

# THE BALLAD of Bass Rock

A Cthulhu Britannica Scenario by Stuart Boon

Cthulhu Britannica



CALL of  
CTHULHU  
(HORROR ROLEPLAYING)

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# -Credits-

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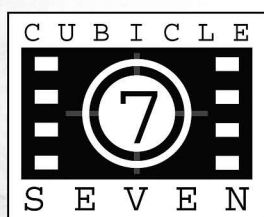
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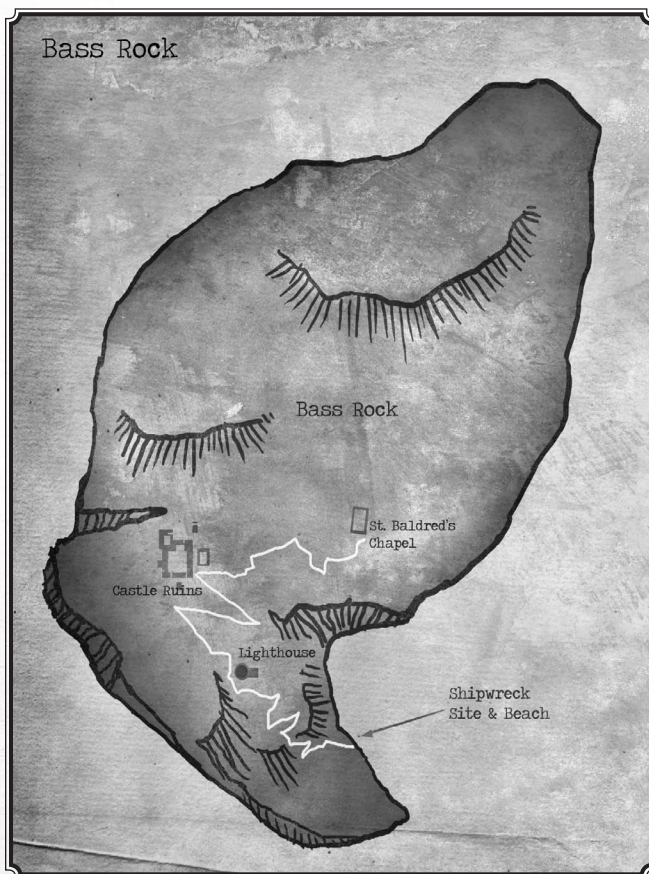


# - The Ballad of Bass Rock -

When a leisure cruise out to Bass Rock goes awry and a summer thunderstorm traps the investigators on the barren island with only a ruined castle and a run-down lighthouse as shelter, things can't seem to get much worse. But as the storm rages on into the black night, they discover just how wrong they are.

## - Introduction -

This short scenario can be played through in a single session and tailored to suit either novice or experienced players, and makes a good introductory scenario for players new to *Call of Cthulhu*. The adventure sees investigators shipwrecked on Bass Rock, less than a mile and a half off the coast of Scotland near North Berwick (northeast of Edinburgh), facing a dark terror that rises from the water at nightfall. The action takes place entirely on the small island of Bass Rock; points of interest are shown on the map below.



The scenario begins as a pleasure cruise one sunny afternoon, but quickly turns threatening as a storm sends the investigators' boat crashing into the rocks beneath a ruined lighthouse. On Bass Rock, they discover a mystery and a threat lurking in the water. As night falls, the action becomes frenzied and the characters are forced to fight for their survival against the thing from the water. Will the investigators live to see another day? Will they survive the horror of Bass Rock?

A plot map for *The Ballad of Bass Rock* is provided at the end of the scenario, together with handouts of clues and documents available to the characters.

## - Keeper's Information -

### The Story So Far

Three months ago in the deep one city of Ur-Y'hlinai off the coast of Aberdeen, a shoggoth-twsha—a deep one high priest with the power to control and command shoggoths—was accidentally killed and its captive shoggoth freed. The shoggoth fled Ur-Y'hlinai and sped down the coast of Fife, finally arriving at the Firth of Forth. Its diet had consisted almost entirely of gulls, gannets, dolphins, and killer whales, until a month ago, when it capsized a boat near Bass Rock and discovered a taste for human flesh.

Shortly thereafter, the shoggoth crawled out of the water and killed the terrified lighthouse keeper of Bass Rock. It destroyed much of the lighthouse, but found a comfortable home in the basement. After a fortnight with no communication from the lighthouse keeper, the port authority in nearby North Berwick sent a team of three men to investigate. The team never returned, and the authority is now planning a full-scale investigation.

The shoggoth has crushed the southeast-facing wooden doors at the base of the lighthouse so that it can more easily come and go. It feeds nightly on what it can find in the local waters or, failing that, hunts amongst the 150,000-strong population of gannets and other seabirds on the island. It has seen the lights on the mainland a little over a mile away, but has not yet gone to investigate what tasty morsels live there. For the time being, the shoggoth is happy feeding off the nightly bounty it finds in the waters and on Bass Rock itself.

## -Involving the Investigators-

The characters have chosen to take a leisure cruise out into the Firth of Forth and the North Sea from North Berwick. Perhaps they are hardened Mythos investigators who have just completed a difficult investigation and are looking forward to some well-earned rest and relaxation—or perhaps they are strangers to one another, with no experience of the horrors of the Mythos, and not ‘investigators’ at all—simply people

### The Horror on Bass Rock

**Freed Shoggoth, age unknown,  
Putrid and Pulsating Protoplasm**

**STR** 64      **DEX** 04      **INT** 07      **CON** 43  
**SIZ** 83      **APP** —      **POW** 09      **EDU** —  
**SAN** —                      **Hit Points:** 63

**Move:** 10 rolling / swimming

**Damage Bonus:** +8D6

**Skills:** At Keeper’s discretion

**Weapons:** Crush 70%, damage db

Multiple Consume attacks—see *Call of Cthulhu* rules page 173

**Armour:** None, but fire and electrical attacks do only half damage; physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage, impaling or not; and the shoggoth regenerates 2 hit points per round

**Sanity Cost:** 1D6 / 1D20

**Appearance:** The shoggoth appears as a churning, shifting protoplasmic mass that propels itself by rolling and stretching. A shoggoth does not have a set form, but is continually forming and reforming; within its slimy, iridescent black bulk, a conglomeration of dripping mouths, alien eyes, weeping pustules, and luminous bubbles constantly emerge, twist and pull, only to be subsumed a moment later into its amorphous immensity. The shoggoth covers an area of five square yards, or roughly a fifteen-foot diameter, but can stretch and pull its form into almost any shape. Shoggoths are amphibious, and can move with equal speed on land or in water. A horridly fetid and stinking mass which attempts to crush or consume everything it encounters, a shoggoth is an indiscriminate omnivore, and capable of breaking down and consuming almost anything.

### Mr John Cooper, Captain of the *Westray IV*

**John Cooper, age 36,  
Hopeful Entrepreneur and Doting Father**

**STR** 14      **DEX** 12      **INT** 10      **CON** 10  
**SIZ** 14      **APP** 10      **POW** 11      **EDU** 09  
**SAN** 53                      **Hit Points:** 12

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Skills:** Bargain 17%, Credit Rating 16%, Electrical Repair 44%, Fast Talk 25%, Mechanical Repair 82%, Navigate 42%, Operate Heavy Machinery 68%, Persuade 48%, Pilot Boat 63%

**Weapons:** Fist / Punch 28%, damage 1D3 + db

**Appearance:** John Cooper is a tall, muscular man in his mid-thirties with shaggy brown hair and a thick reddish brown beard. He has a bright, welcoming smile, blue-green eyes and a slightly ruddy complexion. When acting as ‘captain’ of the *Westray IV*, Cooper is fond of wearing his grandfather’s old captain’s hat and a navy blazer. He is a likeable man who comes across as genuine and kind-hearted; he’ll do just about anything for his family, and would certainly give his life to save Aidan, should the necessity arise.

on a pleasant day out. They may even be friends of the boat's 'captain', Adam Cooper, and have agreed to take a trip to help get their friend's budding tour business off the ground.

The characters board the *Westray IV*, a small but attractive touring/sailing vessel capable of carrying ten adults, in the North Berwick harbour north and east of Edinburgh. The planned tour lasts four hours, and takes them out from North Berwick across the Firth of Forth to skirt the south coast of Fife near Earlsferry and Pittenweem. Leaving Fife behind, the tour heads out briefly into the North Sea, before curving round Bass Rock and pulling back into North Berwick in the late afternoon. At least, that's the plan.

John Cooper captains the *Westray IV* while his fourteen-year old son, Aidan, acts as first mate. Apart from the characters, the only other people on the tour are a newlywed couple from Ireland, Michael and Emily O'Keefe. The O'Keefes are on their honeymoon in Edinburgh, and taking advantage of the fine weather with a sea tour. The O'Keefes will already be on the *Westray IV* when the characters board.

### Aidan Cooper, First Mate of the *Westray IV*

**Aidan Cooper, age 14,**  
**Energetic and Helpful Son of John Cooper**

**STR** 07    **DEX** 14    **INT** 10    **CON** 09  
**SIZ** 08    **APP** 11    **POW** 09    **EDU** 06  
**SAN** 45                    **Hit Points:** 09

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Skills:** Climb 48%, Hide 45%, Jump 32%,  
Navigate 15%, Persuade 25%

**Appearance:** Aidan Cooper is a likeable young man with his father's blue-green eyes and shaggy brown hair. He always has a smile on his face and runs around the *Westray IV* with obvious delight and boundless energy. The boy looks unhealthily thin, and his father jokes about getting some 'meat on those bones'. Aidan makes himself useful wherever possible and is alert and well-meaning; he may not possess a mature understanding of the world, but he understands the importance of the tours for his family's well-being.

The tour goes swimmingly for more than two hours until the boat pulls out into the North Sea. The clouds massing in the east result in Captain Cooper calling an early end to the tour and turning the boat round towards Bass Rock. However, the storm builds quickly, the pleasant blue waters churning into a steel-grey maelstrom.

The Coopers drop sail and engage the boat's engines, by which time the sea is rough. The O'Keefes are becoming increasingly nervous and asking the captain for reassurance.

### Mr Michael O'Keefe, Newlywed

**Michael O'Keefe, age 31,**  
**Newlywed and Antiques Dealer**

**STR** 10    **DEX** 13    **INT** 14    **CON** 10  
**SIZ** 08    **APP** 11    **POW** 13    **EDU** 11  
**SAN** 60                    **Hit Points:** 11

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Skills:** Accounting 38%, Art (Painting) 65%, Art (Sculpture) 61%, Bargain 87%, Credit Rating 36%,  
Fast Talk 85%, Persuade 56%, Psychology 34%

**Weapons:** Fist / Punch 15%, damage 1D3 + db

**Appearance:** Michael O'Keefe is a short and somewhat thin man in his early thirties. He has blond hair the colour of wheat and a thin moustache. Exceedingly talkative, effortlessly charming, and obviously something of a 'player', he knows how to manipulate people and will relate numerous stories of his prowess as a capable salesman. O'Keefe fancies himself an excellent judge of character and may well offer to 'divine' the investigators' personalities and backgrounds. He dresses well in fine suits complemented with gold accessories. He is very much in love with his new wife, Emily, and is making the most of his honeymoon in Scotland.

Cooper can see that conditions are deteriorating fast, and pushes the *Westray IV* hard against the crashing waves in an effort to get back to North Berwick before the full might of the storm hits. He will not be successful. In the lee of Bass Rock, an explosion shakes the boat violently and smoke

pours out from down below; Cooper runs for the engine hold with a sand bucket, but the damage is done. Moving at speed, the *Westray IV* is dangerously close to Bass Rock.

Mrs Emily O'Keefe, Tourist

**Emily O'Keefe, age 29,  
Newlywed and Primary School Teacher**

**STR** 09    **DEX** 10    **INT** 13    **CON** 11  
**SIZ** 07    **APP** 14    **POW** 12    **EDU** 13  
**SAN** 55                    **Hit Points:** 10

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Skills:** Art (English Literature) 66%, Craft (Sewing) 26%, Credit Rating 21%, First Aid 44%, History 55%, Mathematics 76%, Other Language: Irish Gaelic 33%, Physics 34%

**Appearance:** Emily O'Keefe is a petite and attractive woman in her late twenties. She has long, strawberry-blond hair, which she normally keeps hidden beneath a floral hat. A perfect equal to Michael O'Keefe and even more charming than her new husband (although slightly less gregarious), Emily is both confident and capable. She won't let anyone talk 'down' to her and will become very defensive on the topic of women's rights. She is fashionably and colourfully dressed. Emily has fallen 'head over heels' for Michael and is delighted to be Mrs O'Keefe; for the moment, she is letting Michael think he rules the roost, but has definite plans for changing that in the near future.

With his father in the engine compartment trying to put out the fire, the younger Cooper tries desperately to steer the boat. Unfortunately, Aidan has neither the strength nor weight to control the boat, and the *Westray IV* turns towards the rocks. The boy shrieks for his father as the boat is pushed by wind and wave, but even with assistance from nautically-minded characters it is already too late. Captain Cooper appears from below, having successfully extinguished the engine fire, and recoils at the sight of Bass Rock looming above them. He runs to a cabinet at the back of the boat and begins handing out bulky cork life jackets. Seconds later, the *Westray IV* lurches sideways as its hull strikes the first rock.

Characters must make STR x5 rolls to maintain their places aboard the vessel; failure means they're thrown violently to the deck, suffering 1D4 points of damage. Keepers may choose to allow Luck rolls to halve the damage. A split second later the boat rights itself, but only for a second as the hull connects with the next rock. Again, characters must make STR x5 rolls or suffer 1D4 damage as they're slammed to and fro. They now have the opportunity to jump from the foundering boat and swim to shore, or stay with the vessel.

Characters who jump must make Swim rolls to make it safely to shore; failure means they suffer 1D4 damage as they crash against the sea-slick rocks, and must also make a Luck roll to avoid slicing open an arm or leg, losing a further 1 hit point per round until the bleeding can be stopped with a tourniquet or successful First Aid roll.

Characters who stay with the foundering boat will feel it dip suddenly, before the hull breaks open on a jagged rock with a deafening crack. Characters and any remaining NPCs will be launched violently into the air and come crashing down into the churning water, losing 1D2 hit points from the sudden impact; they now have to swim to shore and make the same rolls as described above.

During this ordeal, the Keeper may choose to roll for the NPCs or simply decide their fate; it's possible one or more of them may die in the chaos. Survivors will find themselves battered and bruised—but alive—on the shores of Bass Rock!

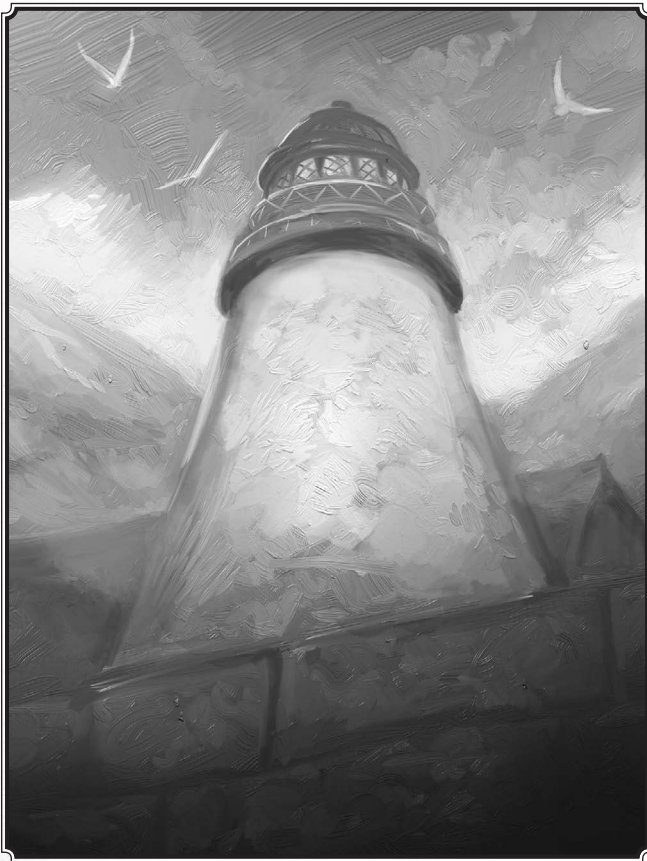
## -Locations-

Bass Rock is a gigantic volcanic plug jutting out of the North Sea just over a mile from mainland Scotland. The nearest port is North Berwick, three miles distant. From the water's edge, Bass Rock slopes up sharply to a height of more than three hundred and fifty feet (107 metres); its upper reaches are home to a huge colony of 150,000 gannets and other sea birds. A ruined castle and run-down lighthouse dominate the lower elevations. A single lighthouse keeper normally lives on Bass Rock, but in this scenario the characters will discover only the keeper's clothing and a few possessions. The keeper himself has been utterly devoured—bones and all—by the newly-resident shoggoth.

The whitewashed stone lighthouse was built in the summer of 1902 using rock from the ruined castle. The sixty-six-foot (20 metre) tall structure was designed by David A. Stevenson on commission from the Lighthouse Commissioners; a light from Bass Rock first shone in the winter of 1902. The current light flashes a white beam every twenty seconds; its huge reflective lamp is illuminated by burning incandescent gas derived from paraffin oil. When the characters arrive, much of the apparatus required to light the lamp has been destroyed.

The ruins of the castle are two hundred metres above and behind the lighthouse. The exposed stone has been severely eroded, and no room of the old structure has either roof or intact doors or windows.

## The Lighthouse



### Basement

The basement of the lighthouse is cylindrical except for a rectangular storage annex at the back. It can be reached by a staircase in the north wall of the lighthouse or through

a set of broken, wooden doors at the south of the annex. Normally a bare bulb near the ten-foot-high ceiling illuminates the area, but the bulb and the housing for the electrics have been ripped off the ceiling by the shoggoth. As a result, if the characters enter the basement at night, they'll require a torch or similar light source to manoeuvre in or otherwise examine the darkened space.

If the characters go anywhere near the basement they will encounter the nauseating fetid smell of the shoggoth's secretions. The shoggoth rests in the basement, and its squalid bulk has come into contact with nearly every surface: the foul smell can therefore be found on literally everything, including the walls, ceilings, and stairs, which are covered in a viscous reeking layer of sweat. The smell is made all the worse for the rotting and decaying food stores that the shoggoth crushed when it first occupied the basement.

The diesel-powered electrical generator and equipment used to turn the stored paraffin into the incandescent gas used in the lighthouse lamp have been squashed by the shoggoth's massive bulk. A successful Mechanical Repair or Electrical Repair roll quickly determines the equipment is beyond repair; and that a considerable force or mass would have been required to crush the equipment in the first place.

A slurry of reeking, semi-gelatinous goo covers a twelve foot diameter patch in the centre of the stone floor, defying anyone to determine its origin or composition. Successful Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy, or Medicine rolls can identify the goo as organic, possibly a biological secretion; and anyone touching or manipulating it will find that it adheres strongly to anything it touches, and has an acidic quality. It will cause one point of damage after five rounds of contact; it smells revoltingly of faecal matter.

The pool of semi-gelatinous goo is a greasy accumulation of shoggoth secretions, although such a realization is unlikely to occur to anyone without past experience of shoggoths. If characters will previous experience of shoggoths make a successful Cthulhu Mythos roll, then they may realize this. Carefully examining the pattern of crushing, the fetid stench, and the destruction evident at the rear door of the annex gives a +10% bonus to the roll.

The rear doors from the basement to the surface have been forced and crushed; just outside is a single rusting barrel of

diesel fuel knocked on its side. A successful Physics or Idea roll reveals the doors were broken from within; a successful Spot Hidden roll or close inspection of the door wreckage reveals the doors bent outwards from the inside and finally burst or exploded. A successful Track roll uncovers a trail down towards the sea.

A successful Spot Hidden roll outside the rear doors finds a men's watch between two boulders on the path down to the water. The watch is inscribed: 'To Walter, loving husband and faithful father. 1917'. The watch belonged to Walter Cummins, one of the workers sent from North Berwick by the Lighthouse Commission over a week ago. Anyone quickly walking down to the water will discover a man's right boot bobbing against the rocks in the surf (although there's no way to tell, it belonged to Ted Hornby, another one of the team). The Lighthouse Commission team were all dispatched by the shoggoth on their arrival at Bass Rock; there's no sign of the boat that brought them.

### Entrance Hall

The main door to the lighthouse has been ripped from its wrought-iron hinges, and lies on the far side of the entrance hall, leaning at an angle against a damaged wooden table and broken chair. A stair built into the thick lighthouse wall curls up to the northeast and down to the northwest. A collection of jackets, overcoats, and hats hangs on the southwest wall. A light switch near the door would normally activate two electric lamps in sconces, but flicking the switch has no effect.

The useable space in the entrance hall is just over fifteen feet in diameter; the walls are more than seven feet thick. With the door off its hinges, the wind whips around this circular room and small piles of sand, dust, and bird feathers have accumulated in hollows and curves. Over the wind and the smell of sea air, the investigators cannot miss the unpleasant, sewer-like tang which gets increasingly worse as they approach the stairs to the basement. Both the stairs to the first floor and down to the basement follow the curve of the lighthouse walls, making it impossible to see what lies beyond.

In the pockets of the jackets and coats on the southwest wall, the investigators will find a number of items. In one plaid coat is a ring of keys which belonged to the now-deceased lighthouse keeper, Archie Carluke, with keys to open every

lock in the lighthouse. In another, the characters will find a to-do list (Handout 1):

- Grease lamp bearing X
- Call Lighthouse Commissioners about foghorn wiring X
- Arrange for delivery 20 gallons paraffin oil – Tuesday?
- Potatoes for dinner X
- Write Martha & Timmy X
- Take a bath

Lastly, in the inside pocket of a large woollen overcoat the investigators will find a well-thumbed copy of *Moby-Dick, or The Whale* by Herman Melville. A cloth bookmark marks page 560, and Carluke has underlined a few lines in rough pencil. The underlined text (Handout 2) reads:

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, swiftly rising to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard; a subterranean hum; and then all held their breaths ....

[Excerpt from Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*]

Investigators attempting to replace the wooden door on its hinges require a combined STR of 22 or more; this will take roughly five minutes, although the door's lock is completely shattered, and a substantial block will be required to keep it from swinging violently in the storm. This quick fix won't keep out intruders, but helps to make the lighthouse more hospitable.

### First Floor

The curving stair from the entrance hall opens into the southeast corner of a room roughly thirteen feet diameter; the stairs curve upwards to the southwest to the next storey. This first floor is where the keeper's log, radio, and other items related to the day-to-day running of the lighthouse



are kept. There are two desks and two tables, along with a wooden chair on castors and one stationary chair. Pride of place on one of the desks is taken by the lighthouse's huge black radio, festooned with oversized knobs and with a great central dial in white.

The massive lighthouse radio is plugged into a wall socket and operates on three settings: SW (short-wave), MW (medium-wave) and LW (long-wave) transmissions. The radio dial is currently tuned to 195 kilohertz (kHz) in LW mode. If the investigators restore power to the radio, the current frequency allows two-way communication with the Lighthouse Commissioners in North Berwick; it's currently inoperable due to the lighthouse's lack of electricity.

However, a successful Mechanical Repair, Electrical Repair, or quartered Know roll will reveal the radio can also be run if two large rectangular batteries are hooked up to terminals on the rear of the machine.

A wooden crate with four such batteries lies on the floor beneath the desk; they've been used as a footrest for quite some time and are covered in dust, dirt, and grime. Unfortunately they don't currently have enough charge to properly operate the radio, which the characters will only determine once they've successfully hooked them up.

The other desk holds the lighthouse keeper's logbook, some well-read hardbacks, an inkwell and fountain pen, and a stained mug. The logbook contains a number of recent entries (Handout 3):

*Tuesday, 1939*

*Everything working as it should. Perhaps Moby-Dick is getting to me. I could have sworn I saw something—small whale? huge killer whale?—down near the water's edge just now. Maybe just a trick of the light, shadow, dark and unmoving. Dinner.*

*Wednesday, 2001*

*Lamphouse again. Lamp working fine, all is fine. I thought I saw the dark shape in the water again. Shone my torch, but it has no reach, nothing there. Not sure it was a killer whale. Something about it not right.*

*Went to look again. Nothing. Probably just tired. Need a break off this rock.*

The hardbacks on the desk are: *Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper, *Sufferings in Africa* by James Riley, *Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Rob Roy on the Jordan* by John MacGregor, and a copy of *Black's Guide to Scotland 1883*. The mug once contained tea that has long since evaporated.

The two tables are covered in an array of odds and ends that helped the keeper manage the lighthouse, including: three large copper lanterns and two nearby tins of lantern oil; four rings of different gauge electrical wire bound with butcher's twine; a series of boxed vacuum tubes (for the radio); a large tool chest containing most common tools and a vast collection of screws, nails, nuts and bolts; a smaller tool chest containing a variety of plugs, connectors, short wires, and electrical couplers; and a small wooden crate filled with small cans and jars of grease, oil, distilled alcohol, and some industrial cleansers.

Boxes and crates beneath the tables contain spare parts for the lighthouse lamp, its rotating base, the generator, various pumps in the basement, the kitchen stove, and the radio. Two cardboard boxes atop the crates contain lightbulbs and candles.

### Second Floor

The second floor of the lighthouse contains the kitchen and washroom. The kitchen holds a single electric stove, a cupboard full of plates and crockery, a small cupboard full of foodstuffs—mostly dried and canned—and a few

*Thursday, 1922*

*Rotten weather, but all's fine. New lamp still ticking away grandly. Need to call Charlie at the Lighthouse Commission to get another shipment of paraffin sent out. Saw the killer whale again just after sunset. I'm sure it's a killer whale now: even through the rain I could make out black and white markings, bobbing up and down near the shore. No idea what it's doing—no seals on Bass Rock to my knowledge.*

*Friday, 1950*

*Gale outside, but all's well with lamp and lighthouse. Made nice stew and had to get candle! Checking downstairs—electrics out and generator just made bloody awful bang. Shook the whole lighthouse!*

shelves of glasses, cutlery, and condiments. A small table with two chairs sits nearby a wash basin, inside which is an unwashed bowl full of water with a rusty spoon in it. A thick iron pot on the stove contains a gelatinous furry sludge that was beef stew.

The small washroom contains a narrow bathtub, and a small pedestal sink—the privy is outside. All are clean but covered by a thin layer of dust. Carluke's razor and a small bag of soap and some hair wax are the only items of note. The water in the taps will run, but is freezing cold and will remain so as long as the electricity is out.

The stair continues up towards the northwest.

### Third Floor

The third floor is six feet in diameter with a single bed, small wardrobe, and a bedside chest of drawers, all covered in dust. The bed hasn't been slept in for days. Inside the drawers and wardrobe is Archie Carluke's clothing, mostly chosen for warmth and longevity. A pocket watch, its hands stopped at 2.45, sits on the drawers alongside an envelope.

The envelope contains a letter from Archie Carluke to his wife Martha and son Timmy, addressed to Martha Carluke of 51 Allison Street, Glasgow (Handout 4):

*My dearest Martha and Jimmy,*

*I'm counting down the days. The Lighthouse Commission has confirmed Craig Hinton will be coming to replace me in less than three weeks, which means that I'll be back in Glasgow with you within the month!*

*I'll stop by at grandma and granddad's in Rosyth like I promised, and get a birthday present for Jimmy from that toy shop in Edinburgh he liked. If he's got his heart set on anything particular, let me know in your next letter.*

*Also, if there is anything you would like for yourself, dearest, let me know that, too. I am sorry for being gone so long, but I know my love for you is even stronger for being apart. You are my world, my everything, Martha. I'll be with you soon, my love.*

*Your devoted husband,*

*Charlie*

*p.s. I can't tell you how much I've missed you both.*

### Lamphouse

Curving around to the northeast, the lighthouse stair finally ends in the lamphouse. This six-foot-high glass enclosure sits sixty feet above ground; in fine weather the view is truly impressive. The half of the glass facing the island rather than the sea has been coated with a highly reflective silvery wash which amplifies the lamp's light during operation.

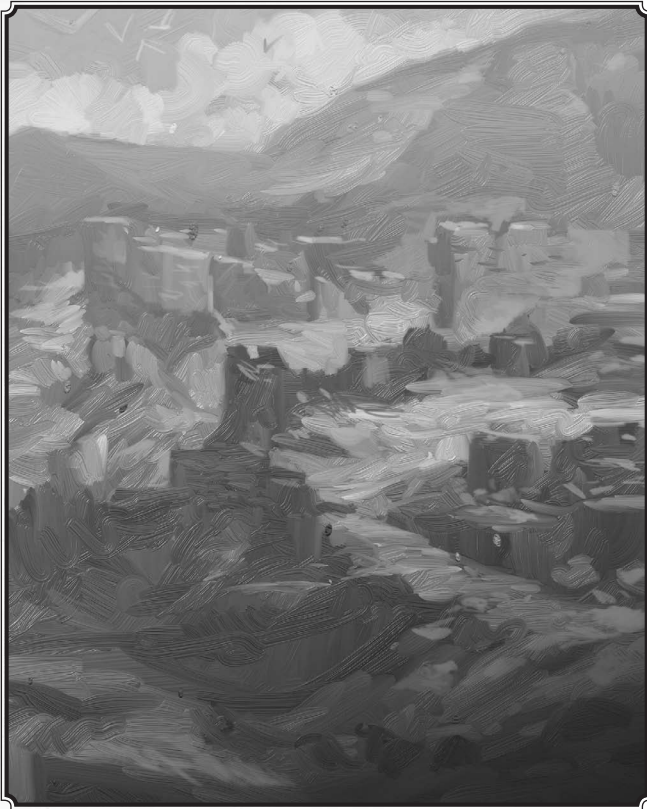
In the centre of the lamphouse is the elaborate mechanism that keeps the lamp rotating and flashing once every twenty seconds. The lamp and rotator are both inoperative; without electricity and the incandescent gas pumped up from the basement, the lamphouse is a lifeless glass shell. A successful Electrical Repair roll determines that there is no fault within the lamp or the rotator mechanisms.

A small walkway circumnavigates the lamphouse, accessible through a movable pane of glass near the top of the stairs. A thin and insubstantial railing frames the walkway, but affords little protection from the elements. Anyone on the walkway in moderate winds must make a DEX x5 roll every round to maintain his balance; in worse conditions this might drop to DEX x3, x2, or even x1 (in a roaring gale.)

Failing the DEX roll requires a Luck roll to avoid falling off the walkway; failure means the character plummets sixty-six feet to the rocks below, suffering 7D6 points of damage. Characters succeeding the Luck roll lose either 1 hit point

or 1 Sanity point as a result of narrowly avoiding the fall (player's choice), and quickly return to the shelter of the lamphouse.

## The Ruined Castle



The castle on Bass Rock was built in the 13th century and served as a fortification for three hundred years. It fell into ruin after 1700. During construction of the lighthouse, stone was taken from the castle walls and towers. In the 1920s, the castle is an exposed and eroded ruin.

### Inner Courtyard

Twenty feet inside the outer walls stand the walls of the castle keep, now host to a perplexing puzzle. The sun-bleached bones of numerous large sea mammals litter the courtyard, and the stone and earth near the centre are oddly discoloured, with much of the tall grass near the southernmost entrance flattened and seemingly 'glued' to the ground beneath.

Before the shoggoth took to resting in the lighthouse basement, it used the castle keep. The remains of a killer whale and several dolphins are scattered about the courtyard; a successful Biology, Marine Biology, or Zoology roll can

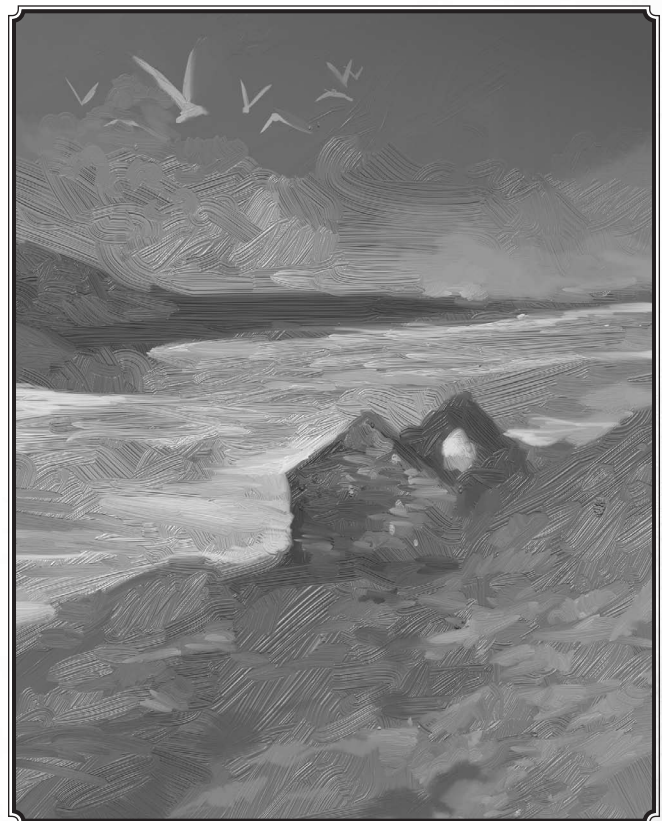
successfully identify them. A successful Spot Hidden roll further reveals that many of the bones show signs of acidic abrasion or erosion (caused by the shoggoth's digestive juices). Characters examining the orca bones in detail can estimate the killer whale was more than twenty feet long (7 metres).

A successful Agriculture, Botany, or Track roll finds flattened foliage and sticky residue suggesting a large bulk, possibly a huge creature of some kind, has moved through a gap in the southern wall. Kneeling down to investigate the sticky residue, characters will note a foetid, putrid smell; if they've already encountered the smell in the lighthouse basement, they will immediately connect the two.

### Outer Walls

The outer walls of the old castle are worn by centuries of rain and wind. The remaining stone is cracked and pitted. Few walls stand over four feet high, offering little protection from the elements. The walls reveal the original shape of the battlements which fortified the south-western slope of the island.

## St Baldred's Chapel





The ruins of St Baldred's Chapel lie nearly halfway up the island; little of the once-quaint, 12th-century chapel dedicated to this Scottish saint survives. Although few know of it, the chapel is built over a cave where St Baldred spent his days in solemn worship. That cave is still accessible near the back of the ruined chapel, nearly hidden now beneath two stones fallen from the nearby wall. A successful Spot Hidden near the back of the chapel will find it. The shoggoth has no idea of the cave's existence.

The entrance to the cave is less than three feet in diameter, opening up into a space six feet wide, ten feet long, and only five feet high—large enough for a party of up to ten people to sit in albeit uncomfortably. The only life is a small lizard that feeds off the insects that venture inside; the cave is otherwise empty.

## -Staging the Shoggoth Attack-

The shoggoth is a simple creature, but an effective predator and extremely difficult to put down. For this reason, the challenge it poses should be carefully considered to find the right balance of entertainment and terror for players. For overly confident and unthreatened players, perhaps have the shoggoth make a brief appearance and up the terror.

A good tense scenario might, for example, result from the shoggoth playing cat-and-mouse with the characters, killing or threatening them one at a time. Don't be afraid to use the NPCs as fodder for heightening the tension as well: have one or two of them go missing or start screaming about seeing something impossible in the night.

Try and engineer the precise moment the shoggoth attacks for maximum effect. Against this powerful and capable enemy, characters will need to use wits over brawn and bullets. If they forget this, the shoggoth is likely to defeat them easily.

## -Conclusion-

Success in this scenario involves either defeating the shoggoth—an impressive feat to say the least—or finding some way of surviving the night or escaping the island. Should the investigators manage to see the dawn, the shoggoth will return to the water and commence hunting easier prey.

Characters can escape Bass Rock in several ways. The Lighthouse Commission or North Berwick Harbour Authority might dispatch a boat to search for the missing tour; characters might find working batteries in the wreck of the *Westray IV* and radio for help; or some other means of escape might be devised. Let the players expend some creativity in coming up with a solution to evade or destroy the shoggoth. Unless the Keeper wishes to have the investigators trapped on the island, the scenario ends the morning after the characters are shipwrecked.

For successfully surviving the encounter, characters should be rewarded 1D6 Sanity points. For defeating the shoggoth, characters should receive 1D6 additional points. Keepers might also wish to reward characters that send or deliver Archie Carluke's last letter to his wife and child in Glasgow.

If either or both of the Coopers survive, their hopes for running a successful tour company from North Berwick will have been dashed, but a number of weeks later compensation will arrive in the form of a profitable insurance payout for the small boat.

## -Appendix I: Handouts-

### Handout 1. Lighthouse Keeper's To-Do List

- Grease lamp bearing X
- Call Lighthouse Commissioners about foghorn wiring X
- Arrange for delivery 20 gallons paraffin oil  
– Tuesday?
- Potatoes for dinner X
- Write Martha & Timmy X
- Take a bath

### Handout 2. Excerpt from *Moby-Dick*

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, swiftly rising to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard; a subterranean hum; and then all held their breaths ....

[Excerpt from Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, or *The Whale*]

### Handout 3. Lighthouse Keeper's Logbook

Tuesday, 1939

Everything working as it should. Perhaps *Moby-Dick* is getting to me. I could have sworn I saw something—small whale? huge killer whale?—down near the water's edge just now. Maybe just a trick of the light, shadow, dark and unmoving. Dinner.

Wednesday, 2001

Lamphouse again. Lamp working fine, all is fine. I thought I saw the dark shape in the water again. Shone my torch, but it has no reach, nothing there. Not sure it was a killer whale. Something about it not right.

Went to look again. Nothing. Probably just tired. Need a break off this rock.

Thursday, 1922

Rotten weather, but alls fine. New lamp still ticking away grandly. Need to call Charlie at the Lighthouse Commission to get another shipment of paraffin sent out. Saw the killer whale again just after sunset. I'm sure it's a killer whale now: even through the rain I could make out black and white markings, bobbing up and down near the shore. No idea what it's doing—no seals on Bass Rock to my knowledge.

Friday, 1950

Gale outside, but alls well with lamp and lighthouse. Made nice stew and had to get candle! Checking downstairs—electrics out and generator just made bloody awful bang. Shook the whole lighthouse!

Handout 4. Carluke's Letter

*My dearest Martha and Jimmy,*

*I'm counting down the days. The Lighthouse Commission has confirmed Craig Hinton will be coming to replace me in less than three weeks, which means that I'll be back in Glasgow with you within the month!*

*I'll stop by at grandma and granddad's in Rosyth like I promised, and get a birthday present for Jimmy from that toy shop in Edinburgh he liked. If he's got his heart set on anything particular, let me know in your next letter.*

*Also, if there is anything you would like for yourself, dearest, let me know that, too. I am sorry for being gone so long, but I know my love for you is even stronger for being apart. You are my world, my everything, Martha. I'll be with you soon, my love.*

*Your devoted husband,*

*Charlie*

*p.s. I can't tell you how much I've missed you both.*

-Appendix II: Plot Map-

Location	Personas	Relationships	Motivation	Cues
<b>The Westray IV, small boat</b>	'Captain' John Cooper; Aidan Cooper, first mate; Emily and Michael O'Keefe, newlyweds	The Coopers are a father and son team running cruises for tourists, including the O'Keefes	The Coopers are trying to supplement their incomes; the O'Keefes are pleasure-seekers	Talking to the Coopers Talking to the O'Keefes
<b>The Ruined Castle, Bass Rock</b>				Rotting killer whale and dolphin skeletons
<b>St Baldred's Chapel</b>				The cave
<b>The Run-Down Lighthouse, Bass Rock</b>	The shoggoth from the water	Hungry and malevolent, the shoggoth is not big on relationships	Survival	Destruction wrought by the shoggoth Archie Carluke's letter and notes