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GM'S MONTHLY MISCELLANY:

JULY 2017





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GM'S MONTHLY MISCELLANY: JULY 2017

Featuring material from some of Raging Swan Press's newest products as well as classic releases of yesteryear, advice articles and material from Creighton's own Borderland of Adventure campaign, the GM's Monthly Miscellany series is a terrific free resource for the busy, time-crunched GM.

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SOURCES

As well as new, never seen before material from my own Borderland of Adventure campaign, this instalment of GM's Monthly Miscellany presents information from several Raging Swan Press products and advice articles including:

- **Places of Power: Beacon Promontory** Mike Welham.
- **Village Backdrop: Skaalhaft** Jeff Gomez.

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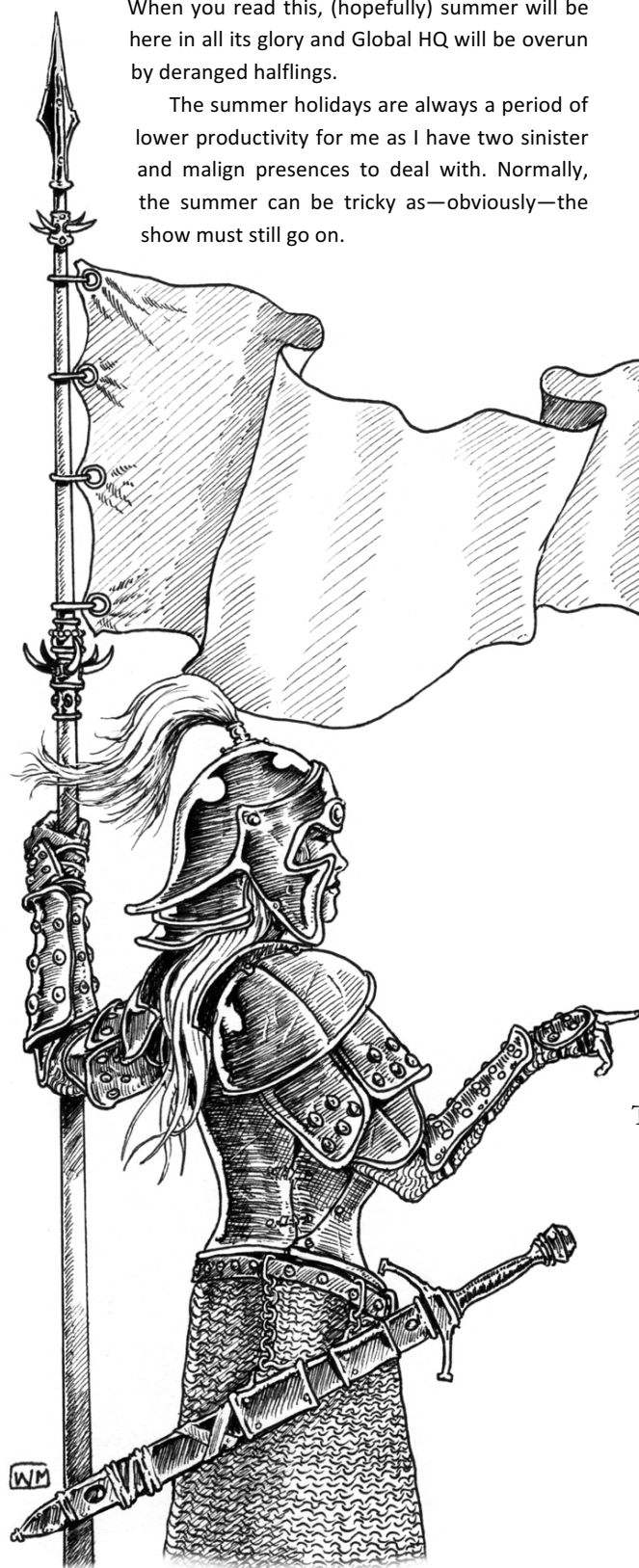
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When you read this, (hopefully) summer will be here in all its glory and Global HQ will be overrun by deranged halflings.

The summer holidays are always a period of lower productivity for me as I have two sinister and malign presences to deal with. Normally, the summer can be tricky as—obviously—the show must still go on.

However, this year I'm looking forward to slowing bit. It's been a jolly busy time of late and I've been struggling to make any time to actually write anything. I've also been struggling to keep ahead of my players in my *Borderland of Adventure* campaign. Hopefully, the summer will give me some time to recharge.

In any event, herein you'll find excerpts from some of Raging Swan's newest products including *Village Backdrop: Skaalhaft*, and *Places of Power: Beacon Promontory*. I've also included a couple of article designed to help you present troglodytes and will-o'-wisps in more detail.

You can read the article—and scores more as well as campaign summaries—at creightonbroadhurst.com.

PATREON

You might be aware Raging Swan Press is now on Patreon. We signed up at the start of April 2015, and it's going rather marvellously. The thrust of our Patreon campaign is to be able to afford better rates of pay for our freelance game designers. As I'm sure you know, the economics of 3PP are notoriously tight, but Patreon gives us at Raging Swan Press a way to increase our freelancer rates. At time of writing, we've already massively increased our word rate to 11 cents a word, which gives me a warm, fuzzy feeling inside. We want to pay more, but to do that we need your help! If you sign up, you get our supplements earlier than normal and cheaper than normal. Even better, you can pledge what you want and cancel when you want. If you are interested in supporting us, check out patreon.com/ragingswanpress or head over to patreon.com and search for Raging Swan!

THANK YOU!

In any event, I hope you enjoy the material in this GM's Monthly Miscellany, but more importantly I hope you find it useful and that it enhances your campaign.

If you've got any comments or questions about Raging Swan Press, I'd love to hear from you. You can contact me at creighton@ragingswan.com.

1,000 ABNORMAL TROGLODYTES

Brutish, savage and feral cave dwellers, troglodytes are the degenerate ancestors of a once proud and powerful race. Living amongst the mouldering remains of their once powerful subterranean empire, they have regressed to a more primal, simple state. Troglodytes can be found throughout the world, dwelling in cave systems large and small. Such caves are often linked to yet deeper systems and thus adventurers battle these repugnant humanoids with surprising regularity.

A standard troglodyte appears thusly:

With a grey scaled hide, long tail and crests on its head and back this humanoid resembles a cave lizard.

APPEARANCE

To the basic description above, apply one of the entries below:

1. One of this creature's eyes is milky white; the troglodyte is literally half-blind and has terrible depth perception.
2. An ugly web of scars criss-cross this warrior's shoulders and back.
3. This creature has a mottled grey and dull brown hide.
4. Part of this creature's crest has broken off.
5. This creature's crest is covered in dried and cracked mud.
6. Instead of grey scales, this troglodyte's hide is pale white.
7. This creature lacks the long tail of its fellows; clearly severed in some recent battle or accident, the troglodyte's stubby tail looks inflamed and infected.
8. Carrying a battered wooden shield with a faded emblem of a leafy tree this warrior also wears a worn, thick leather belt.
9. Using a mixture of blood and mud, this warrior has tattooed his scales with a series of lurid swirls and spirals.
10. This creature wears a belt holding many bulging pouches.

BATTLE TACTICS

In battle, some troglodytes fight differently to their brethren:

1. A cautious warrior, this troglodyte scuttles about the fringes of battle throwing javelins. When it runs out of missiles, it replenishes its supply with fallen or discarded weapons.
2. Literally wild with anger and blood lust, this warrior screams before foaming at the mouth and charging into battle. Enemies bitten by the troglodyte might fear they have contracted some form of disease.
3. This warrior is cunning. It has gathered several small pouches of dust and rubble. As it closes with its foe, it slings a pouch into its target's face to blind and disorientate its enemy.
4. Grown accustomed to the taste of blood, this troglodyte now thirsts for its enemies' lifeblood. If a nearby foe is slain or

rendered unconscious, the troglodyte hurls itself onto the body and starts licking and sucking its wounds.

5. In battle, this troglodyte hisses and snarls at its foes.
6. This troglodyte is a coward. If reduced to half hit points or fewer, it immediately flees from battle.
7. Unarmed, this troglodyte carries several small rocks which it flings at enemies before closing to melee.
8. Cautious in battle, this troglodyte prefers fighting small or weak-looking enemies. It hates wizards and their ilk.
9. Believing himself to be the group's leader, this warrior tries to order its fellows about on the battlefield. They ignore him.
10. Wielding an old warhammer of dwarven artifice, this troglodyte tries to smash and destroy enemies' shields, armour and so on.

TRINKETS & TREASURES

Sometimes, troglodytes carry small trinkets or treasures. Roll on the table below, if you determine the individual has an item of treasure or interest:

1. This troglodyte wore a pair of bone earrings. The carving is crude, but may be of interest to a collector.
2. This troglodyte wears a small, battered and tarnished gold ring (worth 5 gp), on its left hand.
3. A once fine fur cloak fills the troglodyte's mouldy pack. The cloak is similarly in bad condition, but still worth 3 gp.
4. One of this troglodyte's javelins is obviously of ancient artifice. Its point is yet sharp, however, and carved swirls and spiral decorate the weapon's shaft.
5. A rusted dagger is thrust through this warrior's crude belt. A small black stone—an onyx worth 10 gp—decorates its hilt.
6. Incongruously, the warrior wears fine, but worn, thick leather boots of dwarven artifice. The soles are worn and one of the heels is coming away. Perceptive PCs spot a secret compartment within holding a single platinum piece.
7. Smooth pebbles fill this troglodyte's pouch. Mixed in among them are three sling bullets. The bullets have holes bored through them; when hurled, they loudly whistle.
8. The ceremonial bone necklace marks this troglodyte as someone of importance. The necklace is worthless, but is instantly recognisable by other members of the tribe.
9. This troglodyte has a bone scroll tube thrust through its belt. Sadly, the scroll within has suffered catastrophic water damage; a small portion depicting a network of nearby passages and chambers remains.
10. A thick belt of tightly woven rope encircles this troglodyte's waist. The belt comprises 20-foot of rope, and could be handy in an emergency.

SKAALHAFT AT A GLANCE

Ruler: Svaad Ruun

Government: Dynasty

Alignments: LN, N

Population: 187 (187 humans)

Notable Folk: Gremheks (Vaydmar's Light), The Alchemist (Wayhouse), The Poacher (Wayhouse), The Wizard (Wayhouse)

Languages: Common

Qualities: Insular, legendary marketplace

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

Society: -3

Danger: 0

MARKETPLACE

Resources & Industry: Alchemical good, rare creature parts

Base Value: 650 gp; **Purchase Limit:** 3,750 gp; **Spellcasting:** 3rd (Gremheks at location 6 and the Alchemist and Wizard at location 7); **Minor Items:** 2d4; **Medium Items:** 1d4; **Major Items** –

Skaalhaft is a whaling village, where the quarry are drakes, kraken and other magical aquatic beasts as well as more mundane prey. Each kill provides food and alchemical supplies for weeks, both for use in the village and for profitable export. Whaling crews leave for days at a time, returning with a kill or empty handed (or sometimes not at all). These warriors use specialized tools and techniques to take on creatures that would slay far greater warriors.

Back in Skaalhaft, women and children work in a miasmic processing mill. Stone faced and silent, they separate valuable scales, blood and bone from worthless refuse. The bay is thick with mutated sharks from the runoff of such arcane waste.

The citizens of Skaalhaft are strong, sombre and scarred, some marked with glowing tattoos, carved scrimshaw necklaces or strange magic gifts from the alchemically charged meals they consume. While the village's mood usually matches the stormy grey skies, a valuable kill is marked by raucous celebrations which can last many days.

Sadly, mourning can be as frequent as celebration. Two months ago, one of the village's four ships went missing at sea. Svaad Ruun proclaimed the souls aboard lost, and a mass funeral is planned. The village digs deep into their treasury to purchase a new ship even as the local witch insists the crew still lives.

Despite the insular atmosphere, strangers roam the streets. A traveling wizard and alchemist, rich with gold from past misdeeds, make special requests of the whalers and pay their hires well. An orphaned daughter bent on revenge seeks her father's killer among the villagers. And now the PCs have arrived...

VILLAGE LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know something about Skaalhaft. A successful check gains all the information revealed by a lesser result.

DC 10: The founder of Skaalhaft was the legendary dragon-slaying hero Vaydmar.

DC 15: The blue light in the lighthouse is kept aflame by Gremheks the widowed witch.

DC 20: At any given time, the stores beneath the mill hold several thousand gold pieces worth of valuable ingredients used in various magical and alchemical processes and rituals.

VILLAGERS

Appearance: The villagers are large, muscular, heavily tattooed and acid scarred. Their skin is pale, almost blue, but thick without any sign of veins. Both men and women either tie their dark hair in braids, or cut it off completely.

Dress: Here in the cold, there is little difference between the dress of men and women. Villagers wear leather and furs crafted from both land and sea creatures alike. Many wear white and black scrimshaw necklaces from familial kills.

Nomenclature: *male* Gunvor, Hakron, Magnor, Olvar, Ranghide, Torhyld; *female* Fridys, Hyldys, Sigryd, Trygvinn, Yngryd; *family* Baas, Frys, Gurs, Mys, Ruun, Lyne, Ulf, Vyn.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Skaalhaft and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which the check result exceeds DC 10. Use the table below, to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

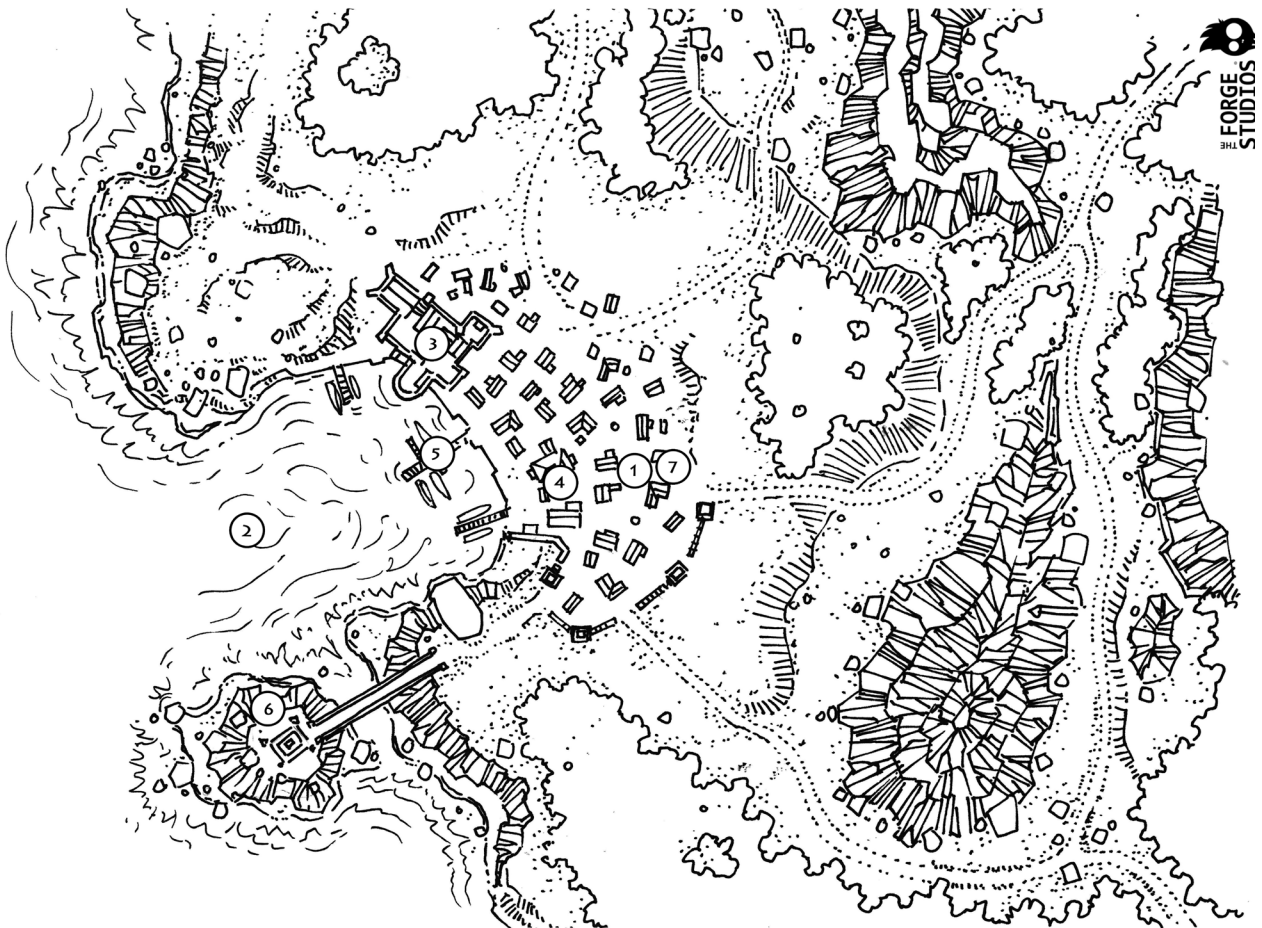
D6	RUMOUR
1*	Svaad Ruun, the burly chief, lost his arm fighting the black kraken. (He was born without his right arm).
2	Two of Skaalhaft's wealthiest customers, the Alchemist and the Wizard, live in the wayhouse.
3	Late at night, the Poacher skulks around the village spying on families in their homes. Patience with this intruder wears thin.
4	Gremheks of the lighthouse believes she deserves to be chief. After all, she is a descendant of Vaydmar.
5	The Alchemist and Wizard disappear one night and are not seen at the Wayhouse or anywhere in Skaalhaft.
6	Gremheks thinks the sailors aboard the lost ship Breakhelm are still alive, but none believe her.

*False rumour

NOTABLE LOCATIONS AT A GLANCE

Most of Skaalhaft comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Black Room:** Within the Wayhouse, the Wizard has constructed a tiny pocket dimension for her dark work. Inside, she and the Alchemist store alchemical goods, piles of gold and their secret project. The pair use materials purchased from Skaalhaft to slowly reconstruct and revivify their fallen leader: the antipaladin Greigard.
2. **Blood Bay:** All runoff from the mill flows into Blood Bay, chumming the water with foul arcane waste. The overwhelming smell attracts gigantic sharks that, over the centuries, have grown misshapen with magical power. Even the black sands and rocks are stained with acid and the entire area smells of rotting fish.
3. **Grey Mill:** Within this massive warehouse, women and children process their kills. Drakes and other creatures are divided into exportable products, which are stored in the basement until traders arrive.
4. **House of Ruun:** The house of Ruun is the ancestral home of the line of Skaalhaft chiefs. Here, the chief negotiates and proclaims, usually to small groups or individuals. Village-wide meetings are exceedingly rare. The current chief, a one-armed giant of a man named Svaad Ruun, decrees with absolute authority and listens stone faced to any concerns.
5. **Hunter's Dock:** Only ships which have killed a drake are allowed the honour of docking at this wooden pier. Until recently, this meant four vessels docked here. However, the *Breakhelm* was recently lost at sea, so only the *Serpent*, *Ygdris* and *Moonborn* remain.
6. **Vaydmar's Light:** This craggy and misshapen lighthouse was raised out of the rock by the hero Vaydmar in ancient times. His decedents have manned it ever since, keeping the arcane blue flame alight through storm and disaster. The witch Gremheks lives here now, all alone and somewhat senile.
7. **Wayhouse:** The Alchemist, Wizard and Poacher all stay within the Wayhouse's crumbling walls. The Alchemist and Wizard live together and in relative comfort, while the Poacher restlessly prowls the village. Their true motives remain unclear to the villagers, but their gold is good.



BEACON PROMONTORY AT A GLANCE

Ruler Vanya Colvin

Population 19 (11 humans, 2 dwarves, 3 half-elves, 3 halflings)

Alignments N

Languages Aquan, Common

Resources & Industry Fishing, safe shipping

Beacon Cove was a prosperous fishing village and a port of call for large ships embarking on or returning from sea voyages. Three years ago, the rainy season arrived and storms dumped an unprecedented amount of water on the village. Instead of drier weather supplanting the storms, the rain kept falling. The waters rose, and the village sank; most of the now homeless villagers fled the area. A few hardy folks retreated to the highest location, the rocky ground around their lighthouse. Thus, Beacon Promontory arose from the watery grave of Beacon Cove, just as the weather returned to normal. Now the residents wait for the water to recede, so they can reclaim their village.

LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know something about Beacon Promontory. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 10: Beacon Promontory is a remnant of a previous village, but the lighthouse still stands and is more relevant than ever in warning ships' crews about the dangerous shoreline.

DC 15: An unnatural deluge wiped out Beacon Cove.

DC 20: Some villagers drowned mysteriously and tales from fleeing villagers mention tentacled beasts lurking in the night.

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are nothing more than ordinary individuals.

- **Appearance** All the locals are proud of their weatherworn skin and calloused hands.
- **Dress:** Villagers dress for the weather and often wear raincoats even when the sun is shining.
- **Nomenclature:** *male* Felgrim, Jorm, Yander; *female* Cass, Filipa, Maggie; *family* Colvin, Dever, Turkel.

Some of the inhabitants, however, are notable:

Cass Dever (location 1; N female human expert 2) Cass maintains and guard Promontory Bridge.

Felgrim Colvin (location 8 and 10; N male dwarf expert 3) Felgrim fanatically tends the lighthouse's light.

Maggie Turkel (location 2; N female halfling fighter 2) Maggie is the chief blacksmith for the area.

Vanya Colvin (location 3; N female dwarf cleric 6) The village's spiritual leader is now leader of Beacon Promontory.

MARKETPLACE

The following items are for sale:

- **Consumables:** *elixir of swimming* (250 gp), *potion of water breathing* (750 gp), *scroll of daylight* (375 gp)
- **Miscellaneous:** *bottle of air* (7,250 gp), *wand of endure elements* (750 gp), *wind fan* (5,500 gp)

Additionally, the following services are available:

- **Crafting:** Fishing gear, nets and water-related weapons (fishing spears, harpoons and tridents).

EVENTS

While the PCs are at Beacon Promontory, one or more of the below events may occur. Choose or determine randomly:

D6	EVENT
1	A glowing green pearl washes up on shore.
2	Several lacedons emerge from the northern waters and approach the village.
3	Writhing tentacles (as <i>black tentacles</i>) surround the bridge and threaten to smash it to kindling.
4	At night, a cargo ship ignores the lighthouse's warning light and will imminently smash onto the rocks.
5	The lighthouse's light begins to flash intermittently.
6	Hundreds of dead fish float to the surface near the dock.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Beacon Promontory and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC exceeding this check gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which he exceeded DC 10. Use the table below to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D6	RUMOUR
1	Most fish from recent hauls have been half rotten.
2	I swear I saw a tentacle pop out of the mouth of one of the fishermen who arrived recently.
3	The rainy season is upon us soon; Vanya has been praying fervently to keep the downpours to a minimum.
4*	I saw a ghostly ship hovering above the lighthouse.
5	Felgrim is looking for an apprentice to eventually take over as lighthouse keeper, so he can help his wife, Vanya.
6	Even on cloudless days, lightning strikes the lighthouse at the same time of day.

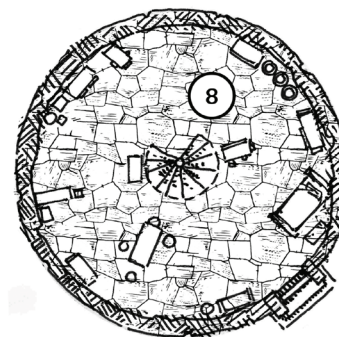
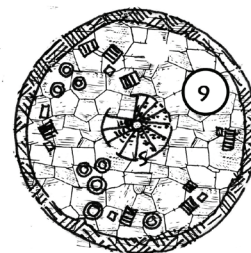
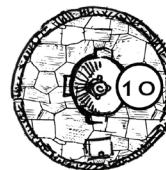
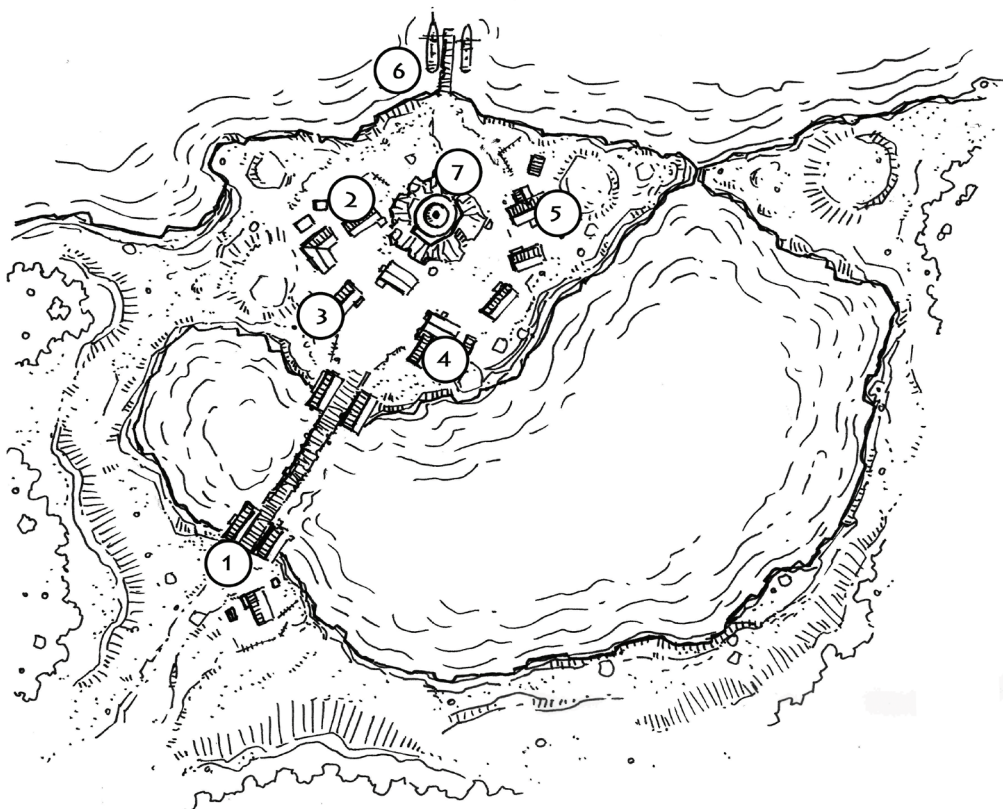
*False rumour

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Most of Beacon Promontory comprises locations of little interest to adventurers. A few locations, however, are notable:

1. **Promontory Bridge:** This hastily built bridge is the only safe approach to Beacon Promontory by land. It is rickety and only usable by pedestrians.
2. **Hooks and Gaffs:** Maggie Turkel spends most of her time here crafting fishing gear and the occasional weapon or suit of armour.
3. **Sea Queen's Blessing:** Everyone from Beacon Promontory comes here to at least give lip service to the Sea Queen, who impacts their livelihood with her savage, impulsive nature.
4. **General Supply and Salvage:** This store serves the crews of the now-rare ships anchoring nearby.
5. **Sea Bounty Inn:** Optimism prompted the rebuilding of the Sea Bounty Inn, a near-identical replica of the building in Beacon Cove; it stands mostly empty due to lack of visitors.

6. **Makeshift Dock:** There are enough ships stopping near Beacon Promontory to require this dock. It cannot accommodate full-sized ships, but can moor rowboats from those ships.
7. **Lighthouse Entrance:** Paranoia about the circumstances surrounding Beacon Cove's fall prompt the remaining group to set a guard at the lighthouse's entrance.
8. **Lighthouse Ground Floor:** During the day, when Felgrim isn't making repairs or assisting Vanya, he can be found here sleeping or eating.
9. **Hidden Storage:** A secret door known only to Felgrim and Vanya hides staple goods and a few weapons. If Beacon Promontory comes under siege, the Colvins plan to shelter the residents in this hidden area.
10. **Lighthouse Lamp:** Arguably the most important feature of Beacon Promontory, Felgrim has ensured the lamp's light has remained constant for the years he has been keeper.



6 WILL-O'-WISPS WITH PERSONALITY

While most will-o'-wisps glow white or pale blue, six wisps of unusual colouring terrorise the citizens of a nearby village. None know the wisps' true names; the villagers have taken to identifying them via their colouration.

1. The villagers call Yellow "The Pale Death." The wisp takes the form of a shrivelled man, gliding silently across the bog. As Yellow approaches, the victim loses all sense of hearing, then taste, then eventually sight and even touch. All that is left is a horrid stench of age and death: brittle skin, soft eyes and teeth. The villagers believe Yellow's touch means death. In reality, its victims die of fear before the wisp even gets close.
2. Green is surrounded by an immense cloud of luminescent, buzzing flies. Vines twist and reeds dance as the wisp moves, animated by its unquestionably malevolent presence. Green draws upon the hostility of nature, upon cold eyes and gleaming teeth in still water. The wisp's victims are driven to paranoia by the sounds of insects and beasts, and flee through the bogs until they die of exposure.
3. A disfigured face is visible within Blue's glow. Bloated and grey, the drowned head chatters with cold. Blue chases creatures into bogs and ponds, any place where mud grasps with eager

hands. The wisp slowly approaches as its prey slowly drowns. A creature may become so disoriented with fear it cannot find air in waist deep water.

4. Purple revels in insanity. It infects the dreams of sleeping or drunk villagers, slowly driving them to terrified madness. Purple usually chooses one villager at a time, breaking his or her mind over the course of many months. This is a long-term strategy, far more nourishing than a quick death. When the victim inevitably takes her or her own life, the wisp is waiting to feed on the anguish.
5. Red leaves a splattering of blood wherever it goes. It revels in the fear and confusion of dripping blood without any apparent source. Sometimes Red generates blood within a villager's stomach or ears, feeding off the terrified frenzy that follows. Other times Red spreads confusion and sows distrust with a well-placed spot of blood on a kitchen knife.
6. Wreathed in ghostly flames, Orange generates intense cold. It lures lost villagers with illusory campfires, then watches silently as they freeze to death. Nothing is more delicious than the panic of a victim unable to get warm.



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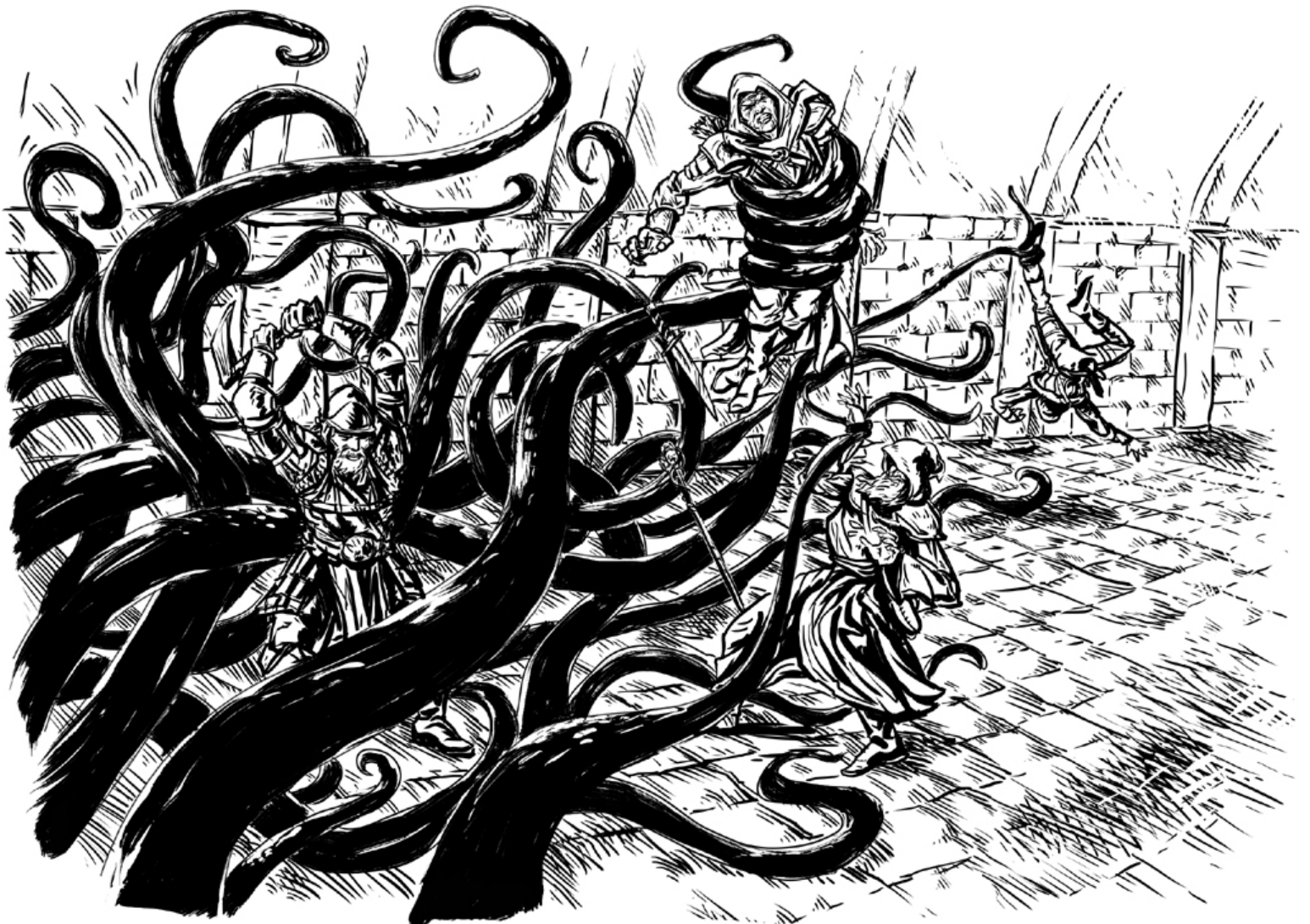
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