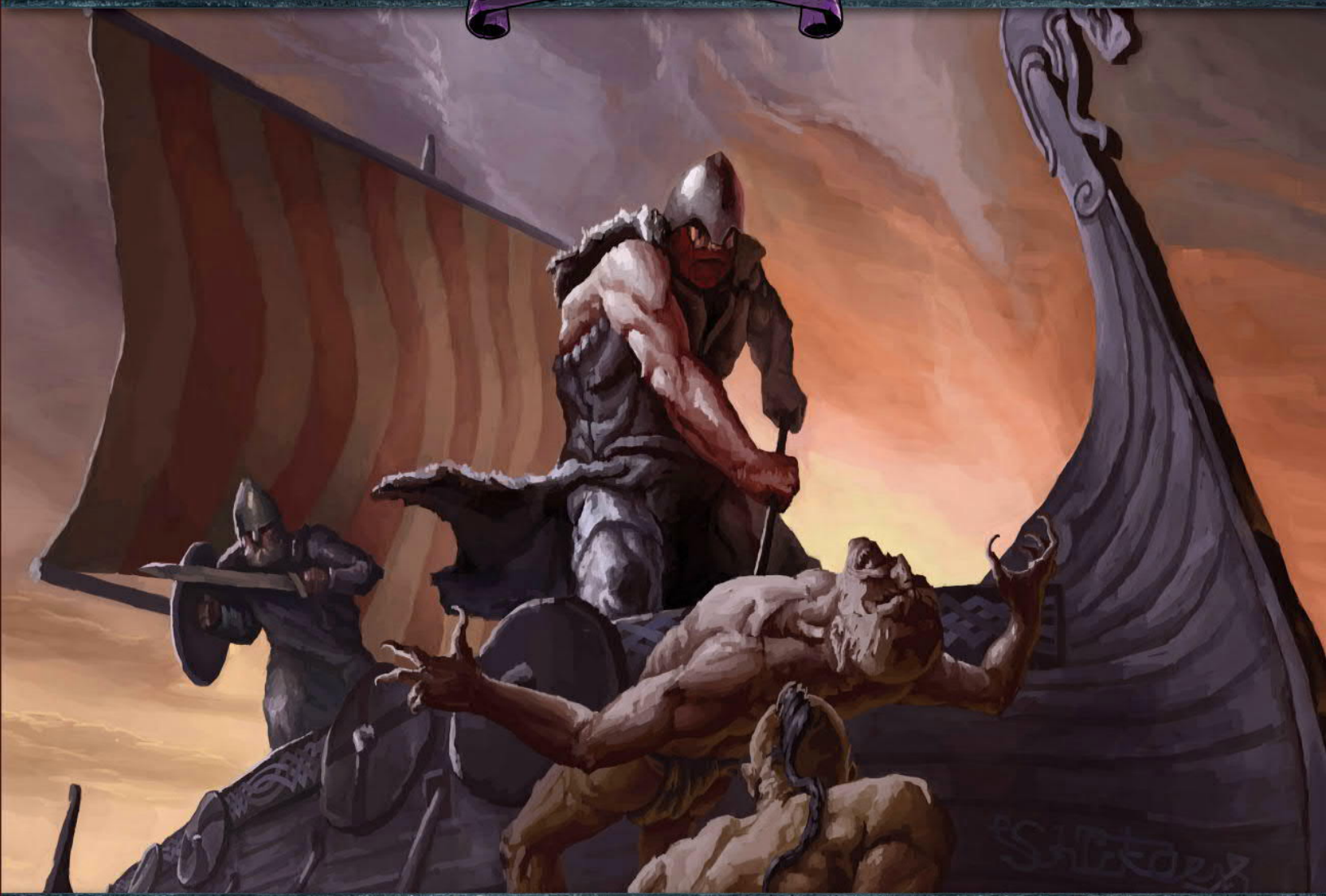


nLS3



the northlands series:
the long night of winter

NLS3: The Drowned Maiden
by Kevin Wright



**FROG GOD
GAMES**



the northLANDS series: the LONG NIGHT OF WINTER

NLS3: The Drowned Maiden

Author: Kevin Wright
Developer: Greg A. Vaughan
Producer: Bill Webb
Editors: Jeff Harkness and Greg A. Vaughan
Swords & Wizardry Conversion: Jeff Harkness

Layout and Graphic Design: Charles A. Wright
Front Cover Art: Artem Shukaev
Interior Art: Colin Chan, Felipe Gaona
Cartography: Robert Altbauer



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CEO — Bill Webb
Creative Director: Swords & Wizardry — Matthew J. Finch
Creative Director: Pathfinder Roleplaying Game — Greg A. Vaughan
Art Director — Charles A. Wright
Lead Developer — John Ling
Marketing Manager — Chris Haskins
Customer Service Manager — Krista Webb
Our Man Friday — Skeeter Green
Shadow Frog — James Redmon

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The Long Night of Winter

NLS3: The Drowned Maiden

By Kevin Wright



The Drowned Maiden is a *Swords & Wizardry* adventure for the Northlands Saga setting and is the third adventure in *The Long Night of Winter* adventure anthology. Like the other adventures in the anthology, *The Drowned Maiden* is intended to be dropped into a Northlands Saga campaign by the Referee at any time or place that is convenient. It is not tied to any particular location other than taking place on or near a seashore. It is designed for a party of characters of levels 5-7.

The Northlands Series: The Long Night of Winter



“Gather round, lads and lasses, and draw close to the hearth fire. Let the glowing coals warm your hands and a horn of mead warm your heart while the old men tell tales and sing songs of days long gone. Each winter the storms howl down from the Far North and bury our fields and halls in a thick blanket of white. They bring nights cold enough to shatter a man’s bones or freeze an aurochs’ blood in its veins, and all men huddle close to their fires in the darkness and wonder if this is finally the Fimbulwinter that will bring about the great battle of Ragnarök. Some say these harsh winters are the work of demons of the Ginnungagap sent to break the will of men in preparation for the coming End Days. Others say they are the gift of the Æsir to mold men and hone their strength as the fire tempers good steel in anticipation of those dark times.

“Me? This old skald thinks it is a time to gather close to comrades and loved ones and tell stories and lies, to swap boasts and jests, and to celebrate that the All-Father has given us one more night for the heartsblood to run hot. The morrow’s dawn is never promised us, and there are things other than the cold that stalk the long night of winter and can kill a strong man just as surely. So tilt the flagon to fill an old man’s drinking horn once again, for talk can be dry work, and lean in close to listen. I have a tale to tell you ...”

The *Northlands Series (NLS)* are standalone adventures set in the Northlands that allow the Referee to drop a one-shot game into that setting or as a short interlude into *The Northlands Saga Adventure Path* with minimal effort. They are not tied to a particular locale within the Northlands, though they may require a certain general type of terrain (e.g. mountains, forest, etc.), and they are not tied to a specific chronology. They can be played in any order, and all or none of them can be used as the Referee sees fit. They are presented from the standpoint of a fireside tale being told by an old skald to pass the long hours of a winter night, allowing the Referee to use them as short breaks from normal campaign play with different Referees and without any long-term consequences, or they can be inserted into a normal campaign. The idea is to provide the Referee with the maximum flexibility for their use with a minimum of fuss.

So take them. Use them. Make them your own. The winter night is cold, and there are many hours to pass before the dawn ...

The Drowned Maiden

The Drowned Maiden is a short *Swords & Wizardry* adventure for character levels 5–7. The adventure takes place on a remote shoreline. Not far out to sea are the ruins of a sunken city once devoted to the sea goddess Rán. The city was swamped in a hurricane centuries ago as an act of favor shown by the detached goddess. That this show of favor utterly destroyed the city and killed most of its citizens was utterly lost on the oblivious Vanir. The lives and concerns of mortals are so miniscule and irrelevant that they are hardly worth the effort to try to understand. In the ensuing centuries, the city has been all but forgotten, and now serves as only a touchstone for a few sparse devotees of the goddess and her brood, and the lair of an ancient evil from the farthest depths of the ocean. It is into this situation that the characters find themselves thrust.

Adventure Background

Founding a great family. Becoming a legend celebrated in tale and song. Being carried by valkyries to Valhalla after the death-blow has fallen. These are the ways that a Northlander attains immortality. But family lines can die out, the greatest legends are eventually forgotten, and admission to Valhalla can be as fickle as whether a dying hand is able to maintain its grip on hilt of sword or haft of axe.

The few — the chosen, lucky few — have another avenue to pursue immortality: by finding favor with a god or goddess, and siring or birthing the offspring of such a being. The resulting son or daughter carries the divine heritage of the god but also the blood of the mortal parent, allowing his or her line to forever join the annals of legend as the mate of a god and forebear of a god's child. This is perhaps the most blessed (and some would say cursed) form of immortality for a Northlander to attain.

Such a union is not unheard of. Gerimund the Bold famously scaled the legendary tree Yggdrasil and wooed the Norn, Skuld. To this day, the infamous Daughters of Skuld carry the immortal legacy of that legendary warrior. More recently, the Protector of Estenfir, Hengrid Donarsdottir, arose in fame as the offspring of the Thunderer and rightful carrier of his banner on the earth. And she was neither the first or last child to be born of the attentions of Donar, Wotan, and Freyr upon a mortal woman.

In *The Drowned Maiden*, one of the characters catches the eye of a demigoddess: Kólga, one of the nine Daughters of Rán, Goddess of the Untamed Sea. The fortunate character gains Kólga's attention through rumors of his personal attractiveness (though none really know what a goddess like that might find attractive) and/or through his personal prowess (the magnitude of his deeds have reached even to the bottom of the sea). The goddess sends a messenger to the character with a magical gift and an invitation to join her in long-sunken Hjallos for a union of divine and mortal blood. Truly, such an invitation is a rare honor indeed for any Northlander with his mind's-worth, but reaching the trysting site may prove to be a problem.

Adventure Summary

A male character of high charisma, great valor, or some combination of the two is approached by a godi of Rán in the presence of his fellows. The godi informs him that he has been deemed the favored one by Kólga, daughter of the goddess Rán, to sire her deific progeny. The godi bestows two beautiful and magical masks upon the character, and bids him to meet her at her hold by the sea where she will make arrangements for the character to visit the realm of Kólga for this union.

Upon arriving at the godi's hold, the characters discover that their party member is not alone in this invitation. Several other suitors for Kólga have received this summons and are equally vying for her affections. From there, the PCs must travel to the lost, sunken city of Hjallos and its

long-submerged temple of Rán. There, in an inner chamber at the temple's heart, the goddess awaits the winner of her affections. This favored one has only to claim the promised prize to attain immortality.

Beginning the Adventure

The Referee should choose one male character of high charisma, great valor, or some combination of the two to be the chosen sire of Kólga's children. Then, wherever the characters are — be it at a mead hall, wilderness encampment, or in a ship arriving at the docks — a godi of Rán by the name of Ethlass, accompanied by her servants, finds the party and presents the chosen one with a very unique proposal.

The smell of the sea is suddenly very strong about you, the sharp salty tang of the deep waters where the silt and cold currents mix over thickets of stringy green fronds, unknowable scuttling things, and the bones of ancient leviathans unseen since the youth of the world. Why this odor and sensation of the salty depths would suddenly possess you beneath clear sky and sun is a mystery — one further deepened by the strange group approaching.

They are seven in all, led by a woman fair of face and pale of skin. Her eyes are the deep blue of open sea and her hair is lustrous, black and long and plastered to her body, dripping wet and interlaced with artfully arranged fronds of kelp. In fact, this sheath of hair and seaweed appears to be all that she wears as she walks boldly toward you on bare feet, leaving a dripping trail behind her. Before her walks a replica of her in miniature and displaying the same sense of modesty — or lack thereof. However, these attendants stand no higher than her shins and have eyes of brilliant green and hair of honeyed wheat. Though their mistress be of the fey appearance of the galdricge — a witch-woman — these two are clearly mystical beings of the Alfar races. Between them they carry a large clamshell dredged up from the depths.

Behind this trio, four more of the tiny women walk in pairs. The front pair drags between them a small but clearly heavy chest of ancient leather, swollen and cracked with long immersion, its bronze straps corroded by exposure to the sea. The pair behind them carries a linen-wrapped bundle the size of a battle helm.

The galdricge is a sea druid and devotee of Rán called **Ethlass**, and the tiny handmaidens are **6 asrai** sworn to Ethlass' service by the goddess herself. Ethlass for her part walks directly up to the chosen PC and addresses him by name. When she speaks, saltwater continually flows from her mouth and drips down her body and from her hair.

Ethlass, Druid of Rán (Drd8): HP 40; AC 9[13]; Atk +1 *club* (1d4+1); Move 12; Save 6 (+2 ring); AL L; CL/XP 9/1100;
Special: immune to fey charms, +2 save vs. fire, shape change, spells (4/3/2/1).

Spells: 1st—*detect magic, faerie fire, locate animals, predict weather*; 2nd—*heat metal, obscuring mist, warp wood*; 3rd—*cure disease, plant growth (seaweed)*; 4th—*dispel magic*.

Equipment: +1 *club*, +2 *ring of protection*, bag of holding containing Face of Kólga, staff of healing (27 charges), piece of gold coral (200hs)



Asrai (6): HD 1; HP 7, 6x3, 5, 4; AC 8[11]; **Atk** cold touch (1d6); **Move** 12 (swim 24); **Save** 17; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 3/60; **Special:** chill touch, spell-like abilities, spells (MU 4/2/1), water dependent. (*The Tome of Horrors Complete* 34)

Spell-like abilities: 2/day—create water, obscuring mist.

Spells: 1st—charm person, magic missile, protection from evil, sleep; 2nd—detect evil, phantasmal force; 3rd—hold person.

Development: If for some reason the characters attack, Ethlass and the asrai seem shocked and attempt to convince the characters of their benign intentions or flee. They defend themselves to the best of their abilities if they must. If any of them are actually struck down by the characters, the wrath of Rán will be upon them the next time they set foot upon a ship and the characters find themselves continually beset by ever more-powerful storms until no shipmaster or crew ever consents to giving them passage. Needless to say, such a character response effectively ends this adventure before it has begun.

If the characters allow the group to approach peacefully, Ethlass walks directly up to the chosen character, drops to her knees and bows before him saying, “Hagalaz! Hail, blessed man and chosen of the gods. My mistress bids thee welcome and offers thou these gifts.” She then rises and steps aside to allow the asrai to approach.

The asrai servants approach the chosen character two by two, presenting him with progressively more valuable gifts. The first two bow upon a knee before him, presenting up to him the large clamshell. It is easily opened by the character to reveal a rope of 10 lustrous pearls (worth 100hs each or 1200hs for the entire string). The next two follow and likewise bow, pushing forward the sodden chest filled with collected coins and broken arm-rings worth 2000hs. The last pair bows and holds forth the linen-swathed bundle.

Faces of the Sea

Mask of the Favored

Cast in gold with the stylistic image of a specific individual chosen by a god or goddess, these masks are occasionally given as gifts to those individuals. They can be worn only by their intended recipients and have varied powers and abilities depending upon their purpose, including the ability to see normally underwater, grant the character Movement (swim) 18, and immunity to water pressure while worn underwater. The mask weighs 3 lbs.

Face of Kólga

Displaying the ravishing appearance of the most beautiful of Rán’s daughters, if anyone puts on the mask or even holds it up to his face and looks through the eyeholes, he comes under a *geas* to seek out the home of Ethlass the galdricge and imbues that individual with the knowledge of where her home lies. The mask weighs 3 lbs.

If placed on the face of Ethlass, and if she is then murdered while wearing it, the mask is destroyed until Kólga attunes it to another devout follower to serve as her mouthpiece. If melted down before she can recover it to attune it to another, then it is permanently destroyed. If melted down, the mask’s precious metals are worth a total of 7000gp, though doing so forever earns the ire of the sea goddess Rán and her daughters.

Within it is a golden facemask artfully cast to resemble an idealized version of the chosen character’s face. This is a *mask of the favored* (see sidebar). Finally, Ethlass herself pulls forth a second mask from a leather pack slung over her shoulder and concealed beneath her thick cascade of hair. This mask is rendered in polished silver and is cast in the image of a woman’s face of exotic and flawless beauty. It is crowned by flowing hair of cast gold that bears a greenish tint and is further embellished with a tiara of silver and sapphires. This as a legendary artifact known as the *Face of Kólga* (see sidebar) that is said to possess strange powers and to be an exact replica of the face of Kólga, Daughter of Rán.

After presenting the goddess’s gifts, Ethlass greets the chosen character in Kólga’s name. She expresses the demigoddess’s admiration for the character, referencing several of his exploits, e.g. foes defeated, battles won, honors gained, etc. She is especially impressed by any of his deeds performed while on, in or around the sea. Ethlass then makes the following proposition:

I am Ethlass, servant of the Cool Wave. My mistress bids thee to come to her at Hjallos-Under-The-Waves, to the Godshouse of Rán. There she invites thee to join in conjugal union with Kólga the Cool Wave, most desirable of all of Rán’s daughters, that thou might sire children of goddess and man. She promises that thine offspring will be many and beautiful beyond compare, that they will live unheard-of long lives and be imbued with the power of Rán’s own divine blood. If thou should accept her blessed invitation, the strength of thine legacy shall endure forever — until *Ragnarök* comes and the long night falls.

To accept this offered boon, thou has but to come to mine humble hut by the sea in three days’ time. The mask of the goddess will show thee the way. There I will direct thee in how to reach lost Hjallos-Under-The-Waves that thou might come to the goddess in good time. My mistress is kind and benevolent and knows that the lives of men are short and filled with dangers. She welcomes, nay, encourages thee to bring thy companions that they might protect thee upon the road and bring thee safely to her chambers.

The Daughters of Rán

Nine are the daughters of the goddess Rán and the Jötnar Ægir, powerful beings who both represent the untamed sea within their respective clans. The Daughters' names are poetic terms for different characteristics of ocean waves. They are:

Himinglæva: That through which one can see the heavens (a reference to the transparency of water)

Dúfa: The Pitching One

Blóðughadda: Bloody-Hair (a reference to red sea foam)

Hefring: Riser

Uðr: Frothing Wave

Hrönn: Welling Wave

Bylgja: Billow

Dröfn: Foam-Fleck

Kólga: Cool Wave

Many maritime deaths are attributed to the Daughters. Any time a man goes missing from a night watch or washes overboard in a storm, the Daughters are blamed and sacrifices given in the name of their mother. Among sailors, Kólga is said to be the most beautiful and gentle of all her sisters, though none alive is known to have beheld her visage to test this.

Ethlass and the asrai are enormously impressed by the one chosen by the goddess (and to a lesser degree his companions). In their minds, anyone so favored by the Cool Wave is almost on the level of Kólga herself. They will be as helpful and informative as possible, though they have little other information of use to give and cannot stay long as the dry air above the waves is quickly becoming uncomfortable to their damp skin. They will not reveal the location of Ethlass' hut, saying that it is a secret only for the goddess to give through her mask. Likewise, they will not reveal the location of Hjallos-Under-the-Waves, saying only that it will be revealed all in good time. Unfortunately, Ethlass won't think it worth mentioning that the character is not the only one favored by the goddess's attentions (and will deny this if asked outright — she is rather single-minded in her zealotry and has completely forgotten the other suitors she is to approach). As soon as the interview concludes, Ethlass and her servants enter the nearest waterway (a river or stream if not near the shore itself) where the galdrice turns into a sleek eel, and she and the asrai quickly disappear, making their way quickly back to her distant castle.

Part One: A Shoal of Suitors

The home of Ethlass lies on a sandy beach on the shore of the North Sea. Her home moves frequently, so just because a person has been there before doesn't mean he can find it again. However, thanks to the *Face of Kólga*, the characters can easily find that it lies within 3 days' travel of their current location. Her house is a large sandcastle (large for a sandcastle; tiny for an actual castle). Every time the tide comes in, the castle is washed away, but when it rolls back out, thousands of tiny crabs emerge from the wet sand and quickly rebuild it.

When the characters arrive at the castle, they find others gathered there.

With the guidance of the goddess's mask, you make your way down the beach toward the home of the galdrice Ethlass. As you top a low dune, her "hut" comes into view. It is an elaborate castle, more fanciful than even those in the Southlander tales, and it is composed entirely of sand.

The pounding surf washes away at its foundations, but even as it does so, scuttling swarms of small crabs continually rebuild its eroded surface, a continual struggle between their unceasing industry and the unrelenting sea.

Your shock at this unexpected palace out of a children's tale is matched, perhaps, by your shock at the scene you witness in the foreground. The amazing castle sits at the edge of a field of standing stones, a remnant of the lost Andovan peoples who once inhabited these lands. However, unlike the typical stones of the Andovan that can be found scattered throughout the Northlands in rings constructed by the ancients, these stones bear no such pattern. Rather, they stand or lie toppled in an arrangement that makes no sense to your eye. And among this legacy of a forgotten people is an unexpected crowd of Northlanders. Perhaps a half dozen separate groups mill among the stones standing before the castle: men and women armed and armored as warriors, and men and women with the look of adventurers. Several of them — at least one of whom is a giant — wear familiar silver masks.

The sandcastle is surrounded by several ancient menhirs on which are inscribed poems extolling the majesty of the underwater realm, hymns to storm and sea, and prayers to Rán, their mistress. One of the stones stands by Ethlass' castle, and its face bears an invocation to the Sea Goddess. Anyone who reads it aloud and makes the appropriate sacrifice gains the ability to breathe water (though they retain the ability to breathe air) and gain Movement (swim) 24 until the moon next sets in the early hours of the morning. To perform the sacrifice, the person must cast a valuable item into the sea. The item must be magical or worth at least 1000hs, and it must be a personal possession (no borrowing). The item disappears once it sinks beneath the waves, taken by the goddess. Ethlass helps the characters in this process if they need it (see **The Lady's Invitation** below for more information).

Several among the gathered crowd wear *masks of the favored* like the one the characters possess. It seems that Kólga has been less than discriminatory in her selection process. Each of the similarly masked suitors is accompanied by his own cadre of traveling companions, and these groups all wander among the menhirs in separate clusters while they eye one another suspiciously and await Ethlass to summon them to enter her sandcastle.

The Other Favored (and Their Friends)

Jarl Unnr, Drinker of the Southmen's Blood, and his Cohort

The demigoddess chose **Jarl Unnr of Vastavikland** as a potential mate because of his battle prowess and leadership, and his legendary exploits as a successful raider on even the farthest shores. He is a bulging, scarred man, uglier than homemade sin, and fantastically impressed with himself. It is a blessing to all passers-by that he wears the *mask of the favored* to cover that face. By himself, Unnr wouldn't present much of a problem, but he came by longship (it is beached less than a mile up the shore) and was wise enough to bring **10 huscarls** with him, each of them steeped in bloodshed and mayhem (another 40 warriors guard the ship). Jarl Unnr will not tolerate any other claimants to Kólga, whom he is already calling his bride, and is currently holding a whispered discussion with his huscarls as to the best timing for brandishing blades and driving the rest of this rabble into the sea.

Jarl Unnr, Drinker of Southmen's Blood (Ftr10): HP 64; AC 2[17]; Atk +2 *guisarme* (1d8+9 plus bleeding) or +1 longbow (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 5; AL C; CL/XP 10/1400; **Special:** multiple attacks (10) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer

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HD, -1[+1] dexterity AC bonus, +2 to hit and damage strength bonus, +1 to hit missile bonus, rage (+1 to hit and damage, 20 rounds/day).

Equipment: +1 *plate mail*, *Suðrmaðsvik* (+2 *guisarme*) "Betrayal of Southlanders" (save after each strike or lose 1hp from bleeding per round until healed), +1 longbow with 20 arrows, *Face of Kólga*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, *mask of the favored*, *potion of extra healing*, *ring of protection +1*, 7 gold arm-rings (250hs).

Huscarls of Unnr (Ftr5) (10): HP 38, 36x2, 34x2, 33, 30, 29, 27x2; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** +1 *battleaxe* (1d8+1) or throwing axe (1d6); **Move** 12; **Save** 9 (+1 ring); **AL** C; **CL/XP** 5/240; **Special:** multiple attacks (5) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer HD, rage (+1 to hit and damage, 10 rounds/day).

Equipment: chainmail, +1 *battleaxe*, 2 throwing axes, *ring of protection +1*, gold arm-ring (250hs), 2 silver arm-rings (75hs).

Leif Hagsson and His Mother

Leif Hagsson is a skald of some renown. It is easy to see why the goddess desires him to father her children. He is fairly well known, immensely talented, and an absolutely beautiful specimen of a man with piercing green eyes, long blonde hair, and chiseled features hidden under his *mask of the favored*. He also really doesn't want to be here. As flattering as Kólga's attentions may be, he is in love with someone else in the most naively chaste kind of way. If Leif had his way, he'd be lounging in the chambers of Sefi Thugorswif, the wife of a jarl of Hordaland, composing odes to her beauty. Unfortunately, his mother had other ideas ... and mother always knows best.

Leif's mother is **Agresh**, the Hag of Snurri's Peak, a *galdricge* of considerable power and a somewhat bloodthirsty reputation. When Ethlass delivered Kólga's proposal to her son, Agresh was exultant, seeing in it endless possibilities to expand her own personal power. Now, she dreams of half-divine grandchildren to raise in her own dread vocation while she awaits Ethlass' invitation to enter her abode.

Leif Hagsson (Ftr8): HP 52; **AC** 2[17]; **Atk** +1 *longsword of dancing* (1d8+1) or short sword (1d6) or +1 longbow x2 (1d6+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 7; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 8/800; **Special:** multiple attacks (8) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer HD, -1[+1] dexterity AC bonus, +1 to hit missile bonus.

Equipment: +1 *chainmail*, winter wolfskin cloak (500hs), shield, +1 *longsword of dancing*, short sword, +1 longbow with 20 arrows, *Face of Kólga*, *mask of the favored*, harp, 2 bejeweled arm-rings (650hs each), gold torc (500hs).

Agresh the Galdricge (MU10): HP 35; **AC** 6[13] or 2[17] (missile) and 4[15] (melee) from shield spell; **Atk** 2 claws (1d4 plus 1d6 electricity); **Move** 12; **Save** 3 (+3, cloak, ring); **AL** C; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** +2 save (spells, wands and staffs), spells (4/4/3/2/2).

Spells: 1st—*charm person*, *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *shield*; 2nd—*darkness* 15ft radius, *detect invisibility*, *invisibility*, *phantasmal force*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *haste*, *lightning bolt*; 4th—*dimension door*, *polymorph self*; 5th—*teleport*, *wall of stone*.

Equipment: *cloak of protection +1*, *wand of charm monster* (6 charges), *wand of magic missiles* (10 charges), 2 *potions of extra healing*, *ring of protection +2*, *bag of holding*, assorted jeweled bangles, rings and bracelets (3900hs total).

Note: Agresh has draconic blood running through her veins. She is able to cause sharp claws to extend from her fingers that do 1d4 points of damage, and deal an additional 1d6 points of electrical damage with each successful strike. Once per day, she is also able to breathe a 60ft line of electricity that does 8d6 points of electrical damage.

The Bors Brothers

Bors and his brothers are all 4 **werebears**, though presently they take the form of three overly large, gray-headed men dressed only in long linen skirts, leather boots, and heavy gold arm-rings and headbands (worth 1000hs per brother). Bors was intrigued by Ethlass' proposal, less for the potential offspring and more from the idea that he could profit from it in some way. He imagines that the demigoddess will shower him with gold and jewels for the honor of becoming his consort. In human form, the brothers are hairy-chested goliaths, mighty-thewed and arrogant. In beast form, they are white-furred polar bears, hungry for mayhem and quick to kill. They have no idea how far in over their heads they are.

Bors and His Brothers (Werebears) (4): HD 6; HP 45, 41, 40x2; **AC** 2[17]; **Atk** 2 claws (1d3), bite (2d4); **Move** 9; **Save** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 8/800; **Special:** hug (natural 18 to hit, additional 2d8 damage), lycanthropy, +1 or better magic or silver weapons to hit.

Equipment: Bors wears a *mask of the favored* and carries the *Face of Kólga* in his pouch.

Skinny Wellfed

Skinny Wellfed is a slow-witted, giant-blooded ranger from the mountain wilds who has become something of a legendary figure for his exploits despite his relative ineptitude. He is abnormally tall and lean, earning him his odd name, with over-large ears and prominent buckteeth. Though he has had interaction with Northlanders in the past, he principally lives among the stone giant tribe of his mother. He is accompanied by 2 **stone giant** attendants (Rix and Nox). The *mask of the favored* and *Face of Kólga* that he bears are enormous, suited to his size. When he sees the chaos at Ethlass' place, he doesn't quite know what to make of all these puny, clearly hostile Northlanders. He is strangely at ease, though, willing to see how the situation develops, but he is not averse to ordering his attendants to start smashing everyone and everything in sight if he gets his blood up. He keeps his massive bardiche close at hand just in case someone needs to be put in their place.

Skinny Wellfed (Rgr9): HP 71; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** +2 *bardiche* (1d8+1) or longbow x2 (1d6+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 6; **AL** L; **CL/XP** 9/1100; **Special:** alertness, +1 damage vs. giants and goblin-kin, spells (Clr 1), tracking.

Spells: 1st—*cure light wounds*.

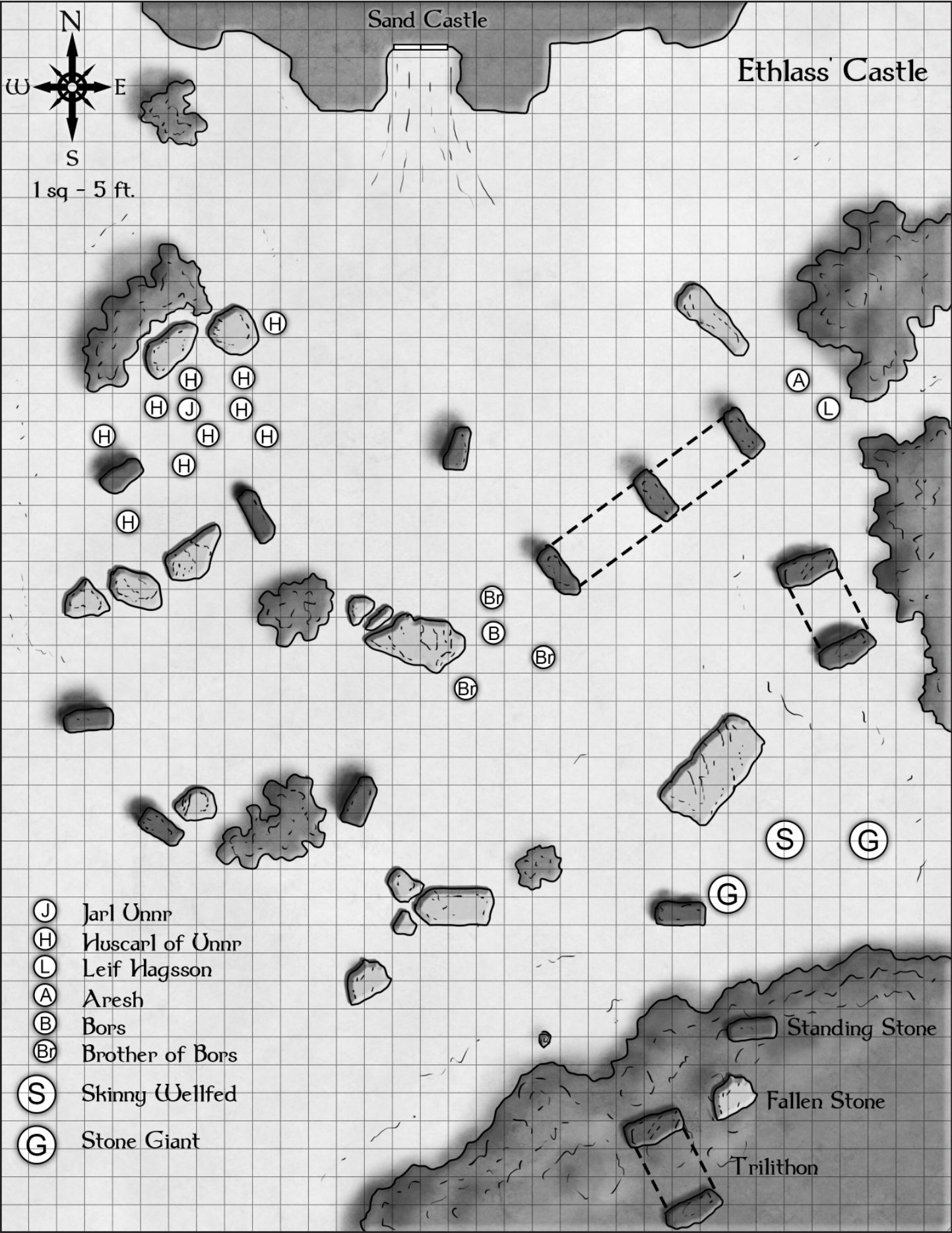
Equipment: +1 *ring mail*, cloak of elvenkind, +2 *bardiche*, longbow with 49 arrows, *mask of the favored*, *Face of Kólga*, *gauntlets of dexterity*, *potion of gaseous form*, pouch with 182hs and a large topaz (275hs).

Rix and Nox (Stone Giants) (2): HD 9; HP 68, 62; **AC** 0[19]; **Atk** club (3d6); **Move** 12; **Save** 6; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** hurl boulders (3d6 damage).

Development: The characters are met with a fairly hostile reception. No one there wants any more competition, and the tension level is already high. Most of the groups stay by themselves and eye each other suspiciously. The characters have the opportunity to interact with these groups if they wish, which can affect how the next encounter plays out. These individual interactions are listed below.

Jarl Unnr: Whether the characters approach Jarl Unnr or not, he soon seeks them out. He is a blustery and coarse braggart who makes veiled threats even as he boasts that Kólga will undoubtedly choose him as her consort and that the others might as well all go home before he has the power of a demigoddess at his beck and call. His huscarls stand silently nearby and look as threatening as possible during this tirade. He will not enter a battle with the characters at this time unless they start it.

Leif and Agresh: Leif attempts to ignore the characters, but at his mother's urging eventually approaches them and attempts to engage them in a friendly conversation. He reveals his identity behind the silver mask in hopes that the characters recognize him (it is up to the Referee to decide if they have heard of or are impressed by him) and is visibly disappointed



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if they don't immediately do so. While Leif talks to the characters, Agresh hangs back among the shadows of some of the standing stones not far distant and silently watches. Agresh quietly picks out one or two promising fighter-types and uses her *wand of charm monster* to attempt to charm them. If confronted about the wand, Agresh and Leif try to avoid a fight; Agresh simply states that it never hurts to have a few extra friends about. Then she and Leif stalk off to keep to themselves. They fight if attacked, however.

Bors Brothers: Bors and his brothers do not approach the characters. If approached by the characters, they are initially unfriendly. If made friendly, they warm up to the characters considerably and attempt to stay near them, seeing them as allies against the other suitors. If the characters anger them, there is a 25% chance that the brothers transform and attack. Before the last of them can be killed by the characters, Ethlass arrives as described under **The Lady's Invitation** below.

Skinny Wellfed: The giants likewise do not approach the characters. If the characters approach them, the stone giants step in the way to shield Skinny from any possible assaults. If attacked, he immediately becomes hostile and the giants respond in kind. If characters remain friendly toward him, Skinny can only relate how the *galdricge* came rushing up a mountain waterfall and found him while hunting in the high peaks a few days ago to give him the masks. He is somewhat bemused by the whole thing and is interested in seeing how it all plays out, though he feels no particular inclination toward Kólga either way.

The Lady's Invitation

Finally, after the party has had some time to interact with the bevy of suitors on hand, Ethlass emerges from her sandcastle to address the crowd.

Any conversation among the folk loitering amid this strange garden of stone is suddenly interrupted by the sound of a chorus of conch shells being winded, as if all the hosts of Rán were suddenly rising from the depths. The hollow moaning of the conches ends just as suddenly, and a great gate made of driftwood set into the side of the massive sandcastle swings open like a drawbridge. The *galdricge* you met previously emerges, still clad in nothing more than her dripping hair and the sea-threads spun from Rán's spindle beneath the sea. The tiny Alfar women accompany her once again — though this time they bear no gifts — and gigantic crabs burrow their way up from the sand beneath the open drawbridge to take guard positions on either side of the Lady Ethlass. She reaches the end of the drawbridge where it rests upon the top of a sand dune looking down on all those gathered.

Surveying the crowd, the witch-woman of the sea draws breath and speaks, "My mistress thanks you for your attendance to her invitation. At this time, she desires that you return the silver masks of her visage, though you may keep the golden masks for your own."

At these words, more crabs the size of large dogs scuttle out from the sand piled beneath the drawbridge. They make their way through the crowd, reaching for and receiving the silver masks of Kólga in their pincers before moving on to the next.

The giant crabs remain peaceful and seek only the return of the *Faces of Kólga*. The characters and everyone else may keep their *masks of the favored*. Once all of the *Faces of Kólga* have been collected, the crabs shuttle them to the asrai, who carry them within the castle. When the asrai return, they carry between them a small urn made of polished green stone, which they present to Ethlass. She takes up the urn and addresses the assembly once again.

"Know that though my mistress has summoned all of thee, she will only give the gift of siring her offspring to one ... the one who proves to be the most worthy."

Dark scowls are exchanged between those present.

Ethlass opens the top of the urn to reveal a lustrous pear of huge size that glows with a soft lavender radiance. She holds it before her and says, "This is the Drowned Maiden's Pearl. It will guide whosoever holds it to the lost city of Hjallos and the Godshouse of Rán therein. But only one of thee may possess it. Thine own strivings must determine which one that will be."

With these final words, the witch goes silent and watches, expectantly.

The proclamation by Ethlass is all it takes to bring about pandemonium on the shore. Exactly how it occurs depends on the characters' interactions with the other suitors.

Tactics: With Ethlass' words, Bors rages and takes on his werebear form; his brothers follow suit. If the characters did not make friends with them earlier, then two of them attack the characters and two attack the giants. If the characters did get in good with them, then Bors calls out, "Help us, brothers!" as all four attack the giants. Regardless of how many attack, a swat of the axe from Skinny Wellfed sends one of them flying to the ground sans a head and causes the others to veer aside and rethink their strategy. If they are friendly to the characters, then they turn their attention to Agresh and Leif; if not, then they attack the characters instead.

The attack by the werebears is just the beginning, however. As they charge toward the giants (and possibly the characters), the huscarls of Unnr rage and attack as well. Five of the barbarians charge at the characters, and five rush toward Agresh. Agresh immediately calls out in giant for help, and Skinny and one of the stone giants that she managed to charm earlier (without their knowledge) immediately leap to her defense against the barbarians. Agresh pushes Leif back out of the way and calls out for help in Nörsks, too. If any characters were successfully charmed earlier, they, too, rush to help the old witch, and leave their fellows to battle the charging barbarians. Anyone asking about Jarl Unnr's whereabouts has a 1-in-6 chance to recall that they spotted him fleeing to the north just as the fight broke out, back toward where his ship was beached.

While the characters battle the barbarians on them, Agresh and her giants make short work of the others. When finished with them (it should happen in the same round that the characters finish off the barbarians that they face), she directs her charmed giants to attack the characters. She realizes at the same time that Leif is no longer in sight and begins to look around for him. Even though Skinny Wellfed and one of the giants is attacking them, the characters have a 25% chance of convincing the other stone giant to help them. He will not attack his charmed comrades but will attack Agresh to try to break the enchantment over his compatriots. If the characters are not successful in convincing the giant to aid them, then it joins in with his friends against the characters.

If the stone giant attacks Agresh, then play out that portion of the battle just like any other. If he attacks the characters alongside his companions, then Agresh spends the time calling out to Leif and looking around for him. He does not answer any calls. She quickly suspects either Jarl Unnr or the characters, but since the characters are present, she turns her ire toward them and attacks in support of any remaining giants. If one of the giants has sided with the characters, then Skinny and the other giant have a 40% chance to break her hold over them. If either is successful, he immediately attacks the witch. If reduced below 20 hp, Agresh attempts to use *polymorph self* to change into a blue dragon to escape by flying away to the west and disappearing from sight. If still charmed, any surviving giants stop fighting as soon as she leaves unless the characters press the attack. If the enchantment over Skinny has been broken, then the sight of the dragon (his favored enemy) convinces him to open fire on it with his longbow for as long as she is within range.

Development: When the battle is over, any surviving giants gather up the bodies and gear of any companions and stalk away to the south — they are finished with all this Northlander nonsense. Agresh is likely to have escaped (unless the characters chased her down and killed her), all 10 of Unnr's huscarls should be dead, and there is no sign of Jarl Unnr or Leif Hagsson. A careful search of the surrounding area uncovers tracks showing where Unnr managed to get the drop on Leif and render him

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unconscious before dragging him away to the north. Following the trail in that direction for 1 mile brings the characters to the beach where Unnr's longship had rested, but it has already put back to sea with its crew and is nowhere in sight. Further, it appears that Jarl Unnr dragged Leif back with him. However, the characters will be presently unable to locate them.

All that is left for the characters is to return to Ethlass and claim the *Drowned Maiden's Pearl*. When they address Ethlass, the evening tide is coming in with full force and quickly demolishing her sandcastle. She pays it no mind, but instead hands over the pearl with the instructions to hold the pearl at arm's length so it may guide the holder to the lost city of Hjallos out on the ocean floor. She also shows the characters how to conduct the ritual with the menhirs to obtain the ability to breathe underwater as explained under **A Shoal of Suitors**. Each character has to conduct this ritual separately if he does not have his own way to safely travel underwater, but once it is done, the party should have no trouble heading out in search of the sunken city with the magic pearl to guide them.

True to her word, Ethlass gives the favored character the pearl, and when held at arm's length, it gives a noticeable tug to draw the character toward the sea. As the last rays of the sun set and the moon rises, the last of Ethlass' castle collapses into a wet sand heap that is quickly washing away to reveal a light sailing craft capable of holding a dozen people. Seemingly paying it no mind, Ethlass and the asrai leap into the sea and swim away, wishing the favored character luck as they go and urging them to hurry before the moon sets and the magic of the menhirs is lost.

Pursuit on the Moonlit Sea

The magical pearl that the characters carry draws them out to sea in the darkening gloom of the night. The could swim if they wish, but the small vessel left behind by Ethlass is easily handled and with the favorable breeze can cover the distance that the characters must cross much faster than could be done by swimming. The pearl guides the characters eastward for more than 5 miles toward the legendary remains of sunken Hjallos. At this point, any character being particularly vigilant and watching the benighted sea in their craft's wake has a 1-in-6 chance to spot a dark sail. This is the *Eschr*, the longship of Jarl Unnr bearing down on them. After another hour, if still no one has mentioned watching back along their wake, non-thief characters have a 2-in-6 chance to hear the stroke of the ship's sweeps as Unnr pushes his crew hard to overtake the characters. By this time, the ship in only 100 yards behind and fast approaching and overtakes the characters in 10 rounds if they do nothing to prevent it.

With full banks of oars and a sail, there is very little opportunity for the characters to successfully evade the vessel. Standing in the prow are **Jarl Unnr** and his last **2 huscarls**. There are also **40 warriors** aboard the vessel manning the oars. Unnr has 1d4+1 warriors for each character leave their benches and join him before the longship overtakes the characters. In addition, crouching in the prow out of sight of the characters is **Leif Hagsson**. Jarl Unnr captured him at Ethlass' home and carried back to his ship. But once beyond the influence of his mother, Leif gladly threw his lot in with the old raider in hopes of making his fortune. Since he has no real desire to father Kólga's children, he willingly turned over his *mask of the favored* and conceded that right to Unnr.

Jarl Unnr, Drinker of Southmen's Blood (Ftr10): HP 64; AC 2[17]; **Atk** +2 *guisarme* (1d8+9 plus bleeding) or +1 *longbow* (1d6+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 5; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** multiple attacks (10) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer HD, -1 [+1] dexterity AC bonus, +2 to hit and damage strength bonus, +1 to hit missile bonus, rage (+1 to hit and damage, 20 rounds/day).

Equipment: +1 *plate mail*, *Suðrmaðsvik* (+2 *guisarme*) "Betrayal of Southlanders" (save after each strike or lose 1 hp from bleeding per round until healed), +1 *longbow* with 20 arrows, *gauntlets of ogre power*, 2 *masks of the favored*, *potion of extra healing*, *ring of protection* +1, 7 *gold arm-rings* (250hs).

Huscarls of Unnr (Ftr5) (2): HP 36, 33; AC 5[14]; **Atk** +1 *battleaxe* (1d8+1) or *throwing axe* (1d6); **Move** 12; **Save** 9

(+1 ring); **AL** C; **CL/XP** 5/240; **Special:** multiple attacks (5) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer HD, rage (+1 to hit and damage, 10 rounds/day).

Equipment: chainmail, +1 *battleaxe*, 2 *throwing axes*, *ring of protection* +1, *gold arm-ring* (250hs), 2 *silver arm-rings* (75hs).

Leif Hagsson (Ftr8): HP 52; AC 2[17]; **Atk** +1 *longsword of dancing* (1d8+1) or *short sword* (1d6) or +1 *longbow* x2 (1d6+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 7; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 8/800; **Special:** multiple attacks (8) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer HD, -1 [+1] dexterity AC bonus, +1 to hit missile bonus.

Equipment: +1 *chainmail*, *winter wolfskin cloak* (500hs), *shield*, +1 *longsword of dancing*, *short sword*, +1 *longbow* with 20 arrows, *harp*, 2 *bejeweled arm-rings* (650hs each), *gold torc* (500hs).

Warriors of Unnr (Ftr2) (varies): HD 2; AC 5[14]; **Atk** *battleaxe* (1d8) or *throwing axe* (1d6); **Move** 12; **Save** 13; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** multiple attacks (2) vs. creatures with 1 or fewer HD, rage (+1 to hit and damage, 4 rounds/day).

Equipment: chainmail, *battleaxe*, 2 *throwing axes*, *gold arm-ring* (250hs), 2 *silver arm-rings* (75hs).

Tactics: As soon as the *Eschr* catches up to the characters' small vessel, Unnr, his huscarls, and the initial group of warriors leap aboard to attack. Leif remains on board the *Eschr*. Each round, another 1d3 warriors leap from the *Eschr* to join in the battle. However, once Unnr and his huscarls fall, Leif takes control of the demoralized remaining crew and orders the ship to withdraw. Unless the characters do something to stop him, Leif takes command of the ship and crew and embarks on a newly formed obsession as the master of a raider crew upon the whale road. Whether he is successful or ever crosses paths with the characters again is up to the Referee.

Part Two: Hjallos-Under-The-Waves

The city of Hjallos was once a prosperous city on the coast. Its citizens were an oddity in the Northlands, each one a devoted worshipper of Rán the Unshapeable, the capricious goddess of the sea. Aware of their adoration, the goddess blessed them with her bounty. Hjallos' fishermen brought in fish by the net-full, her divers retrieved treasured pearls from the watery depths, and her trading and raiding ships were never swamped by storm or lost at sea. Reveling in the goddess's blessing, the Thing of Hjallos enjoined their sailors and citizens to scavenge every beach they came across and return with the seashells, flotsam, and jetsam they found there. With these peculiar treasures, the people of the city constructed a mighty godshouse in the manner of Southlander temples in honor of Rán. As a result, her worship flourished in Hjallos like nowhere else.

Soon, pilgrims came to the city and made appeasement offerings to the goddess, hoping to avoid her wrath and curry her favor. The enigmatic Rán was so pleased by the people and the house of worship they had built that she sent a 7-day hurricane to Hjallos, absorbing the entire section of coastline for miles into her domain and, incidentally, drowning everyone in the city. Most of the city now lies under the weight of sand and silt, with only the topmost spire of the godshouse still jutting above the sea floor, its pinnacle some 100ft below the surface of the sea.

The sunken city lies roughly 10 miles off the coast from the location of Ethlass' home. The *Drowned Maiden's Pearl* unerringly guides the characters here and then begins tugging them downward beneath the waves. It's time for the characters to get their feet wet. The rest of the adventure takes place underwater. Though the moon shines down upon the sea, it remains extremely dark under the surface, so unless the characters all have darkvision, they will need to have some kind of waterproof light source. If they do not have anything they can use, assume that there are 2 or 3 glowing rods stored in the boat provided by Ethlass.

Blood in the Water

As the characters plumb the dark depths of the sea for the rest of the adventure, they are at risk of the dangers inherent to these waters. Schools of sharks whose vague ancestral memory retains some instinct for the great feast they once had here at the time of Hjallos' fall still swim the waters ever in hopes for the next course. Any time the characters are in a fight where there is literally blood in the water (damage inflicted by piercing or slashing weapons or spells that cause similar damage), there is a 25% chance that it attracts a shiver of **1d6+7 sharks** and a 10% chance that it attracts a **giant shark**. These creatures arrive 1d4 minutes after blood spills. After two shivers of sharks have been defeated, no more appear. The large shark is encountered only once.

Small Shark (4HD): HD 4; AC 6[13]; Atk bite (1d4+1); Move 0 (Swim 24); Save 13; AL N; CL/XP 4/120; **Special:** feeding frenzy.

Giant Shark: HD 13; HP 93; AC 5[14]; Atk bite (1d10+8); Move 0 (Swim 18); Save 3; AL N; CL/XP 13/2300; **Special:** feeding frenzy.

The Carcass

Once the characters reach the point where the *Drowned Maiden's Pearl* leads them, they must dive down 300ft to reach the godshouse below. As the characters swim downward through the water, they catch sight of a ghostly shape below.

A large shape drifts into view as you make your way downward through the inky, frigid waters. It is a massive narwhal, its body broken and torn, a long harpoon embedded deeply in its head just below its blowhole, its spiraling horn jutting forward 10 feet as it twitches slightly with the weak thrashes of the badly wounded creature.

The narwhal is long dead. The illusion of its movement is caused by **3 brykolakas**, rotting humanoid corpses with sunken eyes and bluish-gray skin that are animated by a ravenous diseased fury to prey upon the living. The undead feast upon the great whale carcass, tearing away at its exposed belly.

Brykolakas (3): HD 5; HP 36, 31, 30; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6 plus infection); Move 6 (swim 24); Save 12; AL C; CL/XP 7/600; **Special:** create spawn—lacedon (aquatic ghoul), change shape (dolphin or manta ray), death throes (change to poison pool, 10ft, 2d4), lethal infection (save avoids). (*The Tome of Horrors Complete* 74)

Treasure: An examination of the carcass reveals that it has actually been dead for some time, though why it has been harpooned is a mystery. An examination of the harpoon itself reveals it to be of strange manufacture. Rather than being composed of wood and steel as is typical, it is skillfully crafted from some type of rough, black coral that is unfamiliar to the characters. It has a shagreen wrapping, and its tip is a sharp blade of smoky obsidian from some deep undersea volcanic vent. The harpoon is a deep coral weapon (see sidebar below), though its blade is crafted from some unknown type of obsidian. It is worth 800hs as a curiosity, but its origin remains a complete mystery.

Sunken Hjallos

As the characters reach the depth of 280ft, their light sources reveal the remains of lost Hjallos below.

The broken forms of ancient buildings and shattered pillars come into view in the deep gloom below. They rise from the sea floor like blooming shrubs so thick are they with seaweed. There is life here at the sea floor in a riot of color and activity. Vibrant schools of fish swim here and there among the ruins. Vast anemones sway back and forth in indolent languor, and light sources are weirdly filtered this far down, dappled in shades of green and deep blue.

The only structure still standing is the Godshouse of Rán. The part of the structure not buried beneath the sand is a monstrous dome decorated with an astounding variety of shells — shells from every type of clam, oyster or snail, and even the cracked shells of crabs and lobsters are adhered to its surface. Some shells are as tiny as a fingernail, while others are as large as a hay wain. It is an astounding sight to behold, unimaginable to exist beneath the waves so close to the unknowing shore. A single spire sheathed in corroded green copper sits atop this dome, pointing toward the surface above and the heavens beyond.

Here in this forgotten sanctuary-turned-mass grave waits Kólga, the Cool Wave, daughter of a goddess.

What was once a large window on the south side of the temple dome now serves as its only entrance. As the characters approach, they see shadowy shapes disengage from the base of the dome where they were hidden and swim slowly toward them. These are **4 derteshas godshuscarls** who protect the entrance to the abode of Kólga from trespass. They carry spears of the same strange coral as the harpoon that killed the narwhal. These are a remnant of some of the citizens of Hjallos who survived the cataclysm of long ago through dark pacts they had already made with Rán to ensure the survival of their own offspring. As long as the characters plainly display either a *mask of the favored* or the *Drowned Maiden's Pearl*, the derteshas watch them pass with what might be boredom in their vacant, ichthyic eyes. They will not speak or respond to the characters but defend themselves fiercely if attacked or if neither mask nor pearl is displayed.

Derteshas (4): HD 6; HP 45, 41, 38, 36; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 (special) or +1 *deep coral spear* (1d6+1 plus poison); Move 12 (swim or fly 12); Save 9 (+2, ring); AL N; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** create tentacles (1/round, 60ft range, restrain any target they hit, save negates), *magic missile* (4d4), paralytic touch (save avoids).

Equipment: +1 *deep coral spear* (550hs), *ring of protection* +2

The Daughter's Abode

Before running this encounter, remember that the vast chamber is entirely underwater and therefore should be considered a three-dimensional encounter area.

The dome opens into a single, vast spherical chamber, a globe apparently half-buried in the silt of the sea floor. On either side of the huge room are massive statues carved from granite: one of Rán and one of Ægir. Ægir is shown as a muscular man with massive shoulders and biceps. His arms end in fins rather than hands, more fins frame his face, and his bulging eyes are located on the sides of his head, giving him a peculiar, distinctive look. Rán is represented as thet

Deep Coral

Growing in only the deepest ocean trenches near thermal vents, this coral is black in color and tends to grow in unusual rod-like colonies that can reach dozens of feet in length. Adapted to extremely high-pressure environments, it has a high impact strength that makes it well suited for use in construction of weapons, polearms in particular. In addition, the nature of the heavy minerals deposited by the black, smoking thermal vents causes deep coral to be rich in these toxic materials. Weapons constructed of deep coral microscopically chip and flake in the wounds they cause on a successful attack and poison the target. Most deep coral weapons have hafts or handles wrapped in some protective material (typically shagreen) to prevent accidental poisoning of the wielder. As long as this precaution is taken, then there is no chance of a user accidentally poisoning himself with the weapon. Deep coral cannot be crafted into armor.

Melee Weapons

Deep Coral Weapon	Damage	Weight (pounds)	Cost ¹
Axe, battle	1d8	15	6000gp
Mace, heavy	1d6	10	1500gp
Polearm (two-handed)	1d8+1	15	6000gp
Sword, short	1d6	5	1500gp
Sword, long	1d8	10	3000gp

Deep Coral Toxin

Any creature struck by a deep coral weapon must make a saving throw or suffer the effects of deep coral toxin as the flakes of coral enter their body. The effects last for 6 rounds, and require a save each round to avoid the debilitating pain caused by the coral flakes. Also, if three consecutive saves are successful, the effects end.

As the tiny flakes of deep coral infiltrate an open wound, they cause an extreme reaction in the victim's nervous system that causes great wracking pains from the location of the wound. In a round in which a victim makes a successful save, the victim is sickened from the pain (–1 to hit and saves). In a round in which the victim fails a saving throw, the pain is so severe that it nauseates the creature, causing him

to be unable to act. After the third saving throw is successful or the 6 rounds of the poison's duration have passed, these conditions cease.

As a secondary effect of deep coral toxin, after the poison leaves the victim's system, whether through saving throws or the expiration of the effects, a residue of its neuropathic effects remain. Once each day the victim must make a new saving throw. If successful, there is no effect that day. If the save is failed, then for 1 hour of that day (exactly when is determined by the Referee), the victim suffers phantom pain from the lasting damage caused by the toxin and is sickened (–1 to hit and saves). This neuralgia continues to afflict the victim daily until its effects have been completely removed magically such as by a *neutralize poison*

Missile Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Rate of Fire	Range*	Weight (pounds)	Cost ¹
Spear	1d6	1	20ft	10	1500gp
Stones, sling	1d4	by weapon	by weapon	5	30gp

* Shooting or throwing beyond this range is at a –2 penalty to hit. The weapon cannot reach farther than twice this range. Outdoors, these range increments are tripled.

¹ Costs reflect the price in a typical market. For cultures with ready access to deep coral (e.g. certain undersea races), the cost is the same for a normal weapon of that type.

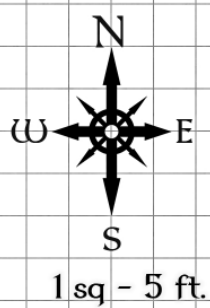
Hjallosian ideal of womanly beauty: wide-hipped and busty with a long, wavy mohawk hairstyle. She'd be truly beautiful if weren't that she was carved with the mouth of a sea bass.

A large, column-like growth of crystalline coral rises in the center of the room. The coral is translucent, amplifying and reflecting back even the faintest glimmer of light. Just visible at the base of this magnificent sea sculpture is visible a tunnel that leads to an apparently hollow interior of the vast, opaque coral bed.

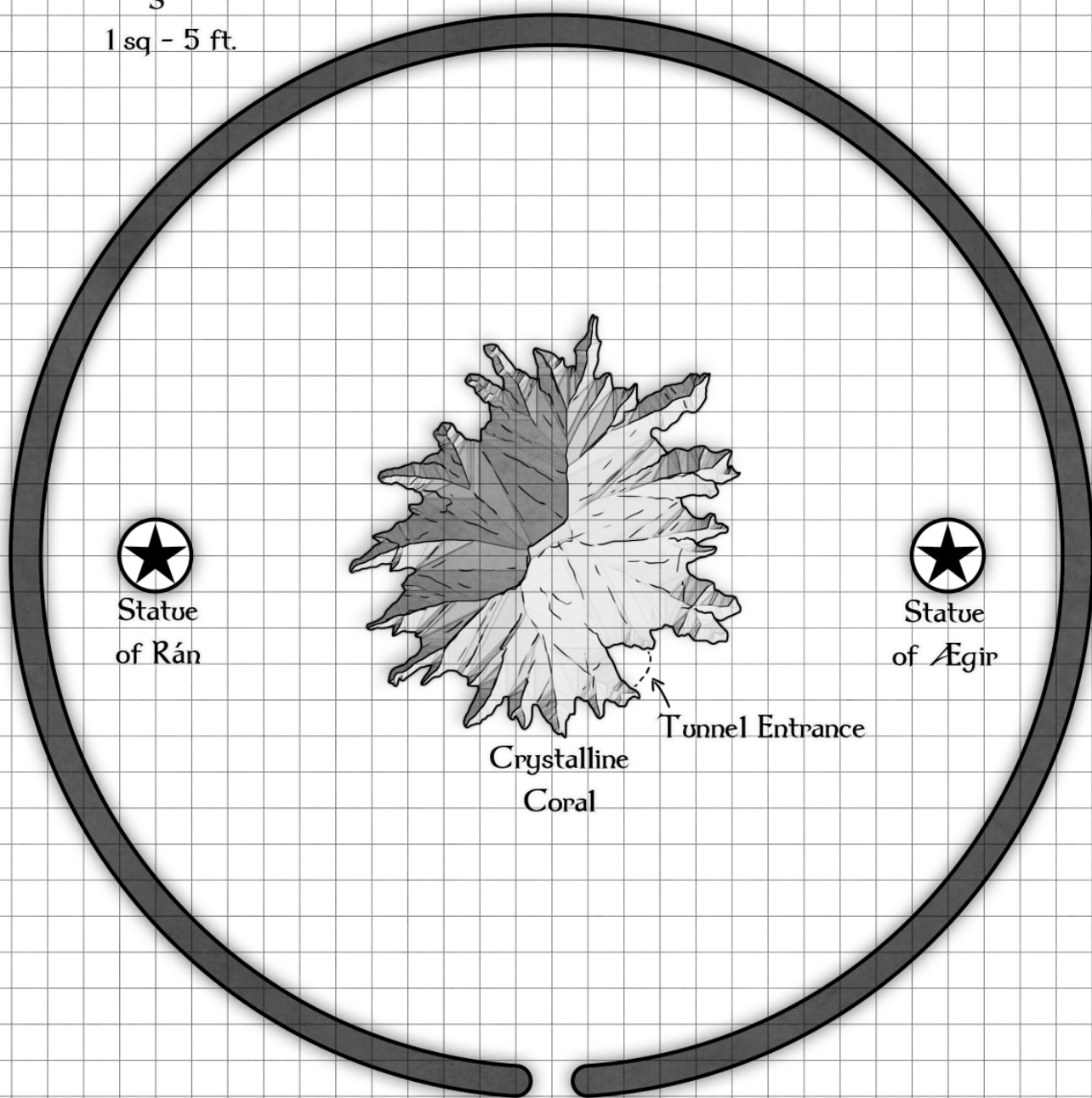
When the characters first enter the room, they are confronted by **2 eyes of the deep** that float near the top of the domed roof. These hideous abominations are 5ft-diameter globes with a great central eye, a large toothed maw, a pair of eyestalks, and huge crablike pincers. Upon sighting the characters, they immediately attack with their eye rays, attempting to maneuver close enough to make use of their stun cones. Kólga left these guardians as a final test of her would-be suitor's mettle. They fight until destroyed.

Eyes of the Deep (2): HD 10; HP 74, 70; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 pincers (2d4), bite (1d6); Move 3 (swim 9); Save 5; AL C; CL/XP 13/2300; **Special:** constrict (automatic pincer damage, save avoids), eye rays (150ft, left—hold person; right—hold monster; both—phantasmal force; central—stun for 2d4 rounds, save avoids). (*The Tome of Horrors Complete* 237)





Godshouse of Rán



Development: When the eyes of the deep are defeated, Kólga floats up out of the coral tunnel, excited to meet her mate. The stunningly beautiful *Face of Kólga* did not lie. It is a perfect representation of the demigoddess's face — all five of them, in fact. Kólga has a divinely proportioned and perfectly formed humanoid body with five heads at the end of five long necks. She is overjoyed at the arrival of her chosen one and swims eagerly toward him singing love-hymns in Aquatic and Nørsk.

The opening in the magnificent coral structure is momentarily shadowed as something emerges. Peeking through the tunnel entrance is the face of woman, her beauty beyond description. She scans the chamber as if making sure that the danger is gone and then turns her attention toward you. Your heart skips a bit as the gaze of a face of such unearthly beauty comes to rest on you ... then another one ... then another one. As the woman effortlessly floats upward from her shelter in the crystalline tunnel, you see that her unadorned body is as fair of form as is her face, or all of them as the case might be. Atop her shoulders are five long necks, each one ending in a face more beautiful than the last one, and all gazing in adoration toward her chosen beau. One final detail to further muddy the picture of an otherwise flawless image is a wide fluke-like tail that extends from the base of her back just above her legs. Your hearts and minds are torn between being captivated by her unearthly beauty and being horrified by her inhuman features.

As the eyes of all five heads come to rest on the favored suitor, her voice fills all of your heads with awe-inspiring power and grandeur, though the lips of all her heads remain still.

"My beloved, you have arrived at last. I am Kólga, the Cool Wave, most beautiful daughter of the sea mother Rán and the sea father Ægir. The time of my estrus is at hand, and I long to bring forth a hero for the coming generations to serve as guardian and champion and to stand with valor in the Fimbulwinter and the foretold Ragnarök.

"Wide have I cast my net to find the most worthy mortal to sire my offspring, and it is you who has won through to reach me. My mother is protective and jealous of my beauty and left the final guardians that you have bested. So know that even in your struggles, you've proven your mind's-worth.

"Now come to me, my beloved. Join me in my crystalline boudoir and know the favor of a goddess. I have prepared a feast worthy of a kœnig to whet your appetites: a banquet of skinned eels, live lobster, and endless oysters. Your companions may stay but must remain here in the safety of the godshouse, outside my crystal bower. Now come to me, my love, our destiny awaits us."

With these words, she quickly swims forward to embrace her chosen suitor and plants a multitude of kisses upon his brow, face, and lips — with all five of her heads. Should the character attempt to draw away, he discovers that his reflexes are no match for those of a goddess, as a tentacle — it is unclear where Kólga produced it from — grasps his arm in an unbreakable grip.

Kólga is a demigoddess and is far beyond the abilities of the characters to fight (if they should want to), so no stats have been provided for her. But though she is fair of face and form, it is possible that her five heads, fluke tail, and random tentacles might be a bit of a shock for a mortal lover. She is capable of taking on any physical form and of using powerful enchantments to influence the hearts and minds of men, but she is so remote in existence from mortal males that she has not thought to do so, leaving her suitor to witness her in her full, inhuman glory.

Fortunately for the character in question, before any awkwardness can occur that might potentially offend a demigoddess, another matter arises that draws everyone's attention away. See **The Great Wight Whale**.

The Great Wight Whale

This encounter occurs in the moments after the characters meet Kólga for the first time as described under **The Daughter's Abode** above.

The moment is interrupted by a great thump that causes the entire chamber to shudder, the sound of the impact echoing weirdly as it reverberates upon the curved walls and through the rolling waters. Kólga looks upward with a curious expression on her face. The thought, "So he wakes," reverberates through your minds in her sultry voice. "It appears that you have one more test to overcome, Worthy One. The one from whom I claimed this ancient place of worship has returned from his stupor and seeks to regain it."

Another impact comes, and bits of stone crack and chip away from the dome overhead and tumble to the floor. With that, the Daughter of Rán floats quickly back into the opening at the base of the coral column and disappears inside, visible as only an indistinct shadow within the irregular opaque growths. Following close on this, a third and final crash shatters the silence and the upper portion of the domed ceiling collapses inward in a cascade of rubble and shells, tumbling down upon the crystalline coral and shattering it beneath the immense weight of its fall. In moments, the once-beautiful coral sculpture has been reduced to a massive pile of rubble and crystalline shards. There is no sign of the demigoddess within.

You don't have time to look long, because in the hole broken through the dome you see a horrific sight. It is the dead narwhal you encountered previously, only now animated with unholy life. Its flesh is stretched taut and discolored, sunken around the wounds it had suffered, and its spiral horn has transformed, becoming a blackened, pitted thing that seethes with the energy of Hel's domain.

The creature that the characters face is a **narwight**, a powerful undead creature of the depths infused with the dark powers of the Underworld. It had claimed sunken Hjallos as its own until Kólga moved in and took over the lost godshouse so she could await her mortal lover. She had impaled it upon the special obsidian and deep coral harpoon (see **The Carcass**), which had served to immobilize it, much like a stake through the heart of a vampire. The brykolakas stumbled upon its carcass and began to feed just before the characters arrived. In that battle, it is possible that the characters removed the harpoon, which allowed the undead sea beast to recover. If they did not, then the harpoon became dislodged by other means.

If **Agresh** escaped the characters at Ethlass' castle, then she followed the characters here after stealing a *mask of the favored* from one of the defeated suitors. She intends to harvest the fertilized eggs of the goddess for her own foul experiments. She came upon the narwight and either allied with it (if the characters had already removed the harpoon) or removed the harpoon herself in order to ally with it. In either of these cases, Agresh rides upon the back of the creature as it carries her into battle (she is fully healed of any injuries she sustained at their hands but has not recovered any spells she cast). If Agresh did not survive the encounter with characters and they did not remove the harpoon themselves, then a shark coming upon the scene of the carnage after the earlier battle with the brykolakas accidentally dislodged the harpoon. In that case, the narwight is here alone.

In either case, Kólga views its arrival as one more test of the worthiness of her suitor and does not interfere in the battle, remaining inside the hollow crystal coral formation. In fact, if a character looks for the tunnel that she used to enter the coral, he finds no trace of it. There does not seem to be any way to get inside the now-demolished coral column.

Narwight: HD 14; HP 108; AC 3[16]; **Atk** gore (2d8 plus energy drain), bite (2d6) or slam (1d8); **Move** 0 (swim 18); **Save** 3; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 17/3500; **Special:** energy drain (2 levels, save



resists), soul capture (anyone killed within 60ft has soul drawn into tusk if save fails), vulnerabilities (deep coral, *resurrection*) (see **New Monster Appendix**)

Agresh the Galdricge (MU10): HP 35; AC 6[13] or 2[17] (missile) and 4[15] (melee) from shield spell; **Atk** 2 claws (1d4 plus 1d6 electricity); **Move** 12; **Save** 3 (+3, cloak, ring); **AL** C; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** +2 save (spells, wands and staffs), spells (4/4/3/2/2).

Spells: 1st—charm person, detect magic, magic missile, shield; 2nd—darkness 15ft radius, detect invisibility, invisibility, phantasmal force; 3rd—dispel magic, haste, lightning bolt; 4th—dimension door, polymorph self; 5th—teleport, wall of stone.

Equipment: cloak of protection +1, wand of charm monster (6 charges), mask of the favored, wand of magic missiles (10 charges), 2 potions of extra healing, ring of protection +2, bag of holding, assorted jeweled bangles, rings and bracelets (3900hs total).

Note: Agresh has draconic blood running through her veins. She is able to cause sharp claws to extend from her fingers that do 1d4 points of damage, and deal an additional 1d6 points of electrical damage with each successful strike. Once per day, she is also able to breathe a 60ft line of electricity that does 8d6 points of electrical damage.

Concluding the Adventure

After the battle concludes and the narwight (and Agresh, if present) is defeated, Kólga rises from the rubble of the crystalline coral growth. She is clearly unharmed and appears to have been curious just to see how her favored would acquit himself. However, she does have a forlorn

expression on her faces as she gazes down into the rubble of crystalline shards that once housed her bower. Clearly visible to the characters is a pile of several dozen translucent spheres, each the size of a man's hand, stacked into a pile and held together by some sort of slimy coating. These can be identified as some type of roe — the egg mass secreted by a fish — though of an unusually large size. However, they are all now smashed or otherwise damaged by the weight of the collapsing coral.

The sad expression of Kólga clearly shows that she held some attachment to the roe and she looks up with great regret at the chosen character. "Alas," she says, "my brood has suffered a terrible wyrd at the works of yon foul beast that you have defeated. It appears that the Norns have decreed that our union is not to be at this time. But fear not, mortaling, I will not forget your worthiness. And when next I produce such a brood in only 125 years' time, I will come and find you that our destiny might be fulfilled. Farewell for now, but I will seek you when the time comes again."

With that Kólga, the Cool Wave, is suddenly gone. She makes no acts of spellcasting, simply one moment she is there and the next moment there is no sign of her. The characters are left alone amid the carnage of the godshouse and their quest to gain the favor of a Daughter of Rán. But the characters need not leave empty-handed. The chosen character still retains his *mask of the favored*, and the crystalline coral is not only exceedingly rare but valuable as well. It has conveniently been broken into thousands of shards worth 75hs per pound. If the characters spend 12 man-hours sifting through the rubble and silt in the chamber, they can recover 200 lbs. of the broken coral (15,000hs total value).

In addition, the characters have had an opportunity here. They could make a capricious friend, or they could make a deadly enemy depending on how they behaved toward Kólga. Treating her with respect garners her continued favor, and anytime the characters are upon the sea, any unfavorable weather they face is reduced in duration by 1d4 days. If this exceeds the duration of the weather, then the seas not only remain calm but grant the characters favorable winds for as many days by which the roll exceeded the length of the bad weather. However, if the characters managed to anger the Cool Wave, they quickly learn of her usually well-

controlled temper. In this case, they'd better remain on land until she forgets. But since a demigoddess never forgets, whenever they are at sea, they will be hounded by double the normal chances of hostile weather or encounters.

Appendix: New Monster

Narwight

Hit Dice: 14

Armor Class: 3 [16]

Attacks: gore (2d8 plus energy drain), bite (2d6) or slam (1d8)

Saving Throw: 3

Special: energy drain, soul capture, vulnerabilities

Move: swim 18

Alignment: Chaos

Number Encountered: solitary

Challenge Level/XP: 17/3500

A narwight has a desiccated, mottled hide pulled taut over its massive body. Its hide shows the scars and injuries of countless years, and small-but-sharp triangular teeth fill this creature's maw. Above this orifice extends a spiraling horn fully 10ft long, pitted and blackened from some foul corruption. However, the creature's eyes, dead and black yet somehow full of a malign will, are what truly distinguishes it from any normal narwhal.

Any living creature killed within 60ft of a narwight must make a saving throw or have its soul drawn into the narwight's tusk. Once the narwight captures a soul, it gains 5 temporary hit points for each Hit Die of the victim. A narwight slowly digests a captured over a period of 1 hour, using it to fuel its dark energies. If the narwight is slain and the tusk broken, any souls that have not yet been digested are released back to their former bodies. The tusk cannot be destroyed or removed until the narwight is slain.

Not just ordinary narwhals that have been transformed into wights, narwights are actually the undead remnant of an entire species of sentient whale-like creatures called primecetans. In fact, narwights represent all that remains of the primecetan race, apparently the result of some primordial cataclysm that destroyed all primecetans that were not transformed into narwights. Whether this ancient cataclysm caused all surviving primecetans to become narwights or if some ancient primecetans used necromancy to transform themselves into narwights to escape the cataclysm is unknown. The name narwights was first applied to the creatures by superstitious Northlander sailors who first reported sightings of the reclusive creatures and compared them to the restless dead of their own lands. They do not refer to themselves as narwights, but take extreme (usually spectacularly violent) offense to anyone who calls them primecetans. If they have a name by which they refer to themselves as a race, it is unknown to land dwellers. In the few peaceful contacts reported with the creatures, they usually only address themselves by their own individual names, extensive sobriquets, often with an almost-poetic quality. Known narwight names include: Sings-To-The-Deep-He-That-Cometh, Cold-On-Darkness-Below-In-Blood, and Bones-Of-The-Sea-Evermore. The aquatic races tend to avoid narwights altogether, and as they typically lurk only in the deepest waters and seem to be extremely few in number in the vastness of the oceans, it is usually not hard to do so.

Despite their dire reputations as heartless killers and devourers of souls, narwights are also known for their great knowledge of the past. Since they are essentially immortal in their undead state unless physically destroyed and their race is known to extend back into the very dawn of time, these intelligent creatures are considered storehouses of vast amounts of historical information. It is also thought that they perhaps possess some rudimentary racial memory from which individuals can draw on to access time periods even before their own births. That they possess incredible recall as well only adds to their reputation as primeval historians.

Though they are dangerous to deal with and often difficult to find, the wise and the powerful among the undersea races have on multiple occasions elected to consult one of these creatures to help unravel some tangle of information or mystery of the distant past. And considering the

long-lived sea elves are among those who do so, their reservoir of ancient historical information must extend far back indeed. However, those who seek them in this capacity are advised to swim carefully and bring many rare and valuable gifts such as might please a being that has truly "seen it all," because if not appeased by the initial offering, a narwight is likely to choose to devour the soul of the one making the offering instead.

Narwights are extremely territorial and avoid their own kind as much as any other. A narwight stakes out a territory, usually but not always in the deep sea, and patrols it in search of sentient trespassers upon which to feed. Other narwights inherently sense the territory of another narwight and avoid it in all but the greatest of exigencies. Narwights prefer to occupy the ruins of ancient civilizations long-sunk beneath the waves (or civilizations that were aquatic to begin with) or a natural locations of some great historic or geologic significance where they work to prevent destruction of these features that hold so much of the past within their very structures. That they do nothing with the information themselves but only hold it in a sterile stasis does not concern them. On occasion when these locations are occupied before the arrival of a narwight claiming the territory, they only devour the souls of a majority of the occupants and offer the survivors the choice between total annihilation or abject servitude for the rest of their existence. Those that choose servitude can then sometimes serve as agents who go abroad on behalf of their narwight master to fulfill enigmatic missions whose purpose is known only to the narwight itself.

Driving a weapon made of deep coral through a helpless narwight's melon (the organ found in all toothed whales inside their head between their nose and their blowhole) instantly slays it. Even if slain by a deep coral weapon in this manner, like a vampire, a narwight returns to life in 1d10 minutes if the weapon is removed unless the melon is excised from the creature and placed on dry land for 24 hours. A narwight returned to life whose tusk has been removed (for example, to release any captured souls) grows a new tusk in 24 hours.

As a matter of personal survival, narwights order their minions to destroy any colonies of deep coral that they locate, though they rarely possess the courage to go near these colonies themselves.

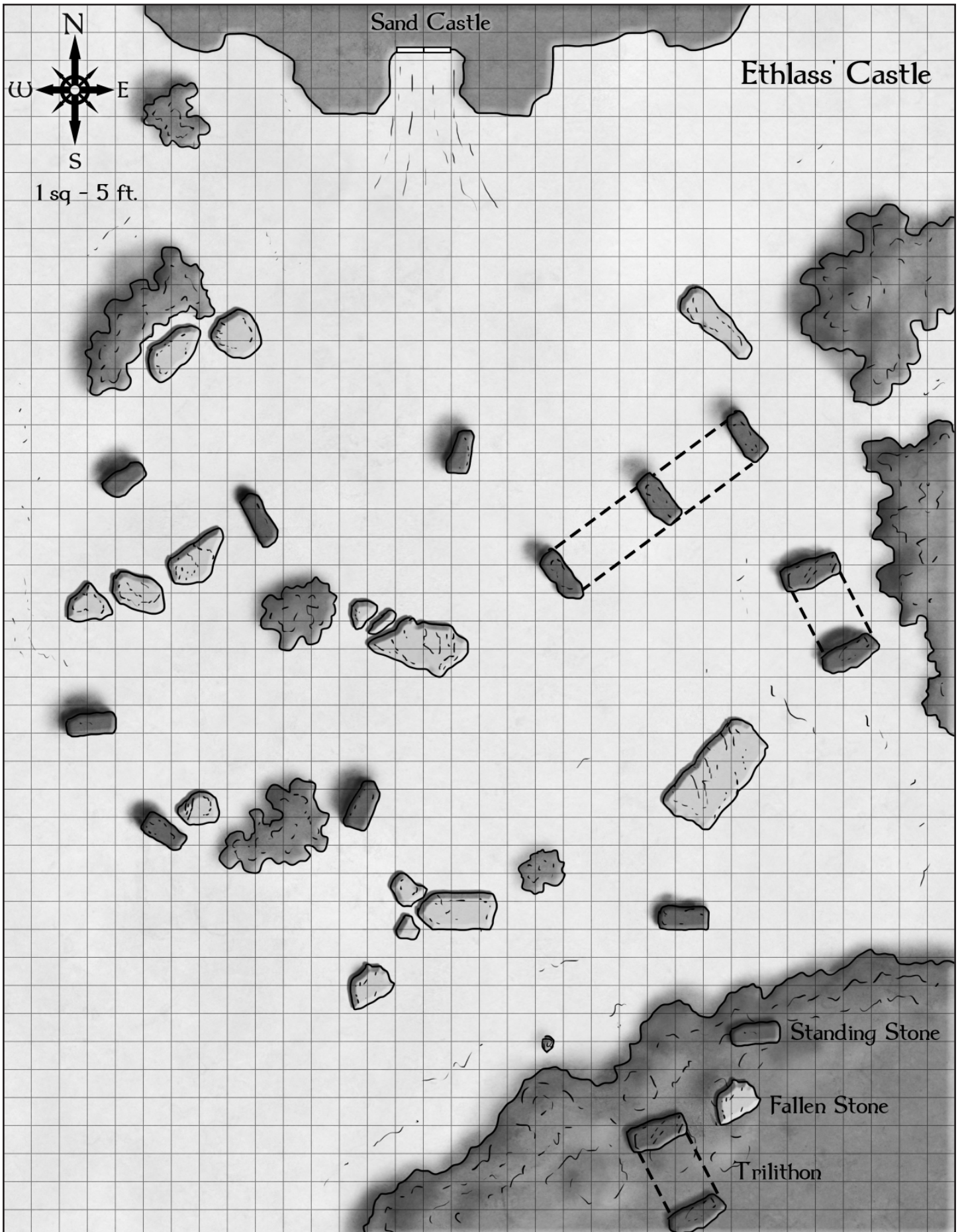
A *resurrection* spell cast on a narwight destroys it if it fails a saving throw. On a successful save, the narwight still takes 3d6 points of damage.

Narwight: HD 14; AC 3[16]; Atk gore (2d8 plus energy drain), bite (2d6) or slam (1d8); **Move** 0 (swim 18); **Save** 3; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 17/3500; **Special:** energy drain (2 levels, save resists), soul capture (anyone killed within 60ft has soul drawn into tusk if save fails), vulnerabilities (deep coral, *resurrection*)

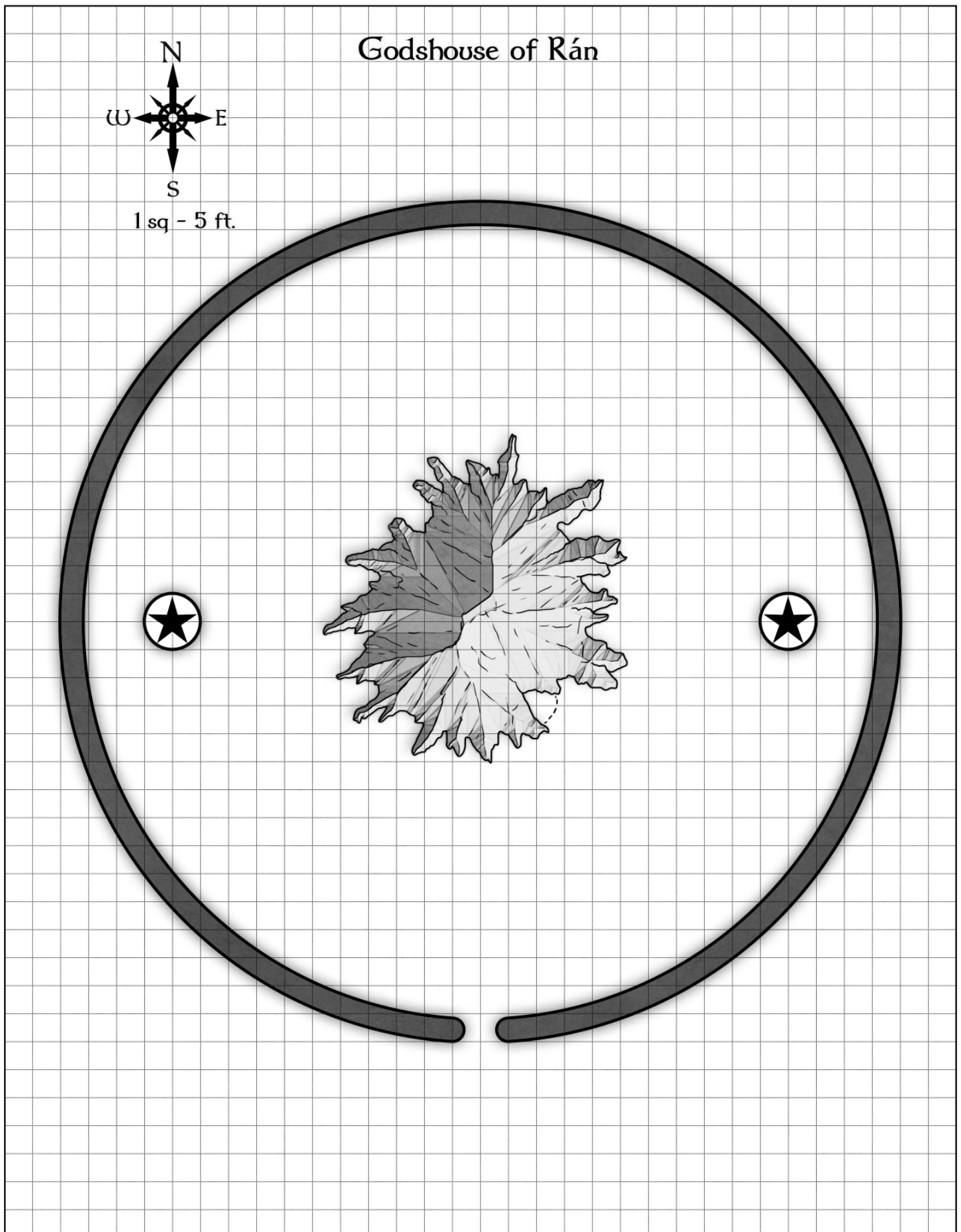
Elder Narwights

Even among the ranks of the eons-old narwights, it is said that there are some few whose existence extends back even farther — perhaps all the way to the beginning of time. Whether these are indeed the original members of the primecetan species still extant after all this time or not, they are called elder narwights and held in great esteem even by other narwights. Some legends hold that to look into the eye of an elder narwight is to see the beginnings of all things and to then go insane with the knowledge. Found only in the deepest, most remote sea trenches and locales, the reclusive elder narwights have 20 or more Hit Dice. Most elder narwights also have levels in some spellcasting class. The elder narwights have discovered a way to excise their melon organ, so that all elders are no longer vulnerable to deep coral.

ETHLASS' CASTLE - PLAYER'S MAP



GODSHOUSE OF RÁN - PLAYER'S MAP



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