



MADNESS IN FREEPORT

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A Shadow of the Demon Lord Adventure for Master Characters

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A Freeport adventure for Shadow of the Demon Lord

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The Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign worships a being known as the Unspeakable One. The last time this entity was summoned, a great cataclysm wiped out the Valossan civilization and sent it tumbling into the sea. The Brotherhood survived and thrived, its members hidden within respectable society, conducting their profane rituals and rites concealed from their enemies' attention. Having spent centuries carrying out their master's bidding in secret, they are now ready to reveal themselves to the world once more and bring forth the dreaded being they serve.

The Brotherhood has spent years installing their members in key positions within Freeport's government and joined forces with serpent people who share their wicked devotion. Leading their efforts is none other than the Sea Lord, Milton Drac, who has nearly bankrupted the city constructing a lighthouse that has been specially prepared to let loose the power of the Unspeakable One. Now that the workers have completed the grand structure, he has invited the leaders of the mainland and people of note from all over to witness the lighting. But instead of an ordinary light, the radiance of his unholy patron will shine forth and drive everyone who can see it insane, making them thralls to the Demon Lord.

This adventure concludes the classic Freeport Trilogy and updates the adventure to fit into the world described in *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. Designed for master characters, the group completes the adventure when they confront the Sea Lord in the lighthouse and thwart his efforts or die trying!

OVERVIEW

Madness in Freeport has four parts, which are summarized here. The characters have about three days to complete the adventure, tackling the first part on the first day, parts two and three on the second, and dealing with part four on the third. You can adjust the timing as needed based on how the story unfolds.

The first part sees the characters drawn into the intrigues of the council and city politics. Through investigation and clever deduction, the characters ought to discover the secret behind the lighthouse and the Brotherhood's plans, and that the *Jade Serpent of Yig* is crucial for thwarting them.

In the second part, the characters head out to find the relic. Thanks to an obscure log entry uncovered by Thuron, the characters learn of the caves of an infamous pirate named Black Dog that offer access to a sunken temple that supposedly holds the ancient relic they need.

Having located the entrance, the third part sees the characters entering the sunken Temple of Yig. To gain the relic, the group must contend with the shadows of long dead serpent people, traps, and other hazards. In the end, the characters must make a great sacrifice to gain the relic they need.

The final part of the adventure involves Milton's Folly, the great lighthouse. The characters must sneak inside and reach the top before Milton Drac and his cronies complete the ritual. If they succeed, they save the city. If they fail, they doom the world.

GETTING STARTED

Milton Drac is good at thinking on his feet. When the characters foiled his plan to frame them (see *Terror in Freeport*), he moved quickly to an alternate plan. Using the evidence that already incriminated Verlaine (the Brotherhood temple beneath Verlaine's home, the artifacts being shipped there from the old temple, and the letter hiring the PCs to investigate the Temple of the Seer), Drac takes steps to paint his former chief councilor as the true villain.

A very public "cleansing" is held: Verlaine's home and the temple beneath it are destroyed by the militia. The Council issues an edict to remove Verlaine's name forever from the rolls of the Captains' Council and for all his former holdings to be seized. Drac also drafts a proclamation explaining the treachery of Verlaine and names him leader of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. At the same time, the characters are hailed as heroes of Freeport for thwarting the Brotherhood's plans.

Since Drac's agents have failed to eliminate the group, the Sea Lord has decided to take matters into his own hands. He invites the characters to the Grand Lighthouse Ball at his palace. There, he awards them the Order of Drac for their role in defeating Verlaine. While the characters are busy trying to find a way to sabotage his plans, Drac tries to set them up and be rid of them for good.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

As with the other adventures in the Freeport Trilogy, the group can gain levels quickly such that by the end of this adventure, the characters will have attained the heights of their power. If you choose to run at an accelerated pace, the group should be level 8 during the second part, level 9 during the third, and level 10 during the final part.

PART I: THE GRAND LIGHTHOUSE BALL

In which the characters discover that social occasions are only warfare artfully concealed

At some point after the events detailed in *Terror in Freeport*, a messenger delivers to each player character a scroll case covered in silver filigree that contains a rolled sheet of fine vellum tied with a red satin ribbon. Give the players **Handout A**. The scroll invites the characters to attend the Grand Lighthouse Ball and receive accolades for their heroic efforts.

The messenger, before departing, informs the characters when the ball is to be held. The ball can take place whenever you choose. Just be sure to give the characters enough time to recover from the events in *Terror in Freeport* or any other adventure you might have run before this one.

The characters can learn more information about the event by gathering rumors and talking with their contacts. You can reveal some or all of the following information.

- The Lighthouse Ball is being held to celebrate the imminent completion of Milton's Folly, the great lighthouse of Freeport.
- Only the most influential people in Freeport have been invited to the ball.
- Now that Verlaine is dead, many people wonder who will replace him on the Captains' Council.
- Councilor Grossette plans to challenge Drac for control of the council. It's expected she will put up her own nominee for Verlaine's vacant post.



ROLEPLAYING

Social interaction dominates much of the first part of this adventure. It's recommended that you use a mix of roleplaying and social attack rolls in these interactions to ensure the players become engaged in the scene and to keep it exciting. You can grant 1 or more boons—or automatic successes—for good roleplaying.

THE SEA LORD'S PALACE

The group finds the Sea Lord's Palace in the Old City on the Street of Dreams. A 15-foot-high wall of stone and iron encloses the palace grounds and two large, black, iron gates face the street, granting access to the gardens and palace. Four guards (as **veterans**) stand watch over the entrance, checking invitations.

Beautiful landscape greets those who pass through the gate. A white stone path winds across an ornate garden of ornamental trees, flowerbeds, and elegant statuary until it reaches the front doors of the palace, which stands some five stories tall.

The palace map details only those areas the characters are likely to visit, covering the ground floor of the palace, which includes the ballroom and the rooms adjoining.

1. Guard Rooms: Two members of the Sea Lord Guard (as **veterans**) occupy each of these rooms, watching over the entrance to the palace. As guests arrive for the ball, a guard stands before each door and inspects invitations a second time.

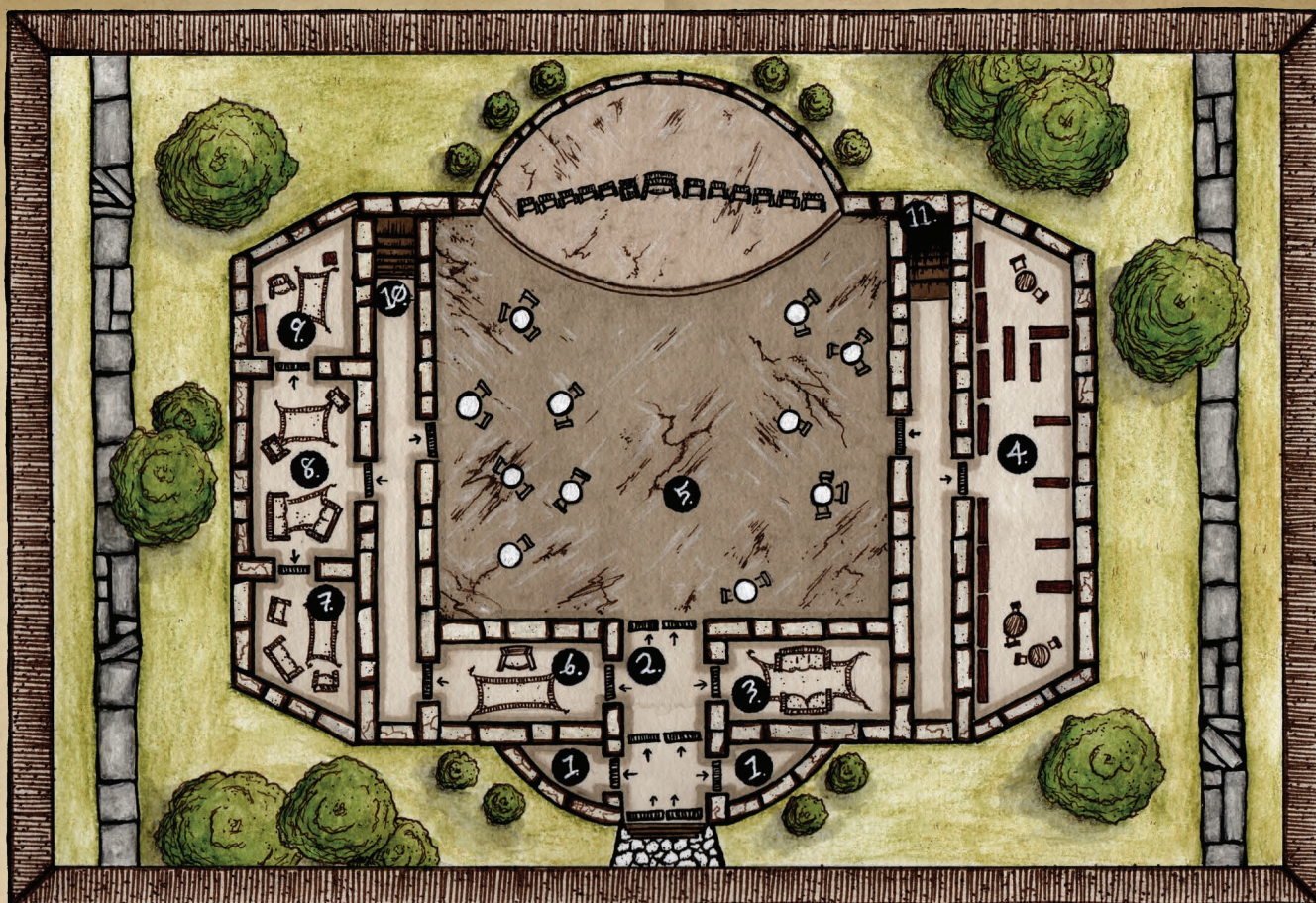
2. Entrance Hall: A mosaic depicting a battle at sea between a pirate ship and a giant, purple squid covers the floor of the entrance hall. Ornate, golden double doors stand closed at the end of the hall leading to the ballroom. Two smaller doors sit in the right and left walls. Well-dressed guards stand before them, preventing access to the rooms beyond.

3. Sitting Room: This waiting area serves people who have come to visit the Sea Lord. Paintings depicting a variety of former Sea Lords and historical scenes hang on the walls. Two large couches sit in the center of the room and a number of chairs are spread throughout.

4. Library: Anton Drac had a passion for learning. During his rule, he tore down the walls of two other sitting rooms to make this impressive library. Floor-to-ceiling bookcases line the interior walls, and large windows in the exterior walls let natural light in for reading. The library has fallen into disuse during the reign of Milton Drac and dust is evident on the bookshelves. The books cover a variety of mundane topics from history to adventure stories.

5. The Grand Ballroom: Golden doors open into a large room. At the far end of the room stands a curved row of windows about half as wide as the room itself; they afford a great view of the garden behind the palace. A dais stands in front of the windows and it holds thirteen high-backed chairs, the one in the center taller than the rest. The chair to right of center is draped in black cloth.

Round tables covered in tablecloths stand to either side of the room to form an aisle that leads from the golden doors to the dais. The floor throughout this room is polished black marble. Tapestries depicting various maritime scenes hang on the walls and in the middle of the left and right walls stand smaller golden



doors. Large glass spheres hang from the ceiling and fill the room with soft yellow light.

6. Small Audience Chamber: Drac uses this room to receive minor guests and to conduct day-to-day business. A small throne sits against the wall opposite the window. Wooden paneling covers the walls, making it seem as if the room was a ship's cabin.

7–9. Sitting Rooms: These rooms contain tables, chairs, and couches for use by visitors. The guests at the ball, including the characters, can freely use these rooms. They might come in handy if private conversations are necessary.

10. Stairs Up: Stairs climb to the upper levels of the palace. Two guards are stationed at the top and the bottom of the stairs, and they refuse to let anyone but Drac pass. The layout and contents of the rooms on the upper floors are not important for this adventure. Detail them as needed.

11. Stairs Down: These stairs lead down to the kitchen and the larder. Two guards stand at the top and the bottom of the stairs. They forbid anyone but the cooks and serving staff to pass. The specifics of the basement are not important for this adventure, but you can add detail if needed.

ARRIVAL

When the characters arrive at the ball and show their invitations to the guards, they are led to a sitting room

(area 3). A guard remains in the room with the group until the chamberlain arrives.

A few minutes later, Tomas Fleetfoot, the High Chamberlain of the Sea Lord's Palace, arrives. He's a portly halfling dressed in a black suit with silver buttons. He welcomes the characters in the name of his master and introduces himself. He explains that the characters are to be honored tonight for their deeds in defense of Freeport. He then lays out the schedule.

WEAPONS ETIQUETTE AT THE BALL

Freeport is a town where carrying weapons in public is not just acceptable, it's good sense. However, for a high-society event like the Lighthouse Ball, being heavily armed is seen as an insult. The most acceptable choices are weapons that can be worn in a scabbard, such as daggers and swords, especially if the gear is ornamental rather than merely functional. Light armor, so long as it is fashionable and clean, is permissible. The guards politely but firmly take custody of the more dangerous items—especially projectile weapons—for the duration of the party's visit, and deny entry to any character who refuses to cooperate. Any character with knowledge of etiquette, customs, or nobility knows what to expect.

- He will lead the characters into the hall as a speech is made in the characters' honor.
- The Sea Lord will introduce them to the gathering, at which point the characters are to approach the dais.
- The Sea Lord will then present them all the Order of Drac, a high honor.
- Then the ball will begin and the characters are free to mingle.

DUBIOUS HONORS

Once the characters are ready, the halfling leads them into the hall, where the characters find the room filled with guests seated at tables and minstrels gathered on one side of the dais. Standing in the center of the dais is a tall man with an angular face. He wears a long, light-green robe with a jeweled belt. He looks toward the group and then addresses the guests, "Thank you all for coming to this grand ball to celebrate the completion of the lighthouse. Soon the world will speak of the greatness of Freeport. As a glowing beacon, the lighthouse shall shine forth to all peoples, proclaiming the unspeakable power of our glorious city.

"Tonight, however, we honor the heroes who have saved us from the traitor Verlaine and the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. If not for their heroic efforts, our fair city might have fallen under the domination of unfathomable evil. Come forward, my friends, and accept the Order of Drac and our sincerest gratitude."

The room erupts in applause.

Milton hands each character a gold medal with a pirate ship engraved on it, shaking the character's hand as he does. The characters are then shown to a table and the music and merriment begins.

THE BALL BEGINS

The Lighthouse Ball lasts the entire evening and continues into the early morning. Food and wine are in abundance. How long or how short this scene takes is up to you. Depending on the type of game you and your group enjoys, you might want to end it quickly, or take your time and enjoy the roleplaying possibilities.

INTRIGUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Amidst the gossip and rumors that swirl around the ball, two main topics of conversation dominate the party. The first concerns who will replace Verlaine on the Captains' Council. Two factions divide the Council. Five members are loyal to the Sea Lord and support his agenda, while the remaining six members support Lady Elise Grosette, who opposes Drac.

Grosette needs just one more councilor on her side to block the Sea Lord's ambitions. Drac would like to maintain his control so he urges the Council to support his nominee.

Characters can eavesdrop on these conversations or interact with people directly to learn where the various Council members stand. Furthermore, the characters now hold status in the city and their support could be influential in the Council's vote for a new nominee. If the characters support Lady Elise, they might be able to win over members who support Drac.

The second topic is the lighthouse and the purpose behind its construction. Many of the people at the ball have seen or learned interesting pieces of information about strange goings on at the lighthouse. When combined with what the characters have learned, insight into the real purpose of the lighthouse could be possible.

Characters who played through *Death in Freeport* and *Terror in Freeport* should know the following. If the characters don't, you can supply the group with the information from important guests or characters you create. The key clues include:

- Bricks used in the lighthouse have the Yellow Sign engraved inside them (*Terror in Freeport*)
- A copy of the speech for Milton Drac was written in the serpent tongue to set up the characters (*Terror in Freeport*)
- A letter from someone named N'tal mentions the Brotherhood and says that the preparations are almost complete (*Death in Freeport*)
- An architectural sketch of the lighthouse that revealed some strange features (*Terror in Freeport*)

THE GUESTS

Several notable people attend the ball and include the Sea Lord, the members of the Captains' Council, and other prominent citizens. As honored guests themselves, the player characters can freely interact with the people described here as well as with characters you create and introduce in this scene. There's no structure to this interaction; the player characters can mingle and talk to the various people in whatever order they like. This said, it's crucial for the characters to pick up the right clues for the rest of the adventure to proceed, so you might have guests approach the group too.

The most important people are described below, but they account for only a tiny number of people present. Nearly one hundred people are at the event and include spouses, concubines, merchants, artisans, performers, nobles, and minor politicians. You can give these minor characters as much or little detail as you need to bring the ball to life.

TOMAS FLEETFOOT

High Chamberlain of the Sea Lord's Palace

A member of the Fleetfoot family has held the post of High Chamberlain going all the way back to the second Sea Lord, Captain Cromey, who oversaw the completion of the Palace's construction. Tomas Fleetfoot grew up in the house and learned everything about running the household from his father. After Anton Drac's assassination, the elder Fleetfoot retired and handed over the responsibilities to his eldest son. Since then, Tomas has done well in his role and no one knows more about the Palace than him.

Tomas is a middle-aged halfling, about three feet tall. He has a mop of curly brown hair and kind, brown eyes. He dresses in a black suit with silver buttons that strain against his large belly. He worries constantly, wringing his hands and surveying the room for the next disaster he must avert.

TOMAS FLEETFOOT

DIFFICULTY 1

Size 1/2 halfling

Perception 9 (-1)
Defense 11; **Health** 10; **Insanity** 1; **Corruption** 0
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 11 (+1)
Speed 8

ATTACK OPTIONS

Unarmed Strike (melee) +1 (1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Good Fortune Whenever a creature within short range of Tomas rolls a 1 on any die, he can use a triggered action to discard the roll and let the creature roll the die again.

Uncommon Courage When Tomas would become frightened, he can use a triggered action to make a Will challenge roll. On a success, he removes the frightened affliction.

Talking to Tomas: Being the high chamberlain means never knowing a moment's peace. Tomas spends the evening rushing about, instructing servants, seeing to the guests, and doing whatever he can to make the ball a memorable experience for everyone. If the characters stop him, he is nearly breathless. When he speaks, he does so in a hurry, words tumbling out of his mouth.

Tomas has no love for the current Sea Lord, finding him strange and sometimes cruel. Despite his misgivings, he remains dedicated to his role as chamberlain and the responsibility of keeping up the family tradition. He suspects something strange is going on in the Palace and he might mention that just last week a visiting merchant ran screaming from his room and jumped out of a third-story window, falling to his death. When Tomas checked the room, he found an open book on the desk. One of the pages bore a disconcerting symbol on it. As he looked upon it, an odd buzzing filled his mind. He only just managed to close the book and escape the room. If asked to draw the symbol, he sketches the Yellow Sign.



THURON (K'STALLO)

High Priest of the Temple of the Seer

If Thuron (K'Stallo) survived the events described in *Terror in Freeport*, he attends the ball and might be the only familiar face present. This adventure assumes that the characters agreed to keep his secret and treat him as an ally. You can replace this character if something happened to him or the characters decided no to work with him. Egil would be a worthy substitute, if he still lives.

Thuron is the high priest in the Temple of the Seer. No one, aside from the player characters, has any idea that the real Thuron died weeks ago and his remains are interred in a vault under the great temple. The person masquerading as the old high priest is a serpent person named K'Stallo, a devoted servant of Yig and enemy of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. K'Stallo has been using the libraries in the temple of the Seer to learn more about the Brotherhood and other occult matters.

K'Stallo appears to be a human man in his early sixties. He stands five feet, nine inches tall, and has a stocky build. He has long, gray hair and bright blue eyes. He wears a long brown velvet robe cinched at the waist with a white silk belt. He walks with the aid of a gnarled quarterstaff.

THURON

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 serpent person

Perception 13 (+3); **darksight**
Defense 10; **Health** 26; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 1
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 13 (+3)
Speed 10; swimmer

ATTACK OPTIONS

Staff (melee) +0 (1d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Change Shape K'Stallo can use an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to transform into a different living creature. The new form must have a humanoid shape and be either Size 1/2 or Size 1. He remains in this form until he becomes incapacitated or uses a triggered action at any time to return to his normal form. K'Stallo can use this talent three times and regains expended uses when he completes a rest.

Shared Recovery K'Stallo can use an action to heal 6 damage and let one other creature within short range heal damage equal to its healing rate. K'Stallo can use Shared Recovery twice and regains expended uses when he completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 2

Arcana *arcane armor* (3), *arcane sight* (2), *unerring darts* (2)
Divination *eavesdrop* (3), *foretell* (2), *reading* (1)

Talking to Thuron: K'Stallo has had plenty of time to refine his impersonation of the late Thuron and he presents himself as a kindly grandfather, offering advice, whether people ask for it or not. While some might bristle at his unsolicited pearls of wisdom, his advice is rarely wrong.

Currently, K'Stallo works to thwart Milton Drac's plans and he sees the group as the means of accomplishing this goal. He's interested in whatever the characters learn. If the characters appear to be floundering, he might nudge them in the right direction, giving them a push if necessary.

After the old man delivers the prophecy (see *The Serpent Speaks*), K'Stallo finds and tells the group he has to go back to the temple. He thinks he might understand the prophecy's meaning, but he needs to consult some books first. He asks the characters to meet him there after they leave the ball.

MORE FUN AND GAMES

There is more going on at the ball than conspiracy and intrigue. You can plant seeds for future adventures, sidetracks, and red herrings to keep the scene interesting and varied. You can also use either of the following optional events.

Nighthaunt: Margaret Roth, more commonly known as Margy, is the daughter of **Torsten Roth**, the head of the Merchant's Guild. Young and vivacious, the characters might note her as she mingles with the crowd. She appears to be a spoiled rich girl and talks of nothing but jewelry, antiques, and gold. Her shallowness, however, is an act. Despite the comforts her father's money brings, Margy is a thrill-seeker at heart. She can't stand the phony world her father lives in and her thirst for excitement has led her into a life of crime. At the ball, she works her way through the crowd, gleaning through innocent conversation what pricey items she can steal from the mansions of Freeport's elite. She plans to start her crime spree a few days later. Despite this careful plan though, she can't resist the urge to pick a few pockets during the ball itself. Alert characters might notice her shenanigans if they watch her carefully. Even if they do nothing about it, the characters might remember the aristocratic pickpocket in the weeks to come as the burglar dubbed "Nighthaunt" (as a **pickpocket**) starts her epic career.

For Freeport! While the characters know the honor is a sham, some youngsters in the audience are swept away by the tales of their heroism. One such is Bedwyr (as a **patroller**), nephew of **Sister Gwendolyn**. He thinks the characters are amazing and he wants to be just like them. Throughout the night, he pesters each character in turn, praising their deeds and thanking them on behalf of "Freeport's pure of heart." He is quick to add he aspires to heroism himself, and he is willing to help in any way he can. Although something of a boob, Bedwyr is genuine in his feelings. Sister Gwendolyn is protective of her nephew, and the characters might have to face her if they lead Bedwyr to a bad end.

TARMON

High Wizard

Tarmon is the archwizard of the Wizards' Guild of Freeport. Orphaned at a young age, he was forced to survive on Freeport's mean streets as an urchin. An adventuring wizard discovered in him an affinity for magic and took him on as a pupil. After many adventures on the Continent, Tarmon returned to Freeport and founded the guild for wizards.

Though he's now an older man in his sixties, he stands six and a half feet tall with short brown hair and brown eyes. He wears a long, flowing red robe with a golden belt. He walks with the aid of a staff carved with strange sigils.

Talking to Tarmon: Energetic and quick-witted, Tarmon enjoys conversation and has such a breadth of knowledge that he can talk long on many different subjects. Tarmon and the Guild have tried to stay out of the lighthouse project, uninterested in becoming embroiled in the politics. Although the wizards realize the project has been draining the city's coffers, they do not want to go against the Council if the majority supports it. Tarmon is unaware of the involvement of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. If the group can gain his confidence and bring him proof of the Brotherhood's involvement, he gives them whatever aid he can.

TARMON

DIFFICULTY 500

Size 1 human

Perception 14 (+4)

Defense 14; **Health** 36; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0

Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 13 (+3)

Speed 10

Grimoires Tarmon carries two tomes filled with magical lore. Either tome grants 1 boon on Intellect challenge rolls he makes to recall information about magic. The first tome contains the *read minds* Telepathy (see *Demon Lord's Companion*) spell, the *call medium animal* Primal spell, and the *force field* Protection spell. The second tome contains the *bestow flight* Air spell, the *fireball* Fire spell, and the *protection from spells* Protection spell. If Tarmon is holding the Grimoire, he can cast a spell it contains by expending a casting of a spell he learned of the same or higher rank.

Staff of Magic When using this implement to cast an attack spell, Tarmon makes the attack roll with 1 boon and creatures make challenge rolls to resist the spell with 1 bane.

Spell Mastery Tarmon has 6 spell points. When he casts a spell, he can spend a number of spell points equal to the spell's rank (minimum 1 point) to cast the spell without expending a casting or to cast a spell for which he has no castings remaining. He replenishes all spell points spent when he completes a rest.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Staff of Magic (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Spell Recovery Tarmon uses an action to heal 9 damage and regain two expended castings. Once he uses this talent, he cannot do so again until he completes a rest.

Counterspell When a creature Tarmon can see attacks him with a spell, Tarmon can use a triggered action to counter it. The triggering creature makes the attack roll with 1 bane and Tarmon makes the challenge roll to resist the attack with 1 boon.

Legendary Casting On his turn, Tarmon can use a triggered action to cast a spell of rank 3 or lower. He can use Legendary Casting six times. He replenishes his uses when he completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 6

Arcana *arcane armor* (8), *magic dart* (8), *arcane shield* (4), *arcane sight* (4), *explosive darts* (2), *destroy magic* (2), *harness magic* (2), *arcane retribution* (1)

Enchantment *bewitch* (8), *presence* (8), *charm* (4)

Illusion *clamor* (8), *disguise* (8), *invisibility* (2), *decoy* (2), *mirage* (1), *illusory double* (1)

Magician *sense magic* (8)

MILTON DRAC

Sea Lord of Freeport, Faction Leader

The Sea Lord is the most powerful person in the room, and he knows it. Milton Drac makes it a point to talk to everyone in attendance, to make others feel welcome even as he threads insults into his compliments. Though he smiles freely and often, the smile never quite reaches his eyes.

Aside from knowing he has the blood of Drac flowing through his veins, no one really knows much about the Sea Lord. He seemed to come out of nowhere after Anton Drac's assassination, taking power soon after. In truth, Marten Drac, one of the most brutal rulers Freeport has ever known, sired a bastard on a harlot named Annabel. Marten forgot the woman after their night of drunken debauchery until she told him she'd borne his son after he had become Sea Lord. Fearing a scandal and unwilling to share his good fortune with an aging strumpet and unwanted child, Marten ordered them killed.

Annabel escaped Freeport ahead of the assassins with her child in her arms but knew Marten would eventually find them. She gave the young Milton to a monastery on the Continent that she believed was dedicated to the New God. He was only ten years old, but she made certain he knew his lineage so one day he could claim his birthright. Drac never learned Annabel's fate, though he imagines she was caught and tortured to death.

Annabel's good intentions were for naught as the monks to whom she had entrusted her boy were not devotees of the New God but members of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. These cultists believed the young Drac was the answer to their prayers and that he would be instrumental in reviving their foul religion in Freeport.

The monks corrupted the young man, drawing him into their faith, always reminding him of his mother's death and the man most likely responsible. Soon Milton's grief gave way to hate, and he found it easy to give himself over to the worship of the Unspeakable One. He eventually rose high in the cult's ranks and began plotting his revenge.

MILTON DRAC

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 1 human

Perception 14 (+4)

Defense 18; **Health** 92; **Insanity** 8; **Corruption** 7

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 14 (+4)
Speed 10

Immune compelled, dazed, immobilized, stunned

Accomplished Caster When Milton casts an attack spell, he makes the attack roll with 1 boon and creatures make challenge rolls to resist the spell with 1 bane.

Uncanny Skill Milton makes challenge rolls with 1 boon.

Preternatural Instincts Milton can use two triggered actions each round.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Long Knife (melee) +4 with 2 boons (3d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Exploding Skull Milton uses an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to hurl a humanoid skull to a point within medium range. When the skull reaches that point, or encounters a solid surface before then, it explodes dealing 5d6 damage to everything inside a 5-yard-radius sphere centered on that point. A creature in the area can make an Agility challenge roll and takes half the damage on a success. Milton can use Exploding Skull three times. He regains expended uses when he completes a rest.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Blessing of the Unspeakable One When Milton would gain an affliction, he can use a triggered action to remove that affliction.

Unhinged Recovery Milton uses an action to heal 23 damage. For 1 round, his attacks deal 1d6 extra damage.

MAGIC

Power 5

Death[†] *killing touch* (6), *life drain* (3), *poisonous breath* (2), *feast of souls* (2), *death fog* (1), *stop heart* (1)

Destruction *ruin* (6), *rend* (3), *sunder* (3), *entropic power* (2), *evaporate* (2), *destroy* (1), *disintegrate* (1)

[†]See *Demon Lord's Companion*

END OF THE ROUND

Epic Adversary Roll 1d3 + 1 to determine how many actions Milton can use during the next round. He can use these actions during any turn and can do so before his enemies act. Each time he uses an action, he can move up to his Speed before or after he resolves the action.

Milton is in his mid-forties, about six and half feet tall, with a thin build, and salt-and-pepper hair worn in a ponytail. He has a long, angular face and a penetrating gaze. He wears a long, light-green robe with a jeweled belt.

Talking to Milton: The Sea Lord's disconcerting demeanor often upsets people with whom he talks. He enjoys mixing innuendo into his conversation so those who speak to him are not sure whether they have just been insulted or complimented. As well, his stare seems to look into a person's soul and few people can tolerate the weight of his gaze for long before they withdraw.

Milton Drac wants to ensure the completion of the lighthouse so the madness of the Unspeakable One will spread across the world. Conveniently, this satisfies his desire to see Freeport destroyed for the murder of his mother. He keeps his plans to himself and his confederates. He will not let anyone or anything stand in his way.



CAPTAIN BROCK WALLACE

Captains' Council Member (Drac Faction)

Brock is not what he seems. He is, in fact, a serpent person named Gorn who disguises himself as the late Brock Wallace. In this guise, he appears as a bald, corpulent middle-aged man in his mid-fifties. He stands just shy of six feet. He wears a black tri-corn hat, a ruffled shirt, and black breeches with white hose. He keeps two daggers in fine leather scabbards on his hips.

The real Brock Wallace was the head of a prosperous merchant family of Freeport. They made their fortunes securing numerous trading contracts with important cities on the Continent. Brock was elected to the Captains' Council nine years ago in return for his support for Milton's Folly. His contacts in the Nine Cities provided much of the materials for the lighthouse project.

About a year ago, Brock spoke out about the lighthouse when Drac began to bring in other families to help fund the project. He threatened to pull his support and, with it, the materials needed to complete the lighthouse. Drac responded by having a serpent person named Gorn kill the man and assume his identity. Now, Brock supports Drac and his policies.

Talking to Brock: Gorn tries to act like Brock, who was always outspoken and ill tempered. Many of Brock's family and closest friends have noticed changes in his personality. He often forgets important details from his past. Things that used to send him into a rage now evoke no response at all. Clearly, something has changed, but the people around him can't put their finger on what or why.

BROCK WALLACE (GORN)

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 serpent person

Perception 11 (+1); **darksight**
Defense 15; **Health** 25; **Insanity** 3; **Corruption** 2
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 10 (+0)
Speed 10; swimmer
Uncanny Skill Gorn makes all challenge rolls with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Teeth (melee) +3 with 1 boon (1d3 plus 3d6)
Cutlass (melee) +3 with 1 boon (4d6)
Crossbow (long range) +3 with 1 boon (4d6)
Dagger (melee or short) +3 with 1 boon (1d3 plus 3d6)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Change Shape Gorn can use an action to assume the form of a different living creature. The new form must have a humanoid shape and be either Size 1/2 or 1. He remains in this form until he becomes incapacitated or uses a triggered action at any time to resume his normal form. He can use this ability once and regains the use when he completes a rest.

ARIAS SODERHEIM

Captains' Council Member (Drac Faction)

For twenty-four years, Arias Soderheim has sat on the Captains' Council. He represents the shipping interests of the elfin pirates who sail from Freeport. Like some elves, Arias lived as a human in the early part of his life, but he was abducted by faeries and his years in a hidden kingdom caused him to become an elf. He remembers enough of his human heritage to be comfortable around them. His contacts and cunning helped land him a seat on the Council.

Arias Soderheim stands nearly six feet tall with a medium build. He wears a black, tight-fitted shirt and dark-green breeches. His blonde hair hangs down to his shoulders and is kept from his face by a slim golden circlet.

Talking to Arias: Arias revels in telling stories and playing the lyre. If given enough encouragement—and usually five minutes of attention is enough—he almost certainly breaks into a heroic saga or an enchanting melody.

Having become very rich supporting the lighthouse project, Arias and the elf pirates he represents fully support Drac. In fact, Arias helped Drac in his rise to power. He wanted to avoid what he felt would be a disastrous war with the Nine Cities for which Anton Drac had argued. A war would disrupt trade and that would cost the pirates money. With the support of nations that wanted Freeport to remain neutral, Arias helped get Anton assassinated and bring Drac to power. In return, Drac gave the elves exclusive shipping rights for all materials used to build the lighthouse. Arias does not know the lighthouse's true purpose and merely plans to wait Drac out. After all, long life has its advantages.

ARIAS SODERHEIM

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 faerie (elf)

Perception 14 (+4); **shadowsight**
Defense 15 (leather); **Health** 35; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 10 (+0)
Speed 12
Immune damage from disease; charmed, diseased
Spell Defense Arias takes half damage from spells. Arias imposes 1 bane on attack rolls made against him using spells and makes challenge rolls with 1 boon to resist attack spells.
Bewitching Presence Arias makes attack rolls in social situations with 1 boon.
Esoteric Knowledge Arias makes Intellect challenge rolls to recall useful information with 1 boon.
Uncanny Skill Arias makes all challenge rolls with 1 boon.
Iron Vulnerability Arias is impaired while in contact with iron. In addition, if he touches or is touched by an object made from iron, he loses Bewitching Presence and Spell Defense for as long as he remains in contact with the object and for 1 minute afterward.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Bronze Rapier (melee) +4 with 1 boon (3d6 + 1)

MAGIC

Power 3
Song *song of friendship* (4), *song of courage* (2), *song of inspiration* (2), *song of valor* (2), *song of captivation* (1), *song of dread* (1)

THE PRICE OF FAME?

Induction into the Order gives the player characters a certain status around town. Unless the characters take pains to disguise themselves, dignitaries who attended the ball recognize them on sight. Other townsfolk might recognize them by name or description. Being recognized—or simply wearing the medallion prominently—can grant boons or impose banes on attack rolls made in social situations against certain peoples in Freeport at your discretion.

On the other hand, cynical PCs might decide their medals are only worth what they can sell them for. Luckily, Freeport has several pawnshops where a shrewd bargainer might get up to half of a secondhand item's full value. After the ball, the invitation is worthless except to a collector. However, a character can get 5 ss for the filigree tube and 10 gc for the Order of Drac medallion.



MELKIOR MAEORGAN

Captains' Council Member (Drac Faction)

For over a century, the Maeorgan family has made their fortunes in the shipbuilding business and with their vast wealth, they have been able to secure political power. Melkior Maeorgan claimed a seat on the Council eleven years ago, a few months before Sea Lord Anton was assassinated. His older brother, Councilor Armin Maeorgan, had been found murdered, stabbed to death. Under a centuries' old rule of the council, Melkior gained his brother's seat.

Melkior Maeorgan stands six and half feet tall and has a muscular build. He has dead gray eyes and short, jet-black hair. In his mid-thirties, he cuts an intimidating figure. He wears black leather clothing beneath a gleaming breastplate and keeps a jeweled dagger in a scabbard on his hip.

Talking to Melkior: Maeorgan is Milton Drac's right-hand man and keeps so close to him that some believe him to be Milton's bodyguard.

Although never proven, and Melkior denies the accusations, Melkior did murder his brother at Milton's urging. Melkior recently converted to the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, and he will stop at nothing to see that the lighthouse is completed. He keeps his affiliation secret, but any conversation with him reveals he is a dangerous and unhinged man.

MELKIOR MAEORGAN

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 human

Perception 12 (+2)

Defense 16; **Health** 37; **Insanity** 5; **Corruption** 3

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 12 (+2)

Speed 10

Assassinate When a surprised creature or a creature from which Melkior is hidden takes damage from Melkior's attack, the creature must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take damage equal to its Health.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Dagger (melee or short) +4 with 1 boon (1d3 plus 1d6 plus Forceful Strike on attack roll 20+)

Forceful Strike The attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Double Attack Melkior attacks twice with a weapon.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Catch your Breath Melkior can use an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to heal 9 damage. He can use this ability once, regaining the use when he completes a rest.

Quick Reflexes Melkior can use a triggered action on his turn to hide or retreat.

CAPTAIN GARTH VARELLION

Captains' Council Member (Drac Faction)

Garth Varellion has held a seat on the Captains' Council for a decade and owes his political rise to his friendship with Milton Drac. The two sailed together for many years. Unlike many other members on the Council, Garth captains a ship, the *Christina*. He loves the open sea and takes every chance he can get to set sail. He has many contacts among Freeport's dockside denizens.

Garth Varellion is a dashing man of forty-five, six feet tall and lean with blue eyes and silver-gray hair. He wears a flowing, green cape, black pantaloons, and a white, silk shirt. He keeps his saber in an ornate scabbard on his belt.

Talking to Garth: Conceited and vain, Garth believes most women are attracted to him and he flirts constantly. Most times, he finds success, so he has no idea what to do when a woman refuses his advances. He is always cordial; even when he insults someone it is with a backhanded comment or subtle insinuation.

Garth does not know about the Sea Lord's ties to the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, nor does he know the true purpose of the lighthouse. He supports Drac because he owes the Sea Lord his position on the council. Drac briefed him about the player characters and so he does his part to find out their real motives. Even with proof, it would be hard to convince Garth that Drac is a member of the Brotherhood or that he has designs against the city.

GARTH VARELLION

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 human

Perception 11 (+1)
Defense 15; **Health** 35; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 10 (+0)
Speed 10
Uncanny Skill Garth makes challenge rolls with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Saber (melee) +3 with 1 boon (3d6 + 1)
Dagger (melee or short range) +3 with 1 boon (1d3 plus 2d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Skirmish Garth can use an action to move up to half his Speed without triggering a free attack. During the move, he can make an attack with 1 bane and the attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Its song was unearthly and alluring. If Mathers hadn't tied me to the mast, I'd have leapt over the ship's side to embrace it. I was not in control of my faculties, and even now, my dreams are filled with fantasies of its embrace.

CAPTAIN HECTOR TORIAN

Captains' Council Member (Drac Faction)

Hector Torian retired from a life at sea a little more than a decade ago. He took his first sea voyage at ten years old and by the time he turned eighteen, he was captain of his own ship, the *Silver Ghost*. He gained a reputation among his men for being fun-loving and generous. He was elected to the Council with the financial backing of a then as-yet-unknown Milton Drac.

Hector Torian is a smiling, swarthy fellow in his early forties. He stands a few inches shy of six feet and has long, thick, curly black hair, beard, and eyebrows. He wears a red frock coat over a white shirt and black pantaloons. A gold earring hangs in his right ear and gold rings festoon his fingers.

Talking to Hector: Hector is full of life and enjoys good food and good drink. He is loud and boisterous to the point of boorishness. He puts his foot in his mouth often because he is so outspoken.

Hector supports Drac because he feels he owes him for his seat. He knows nothing of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. He genuinely cares for the people of Freeport, and he has voiced some concern that the lighthouse has been draining too much money from the government's coffers. Drac has assured him the money will be replaced with the increased trade the lighthouse should generate.

HECTOR TORIAN

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 human

Perception 13 (+3)
Defense 16 (hard leather); **Health** 27; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 11 (+1)
Speed 10
Uncanny Skill Hector makes challenge rolls with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Cutlass (melee) +3 with 1 boon (3d6 + 1)
Dagger (melee or short range) +3 with 1 boon (1d3 plus 2d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Threats Hector uses an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to make an Intellect attack roll with 1 boon against the Will of one creature within short range that can see and hear him. The target becomes frightened for 1 round on a success, or becomes immune to Hector's Threats until it completes a rest on a failure.





LADY ELISE GROSSETTE

Captains' Council Member, Faction Leader

Lady Elise Grossette leads the faction positioned against Milton Drac. One of the Council's senior members, she has served for over a quarter century. Her family has long held positions of power in Freeport and she was raised to be an expert politician. When her father died with no male heir, she took over his seat. Since, she has been a voice of reason on an often-chaotic Council.

A tall, serious woman in her mid-fifties, Elise has long black hair and brown eyes. She wears a simple navy-blue gown and an exquisite string of pearls around her neck.

Talking to Elise: Lady Elise is patient and calculating. She keeps her thoughts and feelings to herself until she is certain about what she wants to say and when she wants to say it. Many of the opposition councilors have taken to calling her "Grandma," but never to her face. She is an excellent public speaker and an accomplished negotiator.

She's concerned with the current situation in Freeport and has been lobbying hard for her candidate, Petra Fricke, to replace Verlaine, giving Lady Elise power on the Council to slow Drac. If she succeeds, she will be able to undo many of the Sea Lord's poor policies.

Lady Elise has already started an investigation into the lighthouse. Her agents have learned that the upper levels of the lighthouse have been sealed off for the past two weeks. No one has been allowed in, and workers who have been assigned to the area have disappeared.

ELISE GROSSETTE

DIFFICULTY 1

Size 1 human

Perception 13 (+3)

Defense 10; **Health** 10; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0

Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 12 (+2)

Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Dagger (melee) +0 (1d3)

DIRWIN "NIMBLEFINGERS" ARNIG

Captains' Council Member, (Grossette Faction)

Dirwin Arnig, known also as Nimblefingers, has represented the many nonhuman peoples living in Freeport for over fifty years. In his time, he has seen Sea Lords come and go. He won his place on the Council thanks to family connections: his family became quite wealthy as gemcutters working for pirates. Despite his political position, he remains involved in the Jewelers and Gemcutters Guild and heads the organization.

As the only gnome at the ball, Dirwin is not easily overlooked. At three and a half feet tall with a wiry frame, he makes his rounds, talking with other

members of his faction. He has short gray hair and bushy eyebrows. He wears brown trousers, green boots, and a green, velvet jacket. Around his neck hangs a large emerald on a gold chain.

Talking to Dirwin: Although he's served on the Council for many years, he remains an upbeat and positive member. He has a quick wit and loves to tell jokes and engage in conversation. He is also very proud of his skill with his hands. He shows off by performing card tricks.

He is, however, an outspoken critic of Drac and his policies. Dirwin has seen how the city has suffered under the heavy taxation forced upon it to build the lighthouse. The rapid decline moved him to join forces with Lady Elise.

He and Lady Elise have been conducting a private investigation into the whole project. Through his contacts on the mainland, Dirwin discovered the Sea Lord commissioned the cutting of a large crystal to be used in the lighthouse. He finds it odd that Milton chose not to use any members of the Freeport guild to cut the gem. From a sketch Dirwin obtained, the gem appears magical. Dirwin plans to have a wizard analyze the drawing to see if its purpose can be determined.

If a scholar of magic or the occult inspects the drawing, a success on an Intellect challenge roll with 3 banes reveals the design allows the stone to channel magical energy. Tarmon the High Wizard can also reveal this information if no one in the group has a relevant profession to discover it on their own.

DIRWIN "NIMBLEFINGERS" ARNIG DIFFICULTY 5

Size 1/2 elemental (gnome)

Perception 13 (+3); **darksight**
Defense 14; **Health** 11; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 8

Immune damage from disease or poison; diseased, poisoned

Impaired by Light When he is not wearing protective covering over his eyes, Dirwin is impaired while in an area of sunlight.

Dead and Gone When Dirwin dies, he turns into a stone statue and explodes. Everything within short range of Dirwin takes damage equal to half Dirwin's Health. A creature in the area can make an Agility challenge roll and takes half the damage on a success.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Dagger (melee or short range) +4 (1d3)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Harden Dirwin can use an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to harden his skin for as long as he concentrates, up to 1 minute. Until the effect ends, he takes half damage. Dirwin can use Harden twice and regains expended uses when he completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 1
Illusion *clamor* (2), *figment* (1)

CAPTAIN XAVIER GORDON

Captains' Council Member, (Grossette Faction)

The captain of the *Bloody Sea*, Xavier Gordon has been a member of the council for two years, holding the seat of the Privateer, a position that is always filled by a privateer and held for a period of just three years. The Privateer's Seat ensures the Council always has a member to represent the pirates and privateers who founded the city long ago.

Xavier is nearly fifty years old, but he remains as fit as ever, standing a bit taller than six feet with long brown hair and brown eyes. He wears a velvet jacket over a white puffy shirt and skin-tight leggings tucked into tall, black, leather boots. He wears a scimitar in a golden scabbard belted to his waist.

Talking to Xavier: While honored to hold his position, Xavier yearns to return to the sea. He speaks of his travels often and tells many tall tales of adventures he has had aboard sailing vessels. He resents being called a pirate, preferring the term privateer, as he feels he fights for the interest of Freeport at heart.

Xavier supported Drac at first, but after he learned about the suffering the lighthouse project has caused, he came to believe it was a waste of money that could have been spent elsewhere. Most other privateers agree with him. He has tentatively thrown his support behind Lady Elise, but he won't take a serious stand against Drac until the majority of the council makes a move.

Before the ball, Xavier learned from his privateer contacts that a mysterious ship was seen just two days ago in the harbor. It slipped into a secluded area near the lighthouse in the dark of night and offloaded cargo and some passengers. One of the passengers had a long, reptilian tail.

XAVIER GORDON DIFFICULTY 10

Size 1 human

Perception 11 (+1)
Defense 15 (hard leather); **Health** 17; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 11 (+1)
Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Scimitar (melee) +3 with 1 boon (1d6 + 1)
Crossbow (long range) +3 with 1 boon (2d6)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Healing Potion Xavier uses an action to drink his healing potion. At the end of the round, he heals 4 damage. He carries one potion.



LIAM BLACKHAMMER

Captains' Council Member, (Grossette Faction)

A blacksmith by trade, Liam joined the Council fourteen years ago to fight the injustices inflicted on the poor people throughout the city. Since then, he has been a champion of the common man, doing everything in his power to divert funds from the lighthouse project to city services. If not for his efforts, things in Freeport would be a lot worse.

Liam is middle-aged, just shy of six feet tall, with a muscular body. He has gray hair and blue eyes. He wears a mail shirt of gleaming silver and dark, leather shirt and pants.

Talking to Liam: Liam has always been headstrong and emotional. When he first joined the Council, he got into many arguments with the other members. Over the years, he has learned to control his temper and be more diplomatic, but when pushed too far, he can and does lose his temper.

The situation in Freeport angers Liam. He knows the lighthouse has been slowly destroying the city and that Milton Drac is to blame. In the past few weeks, he has been more outspoken out about this than ever before.

LIAM BLACKHAMMER

DIFFICULTY 10

Size 1 human

Perception 12 (+2)
Defense 15 (mail); **Health** 18; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 8 (-2), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Warhammer (melee) +3 (2d6)

SISTER GWENDOLYN

Captains' Council Member, (Grossette Faction)

Sister Gwendolyn is a priestess of Oceanus, the god of the sea. When her predecessor retired five years ago, she took over his seat on the council. Drac opposed this at first, but he could not convince Council to break with tradition. A member of the sea god's temple has always sat on the Council.

An attractive, middle-aged woman, Sister Gwendolyn stands five feet, nine inches tall with long, dark hair that sometimes appears green, and inquisitive green eyes. She wears a tight-fitting, aqua-colored, floor-length gown. She wears a silver necklace from which hangs a tiny, jeweled trident.

Talking to Gwendolyn: Practical and self-assured, Gwendolyn enjoys conversation and asks people she does not know to tell her about their lives, listening intently all the while. She flirts, but she almost never follows through on any of it.

Sister Gwendolyn has been helping Dirwin and Lady Elise investigate the lighthouse. She heard many strange reports from the workers, who have claimed to hear strange noises in the lighthouse at night. A priest of her temple reported he saw flashes of magical light from the upper chambers one evening, and the next morning two horrible monsters were found dead at the base of the lighthouse.

SISTER GWENDOLYN

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 human

Perception 12 (+2)
Defense 11; **Health** 27; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 14 (+4)
Speed 10

Blessing of the Sea God Gwendolyn can breathe water as easily as air. In addition, when she would heal damage while submerged in water, she heals twice as much damage.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Scourge (melee) +1 (1d6)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Prayer When a creature within short range makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, Gwendolyn can use a triggered action to grant the triggering creature 1 boon on the roll.

MAGIC

Power 2

Storm fog (3), forked lightning (2), call lightning (1)

Water produce water (3), drown (2), wellspring of life (2), wave (1)

CAPTAIN MARCUS ROBERTS

Captains' Council Member, (Grossette Faction)

Captain Marcus Roberts joined the Captains' Council twelve years ago, shortly before Milton Drac took the mantle of Sea Lord. Marcus spends as much time as possible aboard his ship, the *Black Dragon*, traveling back and forth to the mainland, serving as a quasi-ambassador for Freeport. He created a vast spy network of informants within many of the mainland governments. He also discovered a lot of information about nobles and politicians in Freeport. Luckily, Marcus is a discreet man with the interests of the city at heart. He tries to use the information he has learned only to the city's benefit.

A middle-aged man, he stands six feet tall and has short, blonde hair and blue eyes. He wears a green suit and white shirt. He keeps a small sword in a silver scabbard hanging from his belt.

MARCUS ROBERTS

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 human

Perception 14 (+4)

Defense 13; **Health** 25; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0

Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 12 (+2)

Speed 10

Inveigle If Marcus spends at least 1 minute talking to a creature that can hear and understand what he says, the creature must make a Will challenge roll. On a failure, the creature becomes charmed for as long as it can see Marcus or until it takes damage. On a success, the creature becomes immune to Marcus's use of Inveigle until the creature completes a rest.

Uncanny Skill Marcus makes all challenge rolls with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Small Sword (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Subterfuge Marcus uses an action to make an Intellect attack roll with 1 boon against the Intellect of one creature within short range that can hear and understand him. On a success, the creature becomes charmed for 1 round or until Marcus attacks it. On a failure, the creature becomes immune to Marcus's use of Subterfuge until the creature completes a rest.

Mislead Marcus uses an action to make an Intellect attack roll with 1 boon against the Perception of one creature within short range that can see, hear, and understand him. If the target is charmed, compelled, or impaired, Marcus makes the attack roll with 1 additional boon. On a success, Marcus moves the target up to half its Speed, and the next creature to attack the target before the end of the round makes the attack roll with 2 boons.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Quick Reflexes Marcus can use a triggered action on his turn to hide or retreat.

Talking to Marcus: Flamboyant and expressive, Marcus is the life of the party. Whether it's telling a joke or dancing a jig, he manages to find his way into the middle of things. His boisterous exterior hides a calculating mind. Marcus always has his eyes and ears open, and he doesn't miss much.

Marcus is not a vocal member of Lady Elise's faction. In the beginning, Marcus supported Milton Drac to become the Sea Lord, but over the last few years, he's discovered Drac's manipulative nature and he has become afraid of him. He tends to vote against the Sea Lord when he can because he knows the lighthouse is draining valuable resources away from the city.

Marcus's spy network has informed him that Drac recently sent Melkior Maeorgan to the Continent. He returned with crates filled with strange candles made of yellow wax and engraved with magical symbols. A scholar of magic or the occult knows these items can be used for certain forms of magic that summon creatures.

TORSTEN ROTH

Head of the Guild of Merchants (Drac Faction)

One of the richest men in Freeport, the patriarch of the Roth merchant family also leads the Guild of Merchants in the city. Torsten Roth's great-grandfather built the family fortune by selling iron and copper ore to the Sea Lord from mines he purchased on the Continent. The family has since diversified and sells fine wine and exotic goods as well as ore.

About six feet tall, Torsten has an average build and forgettable features. He wears a sneer on his face beneath his short, brown curls. He dresses in a dark blue suit with brass buttons. He wears a gold belt and a golden pendant on his chest.

Talking to Torsten: Wealth and privilege have made Torsten a snob of the highest order. He looks down on most people he encounters, thinking them below his station. People find his condescension annoying, and though most avoid him, he has convinced himself that he can secure a nomination to the Council at this event and thus fawns over the councilors to curry their favor.

For many years, the Roth family supplied Drac with strange items for the building of the lighthouse, most notably an exotic, soft metal called "Serpent's Blood," which is mined in the jungles of certain

islands to the west. A light green metal, soft enough to be shaped by hand, when treated with alchemical substances, it hardens until it becomes as strong as steel. Prospectors spent years hunting down the ore, but the Sea Lord advised the family, offering insights into where it might be found, and paid handsomely for it. The Sea Lord promised to nominate Torsten for a seat on the Council in return, but the nomination has yet to come and Torsten has become quite bitter.

Torsten has no idea of the metal's significance. The cultists infused the metal with sigils to channel the power of the Unspeakable One, which is an essential component in the ritual Milton Drac intends to complete. Any scholar of the occult who hears about the metal can make an Intellect challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the character recalls the metal is sometimes used to channel demonic energy.

TORSTEN ROTH

DIFFICULTY 1

Size 1 human

Perception 12 (+2)

Defense 11; **Health** 10; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0

Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 12 (+2)

Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Cane (melee) +1 (1d6)

CAPTAIN JACOB LYDON

Captains' Council Nominee

Captain Jacob Lydon has spent most of his life at sea. When not sailing the waters between the isles and the continent on his ship, the *Gambit*, he roams the streets of Freeport, a regular sight at brothels and gambling dens. For the last ten years, he has tried to run a shipping company, but found no real success. With his fortunes dwindling, he has made one last push to influence the citizens of Freeport, mainly those on the docks, and gain their support for the Captains' Council. His recent sponsorship of the annual Swagfest celebration was a great success, and it moved him closer to achieving his wish of joining the Council.

A middle-aged man, almost six and a half feet tall and weighing some three hundred pounds, he looks every bit a scoundrel. He has long, scraggly, black hair and unshaven cheeks. He wears a bright red jacket with gold buttons, a black pirate hat, and black pants. A saber hangs in a scabbard from his black leather belt. He has horribly crooked, yellow teeth.

Talking to Jacob: Crass but lovable, Lydon is a simple man who enjoys drinking, smoking, and having fun. He laughs often and he tries hard to impress people at the ball. He knows this might be his only shot at the big time.

A degenerate gambler, Jacob owes an underworld boss named Finn more gold than he owns. The Sea Lord offered to pay off the debt and nominate Lydon to the Council, but he expects Jacob to support his interests in return.

What the Sea Lord does not realize is that Jacob knows Milton Drac belongs to the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. Jacob saw the Sea Lord performing a ritual to the Unspeakable One in one of their hidden and, now emptied, temples. From watching the cultists, Jacob learned that all members carry a brand of the Yellow Sign on their inner thigh and saw the mark on Milton Drac. Why Jacob was there in the first place is a different story and one he refuses to tell.

JACOB LYDON

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 human

Perception 11 (+1)

Defense 12 (soft leather); **Health** 29; **Insanity** 2; **Corruption** 0

Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 12 (+2)

Speed 10

Uncanny Skill Jacob makes all challenge rolls with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Saber (melee) +3 with 1 boon against Agility (2d6)

Dagger (melee or short range) +3 with 1 boon against Agility (1d3 plus 1d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Threats Jacob can use an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to make an Intellect attack roll with 1 boon against the Will of one creature within short range that can see and hear him. On a success, the target becomes frightened for 1 round. On a failure, the target becomes immune to Jacob's Threats until it completes a rest.



PETRA FRICKE

Captains' Council Nominee

A famous sculptor, Petra Fricke created most of the idols found in Freeport's temples. She's led the Guild of Craftsmen for the last four years and during that time submitted many petitions to the Council concerning the building of the lighthouse. The craftsmen have complained they have not received any contracts for work on the project for the last three years, which is when work began on the lighthouse's upper levels.

Petra is a beautiful woman, five foot nine inches tall, with a slender build and short blonde hair. She wears a long, midnight blue gown with a fine silver belt at her waist. She wears a gold ring on her right hand.

Talking to Petra: Polite and personable, Petra happily talks to anyone who approaches her. She loves her work and can talk about the intricacies of her art for hours, though she's adept enough to know when she might bore someone. She also loves to dance, and her dance card is usually full.

Petra worries about the lighthouse and what it has done to the city. When Lady Elise approached her, she accepted her nomination to the Council to oppose the Sea Lord. She does not know why no contracts have been awarded for the lighthouse. At first, many artisans and craftsmen contributed to the project, but when work on the upper levels began, the Sea Lord brought in private contractors to complete the project. Although this is strange, she does not suspect that there is a cult involved in the lighthouse project.

PETRA FRICKE

DIFFICULTY 1

Size 1 human

Perception 13 (+3)

Defense 12; **Health** 16; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0

Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 11 (+1)

Speed 10

Trickery Once per round, Petra can make an attack roll or challenge roll with 1 boon. If the attack has 1 boon from this talent, it deals 1d6 extra damage.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Dagger (melee or short range) +2 (1d3)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Subterfuge Petra makes an Intellect attack roll against the Intellect of one creature within short range that can hear and understand what she says. The creature becomes charmed for 1 round or until she attacks it on a success, or becomes immune to her subterfuge until the target completes a rest on a failure.



KEY EVENTS

Two events must happen during the ball, both of which are described below. You can run **Drac's Gambit** at any time after the characters have had a chance to pick up a few clues. Reserve **The Serpent Speaks** for the end of the ball, which concludes this part of the adventure.

DRAC'S GAMBIT

Milton Drac believes the player characters know too much about the Brotherhood and he wants them out of the way. He instructed Councilman Brock (Gorn) to convince the characters that they must assassinate the Sea Lord for the good of the city and when they try, Milton will destroy them.

At some point during the ball, Brock approaches the characters and tries to raise their interest by telling them he knows the true purpose behind the lighthouse. He leads the group to one of the sitting rooms and explains that the Sea Lord intends to use the lighthouse as a powerful, magical device to summon an army of monsters to attack the Empire and bring glory to Freeport.

Brock fears the army of monsters might be uncontrollable and destroy Freeport as well. He is also concerned that something very large and powerful might be summoned through the lighthouse, spelling certain doom for the city. He tried to speak out against it, but the Sea Lord threatened to kill his whole family.

The only hope for the city, he believes, is to take out Milton Drac. He says they must act quickly, tonight in fact. He tells them they can make their escape through the window in one of the sitting rooms and climb over the wall. Once the chaos settles down, the truth will come out about the Sea Lord and the group will be hailed as heroes.

Characters should know better than to try to kill the Sea Lord at the ball, as it's unlikely they will escape. If the group turns him down, he does not persist. If they take the bait, 20 guards (as **veterans**) appear just as the characters are getting ready to attack. The group can't hope to fight them all off, but Brock's proposed escape route proves the only truthful portion of his tale. If the characters escape, consider having disguised K'Stallo find them and steer them toward Part II.

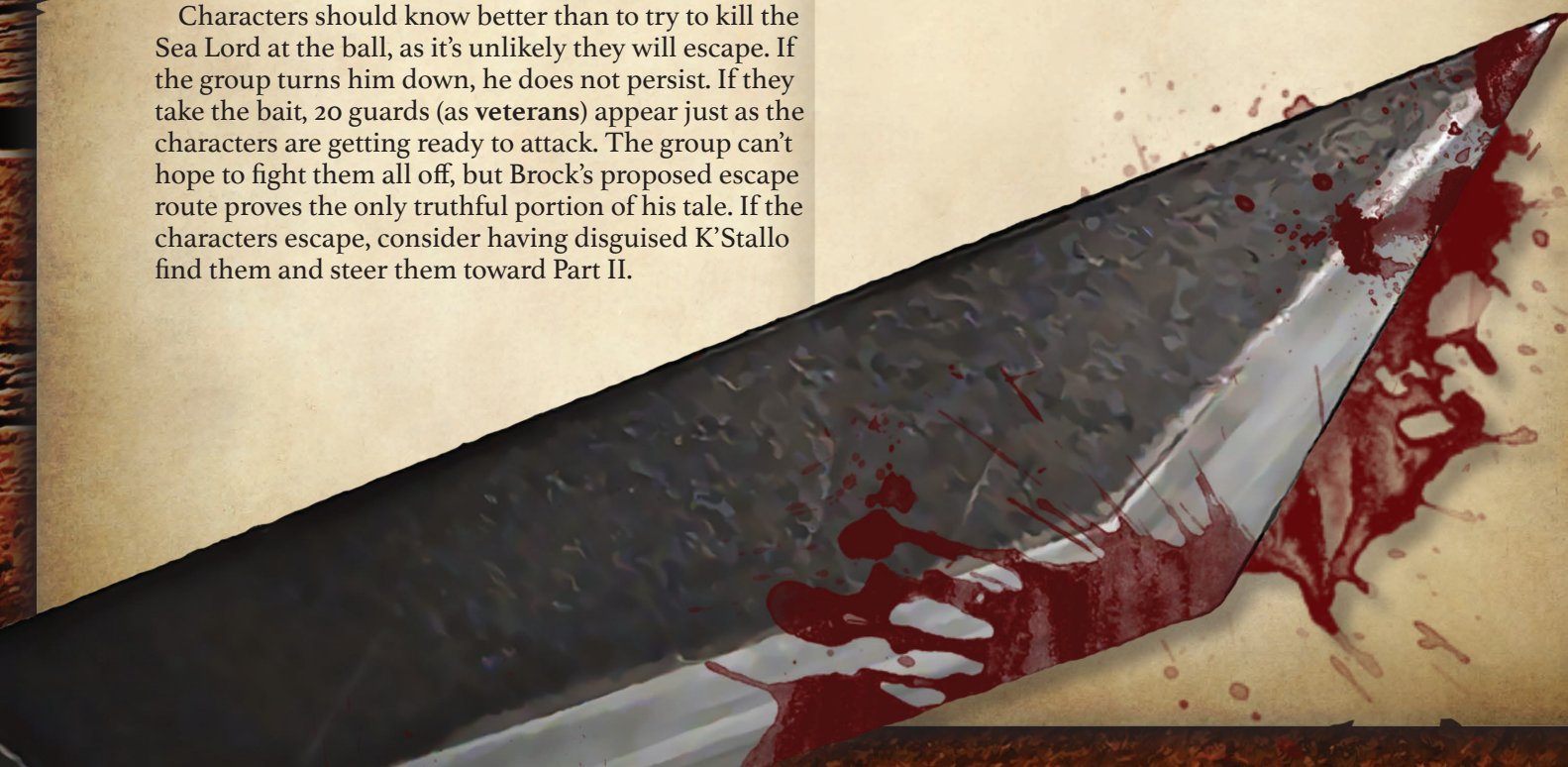
THE SERPENT SPEAKS

As the ball winds down, a stranger appears in the room, a prophet of Yig sent by the snake god to issue a dire warning to the people of Freeport. A grubby man with tangled hair and a scraggly beard, he wears stained brown robes and a rope belt. The music stops. People stop speaking; someone laughs and is shushed. He looks around the room and then speaks, "Heed me well! The words of an old man should not be ignored. In the ancient scriptures of Yig, it is written:

*"The Yellowed Sign once again shall appear.
Then the time for Yig's revenge will be near.
As the finger of evil rises toward heaven,
One must pay heed to the calling of his brethren.
Search below the waves for that which was unmade,
And return with the Serpent carved of Jade.
When the madness is unleashed upon the land,
The icon of jade alone shall stand.
The end of the creature from outside
Contained within the Serpent deep inside.*

"Remember these verses well, people of Freeport. The prophecies of Yig do not lie." The old man then transforms into a small snake. A guard steps forward to stab the serpent with his sword, but the snake vanishes in a puff of smoke.

The old man's appearance puts a damper on the festivities, but the Sea Lord asks the band to strike up a tune and for the party to continue. Any character with the occult or ancient history as an area of scholarship can make an Intellect challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the character recalls that the *Jade Serpent of Yig* was a great Valossan artifact said to be the earthly manifestation of the serpent god.





PART II: BLACK DOG'S CAVES

In which the characters explore the caves of an infamous pirate and discover the entrance to the sunken Temple of Yig

From their time at the ball, the player characters ought to have a good idea of the secret behind the Lighthouse of Drac and most likely will want to regroup and confer with Thuron (or their patron if the characters broke ties with him at the end of *Terror in Freeport*). After hearing the prophecy, Thuron returned to the temple to consult his books and concludes that the player characters must recover the *Jade Serpent of Yig* if they would have a chance at stopping the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. Thuron believes the relic was kept in the Temple of Yig in ancient Valossa, now sunk beneath the waves.

From his research, he came across excerpts from the log of the infamous pirate named Black Dog. (Give the players **Handout B**.) Thuron believes the doorway described in the log is of Valossan origin and could lead to the sunken temple. He does not know, however, where these caves lie.

The characters can learn more about Black Dog and his caves by asking around town. The group should discover the following salient details:

- The pirate named Black Dog was the scourge of the seas around Freeport until he mysteriously disappeared fifty years ago. Legends describe him as a hard-drinking man with deadly skill with the saber and an even deadlier temper.
- Black Dog stowed away a king's ransom in gold and jewels that was never found. The caves in which the treasure was hidden are beset with all manner of hideous traps to thwart any would-be thieves.
- Black Dog haunts his caves from beyond the grave and suffers no man who finds them to come back alive.
- An old pirate named Gareth, who served under Black Dog, still lives. He might know the location of the treasure caves. He lives in the Old City at 45 Masthead Lane.

GARETH, THE OLD SEA DOG

Seeking out the location using the address takes the group to a two-story building made of wood with three windows facing the street on each floor. The door features a brass knocker that looks like a three-masted ship.

The house belongs to Garth, an old man in his mid-seventies. He hobbles about on a peg leg and has a long nasty scar across his left eye. He lives alone in this big house, living off the dwindling fortunes he gained from his time as a pirate. With funds running low, he trades information only for cold, hard coin.

He knows why the characters have come to see him: they want to know the location of Black Dog's Caves. People have been coming to him for years looking for the same information. Gareth complains about his back and old injuries, explaining how he's now poor, having been robbed by greedy merchants over the years. He angles to get as much coin as he can for what he knows, trying for 25 gc and settling for 10 gc. Despite having run through his song and dance and having revealed the location of the caves, none who have set out to find them have ever returned.

If paid, he reveals, "The trick to findin' the caves is the tides. Ye has to go only a few miles west along the coast until ye see two tall stones stickin' up out o' the water. They be tall, almost a full mast high.

"When the tide is low, a cave will appear on the island. All ye have to do is get yer boat in the cave. Once inside, I can't be much help to ye. I was never let inside, but I know it's dangerous. Black Dog sure did love his treasure!"

THE CAVES

The characters can purchase a sturdy rowboat for about 5 gc. If they do so and take it out, following the coastline for about an hour, they find the stones the sea dog described. Low tide occurs at four in the morning and four thirty in the afternoon and lasts for a little over six hours, during which time the cave entrance is visible and accessible.

Unless otherwise described, all areas in the caves are dark.

1. ENTRANCE TUNNEL

Seawater flows into a dark, dripping tunnel. A strong current makes navigating the tunnel perilous. Upon entering the tunnel, characters controlling the boat must make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. Each character after the first that rows can "help," granting

1 boon on the roll. On a success, the characters maintain control of the boat and can follow the tunnel to where it exits into area 2. On a failure, the current jerks the boat forward and slams it into the wall. The boat takes 1d6 damage and everyone on the boat must get a success on an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane or fall into the water.

Any characters that swim into the tunnel or fall into the water are caught by the current and must make Strength challenge rolls with 2 banes to swim. On a failure, the current grabs the character, dragging it under the water and slamming it against the rocky sea floor, which deals 1d6 damage, and drags the character into area 2.

2. WATER-FILLED CAVERN

The entrance tunnel ends at a large cave half filled by a pool of dark seawater. Some fifty feet overhead, stalactites dot the ceiling. A sandy beach climbs out of the water to the west and three tunnels lead out from this chamber.

A strange, monster makes its home at the bottom of the pool, some 25 yards down. The creature notices anything that enters its waters and swims up to attack 1 round later. When it attacks, characters must get a success on a Perception challenge roll with 1 bane or become surprised until the first round ends.

DEEP DWELLER

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 5 frightening monster (aquatic)

Perception 14 (+4); darksight

Defense 18; **Health** 100; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 3

Strength 16 (+6), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 15 (+5)

Speed 12; swimmer

Immune damage from acid; gaining Insanity

Deny Tricks A deep dweller imposes 1 bane on attack rolls made against it using weapons.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Toothy Maw (melee) +6 with 2 boons (3d6)

Clawed Flipper (melee) +6 with 1 boon (1d6 + 3)

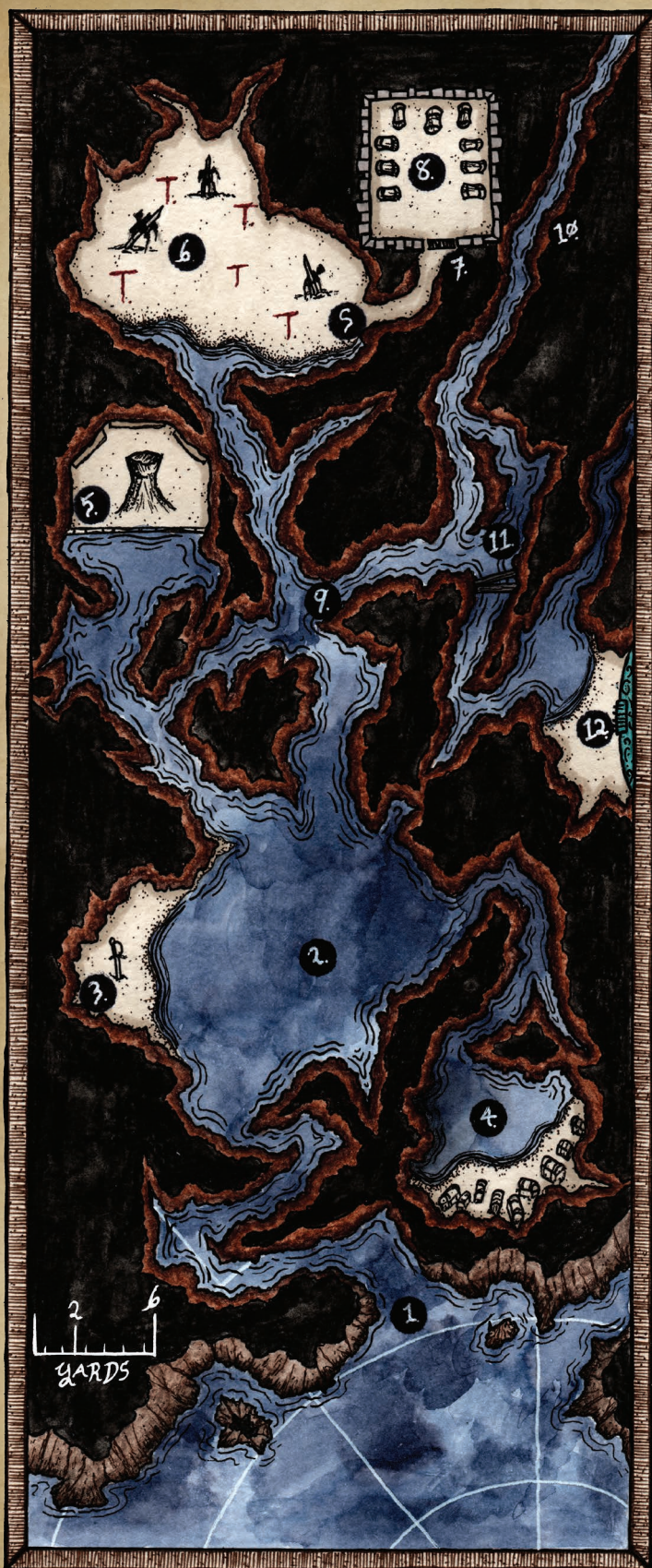
SPECIAL ATTACKS

Furious Attack The deep dweller attacks with its toothy maw. Then, it chooses up to four creatures in its reach and makes a clawed flipper attack against each target.

Darting Flipper When a creature moves into the deep dweller's reach, it can use a triggered action to attack the triggering creature with its clawed flipper.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Foul Expulsion When the deep dweller becomes injured, it ejects stinking fluid from four points in the deep dweller's space into 10-yard-long cones. The fluid heavily obscures water inside these areas. Each creature in the area must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become blinded for 1 minute. While blinded by Foul Expulsion, a breathing creature is also impaired. The deep dweller can use Foul Expulsion once and regains the use when it completes a rest.



The monster has a flat body protected by a thick shell covered in strange barbs and spines. It has eight appendages that emerge from vents in the shell. The appendages include four clawed flippers, three eye stalks, and one toothy maw at the end of a trunk.

Characters who swim down to the bottom of the lake find it strewn with bones and rotting, useless equipment. Mixed in with the debris are six gems, each worth 10 gc. It takes a minute of searching to find the gems.

3. SANDY BEACH

A gleaming saber sticks up from the sand in the center of the beach, its point buried a few inches. Bones and skeletal remains, some still wearing rusting mail and clutching corroded weapons, litter the ground around the saber. The weapon is a cursed relic named the *Saber of Sorrow* (see sidebar). An unhinged haunt, the spirit of its last owner (see below), lurks in the sand, watching the weapon. If a creature takes the *Saber of Sorrow*, the spirit rises from the sand to attack until the weapon is dropped.

UNHINGED HAUNT

DIFFICULTY 100

Size 1 horrifying spirit

Perception 15 (+5); darksight

Defense 14; **Health** 60; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 6

Strength —, **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 9 (–1), **Will** 13 (+3)

Speed 10; flier

Immune damage from cold, disease, fire, and poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, deafened, diseased, fatigued, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Insubstantial The unhinged haunt takes half damage from weapons, can move through solid objects and other creatures, and ignores the effects of moving across difficult terrain.

Shattered Consciousness When a creature attacks the unhinged haunt with an Enchantment or Telepathy spell, the creature gains 1d6 Insanity after resolving the attack.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Maddening Touch (melee) +4 with 2 boons against Agility (3d6 plus 1d6 Insanity plus Drain on attack roll 20+)

Drain A living target gains 1 Corruption and takes a –6 penalty to Health that lasts until it completes a rest. While subject to this penalty, the target makes Strength attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane. If the target becomes incapacitated by an attack the unhinged haunt makes while the target has this penalty, the target creature dies. At the end of the next round, a new unhinged haunt wriggles free from the corpse and stands up in the nearest open space. The new unhinged haunt can take the next available turn.

END OF THE ROUND

Burned by Sunlight The unhinged haunt takes 2d6 damage if it is in an area lit by sunlight.

Unhinged Banter The unhinged haunt screams a stream of gibberish. Each creature within medium range of the haunt that can hear it must make a Will challenge roll. On a failure, the creature gains 1d6 Insanity and becomes dazed as well as frightened. On a success, the creature becomes immune to this unhinged haunt's Unhinged Banter until the creature completes a rest.

SABER OF SORROW

A vile wizard forged the *Saber of Sorrow* to exact revenge on an abusive employer. When the employer gained the weapon, he went mad and used it to murder his family. The saber has changed hands many times over the years, ruining the lives of anyone who happens upon it.

Accursed Weapon If you touch the weapon, you must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 3 banes or become cursed (as by a rank 7 spell) or until another creature becomes cursed by the weapon. While cursed by the weapon, you believe everyone you see covets it. Each time you complete a rest, or whenever you take damage, you must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity. Instead of becoming frightened from this gain, you must take a fast turn each round and use an action to attack the creature nearest to you, regardless of whether that creature is a friend or foe. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Insanity total.

Enchanted Blade The *Saber of Sorrow* is a saber that grants 1 boon on attack rolls made using it and deals 1d6 extra damage.

4. ILLUSION TRAP

Deep water covers most of this cave's floor, except for a sandy beach rising from the waters and spreading out against the south wall. Ten large, ironbound chests sit partly buried in the sand. A skeleton lies partway onto the beach, its arms stretched toward the chests.

The chests are permanent illusions (as rank 7 spells cast by a creature with Power 7). Interacting with the chests reveals their false nature.

Any creature stepping onto the beach triggers a blast of lightning to spread through a 10-yard-long cone extending from a point on the wall to cover the triggering creature. The lightning deals 8d6 damage to everything in the area. A creature in the area can make an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane, taking half the damage on a success.

5. SHRINE OF OCEANUS

The waters lap against an uneven stone floor on the northern side of this cave. Frescoes depicting mythological scenes involving Oceanus, the god of the sea, cover the walls. Rising from the center of the stone floor is a large stalagmite, the top of which has been sheared off and carved to serve as a basin. The sides of the formation have been carved to look as if a serpent winds around it. The basin holds briny water.

The sea god blessed Black Dog for his faithfulness by enchanting this basin. A living creature who drinks the water heals damage equal to its healing rate. The water in the basin can only heal each drinker once per day, and any water removed from the basin immediately loses its power.

6. SANDY CAVE

Sand covers the floor of this large cavern. Impaled on three spears jutting up from the floor at various points are skeletal remains. A secret door stands in the center of the east wall. Any character who spends 5 minutes searching the area finds it. A character might notice the door with a success on a Perception challenge roll with 3 banes.

The floor is trapped, however. The sand covering the spaces designated on the map conceals a pressure plate. When a Size 1/2 or larger creature with a physical body (not a spirit, for example) steps onto the trapped space, it causes a spear to shoot up from the floor. The triggering creature must make an Agility challenge roll with 2 banes. On a success, the creature moves to an open space of its choice within 1 yard of the trapped space. On a failure, the creature takes 2d6 damage and becomes impaled on the spear. While impaled on a spear, the creature is immobilized and takes 1d6 damage at the end of each round until the affliction is removed. A creature can remove the immobilized affliction by destroying the spear (Size 1/2; Health 5). A creature can also pull itself off the spear, which requires a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the creature removes the affliction. On a failure, the creature takes 1d6 damage and slides back down. Other methods for removing the creature from the spear might work at your discretion.

7. TREASURE CHAMBER DOOR

Opening the secret door reveals a short passage of worked stone that ends at an enormous wooden door wrapped in iron bands. A large lock occupies the center of the door and an inscription over it reads, "Enter here and face the wrath of Black Dog."

The door is a Size 2 object with Defense 5 and Health 20. The lock imposes 2 banes on challenge rolls made to open it.

8. BLACK DOG'S VAULT

Opening the huge door reveals a square chamber with nine chests pushed up against the walls. A skeleton clad in tattered cloth lies on the floor at the room's center.

If a character enters this room, a low moan emanates from the walls and then a ghostly man, glowing green, rises up through the floor to hover in the air. The spirit appears to be dressed like a pirate with a long frock coat and feathered hat. He points his saber at the intruder and says in a loud, booming voice, "Who dares disturb the treasure of Black Dog? You cannot hope to stand before me! Leave now, and no harm will come to you. Stay to seek your fortune, and you will be doomed to everlasting damnation!"

The dreaded pirate, Black Dog, died here. He refused to let anyone steal his wealth and so perished as he stood guard over it. So long as the characters touch nothing in the room, he lets them leave.

The characters can talk to Black Dog, but they must withdraw from the room before he will address them peacefully. He knows the location of the door described in his log and he can tell the group how to get there. If they ask him, Black Dog can also describe to them what happened to Tom when he tried to open the serpent door, saying, "He stuck his hand in the serpent's mouth and began to turn the knob. Suddenly, he screamed and yanked his arm free of the serpent. Before he could step away, a stream of poisonous, green liquid shot out of the serpent's mouth and hit him square in the chest. He lived, but he was never the same afterward. He claimed the stone serpent had bitten his arm, but we thought he was crazy because we were all there and none of us saw the thing move."

Any hostile action or annoyance provokes him to attack.



BLACK DOG

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 1 horrifying spirit

Perception 16 (+6); darksight

Defense 20; **Health** 100; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 4

Strength —, **Agility** 16 (+6), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 15 (+5)

Speed 18; flier

Immune damage from acid, cold, disease, fire, and poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, deafened, diseased, fatigued, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Insubstantial Black Dog takes half damage from weapons, can move through solid objects and other creatures, and ignores the effects of difficult terrain

Sunlight Weakness Black Dog is impaired while in areas lit by sunlight.

Naturally Invisible Black Dog is invisible to creatures other than spirits, animals, and children. While invisible, he lacks the horrifying traits and cannot use his attack options.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Spectral Saber (melee) +6 with 2 boons against Agility (5d6 and Flay the Mind)

Flay the Mind The target gains 1 Insanity. If the target is frightened, it instead gains 1d6 Insanity and falls prone.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Ethereal Flight Black Dog uses an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to move up to his Speed. This movement does not trigger free attacks.

Manifestation Black Dog uses an action, or a triggered action on his turn, to become visible. He remains visible until he uses an action, or a triggered action at any time, to become invisible once more.

END OF THE ROUND

Lethal Presence Each living creature within short range of Black Dog must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take 1d6 damage.

If the group defeats Black Dog, they can investigate the chests and the treasures they hold. On Black Dog's corpse is a ring of nine keys, though none of them indicate to which chest they belong. Also on the corpse is a rusting saber, a twin of the spectral one Black Dog carried.

The chests are locked and their locks impose 1 bane on challenge rolls to open them. Each chest is Size 1 and has Defense 5 and Health 15.

Several chests are trapped. Any creature that uses the incorrect key, attempts to pick the lock, or who forces open a chest, triggers the trap. A creature examining the lock and getting a success on a Perception challenge roll with 1 bane finds the trap. A creature can use a tool kit to disarm it by getting a success on an Intellect challenge roll with 2 banes.

Chest 1: A poisoned needle trap protects this chest. If triggered, a needle flies out from the lock at one creature within short range. The target must get a success on an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane, or take 1 damage from being hit by the needle. A creature that takes this damage must then get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or take 8d6 damage and become poisoned for 1d3 hours.

The chest holds 700 ss.

Chest 2: This chest holds 2,000 cp.

Chest 3: A trap protects this chest. If triggered, the lid flies open and releases a hail of needles into an 8-yard-long cone originating from a point inside the chest's space. The needles deal 4d6 damage to everything in the area. A creature in the area can make an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane and takes half the damage on a success.

This chest contains 2,000 cp and four potions of your choice.

Chest 4: This chest holds 100 gc and a *healing potion*.

Chest 5: This chest holds 400 ss and a potion of your choice.

Chest 6: A trap protects this chest. If triggered, a hidden panel opens in front of the chest to fire an arrow at one creature within short range. The creature must make an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, the arrow hits and the creature takes 1d6 + 1 damage.

This chest contains a random enchanted object and a scroll bearing an incantation of *underwater adaptation* from the Alteration tradition.

Chest 7: This chest holds 600 ss, four gems (worth 5 gc each), and two larger gems (worth 25 gc each).

Chest 8: This chest contains two golden goblets encrusted with jewels (10 gc each), ten golden plates (2 gc each), a silver necklace (25 gc), and a gold necklace (30 gc).

Chest 9: A poisoned needle trap protects this chest. See Chest 1 for details. This chest contains 2,000 cp and a random enchanted object.

9. DANGEROUS CURRENT

The current grows stronger here, forcing a character controlling the boat to make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane to maintain control over the boat. Other rowers can help, granting 1 boon on the roll. On a failure, the boat slams into the wall and takes 1d6 damage and then speeds into **area 10**. Furthermore, characters standing on the boat must get a success on an Agility challenge roll with 2 banes or fall off and into the water.

Any character in the water must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes or be bashed against the tunnel walls, taking 1d6 damage, and being pulled to **area 10**. If the total of a character's roll is 0 or less, the character is pulled under the surface and is at risk of drowning.

10. DEEPER TUNNELS

You can use this watery passage to expand on the adventure. If not, ignore the tunnel or have the tunnel narrow to the extent that characters can progress no further down it.

11. BOARDED-UP TUNNEL

Several rotting boards have been placed across the tunnel above the water line to prevent access to the tunnel beyond. Many of the boards are rotten, but the words painted on the board are still visible and read, "DANGER! KEEP OUT!" This barrier is the boarded-up passage mentioned in Black Dog's logbook. The boards are easily broken and cast aside. The current pulls the boat and swimmers into the passage beyond.

12. THE SERPENT PORTAL

The water laps against a sandy floor that extends all the way to the back of the cave. Set in the natural wall is a great, curving jade wall festooned with bas-relief carvings with a door in the middle. Instead of a handle, a giant cobra head emerges from the center of the door, its fanged maw opened wide. Strange, flowing script has been carved above the cobra's head into the door's surface.

Carvings on either side of the door depict a serpent person dressed in robes standing atop a high tower constructed to look like a coiled snake. The serpent person raises its hands to the sky, and below, a throng of serpent people gathers at the tower's base.

The script is in ancient Valossan and reads, "All those who would enter the temple must pass the test of the fangs. Reach into the mouth of Yig, and your courage will be rewarded."

The only way to open the door is for a creature to reach inside the cobra's mouth and twist the lever inside. However, upon doing so, the magic in the door causes the creature to experience the sensation of the snake closing its mouth around the limb. The creature must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1 Insanity and wrench its limb free.

If a creature pulls its arm free before twisting the lever, the serpent's mouth spews poisonous green fluid into a 5-yard-long cone. Each creature in the area must get a success on an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane or be splashed by the stuff. The creature that triggered the trap makes the roll with 3 banes. Any creature splashed by the poison takes 3d6 damage and must make a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes. On a failure, the creature takes 3d6 extra damage and becomes poisoned for 1d3 days. While poisoned in this way, the creature is stunned.

The door opens to **area 1** of the Sunken Temple of Yig, which is described in next part.



PART III: THE SUNKEN TEMPLE OF YIG

In which the characters descend into the ancient Temple of Yig and discover the price they must pay to gain the Jade Serpent

The Temple of Yig is an ancient structure carved from jade to look like an enormous coiled snake. The temple has several levels, each one boasting 20-foot-high ceilings. Lower levels grow wider than the ones above. Although the temple is underwater, potent magical wards keep the waters at bay.

THE DAMNED

When the Valossan civilization collapsed, Yig blamed his priests for not warning the serpent people of the devastation that would come from worshipping the Unspeakable One. As the destruction would wipe out his remaining followers and cause his power to wane, Yig used his remaining strength to preserve his temple from the cataclysm and laid a dread curse upon his priests, ripping free their souls and transforming them into shadowy things, doomed to wander the halls of the temple for centuries in contemplation of how they had failed their god and people.

Madness reigns among the spirits of the dead priests and most have become obsessed with seeking their own annihilation to put their suffering to an end. Without the means to do themselves in, they see their salvation in the player characters. The spirits hurl themselves at the intruders in the hope of finding their destruction at the characters' hands.

The shadow serpents encountered here speak Valossan and High Archaic.

THE GIFTS OF THE SERPENT

Three relics remain in the temple and are collected here for easy reference. Together, they are known as the Gifts of the Serpent.

AMULET OF THE SERPENT

A wizard king of Valossa created the *Amulet of the Serpent* to celebrate his coronation and bestowed the device onto the high priest of Yig. Each high priest has

passed down the amulet to his or her successor. The high priests wore the amulet at important religious ceremonies and during times of war. The amulet has the shape of a serpent's head and hangs from a thin metal chain.

Enchanted Implement If you make this relic your implement, it shines with faint green light that turns darkness within 1 yard of it into shadows and shadowy areas in the same range to lit areas.

Serpent Scales If the amulet is your implement, you gain a +1 bonus to Defense while you wear it.

Blood of the Serpent If you're wearing the amulet and it is your implement, you take half damage from poison and the amulet grants you 2 boons on challenge rolls you make to resist or remove the poisoned affliction.

FANGS OF THE SERPENT

This odd device appears to be metal fangs that can be inserted over the natural fangs of a serpent person. Small reservoirs contain venom, which can be injected into anyone bitten by a creature wearing these fangs. Unfortunately, their unique design makes them unsuited for any creature other than a snake or serpent person.

Enchanted Fangs If you are a serpent person, you can do this by fitting them over your natural fangs. The *Fangs* grant you 1 boon on attack rolls you make using your teeth and your teeth attacks deal 1d6 extra damage.

Venom of the Serpent The *Fangs* hold a small quantity of venom. When you make a teeth attack while wearing your fangs and get a success on the attack roll, you can expend a use from the *Fangs* to inject your target with poison. The target must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes or take 3d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 hour. At the end of this time, the target must repeat the challenge roll and, on a failure, takes 6d6 damage from the poison.

You can use the venom three times and regain all expended uses when you complete a rest.

SCALES OF THE SERPENT

The *Scales of the Serpent* is a coat of scale armor made from a strangely green metal. As with the other relics in this set, the wizard king made the armor and bestowed it to the high priest of Yig. The armor is quite fine and lightweight.

Enchanted Armor This suit of armor has no requirements to be worn. The armor confers Defense 18.

THE TEMPLE

The following locations correspond to the numbered locations shown on the Temple map.

1. THE STATUE OF YIG

An enormous (Size 3) marble statue of a coiled snake stands at the center of this circular chamber. A mural covers the wall and recounts the temple's construction and consecration. Here and there, red scribbles in the Valossan script mar the scene. A ramp along wall leads down into murky water.

A priest named Sseth tried to warn his brethren that Yig was unhappy with them and wrote a warning on the walls that reads, "Beware brethren, for Yig will abandon us." He was thought to be insane and the priests placed him under house arrest in his quarters in the temple below. His spirit remains there still.

The characters can rest safely in this room.

2. THE WATER-FILLED CHAMBER

Although all the other levels are dry and intact, chilling water fills this chamber, contained by magical wards. Any character that swims down notices a light from the ramp below, which descends to the third floor. The magic containing the water prevents it from flowing into deeper levels. The characters, however, can leave this room by the ramps.

The rotted remains of cabinets and standing closets lie strewn about the floor. On the wall opposite the ramps stands a statue of a serpent person. Around its neck, on a golden chain, hangs the *Amulet of the Serpent*.

If a character removes the amulet from the statue, 2 shadow serpents emerge from the shadows in which they hide and attack the amulet's bearer until it is returned to the statue, the bearer leaves this area, or the shadow serpents are destroyed.

SHADOW SERPENT

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 horrifying spirit

Perception 14 (+4); darksight

Defense 15; **Health** 22; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0

Strength —, **Agility** 15 (+5), **Intellect** 8 (–2), **Will** 11 (+1)

Speed 8; flier

Immune damage from cold, disease, fire, poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, deafened, diseased, fatigued, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Insubstantial A shadow serpent takes half damage from weapons, can move through solid objects and other creatures, and ignores the effects of moving across difficult terrain.

Become the Night A shadow serpent is invisible in areas obscured by shadows or darkness.

ATTACK OPTIONS

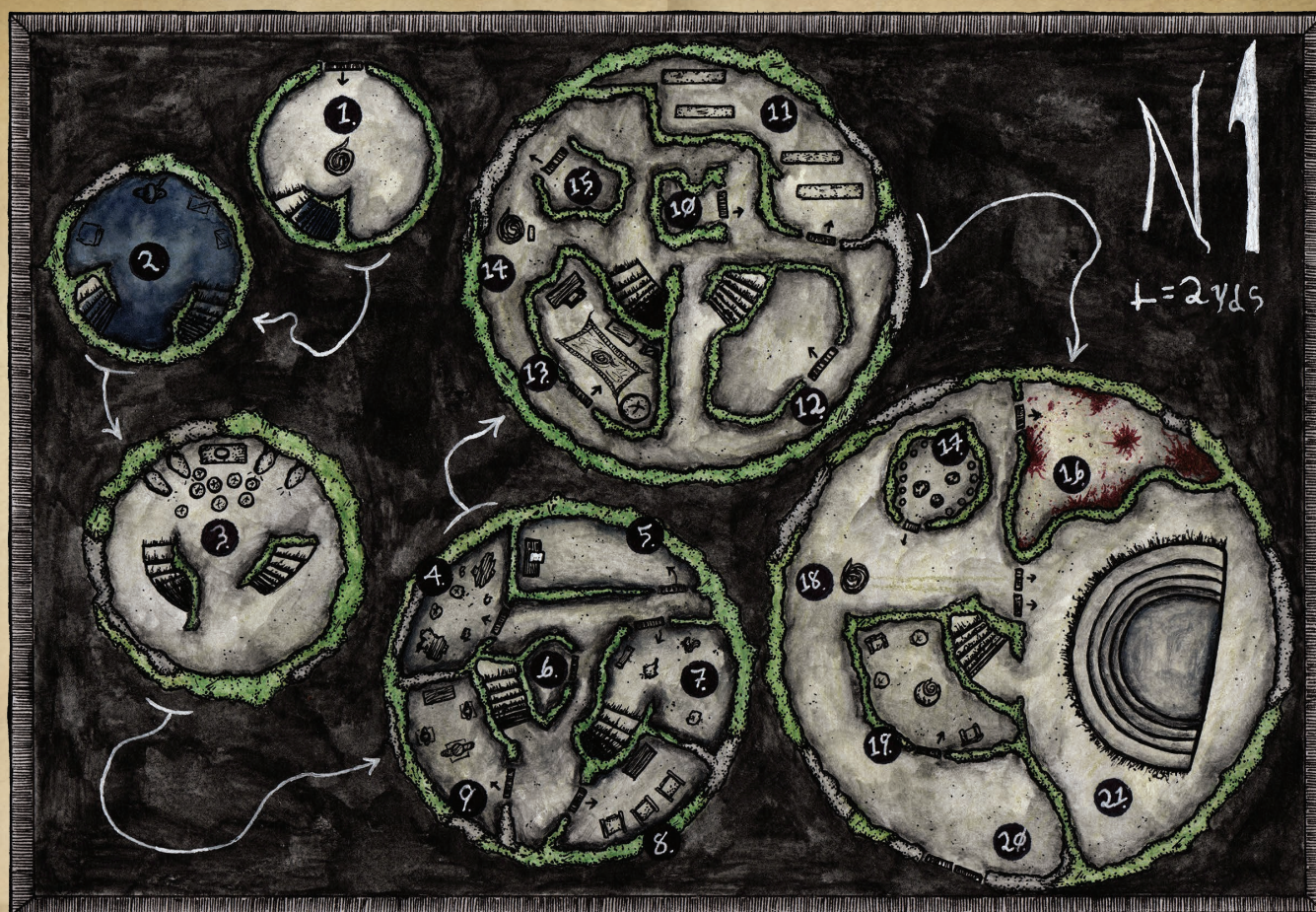
Draining Touch (melee) +5 with 1 boon (2d6 plus Drain on attack roll 20+)

Drain A living target gains 1 Corruption and takes a –6 penalty to Health that lasts until it completes a rest. While subject to this penalty, the target makes Strength attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane. If the target becomes incapacitated by an attack a shadow makes while the target has this penalty, the target creature dies. At the end of the next round, a **shadow** (see below) wriggles free from the body and stands up in the nearest open space. The new shadow can take the next available turn.

END OF THE ROUND

Unnatural Chill Each living creature within short range must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take 1d3 damage from bone-chilling cold and become slowed for 1 round.

Burned by Sunlight The shadow serpent takes 2d6 damage if it is in an area lit by sunlight.



SHADOW

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 horrifying spirit

Perception 13 (+3); darksight

Defense 14; **Health** 20; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 5

Strength —, **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 7 (–3), **Will** 11 (+1)

Speed 10

Immune damage from cold, disease, fire, poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, deafened, diseased, fatigued, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Insubstantial A shadow takes half damage from weapons, can move through solid objects and other creatures, and ignores the effects of moving across difficult terrain.

Become the Night A shadow is invisible in areas obscured by shadows or darkness.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Draining Touch (melee) +4 with 2 boons (2d6 plus Drain on attack roll 20+)

Drain A living target gains 1 Corruption and takes a –6 penalty to Health that lasts until it completes a rest. While subject to this penalty, the target makes Strength attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane. If the target becomes incapacitated by an attack a shadow makes while the target has this penalty, the target creature dies. At the end of the next round, a shadow wriggles free from the body and stands up in the nearest open space. The new shadow can take the next available turn.

END OF THE ROUND

Burned by Sunlight The shadow serpent takes 2d6 damage if it is in an area lit by sunlight.

3. THE HIGH ALTAR OF YIG

Light emanates from four glowing orbs held in the mouths of carved serpent heads that jut from the wall to either side of a large, marble altar. Carvings in the altar make it appear to be covered in writhing snakes. Several circular pillows sit on the floor in front of the altar. Another ramp leads down to the level below.

Alisstar, a **shadow serpent** (see area 2), stands before the altar. Being the last high priest of Yig, he blames himself for his priests' failure to stop the Unspeakable One. For centuries, he has sought a way to complete a ritual to appease Yig and set the souls of his brethren free. He is intent on the altar and takes no notice of the characters unless they attack or speak to him.

If the group attacks him, he throws up his hands and begs for mercy. He tells them he does not want to fight, as they are his only hope. Attempts to communicate with him startle him, but he beseeches the characters for help just the same.

In a low, moaning voice, Alisstar says, "At lasst. At lasst living ssoulss are come to help uss. Yesss. Help uss you can. Alisstar is my name, and the high priest I wass of thiss temple."

"Ssince the day of desstruction, me and my brethren have wandered thesse hallss. Doomed to exisst for all time. Doomed to live with our failure. Yig has abandoned uss!

"But you can help. Yess, you can. Do as I wissh, and I will give you what you sseek."

Alisstar needs the characters to help him complete his ritual. He believes this is the only way to lift Yig's curse. To accomplish this, he needs the group to recover The Gifts of the Serpent that have been scattered throughout the temple. He does not know where, exactly, the items can be found, but he knows they reside in the temple still. (The *Amulet of the Serpent* is in **area 2**. The *Fangs of the Serpent* is in **area 21**. Finally, the *Scales of the Serpent* is in **area 9**.) Alisstar promises to give the group the *Jade Serpent* if they bring all three items to him and help him complete the ritual.

The pillows on the floor in front of the altar have become contaminated with a nasty disease. Any living creature handling them becomes exposed to the disease. When an exposed creature completes a rest, it must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes or become diseased. While diseased in this way, the creature is also impaired from the tremors in its body and, whenever the creature gets a total of 0 or less on an attack roll or challenge roll, the creature drops whatever it carries. Each time the diseased creature completes a rest, it must make a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes. On a failure, the creature takes a cumulative -1d6 penalty to Health that lasts until the creature removes the diseased affliction. Three successes remove the diseased affliction.

4. CHAMBER OF THE ACOLYTES

A rank odor hangs heavy in this room. Rotting pillows and bedding lay strewn about the floor. When the characters enter, **4 shadow serpents** (see **area 2**) emerge from the shadows, wailing loudly, and attacking until destroyed.

5. PRAYER ROOM

This long room features a mosaic of a large serpent on the curving wall. The serpent's tail begins near the door, and the body winds along the outside wall, ending in a fanged head with glowing green eyes at the far end of the room. A stone table holding a large book stands in front of the serpent's head. Four large piles of dust lay on the floor, their shapes suspiciously like serpents.

The eyes of the mosaic serpent are imbued with the spirit of Yig. As the priests recited their prayers, the eyes would help them commune with their god. When Yig abandoned his priests, the eyes drove them to madness instead and the priests here killed each other as a result. Any living creature meeting the

serpent's gaze must make a Will challenge roll with 2 banes. On a success, a creature becomes immune to their power until it completes a rest. On a failure, the creature gains 2d6 Insanity. If the Insanity would drive the creature mad, the creature automatically suffers the Violence effect.

The book on the table is filled with Valossan script and is titled, *The Way of Yig*. The pages in the book are made from molted serpent skin. Any rare book dealer would pay up to 300 gc for it.

6. INCENSE ROOM

A pungent odor fills this small room. Stone shelves loaded with jars and urns line the walls. A brazier stands at the far end of the room, unlit. Most of the incense has long since lost its potency. However, a searching character who inspects the urns finds two blocks of incense.

7. RAMP TO THE LOWER LEVELS

This room is a mess, with bits and pieces of decaying wood, moldy pillows, and smashed pottery all over the floor. Opposite the door, a ramp climbs into darkness, in which hide **2 wraiths**, the remnants of humans enslaved to the serpent people. The following statistics box updates the wraith presented in *Shadow of the Demon Lord*.

WRAITH

DIFFICULTY 100

Size 1 horrifying spirit

Perception 14 (+4); darksight

Defense 16; **Health** 60; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 7

Strength —, **Agility** 16 (+6), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 14 (+4)

Speed 14; flier

Immune damage from cold, disease, fire, poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, deafened, diseased, fatigued, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Insubstantial A wraith takes half damage from weapons, can move through solid objects and other creatures, and ignores the effects of moving across difficult terrain.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Shadow Blade (melee) +6 with 2 boons (Lasting Harm)

Lasting Harm A living target takes a cumulative -2d6 penalty to its Health. The penalty lasts until the creature completes a rest. If the penalty would drop the target's Health to 0 or if the target becomes incapacitated while it has this penalty, the target dies and a new wraith wriggles free from the corpse and stands up. For 1 hour, the new wraith has half the Health of its creator and is compelled. After this time, the new wraith has full Health and removes the affliction.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Ethereal Wind The wraith uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to move up to its Speed without triggering free attacks.

END OF THE ROUND

Burned by Sunlight The wraith takes 3d6 damage if it is in an area lit by sunlight.

8. INFIRMARY

Rotting sedan chairs line the back wall of this room. A stone table with a shelf above, laden with various jars, sits against the opposite wall. Most of the chairs are empty, but two contain the shadowy forms of Valossan serpent priests. They beckon the character toward them.

When the curse of Yig struck, these priests were receiving treatment in the infirmary. They have been lying here, waiting to die, for centuries. They want the characters to kill them and beg them to do so.

These shadow serpents give the group information in exchange for their deaths. Here is what the priests know:

- Vrosh, a warrior priest, wears the *Scales of the Serpent*.
- The Avatar of Yig is a giant serpent found in the lowest level of the temple, resting in a great pit used for holy sacrifices.

One of the jars contains a *panacea potion*.

9. THE SERPENT SCALES

Rotted matting covers the floor of this large room, and combat dummies lay scattered throughout. Racks hold rusting and tarnished weapons of all sorts. A mummified figure stands at the center of the room; it wears a suit of green scale and grips a long spear that crackles with energy. When the characters enter, it says, "Come, young onesss. Come for your lessson. You musst be sstrong to fight for Yig." It then assumes a fighting stance.

The mummified serpent person is a warrior priest named Vrosh. He died just before the curse befell the temple, but his spirit was prevented from finding peace and became trapped in his mummified remains. He waits here to train young priests in the art of war. He refuses to respond to any questions and speaks to the characters as a teacher does to a student, and while he begins with the intent of training the characters, his madness drives him to kill.

Vrosh carries and an enchanted spear and wears the *Scales of the Serpent*.

VROSH

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 1 horrifying undead

Perception 15 (+5); darksight

Defense 18 (*Scales of the Serpent*); **Health** 80; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 4

Strength 17 (+7), **Agility** 9 (–1), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 15 (+5)
Speed 8

Immune damage from cold, disease, poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, dazed, deafened, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, poisoned, stunned

Paralyzing Horror A creature frightened from gaining Insanity by seeing Vrosh becomes immobilized until it removes the frightened affliction.

Fire Vulnerability Vrosh takes double damage from fire.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Enchanted Spear (melee) +7 with 1 boon (2d6 plus 2d6 from lightning; an immobilized target takes 3d6 extra damage)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Storm of Strikes Vrosh moves up to his Speed without triggering free attacks. During this movement, he can attack twice with his enchanted spear.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Fiery Wrath When Vrosh takes damage from fire, he can use a triggered action to attack with his enchanted spear.



10. SCROLL ROOM

Tiny, square niches riddle the walls of this small room from floor to ceiling. The mostly rotted remains and dust of countless scrolls occupy each. Searching all the niches takes about an hour, but turns up a scroll containing an incantation of the *underwater adaption* spell from the Alteration tradition.

11. MESS HALL

This hall holds a number of long, low stone tables. Many ceramic plates and utensils lie cracked and broken upon them. Three **shadow serpents** (see area 2) sit at a table nearby. They appear to be eating, although there is no food on their plates. Another **shadow serpent** emerges from the shadows at the back of the hall and addresses the characters, "Ahhhh! Fresssh morssselss for usss to eat. Let usss kill them, and I will make usss a feassst fit for a king!"

These shadow serpents have not come to terms with the curse of Yig. They believe they are still alive and hunger for a fresh meal. Quick thinking characters might try to talk to them and convince them that they are dead, which requires a Will attack roll against the shadow serpents' Will. On a success, the spirits stand down and stagger about in bewilderment until the characters leave. Otherwise, the spirits fight to the death.

12. THE SEALED DOOR

Three iron spikes driven into the floor wedge this stone door shut. A tiny door has been carved into the portal at eye level. It is currently shut and locked. It can be unlocked from the outside.

This room belongs to Sseth, the priest who wrote the warning on the walls in the topmost chamber of the tower (see area 1). His fellow priests imprisoned him here because they believed he had gone insane and used the small door to feed him. A character using lock picks or tools can attempt to unlock the door with a success on an Intellect challenge roll with 3 banes. Otherwise, the door is a Size 2 object with Defense 5 and Health 20. The spikes can be removed with a success on a Strength challenge roll.

The crescent-shaped room beyond the door is bare but for the Valossan writing covering every inch of wall, in many different styles and sizes. A voice calls out from the gloom, "Enter Foolsss! Help you I can. Yesss! You may be the oness. NO! I am not sssure."

If the characters enter, he says, "To me you musst come, young oness. I alone can help you. Need you the Fangs of the Sserpent. Know where it is, I do! But no! Give it to them I will not! Yesss! You musst! No! Yesss! Yess, tell it to you I sssshall. Only if they anssswer the riddle. Yesss! Only if they anssswer the riddle. No! Yessss! Anssswer it they musst!"

Although Sseth wasn't crazy before Valossa was destroyed, he sure is now. Now a **shadow serpent** (see area 2), he demands the characters solve the riddle before he will tell them where they can find the *Fangs of the Serpent*. He does not respond to any questions and continually asks the characters if they want to answer his riddle, peppering his utterances with self-recriminations and bizarre musings. If the characters agree to solve the riddle, he says:

"I create life and also nourish it. I contain life and the future for some. I am first, although some say I came last. I am fragile, yet strong enough to hold precious cargo. What am I?"

The answer is "an egg." If characters guess correctly, Sseth tells them the *Fangs of the Serpent* wait for them in the Pit of the Great Serpent (area 21). If they guess incorrectly, he hisses at them, but he still tells them something useful: they must find the avatar and take the answer from its mouth.

If the group attacks him, he flees. He only fights if cornered.

13. THE HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBER

The door opens into a crescent-shaped chamber with a large rug showing a faded image of a coiled serpent on the floor. Opposite the door stands an empty, rectangular glass case with a rotting log in it. A decaying, round mattress sits in the right corner of the room, and there is a small chest at its side. On the other side of the room is a large desk and a chair. Lying open on the desk is a leather-bound tome with yellowed pages.

The chest is locked and the key has been lost. A character using lock picks or a tool kit can open the lock with a success on an Intellect challenge roll with 3 banes. Otherwise, the chest is a Size 1 object with Defense 5 and Health 15. The chest contains 50 gc, 2 *healing potions*, and 1 *panacea potion*.

The book on the table is the high priest's journal. It is written in Valossan. The most recent entries express the high priest's concern about the growing worship of the Unspeakable One. One key passage reads, "It is clear that this Unspeakable One is not of this world. It is possible he hails from the Void. To defeat him, it may be necessary to send him back to the Void or to imprison him on this one."

Additionally, the journal contains a thorough history of Valossan life. To the right people, it would be worth around 100 gc.

14. STATUE OF YIG

A huge, 15-foot-tall statue of a coiled serpent takes up the center of the hallway. Spots of colorful paint still cling to the statue. A tiny altar stands in front of its base and holds two empty small jars.

15. THE SERVANTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST

Inside this circular chamber, the furniture—desks, chairs, mattresses—has been divided and pushed to opposite sides of the room. A line in white chalk has been drawn down the center. On either side of the line, 2 **shadow serpents** (see **area 2**) shout at each other and point fingers.

In life, these serpent people never got along and their bickering has only gotten worse. Unable to harm each other, they turn to the characters when they enter, urging them to kill the other, promising to help the group find the “hidden treasure of the temple.” Both lie, as no such treasure exists. The shadow serpents do not attack unless they themselves are attacked.

16. CHAMBER OF SACRIFICES

An overwhelming stench of decay hangs heavy in this room and emanates from the **8 zombies** that were in life intended for sacrifice to the great snake god. The zombies emerge from the shadows and attack.

17. THE HATCHERY

Dozens of cracked eggs lay on rotting cushions arranged around this circular chamber. The room is quite hot, thanks to eight glowing stones, called heat stones, held in brackets spaced evenly along the walls.

The heat stones are enchanted objects that continually radiate heat in a 3-yard radius. Each stone is about the size of an egg. The heat from the stones raises the temperature in the area by thirty degrees. The stones also shed light in a 5-yard radius and turn darkness out to 5 yards beyond this distance into shadows.

The stones are quite hot and any creature touching them takes 1 damage, plus 1 damage for each minute of continuous handling.

18. STATUE OF YIG

A 15-foot-tall statue of a coiled snake with its fangs bared stands here. Its eyes shine soft green light that falls upon a pair of double doors engraved with elaborate carvings of snakes on their surface.

The doors cannot be opened without using the statue. Anyone moving into the light finds they do not block it; the light shines through them. Close examination of the statue reveals the eyes have a pair of lids. If these lids are moved to cover the eyes, the doors to **area 21** open. The doors can also be opening by any effect that ends magic (the ward keeping them shut counts as a rank 6 spell).

19. WAITING ROOM

Rotting furniture fills this room. Tapestries on the walls are faded and torn. Many cushions adorn the chamber, but they too are ruined. In the center of the room, upon a marble pedestal, rests a serpent statuette carved from jade.

The jade serpent in the center of the room is an exact replica of the relic the group seeks. The statue is not magical in any way, but would be worth 50 gc to a collector.

20. POSSIBLE EXIT

The large double doors stand closed. Each has a bronze pull ring at the center, but the doors appear warped. Examining the doors reveals they are cool to the touch, the wood damp, and wet sand oozes out from the bottom.

The doors are stuck. Opening them requires a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. If opened, waters spill in from the outside. The force of the rushing waters deals 1d6 damage to everything within 3 yards of the door. Each creature in the area must make a Strength challenge roll. A creature falls prone on a failure, or takes half the damage on a success. It takes 1d3 + 1 rounds for the water to fill area 18 along with any other opened doors in this level. Every 1d3 + 1 minutes thereafter, the water level rises to fill a higher level until it reaches area 2 and then stops.

Beyond the doors stretches the ruins of Valossa. You can expand the adventure to let the characters explore these ruins. If you don't wish to expand the adventure, you can have the ruins be totaled, with no structures intact and nothing of interest to be found.



21. THE PIT OF THE GREAT SERPENT

This room features a large, sunken amphitheater shaped like a half-moon. Five steps covered in rotting cushions lead down to the pit's bottom. Faded tapestries hang from the walls.

A giant snake coils at the bottom of the pit. Its skin is yellow with decay. It rears its head as the characters enter, baring a set of gleaming white fangs, the front two capped with the *Fangs of the Serpent*.

AVATAR OF YIG

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 6 horrifying undead

Perception 14 (+4); darksight

Defense 15; **Health** 120; **Insanity** —; **Corruption** 5

Strength 18 (+8), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 6 (–4), **Will** 10 (+0)
Speed 8

Immune damage from cold, disease, or poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, diseased, fatigued, poisoned, prone

Steely Scales The avatar's scales impose 1 bane on attack rolls made against its Defense.

Sunlight Vulnerability The avatar is impaired while in an area lit by sunlight.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fangs (melee) +8 with 1 boon, or 2 boons against a grabbed target (4d6 plus Life Drain and Venom)

Life Drain A living creature must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become impaired for 1 minute. If the creature becomes incapacitated while it's impaired by Life Drain, the creature dies and rises as a compelled **animated corpse** 1d6 rounds later.

Venom of the Serpent A living creature must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes or take 3d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 hour. At the end of this time, the target must repeat the challenge roll and, on a failure, takes 6d6 damage from the poison.

The avatar can use the venom three times and regains all expended uses when it completes a rest.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Crushing Grip The avatar slithers around a creature it can reach and uses its body to grab it. The avatar makes a Strength attack roll with 1 boon against the target's Agility. On a success, the target takes 3d6 damage and becomes grabbed for 1 round. If the target is already grabbed in this way, it instead takes 4d6 extra damage and the avatar maintains the grab. A grabbed creature makes Strength or Agility attack rolls to remove the grabbed affliction with 2 banes.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Slithering Evasion When a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against the avatar, the avatar can use a triggered action to move up to half its Speed without triggering free attacks. The avatar moves any creature grabbed by it with it.

Darting Fangs When a creature moves within the avatar's reach, it can use a triggered action to attack that creature with its fangs.

RECEIVING THE JADE SERPENT

Once the group recovers the three artifacts, they can return to the high priest in **area 3**, so he can complete his ritual. The shadow serpent thanks the characters for their efforts. He then says, "I still need your help. I cannot perform the physical partsss of the ritual. One of you mussst sssacrifice sssome blood sssso that my people can be ssaved.

"I mussst warn you, however. This sssacrifice will be great. You will lossse a part of yourssself. It iss the only way. If you refusse, we will be consigned to an eternity of sssuffering, and you will never get the Jade Ssserpent."

If a character agrees to make the sacrifice, the high priest instructs the character to don the *Scales of the Serpent* and the *Amulet*, while he incants the necessary mystic phrases. When he has spoken the words, he tells the sacrifice to use the *Fangs of the Serpent* to cut into each of his or her wrists. The character's blood must then be mixed with the venom extracted from the *Fangs* and the mixture is then poured on the *Scales of the Serpent*.

The character who made the sacrifice takes 2d6 damage and must then get a success on a Strength challenge roll or become cursed (as if by a rank 7 spell). While cursed in this way, the creature takes a –10 penalty to Health that lasts until the curse is lifted.

At that moment, the high priest Alisstar proclaims, "IT IS DONE!" The building begins to shake. Alisstar makes a motion with his hands, and the *Jade Serpent* appears and rises from the center of the altar to float before the player characters. The high priest then shrieks, "Take it, take it!" and then fades away.

The group can then leave the temple the same way they entered, though they must do so with haste as the shaking becomes worse and the building starts to collapse around them. Water pours in through the doors in **area 20** and quickly floods the lower levels. Once free from the temple, it completely collapses behind them. If the characters left their boat behind, they find it where they left it and can use it to escape the caves during the next low tide.



PART IV: MILTON'S FOLLY

In which the characters rush to stop Milton Drac from plunging the world into madness

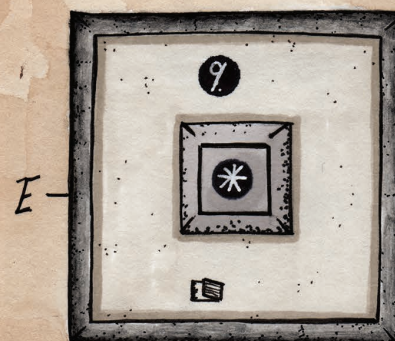
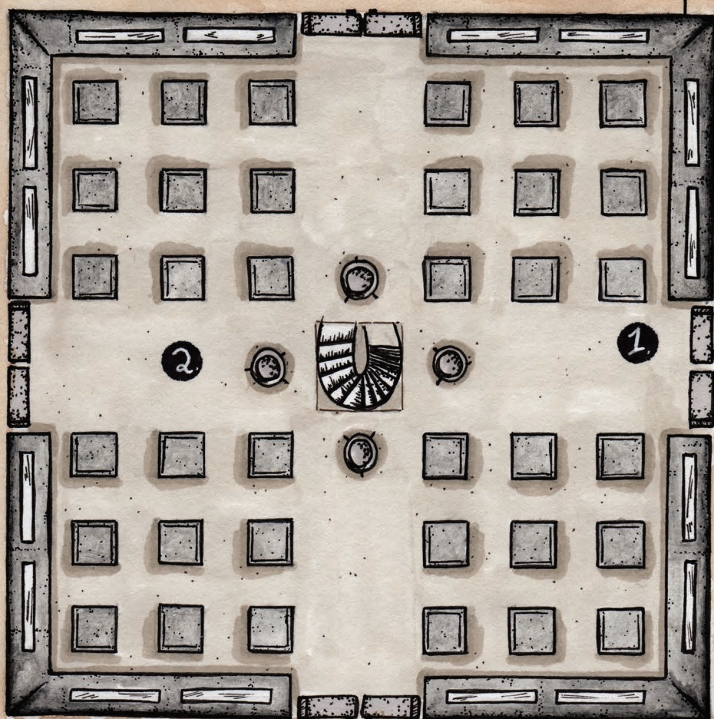
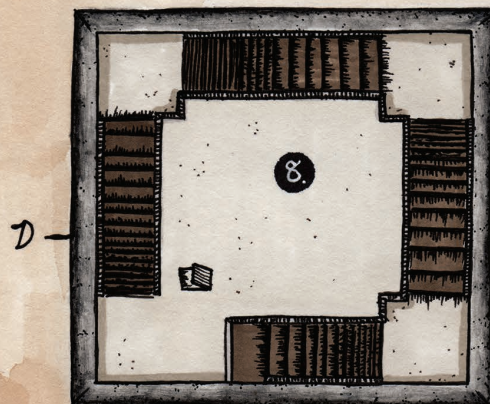
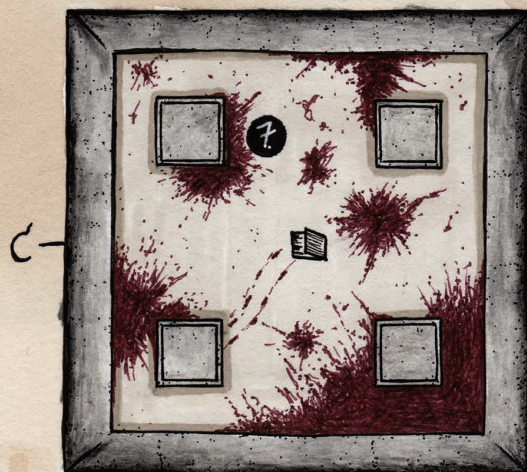
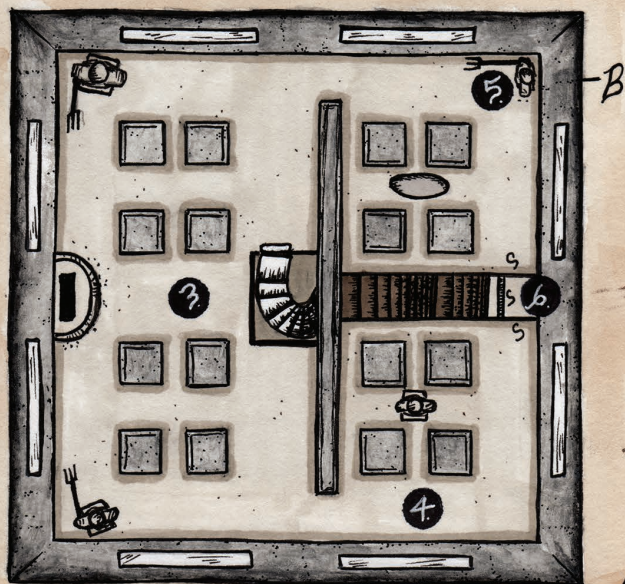
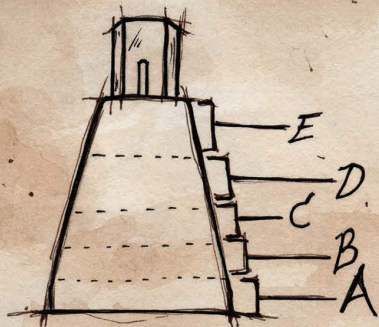
Once free from the caves, the characters find the harbor filled with ships and boats of every kind, and above them all looms the great lighthouse. The scaffolding that had stood around it is now gone and the lighthouse gleams in the sunlight. The waters around it are kept clear by a patrol of four Sea Lord cutters filled with marines.

The christening of the lighthouse and the ceremonial activation of the light are set to occur at night the day the group returns from the caves. The confusion and overcrowding in the city allows them to easily avoid the city watch, which has been ordered to arrest them on sight.

If the group heads over to the Temple of the Seer, K'Stallo happily puts them up there, giving them sanctuary so they can rest and heal in preparation for their assault on the lighthouse. If K'Stallo has been killed, the characters should still be able to find

an inn to stay in—if they are willing to all cram into one room. The impending celebration has the town crowded. If they do so discreetly, they shouldn't have any troubles from the city watch.

It is next to impossible to storm the lighthouse by day. The roving patrols of the Sea Lord's marines and lookouts stationed within the lighthouse would certainly see anyone approaching the island. Milton Drac ordered the tight security to "keep agents of Freeport's enemies from destroying the lighthouse." His real reason for the move is to stop the group from meddling in his plans. For a further nudge in the right direction, any character with knowledge of nature knows there is no moon this evening, so it should be dark enough to approach the lighthouse in secret at night.





A NOTE ON TIMING

The adventure's timeline expects the group to enter the lighthouse on the very night Milton Drac attempts to complete his ritual. This might not work out for the characters, as they might have spent more time adventuring in the Sunken Temple than just one day. Or, they might want to enter the lighthouse during the day before the ritual begins.

Rather than hitting them over the head with some contrived solution, you can let them enter the lighthouse and find nothing. The first two floors of the lighthouse show no outward signs of being anything but a temple to Oceanus.

Another option is that time might move much slower within the walls of the sunken temple due to its peculiar, supernatural nature. Two days within its walls could be but a single day in the real world. Of course, you are free to come up with your own method of moving the adventure to its climax: chasing Milton Drac down inside the lighthouse.



THE LIGHTHOUSE OF DRAC

Milton's Folly is over 200 feet tall, towering over Freeport's harbor. The square building gradually tapers up with sloping walls, from 50 yards wide at its base to 15 yards at its summit. Open archways in the sides of the building begin about 10 yards off the ground and continue up to the second floor. At this point, a sloped, stone ledge juts out to prevent anyone from climbing on the outside to the levels above. The remaining floors have normal glass windows. The fourth floor of the lighthouse is a square tower stretching 100 feet to the top level. Large, 10-foot-wide double doors face each of the cardinal directions, allowing access to the building.

At night, four swift ships circle the island, each ship holding a dozen marines (as **veterans**). The lookouts in the lighthouse by day are not on duty at night. If the group is careful and keep their light sources hidden, they can slip past the patrol and get onto the island unseen.

1. THE GREAT DOORS

Enormous double doors made from stone, each ten feet wide and fifteen feet high, stand closed in the center of the lighthouse wall. A relief depicting the lighthouse shining streaks of light over the harbor has been carved in the surface above two iron pull rings hanging from the center of each door. Flickering orange light shines out from archways some 10 yards above the doors.

The doors have been barred from the inside. Each door is a Size 3 object with Defense 5 and Health 60. Smashing open the doors makes a lot of noise and attracts attention from the guards and the ships patrolling the waters around the island. If the characters make a lot of noise opening these doors, one guard from **area 2** races up the stairs to **area 3** to raise the alarm. You can move cultists from other parts of the lighthouse to respond to the noise. As well, one ship in the harbor drops anchor and sends a dozen marines (as **veterans**) to reinforce the lighthouse's defenders. These marines arrive 1d6 minutes after the characters attempt to break in and are accompanied by a dozen more every 10 minutes until a total of 48 have arrived.

The characters can, however, climb up the side of the lighthouse and enter through the archways. If the characters lack the proper equipment, they must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane to climb. Characters reaching the archways can see into, and climb down to, **area 2**.

2. THE HALL OF COLUMNS

An enormous square room, its walls angle inward to the ceiling some 20 yards above. Huge square columns carved from stone rise from the floor to support the ceiling overhead. Flames burning in four large braziers standing around a white marble spiral staircase at the room's center fill the room with light.

Standing near the foot of the staircase are 4 Brotherhood cultists. Bored, they have been here since nightfall. If the characters enter the room through an archway, they might not be able to see the guards from their position. A character who can't see the guards can make a Perception challenge roll and hears their muttered conversation on a success.

The guards attack intruders, but one breaks off from the rest to run up the stairs to raise the alarm. It takes the guard 2 rounds to reach **area 3**.

The carvings on the columns depict various scenes from the history and myth surrounding the Sea God. A character inspecting a column can make a Perception challenge roll with 2 banes. On a success, the character notices each of the carvings has a subtle etching of the Yellow Sign hidden within it.

BROTHERHOOD GUARD

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 human

Perception 10 (+0)

Defense 15 (mail); **Health** 29; **Insanity** 3; **Corruption** 2

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 10 (+0), **Will** 10 (+0)

Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Sword (melee) +4 with 1 boon (2d6 + 2)

Crossbow (long range) +0 with 1 boon (3d6)

3. THE TEMPLE OF OCEANUS

The door at the end of the spiral staircase opens into a large rectangular room. Two rows of 2-yard-square columns run the length of the chamber. Opposite the staircase, at the center of the far wall, is an altar of blue marble on a dais flanked by two floor-to-ceiling windows that look out onto the harbor. Enormous, 20-foot-tall statues of the sea god stand in the far corners of the room, their tridents pointed toward the altar. Two small doors stand along the back wall, equally spaced from the staircase.

If the cultists have not yet raised the alarm, the Brotherhood cultists perform a ceremony to prepare for the coming power of their god. One stands on the dais, his back to four cultists who chant unintelligible words. The cultists are distracted and the characters can easily sneak past them.

If the alarm has been raised, two cultists hide behind the statues in the corners of the room. The priest, with any guard that alerted the cultists, waits in **area 4**, while the remaining 2 cultists wait in **area 5**. When the characters enter the Temple, the cultists spring out of hiding to surprise the group.

The cultists desecrated the altar to the Sea God, having carved the Yellow Sign deeply into the blue marble surface and smeared the interior with yellow pigment. The grooves of the carving are also filled with dried blood. The altar emanates dark magic. Whenever a creature not devoted to the Unspeakable One takes damage within short range of the altar, it takes 1d6 extra damage and must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity.

BROTHERHOOD CULTIST

DIFFICULTY 10

Size 1 human

Perception 11 (+1)
Defense 15 (mail); **Health** 16; **Insanity** 3; **Corruption** 4
Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Mace (melee) +2 with 1 boon (1d6)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Channel Madness When the cultist would make an attack roll, it can use a triggered action to make the attack roll with 1 boon. On a success, the attack deals 1d6 extra damage. On a failure, the cultist gains 1 Insanity.

MAGIC

Power 1
Destruction *ruin* (2), *rend* (1)

PRIEST OF THE UNSPEAKABLE ONE

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 human

Perception 10 (+0)
Defense 13; **Health** 22; **Insanity** 5; **Corruption** 6
Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 10 (+0), **Will** 13 (+3)
Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Scimitar (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6 + 1)
Dart (short range) +3 with 1 boon (1d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Horror of the Unspeakable One Up to five creatures the priest can see within short range must make Will challenge rolls. A creature gains 1d6 Insanity on a failure, or half the amount of Insanity on a success. The priest must complete a rest before he can use this attack again.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Servant of the Unspeakable One The priest gains 1d6 Insanity and causes a demon to appear in an open cube space, 2 yards on a side, within medium range. Roll a d6. On a 1, a **small demon** appears. On a 2-5, a **medium demon** appears. On a 6, a **large demon** appears. The demon remains until it is destroyed and it can take the next available turn. The priest has no control over the demon. The priest must complete a rest before he can use this special action again.

Shared Recovery The priest heals 5 damage and chooses one creature within short range. The target heals damage equal to its healing rate.

MAGIC

Power 2
Destruction *ruin* (3), *dissolve* (2), *rend* (2), *entropic power* (1)

The cultists and priest all wear gold symbols of the Yellow Sign on chains around their necks. The symbols are worth 5 gc.

4. THE SHRINE OF THE HORNE GOD

The door to this room is decorated with a bas-relief depicting a horned warrior slaying a dragon with a spear. The door opens into a room with floor-to-ceiling windows on the south and east walls. Four square pillars rise floor to ceiling around a marble statue at the room's center. The statue is carved in the likeness of the Horned God wielding a spear and is almost 20 feet tall. The walls of the room are painted with scenes depicting various forms of combat.

The statue contains one of two switches that opens the secret door leading to **area 6**. Anyone examining the statue and pulling on the spear notices that it moves. If pulled down, a grinding noise sounds from **area 6**. If the switch in **area 5** has been thrown, the secret door to **area 6** opens.

Anyone that spends 1 minute examining the walls finds the secret door. The door is sealed shut until the switch in this room and in **area 5** have both been thrown. The door is a Size 1 object with Defense 5 and Health 20.

5. THE WATER SHRINE OF OCEANUS

A bas-relief on the door to this room depicts a pool of water with a mermaid bathing at its edge. The doors open into a room with floor to ceiling windows on the north and east walls. A dais with a statue of Oceanus wielding a trident stands in the corner opposite the door. To the right of the door is a round, stone basin filled with water. Four square, stone pillars surround the basin.

Draped over the lip of the basin is the body of a woman dressed in leather armor. A crossbow bolt protrudes from her back. The woman was a thief who slipped into the temple to steal what valuables she could. The cultists found her and killed her. A search of her body uncovers 10 gc, lock picks, and an *invisibility potion*.

The statue on the dais contains the other switch to open the secret door to **area 6**. Anyone examining the statue and pulling on the trident notices that it moves. If pulled down, a grinding noise sounds from **area 6**. If the switch in **area 4** has been thrown, the secret door opens.

Anyone that spends 1 minute examining the walls finds the secret door. The door is sealed shut until the switch in this room and in **area 5** have both been thrown. The door is a Size 1 object with Defense 5 and Health 20.

6. SECRET ROOM

If the characters enter this area without have thrown the switches in **area 4** and **area 5**, they find a small, bare room. If the door opposite the one they entered is closed, they see a handle in the center of the door, which, when turned, opens the door. A character examining the west wall for 1 minute finds the secret door. It does not open unless the switches are thrown. It is a Size 1 object with Defense 5 and Health 20.

If the characters enter this area having thrown both switches, they find all three secret doors open, the third opening to a hallway that ends at a set of stairs that climb to a trapdoor that opens onto **area 7**.

7. LAIR OF THE MUTTERING MAWS

Opening the trapdoor releases a hideous stench of blood and rotting flesh. The floor is smeared with gore and littered with body parts. Four square stone pillars support the ceiling overhead. Feeding on the workers who completed the lighthouse are 3 **muttering maws**. The carnage imposes 1 bane on challenge rolls to resist the monsters' horrifying trait. The monsters attack anyone who enters this room.

A character inspecting the floor sees footprints that lead from the trapdoor to the pillar marked on the map, where they abruptly end. A character spending 1 minute searching the pillar finds a hatch that accesses the pillar's interior. Inside, ladder rungs climb up to a trapdoor that opens into **area 8**.

8. THE TOWER STAIRS

Sickly yellow light fills this room. A railed staircase hugs the walls, rising clockwise all the way to the summit of the tower, about 100 feet above. The light emanates from the walls of the tower and the hundreds of candles mounted on the railing. The Yellow Sign within each of the bricks throbs with magical energy, illuminating the whole tower with an eerie light.

Six people gather at the top of the staircase and look down at the group when they enter. They include Milton Drac and the rest are robed serpent people. When Drac sees the characters, he speaks in a booming voice that echoes off the walls. "Well, well, well. I see that you have dispatched my pets. No matter. The ritual is almost complete. Soon the Yellow Sign will come to Freeport and drive all the unfaithful masses to madness!

"Your ridiculous attempt to stop us ends now. Farewell, friends. What a pity that you have come so far only to fail in the end."

He then turns to N'Tal, one of the robed serpent people, and instructs him to deal with the characters.

After the speech, Drac tosses down one of his exploding skulls and then heads up to the top of the lighthouse (**area 9**). N'Tal sheds his robe and casts *bestow flight* on himself so he can move freely about the tower and harry the characters with spells to prevent them from reaching the top of the staircase. The remaining 4 serpent people attack with their bows.

N'TAL

DIFFICULTY 100

Size 1 serpent person

Perception 14 (+4); **darksight**
Defense 16 (*arcane armor*); **Health** 25; **Insanity** 4;
Corruption 4
Strength 9 (-1), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 13 (+3)
Speed 10; swimmer

ATTACK OPTIONS

Staff (melee) +4 with 1 boon (2d6 + 1)
Teeth (melee) +4 with 1 boon (1d3 plus 1d6)
Dart (short range) +4 with 1 boon (1d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Change Shape N'Tal can use an action to assume the form of a different living creature. The new form must have a humanoid shape and be either Size 1/2 or Size 1. He remains in this form until he becomes incapacitated or uses a triggered action at any time to return to his normal form. He can use Change Shape 5 times and regains expended uses when he completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 4
Air *wind blast* (5), *glide* (2), *thunderclap* (2), *bestow flight* (1), *create cyclone* (1)
Arcana *arcane armor* (4), *arcane shield* (2), *unerring darts* (2), *empowered magic* (2), *destroy magic* (1)
Fire *flame missile* (5), *meteor* (2), *fireball* (1), *wall of fire* (1)
Forbidden *harm* (5), *obedience* (2), *vision's end* (2)

N'TAL'S BODYGUARD

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 serpent person

Perception 11 (+1); darksight

Defense 16 (scale); **Health** 23; **Insanity** 3; **Corruption** 1

Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 11 (+1)

Speed 10; swimmer

ATTACK OPTIONS

Falchion (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6 + 2)

Longbow (long range) +1 with 1 boon (2d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Change Shape A serpent person can use an action, or a triggered action on its turn, to transform into a different living creature. The new form must have a humanoid shape and be either Size 1/2 or Size 1. The serpent person remains in this form until it becomes incapacitated or until it uses a triggered action at any time to return to its normal form. It can use this talent once and regains the expended use when it completes a rest.

9. THE YELLOW SIGN

Milton's Folly's summit is a square chamber whose ceiling angles up toward a six-sided glass enclosure that sticks out four feet above the stone roof. A raised platform supports a slender stone column upon which rests a crystal that shines yellow light through the glass and out into the night. **Milton Drac** (see page 9), **Melkior Maeorgan** (see page 12), and **Brock Wallance (Gorn)** (see page 10) stand in front of the platform.

When the characters enter the room, the lighthouse shakes ominously, and the platform and column begin to glow with a bright, yellow light. The stone walls throb with magical power as a beam of light shoots through the crystal and out into the night sky. Drac then says, "You are too late. The Yellow Sign is now corrupting the minds of all those fools in the harbor below. Soon they will leave here and spread the glorious madness of the Unspeakable One throughout the world!"

"Now, we can turn our attentions to you. Since I have been trying to kill you for many months now, an agonizing death seems more than appropriate. Which do you prefer? Being flayed alive or slowly bleeding to death as carrion pick at your bodies? Neither, I suppose. I guess we shall just have to kill you now!"

Drac, Melkior, and Gorn know the characters can still stop them from accomplishing their goal. The

crystal needs to project the Yellow Sign over the harbor for at least 10 minutes to take full effect over the people viewing it.

The villains protect the crystal at all costs. If they discover that the characters have the *Jade Serpent*, they try to destroy it, as they know that its power can be used against the Yellow Sign.

If the crystal on the pedestal is removed but not replaced with the *Jade Serpent*, the power surging through the tower is unleashed. After 1 round, the glass enclosure explodes, dealing 2d6 damage to everyone in the room. Two rounds later, the ceiling of the room begins to crumble and collapse. Half of the material is carried upward with the uncontrolled energy, while the other half falls on those within the room. Each creature in the room must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or fall prone and take 2d6 damage from the falling debris.

If the crystal or the *Jade Serpent* is not placed on the pedestal after two more rounds, magical energy engulfs the room, dealing 20d6 damage to everything in it. Neither Drac nor his fellow cultists have a death wish, so they do all they can to get the crystal back on the pedestal.

The *Jade Serpent* has power over servants of the Yellow Sign. If a character can remove the crystal and replace it with the relic, Drac and his allies are in trouble. The energy from the lighthouse surges through the idol of Yig and bathes all of Freeport in a calming, green glow. All those corrupted by the Yellow Sign are cured. The servants of the Unspeakable One caught in this glow wither and die as their skin is peeled away from their bones and they turn to dust—a most fitting end for Drac and his cronies, should any of them still live when the *Jade Serpent* does its work.



AFTERMATH

When the glow of the *Jade Serpent* fades away, Freeport falls utterly silent. Then cheers shatter the silence, as the crowd goes wild. The throngs of ships below and citizens jammed into the streets have no idea how close they came to unending madness, nor are they sure what they've just seen, but they know it was one hell of a show. The Sea Lord, for all his evil intent, did give the people of Freeport something for the history books.

The player characters are, of course, in an awkward position. They could try to explain Drac's plan and show how his death was justified to save the city. The remaining members of Drac's faction on the council, however, are likely to see it as murder, not heroism. The best thing for the group to do is slip away from the lighthouse and let the Captains' Council deal with Drac's death and its repercussions—well, unless they are trying to kick-start careers in politics!

FURTHER ADVENTURES

You can continue your Freeport adventures with any of these handy adventure hooks.

VALOSSA REBORN?

It is possible that the emanations of the *Jade Serpent* undid the hereditary madness of the degenerate serpent people. In fact, it is possible that K'Stallo knew this all along and hoped the group would help him restore his people. With a return to lucidity and K'Stallo to lead them, the serpent people could have a second chance to thrive. Since Freeport is built on the wreckage of Valossa, such a rebirth is not necessarily in the best interest of the city. What would the characters do if their erstwhile ally K'Stallo put the well being of his people before that of Freeport?

EGIL'S RISING STAR

Following the events of the *Freeport Trilogy*, K'Stallo begins grooming Brother Egil as his replacement. His immediate first step is to make the young cleric his personal assistant and then, eventually, appoint him his successor when he retires. Egil becomes the youngest high priest in the history of the Seer's temple. This gives K'Stallo the freedom to rebuild the sunken temple (which by Yig's grace did not collapse completely after all) and recruit followers among his own kind.

A NEW SEA LORD

The Captains' Council is in turmoil for weeks, if not months. They not only must fill several seats, they must also choose a new Sea Lord. The machinations are sure to be heated. The succession law is still on the books, so many distant Drac relations are likely to show up as claimants. There are also those on the Captains' Council who want to abolish the office of Sea Lord altogether. This succession crisis could tear the city apart, and the characters might find themselves caught up in the mess.

Further adventures set in Freeport explore what happens as a result of the succession crisis and *The Pirate's Guide to Freeport* presents the city after this situation is resolved. However, you can develop the city in whatever way you like to make the city yours!

THE JADE SERPENT

The *Jade Serpent* is a powerful relic. (See Appendix I for an in-depth description of its powers.) If the characters are smart, they take it with them when they leave the lighthouse. After Drac has been thwarted, however, what happens to this artifact? Will the Wizards' Guild requisition it for testing? Will K'Stallo demand it as his people's birthright? Or will an ancient dragon land on the docks of Freeport one day, demanding the artifact for itself?

THE CULT AVENGED

The Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign has been thwarted, but it has not been destroyed. True, Milton Drac was a powerful cultist, but he was not in the leadership of the organization. The Brotherhood still lurks in the underbelly of society, preying on the weak, the vain, and the ignorant. The Brotherhood's leaders are sure to be most displeased with the characters and might pursue a vendetta against them. The characters might find themselves beset by assassins, bounty hunters, and crazed cultists. Rooting out the source of the attacks isn't going to be easy, since the cult has cells the world over. How many heads does the serpent have? Only the Unspeakable One really knows.

APPENDIX I: THE JADE SERPENT OF YIG

Valossa once stood as one of the mightiest nations in the world, but its fortunes rose and fell with its faith in the snake god, Yig, who created the serpent people. After a period of darkness, when the serpent people turned away from their patron, a famine gripped their lands and it seemed they would be doomed. However, a young serpent person named Niaggo received a vision from Yig and ventured forth to find a way to lift the curse that had brought low his people. Legends hold he confronted an ebon snake with an eye of jade and vanquished the creature by the power of his belief alone. When he returned to Valossa, he brought with him the *Jade Serpent*, which lifted the famine and would come to represent both Yig and the power and glory of the Valossan people.

The good fortune won by Niaggo would not last, for the Valossan people turned to the Unspeakable One, having forgotten the lessons learned in the past. They lost faith in Yig and he would not protect them from the great evil that destroyed their civilization. But Yig's power resided within the *Jade Serpent* for centuries, waiting, hidden within a sunken temple, for the chance to destroy the worshipers of the Unspeakable One.

The *Jade Serpent* weighs ten pounds and is carved from a single block of jade in the shape of a coiled snake. It is two feet tall and one foot wide at the base. The sculpturing is exquisite with finely detailed scales and life-like features. Its head is poised to strike with bared fangs and a forked tongue. When the powers of the snake are evoked, a dark green light shines from within the stone.

AWAKENING THE SERPENT

The relic has many useful powers and properties, but only one who awakens it can access them. The relic has three stages of awakening, each stage requiring a greater investment of time, treasure, and energy.

STIRRING OF THE SERPENT

To achieve the first stage of awakening, a character must make an Intellect challenge roll with 5 banes. Each of the following conditions met grants 1 boon to the roll.

- The character has magic or the occult as an area of scholarship
- The character is a serpent person
- The character is a priest of Yig

- The character makes a blood offering to the relic. In so doing, the character takes 2d6 damage and becomes cursed (as if by a rank 6 spell). While cursed by the relic, the character has a -10 penalty to Health

On a success, the character can make use of the following properties. On a failure, the character gains 3d6 Insanity and cannot attempt to awaken the serpent again for 1 year and 1 day.

Mercy of the Snake God While holding the relic, you can use an action to touch one creature you can reach. The target heals damage equal to its healing rate. You can use Mercy of the Snake God three times and regain expended uses when you complete a rest.

Servant of the Snake God While holding the relic, you can use an action to cause a serpent (as a compelled **small animal** with the poisonous trait) to appear on a flat surface within short range. The serpent remains for 1 hour or until it becomes incapacitated. When the effect ends, the serpent disappears. You can use Servant of the Snake God twice and regain expended uses when you complete a rest.

Protection of the Snake God While holding the relic, you are immune to damage from poison and the poisoned affliction.



ROUSE THE SERPENT

To achieve the second stage of awakening, a character must spend one month meditating at least four hours each day upon the nature of the *Jade Serpent* and burn incense and special herbs, whose total worth for the month must be at least 100 gc. At the end of this time, the character must make an Intellect challenge roll with 4 banes. The character has the same opportunities for making the roll with boons as described under "Stirring of the Serpent." A character can make use of the following properties on a success, or gains 3d6 Insanity and cannot attempt to rouse the serpent again for 1 year and 1 day.

Courage of the Snake God While holding the relic, you can use an action to remove the frightened affliction from yourself and from any creature you can see. You can use this property twice and regain expended uses when you complete a rest.

Greater Mercy When you use the Mercy of the Snake God property, the target heals damage equal to twice its healing rate.

Greater Servant When you use the Servant of the Snake God property, you can instead cause a giant serpent (as a compelled **large animal** with the poisonous trait) to appear.

THE SERPENT WAKENS

To achieve the third stage of awakening, a character must spend six months meditating at least four hours each day upon the nature of the *Jade Serpent* and burn incense and special herbs, whose total worth for the month must be at least 600 gc. At the end of this time, the character must make an Intellect challenge roll with 3 banes. The character has the same opportunities for making the roll with boons as described under "Stirring of the Serpent." A character can make use of the following properties on a success, or gains 3d6 Insanity and cannot attempt to rouse the serpent again for 1 year and 1 day.

Wrath of the Snake God While holding the relic, you can use an action to make an Intellect attack roll with 3 boons against the Strength of one living creature you can see within extreme range. On a success, the target takes 10d6 damage. If the damage would cause the target to become incapacitated, it dies, all the moisture drawn from its body. You can use this property once and regain the expended use when you complete a rest.

Deliverance of the Snake God While holding the relic, you can use an action to choose one creature within short range. The target heals all damage and you remove from it all Insanity, curses, and afflictions. You can use this property once and regain the expended use when you complete a rest.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF POWER

The great powers of the *Jade Serpent* do not come without a price. Anyone who awakens the relic, who is not a serpent person already, eventually becomes one. (See the *Shadow of the Demon Lord Freeport Companion* for information about this ancestry.) Thirty days after a character accomplishes a stage of awakening, the character must make a Will challenge roll with 5 banes. Nothing happens on a success, but, on a failure, the transformation begins and continues over the course of a month. The affected character grows a tail, teeth become fangs, and skin becomes scaly. At the end of this time, replace the character's ancestry with that of a serpent person. The transformation is permanent.

DESTROYING THE JADE SERPENT

It might become necessary to destroy the *Jade Serpent of Yig*. The relic cannot be unmade by normal means. It is impervious to damage and cannot be affected by spells. Flinging the relic into the Void does not destroy it, but it does remove it from the world. Some legends claim that it can only be undone by bathing it in the acidic blood of the Great Dragon, while others say it must be crushed between the teeth of a demon prince. How the characters might accomplish these things, or if it's even possible, is entirely up to you.

Milton Drac, the most honorable Sea Lord of Freeport,
cordially invites you to be his honored guest at the Grand
Lighthouse Ball. You have been awarded the Order of Drac
for your bravery in defeating the evil counselor Verlaine.
Present this invitation at the gates of the Sea Lord's
palace to gain admittance to the festivities. Prepare yourselves
for an evening of entertainment you will not soon forget.



As many a man can find the caves, but they'll never
find my treasure.

And the lads and I were carried away by the rapids.
Old Sven lost his balance and fell clear out of the boat.
We never saw him again.

At last, we landed on the beach. There was a huge stone
doorway at least half a mast tall and twenty planks wide.
All kinds of drawings of snakes were on the surface.
Carvings of a snake and weird writing were on its

The head was the worst part of it. I told Tom not to
touch the damn thing, but he wouldn't listen. It's a
shame he'll never be the same.

Finally, we all gave up and rowed our way back. I told
the men to forget about that passage, and we boarded it
up so as none of us would go down it in a drunken fit.

CHILDREN OF THE SUN, SEE YOUR TIME HAS JUST BEGUN,
SOLARISING FOR YOUR VILLAGES, THROUGH ADVENTURES EVERY
DAY, EVERY DAY AND NIGHT, WITH THE COMING OF FLIGHT,
WITH ALL YOUR FRIENDS IN TOWN, YOUR SEARCH FOR THE CITIES
OF FALCESSES, AH-AH-AH-AH... WISHING FOR THE CITIES OF
FALCESSES, AH-AH-AH-AH... SOME DAY WE WILL FIND THE
CITIES OF FALCESSES, SOME DAY WE WILL FIND THE CITIES OF
FALCESSES. HEY THERE WHERE YA GOIN', NOT EXACTLY KNOWIN'.

WHO SAYS YOU HAVE TO CALL JUST ONE PLACE HOME, HE'S
GOIN' EVERYWHERE, S.J. 'MAYBE AND HIS BEST FRIEND BEAR, HE
JUST BEATS ON 'MOVIN', LADIES KEEP IMPROVIN', EVERY DAY IS
BETTER THAN THE LAST, WEY DREAMS AND BETTER DREAMS,
AND BEST OF ALL I DON'T PAY PROPERTY TAX, FOLKIN' DOWN
TO DALLAS, WHO'S PROVIDIN' MY PALACE, OY TO WEY ORLEANS
OR WHO KNOWS WHERE, PLACES WEY AND LADIES, TOO, I'M S.J.

'MAYBE AND THIS IS MY BEST FRIEND BEAR, 80 DAYS
AROUND THE WORLD, WE'LL FIND A LOT OF FALCESSES JUST
SITTING WHERE THE FAIRBOYS ENDING, TIME, WE'LL FIND
AGAINST THE TIME, AND WE'LL FLY ON THE WHITE WINGS OF
THE WIND, 80 DAYS AROUND THE WORLD, NO WE DON'T SAY
WORLD BEFORE THE SHIP IS REALLY BACK, FOLKIN', FOLKIN',
AROUND THE WORLD, FOLKIN', ALL AROUND THE WORLD, FOLKIN',
ALL AROUND THE WORLD, FOLKIN', ALL AROUND THE WORLD.

IT IS MY BOOTS, JONATHAN HART, A SELF-MADE MILLIONAIRE
A S.V.V. THIS IS MY H., THE'S GORGEOUS, THE'S
HOW TO TAKE CARE OF HERSELF, BY THE
TAKE CARE OF BOTH OF THEM, WHICH
IT WAS 'MAYBE! VLYTSES
THE GALAXIES, IN THE
VLYTSES, VLYTSES

THE FREEPORT COMPANION





MADNESS REIGNS!

A Classic Freeport Adventure for Shadow of the Demon Lord!

The *Freeport Trilogy* concludes with this thrilling adventure set in the grand City of Adventure. The unveiling of Milton's Folly draws near, and the player characters must uncover its sinister secrets before time runs out. This time they face more than back alley toughs and mindless undead, though. Sea Lord Drac has his eyes on the PCs and they may not survive his malefic attentions. Although this adventure completes the story that began in *Death in Freeport*, you can run this adventure as a standalone scenario, using it to introduce Freeport to master characters.

To make use of this adventure you need a copy of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. While not expressly necessary, having the *Shadow of the Demon Lord Freeport Companion*, the *Demon Lord's Companion*, and *The Pirate's Guide to Freeport* from Green Ronin Publishing will certainly enhance your experience.

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