred named their village, Faeleanal, which means "new home." They have a large circle of standing stones in the middle of the village that represents their piety to the First World gods. (See the Inhabitants section on page 58 for more information on the korred).

FAELEANAL

CN Village

Corruption -2; **Crime** +1; **Economy** -1; **Law** -1; **Lore** +0; **Society** -1

Qualities holy site, racially intolerant (all non-korred) **Danger** +0;

Disadvantages impoverished

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 123 (123 korred)

Notable NPCs

Gang Leader Orefsh (CN male ranger 4)

Huntmaster Yaegish (CN male barbarian 3)

Grand Sculptor Awlish (CN male druid 5)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 250 gp; **Purchase Limit** 1,225 gp; **Spellcasting** 5th;

Minor Items 1d4 (a rope of climbing is always available); **Medium**

Items 1d2; **Major Items** –

Area D2 Kongamato Peak

This peak appears to be half of a completely barren mountain. Before the Green Coven pushed World Descent Island over the edge of the world, this mountain marked the center of the island. During the ritual, however, the island broke in half, leaving behind Kongamato Peak, which is named for its lone kongamato dragon (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3) inhabitant (See the Inhabitants section on page 58 for more information). Somewhere in the bowels of this half-mountain resides a hidden, sealed series of chambers, untouched for millennia.

Area D3 Sweet Clover Glade

Verdant Vessels, living artifacts of myth and legend, foment many stories as to their magical properties. Whispers of The Ruby Plum Tree circulate about the island chains of the Western Ocean, and are heard as far east as Barsella. Few lend credence to these rumors, but many have foolishly chased the dream.

The Ruby Plum Tree sits within a sun-drenched sweet clover glade, hidden by the swirling brine mists of World Descent Island. None of the indigenous creatures of World Descent Island set foot within the glade out of reverence for the Ruby Plum Tree; however, many adventurers have tried in vain to brave the brine-mists to find it.

Area D4 Descent River

The Descent River is actually two branches—north and south—originating from a pool at the base of the World Descent Staircase. At 1,000 feet wide and 200 feet deep, this river moves quite slowly before the confluence slowly spills over the edge of the island. Large boulders litter the banks of Descent River, with the inner bank's rocks being slightly smaller and less frequent. The outer banks expand to approximately 50 feet wide before dropping off the edge of World Descent Island into oblivion. Because of the Cascade Ledges above, the water of the pool and river are completely salt free and potable.

INHABITANTS

Elementals

The great oceanfall and the howling winds over its edge are extreme conditions that attract connections to the elemental planes and the creatures living beyond the boundaries. Air, lightning, and water elementals of all sizes thrive in the adverse conditions and seem to drive the weather to new extremes.

Additionally, air, ooze, salt, and water mephits often cross the planar boundaries here to stage raids on adventurers traveling near Terminus Island, down the World Descent Staircase, or over the edge of the world. The marid Worraedra's well-organized group of salt and ooze mephits uses one of the cascading ledges as a base of operations (see area C3 on page 55). Worraedra is obsessed with finding the Ruby Plum Tree.

Merfolk & Adaro

The descendants of the Green Coven still guard the Ruby Plum Tree. However, their pact with the World Serpent mutated them into adaro, a shark-like merfolk. They live in the Descent River and have completely forgotten their history. They now live only to hunt and kill. This makes them effective guardians. They patrol Descent River and can prove dangerous to anyone using the rope ferry. The adaro maintain and repair the rope ferry, the World Descent Pier, the raft, and the rope bridge, as necessary. Despite their memory lapse, the adaro are drawn to the Terminus Island plateau on the new moon of every month (see area A2 on page 55), where they perform a ritual and feed the guardian.

Dragon Eel

Deep down in the sea, at the base of Terminus Island, a large series of water-carved tunnels and chambers provides a lair for a dragon eel (see page 67). This dragon eel, whom the adaro call Semphilix, has a freedom of movement ability above and beyond what a typical dragon eel might have, allowing him to ignore the currents of the cataract. Semphilix claims the entire cataract as his territory, which if Arawkcaw, The Great Kongamato, actually traveled this far on a regular basis might cause conflict between the two.

Megafauna

World Descent Island is stock full of gigantic, prehistoric creatures known as megafauna. All types live in the forest, around the base of Kongamato Peak, and in the Descent River. In addition to the megafauna, other prehistoric beasts also roam the forest of World Descent Island. Any dire creature of at least large size, mastodons, and woolly rhinoceros all call this island home.

The Elk People

The Elk People are a tribe of 37 mostly peaceful huge fey megaloceros. Their natural forms appear as a massive, light-green to aqua-blue elk with large variegated butterfly wings, but they have the ability to shapechange into wood giants at will. They do their best to stay out of sight, but are also fiercely territorial when it comes to protecting their young.

The nomadic Elk People keep mostly to the deep forest, avoiding the Descent River, as the Dragon People claim the banks as their territory. Additionally, they remain clear of Kongamato Peak for obvious reasons. The herbivorous Elk People can usually be found gathering food in their family groupings.

Elk People (Huge Fey Megaloceros) CR 8

XP 4,800

N Huge Fey

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +16

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +9 natural, -2 size)

hp 95 (9d8+54)

Fort +12, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

DR 5/cold iron; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., fly 75 ft. (good)

Melee gore +12 (3d6+8), 2 hooves +10 (1d6+4)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks powerful charge (6d6+12)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +11)

3/day—*dancing lights*

1/day—*entangle* (DC 13), *faerie fire*, *glitterdust* (DC 14), *deep slumber* (DC 15), *major image* (DC 15), *confusion* (DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 17, **Con** 22, **Int** 4, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 29 (33 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Run^B

Skills Perception +14, Fly +6, Stealth +7; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Sylvan

SQ camouflage, change shape, trackless step

ECOLOGY

Environment cold or temperate forests and plains

Organization solitary, pair, or family groupings (4-7)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflage (Ex) A fey megaloceros can use Stealth to hide in any sort of natural terrain, even if the terrain does not grant cover or concealment. It gains a +4 racial bonus on Stealth checks.

Change Shape (Su) A fey megaloceros can change shape into a wood giant at will as per giant form I except without the size bonuses or penalties to any statistics.

Trackless Step (Ex) A fey megaloceros does not leave a trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked. It can choose to leave a trail, if it so desires.

The Dragon People

The Dragon People are a tribe of 23 mostly carnivorous and aggressive fey megalania. They appear as gigantic, bright-orange to deep-pink iguana-like lizards with a set of iridescent dragonfly wings. They enjoy sunning themselves on the large stones along the banks of the Descent River. The Dragon People make hunting forays into the forest, but they steer clear of Kongamato Peak.

The Dragon People (Fey Megalania) CR 9

XP 6,400

N Huge Fey

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +17

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +11 natural, -2 size)

hp 85 (10d8+40)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

DR 5/cold iron; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 45 ft. (good), swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +13 (2d8+12 plus grab and poison)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks swallow whole (2d8+12 bludgeoning damage, AC 16, 8hp)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +11)

3/day—*dancing lights*

1/day—*entangle* (DC 13), *faerie fire*, *glitterdust* (DC 14), *deep slumber* (DC 15), *major image* (DC 15), *confusion* (DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 4, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 28 (32 vs. trip)

Feats Iron Will, Lunge, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +12, Fly +12, Perception +17, Stealth +13 (+17 in rocks or undergrowth), swim +16; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth (+8 in rocks or undergrowth)

Languages Sylvan

SQ change shape

ECOLOGY

Environment warm forests and plains

Organization solitary or mated pair

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Change Shape (Su) A fey megalania can change shape into a stone giant at will as per giant form I except without the size bonuses to any statistics.

Poison (Ex) Bite; *save* Fort DC 19; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Yrthak

Other than The Great Kongamato, the yrthak rule the skies. They live wild in the forest and nest near the tops of the giant trees. They hunt anything moving below, and actively attack any of their domesticated brethren. The korred trap young yrthak and raise them as mounts.

Korred

The Green Coven's ritual created a temporary breach in the boundary between Midgard and the First World. The korred on World Descent Island curiously stumbled through this breach and were trapped when it sealed up behind them. Despite being very far from home, they have carved out their own territory and thrived. Their chief accomplishment remains the domestication of a few feral yrthak.

A hunting party consists of three to five korred mounted on a single yrthak. The hunters all replace the feats Dodge and Mobility with Mounted Combat and Mounted Archery, and either Craft (rope) or Craft (sculpture) with Ride as a class skill, and are proficient with a halfling sling staff. Korred hunting parties range over the entire island, but typically steer clear of Kongamato Peak.

Kongamato

Arawkcau, the Great Kongamato, lives high on the eponymous Kongamato Peak, where she can survey all her territory (both islands). From above the mists, she can see the entire island, most of the World Descent Staircase, and Terminus Island. While she doesn't often fly that high due to the brutal winds, she is fully capable of escaping World Descent Island.

Arawkcau is a typical kongamato, and she has just recently reached breeding age. She has increasingly become agitated and restless, and she may soon leave the island for a short time to seek a mate.

ENCOUNTERS

Descent Guardian

The landing above the World Descent Staircase (see area A3 on page 55) has a gargantuan catoblepas guardian that must be defeated before the long climb down the staircase can begin. The merfolk druids who raised the standing stone summoned and augmented the immense creature to guard the World Descent Staircase from interlopers who did not

FALLING OFF THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

A creature falling off the edge of the world without magical or other recourse should be considered dead. The buffeting winds slam them into the cliff face every 100 feet, and then they fall several miles down, into the World Serpent's body. That should be enough damage to seal anyone's fate. Should a person survive, he would land on the lower coils of the World Serpent, where he could actually walk up its body to the surface world.

deserve the riches of the Ruby Plum Tree. Their descendants, the adaro, ritualistically feed the catoblepas once a month during the new moon, so the creature is usually quite angry and hungry when anyone decides to challenge him for access to the World Descent Staircase. If the catoblepas is not fed on time, he reverts to a typical catoblepas. The catoblepas is chained by a rear leg to a huge spike driven 15 feet into the bedrock of the standing stone. The immense adamantine chain allows the catoblepas a radius of 400 feet from the staircase and is 6 inches thick (hardness 20, hp 240, DC 36) with a magical immunity to natural weapons.

Augmented Gargantuan Catoblepas

CR 15

XP 51,200

N Gargantuan magical beast (augmented)

Init -2; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +22

Aura stench (30 ft., DC 27, 10 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 4, flat-footed 30 (-2 Dex, +26 natural, -4 size)

hp 233 (15d10+150)

Fort +19, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

DR 10/cold iron; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +24 (4d6+13), gore +24 (3d8+13/19-20), 2 hooves +22 (2d6+6)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. cone, poison, Fortitude DC 27, usable every 1d4 rounds), trample (6d6+19, DC 30)

TACTICS

During Combat

The catoblepas first checks for any creatures trying to sneak around him to access the staircase. Then he charges the closest enemy in an attempt to trample him under his immense girth.

Morale

The catoblepas fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 36, **Dex** 7, **Con** 30, **Int** 5, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +32; **CMD** 40 (44 vs. trip)

Feats Awesome Blow, Diehard, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (gore), Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Perception +22, Swim +21

Languages Aklo

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Breath (Ex) A catoblepas's horrid, stinking breath is 60-foot cone of poison gas. Breath—contact; *save* Fort DC 27; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Con damage; cure 3 consecutive saves. The *save* DC is Constitution based.

ENVIRONMENT AND MECHANICS

Cataract

The oceanfall or cataract has an incredibly strong current, and stormy waters persist several miles east of the edge. Escaping the current requires an extremely experienced ship pilot (Profession [sailor] DC 25 check) or

magical means. At five miles from the edge of the world, the current moves slowly westward at a speed of 40 feet, and increases by 40 feet for each mile closer, and culminates at a speed of 200 feet. To ride the current and successfully moor against the standing stone without obliterating the ship, a pilot must make the appropriate piloting skill or Profession (sailor) check (DC 30).

Once over the edge of the world, the wind currents become incredibly unstable and wild until you reach the lower island. Consider these winds the equivalent of a windstorm. The merfolk-carved shaft protects the World Descent Staircase from the majority of the chaotic weather, and so it only suffers strong winds. Only the tops of the giant trees and the summit of Kongamato Peak suffer these extreme weather dangers, as World Descent Island has mild weather and a temperate climate.

World Descent Island

The flora and fauna of the lower island has adapted to the enshrouding brine-mist. The creatures and plants inhabiting the island are incredibly saline in nature, so every time a character drinks island-bound water (except Descent River water) or eats indigenous plant or animal matter, he becomes sickened for 24 hours unless successfully making a Fortitude save (DC 20, +2 for each previous check). If a character fails a second consecutive Fortitude save, he becomes fatigued and must make Constitution checks each hour, or take damage as though he has gone without water for an extended period of time.

ISLAND ADVENTURES

Straight to the Moon

Of all the tales of oceanfall, immense guardians, days-long staircases, and prehistoric beasts, the most fantastical makes those seem completely reasonable. An astrologer of some note, with the patronage of the Caraviccis of Barsella, claims at the edge of the world one can find a silver bridge to the Moon.

Mad Historian's Plea

Po, a legendary scholar of ancient Ankeshel, claiming to be 976 years old, has found himself cursed by several sites he believes imprison sleeping Old Ones.

Obsessed and penniless, he believes within his "fountain of youth"—the Ruby Plum Tree—rests his cure. Follow the mad historian's cryptic riddle from Morphoi and Meshong-Lir to discover the whereabouts of the Ruby Plum Tree and its godly healing properties.

The Cretin's Revenge

A cryptic treasure map decipherable only under the correct stars, led the The Cretin's Revenge over the edge of the world. Retrace the crew's journey through ports of call and wild islands to their final resting place: a Cascading Ledge. Now under the correct sky, the treasure map reveals a series of hidden caverns within Kongamato Peak.





THE LESSER ISLANDS

KARN'LOTHRA





Dread Karn'lothra is an island of ruins built upon secrets older than any recorded history found in the libraries of Friula, or Bemmea. Here, powerful spirits and ancient dead of forgotten empires stir and rip themselves from the grave, launching into motion serving the terrible purposes of a mysterious queen.

In ages past, two mighty races held dominion over Midgard. The Ankeshel began as the lowliest of humans uplifted by aboleth 'advisors' and taught to master the universe with arcane knowledge and technology. The children of the Gods and nascent celestials, the Peerage entered the world with divine ichor in their veins. Nevertheless, both of these ancient peoples fell due to their hubris and the unforgiving wrath of their benefactors. The Ankeshel turned away from the aboleth to seek spiritual powers which seemed more worthy of their worship. By contrast, the Peerage exploited the benefits of divine grace to advance themselves with arcane magic and discoveries made solely on their own. Divine servants wiped the Peerage from the surface of the world, killing and banishing their numbers, and their mighty works were unmade. The immortal souls of the Peerage were locked and sealed away in the Underworld until they could be pardoned, if ever.

The island Karn'lothra (translated as "Final Refuge") was the site of the Peerage's final battle with their progenitors before their souls were bound to the Underworld. The great stone faces lining the island's shores represent their leaders, defiant in the face of extermination and undestroyed after millennia, as if the gods are unable to destroy something containing some divine essence.

Yet Karn'lothra was not to remain undisturbed for all time. A colony of Ankeshelians would occupy it, in the years before that ancient people rebelled against their aboleth patrons. The Ankeshelians sought a greater understanding of divine beings possessing human-like qualities. While the Peerage and the Ankeshel were relative contemporaries, the irony and foreshadowing of the Peerage's banishment were lost on the Ankeshelian colonists, especially if recent conversations with the ancient undead are any indication. Ultimately the Ankeshelian colony died out under mysterious circumstances following their city namesake's war with the aboleth, leaving Karn'lothra deserted again for centuries.

Off Karn'lothra's western shores is a permanent oceanic whirlpool known as Nethus' Maw, which descends to the Underworld. In recent years, perhaps coinciding with the god's binding, the metaphysical underpinnings of the Maw's gate weakened, permitting one of the Peerage to escape. Ascending like a cold star, the beautiful Ilnora rose from the vortex to declare herself the Bloodless Queen. At her command, some of the ancient Ankeshelians rose from the dead. Assembling a Court of the Damned around her, the dead nobility of Karn'lothra have raised an army of lesser undead to construct ships and ply the seas for living slaves and other resources the dead cannot fabricate for themselves. Meanwhile, Ilnora's servants have begun the methodical excavation and restoration of the island's ruins in earnest.

The dead are not the only unnatural things moving throughout the island. Menhirs spiral out of stone circles to glide across the earth, the very ground and trees warping out of their path. Living pillars appear and disappear, sometimes singing songs or stealing away with the unwary. Golems of unknown manufacture and disturbing awareness, often disguised as statuary, lurch to sudden life at unknown provocation. Some of these arcane manifestations belong to the Ankeshel, and some existed on Karn'lothra long before the Ankeshelians came.

The least of strange beings to haunt the island are the Bloodless Queen's mysterious Yithian advisors. These unearthly scholars poke around ruins and burial chambers in search of artifacts they refuse to name to any save the Queen herself.

While the Bloodless Court holds dominion over portions of the island, much of it still remains uncontrolled until such time the Court's numbers grow enough to claim it all as their territory. Adventurers, shipwreck survivors, and spies from other islands and nations can still plumb the southern ruins with luck and care.

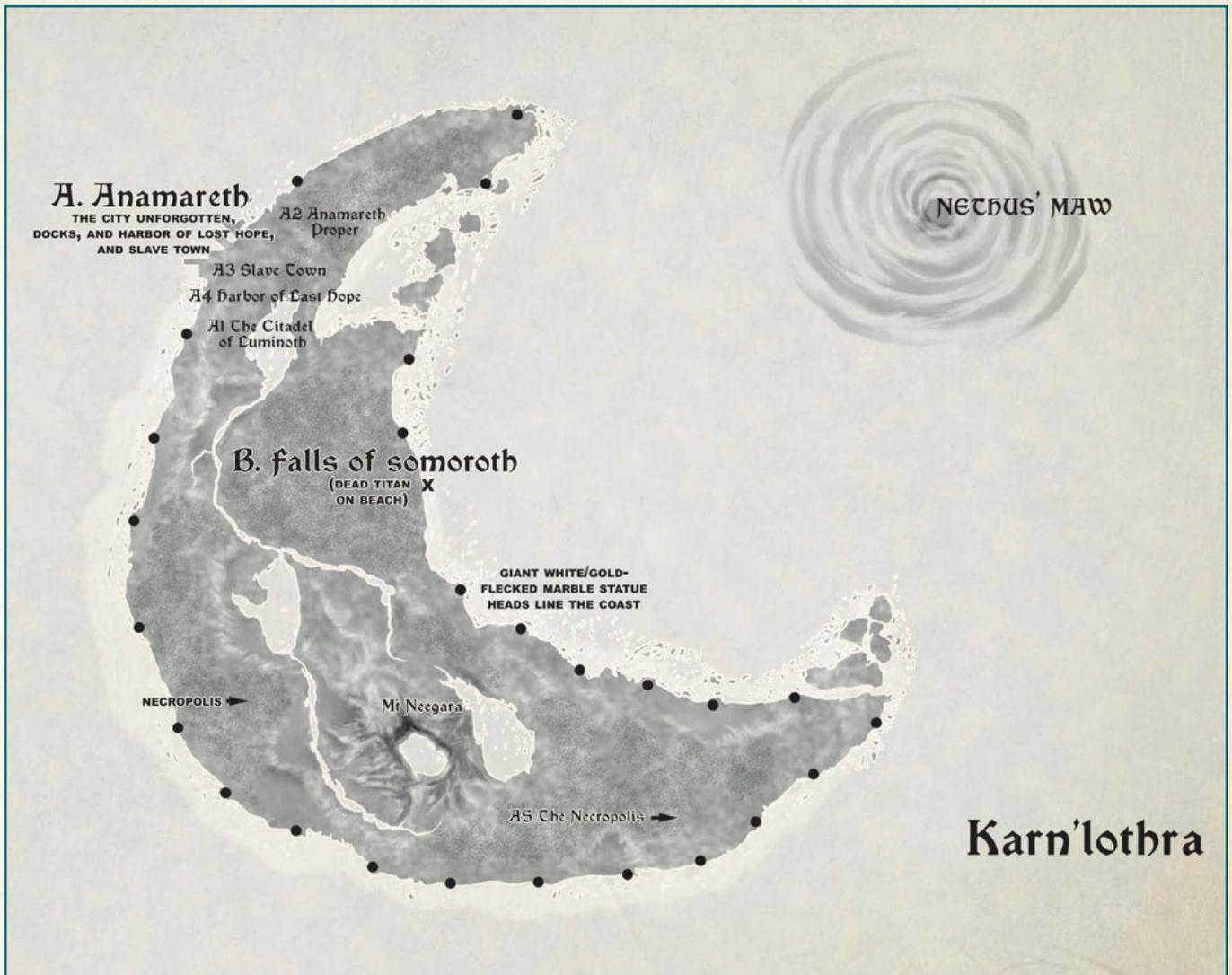
One obvious source of interest in Karn'lothra is its interaction with actual Ankeshelian intelligences (the Bloodless Court itself), and the possibility of vril-based magic and technology. Nevertheless, no vril artifacts have been uncovered as yet. Karn'lothra's ancient colonists, a faction who departed Ankeshel to investigate the divine (as opposed to the arcane) away from the reprisals of their aboleth mentors, bought arcanotech to Karn'lothra; no one has currently located or secured it so it lies buried, waiting to be discovered.

The Bloodless Court of Karn'lothra call no other group ally or friend (except for certain individual representatives of the Great Race of Yith). Yet the whims of the Queen and her Court are inscrutable. It is not outside the bounds of possibility to be granted safe passage or to engage in diplomatic relations, but no one has sufficiently intrigued or otherwise garnered the respect of Karn'lothra's rulers to merit it.

The sea titans have no love for the Queen, and the feeling is mutual. The titans represent a faction of the Peerage who did not rebel or were otherwise spared the extermination of their kind, perhaps hidden deep within the sea by Nethys and Mnesomyne until they evolved into an wholly new type of immortal. The titans know full well what Ilnora's secret heritage is and what her return to Midgard implies. Some titans fear she may be unstable, seeking revenge for their self-preservation, and that she could start another divine insurrection from which they would not escape. The wisest of titans fear she could do all of that and more.

Likewise, the Bloodless Queen takes sadistic glee in the Morphoi; a goddess losing her memory at the hands of mortals is delicious irony to the last of a race exterminated by the Gods.

Unless specifically noted, all natives of Karn'lothra speak Common learned from captives and slaves. A prohibition exists against speaking Ankeshelian in the presence of the living, lest they learn too many powerful secrets. The runic glyphs that compromise Ankeshelian writing still defy non-magical translation.



GEOGRAPHY

Karn'lothra is shaped like a crescent moon, or a boomerang; its furthest tips point to the east. From end to end, it is 48 miles, while its width at the midsection is no more than 12 miles across. Jungle covers the majority of the island, with a few small freshwater lakes and ponds, and intermittent streams interspersed throughout the island. Roughly four miles south of the mid-section lies the island's highest point, an inactive volcano the undead natives refer to as Mt. Neegara.

Ruins dot Karn'lothra's landscape, and careful study from an aerial perspective suggests roads or pathways long since reclaimed by the plant life once connected these structures. To the northwest, Ilnor's servants have preserved and thoroughly restored the ancient ruins there, which are starting to resemble a small city, and have constructed a functioning harbor beyond the beach. In the bay, undead craftsman toil upon the wooden skeletons of ships. Alternate stone structures litter Karn'lothra to the south, but these monuments remain choked with vines, trees, and overgrowth.

A beach of white sands surrounds Karn'lothra. Where the beach gives way to the mainland, giant stone heads of white and gold-flecked marble rest along the coastline, staring out accusingly at the world. Each

meticulously depicts a human-like being of striking beauty or presence; the attention to detail strongly suggests these heads represent once-living beings. These giant statues resist all but the most persistent efforts to deface them, being far more durable than marble should be. Each radiates a strong and sometimes conflicting aura of divination, necromancy, and transmutation, though none are tied to a specific magical effect.

While not a feature of the island itself, Nethus' Maw is an undeniable element of the landscape. Located roughly 12 miles off the eastern shore, the crescent shape of Karn'lothra literally cups this massive whirlpool. To describe the Maw as a terrestrial black hole set in the ocean is no overstatement. This permanent vortex counts among one of Midgard's most awe-inspiring phenomena. The vortex affects currents in a six-mile circumference around it, though a skilled captain can navigate much closer provided she can assess how close is "too close." Storm clouds rage directly above the Maw, and some explorers report magnetic forces and ley lines bend to descend down the Maw's spiral. Within a quarter mile of the whirlpool, magic continues to function normally with one important exception—no magic can calm or tame the Maw, not even a wish. One can teleport away or fly above it, but not even leviathans and titans can outswim it.



delegates the actual work to lesser beings. The ruins contain fallen towers and buildings used as libraries, arenas, or dwellings of varying size. Structures appearing to be Ankeshelian temples have remained untouched.

Area A3 Slave Town

One district of the ruined city specifically houses a small population of living slaves. The majority of these slaves are unfortunates captured during draugr raids on ships and other islands, with a handful being castaways and captured explorers.

The undead use the hardiest as day labor in Anamareth's reconstruction, and those who are particularly intelligent or entertaining may be conscripted to amuse the Bloodless Court (i.e. as artisans, gladiators, performers, or as courtiers and courtesans in the case of particularly attractive specimens). Most slaves eventually become livestock, being turned to undead upon exhaustion of their utility as a living creature. The nobility remake their most beloved slaves as intelligent undead.

A handful of dhampir oversee Slave Town with the assistance of zombie enforcers. Most slaves live in appalling conditions of filth, though their overlords keep them fed and sheltered, and they have even granted their chattel the use of a small garden for exercise as well as food

A. ANAMARETH THE CITY UNFORGOTTEN

Area A1 The Citadel of Luminoth

Since the Bloodless Queen's arrival, this castle has experienced dramatic and incredible reconstruction and now serves as the Queen's personal abode and seat of power, though many of its chambers remain unfurnished. As the bones of Anamareth are cannibalized for its own rebirth, objects d'art are carted from tombs and mausoleums daily to lend the Queen's Castle some peculiar sense of life, and desperate living slaves trade their creativity for another day of respite from being food for the Bloodless Queen's varied and unwholesome appetites. Curiously, the chief architect of Luminoth is the Queen herself, for the castle is not of Ankeshelian design. Its tall slender towers do not lend themselves toward avoiding the light of day as one might expect from a haven for undead. Nevertheless, dark stories of perversions and orgiastic feasts circulate among the Citadel's few surviving mortal guests.

Area A2 Anamareth Proper

The City Unforgotten may be remembered, but it doesn't quite qualify as an actual city as much as it does archeological dig site. Five hundred to 750 mindless or dim-witted undead occupy the city. Under supervision of more clever citizens, the undead are purging the city of rampant vegetation and rubble block by block. The Bloodless Court dwells within the city in their manses, removed from the Queen's immediate scrutiny. Each noble oversees some aspect of Anamareth's reconstruction, and

production. Occasionally, the draugr cast nets for fish on their voyages to supplement the slaves' diet. The overlords keep the particularly attractive or talented slaves, or those with useful skills (particularly architecture or engineering related), separated from the herd, and provide them with somewhat better treatment and resources.

Area A4 Harbor of Last Hope

The captives here more commonly refer to this area as the "Harbor of Lost Hope", although the Court's insistence upon its real moniker curiously reflects its overarching philosophy—the isle here is shelter from the ravages of Oblivion. On the outer northwestern curve of Karn'lothra, the harbor is bereft of natural shelter, but is otherwise protected from the Maw. Undead laborers have wholly constructed this harbor, which sea-titan-dispatched monsters have destroyed at least once before.

A dozen captured ships rotate in and out of the harbor on regular raiding expeditions. Draugr primarily man the vessels, and the undead pirates take some pains to avoid excessively damaging enemy vessels in order to return them here for repairs and to add them to Karn'lothra's nascent navy.

Under the surface of the sea, undead oarsmen propel a half-dozen smaller, mastless ships. These submersible vessels allow the draugr to steal upon mortal ships and bob to the surface, while the crew stands ready to launch hooks and scramble aboard. These craft are rare and require magical preservation to keep the brine from warping their timbers.

ILNORA'S AGENDA

One of the central themes of Karn'lothra is the Queen's strained relationship with the Bloodless Court. If nothing else, it prevents the powerful undead from becoming a greater threat than they already are. Towards that end Ilnora's true agenda is not being explicitly stated, but left to the individual GM to determine in their home game. Nevertheless, some possibilities are very plausible. Ilnora may seek to release the rest of the Peerage from the underworld, to seek vengeance against the gods- the Bloodless Court being merely pawns to be used towards that end. Alternately, she might be seeking her own personal apotheosis, with every undead within miles paused to be converted into a negative energy battery for her to subsume (and by increasing the number of undead the Bloodless Court are unknowingly expanding her future reserve). Perhaps, the Queen is not herself, but a Yithian trapped in a shell too powerful to leave- bidding its time until Auditor 7 and Yin'tik'ni'lala can locate Karn'lothra's secret trove of vril-tech and abscond with her like thieves from this wretched world.

Area A5 The Necropolis

This graveyard extends for miles and is wholly dedicated to Ankeshelian dead. It is divided into quadrants, and a 30-foot-tall stone wall surrounds it. Examination of the wall reveals no bricks or seams, suggesting magical construction, and while it is currently in disrepair, the wall is in overall better condition than most of Anamareth. Multiple openings exist where gates must have once stood, only to have rotted or rusted away. Inside, the more ornate and elaborate crypts and mausoleums lie to the west, closest to the city. To the east, the graves gradually become smaller and more humble; at the far eastern wall, the small headstones are too worn from weather and overgrowth to be read any longer.

The necropolis contains many elaborate funerary monuments, many of which may conceal undiscovered chambers and secrets. Examples include the male and female Colossi of Lachoroth, which are marked with dire warnings that only the opposite sex dare enter either one, but both are hollow and share underground chambers underneath. Alternately there is the Obelisks of Darengra, which can only be entered and exited during an eclipse. These and many more strange tombs remain untouched.

B. The Fall of Somoroth

The remains of a titan rot on the beach here. Over 80 feet long, the corpse is of male humanoid. A swarm of birds, vermin, and other sea life nibble

ORDOMERE'S MADNESS

Catching Ordomere's malady doesn't require a saving throw. Despite the belief of the Yithians, catching it requires some deliberate and intentional effort on the part of the listener to understand the philosophical paradoxes Ordomere presents. The one-time vampire has become initiated into something akin to Zen, and the paradoxes of Greek philosophers like Epimenides, Zeno, and Plutarch. His questions (i.e. 'If the coin could be anyone, who would it be?' 'Your memory is a river. What is a lake?'), prompt the listener to embrace reality at such a fundamental level that Midgard itself begins to reject them. Such is the peril of reconciling aboleth mysticism with celestial awareness into a single perspective.

at the stinking remains that foul the air over a half mile away. This mass of decay and bone is all that remains of the titan Somoroth, who in battle was caught between the Maw and Karn'lothra's beaches. Pitched on shore against his will, he could not return his weakened, broken body to the sea, and his heart burst from his futile efforts to do so. Ilnora intends to raise the titan soon as an undead juggernaut, but in the meanwhile, the corpse serves as both a warning and as bait for any of his kin who might consider challenging the Bloodless Queen's dominion.

Ilnora, the Bloodless Queen

Tall and statuesque, Ilnora is a specimen of strange beauty: her appearance is pleasing to the sight, but exhibits cold, incandescence, soft, and searing aspects all at once. Completely human in some respects, at nearly 7 feet in height, she towers over the Ankeshelian undead. A mane of silver hair cascades down her shoulders, and she has dark eyes that shine like diamonds. Death has left her complexion a light shade of blue, but otherwise she shows no outward sign of decay. Nevertheless, she clearly detects as undead (though what kind remains unanswered), and her supple skin feels cool to the touch. As one of the Peerage, the Queen is unique, and even her Ankeshelian nobles realize it. Her Court feigns adoration and worship, but many suspect her true motives and intentions. As a demi-goddess her statblock is only a suggestion.

(Peerage;LE undead sorcerer 17; 147 hp; Wis 18, Con-, Cha 21; +12 touch (6d8 negative energy), Bluff +16, Diplomacy +13, Sense Motive +16)

Ordomere the Enlightened

One of the first raised ancient Ankeshelians (vampire), this once-shrewd and cunning wizard spends his days studying a cache of Peerage artifacts recovered from a stasis cube discovered in the bowels of Luminoth. Mixing the divine insight of the Peerage with aboleth-gifted vril-tech drove Ordomere utterly insane- or rather has driven the multiverse utterly insane in a very short proximity around him. The wizard has lost ability to wield magic, and yet also seems impervious to it. Cackling and wide-eyed with the realization that the "universe is an illusion" and the gods are all "metaphors," Ordomere has now gone months without feeding and routinely walks in sunlight and ignores basic constants such as gravity, mathematics, and the conservation of matter and energy. If his condition offends divine powers, no one can tell; to divine divination magic, Ordomere apparently does not even exist.

Auditor 7 and Yin'tik'ni'lala are convinced Ordomere's metaphysical madness could spread like an idea that emulates the properties of a virus, and they have persuaded the Queen to quarantine the vampire for the sake of all reality. The Yithians suspect Ordomere could spontaneously teeter over into some unknowable dimension at any second, but until then, his infectious enlightenment risks whoever listens to him. Nevertheless, the Queen sends servants and sometimes living slaves to interview the former wizard, as she is desperate to learn some secret before what is left of him vanishes to the Beyond. For his part, Ordomere is all too willing to chat with any visitor, though all sane beings dread what realizations he might impart. Ordomere has no statblock, as his existence breaks all game mechanics. He should be considered more of a plot device than a traditional character (i.e., he's not hostile and shouldn't be used in traditional melee encounters). Rather Ordomere is a seer who speaks for, and of, that which is impossible. He will not be long for Midgard.

Auditor 7 and Yin'tik'ni'lala

Members of the Great Race of Yith, these bizarre aberrations from the stars have manifested physically on Midgard and on the Island of Karn'lothra seemingly at the Queen's invitation. Auditor 7 identifies itself as the senior-ranking scholar of the pair, and does not deign to be addressed

by most of the island's inhabitants except by any name other than its title. The rank of Yin'tik'ni'lala is best translated to "research assistant," and the creature is definitely the more garrulous and social of the pair. Frequently, they find themselves caught between the Queen and her Court, because technically they answer only to Her Majesty. The duo try their utmost to remain diplomatic about their elevated station, if for no other reason than pragmatism. Neither is comfortable with the need to manifest physically, but prior to their journey to Midgard, Ilnora lacked suitable living hosts for them to possess. They make the best of the situation, but have alluded to the possibility of possession of entities to the east should their research demand it. As to their exact agenda, they share little with anyone other than the Queen. Many of the Court suspect they're investigating vril-tech, in the context of some specialized application. Lord Lucran (page 64) remains in delicate talks with the Yithians, suspecting they might be willing to circumvent the Queen should their investigations become protracted, yet neither side is willing to trust the other just yet. (Yithian – *Bestiary* 3)

The Mad Prince Deland

Deland the Celebrant, the ghost of an Ankeshelian high-priest to a god or goddess he refuses to name, is slightly unhinged by the enormous passage of time since his return and the circumstances of his people's genocide. His royal title is not one he held in life, but is one the Queen bestowed upon him (perhaps mockingly) for his unwavering loyalty to her. In truth, love for Ilnora consumes Deland, and he spends his time dreaming up ways he might woo her. Obviously, physicality would lend itself greatly towards making his ambition a serious possibility.

In fact, Deland fantasizes and romanticizes about returning to life so that he might offer himself freely and wholly to her. Ironically (as his one true love despises the ritual trappings of her divine progenitors) in life he wrote an original doctrine on marriage as a sacrament, and the virtues of fertility in expanding the number of the faithful. While he would do nothing to openly betray her, his obsession born of love and lust is the one schism where he might be turned against her interests— for the greater glory of loving her, of course.

(Ankeshelian; CN ghost aristocrat 7; 73 hp; Wis 16, Con–, Cha 20; +6 touch (7d6, Fort, DC 18 for half)), Bluff +10, Diplomacy +12, Sense Motive +10)

Lord Lucran

Lucran is something of a traditionalist. A former general, the defense of the Ankeshelian colony was his responsibility in life. In death, he is a dark, handsome, and ambitious vampire. Unlike many of the Bloodless Court, he remembers many specifics concerning the final days of Karn'lothra's Ankeshelian colony. Nevertheless, Lucran keeps exactly how much he remembers and the details to himself, not out of melancholy but ambition. Lucran wants nothing more than to expand Karn'lothra into a kingdom of the damned, spreading to the east and beyond—and perhaps one day striking back at the piscine entities who destroyed his once-mighty civilization. These ambitions alone do not set him apart from many would-be deathlords, but Lucran has two things that do distinguish him.

First, his faith is not crushed. Were he introduced to a faith that would be compatible to his state of undeath, Lucran would embrace it—except Ilnora's grudge against all things divine (besides herself) prevents it. Secondly, Lucran actually knows the location of some of the island's ancient arcaneotech. Unfortunately, neither he nor the Queen trusts each other, so he remains under observation. Worse, in an open confrontation, the Queen's magic is greater than Lucran's martial abilities.

So for the time being, Lucran remains unable to access those resources, and remains silently stalemated. The former general is not permitted to leave Karn'lothra under the pretense of being its chief defender. He'd like

to cut a deal with an ally he could trust, and while he's made intimations towards the Yithians, their relationship is nowhere near that point. His public relationship with the Queen is not inimical, but he suspects her true intentions do not consider the welfare of the Ankeshelian undead for a moment. Lucran would certainly consider a temporary alliance with unexpected third parties, provided he could conceal his own true ambitions. Since his raising, Lucran has fathered a half-dozen dhampir sired from consorts selected from Slave Town (in return for his protection and patronage). If he trusts anyone, it is own children, who occasionally act as his proxies in Courtly intrigue.

(Ankeshelian; LE vampire fighter 4/ex–paladin 8; 174 hp; Wis 14, Con–, Cha 24; +20/+15/+10 +2 ghost touch longsword (1d8+9/17–20), Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Intimidate +15, Sense Motive +16)

Mayhana the Betrayer

Every kingdom, including an undead one, has rebels, spies, and malcontents. In life, Mayhana was an Ankeshelian woman who belonged to the ruling class that remained true to the aboleth. The aboleth loyalists smuggled her into the colony to act as their covert agent. Like Lucran, she remembers the fall of the Ankeshelian colony because she engineered it. At the behest of her piscine masters she released an arcane bio-plague designed to resist divine and positive energy healing. The loyalists wanted Karn'lothra to serve as an example of the untrustworthiness and fallibility of divine beings to the warring factions in Ankeshel proper, so the aboleth might reassert their roles as leaders and advisors of human society. Unfortunately, while the aboleth provided Mayhana with an immunization to take with her, they never considered whether she could be allergic to the antigen. Wracked with an alien disease being fought off by a cure that was killing her, Mayhana was consumed by an undeniable ghoulish appetite while being flooded with negative energy of her own act of genocide. The result transformed her into a penanggalan; she became an undead creature but not by Ilnora's doing. Bereft of victims and blood, Mayhana drifted into a state of hibernation for centuries at a time. Now that Karn'lothra crawls with unlife, Mayhana is fully awake and is alternately trying to survive, escape the island, and spy on her former foes.

Unfortunately, her unusual undead appearance betrays her as an outsider, and should she pose as a mortal human, she would have no social station other than potential slave or food (until she was discovered, and then likely destroyed). Given the opportunity, she might try to manipulate any humans she encounters by posing as a castaway. For the moment, she doesn't know about any cache of vril-tech, but would be extremely interested in it if she did. It is not outside the bounds of possibility she would ally herself with the sea titans, in the absence of aboleth in the area—though what they could offer each other would be the first hurdle in such an alliance. If nothing else, Mayhana wants to safely escape Karn'lothra to where victims are plentiful and she can investigate the remains of Ankeshel or Cassadega.

(Ankeshelian; LE penanggalan witch 8; 70 hp; Wis 14, Con–, Cha 18; bite +8 (1d6+4 plus disease), slam +8 (1d4+4 plus grab and wither); Bluff +12, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +12, Sense Motive +10). See *Bestiary* 3.

The Voice

The ancient Ankeshelians originally constructed the Voice to safeguard the Necropolis using techniques now lost to modern wizards. An artificial intelligence comprised of force energy fields, the Voice can deal with physical and ghostly threats alike. Unfortunately for the Bloodless Court, the Voice no longer recognizes them as the race of its progenitors, but rather as invading undead. The construct can generate sound, and speaks in a distinctly booming and inhuman tone. The Voice originates from a vril energy matrix hidden somewhere on the island, presumably near

Anamareth. Unfortunately, none of the Bloodless Court raised as sentient undead actually knows where the matrix hides, except perhaps Lord Lucran, though it may be stored in a different area than the one he knows about.

The Voice can be single-minded and uncompromising in its stewardship—not unlike an inevitable, but Ilnora has destroyed it on multiple occasions. It may be prepared to negotiate with adventurers provided it believes the PCs do not intend to disturb the dead any further.

THE VOICE

CR 12

XP 19,200

LN Large unique construct (incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11 (+2 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, –1 size)

hp 160 (20d10+50)

Fort +6, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities incorporeal, natural invisibility, reactivation;

Immune construct traits

Weaknesses vril energy form

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 slam +23 (1d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +25 (+27 grapple); **CMD** 43 (45 vs. grapple,)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Fly +23, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Perception +15, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +10

SQ truespeech

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Incorporeal Assault (Su) The Voice has a special means of attack effective against incorporeal targets only. The Voice may attack or effect incorporeal enemies within 30 feet as per the crushing hand spell with the following changes: the effect is CL 12, with a +3 bonus for Strength (16) and a +1 bonus for being Large. The effect deals 2d6+3 damage on each successful grapple check against an opponent. The Voice may use the bonuses from any applicable feat in conjunction with combat maneuvers performed with this ability. The effect does not manifest in the form of hand, but rather as an intangible expression of the Voice's will.

Natural Invisibility (Su) This ability works as written, except the Voice may choose to make itself visible as a free action. Its form is that of a Large indistinct humanoid, comprised of a nimbus of crackling blue energy.

Telekinesis (Su) The Voice's most efficient means of attacking corporeal enemies is telekinesis. This ability functions as the spell telekinesis, with a CL equal to the Voice's CR (12). The Voice can use the ability on objects or creatures up to 300 pounds. If the Voice attempts to hurl a creature with this ability, that creature can resist the effect with a successful DC 21 Will save. The Voice many use the bonuses from any applicable feat in conjunction with combat maneuvers performed with this ability. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Reactivation (Su) When the Voice is destroyed; it only remains destroyed for 1d6 days. After this time, it reforms in the center of the Necropolis,

fully healed. The only permanent way to defeat the Voice is to locate its energy matrix and destroy it. The Voice retains the memory of its last defeat.

Vril Energy Form (Su) The Voice is comprised of arcane power, and cannot be healed. Any damage inflicted upon it is permanent until it is completely destroyed and reactivated. Spells such as *antimagic field* or *mage's disjunction* destroy the Voice outright, though it may reactivate later. Its physical energy matrix is not destroyed by *antimagic field*, though such an area suppresses it indefinitely. *Mage's disjunction* completely destroys the matrix.

ENCOUNTERS

The primary creatures encountered on Karn'lothra are the undead and the unusual monsters and constructs (like the living pillars) dating from the ancient Ankeshelian colony. Alternately, strange creatures have come into being on Karn'lothra that are seldom found elsewhere like suicide trees who lull the living into the peaceful release of life's burden in order to devour them and steal their consciousness.

Remember while Karn'lothra appears to be challenging, the majority of the island's creatures are much less powerful and sophisticated. Most of Karn'lothra's ranking entities have an agenda and their motives more complex than simply wholesale slaughter. Vampires and ghosts are not the only possible undead to be encountered. There is plenty of room for Ambassadors from the Empire of the Ghouls, disgruntled mummies, hungry fogs, and raiders from other islands. Karn'lothra has many riches to be plundered or traded for.

ISLAND ADVENTURES

Celebrity Status

A scholar investigating the ruins of Cassedega learns of Karn'lothra and is desperate to learn part of the spoken language to unlock the Ankeshelian written language. But amongst the Bloodless Court, teaching it to outsiders is punishable by True Death.

Location, Location, Location

Rumors persist of an escaped slave who continues to harass the undead masters of Karn'lothra and remain free. He survives as a free and persistent thorn in the Bloodless Court's side, but how does he do it? This insurgent hides within the fallen corpse of the sea titan lying on the beach, sustaining himself on its flesh and using it as a gory refuge. This diet is driving him increasingly insane and seems to be turning him into a thalassic creature. Is it possible he will experience an apotheosis, reincarnating the fallen titan?

Forgotten Sentinel

Deep within the necropolis, an Inevitable lies trapped beneath a toppled obelisk. The construct, Inexorable Eternal Vigilance, is armed with ghost-touch spiked gauntlets and adorned with the spell-resistant mantle of its office. Charged with protecting the burials in conjunction with the Voice, it has been missing for hundreds of years. If it can be freed, the Inevitable may help rescuers either escape or access a dangerous portion of the necropolis

MONSTERS

CORAL OOZE

A colorful collection of hundreds of wispy frills and patches of tiny waving tentacles drift lazily in the water, supported by a broad, translucent sea-blue bulk. The inattentive easily mistake coral oozes for small reefs.

Coral Ooze

CR 6

XP 2,400

N Large ooze

Init -1; **Senses** tremorsense 120ft; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 4, touch 4, flat-footed 4 (-5 Dex, -1 size)

hp 112 (9d8 +72)

Fort +13, **Ref** -3, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d6 plus paralysis)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks paralysis

Spells Known (CL 6th)

3rd (DC 16, 6/day)—*dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *suggestion*

2nd (DC 15, 8/day)—*detect thoughts*, *resist energy*, *share memory*, *summon monster II*

1st (DC 14, 9/day)—*charm person*, *color spray*, *comprehend languages*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

0 (DC 13)—*daze*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 1, **Con** 26, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 10 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Magical Aptitude

Skills Perception +12, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +13, Swim +8, Use Magic

Device +7; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Swim, +16 Stealth (while in water)

Languages Common, Aquan

SQ amphibious

ECOLOGY

Environment any aquatic or coastal

Organization solitary, pair, or moot (3-5)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Paralysis (Ex) A coral ooze is covered in thousands of tiny stingers, similar to a jellyfish. A target hit by a coral ooze's melee attack must succeed on a DC 21 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 3d6 rounds. A creature striking the coral ooze with a natural weapon is also subject to the ooze's paralysis. This is a poison effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Sting (Ex) Any creature injected with a coral ooze's paralytic poison, even if it makes a successful Fortitude save against paralysis, experiences intense pain. The target suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks for 3d6 minutes; spellcasters must make a DC 15 Concentration check to cast spells while affected.

Manifold Awareness (Ex) Coral oozes possess the ability to focus on a number of different things at once without becoming distracted, gaining a +8 racial bonus on Perception checks. In addition, they cannot be flanked, and never need to make Concentration checks to cast spells, even if they would otherwise need to (for instance, by casting defensively, or while being distracted).

Arcane Reduplication (Ex) As a full-round action, a coral ooze may choose to simultaneously cast two spells with a casting time of one action or shorter. Each spell is cast at a -2 caster level, but is otherwise unchanged. The coral ooze chooses any spell parameters (such as targets and effects) for each spell independently, and may choose the order in which the spells resolve. Alternately, a coral ooze may choose



to cast a single spell with a casting time of one full round as a standard action, or a spell with a longer casting time in half the time.

Improved Understanding (Ex) Coral oozes find accumulating and processing complicated arcane knowledge easier than most. Any coral oozes capable of spellcasting gain an additional two spells known and two spells per day for all spell levels the ooze has access to.

The coral ooze is an unusual creature that spends most of its life sunning in shallow bays, rarely moving once it has settled itself except to catch the odd fish or crustacean that wanders too close. What most people do not know is that these oozes are in fact intelligent creatures; while this would be odd enough, the truth is stranger still. Coral oozes have a distributed intelligence not unlike a hive mind, composed of the thousands of coral creatures that live on their surface.

As a result of their sedentary lifestyle and inability to travel far, coral oozes are ravenously curious about the outside world, and satiate their desire for knowledge by attracting oceangoing travelers and making offers to trade information; many creatures find them useful sources of information, for they accumulate much knowledge during their lifespans. They find arcane theory and knowledge especially rewarding; many coral oozes become unorthodox spellcasters.

Due to their unassuming nature and intense curiosity, coral oozes can sometimes become loci of informal information networks. They parlay their magical aptitude and depth of knowledge into positions of prestige and even worship by people who regard them as incarnate ocean spirits.

DRAGON EEL

This sleek serpentine creature resembles an electric eel with draconic features.

Dragon Eel

CR 13

25,600 XP

N Huge dragon (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; blindsight 60 ft; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 9, flat-footed 27 (+1 dex, +19 natural, -2 Size)

hp 200 (16d12+96)

Fort +16, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Immune electricity, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., Swim 60 ft

Melee bite +25 (3d6+12 plus paralysis), tail slap +20 (2d6+4 plus paralysis)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon (120 ft line, 16d6 electricity damage, Reflex DC 24 half, useable every 1d4 rounds)

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 12, **Con** 22, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 37 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Lunge, Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (tail slap)

Skills Diplomacy +20, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (local) +20, Knowledge (geography) +20, Perception +20, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +13, Survival +17, Swim +31 Modifiers +8 Swim

Languages Aquan, Common, Draconic

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate or tropical water

Organization solitary, pair, or den (3-5)

Treasure double

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Paralysis (Ex) Creatures damaged by a dragon eel's natural attacks must make a successful DC 24 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. Paralyzed creatures cannot move, speak, or take any physical actions. The creature is rooted to the spot, frozen and helpless. Unlike *hold person* and similar effects, a paralysis effect does not allow a new save each round. A winged creature flying in the air at the time that is paralyzed cannot flap its wings and falls. A swimmer can't swim and may drown. Creatures immune to electricity damage are not affected by the dragon eel's paralysis effect.

Shock (Ex) A dragon eel's body generates a potent electric charge. Touching or attacking a dragon eel deals 1d6 electricity damage to the opponent. The dragon eel's natural melee attacks deals an additional 1d6 electric damage. A dragon eel gains a +3 bonus on attack rolls if the opponent is wearing metal armor (or is carrying a metal weapon or is made of metal).

Storm Glide (Su) During natural or supernatural storms, a dragon eel can travel through the air as if under the effects of the air walk spell (caster level 15), except using the dragon eel's swim speed.

The dragon eel's unmistakable slender form sports a powerful mono-finned tail and wicked jaws like a matched pair of serrated blades. Dragon eels vary widely in color from browns and blacks to brilliant iridescent hues in mottled patterns.

While most dragon eels are solitary and irascible, on rare instances some form pairs or small bands. Dragon eels make their natural homes



in twisting underwater cave systems and prefer magnetically-aligned, metallic cavern formations navigable with their refined electric-sight. Some dragon eels use their constant electric auras combined with acquired alchemical reagents to electroplate portions of their golden hoard onto the walls of their dwellings to craft intricate gilded courts. They take great care establishing wards to guard their magnificent homes. Dragon eels claim large swaths of shoreline as their demesne. Although neither particularly cruel nor righteous, they often lord over awed tribes, allowing locals to revere one as a mighty spirit. Their ability to swim through air during storms adds to their reputation as terrible thunder-spirits.

Their deceptive moniker sometimes lulls foolish sailors into a false confidence, expecting a simple if dangerous eel beast. Instead, they find themselves dealing with intelligent draconic kings of the coastal shallows. Wise sailors traveling through known dragon eel territory bring tithes and offerings to placate them.

LAMIA MNEMOSYNIAN MATRIARCH

These shapeshifters naturally resemble young female centaurs, but they commonly take humanoid form to steal memories for their goddess.

Lamia Mnemosynian Matriarch CR 12

XP 19,200

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +23

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 21, flat-footed 31 (+6 Dex, +10 natural, +5 Insight; 50% miss chance)

hp 157 (15d10+75)

Fort +6, **Ref** +15, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities displacement, foresight; **Immune** mind-affecting effects, temporal effects; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +3 scimitars +22/+22/+17/+17/+12 (1d6+6/15–20 plus 1 Wisdom drain on first hit each round) or touch +22 (1d4 Wisdom drain and memory drain)

Special Attacks memory drain, temporal stasis, two-weapon rend (1d10+10 damage), Wisdom drain

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +26)

Constant—*displacement, tongues*

At will—*charm monster* (DC 21), *ventriloquism* (DC 18)

3/day—*deep slumber* (DC 20), *dream, major image* (DC 20), *mirror image, modify memory* (DC 21), *suggestion* (DC 20)

1/day—*hallucinatory terrain, righteous might, time stop* (DC 26)

Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +21)

5th (4/day)—*feblemind* (DC 22)

4th (6/day)—*air walk, dimension door* (DC 21)

3rd (4/day)—*cure serious wounds, dispel magic, haste*

2nd (8/day)—*death knell* (DC 19), *invisibility, protection from arrows, resist energy*

1st (8/day)—*cure light wounds, divine favor, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 17), *dancing lights, daze* (DC 17), *detect magic,*



ghost sound (DC 13), *mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, touch of fatigue* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 23, **Con** 21, **Int** 20, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 38 (42 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Double Slice, Extend Spell, Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Initiative[B], Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Acrobatics +12 (+16 jump), Bluff +23, Craft (weapons) +23, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +13, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (any one) +17, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (nature) +17, Perception +23, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +12, Use Magic Device +22; Racial Modifiers +4 Bluff, +4 Use Magic Device

Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Common, Draconic, Sylvan

SQ change shape (fixed Medium humanoid form, alter self)

ECOLOGY

Environment any land

Organization solitary, pair, or cult (3–12)

Treasure double (two +1 scimitars, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Foresight (Su) A lamia Mnemosynian matriarch can see a few seconds into the future. This ability prevents her from being surprised, caught flat-footed, or flanked. It also grants her an insight bonus to AC equal to her Wisdom bonus. This ability can be negated, but the lamia Mnemosynian matriarch can restart it as a free action on her next turn. It also grants her the Improved Initiative feat as a bonus feat.

Immunity to Temporal Effects (Ex) A lamia Mnemosynian matriarch is immune to all time-related spells and effects (including time stop, temporal stasis, and the like).

Spells A lamia Mnemosynian matriarch casts spells as an 8th-level sorcerer, and she can cast spells from the cleric list as well as those normally available to a sorcerer. Cleric spells are considered arcane spells for a lamia Mnemosynian matriarch.

Memory Drain (Su) A lamia Mnemosynian matriarch drains 1d4 days of a target's memory each time she hits with her melee touch attack, gaining those memories. A DC 24 Will save negates the memory drain. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Temporal Stasis (Su) Three times per day, a lamia Mnemosynian matriarch can affect a target with a temporal stasis as a touch attack, as per the spell. A DC 24 Fortitude save negates the effect. The save is Charisma-based.

Wisdom Drain (Su) A lamia Mnemosynian matriarch drains 1d4 points of Wisdom each time she hits with her melee touch attack. The first time each round that she strikes a foe with a melee weapon, she also drains 1 point of Wisdom. A DC 24 Will save negates the Wisdom drain. Unlike with other kinds of ability drain attacks, a lamia Mnemosynian matriarch does not heal damage when she uses her Wisdom drain. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mnemosyne's greatest handmaidens, these lamia received some of their goddess's memory and abilities over time. After the Kammaen inquisitors cursed them, these beautiful women twisted into forms resembling small centaurs. They have the upper torso of a fey-looking female, and the lower bodies of a painted (or spotted) pony-sized horse. When encountered in their natural form, in fact, most individuals believe them to be adolescent centaur females. Lamia Mnemosynian matriarchs use this fact to their advantage by often pretending to be exactly that: docile centaur youths playing about their island home—but they are truly the deadliest of all the lamia.

The desire to recover their goddess's memory consumes these matriarchs, and they use subterfuge, including infiltrating other governments and exploring other lands in human form, to uncover clues to unlocking Mnemosyne's mind. They also seek to regain her consort, by whatever means necessary. Those encountered on Morphoi protect the goddess and her temple, oversee the security of the island, or deal with new arrivals to the island.

Like their lamia matriarch cousins, they move with shocking ease from silken-tongued temptresses to dervishes, striking with deadly precision. They delight in gory feasts, violent trysts, and bloody entertainments, reveling until their playthings break or until they tire and move on.

MORPHOI

This blue-skinned humanoid wields a trident. Its unusual vertically placed eyes are the only features on its face.

Morphoi

CR 1/2

XP 200

CE Medium plant (aquatic, shapechanger)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities plant traits; **Immune** temporal effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +0 (1d6) or trident +0 (1d8) or shortbow +4 (1d6)

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 14

Feats Alertness, Track^b

Skills Perception +14, Diplomacy +3, Stealth +12 (+20 in vegetation), Sense Motive +3, Survival +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth (+12 in vegetation), +8 Perception, +4 Survival

Languages Common

SQ amphibious, change shape (alter self)

ECOLOGY

Environment any, the Isle of Morphoi (hometown)

Organization solitary, gang (2–10), or tribe (10–60 plus 1 chieftain)

Treasure standard (trident or shortbow, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunity to Temporal Effects (Ex) The morphoi's strong connection to Mnemosyne have made them immune to all time-related spells and effects (including time stop, temporal stasis, sands of time, and the like).

Morphoi are shapeshifting, plant-based creatures indigenous to the Isle of Morphoi, which bears their name. They are often mistakenly called "faceless stalkers," which are an entirely different and dissimilar



shapeshifting race (ugoths) sometimes encountered throughout the isles of the West. In their natural forms, the morphoi appear to be light-blue, Medium-sized, androgynous beings of about five and half feet tall. The morphoi's elliptical-shaped heads have no facial features (no chin, forehead, or nose), mere slits for ears, and vertically placed eyes at the upper and lower parts of their heads. The nethysule, a nonshapeshifting distant cousin, do look almost identical to the morphoi, and for this reason, morphoi encountered in their natural form are often mistaken for the more peaceful nethysule. Unlike the nethysule, however, morphoi have an identical set of eyes in the back of their heads. When harmed, the creatures bleed a dark red, saplike substance.

The morphoi gather nutrients from the sun or through an intake of organic carbon, so they do not need to eat (and do not necessarily need sunlight to survive). While in humanoid form, however, they consume small amounts of food to aid their pretense, but this food offers them no sustenance.

Morphoi live in communities on their home island or in the water surrounding it, since they are amphibious. Many leave the island upon successfully wiling their way onto a ship, posing as beautiful women or stranded travelers. Unlike doppelgangers, they do not have the ability to mimic others or read their thoughts, so they create new backgrounds for themselves. All of the morphoi serve and venerate Mnemosyne. They willingly give their lives to protect her and her handmaidens. Approximately one in thirty morphoi are chieftains (with at least 5 class levels). The group has several rangers, shamans, and witches among them. Those chosen as infiltrators often have rogue classes. When the morphoi shapeshift, they keep their additional eyes, placing them on an advantageous part of their body (back of the neck or the back of a glove-covered hand, for instance). They prefer to see in various directions at once.

MORPHOI HULK

An enormous crablike brute rises silently out of the waves, trailing bits of kelp and flexing its main set of claws as it steadily treads toward the island's interior. Gouges and scrapes mar its rusty-looking carapace in a dozen places, marking it as a difficult and tenacious foe.

Morphoi Hulk

CR 8

XP 4,800

CN Large native outsider (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (+1 Dex, +3 insight, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 95 (10d10+40)

Fort +12, **Ref** +11 **Will** +12

Immune poison; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 melee (2d6+6 plus grab) and bite +13 melee (2d6+3 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks Spore burst (DC 19; 1/day)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 13, **Con** 19, **Int** 11, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +17 (+21 grapple); **CMD** 28

Feats Disruptive^B, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack

Skills Climb +19, Knowledge (Planes) +13, Perception +13, Stealth +13, Survival +13, Swim +27; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Swim

Languages Aquan, Common

SQ Amphibious, Capable Grappler, Extraplanar Insight, Ferocity

ECOLOGY

Environment coasts, marshes, underwater

Organization solitary, pair, gang (3–5), or family (5–16)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Capable Grappler (Ex) Using its extra set of arms, a morphoi hulk can use its grab ability against creatures of its size (Large) or smaller.

Extraplanar Insight (Su) A morphoi hulk adds its Charisma modifier as a racial bonus to all its saving throws, and as an insight bonus to AC. This ability also grants morphoi hulks the Disruptive feat as a bonus feat; it also allows advanced morphoi hulks to take feats requiring the Disruptive feat, even if the creature might not otherwise qualify for the feat.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 19; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d3 Charisma damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spore Burst (Ex) Once per day as a move action, a morphoi hulk can release a lingering cloud of poisonous spores from its eye stalks. The cloud moves with the hulk for 5 rounds



before dissipating. The spores have the same effect as the morphoi hulk's poisonous bite, affecting any creature within 5 ft. Anyone entering the cloud or standing within its area of effect on their turn must make a Fortitude save or suffer the poison's effects. This effect is Constitution-based, and it can be used above or below the water's surface. The cloud only lasts for 3 rounds underwater.

The towering and stoic hulks appeared on Morphoi and several other islands in the Western Ocean centuries ago. Dubbed the Morphoi hulks by the islands' populace, these creatures, whose true name has been long forgotten, claim a now-dead civilization summoned them to battle the neh-thalggu, the hulks' natural enemies, after the sorcerer aberrations invaded Midgard in their living ships. Unfortunately for the hulks, their summoners tasked them with the complete eradication of the neh-thalggu insurgents, and this duty has yet to be fulfilled; thus, they remain bound to Midgard. The Morphoi hulks have been on the plane so long now that they have acclimated to it and are considered natives.

Several times a year, the hulks go on hunting rampages, scouring Morphoi and other isles for neh-thalggu, but, in fact, they delight in killing anything unlucky enough to cross their path. When not seeking neh-thalggu foes, the Morphoi hulks keep to themselves, building tunnel warrens and chambers of coral and resin (created with their saliva) in shallow lagoons.

NETHYSULE

This blue-purple-skinned humanoid wields a quarterstaff. It has vertically placed eyes and a ridged forehead.

Nethysule

CR 1/2

XP 200

Nethysule druid 1

N Medium plant (aquatic)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 9 (1d8+1)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +0 (1d6) or quarterstaff +0 (1d6) or sling +1 (1d4)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +4)

6/day—*wooden fist*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st, concentration +4)

Constant—*Speak with plants*

3/day—*sanctuary* (DC 14)

Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +4)

1st—*entangle*^D (DC 14), *obscuring mist*, *summon nature's ally*

0 (at will)—*detect poison*, *flare*, *guidance*

^D domain spell; **Domain** Plant

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 13, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 11

Feats Great Fortitude

Skills Craft (any) +6, Heal +7, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +8, Perception +7, Spellcraft +6, Survival +11, Stealth +3 (+11 in vegetation); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Stealth (+10 in vegetation), +2 Survival



Languages Aquan, Common, Druidic, Sylvan; speak with plants

SQ amphibious, nature bond (Earth domain), nature sense, wild empathy

ECOLOGY

Environment any, the Isle of Morphoi (hometown)

Organization solitary, pair, circle (2–15)

Treasure standard (quarterstaff and sling, other treasure)

Nethysule are androgynous, asexual, plant-based creatures indigenous to the Isle of Morphoi. Their appearance is similar to the natural form of their morphoi cousins, but their ridged heads and purple-tinged skin delineate the two from a distance. Unlike the morphoi, the nethysule cannot change shape and do not possess an additional set of eyes in the back of their heads.

The nethysule are generally peaceful creatures, preferring to avoid combat whenever possible and keeping mainly to their druidic circles. They tend to the area's flora, creating beautiful garden patches throughout the Isle of Morphoi.

Believed to be creations of Nethus, many of the nethysules's circles (the more chaotic neutral ones) once served the sea deity's whims. All nethysule still revere the sea god and make weekly offerings of small crafted items to the sea. None have seen or heard the god for some time now, and they do not understand why Nethus abandoned them. Because the violent lamia kill them for sheer sport, the nethysule keep away from Temple of Mnemosyne, and so have not learned anything about Nethus's disappearance from the priestesses there.

The nethysule gather nutrients from the sun or through an intake of organic carbon, so they do not need to eat (and do not necessarily need sunlight to survive). They live in small druidic communities on their home island called circles. Some communities might be underwater, since they are amphibious creatures. Approximately 1 in 15 nethysule are druidic leaders (with at least 7 druid levels).

Nethysule Characters

Nethysule are defined by class levels—they don't possess racial Hit Dice. All nethysule have the following racial traits.

+2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom, -2 Strength: Nethysule are wise and intelligent creatures.

Senses: Low-light vision and darkvision 60 feet.

Plant Traits: The nethysule are a race of plant people. See the universal rules for plants.

Wild Children: The nethysule gain a +2 racial bonus to Stealth and Survival checks. Additionally, they receive a +8 bonus to blend in with vegetation.

Spell-Like Ability: A nethysule can use sanctuary three times per day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability equals the nethysule's class level.

Languages: Nethysule begin play speaking Common. Those with high Intelligence can choose any language as a bonus language. The nethysule can speak with plants.

OGBANJE

Born from the nightmares of an ancient being slumbering in the coldest depths of the ocean, Ogbanje take great pleasure in the imitation, domination and murder of humanoids. These faceless ape-like aberrations have rubbery, black skin marked only by a livid pink, drooling lip that runs a crooked path from their crown to their navel. Beneath this lip is a cavity packed with squirming, beaked feeding organs. These corpse collectors will often stock their nests with the bodies of their victims which they animate telekinetically for their own unimaginable delights.

Ogbanje

CR 5

XP 1,600

NE Medium aberration (aquatic)

Init +6; **Senses** all-around vision, blindsight 30 ft.; Perception +14

Aura vile mind (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +1 Improved Natural Armor)

hp 42 (7d8+20)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Resist cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 bites +5 (1d6+3)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

At will—*telekinesis* (DC 11)

1/day—*dominate monster* (DC 15)

Special Attacks compelling call, telekinetic fury

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Improved Natural Armor

Skills Perception +14, Stealth+17, Swim +22, Bluff +17

Languages telepathy 40 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment aquatic caves, sunken ships

Organization solitary

Treasure Incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Creature of the Deep (Ex) Ogbanje have cold resistance 5

Compelling Call (Su) When not immersed in water, Ogbanje may suck air through their feeding cavity and emit a horrible, warbling bass drone. Any creature that hears the call must make a Will save of DC 15 or be compelled to move at normal speed towards the Ogbanje by any normal means, as if affected by a failed Charm Monster save. Creatures affected by the call ignore the monster's vile mind aura. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Vile Mind (Ex) When not feeding, the Ogbanje's alien thoughts flit and lurch outside of its body. Non-sentient creatures shy away from this aura. Sentient creatures, including other Ogbanje, find the brief glimpses of the Ogbanje's thoughts repulsive and unsettling.

All-Around Vision (Ex) While an Ogbanje projects its vile mind aura, it sees in all directions and it may not be flanked.



Telekinetic Fury (Su) Once per day, the Ogbanje may unleash a maelstrom of telekinetic force, causing 2d6+2 bludgeoning damage to all within 30 ft. of the Ogbanje. A successful Will save of DC 13 halves this damage. The attack may be sustained for up to two rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Amphibious (Ex) Ogbanje are amphibious.

Though born in the darker places of the ocean, Ogbanje are drawn from the depths to the humanoid groups on which they prey by some uncanny sense.

Their diet consists of small fish, mollusks and shellfish, though they make exceptions. When consuming aquatic sea life, the Ogbanje loses blindsight and is completely blind.

Ogbanje will often fixate on a single humanoid, stalking this humanoid for days on end. This fixation compels the Ogbanje to abduct and drown the family and friends of their victim. Once the need is too great, Ogbanje will capture and “kiss” the object of their obsession, devouring them in immense ecstasy.

Ogbanje’s hands are webbed and cannot grasp a weapon or handle a shield. They are careful and clever hunters and will often flee rather than fight. They fear and are fascinated by martial prowess and are likely to try to dominate the most able melee combatant in a group.

PRISMWING

Gliding stealthily through the jungle, a prismwing flock catches the scent of freshly spilled blood and determinedly descends upon the promise of a fresh meal. Shining feathers deftly refract light around their wings and bodies, making them surprisingly difficult to spot. With their high-pitched cry inaudible to humans, the rustling feathers of a prismwing’s flight often serves as the only warning one approaches. Difficulty and danger accompany spotting a prismwing, as their colorful plumages captivate onlookers in a dream like trance, leaving the prismwing’s prey helpless to blood-draining attacks from long needle-like beaks.

Prismwing

CR 3

XP 800

N Small Magical Beast

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

Aura fascinating plumage (DC 14)

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 22 (4d10)

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee touch+8 (attach), 2 claws +8 (1d4-2)

Special Attacks blood drain

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 17, **Con** 10, **Int** 5, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +1 (+10 grapple when attached); **CMD** 14 (22 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Grapple, Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +7, Perception +6, Stealth +14; **Racial Modifiers** +1 Fly, +1 Perception, +2 Stealth +7

Language Common

ECOLOGY

Environment coastline and warm forests

Organization small flock (3-5)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Attach (Ex) When a prismwing hits with a touch attack, its powerful talons latch onto the target, anchoring it in place. An attached prismwing effectively grapples its prey. The prismwing loses its Dexterity bonus to AC leaving it flat-footed with an AC of 11, but holds on with great tenacity and inserts its proboscis into the grappled target’s flesh. A prismwing gains a +8 racial bonus to maintain its grapple on a foe once attached. A creature grappled in this manner may grapple or strike an attached prismwing—if its prey manages to win a grapple check or Escape Artist check against it, the prismwing detaches.

Blood Drain (Ex) A prismwing drains blood at the end of its turn when attached to a foe, inflicting 1 point of damage and 1 point of Constitution damage. Once a prismwing deals 6 points of Constitution damage, it detaches and flies off to digest the meal. If its victim dies before sating the prismwing’s appetite, the prismwing detaches and seeks a new target.

Fascinating Plumage (Su) A prismwing’s feathers bend light and images around the bird, making it difficult to see and creating a dizzying display of colors. Creatures spotting a prismwing must succeed a Will save (DC 14) or become fascinated as per the condition for one round.

Call Flock (Ex) Prismwings in distress call to other prismwings with a pitch imperceptible by human ears. Any prismwings within 450 ft. respond to the call as quickly as possible. Although prismwings travel in small flocks, a group of a dozen or more may gather to protect one of their own.

Prismwings weigh 4 to 6 pounds with a wingspan reaching 5 feet across. They nest most commonly near carnivorous plants, pollinating the dangerous flora and creating hazardous areas where one threat compounds another. Ideal for making cloaks of invisibility, traders value prismwing feathers for their light-refracting quality. The feathers require magical preservation however, or they lose their supernatural quality.

Intelligent and communal creatures, a prismwing hatchling imprints on a matriarch and flock. Prismwings make ardent and capable companions and training one takes over a year, but training two or more at once reduces the time to one year for each creature. Wild prismwings shun any of their kind raised in captivity, while trained prismwings loyally defend their imprinted families.

A prismwing egg fetches a price of 4,000 gp and a successful Handle Animal check DC 15 for each month of training successfully rears the magical bird. A wizard may summon a prismwing as a familiar with the Improved Familiar feat at caster level of 11.



SON OF TALOS

This handsome man of bronze—which is as tall as a storm giant—is fashioned in the likeness of a muscular human and seems relatively ancient. This bodily perfection is marred by a single vein that runs from the neck down one of the ankles.

Son of Talos

CR 11

XP 12,800

N Huge construct

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 28 (+2 Dex, +18 natural, -2 size)

hp 110 (12d10+40)

Fort +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities hardness 10; **Immune** construct traits, fire

Weaknesses see burning ichor and Son of Talos' Achilles' heel

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +24/+19 (1d8+12 plus grab)

Ranged rock +15/+10 (1d8+12)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+12), rock throwing (200 ft.), and trample (1d8+18, DC 28)

STATISTICS

Str 35, **Dex** 15, **Con** –, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 38

Feats Far Shot, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Lunge, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Intimidate +29, Perception +15

ECOLOGY

Environment any (islands of The Western Ocean)

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure 1d4 magical objects worth a total of 7,000 gp hidden in an ancient cache

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burning Ichor (Su) A Son of Talos is filled with a burning ichor of elemental origin that acts like blood and renders it sentient, which means that this construct is vulnerable to mind-affecting effects—except sleep—and can “die” from massive damage (construct traits otherwise apply). The fiery ichor flowing within its body moreover creates an aura of intense heat. All creatures within 10 feet take 1d6 points of fire damage at the beginning of the Son of Talos' turn.

Son of Talos' Achilles' heel (Ex) A single vein runs down from the neck of a Son of Talos to end at one of its

ankles, closed by a single nail of bronze (hardness 10, 20 hp). If the nail is ever sundered or removed (Strength check, DC 25) the construct bleeds to death, losing 10 hp per round. Accordingly, a Son of Talos is also vulnerable to attacks causing bleed damage.

In the aftermath of The Great Mage Wars many wizards left the continent for The Western Ocean to hide, hoping to rebuild their armies from there. Many have just disappeared after years of wandering, leaving as testimony of their brief passages on some islands constructs known as Sons of Talos which are considered nowadays as living relics that still protect an ancient cache of magical objects, awaiting the return of one of the mages who created them. Meanwhile, the construct unwaveringly patrols and protects its assigned territory according to the instructions received long ago, always following the same path unless an important event forces it to modify its course.

A Son of Talos is a dangerous construct that pelts any approaching ships and opponents that disembark on the island it guards with rocks as soon as it spots a target within one thousand feet, knowing well that many people cannot withstand such bombardment for long and simply turn tail more often than not. If a rain of boulders doesn't dissuade its enemies a Son of Talos simply tramples some and grabs those who survived the initial onslaught to crush them in its mighty fists. Once it has squashed a target the man of bronze tries to demoralize those who witnessed such gruesome act with an Intimate check. A Son of Talos always fights until utterly destroyed or entirely drained of blood.

Winged Son of Talos (CR 12)

A winged Son of Talos possesses huge wings of bronze that resemble those of an angel. Such constructs have a fly speed of 30 ft. (poor), plus the skill Fly and the feat Flyby Attack instead of Intimidate and Intimidating Prowess respectively. Contrarily to their ever-grounded counterparts they are more malicious and often leave their posts out of boredom to seek targets at sea to bombard, dropping a pair of boulders from on high when they find one.

CONSTRUCTION

The hollow body of a Son of Talos is sculpted from 10,000 pounds of bronze and filled with a burning ichor of elemental origin worth 35,000 gp.

Son of Talos

CL 13th; **Price** 225,000 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *eagle's splendor*, *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, creator must be caster level 13th; **Skill** Craft (sculpture) DC 25; **Cost** 115,000 gp.



TOTEM POLE GOLEM

The fifteen-foot tall statue with garish animal face sculptures sprouts stout, wooden legs from its base and lurches across the jungle clearing.

Golem, Totem Pole

CR 6

XP 2,400

N Large construct

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60ft, low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 70 (9d10+20)

Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

DR 5/bludgeoning or slashing; **Immune** construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +12 (1d6+4 plus grab), 2 slams +12 (1d6+4)

Ranged +9 blowgun (1d3 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks fast swallow, poison, swallow whole (no damage, AC 15, 7 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

SQ alert master

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or gang (2-4)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alert Master (Ex) A totem pole golem alerts its master with a mental alarm when activated by a creature of size Small or greater. A creature that speaks the password (determined by the creator at the time of casting) does not set off the alarm.

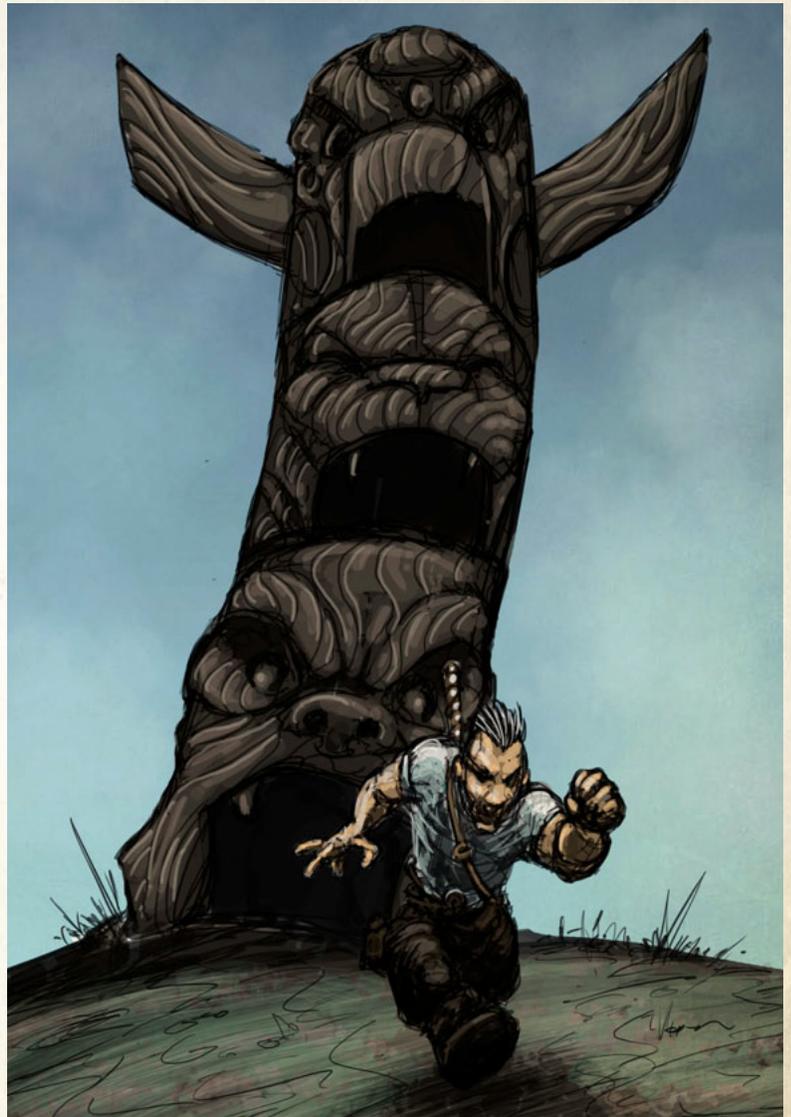
Immunity to Magic (Ex) A totem pole golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. Certain spells and effects function differently against the creature as noted below.

- Warp wood or wood shape slows a totem pole golem (as the slow spell) for 2d6 rounds (no save)
- Repel wood drives the golem back 60 feet and deals 2d12 points of damage to it (no save).

Poison (Ex) Dart—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/round for 2 rounds; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 1d3 hours; cure 1 save.

Swallow Whole (Ex) Once swallowed by a totem pole golem, an opponent takes no damage, but is trapped inside the creature's hollow interior. The golem's mouth snaps shut, preventing creatures from climbing back out. A creature can attempt to hack or smash its way out as normal (the golem's damage reduction still applies to those inside). A totem pole golem can hold up to 2 Medium creatures at a time.

Carved from a single tree, these wooden constructs range in height from fifteen to twenty-five feet. Stacked sculptures of stylized humanoids and animals cover the face of the golem, many adorned with arms, legs, or wings. Coloration of the constructs varies from culture to culture with some electing to bring out the natural color of the wood and others painting them with vibrant hues that reflect their heritage. Totem pole



golems exist in both humanoid and monstrous civilizations in several locations of The Western Ocean. Animating the golems involves a ceremony in which the finished wood is first hardened over a fire made from enchanted hardwoods and then quickly cooled in a water-filled chamber before summoning an earth elemental to bind with the construct. Spellcasters usually task their creations with duties to guard paths, borders, or other locations, including homes.

CONSTRUCTION

A totem pole golem's body is made of a carved, wooden pole weighing 1,500 to 2,000 pounds, smoked over enchanted hardwoods, worth 1,000 gp.

Totem Pole Golem

CL 11th; Price 19,500 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *alarm*, *animate objects*, *geas/quest*, creator must be caster level 11th; **Skill** Craft (carpentry) or Craft (sculpture) DC 15; **Cost** 10,750 gp



ITEMS



BOON NECKLACE OF THE SEA

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 7th
Slot neck ; **Price** 8,000 gp; **Weight** --

DESCRIPTION

The Boon Necklace of the Sea is a beautiful piece of native craftsmanship; silver and bone intertwined with fetishes made from various sea creatures. A newly created necklace comes with 12 fetishes. One fetish can be detached each round as a standard action. Detaching a fetish causes it to magically bestow an extraordinary or supernatural ability of its depicted creature upon the wearer, as indicated below. These effects last for 1 hour and only one effect can be active at any given time. Once removed and activated, the fetish vanishes.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| • Manta Ray Lobe | blindsight 30' | PfB 1, p. 298 |
| • Shark Fin | keen scent | PfB 3, p. 296 |
| • Dolphin Fluke | blindsight 60' | PfB 1, p. 298 |
| • Electric Eel's Tail | resist electric 10 | PfB 1, p. 303 |
| • Anemone Tendril | immune (Gaze) | PfB 1, p. 301 |
| • Crab Eyestalk | darkvision 60' | Core, p.562 |
| • Jellyfish Ichor | amorphous | PfB 2, p. 294 |
| • Devilfish Spine | resist cold 10 | PfB 1, p. 303 |
| • Whale Lung | hold breath | PfB 2, p.298 |
| • Bunyip Teeth | blood rage | PfB 2, p. 294 |

- Gar Jaws waterbreathing PfB 3, p. 301
- Sea Serpent Eye resist fire 10 PfB 1, p. 303

Additional types of fetishes are possible and players should work with their GM to determine appropriate details. The Boon Necklace of the Sea cannot have more than one of the same kind of fetish.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *greater animal aspect*; **Cost** 4,000 gp

MNEMOSYNE'S TEAR

Aura moderate enchantment; **CL** 10th
Slot —; **Price** 16,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

Pirate lords, spies, and adventurers with deadly secrets prize these large lustrous black pearls. By focusing on mnemosyne's tear for a round, the possessor may replace any single memory or secret with a false memory of their devising. While not limited to a set time, the memory must pertain to a single piece of knowledge, object, or event. Afterwards, the possessor forgets the hidden memory, and the truth concerning the alternate, invented fiction. Sense Motive, torture, or spells and effects which determine the truth cannot reveal this deception or compel the possessor to remember. *Detect thoughts* and similar spells cannot interact directly with the tear.



Divinations, such as commune, contact other plane, or legend lore reveals the information is obscured, but fails to provide any specifics regarding its obfuscation. The tear's effects cannot negate *charm*, *geas/quest*, *suggestion*, or similar spells.

As a failsafe, the possessor forgets ever owning the pearl 30 minutes later. Holding the tear for one minute restores the user's memory. Afterwards, if the possessor comes within 10-feet of the tear they sense it (as per *detect magic*), and feel drawn to the possessor's original memory as per suggestion, unless they succeed on DC 13 Will save. Mismanaging the security and recovery of the tear after using it can result in the permanent loss of the memory, or self-sabotage of the effort spent attuning it. The tear cannot take the memory from an unwilling target, and the memory cannot be granted to another creature normally. The tear crumbles to dust after the memory is restored to the original possessor.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *misdirection*, *modify memory*;
Cost 8,000 gp.

MOKOMOKAI OF THE STORMS

Aura strong transmutation; **CL** 13th
Slot --; **Price** 30,000 gp; **Weight** 7 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The Mokomokai of Storms is a preserved head with a potent eldritch connection to the power of the weather. The head - boiled and dried in the sun until it shrunk to the size of a melon - is tattooed with elaborate swirls and curves and its eyes are sealed by glass disks.

The Mokomokai has three charges which are renewed each day at dawn. Spending 1 or more charges creates more powerful wind attacks.

- 1 charge:** 3d6 damage, ranged touch attack
- 2 charges:** 4d6 damage, 60' cone (Reflex DC 17 half)
- 3 charges:** 5d6 damage, 60' line (Reflex DC 20 half)

Additionally, once per day, the wielder of the Mokomokai of Storms can brandish it toward a storm as a standard action; whereupon the storm is absorbed through the open mouth of the preserved head. The result of this is similar to the calm storm effect of a control weather spell but with a much shorter casting time. The Mokomokai can only absorb one storm at a time.

The energy of the absorbed storm can be released as a standard action allowing the wielder to change the weather as per the control weather spell.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *gust of wind*, *control weather*; **Cost** 15,000 gp.



STAFF OF THE CEPHALOPOD

Aura moderate conjuration, faint evocation, necromancy and transmutation; **CL** 13th
Slot none; **Price** 119,600 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This ugly staff is fashioned from a piece of gnarled driftwood crowned with the body of a small octopus or squid whose overly long tentacles squirm while trailing along on the ground. This staff allows the use of the following spells:

- *Darkness* (1 charge)
- *Water breathing* (1 charge)
- *Black tentacles* (2 charges)
- *Poison* (the staff can deliver the following poisons)
 - Octopus poison* (1 charge)
 - Giant octopus poison* (2 charges)
 - Poison (2 charges)
- *Summon monster VII* (octopus or squid only, including giant versions*) (3 charges)

The wielder of a staff of the cephalopod gains a +2 circumstance bonus on his Stealth, Escape Artist, Perception and Swim checks.

The wielder of this staff can also use it to launch a line of ink that blinds a single target on a successful hit once per minute (20-ft. range, Reflex avoids; if blinded, Fortitude negates). This action requires a ranged touch attack (no charge used); note that this specific function does not work in the same way while underwater, the ink thus released as a free action turning into an ink cloud like the one emitted by a squid instead.*

The arms or tentacles of the deceptively small cephalopod that tops the staff can also be used to seize, lift, drag or push objects, or to initiate a Combat Maneuver or Combat Maneuver Defense in place of the wielder (treat this ornament like a giant octopus* for all these purposes, the arms or tentacles having a reach of 30 feet however).

CONSTRUCTION

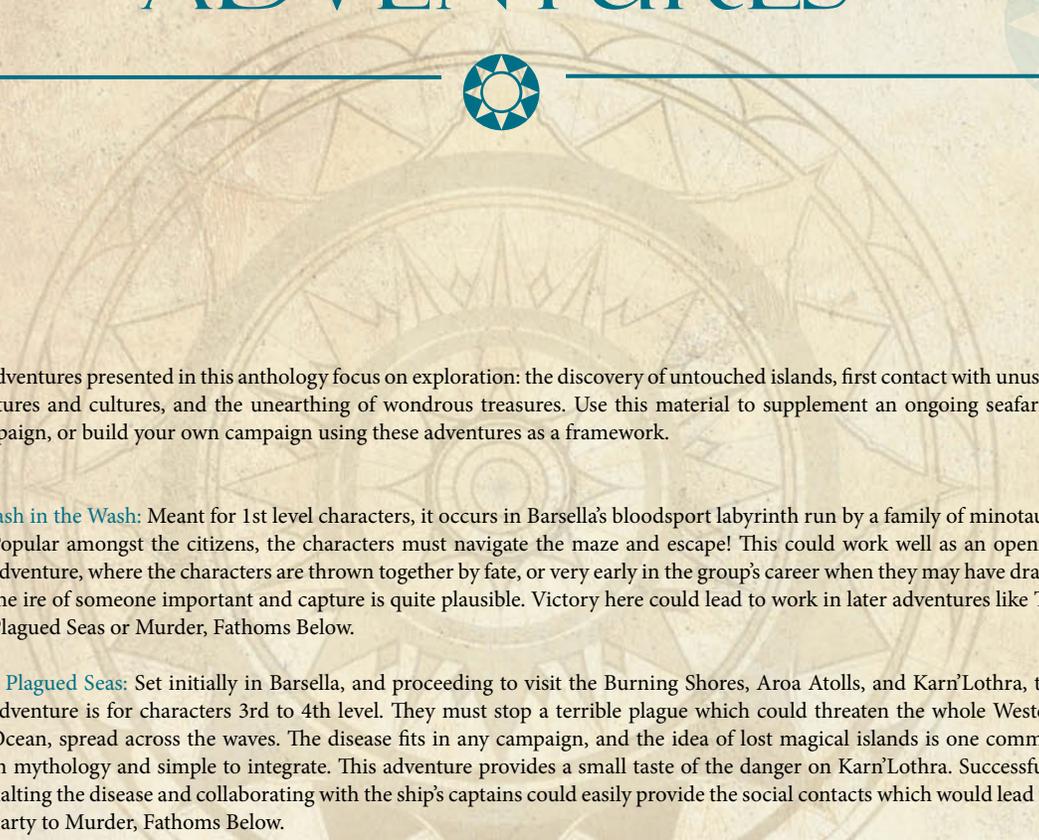
Requirements Craft Staff, *black tentacles*, *darkness*, *poison*, *summon monster VII*, *water breathing*;

Cost 59,800 gp

* See *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*



ADVENTURES



The adventures presented in this anthology focus on exploration: the discovery of untouched islands, first contact with unusual creatures and cultures, and the unearthing of wondrous treasures. Use this material to supplement an ongoing seafaring campaign, or build your own campaign using these adventures as a framework.

Awash in the Wash: Meant for 1st level characters, it occurs in Barsella's bloodsport labyrinth run by a family of minotaurs. Popular amongst the citizens, the characters must navigate the maze and escape! This could work well as an opening adventure, where the characters are thrown together by fate, or very early in the group's career when they may have drawn the ire of someone important and capture is quite plausible. Victory here could lead to work in later adventures like *The Plagued Seas* or *Murder, Fathoms Below*.

The Plagued Seas: Set initially in Barsella, and proceeding to visit the Burning Shores, Aroa Atolls, and Karn'Lothra, this adventure is for characters 3rd to 4th level. They must stop a terrible plague which could threaten the whole Western Ocean, spread across the waves. The disease fits in any campaign, and the idea of lost magical islands is one common in mythology and simple to integrate. This adventure provides a small taste of the danger on Karn'Lothra. Successfully halting the disease and collaborating with the ship's captains could easily provide the social contacts which would lead the party to *Murder, Fathoms Below*.

Murder, Fathoms Below: A murder mystery written to challenge five 5th-level characters, this is set on the living island-creature known as the Leviathan. This adventure works well for groups in the nascent arc of their career, where they might seek a patron, or be entering the service of a patron like the lord who sponsored this expedition to the Leviathan. The experience on this legendary beast can only raise the group's reputation and easily serves as a bridge to the adventure *The Ship that Never Was* as the group returns to port.

The Ship that Never Was: Set for five 7th level characters, it takes the party on a quest for a ghostly ship lost on the island of Meshong-Lir. It can be integrated after any adventure requiring a sailing trip. It offers the characters the chance to claim a legendary ship, or to free a crew from an eternity of tyranny. It also reveals the ruins of Sea Titans, otherwise lost beneath the waves. Their experiences there establish familiarity with Meshong-Lir and the Savage Isles, and provide the group an excellent reason to return in *Black Blood, Red Rain*.

Black Blood, Red Rain: This adventure also visits the Savage Isles around Meshong-Lir, showing a different portion of the archipelago and giving the group the chance to truly advance as influential members of a trading family. Designed for 9th level characters, this adventure goes deep into the heart of one of the islands, looking for answers and finding trouble. Success here means the characters may establish themselves as leaders of a newly established colony, individuals of influence and power.

Intervening adventures might include privateering missions with the captains from *The Plagued Seas*, exploration of the Burning Isle, Karn'Lothra, or Leviathan as treasure hunters, or intrigue and skullduggery in the streets and alleys of Barsella. With a ship in their disposal, they might attempt piracy, smuggling, or trade after *The Ship that Never Was*, building a reputation which draws them into *Black Blood, Red Rain*. Whatever path they choose, this book provides the exotic locations, NPCs, and treasures to make the journey memorable!



ADVENTURES

AWASH IN THE WASH





Christina Stiles & the Barsellan Captains (Ben Armitage, John Beattie, Morgan Boehringer, Jarrod Camire, Jeremy Coffey, Andrew C. Durston, and Mike Franke)

*“Row hard, pull strong.
The tide turns, sea gods frown.
The Wash is callin’!*

*“Row hard, pull strong.
Current rushes into caves down.
The Wash is pullin’!*

*“Row hard, pull strong.
The dark caverns, under town.
The Wash is eatin’!*

*“Row hard, pull strong.
Death awaits, surely drown.
The Wash is Dyin’!”*

“Awash in the Wash” is an underground urban adventure suitable for six PCs of 1st level or four PCs of 2nd level. PCs must use both wits and brawn to escape the minotaurs’ playground. Their best chance at survival means avoiding combat with Argus, the minotaur.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Toran minotaurs of Barsella, cousins to the Anthors, have long used the Murder Maze as a form of entertainment, a testing ground, and a place to procure fresh meat. The PCs are being utilized for the first two reasons, but may, in fact, end up as selections at Bormok’s Chop Shop (Barsella area 33 in Shanty Town).

While it should be assumed the minotaurs gathered up the maze’s current victims—the PCs—randomly, Simez Rothgazzi, the master of the High Order of Geomancy, a frequent visitor to the maze, takes an interest in the group. He is looking for some heroes to assist him in both a few projects (See Wolfgang Baur’s stand-alone adventure *To the Edge of the World* adventure for more details). If the PCs survive, he offers them a job.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs awaken in the Wash, Barsella’s underground district, in a holding pen inside the Toran minotaurs’ Murder Maze (Murder Maze Map, area 1). The PCs are to be today’s entertainment for the minotaurs, who bring waylaid strangers to the maze—those who no one is sure to miss—to participate in their daily gambling event.

During the “game,” the PCs must use their intelligence and strength to survive the maze and its dangers: dangerous terrain, traps, ratfolk, kobolds, and a deranged and fiendish blooded minotaur named Argus.

Simez Rothgazzi of House Rothgazzi (see page 6), a human geomancer

and master of Barsella’s High Order of Geomancy (area A3 in Arch Town), is one of the gamblers betting on the game. He places a 100-gp bet on the PCs before leaving to attend to other matters. He keeps an eye on the group through a scrying device attuned to the maze. If the PCs prove successful, Simez hires them for a mission to Karn’lothra to procure the Book of Valtorag (See *To the Edge of the World*). Through Simez, the characters have their first opportunity to acquire a small ship for sailing into the great Western Ocean.

Ultimately, Simez Rothgazzi seeks to stop the lunar eel Selles’ death from disrupting the ley lines and devastating many coastal cities.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Since the characters begin the adventure in the minotaurs' clutches, the GM need not provide any adventure hooks for the characters. However, details on how the characters—whether travelers or Barsellan citizens—came to be captured remains of interest to the character's back story. Some suggestions detailing their capture are provided below. Additionally, the characters need not know each other at the start of the adventure; in fact, having them begin as strangers (in a strange land) could prove the more interesting choice.

Means of capture:

- Newly arrived by boat or caravan, the PC drank to excess and later came face-to-face with a most unusual press gang: instead of forcing the PC onto a boat to serve among its crew, the creatures ushered him away (unconscious) to serve as a player in their crazy minotaur games.
- The PC, having sought fun at one of the many local brothels, could not pay for services rendered, their pockets were picked, for example. The minotaur bouncer decided the deadbeat would “pay” in other ways. The brothels do not serve only male clientele, so this back story serves appropriately for female characters, as well.
- While exploring the Wash, the PC encountered a band of minotaurs out searching for new gaming recruits. Lucky PC! Note: If the PC is playing a cleric of Nethus, the PC might have been exploring the Wash to locate the deity's formerly-thriving temple there. Since Nethus' capture over a decade ago, parts of the temple have suffered damage, while others have been incorporated into the Murder maze; one active priest still performs his rituals within Nethus' Sanctuary (Suvest in Murder Maze area 6).

INTRODUCTION

The characters awaken inside the minotaur maze in the sea caves beneath Barsella with all their normal gear (though they may not have any rations), and are forced to run the gauntlet and enter the Murder Maze. Read the following to the PCs.

PART ONE: LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

1. Holding Pen (EL 0) & Gauntlet (EL 2)

As you open your eyes, a gruff yell goes out somewhere up above you. “They're awake. Toz, they're awake! The games can begin!”

A horrid smell immediately assaults you, as you squint upwards against the bright light shining down on you. An adolescent-sized minotaur stands behind bars 25 feet above you. He punctuates his glee by baring his sharp teeth. Within a few moments, several much larger minotaurs join him, and soon shaggy bodies surround all three barred sides of the balcony overlooking your circular (40-foot diameter) prison. Metal bars crisscross the ceiling, effectively forming a sealed cage over the stone walls. A slick layer of algae coats the surrounding walls, and you find yourself lying in an inch or more of cold, muddy water. Closed portcullises lie to the northeast and northwest of you.

After a moment, a handsome, thirty-something human man in white robes trimmed in gold joins the group. He stands beside a massive minotaur with thick, midnight-black fur and bands of gold strapped around each arm. The human studies you all, and then says to the obvious leader beside him, “Hmm, Toz, they look an enterprising lot. One hundred gold pieces says they survive the Maze. If they do, they just might turn out to be useful.” The minotaur slaps a hand on the man's shoulder. “We'll see, geomancer.”

LUCK DISCS

Simez's red tokens are luck discs. These provide PCs with second chances, and should be considered the equivalent of hero points, as detailed in the Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide. The GM may decide if they have any other uses in the adventure, like re-rolls on the treasure chart used for located dead bodies. Luck discs will stack with hero points, if the GM already uses those in his game. At the GM's discretion, the PCs may keep any remaining luck discs to use in later adventures, or the GM may have them lose their magic once out of the maze or within 24 hours. Allow the PCs a DC 12 Dexterity check to grab falling chips, or a DC 15 Perception check to find chips landing in the muck.

“Oh, but, let's make it interesting,” the robbed man says, stepping forward. He leans down and tosses a dozen red ceramic tokens into your cage. As he does so, you glimpse tattooed sigils on his arms and an inked arch on both sides of his neck. Afterwards, he takes a step away from the balcony and disappears.

Allow Barsellan characters to make the following Knowledge (local) checks:

Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (local)	<10	The man in the white robes is a member of the Sons of the Arch, a philanthropist group connected with Sail Away Park (see Barsella, Area 1.5) in the city. The PCs are in the infamous Murder Maze in the Wash (Barsella, area 9.4).
	15	The human is Simez Rothgazzi, leader of the High Order of Geomancers in Arch Town. Any geomancer PC already knows this.
	18	The tokens are luck discs, said to help the bearer win favor (see Luck Discs sidebar).

Toz explains the rules before sending them on their way:

“Here are the rules, maze rats. The maze contains many copper rings,” he says, holding up a 5-inch example high above you. “If you collect five of these and place them upon the raised arm of the statue of old Vilthalas within three hours, you win your freedom. You'll even gain 100 gp each, a free night at the Siren's Song brothel, and all the fame surviving the maze brings you. You might even gain a lucrative job.”

He leans down toward the grate. “Just so we're clear: none of us believe you'll gain these rewards. The gamblers here are all betting on just how long you'll survive. Well...your possible employer did think you might survive,” he says, shaking the bag of gold the tattooed man handed him. He laughs, and the others chortle heartily with him.

A bestial howl erupts from somewhere in the maze; the twisting corridors making the sound appear to originate from behind both portcullises. Toz grins at you. “Sounds like Argus is hungry today. Best hurry and find those rings before he catches you.

Raising his hands, he says to his minotaurs: “Release the rats!”

The minotaurs raise both portcullises marked on the map. Whichever portcullis the characters choose, they must survive 3 rounds of the Gauntlet. By this time, a large crowd has gathered above them, and has access through caged ceilings (15 feet above the PCs—the grated ceilings are lower in this area). Read the following:



As you exit the opening, the smell becomes unbearable. Trash, rotting vegetables, and excrement line your path. Many minotaurs, humans, and beings of other races stand upon a grated ceiling above you, looking down. They are shouting and stomping on the caged ceiling above you. The noise is deafening. They are screaming, “Run, run, run!” or “Die, die, die!” Soon, they begin dropping things through the grate: more of what you are running through and various liquids—including minotaur urine. Then, several boat hooks lash out from above, attempting to snag you.

When the PCs exit the portcullis, they are essentially running the Gauntlet for 3 rounds, being harassed from above with thrown objects and meat hooks.

Terrain: The Gauntlet is located in the middens, and movement through this debris-filled area is halved through for 3 rounds. The corridors here are twisty, and the gamblers have access to the characters from grated ceilings. The noise affects hearing, making talking to one another difficult (DC 15) to hear each other. The stench requires a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid becoming Sickened for 1d4 rounds. Allow the PCs DC 18 Reflex saves to avoid being hit by any of the tossed items or splashed liquids.

Every 10-15 feet, a minotaur reaches down from above with a boat hook, trying to make a trip attack on a random PC as the party moves past (suggest only 3-4 such attacks). The minotaurs laugh uproariously whenever PCs trip or are struck. (Note: It is recommended damage done to PCs here be limited to non-lethal damage—or damage only to the PCs’ pride.)

If the PCs show any resistance (casting spells, sundering hooks, etc.), this deeply amuses the minotaurs, causing them to laugh more (and louder) and to up their bets on how long the PCs will last in the maze. Note: The minotaurs have partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Ref saves) against

ranged attacks due to the grated ceiling. Assume the minotaurs shrug off minor damage. Seriously damaged minotaurs leave, but others take their place. PCs standing long enough to attempt attacks are singled out for trip attacks and ranged trash attacks.

Once the PCs escape the Gauntlet, the minotaurs break into applause. Clearly, this group is going to be entertaining!

PART TWO: RUNNING THE MURDER MAZE

GM Suggestions for Running the Murder Maze

THE MAZE

GMs may approach running this maze in several ways. 1) You could, literally, have the PCs map out the maze the old-school style—which is going to take a tremendous amount of time and likely bore the players to death, or 2) you can wing a great deal of the adventure and just have the scouting character make a series of Survival or Intelligence checks (8-10 DC 18 checks) to safely navigate the party through the maze. Failed checks mean they encounter a wandering monster or body; while a successful check leads them to a room along their exit path.

If you are running this at a convention, then the characters should experience at least three to four of the room encounters or wandering monster encounters. You won’t have time for much more. Place a timer on the table to keep them apprised of their ticking fate!

Note: The *Journeys* web enhancement pdf includes information for adding random maze events or other maze encounters.

THE MINOTAUR & SURROUNDINGS

Apart from deadly rooms and horrid encounters, the deranged minotaur, Argus (detailed on page 82), hunts the PCs through the corridors of the Maze. You might have the minotaur use hit-and-run tactics throughout this adventure, as he enjoys playing with his “food.” He uses unarmed attacks against the PCs throughout, attempting to knock them out and tie them up for later. Another favored attack is his Bull Rush. If the PCs severely wound him, however, all bets are off, and out comes the axe—in full force. Luckily, it is a blunted weapon due to its age and state of disrepair.

In terms of his hit-and-run tactics, the minotaur is cunning. Numerous secret doors exist throughout the complex. Of course, Argus knows their whereabouts. At any time things seem to be going slow or the PCs are getting a little cocky, have him Stealth in behind them and pummel a PC. He might even swing down to attack in places like the chain room (area 2).

At any rate, have the PCs hear him bellow throughout the maze, catch glimpses of him behind them, or hear him fighting with other nearby creatures. His presence in the maze should always remain at the forefront of the PCs’ minds.

COPPER RINGS

The copper rings found throughout the Murder Maze come direct from Kammae Straboli, Kammaen minotaurs scavenged them from the sea god’s temple prison and brought them to one of his former temples, hoping they might somehow be a key to freeing him; many minotaurs in Barsella, in fact, still worship him. Toz, not being one of those worshippers, decided to use the rings as props in the games.

The PCs need to find 5 rings and place them on the raised arm of the priest in area 6. Some rings are not located in rooms, while others may be discovered on dead bodies or among the treasure of other adventuring groups wandering the maze (at the GM’s discretion, the PCs may use luck discs to re-roll treasure checks to attempt to find one on wandering monsters). Here is a list of where 5 specific copper rings may be found:

1. **Argus wears one through his nose.**
2. **One of the roachling troupe members carries one on its horn.**
3. **One is located in the backpack hidden in area 3’s trash.**
4. **Suvest, the priest of Nethus in area 6, owns one.**
5. **Two can be located with the mites, area 8.**

A FIGHTING CHANCE

The gamblers watching the PCs observe them from ceiling grates, similar to the one from the arrival chamber, whenever they enter a room. Those betting on the PCs often throw in a little assistance in the form of luck discs or clues to hidden potions of healing (this assistance is even included on the Wandering Monster Table). When things get hairy, bring in Chamidd and his roachling clown troupe (see Residents below) to harass the minotaur; it’s really their purpose in life. The PCs’ best bet is to stay away from the minotaur rather than confront him. This adventure easily becomes a game of cat and mouse—and really should. If the characters force the issue, let Argus show them the error of their choice.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

The GM can easily scale this adventure for more experienced PCs. For levels 3-4, add in more encountered creatures of the types listed, giving them a few class levels. For levels 5-7, bump up the minotaur’s level and remove his limp. Add in poisoned weapons, adversaries with magic, and replace the listed encounters with higher CR creatures. Additionally, you might personalize the adventure with a few lower levels—these are rumored to exist.

PART THREE: MAZE RESIDENTS

Use the following Wandering Monster Table throughout the maze. Many of the residents are detailed below the table.

Wandering Monster Table

D12	Encounter
1	Argus the Crazy (use one of his tactics) (page 82)
2	Dead body (Roll 1d10 for treasure: 1-2: 1d10 cp; 3: a luck disc; 4: 1-4 gp; 5: a useful potion of GM’s choice; 6: a 10 gp gem; 7: a copper ring; 8-10: nothing of value)
3	Roachling jester troupe (Chamidd and his 8 marching, noisy roachlings) (page 83)
4	Nuytor the Confused (p. 83)
5	Wounded maze runners—another party of 1d4 individuals, who start off as Unfriendly. Consult the <i>Pathfinder GameMastery Guide</i> for suitable stats, or just mimic the PC party’s stats.
6	Observer interference/assistance (Roll 1d10: 1-3: rotten food thrown; 4: 1 luck disc dropped; 5-6: light crossbow shot at one random PC +1 to hit; 7: a goodberry dropped near a PC; 8-9: thrown pebble +0 to hit; 10: a tightly wrapped packet with a potion of cure light wounds inside)
7	Ratfolk—1d6, Unfriendly (See <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3</i>)
8	Argus the Crazy (use one of his tactics) (page 82)
9	Huginn band of thieves, 1d6 (use tengu stats, <i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary</i>)
10	Dead body being fed upon (possible feasters include roachlings, ratfolks, centipedes, giant ants—GM’s choice; Roll per encounter #2 for treasure on the body)
11	Suvest, the nethysule priest of Nethus (area 6, page 87)
12	Nal the female white minotaur (page 83)

Argus the Crazy

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male Minotaur, Fiendish

CE Large Monstrous Humanoid

Init -2; **Senses** Darkvision (60 feet), Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 7, flat-footed 12 (-2 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural)

hp 39 (6d10+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

DR 5/good **SR** 10

OFFENSE

Spd 15 ft.

Melee Gore (Minotaur) +4 (1d6+2/20/x2) and Greataxe +9/+4

(1d6+6/20/x3) and Unarmed Strike +9/+4 (1d4+4/20/x2)

Special Attacks Powerful Charge (gore +11, 2d6+6), Smite Good (1/day)

TACTICS

Before Combat Argus grunts hoarsely and may speak a few words or shouts of anger, but does not negotiate, entreaty or bargain.

During Combat Due to his large size and lack of mobility, Argus relies on brute strength and sheer overwhelming power in combat. His greataxe swings in wide arcs, attempting to knock enemies flat. Argus bull rushes,

grapples and sometimes crushes opponents between his tree-trunk sized arms. If player characters flee, Argus slowly pursues. Given the option, Argus attacks minotaur PCs firstly.

Morale Argus slowly and relentlessly pursues player characters through the maze.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 7, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11 (+13 Bull Rushing); **CMD** 19 (21 vs. Bull Rush)

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack -2/+4

Skills Climb +13, Fly -4, Intimidate +9, Perception +11, Stealth+0,

Survival +12, Swim +9

Languages Minotaur, Giant

SQ Natural Cunning (Ex)

Combat Gear Greataxe

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Damage Reduction (5/good) Damage reduction against all except Good attacks.

Damage Resistance (Cold, Fire 10) Specified damage resistance against Cold and Fire attacks.

Improved Bull Rush Bull Rush at +2 to push back. No attack of opportunity.

Natural Cunning (Ex) Although minotaurs are not especially intelligent, they possess innate cunning and logical ability. This gives them immunity to maze spells and prevents them from ever becoming lost. Further, they are never caught flat-footed.

Power Attack -2/+4 Option to subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

Powerful charge (gore +11, 2d6+6) (Ex) Charge attacks deal additional damage.

Smite Good (1/day) (Su) +0 to hit, +6 to damage.

Treasure: 5gp

Appearance: Typically large and muscular as minotaurs go, his flame red eyes and deformed leg distinguish him. Argus' tattered breeches and vest pull tightly over his massive and shaggy-haired frame. He easily wields his blunt and rusty greataxe with one hand; he clings to it as a last reminder of a former life. His red eyes burn with the fire of eternal rage, and his spade-tipped tail betrays his fiendish heritage. Argus limps and hobbles at a tedious pace due to a smashed and splayed left leg.

Background: Dropped off at a Barsella orphanage when just a babe, the minotaur St. Grauhm (see Barsella, page 11) unquestionably took him in. Kind-hearted and patient, Grauhm encouraged Argus at every turn, while ignoring the creeping signs of rooted evil. Fights and bullying eventually led to torture of other orphans and a corruption of personality Grauhm could no longer overlook. Feeling failure and dismay, Grauhm turned Argus loose on the streets of Barsella at a too-young age with a small purse of coins. He quickly acquired an axe and a reputation for terror.

Growing in size and confidence, Argus survived as a street thug for some time. Despite hiding his tail whenever possible, his eyes frequently created rumor and speculation as to his origin. Tavern talk is undecided on whether his petty criminal actions crossed the wrong House, or if his discovered heritage triggered action by a puritanical sect seeking to rid the streets of such an abomination. Regardless of why, Argus awoke in the maze years ago. Now crippled from numerous fights in the maze, he stalks the tunnels of his new home day after day.

Personality: Argus grunts hoarsely and may speak a few words or shouts of anger, but he never negotiates, entreats, or bargains. Every step forces a grimace of pain and anger.

Tactics: Due to his large size and lack of mobility, Argus relies on brute strength and sheer overwhelming power in combat. His greataxe swings in wide arcs, attempting to knock enemies flat. Argus bull rushes, grapples and sometimes crushes opponents between his tree-trunk sized arms. If player characters flee, Argus slowly pursues. Given the option, Argus attacks minotaur PCs first.

CHAMIDD & THE ROACHLING CLOWN TROUPE

Chamidd is a roachling of great humor (fighter 1/bard 4, hp 34). He wears a funny hat and pointy shoes at the end of his insectoid legs. His merry and loud band of eight roachlings march through the maze, playing loud music (horns, drums, flutes, etc.). When they encounter the minotaur, they pelt him with dung, trash, human body parts, and anything available. One of their favorite tactics is rushing toward him with rope to attempt to tie his legs and trip him. This rarely works, but they keep on trying because the one time it succeeded it proved hilarious!

These roachlings do not assist the PCs in any tactical planning or help in exiting the maze. In fact, they see them as entertainment competition and generally refuse to acknowledge them. It is the troupe's job to entertain the minotaurs and gamblers in Chamidd's mind, not the upstart PCs. What do they really know about entertainment? Bah!

One of the roachling troupe members has one of the copper rings the PCs need to "win" the maze. It's wrapped around his horn, and appears to be a part of the musical instrument (DC 15 Perception check to note this). He won't willingly part with it. Trying to take it from the roachling gains the ire of the group.

Roachlings (8), **hp** 4 each, **CR** ¼, *Midgard Bestiary*

NAL THE WHITE MINOTAUR (SHAPESHIFTED MORPHOI)

Nal (morphoi N oracle 3) is actually a morphoi* shapechanged into a white female minotaur. Nal chose this particular form because the morphoi favor the feminine gender when shapeshifting (ingrained training on the Isle of Morphoi as a means to lure sailors ashore), and because Barsellan minotaurs highly respect the white-haired version of their species, viewing them as gifted seers whether or not they truly have such talent. Nal is the nethysule priest Suvest's friend (see area 6), a follower of Nethus, and Argus' mate. She often distracts Argus with her wiles, allowing Suvest or other allies to travel safely throughout the maze. She keeps the crazed minotaur appeased, preventing him from destroying the roachlings and the Sanctuary of Nethus. Like Suvest, Nal's ultimate goal is to find a way to bring back the priest of Nethus. However, Nal does hold great affection for Argus and does not wish to see him killed, going so far as to prevent his death with force if necessary. Nal spends a great deal of time exploring the maze to learn more about it.

Depending on how the PCs interact with Nal and Suvest, both could become friends (or enemies); they would be of great guides to the Isle of Morphoi. If the PCs somehow remove the priest and get him to Morphoi to phase him back into time, then the party would have their gratitude.

*In natural form, the morphoi is a grey-colored humanoid with a figure-eight-shaped head with vertically-placed eyes (very similar in appearance to the nethysule in natural form). Morphoi appear on page 69.

Nuytor the Confused

CR 1/2

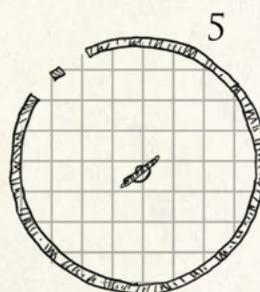
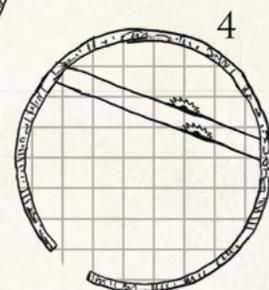
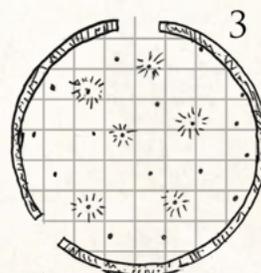
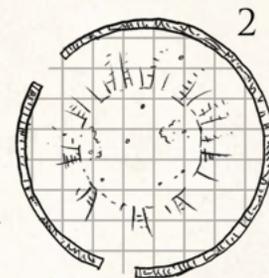
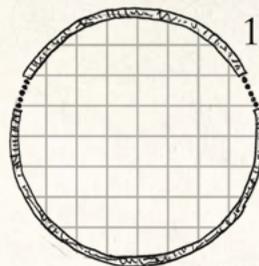
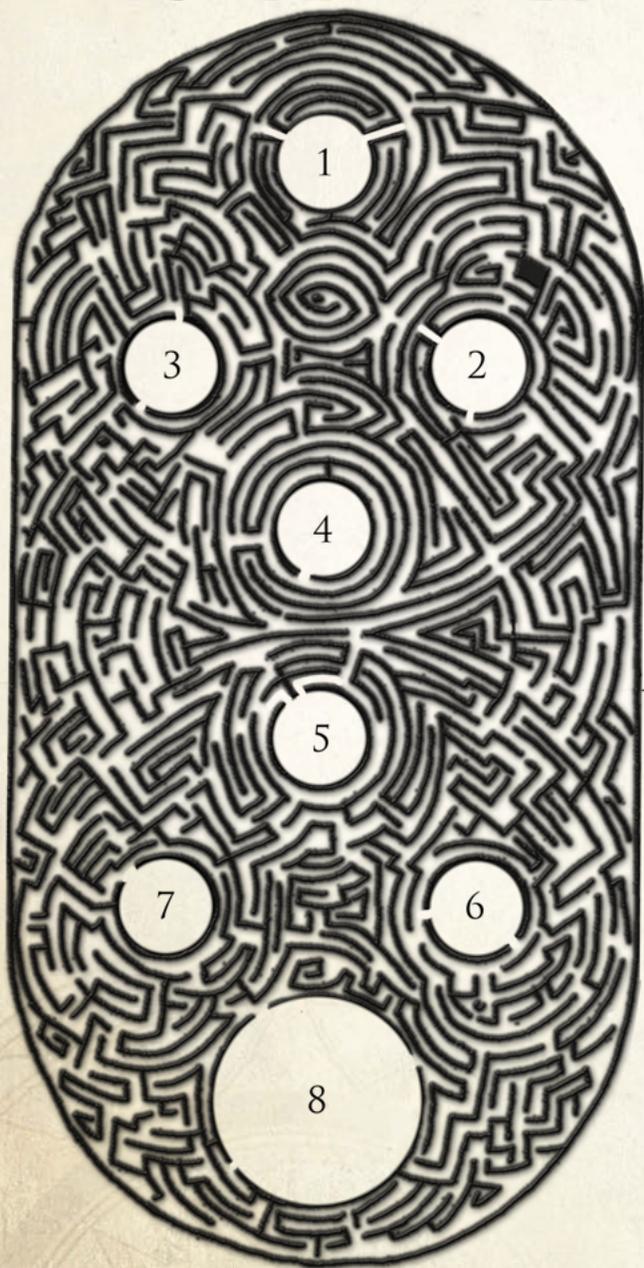
XP 200

Male Human Commoner 2

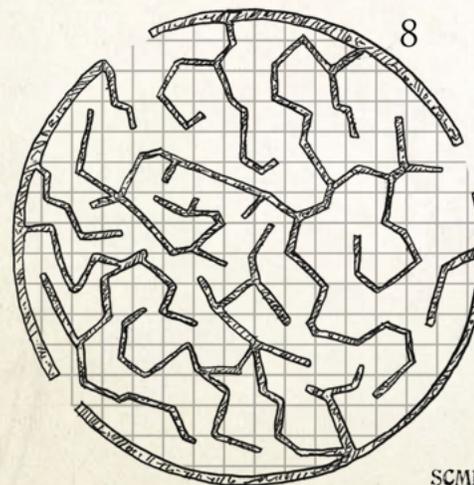
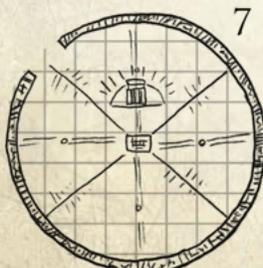
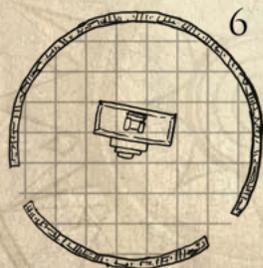
CN Medium Humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Low-Light Vision, Perception +7

MURDER MAZE



1 SQUARE = 5 FT.



SCM12

MAZE BY MORGAN BOEHRINGER & BRIAN SUSKIND

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 12 (2d6+2)

Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee Melee Club +1 (1d6/20/x2) and Unarmed Strike +1 (1d3/20/x2)

Ranged Club +1 (1d6/20/x2)

TACTICS

Before Combat He attempts to hide and avoid notice. If coaxed into an interaction, Nuytor may offer up bits of advice or forewarning entwined with nonsensical banter.

During Combat Nuytor attempts to flee and stealth at the first opportunity.

Morale Nuytor's cowardice and insanity encourage flight from confrontation.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Base Atk +1; CMB +1; CMD 11

Feats Acrobatic, Alertness, Simple Weapon Proficiency - One: Club

Skills Acrobatics +3, Bluff +1, Escape Artist +1, Fly +2, Perception +7, Sense Motive +4, Stealth +1, Survival +2 **Modifiers** +4 Stealth within the maze

Languages Common, Minotaur

Combat Gear Slimy club, Padded

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Resilient Living in the maze forced Nuytor to subsist on food and water from doubtful sources. He's built up his mettle as a result, and gains a +1 trait bonus on Fortitude saves.

Vagabond Child (Escape Artist) Nuytor grew up among the outcasts and outlaws of society, learning to forage and survive in an urban environment.

Treasure: 5 silver, stuck to his forearm with a smelly resin

This wild-eyed man Nuytor (New-ya-tor) frantically looks over his shoulder as he speaks furiously, but with little sense. Nuytor's ability to survive the maze defies all reasonable logic. Covered in grime and filth from head to toe, some spectators reason he uses the layers of grime as camouflage to avoid the maze's denizens. Others assume his erratic behavior provides a kind of luck, baffling the maze architects' assumptions of a victim's predictable actions within the tunnels. Skittish and difficult to spot, spectators cheer wildly when Nuytor comes into view and many a bet as to the timing of his demise remain outstanding.

If the PCs coax an interaction with Nuytor, he may offer up bits of advice or forewarning entwined with nonsensical banter. Nuytor flees any aggressive behavior directed his way.

PART FOUR: MAZE LOCATIONS

2. The Chain Room (EL 2 or EL 4)

The floor of this chamber dips downward in a concave shape. The light here is dim, but you can see that numerous chains hang from the chamber's ceiling all the way to the floor. The stale, cloying smell of refuse permeates the room, and piles of trash lie strewn about everywhere. A faint breeze keeps the stench from becoming overpowering.

On a DC 20 Perception check, the PCs notice a skeleton dangles by one foot from some chains at the back of the chamber. If the PCs search

the room, DC 15 Perception checks reveal at least seven other bodies partially covered in the detritus. The floors of the room are slick with offal and slant downwards. PCs moving about the room must make DC 12 Acrobatics or Dexterity checks (at -2) to stay afoot.

This chamber is a favored main-event style wagering pit, located as it is under The Gaming Den. Known for its brutal synthesis of trick, trap, test and treasure, it attracts high bets, memorable escapes, and equally gory finishes.

The 50' high roof of the chain room is in reality the metal grille floor of the viewing platform and chain manipulation stage. Initially a heavy canvas covers most of the grille admitting the filtered light that allows for limited vision. A 20' wide spike-lined pit stretches the length of the chamber, effectively bisecting the chamber, which is initially covered by a sliding floor.

As "contestants" enter from the south they are confronted with a corpse- and refuse-littered chamber, replete with many dangling chains stretching from their attachment point on the ground to the dark recess of the roof. Once the PCs enter the chamber, portcullises slide down over the northern and southern portals. A dull thumping begins to emanate from minotaurs drumming above, and the canvas cover above the grille is removed to allow light in, making the "contest" easy to see and their plight now abundantly clear.

Any creature moving into a T-marked square may (1 in 4 chance any time a creature moves through this space) step into a hidden (Perception DC 20) toothless mantrap attached to a chain. The character takes 1 point of damage and is yanked into the air by the chain. They are effectively stuck, hanging upside down 20' in the air.

TOOTHLESS MANTRAP

CR 1

Type mechanical; **Search** DC 18 **Disable Device** DC 15

EFFECTS

Trigger entering marked square; activated on a roll of 1 on d4; **Reset** Manual **Effect** 1 point of damage and hauled upside down 20 ft. into the air.

Immediately upon the portcullis' drop and the light improving, the following events occur:

- the pit-floor begins to slide away, revealing its spike strewn, 15' depth. A successful DC 18 Perception check reveals a rusting metal rung ladder that leads down into the pit and up the other side.
- doors open on the east and west wall, on the side far of the pit. Four kobolds armed with shortbows and one with a shortspear emerge from each door. They use rubbish piles at points A and B as cover - those with bows fire at the PCs, the fifth remaining as a guard.
- a 10' diameter metal disc attached to three thick chains crashes to the floor of the pit from the grille above, and then quickly ascends on its chain until it is near the top of the pit - level with the floor. This leaves a 5' gap between the edge of the pit and the edge of the disc.

Betting begins in earnest as the PC's must now avoid the trapped floor, navigate the pit or disc platform and overcome the kobolds.

Any PC wishing to swing across the pit on a chain must make a DC 12 Acrobatics or Dexterity check to successfully make their way across. The GM can decide whether or not to allow the audience to pull the chain up or lower it for extra sport.

The minotaurs happily tilt the disc platform, causing swinging creatures to lose footing and slide into the pit (Reflex save DC 12 for both; 1d6 damage from the fall into pit, 1d4 from spikes). A maximum of four creatures may stand on the disc at any one time.

Descending the ladder is probably the safest route, although kobold archers come to the edge of the pit and fire if they notice characters doing so.

Once the kobolds are defeated, a rousing cheer sounds from above.

Any character held in a man trap is lowered gently to the ground and the portcullises at the north and south entrances rise.

Treasure: In the eastern cavity lies a wooden box containing three Cure Light Wounds potions, placed here in secret after the kobolds emerged.

Kobolds (10)

CR 3

XP 800

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

3. Ants & Honey (EL 2 or EL 4)

This room's floor and walls are earthen and riddled with small holes. Debris and dirt piles lie at various points of the cavern. Unlike most of the rest of the maze encounters so far, no stench of rot permeates the area.

The giant ants remove anything edible from this room, so no odor of decay pervades here. The holes are large enough for Medium-size creatures to enter. But that is not recommended: the holes are worker ant tunnels. Three giant sentry ants lie inside the wall tunnels. They come out at any indication of trouble—such as if the PCs attack any worker ants (roll Perception check for them). The worker tunnels extend far below the city of Barsella, through many layers of the maze and beyond.

Allow the PCs a DC 12 Perception check to note broken pottery with some type of attached golden substance lies among the room's debris. The substance is honey, and the minotaurs and gamblers above throw it upon any PCs who enter the room, attracting nearby ants to them. On a 15 or higher Perception check, the PCs also note the edge of a backpack and the tip of an oak staff rest under trash in the western corner of the room.

Soon after the PCs locate the room or enter it, read the following:

As you watch, three giant ants emerge from different holes in the cavern floor. Two head toward the northern side of the chamber, while the other one heads west. The ants are gathering items from the debris.

If the PCs continue to watch, one ant reenters the hole, and another worker ant emerges, taking its place. The ants ignore the PCs unless the PCs become aggressive...or until the minotaurs douse the characters with honey (ranged touch attack +1 with splash)—which the minotaurs do when anyone enters at least 15 or more feet into the room. The honey attracts the nearest ant. If the PC stands still, it merely gathers the honey from the PC (make the PC roll a Will check DC 13 to stand there without fear); this takes 3 rounds. If the PC runs, the ant follows and attempts to grapple the PC to acquire the honey. If the PC becomes aggressive, the ant attacks and alerts the 3 sentry ants in the wall.

Treasure: The backpack contains a 35-year-old map of part of the Wash indicating the location of the Temple of Nethus (most of which the minotaurs destroyed; the Sanctuary of Nethus, however, is now area 6 of the Murder Maze; parts of the temple lie outside the maze in area 56 of Barsella), 5 iron whales (holy symbols of Nethus), 2 potions of cure light wounds, 1 luck disc, a week's worth of iron rations, a scroll of sanctuary, a copper ring, 10 gp, 5 sp, and 3 cp. The staff is a masterwork quarterstaff.

Giant Worker Ants (3)

CR 2

XP 800

hp 10 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

Giant Soldier Ants (3)

CR 3

XP 1,600

hp 18 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

4. Rats in a Trap (EL 2 or EL 4)

As you round a corner, a larger chamber opens ahead of you, and you are confronted by a strange scene. Several small rat-like humanoids stand near the middle of the room; one lies crumpled in a far corner. Between the two, saw-like blades periodically slide back and forth across the room before disappearing back into the floor. At your approach, the rat-folk raise their weapons and put themselves between you and their injured companion.

The ratfolk fight if need be; however, they are mainly interested in saving their injured companion, a young member of the colony who wanted to test his Disable Device abilities on this room's trap. The ratfolk are veterans of the Wash, and they know full well the Maze's dangerous nature. As a result, they begin any encounter with a starting attitude of unfriendly. A DC 20 Diplomacy check makes the ratfolk indifferent, and a DC 25 check makes them friendly. If the party convincingly offers to help their injured companion, they gain a +10 competency bonus to their Diplomacy check.

Ratfolk (5)

CR 2

XP 800

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

Tactics: If forced into combat, two ratfolk stay back, attacking with their crossbows; the other two utilize their Swarming (Ex) special ability on a lightly armored opponent.

Morale: The ratfolk are not particularly brave, but they are very loyal to family. They fight to protect their injured companion until half of them drop; at which point, the survivors attempt to flee, returning later.

Treasure: The ratfolk have no treasure other than their equipment. If the party aids their family member, the ratfolk provide the PCs with a little information about the maze, giving the PCs a +2 on Survival or Intelligence checks to navigate the maze for the next hour. The ratfolk do not offer to guide the PCs; they are in a hurry to get home before Argus appears.

Development: The surest way to gain the ratfolks' aid is to bypass or deactivate the Floor Saw Trap and return the injured rattling to his family. In addition to deactivating the trap, a character may attempt to tumble past the blades. In this case, allow the player to make an Acrobatics check opposed by the trap's attack roll. If successful, the character avoids the blades and takes no damage. Attempting to tumble past the blades while carrying the injured rattling incurs a -5 penalty to the check.

FLOOR SAW TRAP

CR 2

Type mechanical; Perception DC 14; Disable Device DC 18

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic

Effect Attack +8 (2d6); multiple targets (all targets within 5 feet of the midpoint of the room)

5. Ship's Wheel of Fortune & Misfortune (EL 2)

An old ship's wheel entirely fashioned from dark reddish-brown mahogany inlaid with brass mermaids occupies the middle of this otherwise empty room. The wheel possesses eight maneuverable hand spokes.

If the PCs carefully observe the ship's wheel, they might notice (Perception DC 15) most of the hand spokes can be removed quite easily and that the wheel is linked to a steering mechanism just like the one found on a sailing ship, which implies the presence of a rudder somewhere below

(Knowledge [engineering] or Profession [sailor], both at DC 15). The attached rudder functions as a door to two rooms located below. The large vertical vane can be moved with a Strength check (DC 15), though anyone can move the rudder freely using the ship's wheel until it stops against one of the doorframes.

Dislodging a hand spoke might provide the characters with a useful item or else place them in a dire situation as described below. The minotaurs frequently change the articles and magical traps contained here.

The following objects and traps can be found in the ship's wheel. Ask the PCs to detail which of the eight spokes they remove, if they do so.

- 1 A scroll case holding a yellowed page torn from a logbook is affixed to the wooden handle. The text inscribed on the paper contains a glyph of warding (Reflex DC 16 negates paralysis).
- 2 This hand spoke turns out to be the handle of a masterwork club carved to look exactly like one of the wheel's wooden spokes. The PCs can remove this stout stick without any risk.
- 3 A worn tarot card rests inside the cavity: Wheel of Fortune (Perception, DC 10 to notice the card). This item serves two purposes: firstly, the symbols drawn within the disk displayed on the card's face corresponds to a special lock found within the confines of the Murder Maze (a lower level). An arrow indicates the specific symbol to press to circumvent this combination lock. Secondly, a partial map of areas 6 and 7 of the Murder Maze is on the card's back (01-25: very accurate; 26-50: accurate; 51-75: inaccurate; 76-00: unreliable).
- 4 This hand spoke covers the grip of a +1 dagger driven in the wheel's hard wood. A PC may extract the magical blade with a Strength check (DC 20) or pry it out with a Disable Device check (DC 25). A crowbar can be quite useful in this case.
- 5 Removing this spoke activates a *summon monster II* spell, immediately summoning 1d3 fiendish goblin dogs*.
- 6 A layer of poison (Perception, DC 20) coats this spoke.
MALYASS ROOT PASTE
Type poison, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 16
Onset 1 minute; **Frequency** 1/minute for 6 minutes
Effect 1d2 Dex damage; Cure 1 save
- 7 Removing this spoke unstoppers a hole, from which emerges 1d4+1 vipers*.
- 8 A vial of antitoxin is affixed to the handle.
* (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

If the PCs elect to hack the ship's wheel apart, they most likely destroy every available item except the +1 dagger, freeing or killing the vipers hidden inside in the process (at the GM's discretion). Such vandalism automatically summons the fiendish goblin dogs however. The ship's wheel has the following characteristics:

SHIP'S WHEEL

AC 8 (5 if immobilized somehow); **Hardness** 6; **hp** 25; **Break** DC 25

The minotaurs quickly replace any destroyed wheel if the characters later return to the maze.

6. Sanctuary of Nethus (EL 0)

This circular room holds moldy tapestries depicting ships upon the high seas. Above the ship scenes, an old man with a trident looks down from the Heavens. The ceiling is an elaborate mosaic of a massive whale swimming in a cerulean-blue ocean.

Layers of trash and cloth lie at various points on the 80-foot-diameter

room's stone floor, and each is about five feet long. A massive altar of carved, hardened coral rests five feet above the floor in the room's center. Stone stairs leads up to the altar, where a conch-shell throne sits. To the right side of the throne stands a statue of a man in robes with elvish facial features but a human's build. His right arm is outstretched toward the ceiling and his index finger is extended. His mouth is open, and he almost appears to be shouting, "No!"

The layers of debris are bedding (9 beds) for the roachling troupe members who have claimed this room as their home. Unless the troupe shows up on a wandering monster check, they are all out in the maze at the moment, torturing Argus or making merriment. If the PCs walk behind the altar, they find a plant-woven mat there of the same length, indicating a 10th bed.

The room is not entirely empty. Suvest, the nethysule priest of Nethus is in the sanctuary, hidden behind the western tapestry. He stays here often with the roachlings, and prays daily at the altar to his silent god. Having heard movement nearby, he slipped behind the tapestries, waiting to see how long the visitors would stay (the roachlings always make so much noise, he knew it was not they who approached). Allow the PCs a Perception check versus Suvest's Stealth (Perception DC 20). The odd-looking priest (see description below) surrenders if discovered.

The well-preserved ceiling mosaic radiates a faint abjuration magic.

The PCs need to hang the five collected copper rings on the arm of the statue standing upon the altar. The statue is not really a statue, but is actually the phased-out-of-time form of Vilthalas (elfmarked cleric 10), the former High Priest of the temple. Magic preserves him in this statue-like pose, and a layer of salt has encased his form since Nethus' imprisonment 15 years ago—or perhaps even before. If the PCs take time to examine him, with a DC 18 Perception check, they note he's holding a hand-sized scroll tube that's barely visible from beneath his fingers. Removing the item from the priest's hand takes a Strength Check (DC 15). The priest's hand does not break off, no matter how much the PCs tug, but the salt covering him sloughs off. He is warm to the touch beneath. The PCs may move the priest, if they so desire; he weighs 150 lbs. Inside the untrapped scroll tube is the following message in Aquan: "Hecate's minions stir. Save the temple, save the Eternal Memory's babe, and—by all means necessary—save Selles with the moon seals!"

Some of the Temple of Nethus lies outside the Murder Maze in area I5 of the Wash. The minotaurs destroyed other parts of it when extending their maze into it. They liked the statue and the altar, so they kept this room intact.

Suvest (nethysule cleric of nethus 3; hp 18): Suvest is a nethysule from the Isle of Morphoi. He has a morphoi oracle friend name Nal who pretends to be a white minotaur (who shows up on the wandering monster chart with the roachling troupe). Through Nal, Suvest can enter or exit the maze almost at will, though he prefers to stay near the sanctuary, hoping to find some way to bring Vilthalas back into phase. The roachlings do not bother the nethysule, and he does not bother them. Suvest does happen to have one of the copper rings the PCs are looking for. His other treasure includes a total of 10 gp in various coin, a prayer book, and a potion of cure light wounds.)

7. Maze Mozaic (EL 2)

This chamber has a four-sided vaulted ceiling, and faded mosaics cover its curved walls, giving this room a sophisticated appearance. The floor is likewise broken into four sections, each canted slightly downward, meeting in the center at a large, grill-covered drain. Ancient pipes and now-broken plumbing valves and gears indicate this room many have

once have functioned as a bathhouse. The mosaic is covered in lichen and moss in most places, making its subject difficult to discern, though the northern section bears bright images of a rising sun and a chest of overflowing gold.

A tiny hidden lever (Perception DC 20) juts out of the north section of wall, where two skulls lie in wait for hapless adventurers. Each skull stands motionless, a rope tethering them to the wall; each holds a moss-covered dagger at the ready. The skulls wait for inquisitive PCs to examine the mosaic – any PC making a Perception check while examining the mosaic is subject to a sneak attack by a skull.

If pressed, either skull will attempt to depress the lever, opening a panel covering a giant pipe at point X on the map, which disgorges a torrent of water – PCs must make a DC 12 Fortitude check or be knocked prone – the skulls are tethered and trained to avoid such mishap.

Skulks (2)

CR 2

XP 800

hp 16 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

Note: one skull has +1 to its AC (*bracers of armor +1*)

WATER TRAP

CR 1

Type mechanical; Search DC 25 Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger lever **Reset** Manual

Effect DC 12 **Fortitude** check or be knocked prone and receive 1d3 damage.

Treasure: One skull carries a scroll of cure light wounds and a platinum pendant in the shape of a crescent moon worth 20 gp; it pilfered these items from the Temple of Nethus (area 6). The other wears bracers of armor +1.

8. Maze within the Maze (EL 5 or EL 1)

GMs should have Argus chasing the PCs for this scene, with the roachling troupe nowhere about.

As you round a blind corner, the tunnel you are in suddenly opens into a much larger space. On the far side of the cavern you see many small doors and narrow passages. The passages seem too small for Argus to squeeze into. The loud grunting continues behind you...

A band of four mites makes this mass of small twisting passages, secret doors, and moveable panels its home. They delight in tormenting “biguns” who enter into their maze. Medium creatures must squeeze to navigate these passages. Once the characters reach the center of the small maze, the mites rearrange the passages by closing secret doors and randomly moving several sliding panels located at each intersection of the maze. All the while they harass intruders from concealed arrow slits, shooting or stabbing them. Secret doors require a Perception check (DC 20) to locate, and sliding panels require a Perception check (DC 15). Both secret doors and sliding panels are bolted in place, requiring a Disable Device check (DC 20) to open. The stone secret doors and sliding panels have a hardness of 8 and 90 hp. Characters attempting to navigate (use the same navigation rules as detailed at the beginning of the adventure) these narrow passages find themselves again and again back in the original cavern.

Mites (4)

CR 1

XP 400

hp 3 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

Tactics: The mites avoid melee combat at all costs, attacking from range and preferably from concealed positions, such as arrow slits. Against tough opponents, they use their *doom* spell-like ability.

Morale: The mites are cowardly but hateful. They harass the characters as long as the PCs remain within the “maze within the maze.”

Treasure: The mites keep their treasure in a chest in an area marked with an X on the map. If found, the mites’ chest (Disable Device DC 18) includes 80 gp in copper and silver, a variety of mostly rotten common trade goods (canvas sails, rope, and burlap), and two copper rings.

PART FIVE: CONCLUSION

Maze Conclusion

If the PCs defeat the maze in a climatic fashion, being down to their last hit points and climbing toward the statue to hang their rings, then end this scene as follows in the boxed text. If the ending isn’t going to be climatic enough, then have Simez Rothgazzi use summon monster II to send a creature of your choice into the room to prevent them from hanging the rings (further testing their skills and ensuring they are the right party for his job).

Applause and hoots ring out over your heads. Several observers drop copper coins at your feet, even though they lost their bets. Horns blare, and the roachling troupe comes marching in, banging on their loud drums. They march around you and then begin an intricate dance while playing their instruments.

When the fanfare finally ends, you see the large minotaur called Toz shaking his head at you. “Unbelievable,” he says in bewilderment. The human with the arch tattoos who bet on you appears beside him. “I saw something in them, Toz. You know I don’t give money away.” The man then looks toward you all: “Very well done. Enjoy your spoils. I will have my associate contact you soon.”

The PCs are then guided out of the maze and given the rewards promised on page 80. Their fame spreads through Barsella. For the next week people buy them drinks and food, give them discounts on purchased goods (5%), and generally avoid waylaying or attacking them (they are under the minotaurs’ protection). Whenever any geomancers happen upon the PCs, they give a friendly nod to them, knowing Simez has chosen them for a job.

Simez’ Job Offer

Once their week of fame ends, Simez Rothgazzi offers them a job through Taigo Rothgazzi, his brusque adopted vanaran (simian-like creature from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3*) nephew. Taigo rounds up the PCs wherever they might be. Alternately, the GM may have Taigo or Simez send them an invitation to come to the High Order of the Geomancy to meet. Simez wants them to go to Karn’lothra to retrieve a book. He provides them a small caravel (the *Speedwell*) with an experienced captain and crew of 8. The actual job offer and adventure is covered in “To the Edge of the World” adventure.



ADVENTURES

THE PLAGUED SEAS





DAWSON KRISKA

A deadly disease spreads across the ocean to the shore, and even bustling ports close their harbors. Who among you has the heart to brave the unexplored oceans to stop the spread of the plague?

Sail “The Plagued Seas”, an oceanic and island fantasy adventure suitable for four PCs of 3rd to 4th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Many years ago, the summoner Maximilien Song neared his deathbed. His symbiotic eidolon, Harrow, comforted its master by refusing to end their bond and returning to its home plane.

When Maximilien’s soul finally crossed the veil, Harrow discovered the link to its home plane closed. Instead, Harrow appeared on a mysterious island, Malkay, the atoll of the Lost.

Every attempt to reach his home plane landed Harrow on another island, and the prolonged absence drove the now unfettered eidolon to compulsive madness. One attempt brought Harrow to the dreaded island of Karn’lothra.

Here, Harrow met the Mad Prince Deland, a ghost with promises of helping the eidolon. Deland told Harrow of the Bloodless Queen and assured the eidolon she held the power to send Harrow home. To secure the queen’s help, Harrow must help Deland raise an army for the queen. Unknown to Harrow, Deland’s uses the eidolon in an intricate plot to woo the Bloodless Queen.

Armed with a voodoo ritual, and the powerful urge to return to its home plane, Harrow set the plan in motion, releasing a deadly plague in the vast western ocean. Sea life begins to spread the infection and an infected tribe of sahuagin swarms the harbors of Barsella. Here, the adventurers enjoy a harvest moon festival quickly turned nightmare, as they defend the city from the invading plague-bearers.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

After defeating the plague bearing sahuagin, the characters board the Spotted Fin with Captains Evain and Ré Saol. They sail to the Burning Shores, hoping to receive the assistance of the wizard Allister Dorn, but a cutter from Barsella arrives to stop the Spotted Fin and arrest her captain for breaking quarantine. The characters take a longboat to the Burning Shores while Evain and Ré evade the cutter.

The characters arrive at Dorn’s tower on his iron cage lift, harried by mephits along the way. After extensive research, the characters discover the nature and origin of the plague. They travel to an unknown Aroan atoll to reverse a voodoo ritual performed by an unfettered eidolon named Harrow.

On the atoll, the characters encounter dozens of lost sailors with a strange reverence to Harrow. The eidolon escapes the characters to join his partner, Deland, on Karn’lothra. The characters rejoin Evain and sail in pursuit.

Evain and Ré refuse to set foot on Karn’lothra and again send the characters in a longboat to track the eidolon.

The characters force their way through the small group of zombies guarding the temple to find Harrow with Deland. The ghost flees and Harrow attacks the characters to present live bodies to the Bloodless queen.

Defeating Harrow, the characters complete a counter ritual, ending the spread of the plague.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The adventure begins with a sahuagin attack, but becomes dire almost immediately with the added element of the plague. Since the characters likely contract the plague during the first encounter, they need little prodding to seek an end to the blight.

Other motivations might include:

- Characters barred from family or friends in Barsella must end the disease before allowed to see them again.
- Characters see their loved ones infected with the plague.
- The party may know of Captain Evain and wish to set sail with the pirate.
- The scope of how the plague spreads frightens the party into action; if sea creatures bear the plague, every harbor remains in danger.

Introduction

As the story begins, the characters revel near the docks during the Harvest Moon Festival...

PART ONE: THE SICKENED PARTY

Party Crashers (EL 3)

The Harvest Moon Festival not only marks the reaping season of grains, but also more importantly, in Barsella, indicates the start of an annual migration of various sea life; bringing in an abundance of food, pearls, and other oceanic supplies. The Port area celebrates the coming good fortunes with drink, song, dance, and debauchery. Already past two in the morning, merchants and taverns keep their doors wide open, and no one shows any sign of tiring.

Allow the characters some fun before the adventure begins. During the festival most folks drink, gamble, and carouse. No need exists to preclude the characters.

Allow characters a Perception check to notice the sahuagin in the water before they emerge.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Perception	<15	See nothing amiss, no action until pointed out or attacked.
	15	See humanoid creatures in the water.
	18	Spot lateral lines and tridents.
		DC 13 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check identifies sahuagin.
	21	The creatures appear injured. Make a Heal check.
Heal Check	15	Blood oozes from the sahuagin joints.
	19	The blood appears thicker than it should be.

If the Party Spots the Sahuagin

Just under short choppy waves, tips of tridents and large aquatic eyes of sahuagin gleam. Rows of teeth protrude from the over-large mouths of these scourges of the sea. Some are swimming straight to the water wall while others wait to climb the pier and attack in concert with their comrades.

If the characters wish to act, roll for initiative, if the sahuagin went unnoticed read the following:

A loud drunken guffaw catches in its owner's throat becoming a peal of terror as two dozen sahuagin warriors storm the docks. Within a heartbeat, the unfortunate revelers too close to the water's edge lie in

Captains Evain (a half-elf bard) and Ré (a gnome druid with plum colored hair) Saol navigate the Western ocean. Their ship, the Spotted Fin, houses a unique pipe organ capable of playing whale song. A master cartographer, Ré owns extensive and detailed maps of ocean currents and landmarks. They secretly serve the Barsellan government, transporting precious cargo and recovering sensitive materials. Ré's elasmosaurus animal companion, Lea, aids deep-sea exploration and fending off threats to the Spotted Fin. Evain's prism wing familiar, Jry, distracts enemies while Evain uses a honeyed tongue to avoid bloodshed.

See *Pirates of the Western Ocean* for stat blocks and more details about Captains Evain and Ré Saol and the Spotted Fin.

Keep track of the number of days the party faces "skinny-bones", even if they keep it at bay magically. At the end of the adventure, grant each character bonus xp equal to 75 times the total number of days they survived "skinny-bones".

bloody heaps. Most run for cover, a few run for weapons. The sahuagin move sluggishly, and appear already sorely wounded.

Now in the last stages of the plague, the sahuagin pose a much weaker threat than ordinary. Calcified skin cracks at their joints, and blood seeps from the wounds. The creatures cry in pain to wield their weapons, but the discomfort only fuels their battle lust. They attack indiscriminately, but stay in packs of four. To give the characters an extra challenge, have them defeat two or more packs of sahuagin. This also increases the likelihood of characters contracting the plague.

Terrain: This section of the Port area includes three piers extending in the water from a fifteen-foot high rock wall. The water reaches six feet at low tide and eleven at high. The tide recedes as the sahuagin attack. A crane used to load and unload heavy cargo on ships hovers over the area. The main portion of Port, and Barsella proper, joins the area by a set of stairs and a ramp. On the eastern side of this district, sailor's taverns and supply stores remain open late into the evening.

Creatures: The plague stricken sahuagin take only a small amount of damage to strike down, but their hardened skin better repels attacks. A DC 15 Heal check reveals the sahuagin carry the plague. After the battle, word of the plague spreads quickly.

The Plague

Throughout the adventure, the characters face exposure to the plague. Officially called "the plague," or "skinny-bones," this nickname describes the plague's affect.

The mucus-borne disease attacks the creatures' bone marrow, slowly transferring calcium from the skeleton to the skin. Invertebrates possess natural immunity to "skinny-bones". "Skinny-bones" requires a DC 13 Fortitude save. Each day of exposure increases the DC by +1, but four days of consecutive saves grants the character immunity to passive exposure, they must still make saves during combat.

Combat with any creature infected with "skinny-bones", requires a DC 13 Fortitude save every round. The DC increases by +2 when both the plague bearer and the other combatant suffer piercing or slashing damage. "Skinny-bones" incubates for 1d4+2 days. After incubation, the stricken creature takes 1 point of Con damage each day. A lesser restoration acts normally against the Con damage, but the infected creature remains infected.

For every 2 points of Con damage taken, the creature's natural armor increases by +1. When the creature's Con score reaches 5, the creature also takes 1 point of Dex damage each day, in addition to the Con damage. Also, the creature's skin cracks and openly bleeds. The bleeding causes no extra damage but increases the DC for others contracting "skinny-bones". Natural and magical methods provide no cure for "skinny-bones". A

THE SPOTTED FIN

A single masted cog with a merfolk figurehead of prowess, the Spotted Fin supports a crew with a true love of the sea. The captain's quarters house the Whale's Song pipe organ, capable of replicating the eerie and comforting melodies of the oceanic giants. She bears no weapons other than the crew's personal armaments, relying on speed and her captain's cunning to win the day at sea.

remove disease spell keeps the infection from spreading for 24 hours. Thus, an infected creature suffers no Con damage, Dex damage, or natural armor bonus for one day, if it receives a remove disease spell.

Any creature stricken with “skinny-bones” begins to show signs the first day. After 1 hour, small, hardened white nodes form on the creature’s skin. The nodes grow less visible as the character’s skin calcifies.

Characters with immunity to magical and non-magical diseases must still make Fortitude saves against “skinny-bones”. A failed saves results in these characters developing the circular nodes, but no further infection.

Familiars and Animal Companions infected with “skinny-bones” suffer at a slower rate. These creatures take one point of Con damage every two days, or half the rate of their masters.

Stricken Sahuagin (4) CR 3

XP 800

Stricken Sahuagin

Use the following template on the Sahuagin entry of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*.

All the sahuagin traits remain the same except CR 1/3

XP 135

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 5 (2d10-10)

Fort -3, Ref +4, Will +4

A stricken sahuagin loses the Blood Frenzy special ability.

Development: After defeating the sahuagin, it’s discovered this is one of several attacks all over the city. In the aftermath of the battle, a runner from the Paladin Order of Lada arrives, telling the dock defenders to allow no one to leave, to build fires and burn the infected bodies. However, as some try to leave the area, city guards bar the stairway and ramp back into the city.

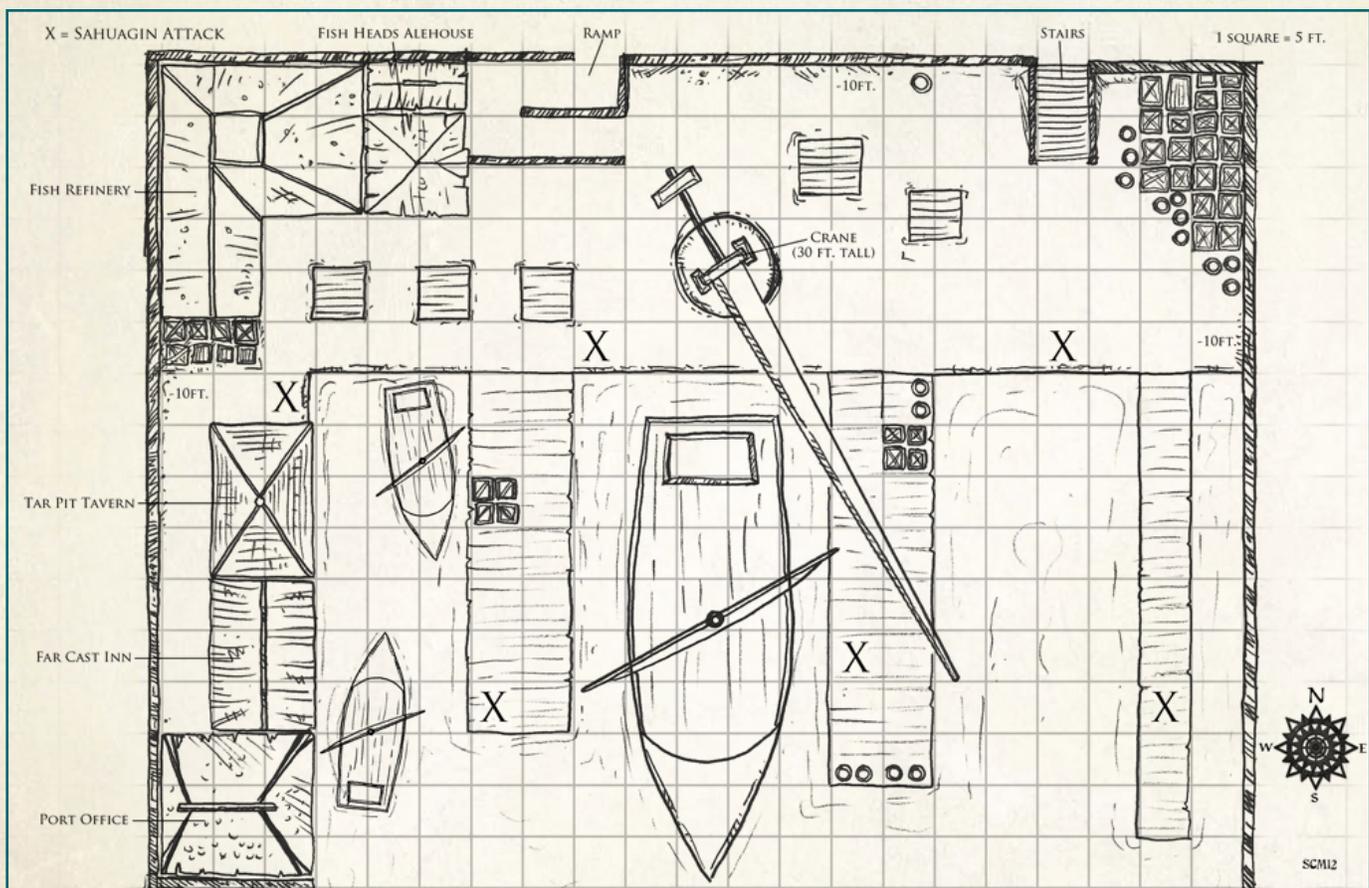
The acrid smell of burning sahuagin bodies fill the air; weary defenders meet a line of city guards blocking the way back into Barsella. You hear cries of people begging to return to families, and guards flatly refusing anyone passage and claiming a quarantine on the Port area. Each guard wields a long spear, threatening the lower level of the docks with their reach. The guards also wear medicine masks instead of standard headgear. Evain raises his voice above all the other protestors. “You tell them ‘Sea-Bellows’ demands re-entry to retrieve his crew!” The guard’s response is inaudible, but the captain’s tirade continues. “What do you mean we cannot leave? Do you have any idea who I am?”

The captain storms away from the guards, nearly plowing into the party in frustration. Gathering his composure, he introduces himself as captain Evain “Sea-bellows” Saol. Characters make a Knowledge (local) or Profession (sailing) check for information about Evain. He informs the characters of the futility of trying to return to the city, and lets them know he plans to defy orders and seek a cure for the plague.



Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (local)	<10	A recent tavern song calls him a half-elf captain, loved by his crew
	13	Evain, “The Privateer,” only targets other known pirates
	15	Married to a druid gnome Ré; the pair makes a formidable force
	20	Rumors say Evain and Ré serve the Barsellan government

The guards refuse to release the quarantine. Evain’s plan to escape the dock-locks unfolds with the characters creating a diversion, while the captain uses magic to propel the ship to freedom. Meanwhile, Lea breaks the harbor chains from underwater. Evain needs six rounds to set everything in motion, after which the characters have four rounds to board the ship. Evain needs to play his pipe organ to coax the wind into motion. Allow the characters a moment to brainstorm the best way to distract the guards from noticing the inherent magic of the song.



If the characters decide not to help Evain, he attempts his escape after nightfall, but the guards discover his plot and board his ship, disrupting the song. If the characters insist on forcing their way into Barsella, the guards attack them. The regiment posted at the docks consists of fifteen city watch (guards) and two city watch (guard officers). Use the templates from Game Mastery Guide: NPC Warrior 3 for the guards and NPC Warrior 4 for guard officers. The guards attack in groups of five; a CR 6 encounter, and more guards show up every ten rounds. They use non-lethal attacks until two of their number die, then shift to lethal attacks.

Evain attempts to escape while the characters are attacking the guards; breaking free six rounds after the skirmish begins. The characters then have four rounds to board the Spotted Fin before she leaves the wharf. It is a DC 15 Acrobatics check to leap to the Fin. This DC increases by 5 every round.

If the characters aided the Fin's escape, but miss their opportunity to board the Spotted Fin, the city guards capture them, tie them up, and set them on a longboat with the receding tide. The next day, Lea appears and pulls the characters to the Spotted Fin.

Possible ways to cause a distraction include:

- Starting a fire among the crates of supplies
- Staging a fight between characters
- Operating the crane (Requires Profession [sailor] or Knowledge [engineering] DC 15)
- Creating a spectacle of some kind

Allow the characters to get creative. A reasonable plan should have a good chance of success, given many of the guards have enjoyed the holiday or been wounded in skirmishes.

While aboard, the characters notice several crewmembers show signs

of the plague. Unless the characters treat them, Ré uses her spells to delay the sickness in as many as she can, which leaves her with one remove disease spell per day to use on the party.

Flame of Hope on the Burning Shores? (EL 5)

The characters travel to The Burning Shores where Evain hopes the old wizard, Allister Dorn, owns the resources to end the plague.

Evain says the trip to the Burning Shores takes four days. On the evening of the second day, a twin-masted cutter flying the Barsellan Navy flag appears. "Looks like, we've a chase on our hands, and one that's just about to start," Evain says.

"I'll bring us as close to Dorn's Tower as I dare, but yon cutter carries heavy ballistae and I dare not set anchor. If I mean to avoid killing these fools, I must stay with the Fin. You lot, take the longboat, and speak with Dorn while I draw their fire. Though, mind your manners with him, he is a potent wizard."

True to his prediction, the first thick ballista missile whizzes over the stern of the Spotted Fin as the characters set the longboat down. Two crewmembers, Jaleb and Cosh operate the oars and bring the boat within sight of the obsidian cliffs, atop which looms Dorn's tower. Allow Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (arcane) skill check to learn about Dorn.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (history or arcana)	10	An ancient wizard with vast stores of knowledge
	15	Rarely sees anyone, and very few enter his tower
	25	A 400-year-old survivor of the Mage Wars
	30	Tower supposedly transports trespassers to demi-planes
	35	Allied himself with a deva

At the base of the cliffs, a large metal caged-in lift supported with impossibly long chains rests on a small portion of black sandy shore. Four men fit comfortably inside the lift; six in a squeeze. Despite its proximity to heated salt water, it shows no sign of rusting or corrosion. High above, jutting from the cliff face, Allister Dorn's tower stretches outward in a mockery of natural forces.

Jaleb and Cosh remain with the longboat as the characters use the lift. When the doors of the lift close, bound water elementals go to work raising the characters to the top at a speed of 10 ft. per round. After the group has ascended 50 ft., permit a Perception Check.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Perception	10	Jaleb and Cosh are yelling at the party to look up.
	15	Two Mephits are hurtling toward the cage.

Characters matching or exceeding the DC 15 Perception check act normally. Otherwise, the mephits surprise the party, and both use their breath weapons just before landing on the cage.

Terrain: Confined to the lift, the characters may fight from inside or exit the lift and fight from on top. Opening the door causes the lift to stop, and it resumes motion when the door closes. Characters attempting to climb the cliff must succeed at a DC 20 Climb check for every 10 feet of progress. Adjust this DC by +1 for every point of damage suffered since the last check. Any attack inflicting 10+ hp forces the character to make an immediate DC 25 Climb check to remain on the wall.

Creatures: A pair of magma mephits.

Magma Mephits (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 19 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

Tactics: The Mephits begin with their breath weapons and use it every four rounds. A dimensional lock surrounding Dorn's tower prevents summoning spells of any kind. These wards restrain the mephits' natural ability to summon aid and the characters' summoning spells. After the initial onslaught, the mephits attack from the sides of the cage or on top, if any characters ride, taking flight only to use breath weapons.

In the lift, ranged weapons take a -4 penalty to attack through the bars, and melee weapons take a -2 penalty to attack and damage for limited mobility. Fighting on top of the lift requires a DC 10 Acrobatics or Dexterity check each round. A failed check results in the character falling prone but the cage's bars make easy handholds to keep characters from falling. Wire mesh covers the bottom of the lift, catching items before they drop.

Award each player an extra 150 xp for the difficulty of the terrain. Award any character daring to balance on top of the lift an extra 500 xp.

The Tower of Allister Dorn

The lift-cage comes to a slow stop and you meet the grand sight of Allister Dorn's Tower. Rocketing an additional 100 ft. into the air, the same smooth rock making the cliff so dangerous spirals upward in a huge construction no man could hope to build without powerful magic. Doors all around the base of the tower bar the outside world. If everything said about Dorn proves true, one should fear opening any of these doors. A whipping gust rushes across the cliff face and around the tower creating eerie ghosts of sound. Besides yourselves and the wind, nothing stirs on the cliff top.

The characters discover none of the doors open or unlock no matter the effort put forth, then notice a note on the first door they examined; not there before they thoroughly inspected the area.

"My apologies intrepid adventurers, while I know your quest is of utmost importance to the Western Oceans and eventually the whole of Midgard, I'm currently away on other business. Nevertheless, you may peruse my visitor's laboratory, where I've left some of my older journals and a couple of trinkets.

PS- Please don't disturb the statue."

The door opens to a hybrid library and alchemical lab. Months of supplies pack shelves and cabinets, on the eastern wall. To the west, cases packed with hundreds of leather-bound tomes stand tall and forbidding. A large chalkboard, nearly entirely filled with writing of at least half a dozen languages covers the far wall. Five divans provide areas for lounging, each with its own light and table for reading. Two long tables equipped for alchemical mixes stand in front of the chalkboard. Standing between two bookshelves is a ten foot tall iron statue of a soldier wearing ancient-looking armor and carrying a spear.

Here, the characters discern the nature of "skinny-bones", and how to end it. An iron golem watches the room, and attacks if the party takes anything magical other than the bottle and potion or a book. As long as the group returns the stolen item, it ceases its attacks. The golem does not respond if they copy materials from the books or chalkboards and does not otherwise speak to the party. The golem is enchanted with see invisibility.

Iron Golem

CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 129 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

Complex Skill Check (EL 1-6)

This table describes what the characters learn about the plague if they meet the skill checks. Each check represents one hour of investigating. A character not possessing any of the skills, instead researches for one hour, requiring a DC 10 Intelligence check. A successful Intelligence check adds +2 to a chosen skill check for another character. Increase the DC for successive checks in a single skill by 5. If a check reveals more than one clue, each success reveals the next clue in line for the skill. If the characters fail a skill check before revealing all clues for the category, they must wait until the next day to try the category again.

Grant the characters experience for EL 0 (+1 for every three clues revealed). Translating the chalkboard adds +1 to the final established EL.

Skill	DC	Clues Revealed
Craft (Alchemy)	13	1 - The plague weakens bones and hardens skin 2 - Discern basic alchemical ingredients 3 - The bone and skin of the original caster of skinny bones required 4 - The cure must brew for one full day
Heal	13	1 - The plague spread from one creature (patient zero) 2 - Slows with remove disease 3 - Incubates for 1d4+2 days
Know (Arcana)	13	1 - Not of this plane 2 - A mystical ritual started the plague
Know (Nature)	15	1 - Not natural 2 - A counter ritual ends the spread
Know (Planes)	17	1 - This disease seems to come from the realms of the Great Old Ones
Survival	15	1 - Patient zero; Leviathan 2 - Need Leviathan's blood for cure

The chalkboard presents the story of Harrow from the Adventure Background; written in Common, Elven, Draconic, Dwarven, Ignan, Celestial, Sylvan, and Aklo. If the characters speak all these languages, they discern it after 10 minutes time. A Linguistics check DC 15 unravels one more section of the story; for each successful Linguistics check and for every language the characters read, the DC for the next check decreases by -1.

Keep track of the number of successes the characters achieve, the greater this number the better chance they cure “skinny-bones” at the end of the adventure.

“Trinkets lying around”

One potion of *water breathing* and a dark glass bottle containing a *scorching ray* (CL 11) stand on the workbench, labeled with a small tent of parchment. The words, “For my guests” is written in artistic calligraphy on the parchment. Inside the tent are short directions regarding the bottles. The potion contains sufficient doses for each member of the party to have two. Opening the dark glass bottle both releases the spell effect at the wielder’s intended target(s) and melts the bottle. A box with masterwork ammunition (five of each projectile weapon) for bows, crossbows, and guns sits in a corner.

The collection point for all displaced objects and creatures of Aroa’s spatial flux, Malkay rests at the heart of the Aroan triangle. As the epicenter of the ley-tectonic cataclysm responsible for thrusting K’karoa outward and creating Aroa as it lies today, the energy of the displacement on Malkay focuses inward, rarely away, trapping creatures.

A round atoll with a shallow lagoon and no harbor, the reef, beaches, and islet sit literally strewn with a miscellany of misplaced plants, shrubs, trees, and objects. Forlorn animals wander the beaches, and birdlife appears similarly lost. Ruined k’kin civic monuments, statuary, mosaics, and friezes abound. The now-ragged paths and broad avenues indicate Malkay’s former use as a government precinct.

Satisfied with the information gathered in the laboratory, you open the door to return outside, but instead find a strange hallway. Mirrors completely cover the walls, floor, and ceiling of the twenty-foot long corridor, ending with a shimmering arched stone wall. An inscription is chiseled over the archway, reading “ENTER HERE AND BE LOST.” In smaller less official lettering just underneath, an inscription reads, “Be sure to hold your breath.”

Detect magic reveals an aura of strong conjuration.

Development: Parties who pass through the portal proceed to Part Two. Those who refuse to pass through the portal but attempt to find another exit discover any passage or opening in the tower structure leads to the corridor.

PART TWO: LOST AND FOUND

Malkay, Atoll of the Lost (EL 5)

You step through the archway and lose all sense of direction. Then a brief moment of vertigo spins your head, and your eyes begin adjusting to scarce light. More alarming however, you appear in a fully submerged hallway. Far to the left, faint daylight filters through the depths.

The flooded tunnel runs 100 feet before the characters find themselves in a large well. Below the well’s opening, the well continues down another 200 feet. A +1 trident rests at the very bottom of the well. Above them, a voice calls down asking if they need help, and lowers a sturdy hemp rope. The characters emerge to see a group of creatures of various races staring at them.

Crude homes and lean-tos dot a few acres of land, making up Flotsam Village. In the center of the village, a communal fire burns with an oversized cauldron bubbling over it. The weary eyes regarding you do so with a sense of defensive trepidation. Several species stare at you, each huddle with their own kind. A kobold steps forward.

“I am Kol, I lowered the rope. Welcome to Flotsam Village.” He speaks slowly, deliberately, as if trying to take a measure of your group. He gestures to a cook fire behind him. “The stew in the pot has enough for us all; you can join us, if you wish.” He turns away from you, and walks back to a group of kobolds; the other onlookers likewise retreat.

Everything about this island feels wrong and fragmented. Allow the characters Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) to learn more about Malkay.

Overall, the incongruous vegetation and strewn objects create a confused, jarring landscape. Strong winds whip from nowhere and disappear as quickly; invisible spatial rifts deposit creatures and items continuously. Creatures arrive groggy and bewildered; items appear on rocks, beneath waves, and in trees.

In the southern, wind-protected lee of a small series of hills to the north squats the shabby settlement of Flotsam. Inhabited by a motley array of humanoid races – locathah, lizardfolk, and vegepygmies from the Aroan atolls, and humans, kobolds, dwarves, and minotaurs; all unfortunate sailors and travelers of the Western Ocean plucked from their vessels and marooned here.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (geography or local)	13	The K'kin inhabit all of Aroa
	15	Malkay sits in the center of the Aroan Triangle
	18	Things lost here rarely get found
	20	A great catastrophe happened, centered in Malkay
	25	Anything ends up here because of the spatial flux
	30	Malkay caused the "Far Flung Atolls"

The characters begin their search for Harrow in Flotsam.

Flotsam Village

N Village

Corruption +0; **Crime** -4; **Economy** -2; **Law** 0; **Lore** +1; **Society** +0

Qualities: misguided citizens, withdrawn

Danger +1; **Disadvantages:** impoverished, hopeless

Demographics

Government: Autocracy

Population: 81 (15 humans, 7 dwarves, 9 elves, 12 gnomes, 4 halflings, 5 lizardfolk, 4 locathah, 8 k'kin, 6 kobolds, 3 minotaurs, 8 vegepygmies)

Notable NPCs

Harrow (Unfettered Eidolon) Seen as an angel to villagers.

Kol the Cowardly (CG male k'kin rogue 2) Harrow's favourite

Marketplace

Base Value: 150 gp **Purchase Limit:** 750 gp

Spellcasting: 1st

Minor Items: 1d2 **Medium Items:** - **Major Items:** -

Diplomacy checks permit the characters to gather information about Harrow or learn about Malkay from the villagers. Each villager begins with an attitude of Unfriendly, which improves when the characters reveal an unimportant secret. A character using Diplomacy with a villager of the same race begins with an attitude of indifferent. If a villager's attitude shifts to hostile, they refuse to speak with the characters. The villagers all love Harrow and disbelieve any claim of his crimes.

Information the villagers share:

- The villagers, all lost sailors, arrived at random on Malkay.
- Harrow appeared on Malkay over a century ago.
- Many villagers believe Harrow is an angel and Malkay is some kind of purgatory.
- Lost items or creatures appearing on Malkay never leave.
- Harrow sets no feet on the ground and thus remains immune to Malkay's draw.
- No one has managed to leave, those on the island for long seem to want to stay.
- Everyone minds their own affairs; rare disputes begin and end quickly.
- Ships seen in the surrounding water all eventually crash or sink.
- The open throne room of a ruined structure serves as Harrow's "temple".
- In Harrow's absence, "vampires" guard his temple.
- Harrow regularly brings supplies and food to the villagers.

- Harrow usually escorts all new arrivals into the village and his absence disturbs them.
- Harrow last appeared twelve days ago.

Though the villagers advise against investigating the ruined structure, they don't prevent the characters from doing so.

Harrow's "Temple"

A short trek through a mismatched forest leads to a clearing where a great fortification once stood. Scattered around the base, huge chunks of weathered stone overgrown with moss testify the remains of a tall and impressive structure.

The pentagonal building's walls barely obscure the ground floor, while damaged carvings of impressive K'kin warriors stand ten feet tall at each of the ruin's corners. Wild grasses grow in perfect rectangles up six stairs, into the space where a door once stood, giving the impression of a long-rotted plush carpet.

Inside the ruin, a central spiral staircase winds up eight feet before ending abruptly in the air. Behind the stairway column, another set of stairs spirals down.

Opposite the entrance with a small tree growing from its cracked surface, a raised dais provides the only clue of the great room's former purpose.

At the top of the stairs leading down, built into the masonry and still functional, looms a swinging axe trap (Pathfinder Core Rules). Below, the castle splits evenly into five sections. The doors rotted away long ago, and no light filters through the ceiling. Harrow has replaced the southwestern door.

- North, the tree breaching the surface blocks this section.
- Northeast, an old and bare armory. DC 20 Perception check within 5 feet to spot a secret door in this room. Disable Device 19 opens the locked door to reveal a rotted chest.
- Northwest, an abandoned area with nothing of value.
- Southeast, a functional and undamaged bedchamber with a footlocker resting at the end of a plush bed (DC 20 Disable Device to open). Inside the locker, the characters find a +1 silvered kukri in a stylized scabbard.
- Southwest, an unadorned room turned into an alchemical or arcane laboratory with a cauldron, strange sigils scrawled on the wall, and a vast array of alchemical ingredients. Two everburning torches make this the only lighted room underground.

Soft chanting echoes and the only light source underground seeps from the Southwestern door. You walk in to find a midnight blue colored creature with long claws and a featureless face staring at you from over a cauldron. Its feet never touch the ground and it appears to be casting a spell. You seem to startle the creature, and before any of you reacts, it vanishes.

Harrow *teleports* away before the characters confront him, but in his haste, he leaves behind a journal, his cauldron, and all of his supplies. Note the possibility of Harrow returning at any moment to speed up the process of investigation.

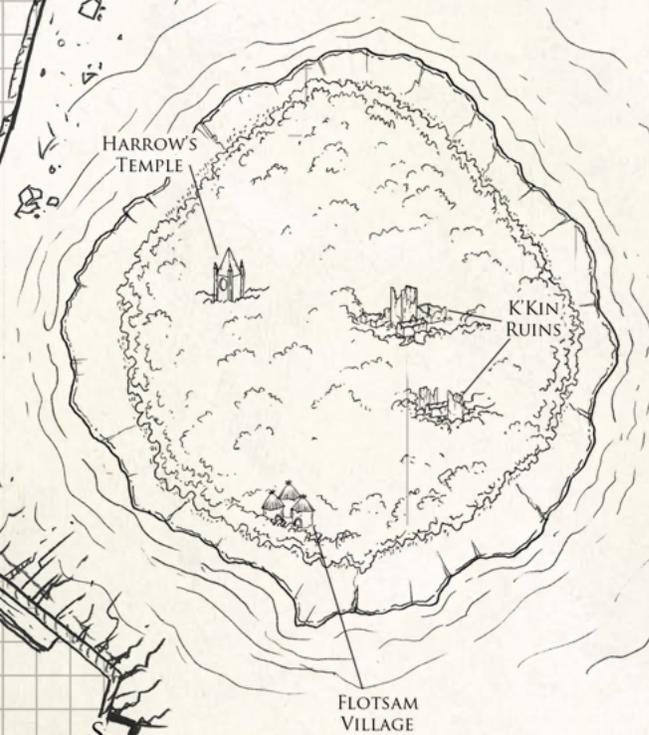
If the characters revealed the clue of the alchemical ingredients, they find them here. The journal explains the ritual Harrow used to start the plague and describes the abandoned temple where the eidolon meets regularly with the ghost Deland on Karn'lothra. The eidolon used its own bone and skin to perform an arcane ritual (an incantation) infecting the great Leviathan.

As the characters finish gathering supplies and exploring the rest of the underground level, they hear a high-pitched screech. When

HARROW'S TEMPLE

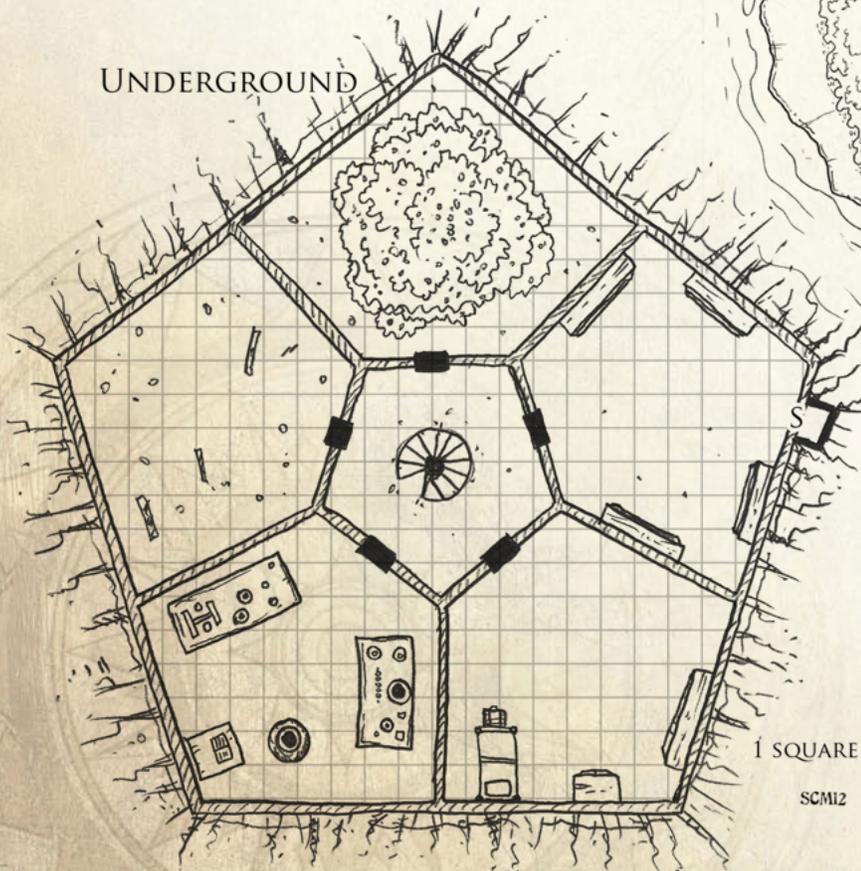


MALKAY (NOT TO SCALE)



GROUND LEVEL

UNDERGROUND



1 SQUARE = 5 FT.

SCM12



they reach the surface, a strange quadruped lies dead at the top of the stairs. Knowledge (Arcana) DC 13 reveals the creature as a chupacabra, the “vampire” the villagers fear. The dead one distracts the characters, allowing the other two to attack with surprise.

Terrain: Harrow recently befriended some of the creatures around the ruined structure, and they now guard the place in his absence. Though once well worked and smooth, the stone ground now sits lettered with debris; treat as difficult terrain.

Creatures: Two chupacabra, clearly the “vampires” the villagers warned of, rush the characters as they emerge from underground. They crouch in hiding to catch the characters flat-footed; allow a Perception check versus their Stealth check (+16).

Chupacabra (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

Tactics: The chupacabra use their pounce ability to receive a full attack each round. They each attempt to pin a character to begin drinking blood. The chupacabra fight until one dies, or both drop below five hit points, then attempt to flee by making for the water and swimming to a nearby submerged wreck.

Circling above the ruins, Evain’s familiar, Jry, screeches at you and begins flying to the northeastern shore. After another short trek through mismatched trees, you break the forest line and see the Spotted Fin a hundred feet off the shore. Waiting thirty feet from shore, Jaleb and Cosh keep the longboat steady awaiting your arrival, but unwilling to come any closer to shore.

The characters must swim to the longboat, then row to the Spotted Fin, while Evain’s voice carries on the wind

”My mates reported you entered the tower but never saw your exit, so I rode the lift up and found a note addressed to me. It read, “They are lost.” So naturally, I set course for Malkay, which is to say I set no course and sailed into the triangle.”

Evain and Ré pull the characters on board, then the duo goes to work sailing outside the influence of Malkay, with the guidance of Lea in the water and Jry in the air. After explaining the events since Dorn’s tower and showing Evain and Ré Harrow’s journal, the gnome chimes in.

”Be warned, though I’ve mapped the island well, neither I nor Evain have contacts or friends on Karn’lothra. As a guardian of the natural world, I set no foot on the unholy place, and the Bloodless Queen has a contract or three for my husband’s head on a plate. I’m afraid, once again, you are on your own. But you’re welcome to a ride,” she smiles impishly with this last comment.

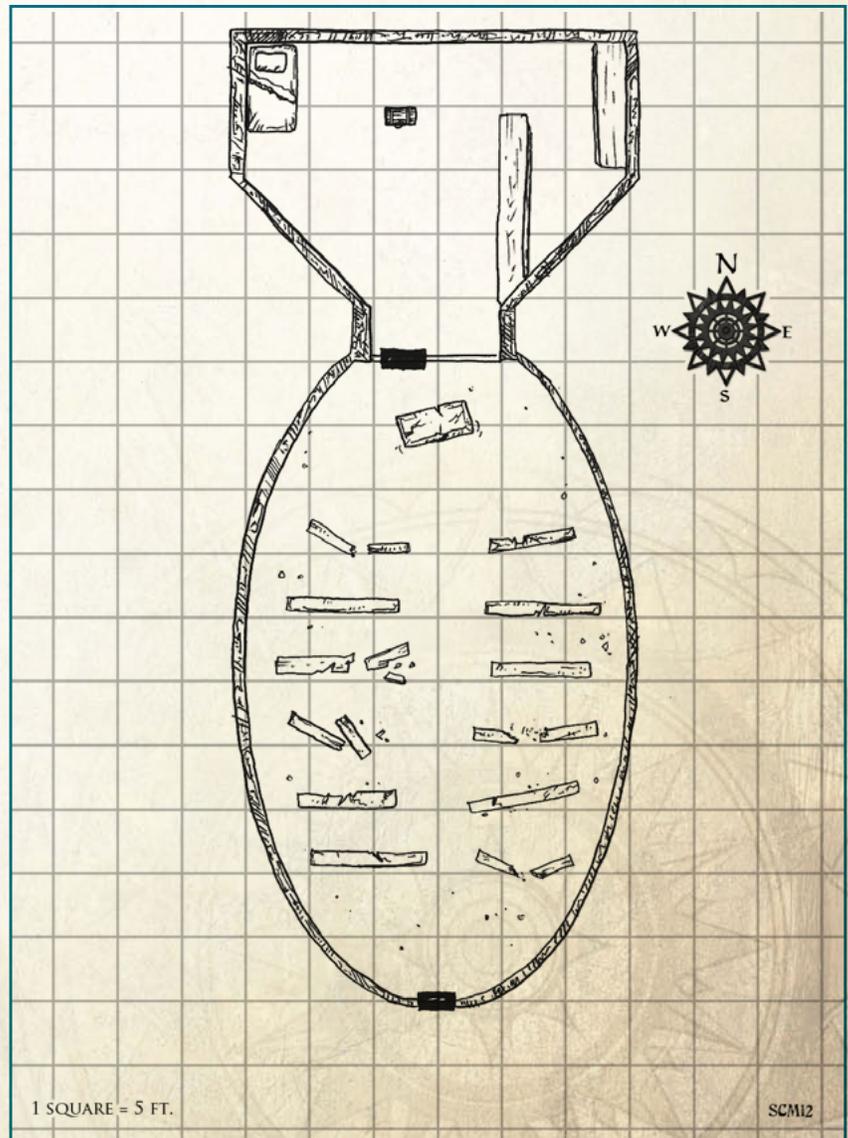
Karn’lothra

After setting a course to Karn’lothra, Evain explains to the group.

”This trip would only take four days, but we gained some weight at The Burning Shores, so we must hold this ‘skinny-bones’ plague at bay for another six days. The Barsellan cutter ran aground at Dorn’s tower and I could not, in good conscience, watch them drown. We salvaged the valuables; put the surly crew in a cargo hold, and recovered Cosh and Jaleb.”

Ré feels confident the temple described in Harrow’s journal lies on the northern tip of the crescent moon shaped island of Karn’Lothra. Cosh and Jaleb row the characters to shore, then return to the Spotted Fin. Before departing, Ré gives one of the characters a swan boat feather token. The captain informs the characters she and the ship wait east of the island, but not too far for the feather token’s range.

The rocky, desolate shore sours moods, and sobers you to your task. Just beyond the graveled, weed-strewn dunes, a steeple rises perversely into



the sky; destroying any chance of the building going unnoticed.

Cresting the dunes, you notice three humanoid creatures standing outside the ruined temple. Ravaged by plague, their race remains undeterminable. They stand in front of the gaping doorway like guards and seem to take no notice of you.

The sandstone temple once housed a shrine for Nethus, but decades of desertion left it in disrepair. The steeple once likely stood high into the air like the mast of a sailing vessel, but now only resembles a shard of bone jutting into the sky. As the characters approach the temple, a Knowledge (engineering or religion) check DC 15 reveals the former use of the structure. Intentionally defiled holy symbols scar the crumbling masonry. Exploring the temple, the characters find only one entrance, its doors long rotted away.

Skinny-bones Zombies (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200

Skinny-bones Zombie

CR 1

XP 400 each

NE Medium Undead

Init -2; **Senses** darkvision 60ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16 (-2 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 12 (2d8+3)

Fort +0, **Ref** -2, **Will** +3

DR 5/-; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d6+4)

TACTICS

During Combat The skinny-bones zombies guard the entrance until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 7, **Con** -, **Int** -, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** +14

Feats Toughness

Special Qualities staggered

Plague Bearers Skinny-bones zombies died of the plague. Encountering them requires saves against the plague while in combat (see page 90).

After defeating the zombies, the characters walk into the temple.

The smell of death fades slightly as you enter the ruins. Dry-rotted and broken pews lie scattered along both sides of the windowless building, facing a raised pulpit carved in crumbling sandstone. Rounded walls grant the church the illusion of a ship's hold.

A rotting wooden altar sits slightly askew in front of the pulpit. A newly erected door to the left of the pulpit likely leads to the sanctum. Hushed voices are audible behind the door.

Allow the characters a Stealth check to approach the door unnoticed. The worst approaching character's Stealth check opposes a +0 Perception check for Harrow. Its +8 Perception is penalized for the closed door, 10 feet of distance, and poor circumstances. A successful Stealth check allows a DC 14 Perception check to overhear the voices. One voice resembles a dying wheeze (Deland), while the other sounds irritated and

low (Harrow). Failure indicates Harrow knows of the party's presence and is not surprised by their entry. He carries on his conversation but is ready for an ambush.

Whatever the Stealth result, allow the characters to cast preparatory spells before entering the room.

Harrow: Is it not enough? How many more must die before your queen grants me my wish?

Deland: Patience, outworlder. Just a few hundred more bodies should convince her. But, she also wants a few alive, to study your plague thoroughly. Troubles?

The deep voice of Harrow gasps in severe pain

Harrow: The link to my old master burns until I free myself of this plane. Did the Bloodless Queen send her aid?

Deland: Of course, each is very strong.

Harrow: Leave them and be gone, I must return to Malkay soon.

Deland: Such ingratitude! Tsk tsk. The Malkay people would make perfect...

Harrow: No! Not them, I'll find others.

Deland: I think perhaps, "others" already found you.

Deland sensed the destruction of the zombies and the presence of living creatures, but with his need of Harrow diminishing he decided not to inform the eidolon.

The door slowly swings open to reveal two creatures. One, nearly translucent presents a menacing grin accompanied with a regal bow before disappearing entirely, leaving Harrow staring at you.

Black ichor drips from the claws of this bipedal creature. Its gloomy blue skin glows with odd sigils and its large black eyes regard you with contempt. A clear gem orbits the creature's head. Its rune-etched skin flares brightly causing another gasp of pain.

Harrow

CR 8

Unfettered Eidolon (Harrow)

CR 8

XP 4,800

CN Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 75 (10d10+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

PLAGUE SCARS

Where the original nodes appeared on characters, pale crescent and circular scars remain; the scars resist regenerative magic, but grant the characters no harm or benefit. Characters joining the game after this adventure should also begin with plague scars to represent the impact and spread of the plague. No matter the location on the creature's body, every scar resembles the moon in one of its phases. Detect magic reveals a faint universal magical aura on all the scars.

Defensive abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +15 (1d6 +5 plus 1d6 acid), bite +13 (1d6+5 plus 1d6 acid)

Space 5 ft., **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with claw)

TACTICS

Before Combat Harrow taunts enemies to delay the fight, while determining the best evolutions to use against them.

During Combat Harrow relies on its strength to overwhelm opponents. When threatened by more than one attacker, Harrow always attempts to control one of the combatants with its re-fetter ability. Harrow takes any damage from wounds bringing a controlled creature's hit points below zero, because the eidolon wants live subjects to present to the Bloodless Queen.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 7, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +15 (+2 to Grapple); **CMD** +27 (+2 to Grapple)

Feats Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple, Dodge, Mobility, Multiattack, Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +12, Fly +9, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (planes) +7, Perception +7, Stealth +9, Swim +10

Languages common

Special Qualities evolution points (arms, claw, legs, reach [claw], bite, climb, energy attacks [acid], re-fetter, rapid evolution

Re-fetter (evolution 2 pts.) As a full round action, Harrow makes a grapple check against a creature's CMD. If successful, the creature makes a Fortitude save (DC 17). If the creature fails the save, the next round it makes a Will save (DC 15). If the creature fails this save, Harrow forms a temporary symbiotic bond with the creature, controlling all its actions. Harrow retains all of its own statistics, but may transfer any damage it receives to the fettered creature. Harrow must maintain a grapple, as a swift action, throughout the duration of fettering. When the creature reaches zero or fewer hit points, Harrow must disengage.

Rapid evolution (evolution 3 pts.) As a full round action, Harrow exchanges any one of its evolutions for another of equal or lesser value.

Gear ioun stone (clear spindle)

Searching the room after the battle, the characters find a simple locked chest (Disable Device DC 20 to open). A poison needle trap (use the Poison Dart Trap from the Pathfinder Core Rules) triggers if not noticed and disabled.

Chest Contents:

- Vial of Leviathan's blood
- 3 *shaman stones* containing *cure serious wounds* (CL5).
- *Handy haversack*

Development: After defeating Harrow, the characters depart quickly in fear of Deland's return or more zombies.

If the characters brought all the supplies from Malkay, they attempt the cure from anywhere. Otherwise, they must return to Dorn's Tower to use his laboratory. The return trip to Port takes a total of nine days.

Concocting the cure requires a single Spellcraft check DC 30. For every clue the characters revealed, reduce the DC by 1. Any character with Craft (alchemy), Knowledge (arcana), Heal, or Survival makes one check each (DC 15) to reduce the Spellcraft DC by -1.

After 24 hours brewing, the magic of "skinny-bones" breaks and every infected creature begins healing at the same rate the plague affected them.

The characters possess enough key ingredients to attempt the ritual three times. If unsuccessful after the third attempt, they only manage to cure themselves and the crew of the Spotted Fin of "skinny-bones", and return to Barsella only to pass along the method of curing the plague. They receive no accolades or rewards from the city, if unsuccessful with the ritual.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If successful, the characters return to Barsella aboard the Spotted Fin.

The sights and sounds of Port never felt more inviting than today, where last you saw burning piles of sahuagin and guards keeping an emergency quarantine, rows of people shout your names. With joyous fists pumping the air and smiles belying the scores of lives lost to the plague, the people celebrate the return of the 'Plague Enders'.

Evain steps towards you and whispers, "I may have sent word of your heroic exploits ahead of our return, best ye all distance yourselves from me once ashore, I've much to explain to my...superiors." Lea coos a soft sound and the gnome druid speaks, "Mind you all, if ever the Fin is in harbor and you need use of her, you need but ask."

With nothing left to say, you pull into the harbor and disembark.

A group of ten guards stands close to the plank in the finest Barsellan livery. In the center of the guards, a Founders Council Lord holds a small coffer. The medals contained are *shaman stones*.

"Let the plague Enders come forth, and receive the city's thanks!" The crowd roars, and the Founder presents each of you with a medal fashioned to resemble the Barsellan flag, and small pouches with ten platinum pieces in each. He smiles a genuine thanks, "Now, take a rest, regain your land-legs, and do me the honor of feasting at the Founder's Hall this night as welcome guests."

SHAMAN STONE

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 7

Slot -; **Price** 5,600 gp; **Weight** 1lbs

DESCRIPTION

This fist-sized, well-worn river stone grants the use of one spell to anyone holding it. Originally designed during the Mage Wars, a shaman stone allows a spellcaster to share a spell with anyone wielding the stone. Casters who prepare spells daily store one spell in the stone rather than their own memory. Spontaneous casters decide a known spell to store in the stone. In either case, the spell stored in the stone counts against the caster's daily spells. An unused spell in the magical stone vanishes when the spell-caster prepares new spells or rests to regain spells. The caster sets a trigger at spell preparation; anyone holding the stone may perform the trigger and activate the spell. After ten uses, a shaman stone becomes unstable, transforming into a thunderstone. A shaman stone crumbles to dust if anyone attempts to use it more than ten times, and the spell intended for the stone remains used for the remainder of the day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *imbue with spell ability*; **Cost** 2,800 gp

ADVENTURES

MURDER, FATHOMS BELOW



Brian W Suskind

A devious murderer stalks an expedition trapped underwater in an air-tight tower perched on a living island. Can you unravel the clues and reveal the true culprit before he strikes again, or will you be the next victim?

“Murder, Fathoms Below” presents a murder mystery for five 5th-level PCs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Leviathan, a sea creature over a mile long with an entire island on its back thought by most to be mythical, has surfaced. When it appeared, Lord Arvid Olhouser, a Barsellan noble family’s aging patriarch, famous for leading dangerous exploratory voyages, saw his chance to command one last, great adventure. He sent his son Hagen and a scout to secure a base camp while he gathered members for his final expedition.

However, Lord Olhouser’s past, just caught up to him. Years earlier, the lord abandoned a Maillon barmaid after a brief affair, not realizing he’d fathered a child. Raised to hate her absentee parent, Alyce Nox swore revenge at her mother’s deathbed. Lord Olhouser’s expedition seemed like the perfect opportunity. A highly-skilled sorceress, Alyce recently seduced and married the lord’s nephew Bertram, and arranged for them to accompany the expedition together. She has the entire Olhouser family in one spot, but doesn’t know Lady Olhouser and Hagen also plan on murder.

SPOILER - THE MURDERERS

This classic murder mystery utilizes the trope wherein everyone is sealed in an isolated location. Three murderers actually run rampant. First, Hagen Olhouser and Lady Olhouser murder Lord Olhouser. Then Alyce murders Hagen and Lady Olhouser for killing her father before she could and to become the sole heir to the family fortunes. Once the PCs’ investigation endangers Alyce, she targets them too, and ultimately attempts to drown the entire expedition to eliminate any witnesses.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs escort the expedition, which becomes trapped in an air-tight tower when the Leviathan suddenly dives. After someone brutally murders Lord Olhouser, evidence implicates the mongrelmen, a bestial tribe inhabiting organic tunnels within the Leviathan’s body. The PCs delve inside, braving traps and invading the mongrelmen lair before learning of the creatures’ innocence. Returning to the tower, they find Hagen murdered in their absence.

The investigation uncovers grudges, blackmail, illicit affairs, and the fact everyone has potential murder motives. Fearing discovery, Alyce surreptitiously turns Lord Olhouser’s and Hagen’s corpses into undead horrors to assassinate the adventurers. The PCs might foil her attempt to kill Lady Olhouser. In her final ploy, Alyce convinces Bertram to sabotage the arcane device keeping the tower air-tight. With the tower flooding as the Leviathan begins surfacing, the PCs pursue Alyce up stairs through cascading water to the tower’s top. There, in the final confrontation, Alyce wields spells harnessing the ocean’s power against the PCs.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Through his aide, Delgrade Agador, Lord Olhouser hires the PCs to guard the expedition members on their trip to the Leviathan. Delgrade arranges transport on the Walrus, the smaller of the two ships heading for the Leviathan.

Other hooks might include:

- A law-enforcement agent, suspecting someone intends harm to an unspecified Olhouser, asks the adventurers go undercover to find the villain.
- The party may be friends of Lord Olhouser, or he may be a patron, and were invited to accompany him.
- The PCs may own or work on board another ship transporting the expedition supplies (or on the supply ship Walrus) and tasked with helping during landfall on the Leviathan.

RUNNING MURDER MYSTERIES

Murder-mystery adventures differ dramatically from dungeon crawls. The storyline unfolds through events, not following a sequence of locations. Combat is minimal. Discoveries should unfold through roleplaying, with dice playing a minor role. Encourage players to question, persuade, or intimidate information out of NPCs, letting their roleplaying determine the outcome, or granting substantial modifiers to their rolls if dice are used at all. Possible motives for the murders are given for each major NPC. Feel free to have other NPCs expose these motives to clear themselves from suspicion.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

LORD ARVID OLHOUSER

NG male human

Use the statistic for Noble - *Game Mastery Guide*

A tall, silver-haired and mustached noble, Olhouser is best known for his eccentricities and childishly excited attitude about each and every voyage. He takes risks that earn him the disdain of his peers. Olhouser's adventurous spirit made him rich, but left him somewhat forgetful and limping.

Personality Traits: Eager, Enthusiastic, Forgetful

Other Information:

(DC 15) Hagen has a mean streak and his vices are an embarrassment to the family.

(DC 25) "I have received several hateful, unsigned letters from someone claiming to be my child." He reveals this information only if specifically questioned about potential threats and his wife is not present.

LADY MARGAT OLHOUSER

CN female human

Use stats for Noble Scion - *Game Mastery Guide*

The haughty wife of Lord Olhouser, Margat loathes her husband for shaming the family name by personally leading his expeditions. Though filled with deep reservoirs of simmering anger and resentment, she only shows it in small, petty ways. She is having an affair with her husband's aide in an attempt to provoke a reaction, but worries it may have gone too far.

Personality Traits: Serious, Reserved, Angry

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Inheritance – Thinking Arvid was going to write Hagen out of the will, she kills to protect her son.

Fear – Arvid has discovered her affair and plans to punish her son rather than her.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motive):

Inheritance – Hagen was squandering the family fortune.

Other Information:

(DC 10) She suspects Professor Dolynn wants to renew her affair with Arvid.

(DC 15) Bertram approached her on the ship requesting money but she refused him.

(DC 35) "There is a definite resemblance between Arvid and the Nox girl, don't you think?"

HAGEN OLHOUSER

NE male human

Use stats for Slaver - *Game Mastery Guide*

(Plus boots of striding and springing)

The self-absorbed heir to house Olhouser, Hagen sneers at commoners and distrusts non-humans. His exaggerated reputation as a womanizer and adventurer results from his money and position. Since arriving on the Leviathan he's hunted mongrelmen, collecting ears as trophies.

Personality Traits: Racist, Arrogant, Cruel

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Greed – He learned from Delgrade that Lord Olhouser may write him out of his will.

Other Information:

(DC 5) "Lucas uses the local drugs and hallucinates often." (False).

(DC 10) He overheard his father refusing to lend Bertram money, seriously angering Bertram.

(DC 20) "Delgrade spends considerable time around mother."

DELGRADE AGADOR

N male human

Use stats for Shopkeep - *Game Mastery Guide*

Lord Olhouser's impeccably dressed aide, Delgrade compensates for an inferiority complex, stemming from a lack of noble rank, by behaving like a "real" noble. After years of managing the family fortune, Delgrade wants it for himself. His schemes are complicated by his love affair with Lady Olhouser.

Personality Traits: Organized, Calculating, Inferiority Complex

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Greed – Wants control of family wealth.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motives):

Greed and Spite – Hagen doesn't deserve the family fortune

Other Information:

(DC 5) Lord Olhouser works on revising his will to Hagen's detriment. (False)

(DC 10) Before Hagen's murder, saw Bertram entering Lady Olhouser's room.

(DC 20) "I passed Lady Olhouser's room when Lord Olhouser died, but I didn't hear her there."

BERTRAM BODKIN

N male human

Use stats for Noble Scion - *Game Mastery 288*

Wearing octagonal spectacles and slicked back hair, Bertram cannot stop his relatives from constantly taking advantage of him. Dim and hapless, he accumulated large gambling debts and recently learned that Hagen has bought these markers to blackmail him. The only light in Bertram's life is his new bride, Alyce. He loves her despite not understanding why she wanted to marry him.

Personality Traits: Nervous, Bewildered, Well-Meaning

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Anger – Olhouser refused to lend Bertram funds to settle his gambling debts.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motives):

Anger – He hates Hagen for trying to blackmail him into giving Alyce to him for a night

Other Information:

(DC 5) Hagen resents his father's limitations on his less-than-noble activities.

(DC 15) "Aunt Margat is here to convince Uncle Arvid to stop adventuring by pointing out each and every bad choice he makes."

(DC 25) "Hagen bought my gambling debts knowing I can't pay. Now he threatens to have me beaten, jailed, or worse unless I convince Alyce to sleep with him."

ALYCE NOX

LE Female Human

Wildblooded Seaborn Sorceress 8 – statistics in Appendix A

This plucky, pretty redhead with unfashionably short hair has an infectious grin and a go-to attitude. She just married Bertram and seems deliriously happy, but Alyce is not what she appears to be.

Obsessed with revenge, she plans to murder all of the Olhousers during this expedition. To maintain her cover, Alyce contemplates giving in to Hagen's blackmail and going to his bed. She hopes to accomplish her goal before that becomes necessary.

Personality Traits: Charming, Spirited, Driven, Obsessed

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Feigned Motive (Anger) – Lord Olhouser refused to help Bertram with debts or Hagen's blackmail.

Real Motive (Revenge) – Lord Olhouser abandoned Alyce's mother to poverty and death.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motives):

Feigned Motive (Anger) – Hagen tries to blackmail Alyce for sex.

Real Motive (Revenge) – Hagen is an Olhouser and he killed Lord Olhouser before Alyce could.

Other Information:

(DC 5) "Before Bertram, I dabbled with adventuring myself."

(DC 10) "Bertram has a bit of a gambling problem. He's promised to stop."

(DC 15) "Hagen bought Bertram's debts as leverage to get me in his bed. I've spurned him thus far."

(DC 25) "I'm glad Olhouser died. Hagen too. They weren't as perfect as you might think."

PROFESSOR MYRA DOLYNN

N female human

Use stats for Archaeologist - *Game Mastery Guide*

An older professor from Barsella's leading university, Professor Dolynn obsessively collects information in her notebooks. She keeps her silver hair in a tight braid and typically wears comfortable robes and spectacles. Although their love affair ended when Olhouser married, he continued financing her research. However, Professor Dolynn recently learned Hagen plans to cancel her funding.

Personality Traits: Intelligent, Secretive, Impersonal

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Spurned Love – She's resented Olhouser all these years.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motives):

Greed – Hagen planned to cancel her funding.

Other Information:

(DC 10) "At the time of Olhouser's murder, I heard Bertram sobbing in his room."

(DC 15) When Hagen was murdered, she thought she heard watery sounds from Hagen's room.

LUCAS CABRAL

N male human

Use stats for Guide - *Game Mastery Guide*

Grizzled, bearded, and well past his middle years, Lucas looks like a mountain-man, but he is the closest thing to a resident expert on the Leviathan. He secretly befriended the mongrelmen, hoping for the right to commune with the beast.

Personality Traits: Gruff, Uncommunicative, Tough-as-Nails

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Madness – Living on Leviathan drove Lucas insane; he blames Olhouser.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motives):

Revenge – He hates Hagen for hunting mongrelmen.

Other Information:

(DC 5) "The mongrelmen pose no threat."

(DC 15) Hagen angered the locals by hunting them like animals.

(DC 25) "I saw Hagen and Lady Olhouser together in the hallways just before Lord Olhouser died."

FYNN

NG young male

Use stats for Farmer – *Game Mastery Guide*

The twelve year old son of the first mate of the Gull's Wing, Fynn wishes he could go back to his cabin boy duties. A bright lad with sandy-hair and a small scar across one cheek, Fynn hated how the expedition's nobles treated his father and the other sailors.

Personality Traits: Sorrowful, Resentful, Frightened

Lord Olhouser Murder (Possible Motives):

Revenge – He's angry that Olhouser brought them to the Leviathan where his father died.

Hagen Murder (Possible Motives):

Revenge – He wanted payback for Hagen scarring his cheek.

Other Information:

(DC 5) "That Hagen is a mean cur, gave me this scar he did!"

(DC 10) "I saw that Professor lady sneaking in and out of the chambers when folks weren't there."

(DC 15) "Pa said that Lord and Lady Olhouser have been pretty mean to each other for years."

(DC 20) At the time of Hagen's murder, saw Professor Dolynn (Alyce in disguise) leaving Alyce's room.

(DC 25) After Event A4 - Saw Delgrade (Alyce in disguise) telling the wraith that the PCs killed him.

PART A: EVENTS

Introduction

The PCs sail on the Walrus, the smaller of the two ships heading for the Leviathan. All notable NPCs not already on the island travel on the other ship, the Gull's Wing.

Investigation Note: If at any time Alyce feels that she may be in danger of discovery, she enacts her escape plan (see Part C: End Game). This may bypass some of the following events.

TABLE 1: The Murders

Time	Event
1 month Ago	Hagan Olhouser arrives on Leviathan with Lucas Cabral
Two Weeks Ago	PCs hired by Lord Olhouser
Day One	PCs arrive on Leviathan
Day Two	Lord Olhouser Murdered
Day Three	Hagan Olhouser Murdered
Day Four / Five	Lady Margat Murdered Sabotage & Fighting Upriver Rooftop Confrontation
Various	Lord Olhouser's Revenge! Hagen's Return!

After two weeks, the Walrus finally arrives at the Leviathan. The island, covered in mangroves and crumbling ruins, appears normal enough until a fluke as big as a small peninsula rises from the waves, revealing the beast's sheer size.

Once the expedition lands, this adventure unfolds almost entirely in and beneath the Bubble Tower. Table 1 presents a suggested timeline of events.

A1. Arrival

In the late afternoon the Walrus and Lord Olhouser's flagship, the *Gull's Wing*, reach the safety of Two Fins Harbor. A town's ruins stretch up and away from the relatively clear mooring. Rubble strewn streets and collapsed buildings abound, but some intact structures remain. The nearest, a half-mile from the dock, is a tall white tower with rounded windows.

As Lord Olhouser and his expedition emerge from the *Gull's Wing*, a slender nobleman and a grizzled man in outdoorsman gear stand on the dock to greet everyone.

Hagen and Lucas wait on the stone pier. This is likely the first time the PCs meet the major NPCs. Use the notes in the Dramatis Personae descriptions to give the PCs their first impression.

Lucas leads the main expedition members toward the 200-foot tall Bubble Tower, warning them about the island's various dangers like mongrelmen and oozes. Sailors lugging the baggage lag well behind.

A2. Swept Away

As the expedition approaches the two hundred foot tall tower, a tremor seems to shake the island. Everyone stops, glancing around in confusion. Then, with a great blast of noise, gasses vent from openings around the tower's base.

"By the depths!" Lucas cries out. "The beast! It's diving! Get to the tower or you'll be pulled down with it!"

As he finishes speaking, a wall of water rushes up the broken street as the Leviathan begins to plunge into the depths.

Lucas's warning allows everyone a single action before the water reaches them. Allow the PCs to act, then roll for initiative.

Hazard - Surging Water (CR 3):

- The PCs are 90 feet away from the tower when the dive begins. The street ends in a T-intersection right at the steps to the Bubble Tower.
- Roll a d20 for the water to place it in the initiative order
- Ground is uneven, preventing running for most characters.
- When water hits, anyone who has not reached the steps to the tower is subject to a bull rush (CMB +10).
- Those who make their save are able to resist the surging water for now. They can move at half-speed with a DC 10 Swim check or DC 15 Reflex save, but only at quarter speed without. Next round another DC 10 Swim check prevents them from also being swept away.
- Those who fail their save are swept away by the water, tumbling 30 feet downstream per round and taking 2d6 points of damage from debris kicked up by the surge. In subsequent rounds, a DC 10 Swim check arrests their motion by catching a rock, or other solid object.
- At the end of the street, swept away characters slam into the tower steps taking an additional 1d6 points of damage.

The water sweeps away most of the NPCs with the exception of those listed in the Dramatis Personae section. Once the PCs reach the safety of the Bubble Tower's steps, read the following:

A child's scream rings out as the expedition reaches the temporary safety of the high steps of the Bubble Tower. Fynn, the ship's cabin boy, speeds past, caught in the rushing water. He fruitlessly calls out for his father who is nowhere to be seen.

Without a pause, Alyce Nox leaps into the deluge, practically tackling the boy as he passes. They are swept out from the stairs, but Alyce somehow manages to grab hold of a stone column and avoids being swept away. Now, however, there is 40 feet of water between her and the safety of the steps.

Rescuing Alyce and Fynn depends on the makeup of the party. Increase the tension by raising the water level by 1 foot per round. There are ten feet of steps between the surging water and the top of the stairs.

When the PCs enter the tower, read the following:

Hagen easily outdistances all other NPCs, reaching the door first and leaping through. Others struggle to follow. The iris door snaps shut just after everyone tumbles through. As the ocean envelops the tower, Fynn hurls himself at the door, banging on it with his fists and crying, "Father! No, no. Father!" Several others babble in fright until Lord Olhouser calls out, "Calm down, everyone calm down! We're alive. Let's take stock and decide what to do next."

If the PCs don't do so first, Lord Olhouser kneels to comfort the boy.

See Area B1 below for a description of the Entrance Chamber.

Lucas speaks up, "The tower's enchanted to keep the water out and gives us air to breathe. The young lord and I have cleaned out the first two floors and sealed the others. We've stocked supplies and prepared bedchambers. So...we'll be as safe and comfortable as may be until the beast returns to the surface."

Lord Olhouser suggests everyone together examine the tower's public chambers before everyone retires for the night. He uses the tour to calm everyone's nerves with the lines below.

- Lucas – "We've escaped tighter spots than this one, eh?"
- Lady Olhouser – "It's going to be alright, my dear. Things may look bleak now, but if we all work together, we'll get through it."
- Hagen – "Son, you've been looking for a task equal to your courage and skill. Let's face it now, together!"
- Professor Dolynn – "Well, Myra, we've finally done it! You've going to be the pride of your university for generations to come!"
- Bertram and Alyce – "Not what we all planned, but surely this is the most exotic honeymoon any young couple ever had. Think of the stories you'll tell!"
- Fynn – "Your father's in a better place now. He'll be watching over you I'm sure. There's no shame in crying, lad. But I'll watch over you too, we all will, until the tears pass."
- The PCs – "I'm counting on you to show us all what courage looks like and to help an old man turn a bit of misfortune into an adventure for the ages."

He allows the PCs to pick either or both empty bedchambers (Area B13) for themselves.

A3. Lord Olhouser's Murder

The Crime: On Day Two, Lord Olhouser arises before dawn as is his custom. He descends to the Great Hall where he sees a figure (Hagen, unrecognizable beneath a ratty cloak) shambling into the southern hallway. He follows the suspicious person into Area B7. There, Lady Olhouser throws a vial of oil of silence on her husband's arm while Hagen crushes his skull with a brick. They strike from behind, so he never sees who kills him. Hagen then drags the corpse back to the Great Hall and thrusts mongrelmen spears, stolen from Lucas' room, into the body.

Unless the PCs find the corpse first, Professor Dolynn's screams from the Great Hall announce the crime.

Lord Arvid Olhouser lies in an enormous pool of blood at the southern staircase's foot. Three crude looking spears with red leather wrappings transfix his corpse, plunging through his brocade coat. The back of his head is matted with blood.

The other expedition members enter in the following order: Delgrade, Hagen, Alyce, Fynn, Bertram, Lady Olhouser.

Lucas, however, remains in the mongrelmen tunnels until noon. If the PCs enter the tunnels, they encounter Lucas in Area A5)

Physical Clues: Besides speaking to NPCs, there are several clues present.

- **Spears** – Typical mongrelmen design, crude but effective. Hagen stole these from Lucas's room.
- **Body** – A successful DC 20 Heal or DC 25 Perception check reveals the spear wounds happened after Lord Olhouser fell to the ground. A successful DC 30 Perception check discovers a damp oily patch and small glass fragments on Lord Olhouser's arm. Tasting the oil grants a DC 27 Spellcraft or Craft (Alchemy) check to realize it is oil of silence.
- **Area** – A successful DC 10 Perception check reveals a blood trail from the body to Area B7's hidden hatch. Area B7 also contains the murder weapon, a blood stained yellow and white brick. Touching the brick leaves yellow and white dust on the hands.

Development: As soon as possible, Professor Dolynn blames the mongrelmen.

Look at those spears! The natives, the mongrelmen have murdered Arvid! You! Adventurers! You didn't protect him but you'll damn sure make those beast-men pay!"

Lady Olhouser and Hagen agree, offering each PC 300 gp to exact vengeance on the mongrelmen for the murder and ensure they dare not attack again. Then Lady Olhouser insists her husband's body be moved to his chamber. The NPCs carry it there if the PCs do not.

A4. Lord Olhouser's Revenge!

Alyce quickly identifies the PCs as her greatest threat and moves to discredit or destroy them. Her first attempt can occur anytime after Lord Olhouser's death. She uses her potions of invisibility and elixirs of hiding to sneak into Area B9. There she uses her dust of illusion to impersonate Delgrade, creates a wraith from Lord Olhouser's body with her scroll of create greater undead, and controls it with her wand of command undead. She tells it that two PCs – the ones most confrontational with her thus far – murdered Lord Olhouser. She commands the wraith to slaughter them, screaming specific PCs' names and "You killed me!" while attacking.

Note: If the PCs enter the mongrelmen tunnels without investigating (and giving Alyce time to create the wraith), run this event just after the investigation into Hagen's murder begins.

Wraith

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 47 (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)

Development: If NPCs witness the wraith's accusations, this undermines the PCs' investigator status and compromises the NPCs trust in them. If questioned carefully, a frightened Fynn says he looked into Lord Olhouser's room and saw Delgrade tell the "ghost" the PCs murdered Lord Olhouser. The lord's body can be questioned after the wraith is killed, but not while the wraith exists, and it will describe the wraith's creator as Delgrade.

A5. Mongrelmen's Den

While descending into the Leviathan's interior, the beast's innards create an organic and otherworldly environment:

- Flesh-like walls as hard as stone with pulsating veins running through them
- The Leviathan's ever-present slow heartbeat
- Cloying dank air tinged with the metallic smell of blood

Crude-looking idols and fetishes mark the path to the Den.

Table 2 – LORD OLHOUSER MURDER NPC LOCATION CHART

Name	True Location	Claimed Location/Alibi
Margat Olhouser	Committing the murder.	With Hagen in his room; Bertram came bringing a coffer (False)
Hagen Olhouser	Committing the murder.	In his room with Lady Olhouser; Bertram came bringing a coffer (False)
Delgrade Agador	In his chambers cleaning Lord Olhouser's coats.	(True)
Bertram Bodkin	Hiding in his rooms.	Brought a coffer to Hagen and Lady Olhouser in Hagen's room (False, Hagen coerces Bertram into saying this)
Alyce Nox	Helping Fynn gather breakfast supplies.	(True)
Professor Dolynn	Studying glyphs in Moon Seal Room.	(True)
Lucas Cabral	Helping mongrelmen prepare tunnel trap.	In his chamber preparing his gear (False)
Fynn	Helping Alyce gather breakfast supplies.	(True)

The tunnel opens into a rocky outcropping above a large circular chamber where 8 mongrelmen dance around an organic stalagmite carved into the likeness of the Leviathan itself. An older mongrelman shakes a fetish-decorated staff and chants at the dancing warriors. Along one wall, females and youngsters huddle on crude beds.

When alerted to the adventurers' presence, the mongrelmen attack. The mongrelmen chief remains on the sideline extolling his fighters.

Mongrelmen (8)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 15 (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)

When only two mongrelmen remain, Lucas rushes in from the tunnel crying out in the mongrelmen's guttural language, and in common tongue, "Stop! Stop! They're not dangerous!" If the PCs relent, the mongrelmen retreat warily. If not, they fight to the death to protect the tribe.

Treasure: A cache at the carved stalagmite's base is the Tribe's treasure: assorted gems (523 gp), flesh of water breathing (treat as potion), and a scroll of scorching ray.

Development: Lucas knows nothing about Lord Olhouser's murder. Once informed he offers the following:

- After arriving on the island, he befriended this tribe and exchanged gifts.
- When Lord Olhouser died, Lucas was with the tribe and no one was missing.
- If the PCs describe the spears stuck in Lord Olhouser, Lucas confirms they're from his room, likely stolen in his absence.

If the PCs apologize or make reparations to the mongrelman chief, he hands Lucas a small silver buckle, explaining his scouts found it while closing the trap door.

A6. Hagen's Murder

Lord Olhouser's murder by someone else ruins Alyce's long-planned personal vengeance. She correctly deduces the culprits (Hagen and Lady Olhouser), so she targets them next. Should both perish, the family fortune could be hers.

This murder works best if it occurs shortly before the PCs return from the tunnels.

The Crime: Hagen relaxes, reading a text on the Leviathan, when Alyce strikes. Disguised with her *dust of illusion* as Professor Dolynn she enters

Hagen's room, knocks him prone with her wave blast ability, and drowns him with aqueous orb. She covers her tracks by drying the body and the surrounding area with dehydrating touch.

Delgrade finds the body. His shouts bring the others. Professor Dolynn orders Bertram and Alyce to take Lady Olhouser to her quarters while she seals the room until the PCs arrive.

Hagen Olhouser lies on his side in the chamber's center. A discarded novel rests near his outstretched hand. Other than the fact that there is a dead body in the room, nothing else appears amiss.

Physical Clues:

- **Body** – A white gritty residue surrounds the mouth and nostrils (dried froth expelled from the lungs). A successful DC 15 Heal or DC 20 Perception check reveals the body's extreme dehydration. Several minutes of closer inspection grants a second DC 20 Heal check to discover signs of drowning, incongruous with dehydration.
- **Clothing** - Hagen's pocket holds Bertram's gambling marker. It shows Hagen purchased Bertram's debts.
- **Magical Aura** – if the PCs cast detect magic within 1 minute after entering the room, it detects the aura from Alyce's water magic.
- **Area** – Hagen's book is waterlogged. Alyce failed to dry it with her spell. A successful DC 25 Perception check uncovers a faint dust sprinkling (cast off from Alyce's dust of illusion) near the doorway.

Development: Lady Olhouser and Bertram implore the PCs to find Hagen's murderer. Lady Olhouser demands someone place the body with her husband's. If the PCs try taking Hagen's gear, both decry this as desecrating the body. All NPCs support them.

A7. Hagen's Return!

Given the wraith's failure, Alyce tries again. This event occurs anytime after Hagen's death.

The Crime: Alyce uses the same tactics as in Event A4 but turns Hagen's corpse into a mummy instead of a wraith. The body is unwrapped, but desiccated. She commands it to kill the PCs while loudly declaring them the murderers.

Mummy

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 60 (*Pathfinder Bestiary* except as below)

Speed 30ft (from Hagen's boots of striding and springing)

Table 3 - HAGEN MURDER NPC LOCATION CHART

Name	True Location	Claimed Location/Alibi
Margat Olhouser	Asleep in her chambers until Bertram interrupts, alleging Hagen's blackmail attempts.	The same (calling the blackmail claims "foolish drivel")
Delgrade Agador	Planting fake will in Hagen's room but fled when he heard someone entering Hagen's room next door.	In his room drinking wine in honor of Lord Olhouser (False)
Bertram Bodkin	In Lady Olhouser's chambers trying to convince her of blackmail.	He was with Alyce in their chambers (False)
Alyce Nox	Committing the murder.	In her chambers with Bertram (False)
Professor Dolynn	In her chamber writing her Leviathan findings thus far.	(True)
Lucas Cabral	Bringing mongrelmen food.	In his chambers, eating bread and cheese (False)
Fynn	Stealing items from crates in storage area.	Bringing towels to PCs rooms (False)

Development: The mummy moans, calling the PCs murderers, further undermines the NPCs faith in them. If Lady Olhouser is sufficiently suspicious of the PCs (due to Alyce's previous machinations), she publically accuses them of murder even if she cannot prove it.

A8. The Murder of Margat Olhouser

With only one final Olhouser left, but the NPCs now on guard, Alyce changes tactics. This event occurs after Hagen's Murder, but GMs should choose the timing that works best.

The Crime: Alyce uses her last pinch of dust of illusion to impersonate Delgrade (or another NPC or even a PC if the GM chooses). She gives Fynn a special "gift" - a lesser necklace of strangulation - to bring to Lady Olhouser. When the lady tries it on it begins choking her. Fynn calls for help, which easily attracts the PCs.

Lady Olhouser convulses on the floor, her hands clasped desperately around a golden necklace that seems to be slowly choking the life out of the woman. Fynn, still calling for help, looks on in horror.

A *lesser necklace of strangulation* is identical to a *necklace of strangulation*

(*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 541) except that it deals 3 points of damage per round and cannot be removed by the wearer. Anyone else can either use *dispel magic* against CL 20th or succeed in two consecutive DC 25 Disable Device checks

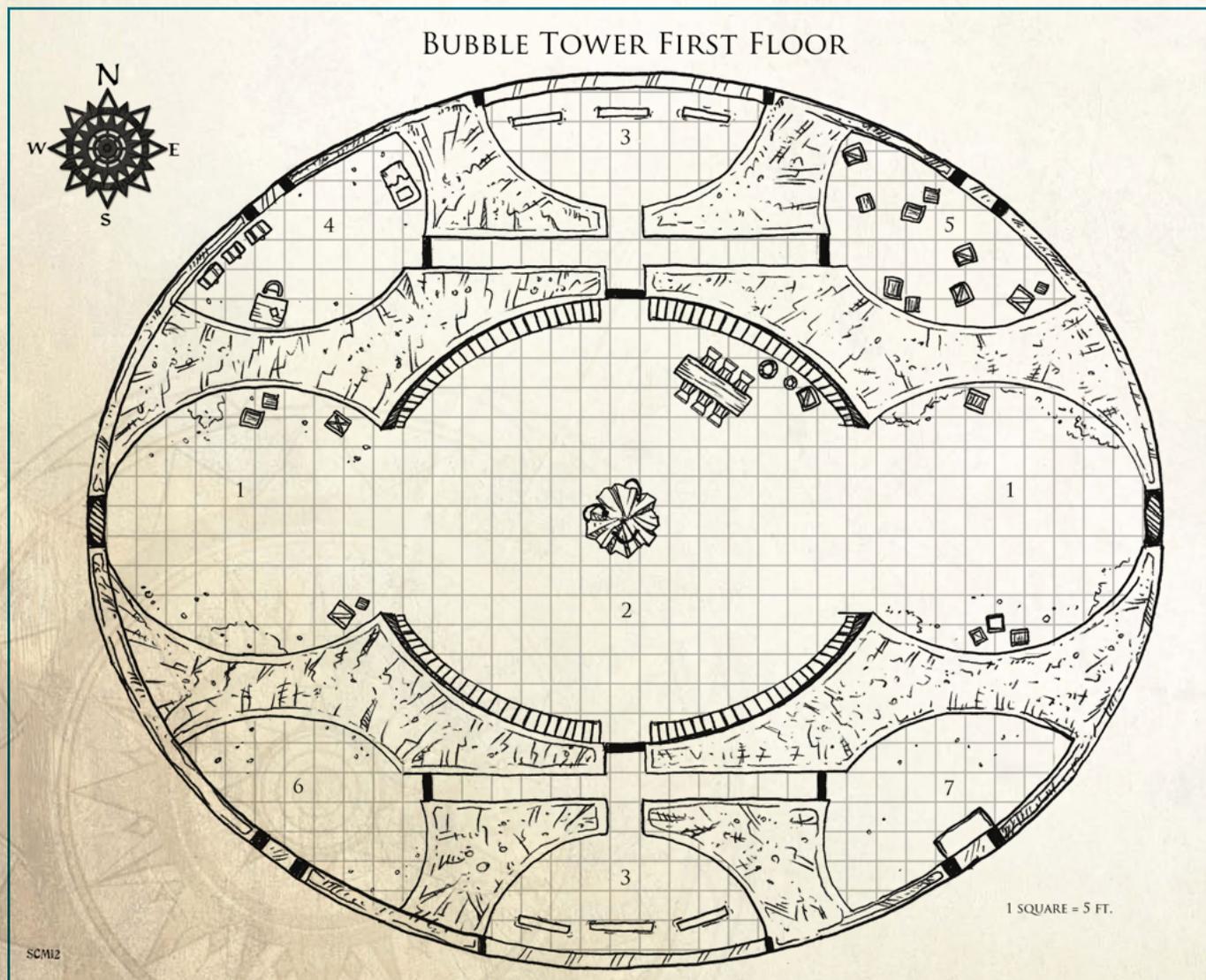
Clues: If questioned, Fynn says that Delgrade asked him to give the necklace to Lady Olhouser. The letter that came with the gift reads, "A *bauble to brighten your day*" and is signed by Delgrade (fake signature - DC 10 Linguistics check).

Development: If rescued, a grateful Lady Olhouser offers her patronage in the future.

Investigation Note: If Alyce reaches this point in the adventure undiscovered, she launches into her End Game immediately (see Part C).

PART B: BUBBLE TOWER

This tower was looted long ago and left trash ridden but empty. The cunning etchings festooning the walls and floors in swirling patterns evoke the impression of sea currents. Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings are forty feet high. A faint breeze blows through the rooms, one effect of



the enchantment that keeps the tower air-tight when the Leviathan dives. Apart from the Entrance, the tower is unlit except by flickering runes and sigils running across chamber floors and up walls, which provide only dim illumination. Although Lucas and Hagen provide lanterns and torches, the unlit rooms and corridors give off a forbidding feeling.

Most NPCs tend to stay on the first floor during the day and retire to their second floor rooms at night.

Note: Keys on the map use the number without the “B” prefix.

B1. Entrance Chamber

This chamber’s walls arch up to meet at a brightly glowing silver orb at the ceiling’s center. The outer wall bears an “iris door”, its dilating facets currently sealed against the ocean outside.

Empty crates marked with the Olhouser sigil rest against the walls atop junk and rubble from numerous past inhabitants.

Lucas made these reception rooms a dumping ground for the rubble pulled out of the first and second floors.

Treasure: A two-hour search grants a DC 20 Perception check to find

trinkets Lucas missed: an anchor feather token (Eastern Chamber) and 3 sunrods (Western Chamber)

B2. Grand Hall

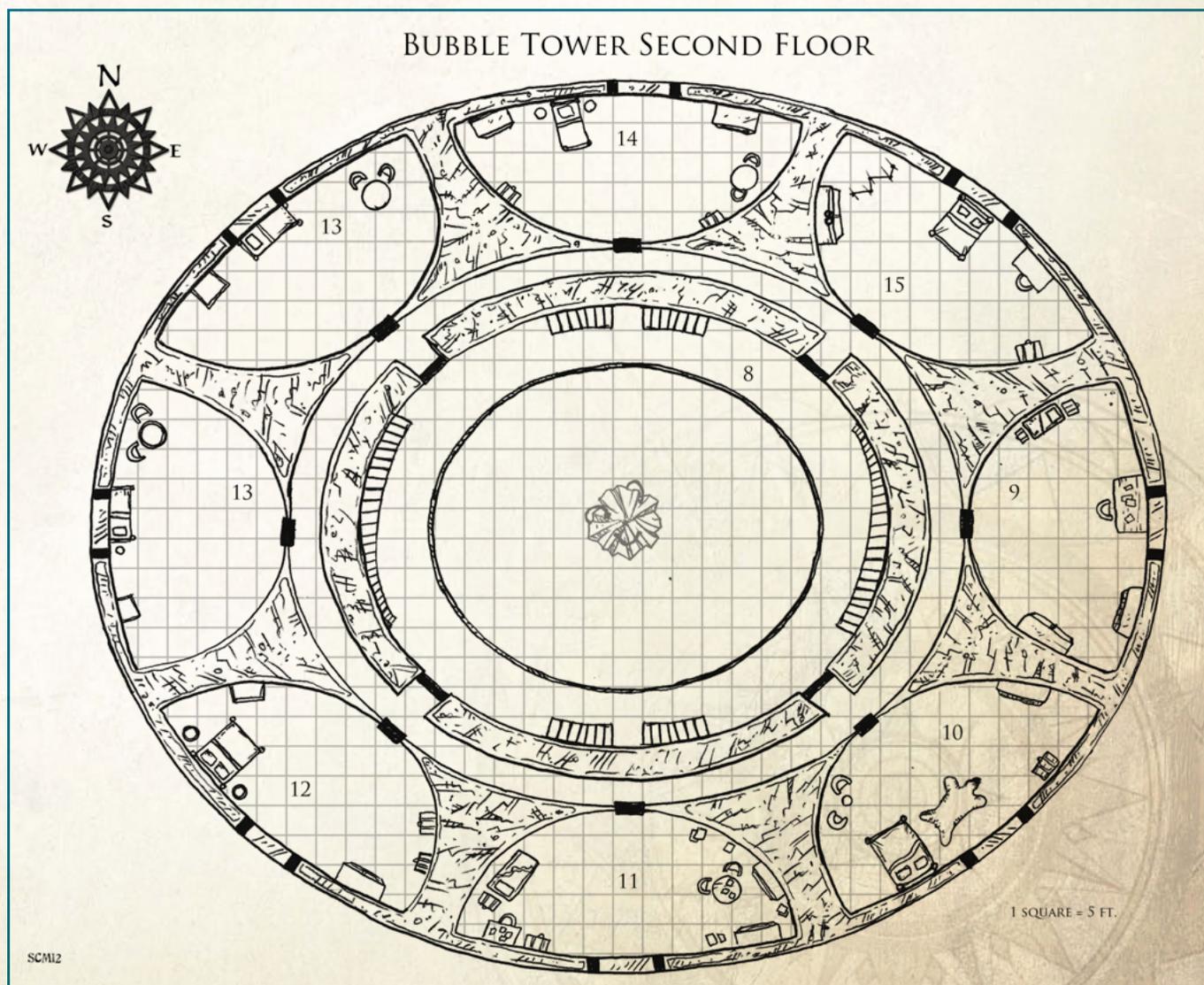
The tower’s central chamber soars ten stories up. Large openings lead in the cardinal directions.

Faintly glowing runes and sigils on the walls pulse like a heartbeat, their colors shifting from blues to silvers to greens. Spacious balconies circle the stories above, the first 60 feet above the ground floor. Each glows with its own sigils and can be accessed by the room’s double stairways on the northern and southern sides.

In the chamber’s northeast arc, free-standing candelabras shed flickering light on a make-shift kitchen and a long dining table with many chairs.

A large arcane-looking crystal and metal growth lurks at the center of the room. Fluid-filled tubes pumping viscous substances extend in and out of it in a seemingly random pattern. The ever-present breeze in the Tower seems stronger near this device.

Lucas and Hagen use the Grand Hall to prepare and eat communal meals.



Crates of food supplies as well as barrels of water, wine and spirits rest here.

The Machine: This strange machine keeps the tower air-tight and provides breathable air. When the PCs first see it, Lucas warns them against touching it.

“This far down we’d never stand a chance. The water’d rush in though the windows and doors, slamming everything around, and we’d be done. So, for all our sakes, leave the damned thing alone, eh?”

B3. Atria

This semicircular chamber’s outer wall is completely transparent, revealing a breathtaking view of the ocean world outside. Stone benches provide places to sit and observe. More color-shifting sigils provide a dim, rippling light.

When not in her chambers, Lady Olhouser lingers in these beautiful rooms, gazing out at the undersea view.

B4. Lucas Cabral’s Chambers

Lucas keeps his room messy and unkempt. Three trunks rest against one wall, partially open. Hand-drawn maps decorate walls, a few crude-looking spears and weapons occupy one corner and various plants litter the floor.

Clues: The spears have red leather wrappings matching those stuck in Lord Olhouser’s corpse.

Treasure: One trunk’s false bottom (DC 25 Perception check) holds a ceremonial mongrelman mask (100gp) given in friendship by the mongrelman chief.

B5. Supply and Storage

Crates and boxes bearing the Olhouser sigil fill this chamber.

This room holds expedition supplies. There is a 50% chance of finding any non-magical Core Rulebook item people need. Fynn sleeps here nightly.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check after 1d4 hours searching uncovers a small box marked for the Church of Seggotan in Barsella containing 6 cure light wounds potions.

B6. Moon Seal Chamber

Cunningly carved pictograms, more shifting and glowing runes, strange diagrams and eye-twisting symbols cover every available wall of this chamber, apart from the large circular window.

Professor Dolynn spends most of her time here studying the mosaics on the walls and making notes. The mosaics depict the periodic rebirth of Selles, the Lunar Eel. Professor Dolynn has found hidden symbols in the mosaic which say six Moon Seals have been hidden around the Western Ocean. If all six Moon Seals are found, they can be used to perform a ritual to ease Selles’s rebirth and prevent the earthquakes and tidal waves that normally occur in the western Ocean during this process.

B7. Empty Chamber (Tunnel Entrance)

This chamber features a stone table below one of the large circular windows and stone shelves along one wall.

Lucas cleared this room but it’s currently unused.

The mosaic floor cleverly conceals a hatch (DC 18 Perception check to find; DC 20 Disable Device to open). It leads into the Leviathan’s interior.

After Lord Olhouser’s murder, clues remain here (see Event A3 for more).

B8. Grand Balcony

A waist-high marble railing circles this second-story balcony overlooking the Grand Hall below. The stairs continue upward.

The tower’s other floors are identical to this one. Lucas found nothing meaningful in them, but sealed their corridor doors with heavy padlocks and shimmed them with pitons, just in case. The stairs rise to the roof hatch (Event C3) that will not open if the tower’s top is submerged.

B9. Lord Olhouser’s Room

This chamber looks like an explorer’s dwelling. Maps adorn walls and shelves are filled with books. Several closed chests flank the bed. Sheets of notes, open books, and writing implements litter the table.

Clues: One book (*Flora of Maillon*) contains a letter dated before the expedition left Barsella a letter dated from before the expedition left Barsella. Half of a silver locket decorated with moon symbols is bound to the letter’s wax seal. A picture of a young pretty woman is inside. The letter says:

You will pay for abandoning her. You will pay for spurning her love. You will pay for the broken heart that killed her. What the two of you made will bring about your death.

While Alyce murders Hagen, Delgrade slips a forged will into one of the chests. Thereafter a successful DC 10 Perception check discovers it. The forgery leaves all real estate and personal possessions of the family to Lady Olhouser, but leaves control of the Olhouser business interests to Delgrade Agador. A DC 15 Linguistics check reveals it is a forgery.

Treasure: Masterwork leather armor, masterwork light crossbow, masterwork rapier.

B10. Hagen’s Room

Hagen’s room appears to be decorated by someone who seeks to impress. Gaudy weapons adorn one wall. An armor stand holds an elaborate black and gold plate mail embellished with the Olhouser sigil. Bear skin rugs flank the silk-sheeted bed. Leather chairs provide comfortable seating and a collapsible wine-rack holds many bottles.

The weapons are unsharpened, poor quality steel, and the armor’s metal is paper thin.

Clues: A trapped, locked coffer (DC 20 Disable Device), stashed behind the armor stand (DC 15 Perception), holds papers outlining the sale of the Olhouser fleet to finance several Barsellan ship-building concerns.

Coffer Trap (CR 1): Poison dart trap (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook*)

Hagen stuffed the towel he used to clean up after murdering his father inside his mattress (DC 20 Perception). It has blood stains and telltale yellow and white dust on it.

After Alyce murders Hagen, additional clues appear here (see Event A6).

Treasure: The wine rack contains 4 bottles of particularly fine Agnu Burgundies (50gp each).

B11. Professor Dolynn's Room

Large books, tomes and scrolls sit in stacks around the room and fill three sizable chests. Diagrams, maps and more books rest on the table.

Clues: A series of love letters a young Lord Olhouser sent Professor Dolynn years ago rest in a stack bound with blue ribbon beneath the bed's mattress (DC 15 Perception).

B12. Bertram and Alyce's Room

Several chests and pieces of luggage sit neatly against one wall. Folded clothes hang on a rack, and the bed is neatly made up. A small basket of dried herb bundles and flowers fills the room with a sweet, summery scent.

Clues: Alyce's pouch containing 3 doses of dust of illusion lies hidden in the herb basket (DC 15 Perception). Alyce keeps 4 more doses in her belt pouch.

Half of Alyce's mother's silver locket (silver with moon symbols and a picture of a young Lord Olhouser inside) hides beneath a chest's false bottom (DC 15 Perception). She attached the other half to the message found in Lord Olhouser's room.

Treasure: Bertram's small book collection on games of chance and gambling strategies is worth about 100gp.

B13. Empty Bedchamber

This bed chamber features a stone pallet below one of the large circular windows, stone shelves and a solid marble table.

Lucas placed several feather mattresses here.

B14. Delgrade Agador's Room

Orderliness defines this chamber. A table serves as a writing desk, and a clothes press awaits its next task.

Clues: A successful DC 10 Linguistics check made examining the desk reveals sufficient seals, special inks and other tools to create legal documents.

Treasure: A copy of the Olhouser seal on the desk is worth 75gp.

B15. Margat Olhouser's Room

Richly appointed furniture creates an atmosphere of wealth and comfort not easily found in this barren tower. A mahogany wardrobe dominates one side, tapestries hang on the walls, and an ornamental screen provides a private dressing area.

Clues: A DC 15 Perception check reveals a shoe missing a silver buckle hidden in the wardrobe. The buckle matches the one found in the mongrelman den (see Event A5).

Treasure: A jewelry box contains 483gp worth of various jewelry and gems.

PART C: END GAME

When the Olhousers are all dead or the PCs have ruined her plans, Alyce goes for broke by trying to kill all remaining witnesses. She uses a scroll of suggestion on Bertram convincing him that if he does not destroy the device in the Great Hall, she will be murdered like the others. He vows to do so, immediately leaping to the task. Alyce flees towards the roof (Event C3).

C1. Sabotage

Wherever the PCs are, they hear hammering and yelling from the Great Hall.

Bertram stands on the crystal device, a sledgehammer in his hands raining down blow after blow, sending mechanical parts and crystal chips flying.

Available NPCs who reach the Great Hall before the PCs try to stop the crazed young man but he eludes them. If captured, Bertram babbles that he needs to protect Alyce from the murderer. Casting *detect magic* will reveal a faint enchantment aura on Bertram, consistent with a *suggestion* spell.

Alyce lingers on the fifth floor to watch. Whenever the PCs begin pursuing her, the device finally shatters, collapsing into shards of crystal and metal.

A grinding shudder shakes the tower and the air pressure changes violently. The tower windows begin cracking, spraying plumes of icy seawater. Several explode inward, sending water torrents across the Great Hall's floor. Then, suddenly, the whole tower surges upward at an angle.

"The beast is rising," Lucas croaks. "But we ain't got that long!"

The NPCs scream and run for the stairs.

C2. Fighting Upriver

As the rush up the stairs begins, more windows burst inward. Water rains down the tower's central shaft in a sudden waterfall that cascades down the staircases carrying masonry, glass, and other debris.

On every other floor, each climber must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid 1d4 damage from falling debris and a DC 10 Acrobatics check or Reflex save to avoid slipping in the streaming water (failure incurs 1d4 damage).

The top stairway leads to a ceiling hatch. If Alyce reaches it first, she climbs onto the roof and slams the hatch. It has no lock.

C3. Rooftop Confrontation

If she has time before any PCs emerge, Alyce summons 4 small water elementals with her wand. They lurk in the water covering the rooftop. She then readies a quickened water blast and an aqueous orb.

Bright sunlight shines down on the Bubble Tower's flat, 55 foot radius circular rooftop. Two feet of sloshing water cover the entire platform. The Leviathan's forward motion sends a salty spray showering across the rooftop's western side, and only the three-foot wide wall of marble holds back the churning ocean beyond.

Treat the rooftop as a shallow bog. Alyce stands on the far side, trying to knock the first melee combatant prone and capture as many as possible in an aqueous orb, greeting PCs thereafter with, "Glad you could make it".

During combat she taunts the PCs about her plans.

Alyce Nox, Wildblooded Seaborn Sorcerer CR 7

XP 3,200
hp 50
(See Appendix A)

4 Small Water Elementals CR 1

hp 13 (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)

PART D: CONCLUSION

The Leviathan surfaces at last. As water streams off the island's back, the mangrove trees spring up out of their coral casings to wave in the slight breeze.

The Leviathan finishes surfacing minutes after the battle with Alyce concludes. The surviving NPCs, battered and water-logged, tumble out onto the rooftop. Shortly, the Walrus appears in the distance searching for them. The Gull's Wing did not escape the plunging Leviathan.

Aftermath

- If the PCs capture Alyce and any of the Olhousers survived, they escort the murderess to Barsella for trial and the PCs find themselves with a powerful patron for future endeavors.
- If the PCs manage to discover that Lady Olhouser murdered her husband, Lucas and Professor Dolynn escort her back to Barsella for trial. The PCs could be called to give accounts during such a trial.
- If Lady Olhouser died and the PCs failed to capture Alyce, the murderess returns to Barsella where she assumes control of the Olhouser family interests. She becomes a powerful ongoing foe for the PCs for fear they know the truth of the events here.
- If the PCs saved Lady Olhouser but failed to capture Alyce, the murderess plots to finish the job against the Olhousers and the adventurers who prevented her from getting revenge.
- Bertram blames the PCs for the loss of his only love and devotes himself to punishing them. He can become a worthy adversary or a comedic one depending on the campaign.
- The Bubble Tower repairs itself after 1d4 weeks.

APPENDIX A:

Alyce Nox

CR 7

XP 3,200
Female human sorcerer (Wildblooded/Seaborn†) 8
LE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +7; **Senses** Aquatic Blindsight 30 ft; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 shield)
hp 50 (8d6+16)
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8
Resist cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft; **Swim** 30 ft.
Melee dagger +5 (1d4+1/19-20/x2)
Ranged touch +7
Special Attacks aquatic telepathy* (100 ft) (CL 12th, 6/day, DC 19)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +14)
6/day – dehydrating touch* (CL 6th), water blast* (DC 22)
3/day – quickened water blast† (DC 22)
Sorcerer (Wildblooded) Spells Known (CL 8; concentration +14):
4 (4/day) *daze*, *mass* (DC 20)
3 (6/day) *lightning bolt* (DC 19), *aqueous orb** (DC 19), *hydraulic torrent**
2 (8/day) *slipstream* (DC 18), *mirror image* (DC 18), *blur* (DC 18),
scorching ray
1 (8/day) *magic missile*, *shield* (DC 17), *expeditious retreat* (DC 17), *mage armor* (DC 17), *hydraulic push**, *obscuring mist*
0 (at will) *acid splash*, *read magic* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation* (DC 16), *message*, *light*, *spark** (DC 16)

TACTICS

Before Combat Alyce casts mirror image and blur after summoning the small water elementals. Mage armor and shield already cast and calculated above.

During Combat Alyce uses the elementals and quickened water blasts to keep melee combatants away. She favors aqueous orbs, followed by lightning bolts to finish off foes.

Morale If reduced to 15 hp, Alyce will dive into the sea using her swim speed to take her to safety.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Feats Deceitful, Eldritch Heritage† (dehydrating touch*), Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (water blast), Skill Focus (Swim), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +10, Disguise +12, Perception +7, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +14, Swim+13, Use Magic Device +17

Languages Common, Aquan, Common, Draconic, Elven; aquatic telepathy 100ft

SQ seaborn bloodline arcanaf

Combat Gear Dagger; **Other Gear** *Handy Haversack*, *Headband of Alluring Charisma* +2, *Ring of Mind Shielding*, *Robes of Arcane Heritage**, 2 potions of *invisibility*, 2 elixirs of *hiding*, scroll of *summon monster IV*, wand of *create greater undead* (2 charges, CL 17), wand of *command undead* (3 charges, CL 17), 4 doses of dust of illusion, lesser necklace of strangulation

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*

† See *Ultimate Magic*

ADVENTURES

THE SHIP THAT NEVER WAS



TED REED

“The Ship that Never Was” sweeps five 7th-level PCs into a high-seas rescue adventure leading to an astonishing galleon as the ultimate reward.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Few ships inspired more loyalty than the magnificent galleon, The Last Vagabond. Few commanders were more adventurous or beloved by their crews than her captain, Illyria Rashellas. The ship and her captain inspired such loyalty that many crewmates who died returned to continue their service as ghostly crewmates. To aid this, The Last Vagabond has a magical figurehead of eternity, binding willing sailors' spirits after death and grants the ghost touch quality to the ship and its equipment. The captain rewarded each crew's loyalty with a small ownership share in the galleon. Captain Rashellas named the vessel The Last Vagabond after the Western Ocean legend of The Vagabond, the legendary ship supposedly so magical one man alone could sail her.

Now that the captain is dead, and all her crew are ghosts, one man actually could.

A herald of darkness masquerading as a bold explorer named Algernon Rake won Captain Rashellas's trust. It planned to sacrifice her, assume her appearance, and seize her ship. Rake convinced the captain to harvest forgotten Meshong-Lir treasures three nights ago, when it knew Meshong-Lir would rise. Only the 12-year-old cabin boy caught glimpses of Rake's monstrous identity, and he never told what he saw. Upon landing on Meshong-Lir, Rake led the captain and her landing party into a gulf enclave for horrid sacrifice, body and soul, to Noth-Nyarthogu. Captain Rashellas, however, wounded Rake grievously before succumbing. Rake survived but failed to reach the ship before the island sank. When the island went under, its suction pulled The Last Vagabond against its side, where a horizontal, titan-sized angel of death statue caught its rigging, dragging the ship into the ocean. All crewmates died, but many returned as ghosts.

Sunk or not, the herald of darkness still wants The Last Vagabond and its ghostly crew for itself.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Sailing just north of the Savage Isles through a nighttime storm, the PCs rescue a mariner named Thoros Wayfarer, found adrift on flotsam. Simultaneously, a Savage-Isles pygmy ritual raises Meshong-Lir from the depths, heaving up a towering tidal wave. Just as Thoros tells the PCs secrets about his quest to find The Vagabond, the wave smashes the PCs' ship against a promontory, plunging all into the sea.

When the PCs and shipmates crawl ashore in different Savage Isle coves, flesh-eating pygmy war bands attack. They capture the crew and perhaps some PCs. If captured PCs fail to escape, pygmies ferry them by outrigger canoe to Meshong-Lir, along with all other captives, including Thoros. Free PCs must defeat a totem-pole golem guardian to steal an outrigger and pursue.

The canted tops of colossal, submerged pillars breach the waves at Meshong-Lir's foot. Here, in pre-dawn darkness, pygmies abandon bound prisoners and their valuables as sacrifices to Noth-Nyarthogu. Whether the PCs escape their bonds now or arrive by outrigger, they must rescue surviving crew from nightmarish horrors.

Thoros warns that Meshong-Lir sinks at dawn. Two-hundred feet above, however, up the face of a vertically tipped titan graveyard, The Last Vagabond precariously hangs on horizontal obelisks, the statue still entangling its rigging. Everyone must climb to reach it. On gravestones

jutting like platforms far above the churning surf, they battle another abomination. If the PCs can befriend an ancient titan ghost inside a broken mausoleum, she presents vital information about heralds of darkness.

On board the ship, the PCs learn they need the ghostly crew to sail the ship. Although this crew cannot sail without a living captain, the crew has the power to choose one. Thoros vies charismatically for command. Thoros is actually the veiled herald of darkness once calling itself Rake. The PCs must unmask Thoros, likely aided by insights from the terrified cabin boy's ghost, and defeat the villain before Meshong-Lir sinks beneath them. Can they win the spectral crew, free the ship when the waters rise, and sail up and out of the sinking island's quarter-mile-wide vortex to claim The Last Vagabond?

The PCs' Ship and Shipmates

If the PCs lack their own ship or acquire one to set up this adventure, a multi-deck ship of small to moderate size, like a caravel, small carrack, or large, multi-deck cog, works best. Likewise, at least ten crew and several passengers help. Numerous people trapped inside multiple flooding decks ensure an exciting shipwreck scene. Further, in the climax, the PCs need as many deckhands as possible to sail The Last Vagabond out of the vortex.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs may be sailing north of the Savage Isles for a number of reasons, including:

- A church hired them to ferry missionaries from Barsella to Kammae's Landing ("Hell's Hole") or another isolated colony in or west of the Savage Isles;
- Storms, pirates, or monsters drive them into unknown waters;
- Rumors of Meshong-Lir's glorious treasures or terrible magics lure them, perhaps guided by Lucas Cabral or Professor Dolynn, following clues etched into the Bubble Tower's walls in "Murder, Fathoms Below," or
- The crew sails aimlessly, their memories erased through the magics of the Morphoi

The adventure assumes the PCs want to rescue captured shipmates and learn Thoros Wayfarer's secrets. Other possible motivations include:

- Recovering a valuable treasure or magic item a shipmate carries; or
- Learning a crucial secret a passenger knows but has not shared.

PART ONE: FURIES OF THE SEA

One Man's Last Stand (EL 5)

The storm plunged the sea into premature twilight hours ago. Now, on the darkening edge of true nightfall, gale-force northeasterly winds howl and churn the ocean into heaving swells, making the ship pitch and roll. Curtains of rain race sideways, frequently cutting sight to a few yards. Lightning sears the northern skies, its cacophonous thunder shaking the ship mere heartbeats later.

The PCs' ship passes a half mile north of the unnamed Savage Isle located two islands east of Dakara-Nor. Northeasterly severe winds blow (Core Rulebook, Table 13-10: Wind Effects). Allow PCs on deck a DC 25 Perception check to notice the shattered remnants of another ship almost dead ahead. If no PC succeeds, a shipmate notices, calling the alarm:

Through the sheets of dark rain, an irregular raft or piece of a ship's hull appears, rising and falling with the waves. A humanoid figure kneels at its center. The flotsam tips upward as a large, dark form appears at its sinking edge. The humanoid clings to the surface while lashing out with something at tentacles reaching across the platform.

Creatures: The platform is a wrecked ship's main deck fragment, roughly square, 20 feet across. A devilfish chased the herald of darkness formerly disguised as Rake up onto the flotsam. The herald spotted the PCs' ship and veiled itself as Thoros Wayfarer, a tall, handsome, rakish human male just past middle age with a short gray beard, long salt-and-pepper hair, and a sapphire earring. Thoros wears a torn adventurer's outfit with a buccaneer's design. Numerous scars and fresh bruises cover his skin. His captivating voice rumbles like a long trip over too much gravel road.

THOROS WAYFARER

CR 8

Advanced Herald of Darkness (see page 26)

XP 4,800

hp 103

Melee +2 keen rapier +12 (1d6+5/15-20), or 4 tentacles +14 (1d8+5 plus grab plus accursed eye curse)

Special Attacks accursed eye curse (DC 22)

Spell-Like Abilities Increase all DCs by +3

TACTICS

Tactics. Thoros fights aggressively, putting on a good show, as described below. He only casts charm monster if the devilfish drags him underwater.

STATISTICS

Abilities Cha 26

Skills Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Intimidate, and Use Magic Device are all +20; Profession (sailor) +10; increase all other skills by +2

Combat Gear 6 potions of eagle's splendor (all in a single flask)

Other Gear +2 rapier, ring of counterspells (dispel magic)

ADVANCED DEVILFISH

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

TACTICS

Tactics The devilfish attacks the closest creature, dragging it underwater before biting. Successful ranged attacks or loss of 20 hp make it attack the platform from underneath, destroying it in 4 rounds, then attacking whoever falls in.

Morale It flees if reduced below 10 hp.

Thoros initially pretends not to notice the PCs' ship, acting with deliberate, audacious bravado, fending off the devilfish with his rapier as his platform disintegrates around him. Although his battle looks desperate, he shouts at the sky, "The wave you sent didn't kill me, so now you send monsters? But only one? You gods are fools! You should have sent legions!"

The PCs' ship reaches Thoros's platform in 2 rounds. To pass just beside the platform requires one successful DC 20 driving check either round. (See *Ultimate Combat*, Vehicles, Propulsion and Driving Checks, or use Profession [sailor] checks.) Failure by less than 5 puts the platform 3d6+10 feet away. Greater failure strikes the platform, destroying it and doing minimal damage to the PCs' ship. Thoros dives away, but the devilfish takes ramming damage (see *Ultimate Combat*, Vehicles, Table: Ramming Damage by Size).

Swimming in the stormy water requires a DC 20 Swim check, which Thoros always makes. Climbing onto the platform requires a DC 10 Climb check. Treat the pitching, slick platform as an Ice Sheet (*Core Rulebook*, Environment, Wilderness, Desert Terrain). It has 20 hp and hardness 5.

SECRETS AND LEGENDS

Thoros' Role

Thoros seeks to impress the PCs and crew into accompanying him to The Last Vagabond. With their support, he hopes to convince its undead crew to name him captain. To ensure support, particularly from the PCs' crew, he acts with heroic daring throughout this adventure.

Keep his PC interactions here brief. The tidal wave hits once Thoros piques their interest.

Thoros' Tale

A brilliant mind and experienced deceiver, Thoros strives to tell only truths while conversing. All statements listed below are true, if not complete. Thoros readily volunteers he has secrets he keeps to himself about his past and his quest. This likely diffuses the impact of successful Sense Motive checks giving one a hunch Thoros holds back information. He demands respect for his personal space, grinning widely while tossing out admonitions like, "Don't you know never to touch a captain without

permission?!” He knows touching could give someone looking for something amiss a chance to pierce his veil spell-like ability.

Once aboard the PCs ship, Thoros expresses gratitude. He immediately pulls out his copper flask, says, “To your health,” and drinks a potion of eagle’s splendor, coughing like it is harsh whisky.

Who are you? Thoros openly admits to being a seafaring wanderer who travels many of the world’s waters seeking knowledge long forgotten and prizes beyond compare. “I’m an old soul who belongs to the sea. I’m a brilliant captain, a mediocre swordsman, and a terrible drunk, although I’ve been told I’m an entertaining drunk. I have devoted friends in Barsella, mortal enemies in Karn’Lothra, and a nereid near Terminus waiting for me with a kiss, but I don’t know what kind. I’ve told more than my share of lies, but I think those to whom I’ve told the naked truth are the only ones who fear me. I’ve found more treasure than most could spend in ten lifetimes and have none left to prove it.”

What happened to your ship/crew? “I will not tell you all. My secrets are my own to keep, and not all tales are fit for such a night in dark waters, where a wave that’s meant for you alone can come against the wind. Suffice to say, the ship I loved went down beneath me, and all hands were lost but myself. The Gods of Betrayal always want their due, and one I had called my true friend turned on me at the worst moment. Her attack prevented my saving the ship. I failed. And I would strive to give all the crewmates who perished something better than a cold grave in the ocean’s depths, should their ghosts ever haunt my wake.” He will not say more.

What were you doing here? Thoros admits he nears his greatest quest’s end. If pressed, he holds back for a time before whispering, “I’ve found the greatest ship that ever was, The Vagabond. There’s never been a ship like her! Surely you know the tale?” A successful Knowledge (history) or (local) check lets one recall all information with DCs below the success level:

The Last Vagabond Legend	
DC	Information
12	The Vagabond is a magnificent galleon of legend.
17	She’s so magical, one man alone can sail her.
22	All parts of the ship are animate, moving to the captain’s commands as if handled by an experienced crew.
26	She’s a warship, heavily armored and armed, her siege weapons firing at her captain’s command.
30	Only the ship’s rightful captain can command her. When one dies, the ship picks another based on his seamanship, wanderlust, and thirst for adventure.

Thoros knows this information but prefers to let others tell it, giving the tale more credence. “I have seen her, and she’s abandoned,” he adds. “I believe I’m the only mariner alive who knows her location. She’s in these very waters, although the fates conspire to dangle her just beyond my reach.” In no circumstances will he reveal her location or plight. If the PCs seem interested, he asks their aid reaching her, offering half of all treasure aboard not essential to ship operation.

Tidal Wave (EL Varies)

When the pygmy ritual causes Meshong-Lir to rise, the ensuing tidal wave crashes the PCs’ ship against a massive promontory. Because different players running this adventure will have different ships and shipmates,

no tightly crafted shipwreck encounter works for all. Instead, this scene provides guidelines requiring some advance preparation to ensure a harrowing, memorable event.

Scene Sequence:

- 1. The Tidal Wave Hits:** It destroys the ship and washes many NPCs, and perhaps PCs, overboard.
- 2. The Sinking Ship:** The PCs rescue NPCs and retrieve gear from the sinking ship before taking to the waves.
- 3. Escaping the Wave:** Simultaneously, PCs washed overboard struggle to escape the tidal wave.
- 4. Adrift:** Waves carry swimmers to shore.

Weather Northeasterly winds climb to windstorm levels (Core Rulebook Table 13-10). Lightning provides the only natural illumination, and driving rain often limits visibility to virtually nothing. Even with light, anyone swimming can see only to the tops of surrounding waves. Swim checks face stormy water conditions. Wind, blinding rain, and darkness should prevent even flying and magically-assisted-swimming PCs from tracking everyone in the water. The wind and smaller tsunami swells following the tidal wave push swimmers and floaters south-southwest towards shore.

Preparing the Scene

Unless the PCs sail alone, place many shipmates topside including Thoros and anyone the PCs will particularly want to rescue. The tidal wave automatically sweeps most overboard, setting up people to rescue from sacrifice later in the adventure. The wave-and-promontory collision shatters masts, sweeps decks clean, and breaks off decking and hull sections, giving swimmers buoyant objects to grasp.

Before running this scene, anticipate what tasks the PCs will likely pursue immediately after the wave passes based on your group’s composition. For adventuring gear and other items stored below that the PCs will likely want, decide each item’s location and the difficulty of reaching it through the foundering ship. Decide each shipmate’s location, which become trapped, by what, and the severity of each one’s injuries. Set DCs for Strength checks to free pinned shipmates, Swim checks to rescue non-swimmers, and Survival checks to navigate the flooding blackness. For ideas, consult the Below-Decks Sinking Hazards table, below. Limit the ship’s sinking duration to a number of rounds within which PCs can accomplish several but not all of these tasks. Don’t be afraid to rule out at least one instance of serendipity, as a character who performed a selfless act sees their pack float past on a piece of flotsam.

Effect of Scene

This sequence should separate the PCs from NPCs they value most, so they land in different coves, precluding the PCs from protecting them from pygmy capture. Unless you’re comfortable with a split party, the characters should arrive relatively close to each other.

1. The Tidal Wave Hits

As rain momentarily slackens, lightning allows a DC 20 Perception check to spot the wave 3 rounds before it hits. If no PC sees it, a sailor shouts, “No, no, by the Gods, LOOK STARBOARD!”

The ship suddenly stops rolling on regular swells and begins listing continuously to the north. A deep roar grows from that direction. A dark shadow emerges from the darkness, stretching to both sides like a wall. Lightning flashes, revealing a cresting wave so large it seems to move impossibly slowly as it eats up more and more sky.

The wave slams the ship against a massive coral promontory exposed by the lowering sea before the wave. The impact irreparably splinters the hull and destroys any smaller boats aboard.

2. The Sinking Ship Topside

PCs on deck or in the rigging who did not secure themselves must make a DC 20 Reflex save, or the wave washes them overboard. Those secured still risk battering injuries. The wave sweeps most passengers and crew away.

Each person remaining topside after the wave passes faces a Sinking Hazard each round:

Topside Sinking Hazards			
D20	Event	Reflex Save DC to avoid	Effect
1-14	No event	—	—
15-16	Equipment, container, or wreckage slides	15	1d6 damage, 50% chance pinned, DC 12 Strength or Escape Artist check to escape
17-18	Rope snaps, whipping through air	20	1d4 damage
19	Rigging falls	15	2d4 damage, entangled, DC 20 Strength or Escape Artist check to escape
20	Deck section collapses	20	Fall into lower deck

Below Decks

Anyone below when the collision occurs must make a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid collapsing structures that inflict 1d6 bludgeoning damage and pin the victim. Escaping a pin requires a successful DC 15 Strength or Escape Artist check, or a successful CMB check against a 20 CMD. Down here, 80% of nonmagical lights go out; some may start fires. Anyone in submerged areas needs a successful DC 15 Survival check each round to avoid disorientation. Each person faces a Sinking Hazard each round:

Below-Decks Sinking Hazards			
D20	Event	Reflex Save DC to Avoid	Effect
1-11	No event	—	—
12-13	Explosion of water	15	Knocked prone, 1d6 nonlethal damage, flames extinguished
14	Sudden water rise	—	Movement halved first round, must swim second round, chamber submerged third round
15-16	Equipment, container, or wreckage slides or tumbles through water	15	1d6 damage, 50% chance pinned, DC 12 Strength or Escape Artist check to escape
17	Door or hatch jams shut	—	DC 13 Strength check to burst
18	Wall segment collapses	15	1d6 damage, pinned, DC 15 Strength or Escape Artist check to escape
19	Floor collapses	20	Fall into lower deck; if already on hull, treat as explosion of water first round and sudden water rise thereafter
20	Ceiling segment collapses	20	2d4 damage, pinned, DC 20 Strength or Escape Artist check to escape

Story Awards: Award 100 XP for each Sinking Hazard overcome and 300 xp for each NPC saved from sinking with the ship.

3. Escaping the Wave

Anyone swept away has 10 rounds to escape the tidal wave before it crashes ashore, inflicting 8d6 bludgeoning damage. Until they escape, victims need Swim checks each round whose cumulative benefits vary with success level. One cannot take 10 on these checks:

Swim DC	Successes Needed	Effect
10	1 each round	Avoid 1 nonlethal damage
15	2 consecutive	Surface for air
20	2 non-consecutive	Escape behind the wave

Assume most NPCs escape the wave and seize floating wreckage.

4. Adrift

Wind and waves scatter survivors widely in the darkness but propel those merely clinging to wreckage to shore in 20 minutes. Groups clinging to the same wreckage stay together. Otherwise, each person needs a DC 15 Swim check each round to avoid separating by 10 feet. Once beyond sight in the darkness, waves, and wind, one needs a DC 20 Survival check to find someone, increasing by +1 for every 10 feet beyond sight. The PCs land in one cove (unless they become separated), while those from whom they become separated wash up in different ones.

PART TWO: SAVAGERY OF THE ISLES

Cliffs form the island's northern front. Coves line the escarpment's base, separated from each other by large areas of naked cliff. Shipwreck survivors land in these coves.

Several miles west, the red-lit, nightmarish pygmy village Wealraw encrusts the broken tiers of an ancient titan ruin on the cliff top. Its shaman led the sacrificial ritual that raised Meshong-Lir. She receives startlingly prescient visions ever since she accepted a herald of darkness' patronage. Today's vision showed humanoids washing ashore after the accursed isle rises. She dispatched war parties to collect and ferry them to Meshong-Lir for sacrifice to their new, terrible god, Noth-Nyarthogu.

Weather: As the PCs come ashore, winds shift southeasterly and drop to severe. In coves, cliffs cut winds to strong.

Welcoming Party (EL 8)

This encounter assumes the PCs reach shore together. If not, they land in separate coves with similar encounters. For smaller groups, reduce pygmy numbers or remove the golem.

Cut into a sheer, looming cliff, a small cove with a rocky floor rises back from the pounding surf.

Creatures: A four-pygmy hunting party awaits behind rocks, blowguns readied. A totem pole golem under their command stands motionless. The map places the golem at the exit trail's foot. If breakers slew the PCs ashore in a tumble, consider placing the motionless golem at the surf's edge, so they wash up at its base.

A flash of lightning reveals a broad, 20-foot-tall totem pole of utterly black wood looming against the sky. Five bestial heads in a stack, primitively carved, glare in all directions through demonic features.

SAVAGE ISLES PYGMIES (4)

CR 3

XP 800

hp 30 (see page 27)

TACTICS

Tactics If the PCs approach the golem, it waits until they enter melee reach, then tries to swallow one. Once it attacks, pygmies blow poisoned darts. If the PCs skirt the golem, pygmies fire poisoned darts, then charge before the PCs can climb from the cove, swarming the largest foe. If the golem swallows a PC, it marches off to the outrigger-launch coves, the pygmies covering its retreat.

Morale Each pygmy flees if reduced to 10 hp or if all allies fall or flee.

TOTEM POLE GOLEM

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 70 (see page 75)

TACTICS

Tactics See pygmy tactics, above.

Morale The golem fights until destroyed.

Development. If the pygmies capture PCs, use the Captured! encounter below.



Captured! (EL Varies)

Captured Castaways

War parties capture shipmates washing up in other coves. Most patrols have 10 or more pygmies and a golem. Pygmies disarm, blindfold, and bind conscious prisoners' arms, tie a short cord between their legs, then hook them all in a line with multiple fish hooks on a long, gut-line tether, inflicting 1d2 damage. It takes a DC 24 Escape Artist or Strength check to slip these bonds. Each attempt inflicts 1 damage as the hooks tear tissue. Victims cannot take 20 while pygmies prod them along. Golems carry or swallow unconscious prisoners.

Setting Sail

The war bands climb from the coves and march prisoners west by lantern light along cliff-top trails. All then descend into numerous, two-level coves closer to Wealraw, where they keep outrigger canoes. They lower outriggers to the water, boarding with captives. Dozens of outriggers sail for Meshong-Lir 22 miles away, the line of red lights from their lanterns pointing northeast.

Escape

If pygmies capture one or more PCs, they place them in storage huts above their launch coves while spending 2d6 minutes preparing their outriggers. Two pygmies guard outside, watching the launch preparations, only occasionally entering to poke prisoners. The opaque thatch walls prevent outsiders from seeing inside. A DC 13 Strength check bursts a wall section, or one can unweave a 2-foot-square section in five minutes with a DC 15 Disable Device or Dexterity check.

If captive PCs don't escape here, a last chance arises at the sacrificial site.

Story Award Award 500 XP to anyone escaping without outside help.

Stealing a Boat (EL 7 or 9)

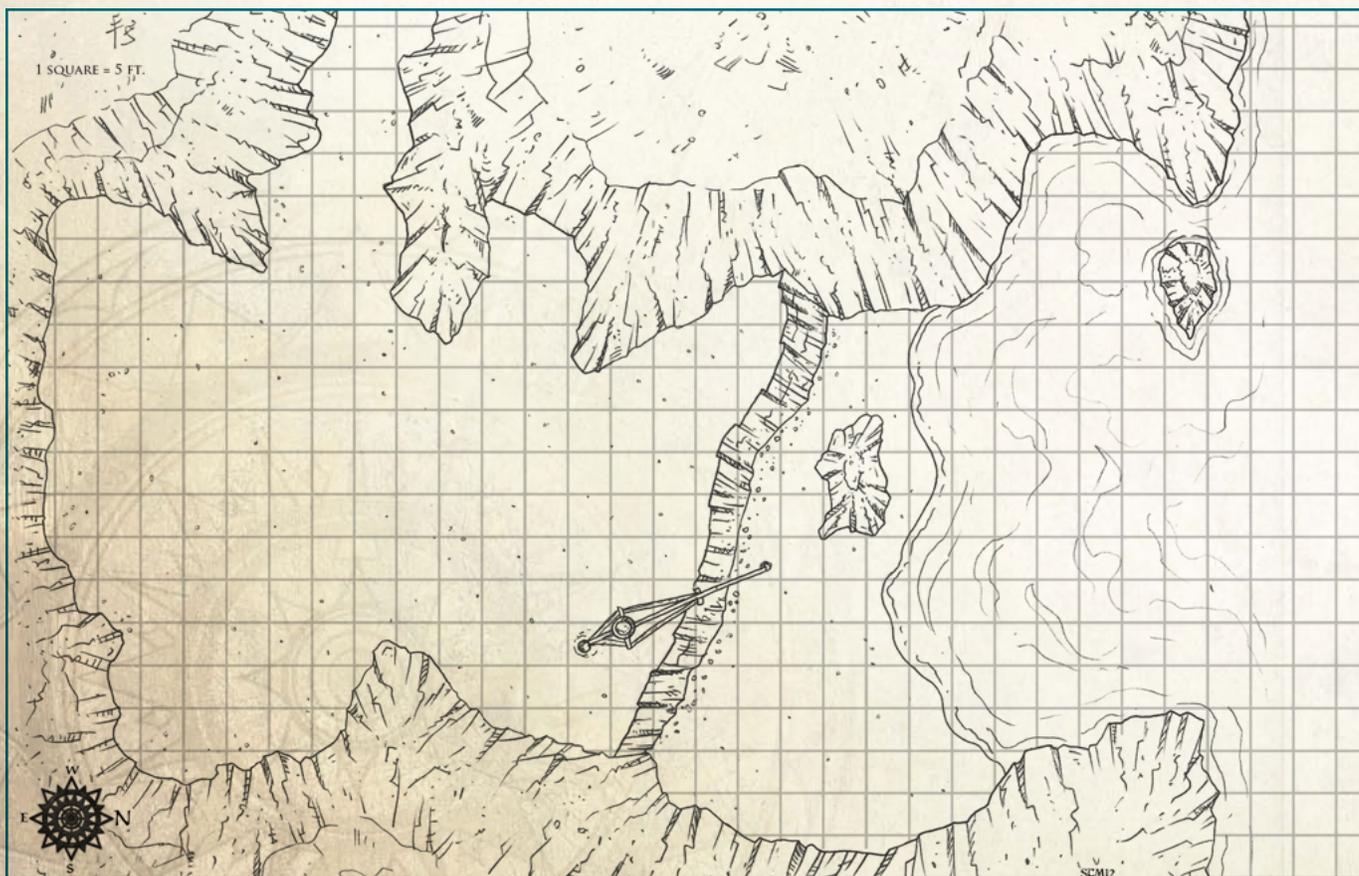
Weather: Winds diminish to strong, and the rains stop. Skies remain overcast, but the range of visibility returns to normal.

Outrigger Cove

Free PCs without long-range flying magic will need a boat to pursue the pygmy flotilla. Several poorly maintained outriggers (35 hp) remain in the top sections of coves now free of pygmies. Several people can lower the canoes down the 25-foot cliff with a dangerous-looking but functional cranes of branches, twine, and rock-bag counterbalances.

Two people can slide an outrigger 10 feet each round with one DC 18 Strength check. Understanding the crane requires a DC 12 Knowledge (engineering) or DC 20 Intelligence check. Lowering an outrigger takes 1 round to pivot it over the cliff and 2 more to lower it. Each round requires a DC 10 Dexterity check to operate the crane and a DC 18 Strength check. For different reasons, failing each check inflicts 1d6+3 damage (minus 3 hardness):

Round	Failure Result
1st	Outrigger slides off edge too quickly, banging against cliff face, causing crane to creak, shudder, and list forward
2nd	Outrigger freefalls 15 feet before catching, hitting cliff face, pulling crane partially from foundation
3rd	Outrigger falls to ground



The outrigger acquires the Broken Condition at 20 hp (see *Ultimate Combat*, Vehicles, Vehicles in Combat, Damaging a Vehicle).

Creatures: A golem guards the top section, attacking non-pygmyes failing to shout the password “Gnah-dinn!” The cliff protrusion between the trail and golem blocks sight, but the golem does not otherwise hide.

ADVANCED TOTEM POLE GOLEM CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 88 (see page 75)

TACTICS

The golem fires a poison dart at the intruder first approaching, then charges. It doesn't directly damage outriggers or the crane or pursue beyond the cove. It fights until destroyed.

While the PCs are lowering an outrigger, a giant mosquito that hunts these coves attacks.

OVERSIZED GIANT MOSQUITO (GIANT TEMPLATE) CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 78 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

TACTICS

The mosquito attacks the most vulnerable PC, like one struggling to hold lines lowering the outrigger. It flees if reduced to 10 hp.

PYGMY OUTRIGGER CANOE

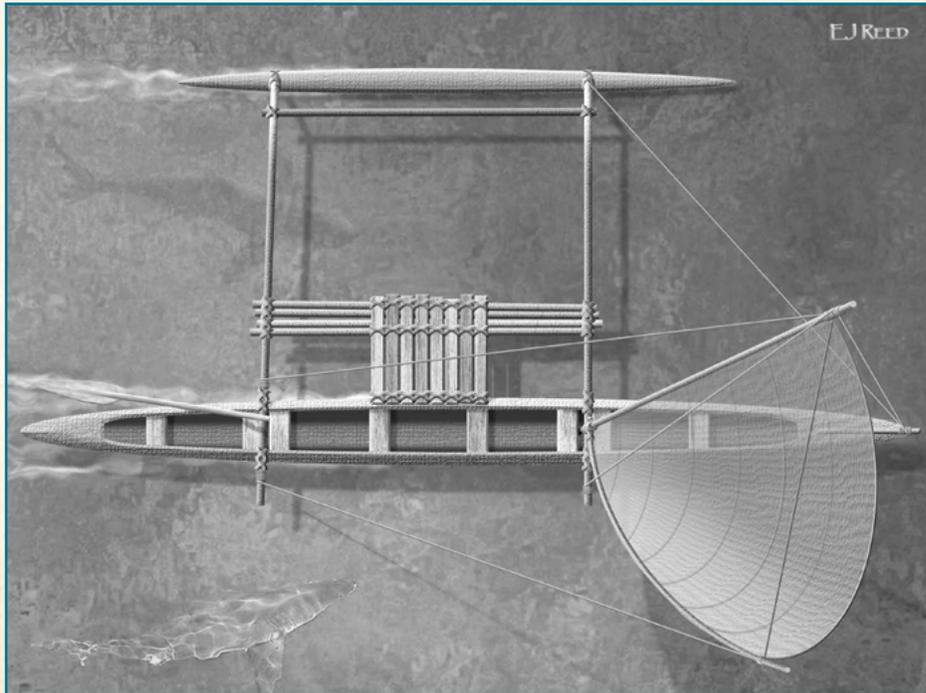
Large water vehicle

Squares 5 (5 ft. by 25 ft.); Cost 50 gp

DEFENSE

AC 9 (plus the driver's driving skill modifier); **Hardness** 3 (woven reeds and wood)

hp 40 (20) (presently 35)



Base Save +0

OFFENSE

Maximum Speed 90 ft. (current) or 30 ft. (muscle); **Acceleration** 30 ft. (current) or 15 ft. (muscle)

CMB +1; **CMD** 11

Ramming Damage 1d8 to outrigger canoe, 1d4 to other object

DESCRIPTION

This long canoe of wood and woven reeds has a simple sail and single outrigger—a float attached parallel to the main hull by arcing braces. It can be sailed or paddled. The outrigger adds stability. Pygmies designed this canoe for Small humanoids. Each Medium or larger crewmember imparts a -1 penalty on driving checks.

Propulsion current (air, one mast, 4 squares of sails, hp 20) or current (water) or muscle (pushed; 2-8 Small or 2-4 Medium crew; one is the driver)

Driving Check Knowledge (nature) or Profession (sailor)

Forward Facing boat's forward

Driving Device paddles

Driving Space the rear square

Decks 1

Preparing the Sacrifice

Heralds of darkness instructed the Wealraw shaman how to prepare sacrifices to Noth-Nyarthogu. Under this guidance, the shaman instructed her tribe to bind victims on platforms at Meshong-Lir's base, leave their gear on a separate platform, light a signal bonfire, sail back to a safe distance, and then sound their horns. This summons various Great Old One servitors to devour the sacrifices, whose committed souls weaken Noth-Nyarthogu's bondage. Heralds collect magic items from sacrificed valuables.

The pygmy flotilla sails to the platforms and prepares the sacrifices. Pygmies douse outrigger lanterns as they depart, scattering miles apart to watch Meshong-Lir sink at dawn from safety.

Crossing Violent Seas

Unless the PCs accelerate the timeline, the pygmy flotilla is far ahead when the PCs launch their outrigger, but pygmy outrigger lanterns shining on the water point the way. PCs reach the sacrificial platforms after the pygmies leave.

Weather: As the PCs sail, weather changes:

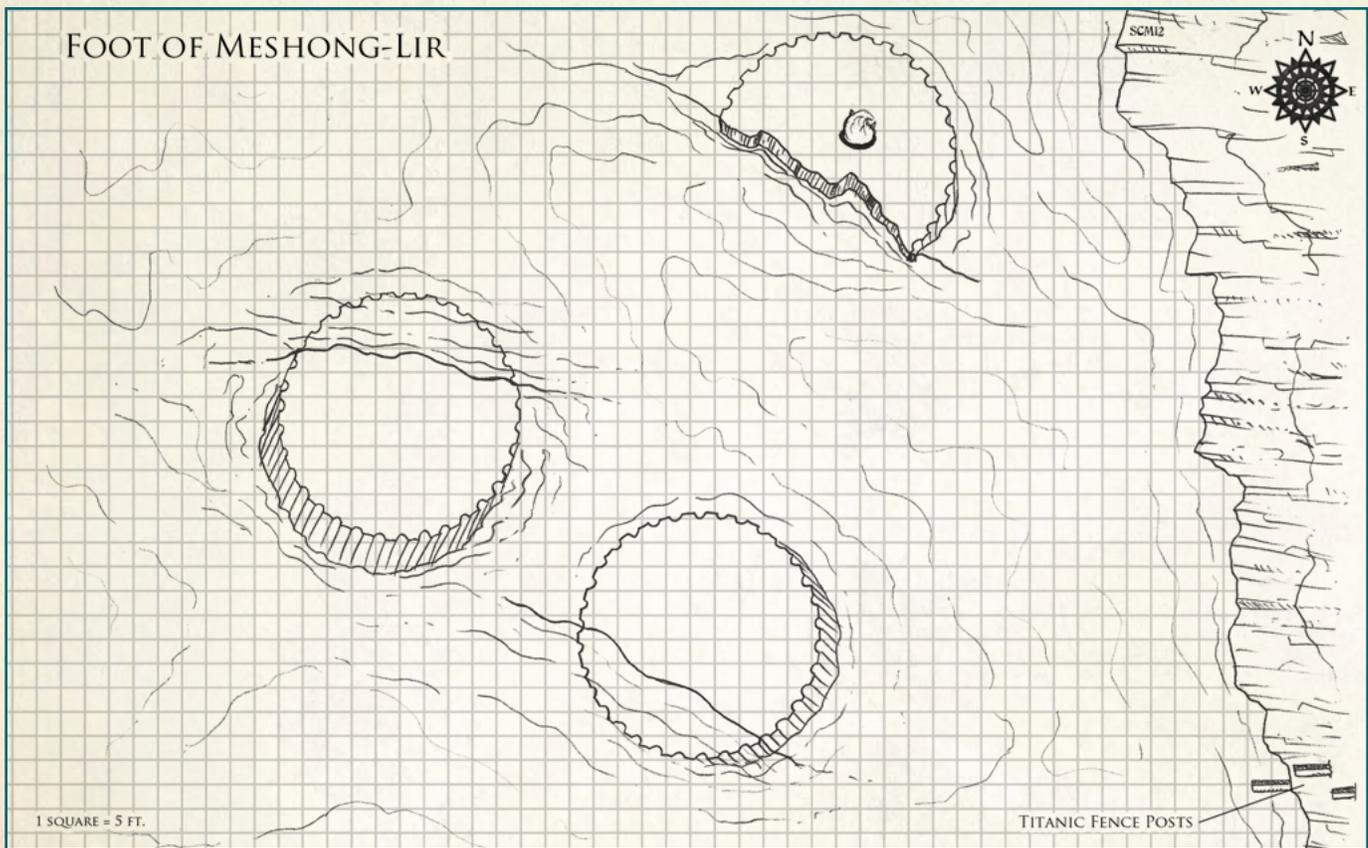
The roiling clouds begin to shred, revealing a full moon. Fast-moving strips of moonlight race across the heaving waves.

Five miles from Meshong-Lir, the PCs first glimpse the accursed isle:

Waters along the northern horizon glow with a dim, eerie, blue-green luminescence. Above this looms a towering dark shadow, many miles wide. Ghostly lights move slowly in front of and above the shadow.

The ghostly lights are undersides of levitating towers, etched with glowing runes.

The pygmy lanterns' lights gather near



the center of the accursed isle's base, where the pillar-top platforms stand. Pygmies extinguish these lights as they depart, leaving only the bonfire alight.

Simulate the danger of crossing the entire strait in high seas and wild winds with three DC 18 driving checks. Failure on any by more than 5 inflicts 1d6+3 damage to the canoe (minus 3 hardness). Failure by more than 13 inflicts 2d6+3.

Ardent PCs can overtake the hindmost pygmy outriggers before Meshong-Lir by sailing recklessly, beyond the edge of danger. Simulate this wild endeavor with three DC 25 driving checks and harrowing descriptions of launching off wave peaks, careening on pontoon edge down others, and driving entirely through more. Failure by more than 5 inflicts 1d8+3 damage to the canoe. Failure by more than 13 inflicts 2d8+3 damage, and each passenger must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be thrown overboard. Failure by 18 capsizes the vessel. Note that driver check DCs increase by +2 when the canoe falls below 20 hp and acquires the broken condition (Ultimate Combat, Vehicles, Vehicles in Combat). Success on all three checks—even with a broken canoe—overtakes one or more Meshong-Lir-bound pygmy vessels carrying 12 pygmies and a prisoner. Pygmies ignore overtaking outriggers, assuming they're friendly.

Development: If intrepid PCs rescue a pygmy outrigger's prisoner, it could be a shipmate or an engaging young man or woman from an earlier shipwreck who witnessed Wealraw's shaman lead a massive, horrific ritual sacrificing dozens of a rival tribe's pygmies to raise Meshong-Lir.

Timing: Control the crossing journey's duration to make certain that the PCs reach the sacrifice platform an hour or two before dawn.

Story Award: Award 1,600 XP for sailing to Meshong-Lir or 2,400 XP for overtaking the pygmy flotilla's rear.

Devilfish Attack (EL 5)

Ensure the PCs outrigger reaches Meshong-Lir damaged enough to discourage a return trip. If necessary, an advanced devilfish attacks several dozen yards shy of the sacrificial platforms. If the party has exhausted few resources, add a second advanced devilfish for a CR 7 encounter.

ADVANCED DEVILFISH

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

TACTICS

Tactics The devilfish initially attacks the canoe structure only. It deems passengers easy pickings once their craft sinks. If the canoe is moving faster than 40 ft. and its first attack succeeds, it grabs, slowing the canoe to a stop in 2 rounds. It only attacks passengers in the water.

Morale It flees if reduced below 10 hp.

PART THREE: AT THE FOOT OF MESHONG-LIR

Pillar-Top Platforms

Just beneath the waves, two rows of listing, titan-sized pillars run up to Meshong-Lir's southern edifice through waters hundreds of feet deep.

A mammoth cliff forms the south face of the black island. Three canted stone platforms rise above the surf yards from the looming edifice, like the flat tops of gigantic, submerged pillars. Waves roll over the lowest



A couple hundred feet up, a massive ship hangs on the front of the cliff face. Tilted astern at a 25-degree angle, the ship's hull perches on top of the bases of two broken obelisks jutting forth horizontally from the escarpment. The ship looks ready to tumble off these supports, but between its foremast and mainmast, its rigging tangles around a black, titan-sized statue jutting horizontally from the cliff face. The 75-foot statue—winged, cloaked, and hooded like an angel of death—faces straight down over the ship towards the ocean below, its feet on a monumental stand embedded in the cliff, its skeletal arms raised to hold a broken hourglass. Ropes of seaweed dangle from the ship, and a thin stream of water pours steadily from a small hole near its stern.

Fence Slat Ladder (EL 2)

None of the rescued people have flying or transportation magic. Climbing the swirling pattern of wall indentations requires DC 15 Climb checks each round.

The vertical slats of a titan's petrified fence protrude horizontally in a drunken line from beneath the water up the cliff face for 100 feet. The fence slats are 1 foot in diameter, 2½ feet apart, and stick out 45 feet from the cliff like colossal spears stuck in a wall. They form a surreal ladder. Climbing them requires DC 5 climb checks.

Eighty feet up, a two-slat section collapses when someone puts weight on the higher slat.

LOOSE FENCE SLATS HAZARD

CR 2

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** none

EFFECTS

Trigger 50 pounds weight on higher pole; **Reset** none

Effect fall 80 feet into water (4d6 plus 2d3 nonlethal) (DC 20 Reflex avoids); both original victim and anyone climbing below take 1d3 bludgeoning damage/10 feet the original victim falls before contact, and the second climber falls too (DC 15 Reflex avoids), potentially hitting the next climber

Horizontal Gravestone Attack (EL 7)

Five feet west of where the fence slats end, a 36-foot-wide gravestone protrudes vertically from the cliff. Directly above it, one of the swirling cliff indentations expands into a niche hiding a chaos beast.

CHAOS BEAST

CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 85 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*)

TACTICS

Tactics The horror charges when victims move within 20 feet of its niche. If possible, it bull rushes foes off edges.

Morale Under Noth-Nyarthogu's influence, it fights until slain.

Ten feet west of the gravestone, the 120-foot long edge of a mausoleum roof runs vertically, protruding several feet from the cliff as the building runs up the cliff face. Near its base adjacent to the chaos-beast gravestone, a 5-foot-diameter gap opens in the edge. A dim, blue luminescence flickers inside.

Titan Tomb

This vast, broken chamber of black stone soars high above. The western wall collapsed into rubble, forming a ramp of gigantic blocks climbing

to the top. On the back wall, the open front of a colossal, shattered sarcophagus protrudes above the rubble. Strange runes of light slither up the walls, shedding dim illumination. Their elegant form glows blue at floor level, but they corrupt as they rise into disturbing, lurid red sigils.

The slithering runes are harmless. The lower runes are elements of titan protection wards (DC 30 Linguistics or Knowledge [religion]). The upper sigils are Far Beyond corruption symbols (DC 35 Linguistics or Knowledge [arcana]).

To climb the rubble requires a DC 8 climb check. One hundred feet up a hole opens out onto the lower obelisk supporting the ship's hull.

Creatures: The 70-foot-tall ghost of the titan Anticlea Lydiadas, slain in Meshong-Lir's catastrophe, haunts this tomb of her husband who died before the cataclysm. Despite Noth-Nyarthogu's malignant influence, Anticlea remains mostly sane. Perpetually trembling and grief-stricken, her breathtaking beauty deforms into a twisted, shuddering horror when her agitation peaks, receding to beauty again when she calms. She demands that intruders flee the island, saying, "Dying here will only make it stronger!" She answers questions with fragmented, elliptical statements only if each visitor swears to leave the island before dawn.

Anticlea knows Meshong-Lir's complete history. She knows Noth-Nyarthogu is a Great Old One, and she suffers torment from its influence, but she knows little Great-Old-One lore. She sees its numerous horrible minions gathering but doesn't know what they are. A herald of darkness visits repeatedly to unhinge her. She learned heralds are Noth-Nyarthogu's emissaries which magically disguise themselves as any creature they desire and lure sentient creatures here for sacrifice to weaken Noth-Nyarthogu's bondage. Make sure she tells the PCs that their true form has tentacles and "is covered in eyes." This clue becomes crucial when the child ghost Wulf repeats this phrase on *The Last Vagabond*.

Anticlea's husband's body disintegrated millennia ago, leaving only his foot-diameter silver finger ring, worth 8,000 gp, hidden in rubble (Search DC 20). Once a ring of major spell storing, corruption destroyed its magic. If the PCs place it in his sarcophagus, Anticlea will cast mass cure serious wounds and remove curse on the characters from its ghostly twin on her hand.

GHOST OF ANTICLEA LYDIADAS

CR 9

CG Female Corrupted Elysian Titan Ghost (see page 27)

XP 6,400

hp 76

Special abilities frightful moan, telekinesis (DC 24 each)

Story Award: Award 1,600 XP for learning Anticlea's information.

PART FIVE: THE LAST VAGABOND

The Ship

The Last Vagabond is a three-masted galleon. Although she spent three days on the ocean floor tangled to Meshong-Lir's monuments, ancient island magics designed to protect submergible titan ships warded her from the ocean depths' pressure. Two broken, horizontal obelisks bear the ship's weight, one beneath her hull, the other behind her keel. The ship leans abaft at a 25-degree angle, water draining from a keel hole at the stern.

The Last Vagabond

Warship full stat block in *Ultimate Combat*, Vehicles Section, except as follows:

Speed 180

Weapons 2 bow and 2 stern light ballista, 20 light ballista on each side

Special magical figurehead of eternity

Figurehead of Eternity

The Last Vagabond has a magical figurehead of eternity affixed to its prow. This turns the ship's sailors who die serving her into ship-bound ghosts that interact with the ship as they did while they were alive. The crew must serve a rightful captain, but they lack one now. See the Figurehead of Eternity sidebar.

The ship's minimum crew complement is 50. With fewer, all driving check DCs increase by +10. Give The Last Vagabond a number of shipmates equal to 54 minus the number of able people in the PCs' party, including the PCs, with ranks in Profession (sailor) or Knowledge (nature).

GHOST SHIPMATE (54 MINUS PCS' PARTY NUMBER OF SAILORS) CR 2

XP 600 (each)

Human ghost expert 2/warrior 1

N Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

Init +1; Senses Perception +12

FIGUREHEAD OF ETERNITY

Aura strong necromancy; CL 15th

Slot—; **Price** 250,000 gp; **Weight** 200 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Carved from gray driftwood, this ship-prow statue depicts a skeletal, humanoid figure wrapped entirely in a shroud. A figurehead confers ghost touch properties on its ship, fixtures, and rigging. It also confers ghost touch properties on all tools, raw building items, weapons, and ammunition that have spent a full month aboard. All equipment and weapons lose their ghost touch properties beyond 100 feet from the ship.

If a sailor dies within 100 feet of a ship she has served less than a year that has a figurehead of eternity, she may, if she wishes, become a ghost bound to the ship for one year. If she has served the ship for more than a year, she automatically becomes a bound ghost for one year unless she makes a DC 22 Will save to resist. At each year's end, the magic breaks, permanently destroying the ghost unless she voluntarily makes a DC 22 will save.

A figurehead causes a ghost it creates to experience an effect identical to normal gravity over any part of the ship or rigging. Only beyond the ship can it fly. If a ghost created by the figurehead moves more than 100 feet from the ship, however, it is instantly destroyed, although it can rejuvenate normally.

Crafters make figureheads of eternity to aid living captains, not to create self-directed, undead pirate ships. Only a living captain can command figurehead-created ghosts, and they must follow the rightful captain's orders to the same extent they did while living. Without a living captain, they cannot sail the ship.

Removing a figurehead from its prow instantly destroys the figurehead and permanently destroys ghosts it created.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirement Craft Wondrous Item, *command undead*, create greater undead, ghost touch; **Cost** 125,000 gp

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +1 Dodge, +1 deflection)

hp 17 (3 HD; 2d8+1d10+3)

Fort +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation;

Immune undead traits

Vulnerabilities figurehead destruction, subject to command

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 (perfect), see below

Melee ghost touch cutlass† +3 (1d6/18–20) or chill of the depths +3 (1d6 cold, DC 12 half) (see below)

Ranged ghost touch longbow† +3 (1d8/×3)

STATISTICS

Str __, **Dex** 13, **Con** __, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 16

Feats Dodge, Sea Legs*

Skills Acrobatics +6, Climb +6, Craft (ships) +4, Perception +12,

Profession (fisherman) +5, Profession (sailor) +10, Stealth +9, Survival +4

Siege Engineers 12 shipmates have Exotic Weaponry Proficiency (ballista) instead of Dodge, and Craft (siege engines) +4 instead of Craft (ships) +4

SQ ship-bound movement, one-year voyage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Chill of the Depths (Su) This attack inflicts cold rather than the aging damage a typical ghost's corrupting touch attack inflicts.

Figurehead Destruction (Su) Destroying or removing the figurehead of eternity from the ship's prow destroys this ghost permanently. Temporarily suppressing its magic does not affect existing ghosts.

Ship-Bound Movement (Su) This ghost experiences an effect identical to normal gravity over any part of the ship or rigging. Only beyond the ship can it fly. Moving more than 100 feet from the ship instantly a ghost, but it will rejuvenate.

Subject to Command (Su) This ghost must follow the ship captain's orders to the same extent it did while living. Only a living captain can serve this command role. Without a captain, it cannot participate in sailing the ship.

One-Year Voyage (Su) Each year after the first, the ghost must make a DC 22 Will save to avoid being permanently destroyed.

†Enchanted by the figurehead of eternity, this weaponry loses all ghost-touch properties if moved over 100 feet from The Last Vagabond

*See *Ultimate Combat*, Feats

Captain's Quarters. Captain Rashella's cabin holds the Captain's log, numerous charts, and valuables from many voyages worth 8,400 gp total. A secret wall safe (Search DC 20, Disable Device 25) holds:

- 3 potions of *owl's wisdom*
- 4 potions of *cure serious wounds*
- 2 potions of *restoration*
- scroll - 3 *make whole*
- scroll - 1 *wall of iron*
- wand of *dispel magic* - 5 charges
- 16,850 gp worth of coins, gems, and jewelry

The crew knows the Captain's stash holds ship-repair magic, but neither its location nor precise contents.

Vying for Command

Dawn fast approaches when the PCs reach the ship. The mausoleum's top exit opens on the lower obelisk's top surface. To walk across it to the ship's keel requires a DC 8 Balance check. The ship's main deck stands 25 feet up.

Only the gruff and suspicious ghost of "Old Man" Tallow, the bosun, stands on deck. He speaks for the crew. Old Man remains suspicious after Algernon Rake's betrayal. He demands by what right intruders disturb the damned. He understands the figure of eternity's effects. He quickly warns the PCs that no one can sail this ship without its ghostly crew, but that the crew cannot sail without a living captain. He explains this immediately if the PCs threaten violence. Despite his suspicious nature, he is eager to explain how a stranger called Algernon Rake lured the ship here and then betrayed the captain and crew, leading to the island pulling the ship down. Nonetheless, he adds with pride, many of the crew returned as ghosts out of devotion to the ship they love.

The Contest

If present, Thoros wastes no time introducing himself and making his case for command. Whenever anyone begins discussing possible captains, the other ghosts emerge from the focsle and below decks. Old Man explains that every crewman has an ownership interest in the ship. Captain Rashella's death makes them the ship's sole owners, able to choose her new captain. "But only the most capable and adventurous captain can command this ship," he declares.

If Thoros is absent, and only one PC vies for command, she needs a DC 25 Diplomacy check to succeed. If multiple contestants vie for command, they make opposed Diplomacy checks. The crew selects whoever first wins two checks. Thoros inspires with charm and spirit. Grant bonuses and penalties based on the PCs' arguments' merits. Possible examples include:

PC Argument	Diplomacy Check Modifier
Thoros's last ship sank, killing all crew	Thoros -4
Thoros will not explain why it sank	Thoros -4
PCs' shipmates describe how no ship could have survived tidal wave destroying PCs' ship	PCs +2
PCs' shipmates describe PCs' heroics rescuing them	PCs +4

Thoros Argument	
Thoros demonstrates his encyclopedic knowledge of oceans and ports	Thoros +2
Thoros acts with heroic bravura (PCs' shipmates grudgingly confirms)	Thoros +2
PCs' ship sank	PCs -4
Thoros passionately explains that because he could not save his last crew he owes a debt to the dead, so he will give his all to provide a wild life of adventure to this ghostly crew	Thoros +2

A Child's View

While disguised as Algernon Rake, Thoros began teaching the curious 11-year-old cabin boy increasingly dark secrets. Eventually Wulf pierced Rake's veil, glimpsing the horror beneath.

When Thoros speaks about his ship's sinking or its crew's death, Wulf gasps, points, and says, "Him!" The crew falls silent and stares at Wulf.

If questioned, the terrified ghost says, "He just feels wrong." If pressed, he says, "Like he's shiny outside but bad inside. Like he mighta killed his crew a'purpose." This spooks several crewmates, imposing a -2 penalty on Thoros's Diplomacy checks. It also forces Thoros to Bluff a direct denial, giving over 40 crewmen a Sense Motive check.

Wulf begins with an indifferent attitude to the PCs. If they make him friendly and go out of Thoros's earshot, Wulf explains how Algernon Rake lured them all here to their deaths, and he thinks Thoros is somehow both Rake and something worse too. "Cause I saw once. He's really got eyes all over!"

This is really a giveaway; only use this if the PCs are completely failing.

If a PC Wins

Thoros congratulates the winner with good grace. When the ship gets caught in the whirlpool, however, he attacks the helmsman. If he wins, he seizes the helm, ordering the crew to drive the PCs overboard or he will spin the wheel and capsize the ship. He plans to force the crew to name him captain after all other candidates perish.

If Thoros Wins

Old Man instructs Thoros to sign the Captain's log. Upon doing so, Thoros orders the outraged crew to drive the PCs onto the island, but to keep their shipmates aboard as crew. This command forces the ghosts to fight the PCs if the PCs resist. Against dozens of corrupting touch attacks, the PCs will likely be overmatched and driven off.

Wulf slips over the side once Thoros isn't looking. If he can reach the PCs with his 100-foot-movement limit, he says Old Man wants them to sneak back aboard, adding Thoros ordered the crew to put the PCs off the ship, not to keep them off. If he has not yet done so, he tells his story of Algernon Rake and the eyes.

Unmasked

If the PCs declare Thoros is actually Algernon Rake, Old Man says if they selected an imposter, he's not their real captain. A handful of enraged ghost immediately attack Thoros. Thoros's cold immunity foils their cold-based corrupting touch attacks, startling all ghosts and allowing saves against Thoros's veil. Thoros commands all crew to kill the PCs, but in their confusion they delay 1d3+1 rounds before obeying.

Thoros fights with his spells and rapier unless severely pressed. Once he starts making tentacle attacks, everyone gets new saves against his veil. If the PCs unveil Thoros, the crew begs the PCs to take command.

Story Awards: Award 3,200 XP for winning command and 2,400 XP for unmasking Thoros.

Freeing the Ship

The sun cracks the horizon either moments before the crew names a PC captain or while the PCs confront Thoros. With a lurching shudder, the island begins sinking. It takes 3 minutes to sink 25 feet, then accelerates, covering the next 25 in one minute and the remaining distance to the ship in one minute.

Planning the Release

Rigging lines and yards entangle the statue thrust between the masts. This keeps the ship from tumbling off the supporting obelisks beneath it and crashing to its destruction. To get free, the crew must cut away the rigging as the island sinks, just as the rising water buoys the hull, and then force

the ship away from the statue. Planning this release perfectly requires a DC 15 Profession (sailor) or Knowledge (engineering) check, or a DC 25 Intelligence check. Taking 20 requires 5 minutes. Every 5 points by which the check exceeds the check's DC adds +1 to the driving check to execute the release. A properly timed animate rope spell will also free the ship.

Executing the Release

Executing the release at the crucial moment requires a DC 20 driving check. Failure causes different effects depending on the roll:

Driving Check Result	Ship Damaged, All Future Driving Check DCs Raised by	Ship Freed
19 or less	+1	Yes
14 or less	+2	Yes
9 or less	+3	No
4 or less	+4	No

PCs can try this driving check three times before the statue forces the hull underwater for good. Crew cannot aid this driving check because they perform the commands the check represents. Each free PC, however, can aid another with a Profession (sailor) check or a Strength, Dexterity, or Knowledge (engineering) check.

Plugging the Keel Hole

Unless plugged, water floods through the keel hole, making the ship heavier and less maneuverable. Each minute the flow continues causes driving check DCs to increase by +1. Each make whole cast on one of the four broken hull board adds another minute before the next +1 penalty applies. Wall of iron or Wall of Ice seals it completely.

Sailing Away from Meshong-Lir

When the ship comes free, she enters raging water surging back towards the island. Once the island fully submerges 10 minutes later, a vortex forms in the island's wake. This quickly narrows to a funnel a quarter-mile wide and thousands of feet deep. A single driving check determines how far the ship sails away from the island, against the current, before the vortex forms. This, in turn, determines how deep inside the whirlpool she begins her ascent to escape.

Driving Check Result	Ship's Depth Inside Vortex
30+	100 feet
25	200 feet
20	300 feet
15	400 feet
10	600 feet
5	800 feet

Escaping the Vortex

As the island disappears beneath raging foam, the sea follows. The entire ocean seems to surge inward, swirling counter-clockwise and sinking in the center. With a falling sensation, the ship lowers along the wall of a mammoth, increasingly steep vortex a quarter mile wide whose funnel plummets far down into darkness. The cauldron's walls rise high above the ship as it sails along the roaring side.

Strong winds circle above the whirlpool faster than the water spins. Any ship attempting to sail straight up and out capsizes under the ferocious water current. It takes a masterful hand to pilot the ship up gradually. The ship needs a DC 20 driving check each minute. Success raises the ship 100 feet. Success by more than 5 raises it an extra 100 feet. Failure by more than 10 drops the ship down 100 feet. If the ship slips 1,000 feet down, the vortex swallows her.

The Last Attack (EL 7)

Flushed from the island, a flight of 6 vargouilles serving Thoros sees the ship under another's command and attacks the new captain.

VARGOUILLE (6)

CR 2

XP 600

hp 19 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Tactics 2 shriek to paralyze crewmates while 4 attack the person giving commands.

Morale All fight until 5hp or less, and then flee.

Development: Each round the captain is distracted from sailing imposes a -1 penalty on her next driving roll. If she cannot make the roll at the minute mark, the ship descends 200 feet.

Story Award: Award 3,200 for sailing The Last Vagabond to safety.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

By rescuing the ghostly crew from eternity on the ocean floor, the PCs gain their ferocious loyalty. Adventurous spirits filled with insatiable wanderlust, they strive to remain when their ghostly year expires if their captain routinely sails them into danger and emerges victorious. Some ports, however, do not welcome the magnificent vessel when its undead crew appears.

The all-but-priceless ship serves as the adventure's principal treasure. If losing the PCs' last ship places them in debt, fill the cargo hold with sufficient goods or treasure to discharge that liability. Selling The Last Vagabond proves difficult. The crew controls captain selection and strives to scare off potential purchasers. Plus, fear that sailing her may cause the sailor to become part of her spectral crew presents a powerful deterrent. Some less savory powers would covet an undead crew, going to great lengths to usurp the ship from the PCs.

The tip of the promontory against which the tidal wave crushed the PCs' first ship breaches the surface. A careful search employing Survival and Perception skills locates it and its sunken wreck.

Story Awards: Award the PCs 1,000 XP for each original shipmate they rescue and 4,800 XP for rescuing the ghostly crew.

ADVENTURES

BLACK BLOOD, RED RAIN



Michael Lane

A mad oracle speaks of a terrible doom. Can you help him recover his memory before all is lost?

“Black Blood, Red Rain” takes place in ruins and wilderness and is suitable for four PCs of 9th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Thousands of years ago, at the height of the Ankeshel Empire, the Ankeshel clashed with the god Nethus. Several of his servants were destroyed or imprisoned before the empire sunk into the waves. One of his most terrible sea monsters was a rare creature known as a nightwave. Too powerful to destroy, the Ankeshel trapped the nightwave on an island in the archipelago of the Savage Isles using Vril locks to prevent its escape.

Twenty years ago, the Oracle in Kammae made plans to chain Nethus and sent inquisitors into the Western Ocean looking for secrets the Ankeshel used against the god long ago. In an ancient ruin deep in the jungle, they found one. Studying the lock, the Oracle uncovered forgotten lore helping her chain the god. In the heady days following their success, the lock was forgotten. But ten years later, the Oracle received a vision suggesting the nightwave was testing the remaining bonds and failure to return the lock would result in the nightwave breaking free to terrorize the seas once more.

The Oracle sent the witch Tarena Ilsava to return the lock. She eluded the servant of Mnemosyne, but on the threshold of success, a most unfortunate turn of events took place. Tarena reached the Ankeshel ruins at the exact same time as a small band of treasure seekers. Words turned to violence and while she destroyed most of the group, she was slain before she could kill the last member - an oracle of waves.

After piecing together clues in the ruins, the man fled with the lock, barely escaping bands of kech warriors stalking him through the jungle. At last, he reached the town of Hell's Hole. But a conundrum faced the oracle. He planned to sell the lock to the priests of Nethus, but feared agents of Mnemosyne would take it first. He hatched a desperate plan to slip their net. The man used a mnemosyne's tear to strip away his memory of the ruins and the meaning of the Vril lock. He arranged for a friend in Hell's Hole to meet him in Barsella with the tear and left town with the lock.

But, unbeknownst to the oracle, the witch, stymied in her task to return the lock, rose as a witchfire. Thinking the thief hid in Hell's Hole, she subjugated a coven of hags and used the town's cisterns to spread a virulent disease killing most of the town's inhabitants, including the oracle's friend. The tragedy grew worse as the oracle's ship, last to leave town, was wrecked on the north shore in a storm. He and a handful of survivors were plucked off the ship a few days later by agents of Mnemosyne and left in Barsella with few memories of the intervening events. The Brine Pauper had come to Barsella.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The characters pass the Brine Pauper on Barsella's docks as they return for resupply after a recent journey. He spouts his usual drivel about lush jungles, forbidding ruins and terrible eyes in the night. A few days later, the characters are summoned by the Pavonis family to discuss an expedition to investigate their stronghold and to secure it, if possible. The characters sail for Hell's Hole.

Arriving at Hell's Hole, the witchfire sends a flight of baykoks against the characters' ship, after which they must manage the tricky landing at the ruined town's docks. The characters must determine whether to press on into the ruins at night or wait until morning. If they wait, the night hags visit while they sleep. Either way, once they enter the ruins they face several threats while attempting to decipher the mysteries of Hell's Hole and rekindle the Brine Pauper's memories.

Eventually, the characters learn both the fate of the town and discover the mnemosyne's tear, helping the Brine Pauper to remember the lock and his ship, but not what happened immediately before finding the lock or after planning to use the tear until he was saved from the shipwreck. These memories were stripped away by agents of Mnemosyne. He does remember the name of the ship and the characters piece together not

only its departure from Hell's Hole but the fact the shipwreck took place on the same island.

Before they leave, the witchfire intercepts them and seeks revenge on the Brine Pauper and his allies. She warns the locks are now failing and at best a day remains before the nightwave escapes its bonds. Through combat or negotiation, the characters make their way back to their ship and sail to recover the lock in the ship's graveyard. There, they fight past a sargassum fiend to recover the lock and head into the jungle to replace it in the ruins. In the jungles, as bad weather blossoms into a raging hurricane, the characters must make their way past a tribe of kech to the ancient ruin.

Defeating the undead remains of the Brine Pauper's allies before venturing into the ruins, they face the dual hazards of the nightwave's malign influence and a puzzle the Ankeshel designed to trap intruders in the prison. Escape depends on defeating a kech summoner in the jungle before reaching their ship. The passing eye of the hurricane provides a window for the characters to make for the open seas, where a hidden Lamia Mnemosyne Matriarch attempts to steal their memories even as they flee.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The characters begin this adventure at Barsella's docks, where The Brine Pauper foreshadows the adventure to come. Soon thereafter, the Pavonis family contacts them, asking the group to lead an expedition to Hell's Hole.

Other motivations might include:

- The Brine Pauper convinces them to take him to Hell's Hole, claiming a great treasure lies there.
- A loved one perished in Hell's Hole and a character seeks out the town to learn the cause.
- The characters hear of a graveyard of ships in the Savage Isles and seek it out for salvage.

INTRODUCTION

Weather plays an important role in this adventure. The wind gains strength as soon as the characters arrive at the island and builds into a hurricane by the time they head for the ancient ruins. The GM should be familiar with the rules in the Core Rulebook regarding weather.

PART ONE: BARSELLA

The Brine Pauper

The characters walk through the docks of Barsella. They could be returning from a journey or on an errand through the area. Ideally, The Brine Pauper should already be a familiar fixture on the docks.

The tumult of Barsella's docks fills the air with sounds. Ropes creak. Men shout as they unload ships. Gulls caw as the wheel across a clear blue sky. You spot the familiar figure of the Brine Pauper slumped against a fishmonger's shack. Defying possibility, his thread-worn clothes look even more bedraggled and a piece of seaweed is caught in his stringy hair. Without warning, he stirs to life and thrusts his tin cup toward you. His thin voice cries pathetically in a spray of spittle, "Help me. Eyes! I see gold eyes in the night! Ruins in the jungle. Must get to Hell...No! It is swimming. Black as the night beyond the stars. Aaaagh!" Just as suddenly as he stirred, he slumps back against the wall.

This scene introduces The Brine Pauper and foreshadows later events. If the characters speak with The Brine Pauper, he continues to rattle on about eyes in the night, a black shadow swimming among ancient ruins, and being hunted through the jungle.

A Family Meeting

Later, a messenger arrives for the characters. Dressed in the colors of House Pavonis, he delivers an invitation to attend the House patriarch. The invitation promises a mutually beneficial venture should the characters accept. If the characters are not already familiar with House Pavonis, a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility) check reveals the information on page 5. Characters who succeed by 5 or more also know the loss of a stronghold in the Western Ocean five years ago contributed greatly to the family's desperate situation.

The trip through town to the Pavonis household is uneventful:

Arriving at the Pavonis estate, you are shown to an extravagant drawing room. A balding, rat-faced man greets you and introduces himself in a nasal voice as "Talbot Sulla Pavonis, the head of the house."

Talbot Sulla Pavonis, the family patriarch, leads negotiations with the characters. He shares the difficulties the family has faced since they last contact with their stronghold in the Savage Isles, the town of Kammae's Landing, more commonly known by those who escaped as Hell's Hole.

He expresses great interest in learning what tragedy destroyed the town and learning if it can be recovered. He also expresses frustration with his family's inability to learn more, but new information has surfaced and he wishes to make an offer to the characters, known to be successful explorers in the Western Ocean. Talbot suggests positions of leadership in a newly reestablished Kammae's Landing would be available for such skilled allies, such as Governor, Exarch, Harbormaster, or Strategos. The details of such a position are left to the GM to define, but might be roughly equivalent to the Leadership feat, or "Great Renown" if the character already possesses Leadership. Talbot also offers appropriate financial or magical rewards should your characters be motivated by other incentives.

Development: The characters may learn several things in the course of this interview and negotiation. If the characters ask about dangers in Hell's Hole, the family reveals reports indicating both the difficulty of docking ships in the harbor and the presence of undead in the ruins, including shadows and strange, flying undead with bows made out of bone. Talbot also shares a map of the town and discusses the shipwreck of the Silver Octopus, the last ship to attempt leaving.

Setting Sail

The next morning, while the characters prepare to depart, the Brine Pauper and Ilisa Rovanna, the Pavonis agent arrive at the ship, a sailing ship named Margaret's Dream (See *Ultimate Combat*).

The Brine Pauper is in good spirits this morning and while still unkempt, he is more coherent than any other previous occasion. If the characters engage him in conversation, they find he recalls leaving Hell's Hole in a rush several years ago on the Silver Octopus. A good friend in Hell's Hole, Jeran Dilsap, proprietor of the Journeys Trading Company



made arrangements for his departure. The Brine Pauper is hoping something in Jeran's records might give him more clues to his memory loss.

Ilisa Rovanna is actually a Mnemosynian Lamia Matriach. Like the Pavonis family, agents of Mnemosyne harbor suspicions about the Brine Pauper. When word came of the journey, she killed the real Ilisa Rovanna and took her place on the expedition. Ilisa replaces protection from arrows with misdirection and casts it each day on a rat or sea bird.

PART TWO: HELL'S HOLE

Welcoming Party (EL 11)

Late in the day, your lookouts spy the island. On the western horizon under a sky painted shades of red, emerald mountains cloaked in deep green thrust from the ocean as though a titan is pushing them up from the seabed. As you near land, you see the coast is made of sheer red limestone cliffs. You can see a gap ahead where your maps indicate you should find Hell's Hole. As you watch the gap, you see two large birds fly up heading toward your ship.

As the creatures close with the ship, it becomes clear they are not birds. A DC 46 Perception check is needed to properly identify the creatures. The DC drops to 28 next round as the creatures approach. The following round they close to 100 feet (DC 10) and open fire. Once the party decides to respond to the approaching baykoks, roll for initiative.

The creatures draw near. Now, close to the ship, you can see they appear to be simian corpses with elongated legs and bone bows.

Terrain: This encounter takes place on the open sea.

Weather: A strong wind is blowing from the west (-2 to ranged attacks and Fly checks).

Creatures: A pair of baykoks attacks the ship. These baykoks were once kech hunters slain by the witchfire and hag coven but now serve the witchfire. A DC 24 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the creatures.

Baykoks (2)

CR 10

XP 12,800

hp 97 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*)

TACTICS

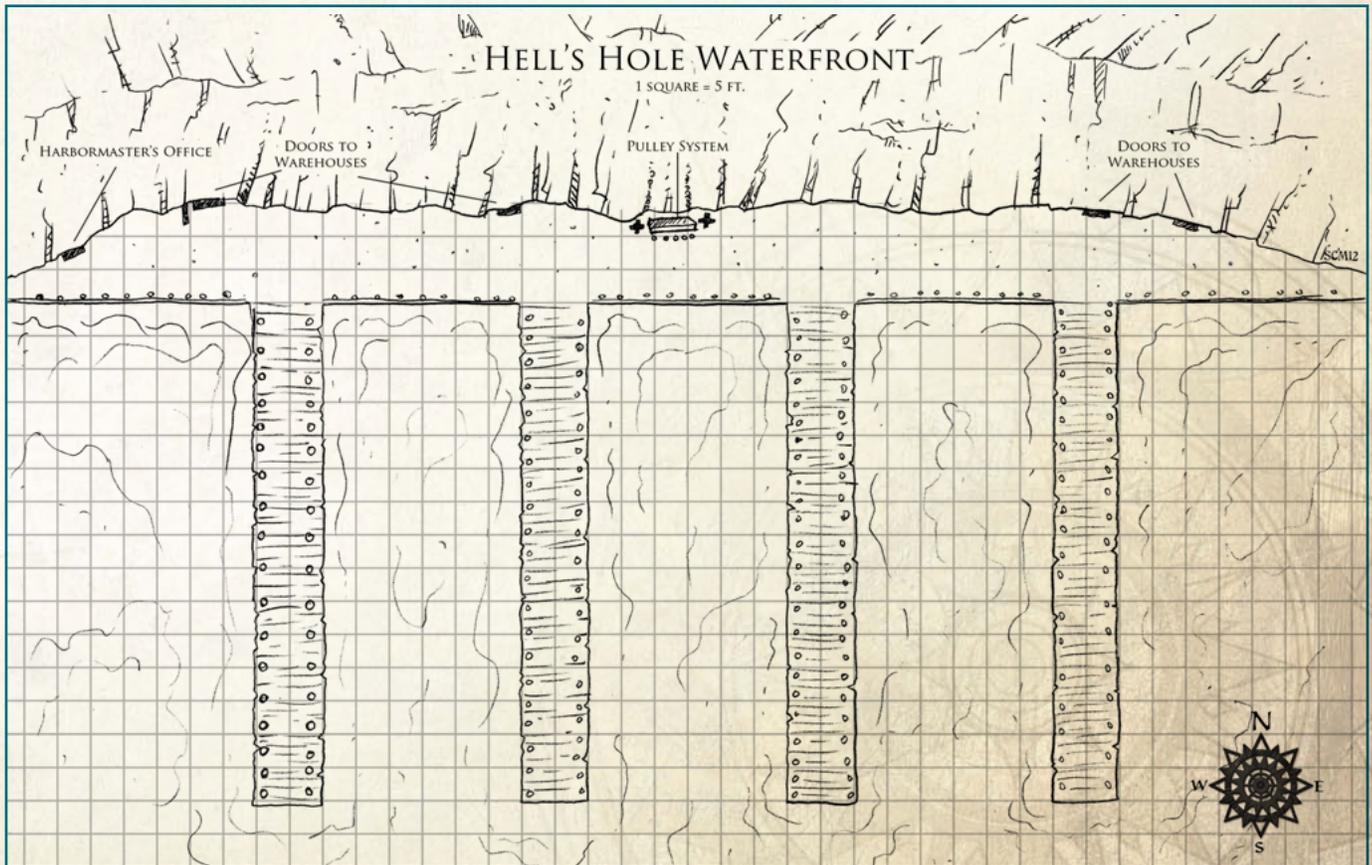
Before Combat The baykoks begin 460 feet from the ship and use their first two rounds to close to approximately 100 feet. In the second round, they have a standard action after moving.

During Combat The baykoks open combat by firing at exposed crewmembers, particularly lookouts. Once powerful-looking foes present themselves, they switch their attack and focus on the new enemy. If a baykok slays a powerful enemy, it attempts to devour the soul. If a baykok drops below half its hit points, it attempts to slay a less powerful crew member and devour the soul.

Morale The baykoks fight to the death.

Treasure: Two +1 composite longbows, but considerable effort is necessary to capture these if they fall in the open water, as they sink quickly.

Development: A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the baykoks were formerly kech.



A Tricky Landing

Successfully defeating the strange creatures, your ship sails to the island in dwindling light. Inside the rocky gap in the cliffs, a long, narrow harbor opens. On either side, you can see dwellings perched on ledges rising to the sky. To starboard, docks large enough for your ship beckon as the water begins to pick up speed, pulling you to the far end of the harbor.

Terrain: This encounter takes place in the harbor of Hell's Hole. The ship's pilot must make a DC 25 Profession (sailor) check to safely dock the ship. The characters may assist or perform this check. Characters aware of the difficulty of landing at Hell's Hole at the meeting with the Pavonis family only require a DC 20 check due to the forewarning.

Development: Failing to dock safely draws the ship toward the reverse river running towards the center of the island and cascading into a deep sinkhole. Fortunately, the harbor exit is clogged with the wrecks of ships which failed to escape. A collision with these wrecks causes 5d20 hp of damage to their ship. Extricating the ship forcibly from the debris inflicts an additional 5d20.

Bad Dreams (EL 9)

If the characters elect to sleep through the night before entering the ruined town, the night hag in the coven haunts their dreams. If they proceed directly into town, skip this encounter and go to "The Harbormaster." (page 129)

As you go to sleep, increasingly powerful winds bring bands of rain into Hell's Hole. Your ship rocks in the night. Those on watch report strange, glowing orbs seen in the night though none approach the ship. At first, the night passes peacefully. But your dreams are filled with visions of terrified people coughing and seeking help, finding nothing but pain and darkness. In rain-slick streets, black shadows hunt you, springing from doorways and alleys with cold, slashing claws. You awaken in the morning, feeling wearier than you have in quite some time.

Terrain: This encounter takes place on the character's ship.

Weather: The winds are strong throughout the night (-2 to ranged attacks and Fly checks).

Creatures: Around midnight, the witchfire sends the night hag to visit the ship and report on the visitors. The hag uses her etherealness ability to visit the ship. Once located, the hag returns to the witchfire and annis hag to report her findings. Following this, the hag uses her dream haunting ability to return and ride the back of the most powerful character until dawn. All characters sleep fitfully and wake with memories of dark dreams.

Development: Any characters affected by the night hag suffer 1 point of Constitution drain upon awakening. If the characters detect her and have the ability to become ethereal, they can take the fight to the night hag. The Brine Pauper remembers the Journeys Trading Company was located off of one of the open air courtyards in the town, several of which are marked on their map.

Night Hag

XP 6,400

hp 92 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

CR 9

TACTICS

Before Combat The night hag turns ethereal and attempts to use her dream haunting ability.

During Combat If anyone attacks the night hag, she attempts to flee into the ruins, fighting only persistent pursuers.

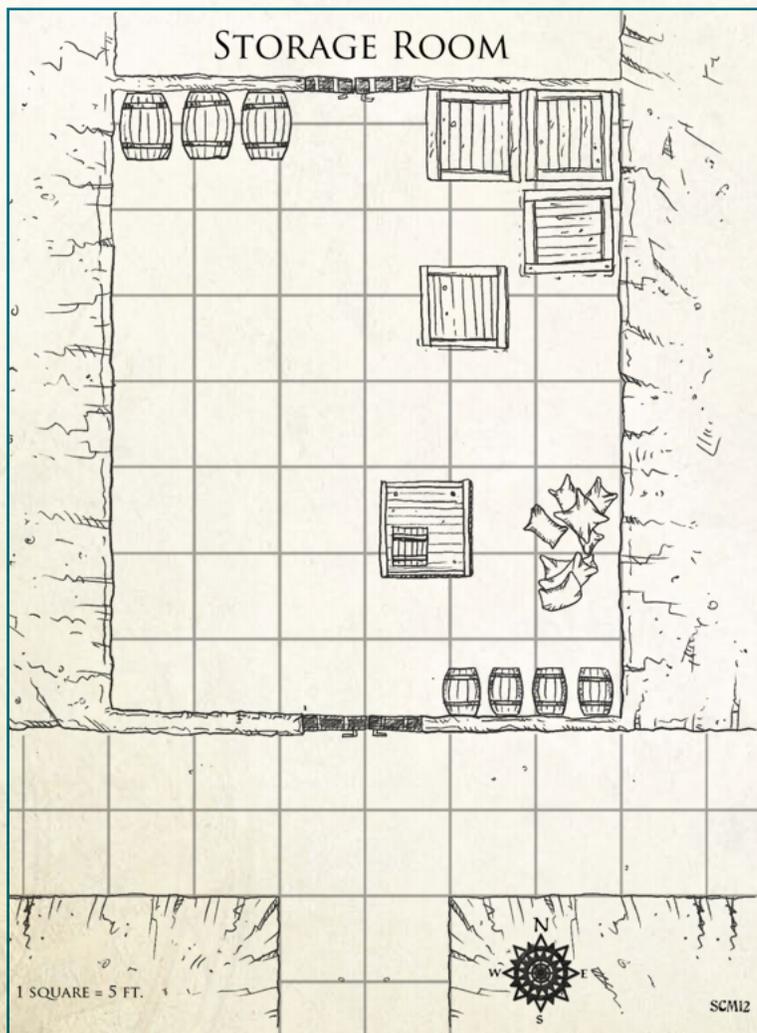
Treasure: The night hag carries her heartstone (1,800 gp).

Survivors? (EL 9)

An hour or two after the visit of the night hag, her annis hag sister visits the ship. This interaction depends on the characters' approach for watch. If the characters go directly into the ruins, this encounter should be run in the ruins.

Ahead of you, a warehouse door swings open. A young girl, probably nine or ten, peers out. She begins to take a step out when an older man grabs her shoulder and pulls her back. The door closes behind the two.

Creature: Whether this encounter takes place at the docks or in town, the annis hag is attempting to lure a small group into an ambush. She disguises herself as the old man, while the doppelganger disguises himself as the young girl. If anyone follows them behind the door, they find a tunnel leading down, into the rock, with several double doors on the



right and left leading to large storage rooms. The greater barghest hides around a turn in the tunnel 80 feet from the entrance. By the time the characters enter the tunnel, the girl is gone, but they catch a glimpse of the old man before he disappears into one of the storage rooms. If questioned, the man says he and his granddaughter have been hiding here since they escaped the last shipwrecked attempt to escape. There are a few other survivors, and she's gone to get them. If the party follows him, he'll take them to the others. The hag then leads them into an ambush.

Annis Hag

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 66 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3)

TACTICS

Before Combat The annis hag stays disguised as a little girl, attempting to lure characters close to her before transforming and attacking.

During Combat The hag prefers to attack the strongest foes in combat, but first strike the target chosen by the barghest.

Morale If reduced to less than 20 hp, the annis hag uses her fog cloud ability and attempt to flee out the back of the storage room. If this fails, she negotiates for her life, but seeks to lead enemies into an ambush for her sister, the night hag.

Greater Barghest

CR 7

XP 4,800

hp 85 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat The barghest casts mass bull's strength on all three allies and waits out of sight down the hall and comes down to the doors as soon as all of the characters enter the storage room or it heads the sounds of conflict. It uses invisibility sphere before using dimension door to get behind the party and attack the least armored foe.

During Combat The barghest looks for lightly armored foes, especially spellcasters, at the rear of opposing groups. It uses blink to move to advantageous positions on the battlefield.

Morale The barghest fears the wrath of the hags and fights to the death while the annis hag lives. If the last remaining combatant is reduced to 10 or less hit points, it offers some information about the hags in exchange for its escape.

Doppelganger

CR 3

800

hp 26 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat The doppelganger hides behind one of the warehouse doors, waiting for opponents to enter so it can flank with the annis hag or barghest.

During Combat The doppelganger tries to get into position to help the annis hag and barghest flank.

Morale The doppelganger is easily frightened and flees down the tunnel or out the back of the warehouse if reduced to half its hit points or less.

The Harbormaster (EL 9)

Between the cliffs, it is quite dark by the time the ship is docked. These events may take place at night or when the characters explore the town in the morning.

Four piers extend back to the docks of Hell's Hole, where a twenty-foot wide road extends left and right at the base of the cliffs. Along the face of the cliff, you see several doors on both sides. In front of the piers you see the remnants of a pulley system, clearly once used to raise cargoes to higher levels of the town. A sign for the "Harbormaster's Office" still swings in the wind next to a door at the end of the docks.

Characters exploring the harbormaster's office find a small office with living quarters in back. A large desk takes up most of the room with a giant logbook in the center of the desk. Touching the logbook triggers the haunt. Older logbooks and other records sit on shelves in the office. In the living quarters behind the office, characters find corpses of a man and a large dog, clearly deceased several years ago. Speak with dead reveals the man died of an unknown horrible disease that affected most of the town.

The Harbormaster's Hound

CR 9

XP 6,400

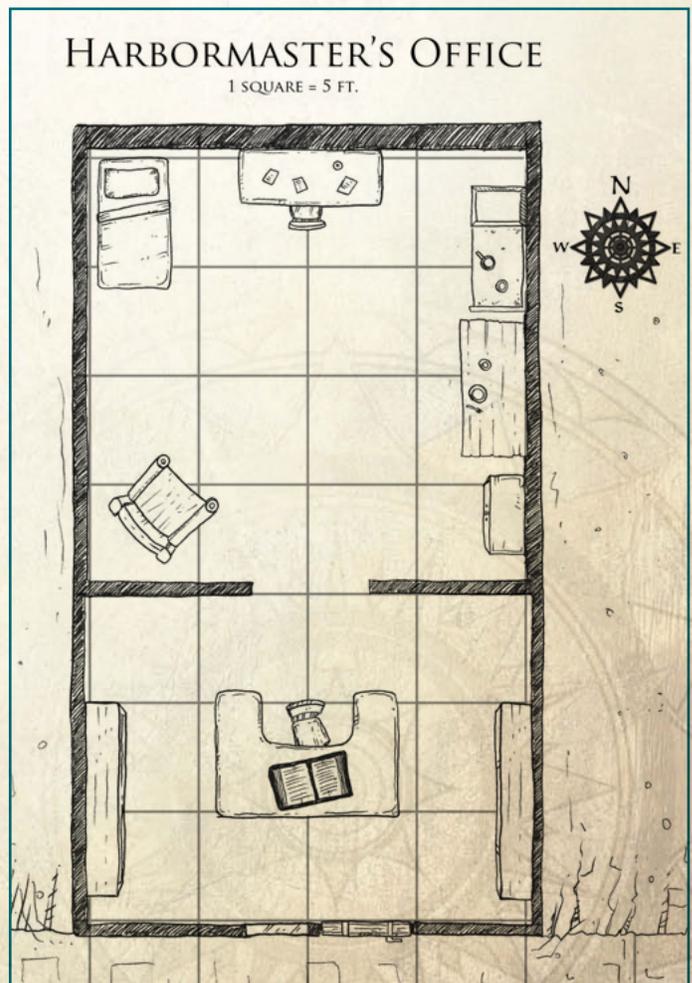
NE Haunt (10 ft. by 10 ft. area in front of the counter)

Caster Level 9th

Notice Perception DC 28 (to hear the sound of a dog snarling)

hp 18; **Trigger** touch; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When this haunt is triggered by a character touching the logbook, spectral hounds appear as if the *Mage's Faithful Hound* spell were cast on each character in the affected area.



Destruction The Harbormaster's body and his loyal hound must be given a burial at sea together.

Development: Reading the logbook reveals fairly regular ship traffic which suddenly stops five years ago. The last ship to leave Kammae's Landing was the *Silver Octopus*.

Fever (EL 11)

You emerge from a tunnel into the remains of an open-air market. Detritus of old tents and market stalls fills the chamber. The ceiling opens to a stormy sky. Wind and rain sweep down upon the remains of the market. At the far end of the market you can see a large cistern with decorative stonework depicting leaping fish. Torrents of water pour into the cistern, channeled from someplace above the market. Along the wall on the right side of the chamber, you see several permanent storefronts, including one with a weathered sign reading *Journeys Trading Company*.

The Brine Pauper can easily see the sign through the torrential rain and presses the characters to go with him to the shop. The door is unlocked, but characters entering the shop trigger Jeran Dilsap's haunt and reveal more about the death of the town.

Jeran's Haunt

CR 11

XP 12,800

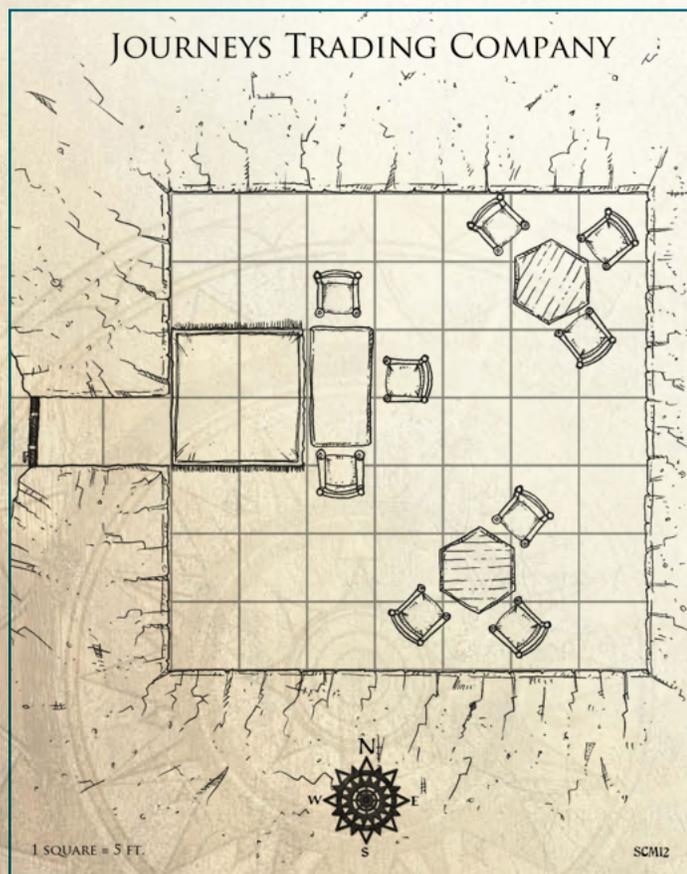
NE Haunt (10 ft. by 10 ft. area inside the door of the shop)

Caster Level 11th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear a racking cough)

hp 22; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 day

Effect When this haunt is triggered, the image of a sickly, feeble man



stumbles toward each character in the affected area. All characters in the area are targeted by the *epidemic* spell with Demon Fever (DC 18).

Destruction The haunt is destroyed by reuniting The Brine Pauper with the Mnemosyne Pearl

Inside, you see the sitting room of a successful trading company. Pictures of nautical scenes hang on the walls and fine furniture is arranged in tidy groupings. Directly in front of the door, a skeleton lies slouched in a chair, a traveler's satchel at its side.

At this point, if the characters have triggered the haunt, the plague-ridden image of Jeran Dilsap lurches toward them, coughing and telling The Brine Pauper he was supposed to leave town and he was sorry he couldn't follow; everyone was so sick.

Treasure: In Jeran's travel satchel, the characters find a large lustrous black pearl in addition to various travel documents. This is a mnemosyne's tear (see page 76), and if The Brine Pauper comes within 10 feet of it he feels drawn to it.

Development: If The Brine Pauper touches the tear, he recovers some of his memories. He remembers arriving at the ruins, fighting the witch and finding the strange lock on her dead remains. He remembers the lock had something to do with Nethus and he planned to escape the island and sell the lock to priests of Nethus. Unfortunately, the witchfire also senses his presence. If this happens here or on the boat near Hell's Hole, she arrives in 2 minutes. If it happens on the north shore or in the jungle or ruins, she arrives in an hour.

Revenge (EL 9)

The GM needs to adjust the location of this encounter based on when the *mnemosyne's tear* is touched by The Brine Pauper.

A beautiful woman surrounded in shimmering green fire descends in front of you. She glares and shouts, "Thieves, give me back the lock or die!"

Terrain: Varies based on when the characters meet the witchfire.

Weather: Dependent on the timing of the encounter. Use appropriate conditions for the timing of the event.

Creatures: The witchfire believes The Brine Pauper still has the vril lock and refuses to be convinced otherwise. She insists the lock must be returned or a terrible doom will escape into the oceans of Midgard. While the witchfire begins with a hostile attitude and is content to destroy everyone and torture the Brine Pauper until he tells her the location of the lock, it is possible to shift her attitude and learn the full story of the town and Ankeshelian ruins revealed in the Adventure Background. The incorporeal witchfire is not capable of replacing the lock herself and negotiates with the characters to do so if they shift her attitude to friendly.

Witchfire

CR 9

hp 115 (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2)

TACTICS

Before Combat The witchfire attempts to use her ability to summon will-o'-wisps.

During Combat She sends any summoned will-o'-wisps against foes and attempt to fire witchflame bolts from range. If any characters attempt melee combat with her, she fights with her incorporeal touch.

Morale The witchfire fights to the death, determined to recover the lock.

The Jilted Crone (EL 4)

This is an optional encounter. There are several ways players may learn the location of the *Silver Octopus*. For those still stumped, the sea hag Vaela can help lead them to the location of the wreck.

You make your way back onto the docks and begin walking over the pier to your ship. The winds are now thrashing the water in spite of the sheltered harbor and the rain soaks your clothes. Shredded seaweed floats in clumps next to the pier. A head bobs up next to you revealing a hideous woman with rotting hair and dingy green skin seeming to slough off her face “Greetings heroes. Did you slay the bitch or are my treacherous sisters still in her thrall?”

Terrain: This encounter takes place on the docks of Hell’s Hole. The weather has made the docks slick and in the event combat takes place, the docks are difficult terrain.

Weather: Winds are severe.

Creatures: Vaela hates the witchfire for breaking up the coven. She is eager to hear if the characters have defeated the witchfire and if they have, or intend to, she is eager to help them. She can tell them of the witchfire coming to Hell’s Hole from the jungle and convincing her sisters, the annis hag and night hag to help destroy Hell’s Hole. If they ask about the Silver Octopus, she can also tell them of the graveyard of wrecks on the north shore. If the characters give any indication they are supporting the witchfire’s objectives, she becomes hostile and directs them to the wrong part of the island before going out to seek the party’s ship and sabotage their escape.

Sea Hag

CR 4

hp 38 (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)

TACTICS

Before Combat The sea hag does not seek combat against the party

During Combat She tries to seduce and then murder the crew if the party aids the witchfire.

Morale If the sea hag is reduced to half her hit points, she seeks to escape.

The Wreck of the Silver Octopus (EL 9)

The seas froth and boil while the rain pelts you sideways as you arrive among the wrecks on the north shore. With difficulty, you anchor your ship. Ahead lies a bobbing morass of shattered hulls and broken masts. Fortunately, the Silver Octopus does not prove too difficult to find. One of the most recent wrecks, she rolls near the edge of the ship’s graveyard, a thick tangle of torn up seaweed surrounding her deck. Her figurehead depicts a merfolk couple caught in a fierce embrace, now jutting skyward from the bow of the ship.

Terrain: The ships’ graveyard is difficult terrain due to the tilted decks and the rolling action caused by the wind and waves.

Weather: Winds are severe.

Disease: If any characters fell victim to the effects of Jeran’s haunt, Demon Fever may infect more of the crew during the 2 hour journey.

Creatures: The seaweed surrounding the Silver Octopus is actually a sargassum fiend.

Sargassum Fiend

CR 9

hp 123 (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3)

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as characters approach within 300 feet, it uses its mirage ability to compel their approach.

During Combat The sargassum fiend grabs the closest character and attempts to crush them to death, dropping unconscious characters in the sea.

Morale The sargassum fiend fights to the death.

Treasure: The ship’s figurehead is a figurehead of prowess (Merfolk). The Brine Pauper can lead the characters to a crate in the hold containing the vril lock, a foot long silver cylinder which vibrates when held in the hands.

Development: When the characters emerge from the wreck, winds have grown to windstorm strength, but rain is so heavy it is treated as fog. Note the Brine Pauper remains unaffected.

PART THREE: THE NIGHTWAVE’S PRISON

With the vril lock secured, The Brine Pauper directs the characters to shore in the growing hurricane. The characters follow the path through the jungle to the stone arch of the Ankeshel ruins.

Watchers in the Rain (EL 10)

The rain becomes more intense. Ahead on the path, you see two 20-foot tall wooden poles on each side of the path carved with the faces of animals and simian-looking humanoids.

Terrain: The characters are on a ten-foot wide path with dense jungle treated as difficult on either side.

Weather: Winds are windstorm strength above the canopy and strong at ground level. The jungle protects characters from some of the rain, but visibility is still limited to 60 feet.

Creatures: The path is guarded by four totem pole golems that signal a kech summoner when the characters approach within 60 feet.

Totem Pole Golems (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 70 (*see page 75*)

TACTICS

Before Combat The golems signal the kech summoner as soon as they detect intruders.

During Combat The totem pole golems each move to attack a different character, attempting to catch their victims.

Development: If the characters wake the golems, the kech are alerted to their presence and the war party described in Red of Claw and Tooth intercepts them in 10 minutes. If the golems successfully catch the entire party, run the next encounter when the kech release the characters from the golems.

Red of Claw and Tooth (EL 11)

In the jungle, the winds calm slightly and the path slopes gently towards the approaching hill. Suddenly, there is the song of bowstrings and the air is filled with arrows flying from both sides of the path!

Terrain: The characters are on a ten-foot wide path with dense jungle treated as difficult on either side.

Weather: Winds are windstorm strength above the canopy and strong at ground level. The jungle protects characters from some of the rain, but visibility is still limited to 60 feet.

Creatures: The characters are attacked by a kech hunting party consisting of two rangers and eight kech warriors.

Kech Rangers (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male Kech Ranger (Guide, Skirmisher) 5

NE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** Darkvision (60 feet), Low-Light Vision, Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +3 natural, +1 dodge)

hp 61 (9d10+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +12, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft., **Climbing** (20 feet)

Melee Bite +7 (1d6+1/20/x2) and Claw x2 +7 x2 (1d4+1/20/x2) and Rend x2 +12 x2 (1d4+4/20/x2)

Ranged +1 Longbow, Composite (Str +3) +14/+9 (1d8+4/20/x3)

Special Attacks Ranger's Focus +4 (2/day)

Spell-Like Abilities Pass without Trace (Constant)

TACTICS

Before Combat The kech rangers take positions on opposite sides of the path 100 feet up in the trees where they have line of sight while the rest of the kech attack foes on the ground.

During Combat The kech rangers focus ranged attacks on lightly armored foes using Deadly Aim and their Aiding Attack and Ranger's Focus special abilities. If foes close to melee range, they attack with tooth and claw.

Morale The kech rangers fight until death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 27

Feats Deadly Aim -3/+6, Dodge, Endurance, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Skills Acrobatics +15, Climb +20, Perception +14, Stealth+20, Survival +10 Modifiers +6 Stealth in jungles, Acrobatics (Jump) +4

Languages Kech

SQ Hunter's Trick, Aiding Attack (Ex), Hunter's Tricks (3/day) (Ex), Terrain Bond (Ex), Terrains: Jungle (+2 bonus) (Ex), Track +2, Wild Empathy +4 (Ex)

Combat Gear +1 Longbow, Composite (Str +3), +2 Leaf Armor

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hunter's Trick: Aiding Attack (Ex) The ranger can use this trick as a free action when he hits a target with an attack. The next ally who makes an attack against the target creature before the start of the ranger's next turn gains a +2 circumstance bonus on attack roll.

Ranger's Focus +4 (2/day) (Ex) +4 to hit and damage focused target.

Terrain Bond (Ex) Allies within line of sight and hearing gain +2 Initiative, Perception, Stealth, Survival and don't leave tracks within your favored terrain.

Kech (8)

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 26 (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3)

TACTICS

Before Combat Four kech hide in the jungle on each side of the path and attack when the characters are in their midst or if seen.

During Combat The kech each fire one arrow at the characters and then drop their bows to attack with tooth and claw. If possible, a pair flanks each enemy foe.

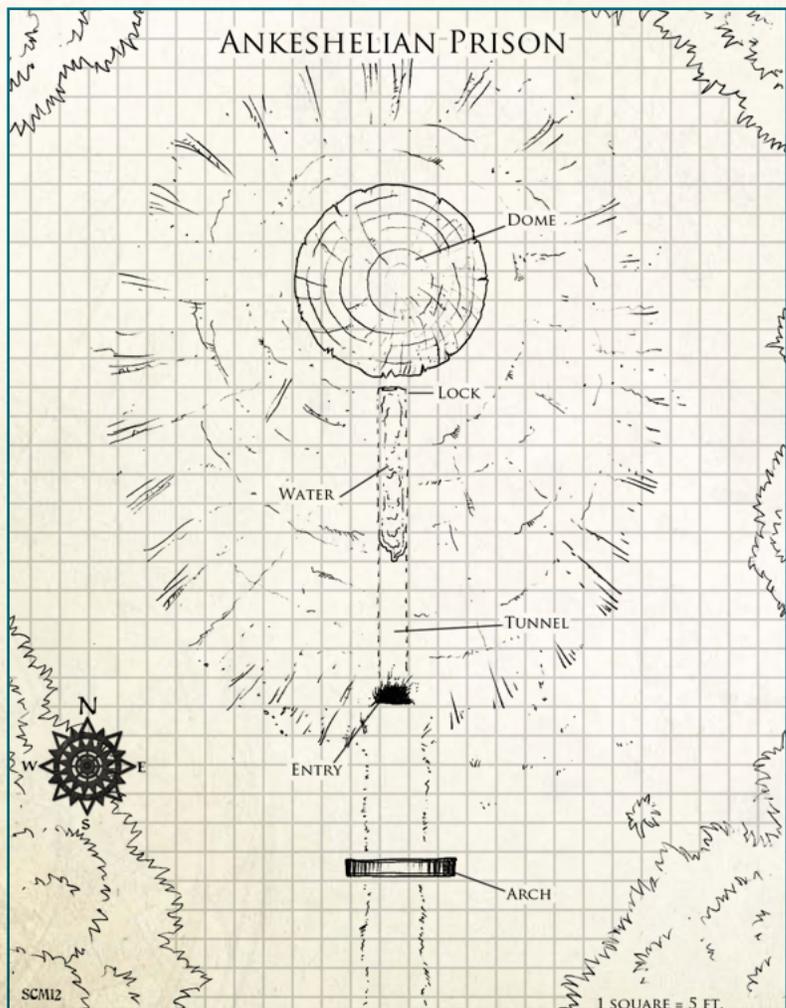
Morale The kech fight to the death.

Treasure: Two +1 composite longbows (+3 Str), Two suits of +2 leaf armor.

Development: Fifteen minutes after the kech are defeated, the characters hear a larger force pursuing them through the jungle.

Reunion (EL 9)

Moving through the jungle, you catch glimpses of more kech shadowing you on both sides. Without warning, you the trees open into a clearing and the full force of the wind and rain blast you again. Ahead you can see a rugged hill, topped with a giant dome. Halfway up the trail, you see a stone arch. Behind the arch, a black tunnel leads into the hill.



The kech refuse to leave the jungle, believing the hill is cursed. They continue to fire arrows until the characters are out of range. The Brine Pauper recognizes the scene. The fight with the witch took place at the arch.

You pick your way through the rough ground toward the arch. Below you in the jungle, you see hundreds of glowing eyes looking out at you. The arch sweeps 12 feet into the air, a series of complex glyphs or runes carved in its stone. The skeletons of three humanoid creatures lie scattered on the ground. As you watch, ghostly figures coalesce around two of the bodies, a warrior and a perhaps a mage. They greet the Brine Pauper in common, “You’ve returned, old friend. So nice of you to bring new playthings.”

Weather Winds are hurricane strength.

Creatures: Two of the Brine Pauper’s fallen companions transformed into spectres and now haunt the hill.

Spectres (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 52 (*Pathfinder Bestiary*)

TACTICS

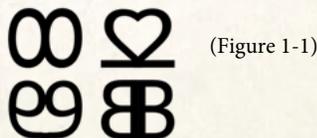
Before Combat The spectres appear as soon as characters are within 60 feet of the arch.

During Combat The spectres attack the weakest looking characters, hoping to slay them and create spectres under their control. They taunt The Brine Pauper throughout the encounter.

Morale The spectres fight until death.

Development: In addition to the remains of The Brine Pauper’s companions, the remains of the witch transformed into the witchfire lies just outside the arch. In her satchel, characters find a thin metal sheet embossed with four arcane glyphs (Figure 1-1). The glyph plaque radiates a strong transmutation aura. If the glyph plaque is held and released, the individual symbols separate and float 3 feet in front of the user. If someone grabs an individual glyph, the other three fly to it and form the metal sheet again. It is possible to manipulate the individual glyphs with spells such as mage hand. The glyph plaque is the key to a puzzle that opens and closes a stone block to seal the prison. The witch had just finished opening the door when surprised by The Brine Pauper’s companions.

Characters studying the arch find a variety of Ankeshel glyphs and runes. However, observant characters (DC 25 Perception or Linguistics) observe that four major glyphs (Figure 1-2) dominate the arch with room for a fifth glyph which is missing. Clever characters recognize the four glyphs are mirror images of the numbers 1-3-5-7 and manipulate the 9 (lower left in Figure 1-1) into position. Doing so while the door is open, as it is currently, causes the stone block to descend with a grinding noise until the door is sealed half a minute later. Grabbing one of the remaining glyphs returns the trigger glyph to the metal sheet. The process may be repeated to open the door.



(Figure 1-1)



(Figure 1-2)

Death in the Black Depths

The nightwave still struggles to escape its prison, but has forced open a gap and flooded a 60 foot section of tunnel with water. The missing lock must be placed in a hollow at the end of the tunnel. The lack of light makes it difficult to replace the lock, requiring a full round to find the space and slide the lock into it.

The waters before you are so black, they appear to be a pool of tar. Bitter cold radiates from the pool, the sort of bone-chilling frost that sinks to your very marrow.

The nightwave has spent the last 15 years pushing against the walls holding it. The missing lock has proven to be a nearly catastrophic weakness and the nightwave is now able to extend its influence beyond its prison. Characters entering the water feel it to be as frigid and heavy as the deepest depths of the ocean.

Creatures: The nightwave (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2) cannot yet escape the prison, but the tunnel is affected by its blackest depths special ability. Characters in the water take 6d6 points of damage (half cold, half bludgeoning) at the end of their turn each round they remain in the area. A DC 31 Fortitude save negates the crushing damage. Incorporeal creatures and creatures with the aquatic or water subtypes native to deep waters do not take this damage, and freedom of movement protects completely against the damage.

Development: When the characters replace the vril lock, the prison is sealed once more. Once this takes place, the water is no longer affected by the nightwave’s ability.

Trapped

You return to the entrance only to find it covered by a huge block of stone.

When the characters entered the ruins, a 20 foot square block of stone slowly sealed the entrance. An identical arch to the entrance stands in front of the block of stone. Characters must solve the same puzzle described in “Reunion” to exit the ruins. If the characters failed to recover the glyph plaque from the witch’s corpse, they must use a spell such as *passwall* or *stone shape*, or await rescue by their crew or Ilisa Rovanna. Alternatively, crushing the *mnemosyne’s tear* against the arch also open it.

PART FOUR: ESCAPE

The characters retrace their steps on the jungle path as the hurricane rages.

Pursuit (EL 10)

With the hurricane now in full force, most of the kech have retreated to their villages for shelter. However, their summoner remains.

Outside the ruins, the storm has reached its peak. Trees bend to the ground and the winds howl so loud you can barely hear.

Terrain: The characters are on a ten-foot wide path with dense jungle treated as difficult on either side.

Weather: Winds are hurricane strength above the canopy and severe at ground level.

Creatures: The kech summoner waits until the characters reach the treeline before sending his eidolon against them while remaining hidden in the trees. The summoner does not engage in melee combat and prefers to use his summon spells to harry characters until they leave the jungle.

Kech Summoner

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male Kech Summoner (Master Summoner) 8

NE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** Darkvision (60 feet), Low-Light Vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +3 natural, +1 dodge)

hp 82 (4d10+8d8+24)

Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft., Climbing (20 feet)

Melee Bite (Kech) +11 (1d6+1/20/x2) and Claw x2 (Kech) +11 x2 (1d4+1/20/x2) and Rend x2 (Kech) +11 x2 (1d4+1/20/x2)

Spell-Like Abilities *Pass without Trace* (Constant), *Summoning Master IV* (9/day)

Summoner (Master Summoner) Spells Known (CL 8, +11 melee touch, +14 ranged touch)

3 (3/day) *Black Tentacles*, *Mad Monkeys*, *Rain of Frogs*

2 (5/day) *Haste* (DC 16), *Bull's Strength* (DC 16), *Summon Swarm*, *Summon Cacodaemon*

1 (5/day) *Magic Fang* (DC 15), *Mage Armor* (DC 15), *Ventriloquism* (DC 15), *Summon Minor Monster*, *Unfetter* (DC 15)

0 (at will) *Daze* (DC 14), *Mage Hand*, *Mending*, *Guidance* (DC 14), *Message*, *Light*

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 19, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26

Feats Augment Summoning, Dodge, Equipment Trick (kava musk), Extra Evolution, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stealth Synergy

Skills Acrobatics +12, Climb +16, Craft (Traps) +8, Handle Animal +8, Knowledge (Local) +5, Knowledge (Nature) +5, Knowledge (Planes) +5, Perception +17, Ride +8, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +23, Survival +8, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +10 **Modifiers** +6 Stealth in forests, jungles, Acrobatics (Jump) +4

Languages Kech

SQ Eidolon Link (Ex), Lesser Eidolon, Life Link (Su), Maker's Call/Transposition (1/day) (Su), Metamagic Rod, Reach, Lesser Share Spells with Eidolon (Ex)

Other Gear Tools: Craft (Traps), Metamagic Rod: Reach, Lesser

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Augment Summoning Summoned creatures have +4 to Strength and Constitution

Life Link (Su) Sacrifice HP to prevent equal damage to your Eidolon

Maker's Call/Transposition (1/day) (Su) Dimension Door your Eidolon to you or swap places with your Eidolon

Eidolon

CR 3

XP 800

Male Quadraped

NE Medium Outsider

Init +2; **Senses** Darkvision (60 feet), Scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex), +4 natural)

hp 21 (+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities Evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft.

Melee Bite (Bite) +5 (1d6+2/20/x2) and Claws x2 (Claws) +5 x2 (1d4+2/20/x2) and Rake x2 (Rake) +5 x2 (1d4+2/20/x2)

Special Attacks Grab

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 7, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+9 Grappling); **CMD** 17 (21 vs. Trip)

Feats Power Attack -1/+2, Stealth Synergy

Skills Acrobatics +5, Climb +5, Perception +6, Stealth +8 Modifiers Tail

Languages Kech

SQ Pounce

Development: The shaman can be sated with a sufficient bribe. He wants the figurehead from the Silver Octopus.

Out of the Frying Pan (EL 12)

Just as the characters return to their ship, the hurricane subsides as the eye passes over the island. This provides time for the characters to sail back out to open seas or they can ride out the storm in the harbor. Ilisa Rovanna congratulates them on their success and asks if she can hear the tale as soon as the ship is in safe waters.

If the sea hag attacked the crew, then many did not survive. Ilisa did help repel the creature, but the trip home takes twice as long.

Terrain: This encounter takes place in rough seas as the ship rides out the hurricane.

Creatures: Ilisa begins by asking the characters details about their journey to the ruins and what happened within.

"Ilisa Rovanna", Mnemosynian Lamia

Matriarch

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 157 (see page 68)

TACTICS

Before Combat Ilisa casts mage armor and divine favor before coming to see them. Once she hears their tale, she asks for a drink and casts time stop while they are distracted. Just as she begins, the Brine Pauper suddenly remembers a similar incident and shouts a warning to the characters. A DC 25 Sense Motive check allows the characters to act in the surprise round.

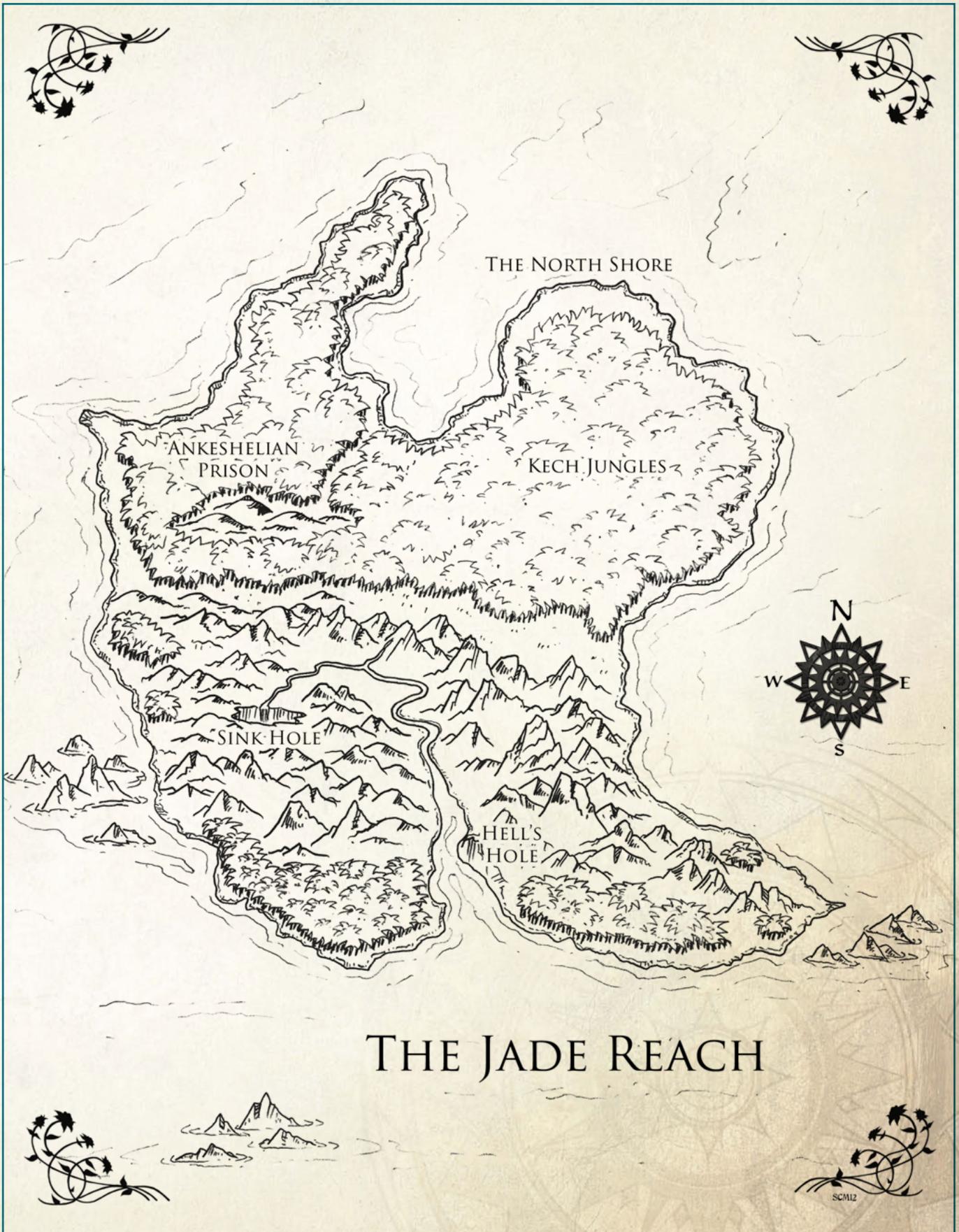
During Combat If successful with time stop, Ilisa attempts to uses temporal stasis and her memory drain ability to learn all she can of the ruins.

Morale She flees using air walk if reduced to less than 30 hit points.

Treasure: Nothing more than the matriarch carries, at the GM's discretion.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Talbot Sulla Pavonis is true to his word, and when characters return to Barsella he invites them back to his estate to hear the tale. This time, no mnemosynian lamia matriarchs lie in wait. He offers the leadership positions at Kammae's Landing, as promised, although they have some restoration work ahead of them to claim their reward.



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