



# DRAGON WARRIORS

# FURY OF THE DEEP

AN ADVENTURE OF WRECKS AND RUINS

By Damian May and Jon Reed

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# FURY OF

# THE DEEP

Hear ye now a tale as old as the ocean: of a man of pride and vanity, and his desire to possess that which was not his to own. Of a great island temple to ancient gods, lost with its secrets for long centuries; and of spirits even older, with unknowable powers and great vengeance, who will fight to preserve the fragile balance and subtle treasures of their home. And of a band of wanderers whose travels bring them to the heart of this story where they will, as like as not, make of it a blood-red shambles.

By Damian May and Jon Reed

**MAGNUM·OPUS·PRESS**

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# THE DEEP

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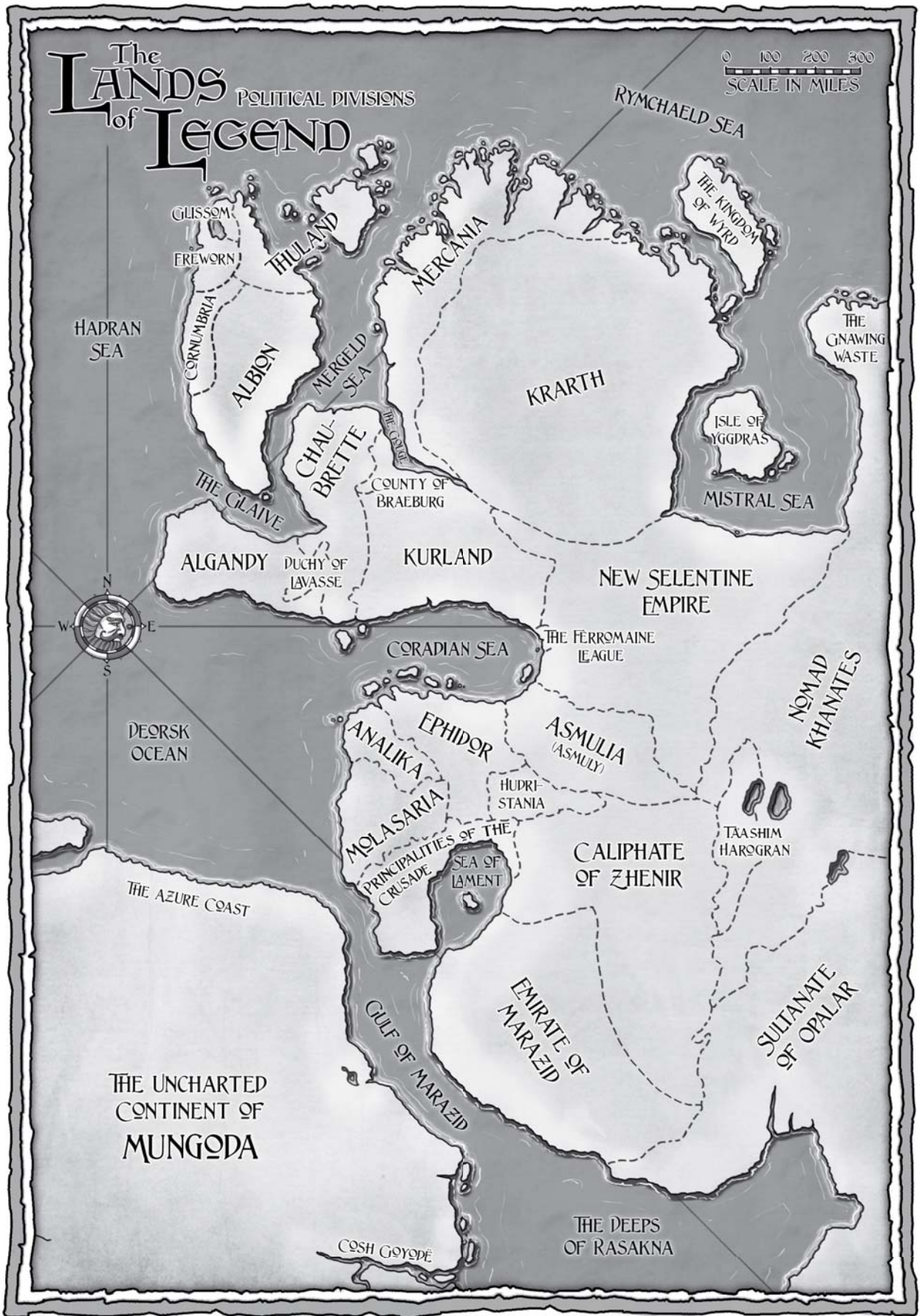
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# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	6	A Passage Broken	27
Synopsis	6	Ladies' Chambers	27
Format	6	A Secret Test	28
Background	7	The God-Deceiver	28
<b>1. The Adventure Begins</b>	<b>8</b>	Chamber of Three Pools	30
Set-Up	8	The Forbidden Hall	30
The Iniguez Expedition	9	Ante-Chamber	31
Guarcias Iniguez	9	T-Junction	31
The Artiglio	11	The Cavern of Lost Hope	31
Air Bladders	11	The Island	31
		The Hall of Penitents	32
		Mirrored Doors	33
		The God-King's Audience Chamber	33
		Face of Poseidos	33
<b>2. The Voyage Out</b>	<b>13</b>	The Hall of Shadow	33
The Journey	13	Chamber of Oceanos	34
Landfall	14	A Hidden Stairway	34
		Brass-etched Doors	35
		The Idol Room	35
<b>3. The Temple of Xathos</b>	<b>16</b>	Passage to the True Vault	35
A Steep Ascent	16	The Vault of the Ocean	35
The Ruins	16	The Treasure	36
Shrine of Poseidos	17	<b>4. The Water Trap</b>	<b>37</b>
Entrance to the Temple	17	A Filthy Sewer	39
The Vaults	18	Diversion	39
Decisions, Decisions	18	The Worms' Lair	39
A Cracked Roof	19	Run for Your Life!	40
Rubble Trouble	19	Tight Spaces	41
The Sculptured Hall	20	Twilight Zone	43
Poseidos Watchmen	20	Dive Time	45
A Pool of Purity	21	The Sparkling Cavern	46
The Sea Cave	21	Under Pressure	46
The Grotto	22	A Vision in Bluescale	46
The Dark Lake	22	<b>5. Wrecking of the Artiglio</b>	<b>50</b>
The Black Shore	23	A Lady Scorned	50
A Long Way Round	23	Lost Time	51
Falling Rocks	23	<b>6. Beyond Xathos</b>	<b>53</b>
The Sanctum of Sionus	24	Wrapping up	54
A Small Corridor	24		
The Hall of Figures	24		
The Sanctum of Anteus	24		
The Arch of Amphitra	25		
Chamber of Three Wonders	25		
An Altar Blasphemed	26		



# INTRODUCTION

# ABOUT THIS BOOK

*FURY OF THE DEEP* is an essentially self-contained adventure, and is designed for a group of adventurers between 4th and 6th rank. A party of mixed professions will have the best chance of surviving, but there is no reason that a group of simple Knights or Barbarians could not brave the challenges of the island of Xathos and survive.

The adventure could easily be slotted into any ongoing campaign that takes place in and around southern Coradia, and whilst it is designed to start in the great city-port of Ferromaine, there is no reason why—with some little adaption—it could not begin in any port that borders the Coradian Sea, such as Mantla, Achtan, Feldalium or Teleos; or even further afield.

Accounting for its start-location and player-character rank, the authors suggest that this adventure could even act as a suitable linking episode from the conclusion of the scenario ‘Sins of the Fathers’ (from the campaign book *Sleeping Gods*) to more exotic scenarios, such as the events of ‘Mungoda Gold’ (see *Sleeping Gods*) or perhaps even more mysterious lands (see *In From The Cold*).



In common with other *Dragon Warriors* adventures, those sections of text given in italics may be read aloud to the players, or paraphrased by the Games Master. However, some text may only apply in certain circumstances and those instances are indicated as such in the Games Master notes.

## Synopsis

This scenario is located in and around a water-logged ruin on an isolated Emphidian island. The companions are contracted by a wealthy sponsor to travel from Ferromaine in search of the long-forgotten treasure vault of an Emphidian god-king from the Golden Age.

Upon arriving, the companions are faced with a choice of two approaches to the vault—either via coast or land—and subsequently become trapped within. Amongst the dangers they may find are rockfalls, an evil demon-spawn, animated statues and a booby-trapped hoard of priceless treasure. To escape the vault, they must find the only way out—via a sewer and the lair of fearsome huge eels—to a maze of water-filled tunnels and caverns that extend beyond.

## Format

*Fury of the Deep* is only being released as a digital book. There are no plans to publish a printed edition of it. We have made a few other changes to the normal *Dragon Warriors* format: for example, apart from the maps there is almost no artwork. This allows us to bring books to you much more quickly and cheaply than before. We'd be interested to hear what you think of this: drop us a line at any of the usual addresses.

# Background

## History of the Temple of Xathos

GM: Background information to the adventure is detailed below, some of which—marked in italics—may be passed on to the companions by Voula the Weaver and Alexandros the Vinter after the adventurers have reached the island.

*Long millennia ago, during the early days of the Golden Age of Emphidor, it is said there dwelt amongst men the offspring of the gods. Born with the divine gifts of their parentage, they created wonders and beauty the likes of which have not been seen since.*

*In time they began to vanish from the world. Some are said to have joined their parents in the heavens, some turned against each other and were slain in great battles which shook the pillars of the earth, and others were slain by the very men they ruled over. Sionus, the favoured son of Poseidos—supreme God of the Seas—was one of the wisest of the god-kings; he foresaw the oncoming doom of his kind and sent his greatest architects and craftsmen out to a hidden sanctum on the island of Xathos.*

*There, he placed his most precious treasures and artefacts. He bade his followers to construct a mighty temple complex there and with them he sent his most trusted priests, servants and guardsmen to watch over the site and await his coming. So that none would learn of their location, he ordered that their ships be scuttled.*

*But Sionus waited too long, for he was slain by his own son Pliades as he prepared to leave for Xathos. Pliades sought to take his father's place, but underestimated the titanic anger of his grandfather Poseidos; when Pliades boarded a ship bound for Xathos, it was sucked down into the blue abyssal depths with all hands, and with it the knowledge of the settlement on Xathos perished.*

*On Xathos the worshippers and servants of Sionus waited. The temple they built was mighty and filled the entire floor of the hidden valley it occupied; thousands of tons of marble were quarried out of the valley walls to build the sprawling edifice and they dwelt there*

*for many years. As the decades wore on, many of them finally accepted that their master would never return and having little choice they made the best of life that they could; there were plentiful grapes and figs within the valley, fish in the ocean and the goats and horses that they had brought with them soon adapted to the confines of the valley.*

GM: However, some of those on Xathos could not accept that they had been abandoned. The head priest Acherades spent decades sending sacrifices to Poseidos of wine, goats, horses and even—some whispered—newborns. But his sacrifices were in vain; the primordial Titan of the Oceans had turned his face away from the world with the death of his favoured son.

In his desperation, Acherades is said to have sacrificed his own wife and child, cutting their throats and drowning them in the sacred pools, but it was all to no avail. Thenceforth, he locked himself away in the darkness of the temple vaults. What happened within those dank chambers is unknown, but what is certain is that those above continued to send food and drink to him and those who remained in servitude.

*Some time later a great earthquake shook the island, sending great slabs of mountainside crashing down into the valley floor devastating most of the buildings and rendering the temple to ruins. Though the vaults fared better, their entrances were buried under rubble and forgotten in the panicked aftermath of the cataclysm.*

*And so the few survivors endured and slowly rebuilt their lives as best they could—the vaults beneath them remaining long ignored. Since then, they have endured their isolation for another millennium, until finally a crippled Asmuli merchant vessel, desperate to find food and water, identified a path through the treacherous reefs that surround Xathos to the secluded cove and took the ancient tale of Xathos back to Ferromaine and the eager ears of the treasure-hungry Guarcias Iniguez...*

## CHAPTER I

# THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

### The Set-up

GM: The city-port of Ferromaine is distinguished by its magnificent canals, marble edifices and the profusion of footbridges and tiny alleyways that thread their way through the great city. The metropolis is dominated by the ostentatious compounds of the merchant families, whose infamous intrigues and fortunes, both mercantile and political, are the lifeblood of the city-state.

The companions are approached while staying in Ferromaine by a group of armed men:

*Standing before you are six lightly armed young men in blue-green tabards over maille hauberks, each possessing dark-hair, a beard and a muscular stature. Although they do not speak, one of them appears to be a leader, of sorts, and he simply grins a very toothy grin before handing over a sealed parchment message to you.*

GM: No matter what the companions may say or do, the strangers will not speak and remain entirely silent throughout the encounter. Any adventurer with the ability to discern sorcery will be able to tell that (a) the strangers exude a magical aura; and (b) the message is a plain piece of parchment. The red wax seal on the message bears the imprint of a wolf's head. Once opened, the sealed message reads as follows:

*I wish to convey an opportunity for you to accompany myself on a sea voyage which will prove quite profitable. Meet me on the docks at daybreak in two days time.*

*Yours sincerely,  
G. Iniguez.*

GM: After delivering their message the strangers will quickly leave, as silently as they arrived.

Once in the open air the strangers will begin running away. If the companions attempt to give chase, then they will find that they are easily out-paced; the strangers are incredibly agile and fleet-of-foot, able to run at 25 metres per combat round—for reasons that will become clear later—and will lose the companions in the maze of alleys within Ferromaine. Any adventurer that tracks the strangers will find that their trail ends at the edge of grimy water-filled canal and there is no sign of where the strangers may have disappeared to.

If the companions enquire about their job offer among their Ferromani contacts, they will discover that Guarcias Iniguez is thought of variously as an arrogant but wealthy merchant, a noble fop with a temper (and deep pockets), or an indelicate but straightforward business man. He is currently residing as a guest of the DeMarco family, who maintain a large and powerful trading fleet. Guarcias has purchased one of their vessels—the *Artiglio*—and the



service of its crew for his latest venture. The captain of the *Artiglio* is one Giorgio Ferrucci, renowned as a stern and highly respected ship's master.

## The Iniguez Expedition

*You find yourselves on the docks of Ferromaine, standing in the pre-dawn chill amongst sailors and dock hands. Bales of wool and barrels of wine and olive oil are piled against the sides of the warehouses waiting to be loaded on board vessels tied to the wharfs. Old sailors crouch about braziers, warming their hands against the cold.*

*A number of swarthy men approach you, and one speaks out: 'Buongiorno, Masters (and Mistresses). Your quarters aboard have been cleared. My name is Dario, I'll be yours aboard the Artiglio. If there's anything you need, just ask me. Can I help with your bags?'*

*Dario leads you down the dock to an immaculately maintained vessel; it is broad across the beam with high sides and a tall steeped mast. The hull is brightly painted with white and green geometric patterns and the bow is dominated by two large blue bulls-eyes.*

*A tanned and leathery man in black velvet and purple hose greets you at the gang plank. 'I am Captain Ferrucci, master of the Artiglio, I will have you people behave yourselves whilst aboard my ship. I am paid to transport you, not to put up with any foolishness. So get aboard and keep out of the crew's way until we get you to this bloody island.'*

*A large, heavily built man in rich robes reclines on the deck surrounded by a dozen armed men among whom you see those who delivered the missive two days earlier. He looks up at you with heavy eyes. 'Ah, welcome. Do you like my ship? I am your employer... if you so choose. I have recently received word through somewhat unorthodox channels that some ruins have been discovered on the island of Xathos. There is an item said to be hidden within these ruins that will enable me to become a true force to be reckoned with amongst the merchant fleets. And I have chosen you to be involved. This is a great honour for you. We find this item, it is mine. Any other gold or treasures, we divide—half to me and the crew, half to you.'*

*The cabin you are shown to is sparse but clean, new blankets are piled in one corner and there is a woven rug covering the wooden boards.*

GM: Dario will keep the companions entertained in their cabin with various snippets of shipboard gossip

and questions about the companions' past activities. This is actually a ruse by Guarcias in order to keep the companions out of the way until the *Artiglio* is well out to sea.

## Guarcias Iniguez

Guarcias claims to be a merchant and deposed member of a noble family in the south of Algandy; though in truth he spends a great majority of his time travelling the trade-roads of Asmuly with his 'court' and imposing himself upon unsuspecting landholders and minor nobility. Guarcias is, obviously, not who or what he appears. Although he is from Algandy he is not of noble birth, nor is he a young man; he is actually a vile and loathsome scoundrel of foul and unnatural hungers.

He usually travels in a richly appointed coach bedecked with coloured glass and gilt finery, and drawn by four huge white horses. He is often accompanied by 12 'knights' dressed in rich tabards and maille... which look a little too clean and smart for road wear. The men are surly, seem fierce and are not known to speak; Guarcias waves this away with an airy 'They are ignorant men, they know only the blade and the dialect of the mountains where my family rule.' His 'knights' fight as hot-bloods but any wounds caused by their weapons will, on closer inspection, appear to be ragged bite marks.

He is also accompanied by a slight young girl, his 'daughter', who is quite short and always heavily wrapped in furs and a hooded cloak no matter what the weather.

Ten years ago, Guarcias was leading his band of cut-throats as they raided coastal villages to the south of Algandy when he came across a hidden grotto where the elders and fishermen were making offerings at a shell-bedecked shrine. There was a fierce battle and half his men were slaughtered like the pigs they were, but they managed to kill the villagers and seize the unconscious object they were protecting. When Guarcias saw what he had captured he set about securing her for himself; he poisoned his remaining men's rum that night and wrapped her in cold iron chains which burnt and scoured her flesh. He beat and tore her until she acquiesced to his wishes and cloaked him in a powerful glamour. She summoned a wolf pack for him and wove them into men, a group of oxen and a

hay cart became a royal coach and river pebbles and leaves became jewels and gold. Thereafter, he left Algardy immediately and departed for far shores.

Over the years Guarcias has carved his name into the girl, he has tortured her mind and body and sates himself upon her whenever the mood takes him. If the cloak and furs are ever removed one may gaze upon a ruination of innocence. The nereid is slight, bird-like; her skin is pale as snow from too many days without sunlight and covered in a patchwork of welts, burns and scars. Her teeth are chipped and broken and her ears have been clipped away from her head... to human eyes she is a child, but there are aspects of a woman about her and one cannot look too long without feeling a dread uneasiness overtaking the revulsion at has been done to her form. Her eyes are large and the colour of autumn skies, and there is thunder and wrath within them which speaks of ancient dawns and a coming doom. This fay-creature is, in fact, far older than her appearance suggests and if the companions unshackle her then they may be playing with fire; will she thank them or instead scour them from the earth because they are mortal—like her captor? Or will she simply heal herself and leave, seeing the entire experience as a mildly strange interlude in her long existence?

More information is given about her on page 48.

The captain of the ship that originally discovered the lost settlement owes Guarcias a considerable debt, due to Guarcias having certain information that pertains to the drunken murder of one of the Doge's third cousins. He came straight to Guarcias in an attempt to put an end to the Algardian's blackmail, but it is only a matter of time before word gets out. The difference is, although others may be interested in exploring the ruins based on rumour, Guarcias' captive described to him the legend of Sionus and the famed treasures he concealed within the Temple—especially a unique sorcerous artefact; the Compass of the Eternal Sea, which would revolutionise Guarcias' ship-based merchant trade. She did not, however, mention any of the dangers that lie in wait within the Temple, knowing full well that Guarcias' greedy nature would ensure that he would not trust others to such vast wealth and that he will venture there himself... hopefully to his death.

### Appearance

Guarcias is 5' 7" tall, and heavily built. He appears to be about 25 years old and dresses extremely richly—to the extent that he is usually regarded as some-

thing of a fop. He has an extremely arrogant manner and fully enjoys the good things in life, often at the expense of others. He claims to be a devout follower of the True Faith and will have no truck with sorcerers and the like, going so far as to refuse to spend the night under the same roof as one.

Note that Guarcias' necklace is hidden below his tunic at all times; this sick trophy consists of the nereid's severed triangular ears threaded onto a length of leather.



### GUARCIAS INIGUEZ

#### NORMAL HUMAN

Rank-equivalent: 1st

ATTACK 12, hand (d3, 2)    Armour Factor: 0

DEFENCE 5    STEALTH 12

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3    EVASION 3

PERCEPTION 4

Health Points: 8

*Strength 15; Reflexes 9; Intelligence 13; Psychic Talent 9;*

*Looks 12*

Equipment: Wolf-seal ring, nereid-ear necklace.

Note: The survival of Guarcias and his captive nereid are vital to the plot of this adventure. It is highly recommended that neither of them be allowed to die unless specifically instructed in the GM notes. For example, if the companions become so enraged by Guarcias' attitude and demeanour that they threaten to slay him then he will bargain for his life; offering large amounts of money and power to the companions in order to save his own neck. If they still insist on slaughtering him, then so be it... perhaps one of the companions will pick up his necklace and suffer the same miserable fate that is intended for Guarcias in Area 52?

### Wolf Knights

The twelve 'knights' that guard Guarcias use the same statistics as for wolves—as that is what they truly are.



### Air Bladder

A strange device somewhat reminiscent of the clan pipes of Cornumbria and Thuland, the air bladder recently emerged from the workshops of the Doge of Ferromaine. In construction it is an ox stomach sealed and oiled with layers of fish-glue and tuna oil, and is inflated by means of a wooden stop sealed into an opening. Whilst it is unknown what original use was envisaged for the air bladder, it has become popular on board small vessels as a floatation aid for sailors or to assist with drift fishing.

A fully inflated bladder is the size of two men's heads and will keep a man afloat for up to 3 hours.

After this time the salt water's effect on the fish glue and oiled surface will cause the bladder to begin to leak... not only this, but the pungent glue and oil will mix with the water and draw the attentions of large predators well before the air finally gives out.

It is possible one may be able to use the bladder to draw breath from beneath the water, but it would be tricky to do so and the air would be rank with the smell of the bladder.

Spare air bladders can be found in the ship's stores and Dario will advise the companions to equip them at a cost of 4 florins each.

## CHAPTER 2

THE VOYAGE  
OUT

## The Journey

*Shipboard life is deeply boring, broken only by evening banter with the sailors and watching dolphins cruise the bow-wave. Occasionally an island is sighted—often-times with a few small white-daubed huts and a tiny fishing skiff dragged up on the beach. The ship's goats bleat questioningly at the odd passing ship. The sailors are an experienced and professional group, keeping the ship tightly on the course dictated by Captain Ferrucci, who glowers at the horizon as he directs the steerage.*

GM: After departing from Ferromaine, the trip to the island of Xathos takes approximately two weeks in moderate winds. Once it is out of sight of land there are few landmarks by which to guide the ship, and though the crew is used to sailing by the stars and sun these are not the most accurate of guides in the current age. During this time, Guarcias spends quite a lot of the journey within his cabin 'conversing' with the one he describes as his daughter and emerges from these discussions at regular intervals to give the Captain course corrections. This strangeness causes no little muttering among the crew, as rumours of witchcraft and the like abound. However, in spite of this unusual navigation the ship makes good progress and is guided directly to the mysterious island of Xathos.

If Guarcias is questioned about the ruins on Xathos, he will relate some of the little information he knows; merely that the ruins contain the treasure vault of an ancient Emphidian king called Sionus

and that it has lain undisturbed for many hundreds of years. However, Guarcias will pointedly avoid and refuse any discussion of the specific 'item' that he seeks until he is actually inside the ruins.

The captive nereid has overplayed her hand somewhat in divulging the story of the vault and its treasure to Guarcias. He suspects that she may have a possible means of escape on the island—which is actually correct—and has therefore decided to leave her bound and locked at all times in his cabin on board the ship, guarded by six of his loyal wolf-knights.

The sea voyage is largely uneventful, though the following encounters may occur:

## A Tense Stand-off

Guarcias is jostled by one of the sailors as he ventures across the deck whilst the Captain attempts to tack against the wind. He pushes the man away violently, almost cracking his skull on the mast and there is suddenly the threat of spilt blood as the ship's crew face off against Guarcias' men. The Captain and his first mate will petition the companions to assist them as negotiators between the two groups in order to get the situation back under control.

## The Rock Spur

The ship chances upon an uncharted small spur of rock projecting up above the ocean surface. Tucked beneath an overhang is a small iron box that has

almost rusted away. It contains a piece of rose quartz and a faded piece of parchment. The parchment has been ruined by salt and is illegible.

### The Shoal

A rocky shoal scrapes the side of the ship when underway with a strong wind in the sails. There are no reefs marked on the charts at this location, and the Captain asks the companions' assistance in determining their position before they are too far away so he can add the danger to his charts.

### Dario's Ordeal

After the Captain has retired for the evening, Guarcias tries to get Dario to accompany him to his cabin for the night. The young lad protests but Guarcias coldly insists that the boy is under his employ and his to do with as he wishes. At this, the ship's first mate—Dino—attempts to assign night-watch duties to Dario to keep him out of harm's way, but is firmly rebuffed by Guarcias. In his desperation, Dino secretly implores the companions to intervene.

### A Rotting Corpse

A skiff crewed by two young fishermen pulls alongside to trade fish for whatever they can. They will be quite outspoken about the beauty and grace of any female PCs—no matter how plain they might actually appear. They will tell of a strange corpse which washed ashore on their island recently. The bloated dead man had skin of darkest ebony and teeth filed to points. Eventually they will leave the ship and sail back to their island.

### The Unceasing Noise

Late one evening, there can be heard a very loud continuous scraping against the hull which does not cease; the companions and the lookout will be unable to see what is causing the mysterious noise and it will continue throughout the dark hours, stopping anyone from getting any sleep. Shortly before day-break the next morning the noise will stop. When the sun rises the sailors will examine the bottom of the ship, discovering that the hull is completely free of barnacles and also that there are shallow gouges in the painted wooden planking.

### The Castaways

The voyagers encounter a small fishing vessel crewed entirely by young boys. The children have a donkey penned at the back of the boat's deck and a large green cricket hangs in a wicker-work cage from the mast. Despite their situation, the boys seem to be in good spirits and are happy to continue on their way in their small craft.

### The Sea-beast

A fearsome battle rages between a pod of cachalots and a huge kraken-like beast several hundred metres away, causing the sailors to fear the ship may be swamped. When the battle is over the sea is littered with parts of the kraken—reeking of ammonia.



### Landfall

*After a long sea voyage, the sailors finally sight the island of Xathos on the horizon. The captain orders the ship to anchor in the lee of a rocky promontory and then calls Guarcias over:*

*'I will not risk this ship to that rocky cove—you must row the boat ashore instead.'*

*He points to the ship's wooden boat, which the sailors are already man-handling across the deck and over the side. Readying yourselves—along with Guarcias, six of his knights and two of the crew—you all board the very cramped 8-man boat and begin rowing out to shore. After sculling around the promontory, the boat starts to pitch and yaw amid the increasingly choppy rock-strewn waters, making you grip the edges of the boat tighter. Then you hear a loud rasping as the bottom scrapes against submerged rocks.*

*Finally you make landfall on the beach, where you all leap out into the briny waters and haul the boat up the sandy shore, above the tidal mark. Sodden from the waist down, you stop to gather your bearings in the bright sunshine. The secluded beach is composed of chalky white-and-cream coloured sand, littered with seashells and dry kelp. It nestles amongst the dark rocky*

*cliffs, with large clusters of darker rock projecting from the rear of the beach and in small outcrops all along it, leading to a wide sea-cave that undercuts the sheer cliff-face. Almost hidden amid the boulders, you also spy a well-trodden path that meanders through the cliff rocks before ascending up into what may be a valley above.*

GM: The actual approach to the beach is quite simple if one knows the way—a small longboat could easily make the journey if it had the correct maps. Indeed, this is how the livestock were originally landed, but now there are none who know the reef's secrets.

The six wolf-knights that accompany Guarcias to shore will become less and less responsive to his orders the longer they are away from the enslaved nereid; they will turn and run from the first supernatural encounter and return immediately to the surface where they will mill about in confusion, whining and scratching at the earth... and eventually they will run off into the valley and help themselves to a tasty goat. Meanwhile, Guarcias will seem unconcerned by their abandonment: 'See? Useless wretches! But you are made of sterner stuff, I am sure....'

## Beyond the Beach

GM: The companions face a choice of two possible routes to the temple:

1. A trek up the cliffs towards Area 1, followed by a hike through the valley and a long and arduous excavation of the Temple's central stairwell.
2. A dangerous venture through the sea-cave next to the beach at Area 11. Travelling through a sundered rock wall, the companions will encounter the flooded caverns beneath the temple.

## The Island of Xathos

### Key

- |     |                    |
|-----|--------------------|
| 1.  | Path               |
| 2.  | Ruins              |
| 3.  | Shrine of Poseidos |
| 4.  | Temple of Xathos   |
| 11. | Sea-cave           |



## CHAPTER 3

# THE TEMPLE OF XATHOS

### 1. A Steep Ascent

*The ascent up from the beach is steep, but the going is relatively easy; many years of use have worn a solid path amid the scrubby trees and through a gap in the forbidding cliffs. Overhead, seagulls caw and swoop, angry at your intrusion. Emerging from the topmost treeline you suddenly find yourselves on a slight rise overlooking a lush, green and verdant valley extending quite far into the distance, surrounded on either side by huge cliff walls that reach into the sky.*

*Ahead, the remains of a massive marble temple complex dominates the closest part of the valley, giving way to a series of olive groves and grape trellises behind. To your left you see the ruins of a large number of tumbled stone buildings, which must surely be uninhabitable. At the rear of the valley, massive cuttings in the stone walls form great square-sided alcoves in which building materials have been stored.*

GM: Guarcias seems to disregard all of the strange sights and sounds of the valley. He regards the few elderly inhabitants of the valley as he does the goats and horses, though he will pay close attention at any mention of the vault below. He will not assist with the excavation or any other manual chores and will make occasional ‘encouraging’ comments to those working. Though he does not divulge this to the companions, the nereid has told him that the Compass is hidden deep within the vault and in order to find it he needs several ‘keys’ to unlock the ‘secret doors’. His obsession with the Compass knows no

bounds and he is eager to find it as soon as possible—and at any cost to those around him.

From this location the companions can explore the ruins at Area 2, the shrine at Area 3 or the temple at Area 4.

### 2. The Ruins

*Even in its destroyed state, you can see that the ruins were clearly built by people of ancient prowess and craftsmanship; great avenues of columns and delicate carvings of caryatids, sea nymphs and horses grace every surface. Fleecy goats gambol and climb upon the piles of broken marble, while great powerful horses crop the grass nearby, seemingly unworried by your presence. Many of the intact buildings show signs of intensive habitation, with incongruous sights such as woollen cloaks drying on a line strung between two great stone statues.*

GM: The valley is almost two kilometres long and 500 metres across at its widest point, with much of the area taken up by the tumbled ruins of a massive marble building complex surrounded by wide areas of trees and grass. The ancient remains of some simpler buildings exist as piles of rubble dotting the verge. Further down the valley are some small fields and groves of trees, and a pile of perished fishing nets is hanging over the wall of a fallen guardhouse.

The bulk of the population has departed with their ‘rescuers’ but there are still a number of elderly



residents living among the ruins who will be pleased to chat with visitors and relate all they know about the island, the ruins and their history. Among their number are Voula the Weaver and Alexandros the Vinter. Either of these two ancients will be able to relate a great deal of the history of the island, Sionus etc. though the GM is free to have their accounts vary or contradict each other—in truth neither knows why Sionus did not arrive, but they have different theories as to why, and one of them may even be correct!

### Horses of Xathos

The horses of Xathos are an ancient breed that long ago vanished from the mainland and are distinguished by a heavy musculature and small vestigial toe on their hind legs. Despite being only slightly larger than a modern riding horse they possess the same statistics as Warhorses and—having never known a rider—they will react violently to anyone attempting to mount them.

If at a later stage, after the adventure, the companions make plans to ship the horses back to the mainland for purpose of sale or breeding it is possible to arrange for them to be taken off the island. An expert navigator could get a small longboat or trireme to shore or brave men could swim them out to a cog where a team might hoist them on board. However, it is fair to say that there will need to be a lengthy period of acclimatisation for either of these plans to be successful. The horses would fetch perhaps an extra 500 florins compared to a normal warhorse simply due to novelty but they also require forage and water to a far lesser degree, thus allowing them to be kept on a budget that is only slightly larger than a mule's.

However, the horses would need to be bred with other bloodlines as only the blessing of the Lord of Horses has kept their blood pure and that blessing no longer applies away from Xathos itself. After several generations the horses will be indistinguishable from any other breed, becoming yet another of the lost treasures of Xathos.

#### WARHORSE OF XATHOS

Rank-equivalent: 5th	Armour Factor: 0
ATTACK 17, bite (d8, 4) or kick (d10, 6)	Movement: 15m (30m)
DEFENCE 4	STEALTH 10
MAGICAL DEFENCE 4	EVASION 4
Health Points: 1d6+16	PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

From here, the companions can explore the shrine at Area 3 or the temple at Area 4. Alternatively, they could go back to the cliff-top at Area 1.

### 3. Shrine of Poseidos

*The largest of the ruined monuments draws your attention. Entering through a collapsed doorway, you find a large rough-stone altar, carved with swirling patterns that have been stained red with long-dried libations and the remains of dried flowers.*

GM: This was a holy shrine of Poseidos, where the villagers made votive offerings to the great Sea-God. Apart from the altar, there is nothing else of interest here. The stains are wine stains, not blood.

Anyone touching the altar feels a profound sense of grief for a moment, which then passes quickly.

Anyone attempting to desecrate or destroy the altar is apparently unaffected. However, they are secretly subject to a curse with a Magical Attack of 24 which will cause any horse which comes within 10 metres of them to be struck with a homicidal fury centred upon the adventurer—for Poseidos is the Lord of Horses. This curse will last until the afflicted makes penance or touches a saintly relic.

From here, the companions can explore the ruins at Area 2 or the temple at Area 4. Alternatively, they could go back to the cliff-top at Area 1.

### 4. Entrance to the Temple

*The monolithic remnants of this structure clearly suggest that the tales were true; this is indeed the long-lost Temple of Xathos. It stands eerily silent—even the goats seem to stay away from this imposing building. There appears to be no obvious entrance, until—having circled the great complex of sundered marble—you find a large stone stairway that leads down into the ruined temple. However, it is choked with huge blocks of broken marble which fell from the balustrade overhead. The blocks must have lain here for a very long time, as they are covered in a profusion of grape-vines and moss which has overgrown them.*

GM: The marble blocks weigh about 1,000 kg each, although the smaller chunks weigh substantially

less. It would take about 30 man-hours to clear a safe path through the jumbled blocks to the dusty stairs beneath. If the companions clear the rubble then read the next passage to them:

*As the hours pass by you slowly excavate a small path through the rock-fall, behind which you finally uncover a stairway of smoothly finished marble slabs that extends down into the darkness...*

GM: The stairs descend down to Area 5. Alternatively, the companions can explore the the ruins at Area 2, the temple at Area 4 or hike back to the cliff-top at Area 1.

# The Vaults

## Sea-cave, Caverns and Tunnels

### Key

5. Decisions, Decisions
6. A Cracked Roof
7. Rubble Trouble
8. The Sculptured Hall
9. Poseidos Watchmen
10. A Pool of Purity
11. The Sea Cave
12. The Grotto
13. The Dark Lake
14. The Black Shore
15. A Long Way Round
16. Falling Rocks
17. The Sanctum of Sionus
18. A Small Corridor
19. The Hall of Figures
20. The Sanctum of Anteus
21. The Arch of Amphitra
22. Chamber of Three Wonders
23. An Altar Blasphemed
24. A Passage Broken
25. Ladies' Chambers
26. A Secret Test
27. The God-Deceiver
28. Chamber of Three Pools
29. The Forbidden Hall
30. Ante-Chamber
31. T-Junction
32. The Cavern of Lost Hope
33. The Hall of Penitents

34. Mirrored Doors
35. The God-King's Audience Chamber
36. The Hall of Shadow
37. Chamber of Oceanos
38. A Hidden Stairway
39. Brass-etched Doors
40. The Idol Room
41. Passage to the True Tomb
42. The Vault of the Ocean

- A. Pool of Oceanos
- B. Pool of Poseidos
- C. Pool of Amphitra
- D. Flame Chest
- E. Shield Chest
- F. Bronze Chest
- G. Island and Altar
- H. Face of Poseidos
- I. Dais and Throne
- J. Horse Urn
- K. Dolphin Urn

During the scenario, several events may occur that will significantly alter the layout and description of the underworld. Most importantly, rockfall events are necessary to trap the companions inside the vault and force them to search for an alternative exit. GMs should keep a track of these events, as follows:

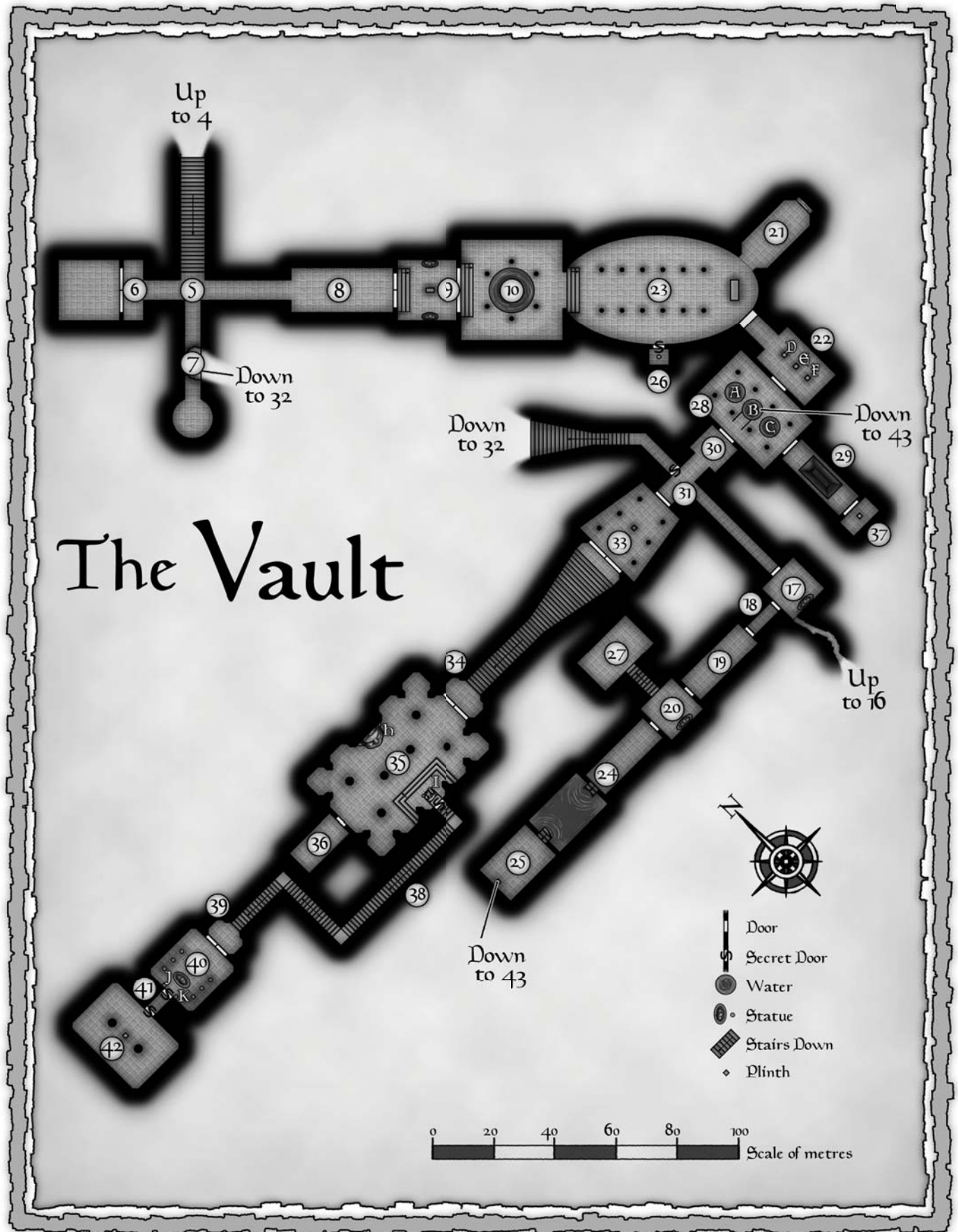
<i>Location</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Trigger</i>
Area 7	Rockfall	Failed excavation of Area 7
Area 22/23	Rockfall	Attempted opening of door between Area 22 and Area 23
Area 15	Rockfall	Opening of door at Area 33
Area 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42	Flooding	Attempted removal of treasure from Area 41

## 5. Decisions, Decisions

*You cautiously descend into the ruins. Several minutes later the stairs finally end in a cramped cross-roads, from which three dark passageways lead off to your right, left and straight ahead.*

GM: Each passageway continues for a distance of roughly 30 metres.

The western passage leads to Area 1, the southern passage leads to Area 7, and the eastern passage leads to Area 8. The stairs lead back up to Area 4.



## 6. A Cracked Roof

*This passageway finally ends in a long room of marble tiles and granite walls that lie below a high vaulted ceiling which rises some twenty feet above. In the darkness you can make out many dusty cobwebs, and a pair of doors constructed from fig wood and marble lie before you.*

GM: A successful Perception check (Stealth 8) will reveal that the stones making up the ceiling are badly fitted and cracked in comparison to the rest of the stonework in this room.

If the doors are opened the pressure change will be enough to drop the ruined ceiling onto anyone beneath. Poking or otherwise touching the roof with any force will also trigger a collapse. Anyone within the room will be caught in the collapse.

The collapsing ceiling has a Speed of 12, and will deal 4d20 Health Points of damage. The roof collapse completely fills the room with debris, including an ancient podium and columns from the room above that are also pulled down into the void as well.

It will take 20 man-hours to dig any survivors out, and a further 200 man-hours to clear the way to the buried doorway.

Beyond the doors is a storeroom filled with long-dissolved foodstuffs, perished wooden shelving and piles of cloth that have long-since turned to threads and dust. There is nothing further here.

The only way out is back to Area 5.

## 7. Rubble Trouble

*The corridor ends after about thirty metres—it is blocked by a massive pile of stone and earth that appears to be the result of an ancient rock-fall.*

GM: Digging through this blockage will take approximately 40 man-hours. If the companions attempt to excavate the rock-fall then they face a 75% chance of digging through into a void above Area 32 and triggering a total floor collapse; the ground beneath the companions feet disintegrates and plunges them down into the water-logged cavern below—unless they can make a successful Reflexes check against a difficulty of 14.

If the companions persevere and manage to find a way through without falling into the abyss below,

they will discover a circular room another 20 metres further on. This room contains the perished remains of cloaks and dust-covered bottles of debased oils. In the centre of the room is the ancient grinning skeleton of a man. Judging by the gnawed torch and sandals that lie beside him, he must have starved to death over a number of weeks. There is nothing further here.

If anyone is able to read Ancient Emphidian there is a scratched message on the west wall which reads, 'The key is in the pool'.

If the rockfall is triggered, then a chasm leads down to Area 32. Otherwise, the only exit is back to Area 5.

## 8. The Sculptured hall

*Perhaps fifty metres on, the corridor empties into a wide hall. The walls are carved with intricate marble relief sculptures upon which vibrant paints have been daubed; they are still as bright as the day they were painted. The colourful sculptures depict nymphs and hippocampi in procession, with dolphins and great seashells. Dust coats the floor, through which you can make out a striking mosaic of tiles forming the image of a trident against a crashing wave. At the end of the corridor is a set of double doors that appear to be constructed from fig wood and thin bronze plates. The plates are stamped with imprints of conch shells.*

GM: The doors are not locked or otherwise secured, and they can swing open easily onto Area 9, while the corridor leads back to Area 5.

## 9. Poseidos' Watchmen

*Two huge statues of Tritons, each 3 metres tall, stand on either side of the room. In the centre is a small plinth that is carved to resemble a pair of dolphins. Beyond it lie two massive stone doors with veins of black that run throughout their surface, barring your way forward.*

GM: The plinth is set on a hydrostatic channel of water which runs under the floor to a pressure plate under the massive piebald stone doors. The plinth will lower slightly if anything is placed upon it. It

was on the plinth that offerings were laid by worshippers to judge whether they were deemed worthy; if the item was heavy enough to compress the water column then the huge stone doors would swing open under their own weight.

Any attempt to physically destroy the doors is both difficult and dangerous. Whilst the heavy doors can be smashed down with 12 man-hours of work, the slabs of marble are held up by relatively weak hinges and breaking through their bases will send a quarter ton of marble slicing down like a runaway guillotine, with a Speed of 14 and damage of 2d10 Health Points.

The stone doors lead to Area 10, while the passage leads back to Area 5.

## 10. A Pool of Purity

*The walls of this large chamber reach high into a vaulted ceiling covered with bright blue paint, which is somewhat patchy and faded now. In the centre of the room you can see a large shallow pool of fairly clear water, surrounded by six slim marble pillars. Extending around the perimeter of the room, a number of torch brackets dot the walls at regular intervals. A strange smell hangs in the air. At the far end of the hall is a dark archway, hung with tatters of long-perished cloth.*

GM: If someone inspects the pool they will note that it appears empty other than a few patches of ceiling tiles, but occasionally the water ripples and and swirls strangely. There are two abalone shells on the lip of the pool.

If anything other than one of the abalone shells are placed into the pool, the water will boil up suddenly into a huge man-like form which says 'You must drink the sacred waters to purify yourselves before entering the inner sanctums.' Which would be fine if any of the companions spoke fluent Ancient Emphidian. Those who speak modern Emphidian will pick out the words for 'water', 'drink', 'inner' and 'enter'.

The Water Elemental will allow anyone who drinks water from the abalone shells to continue their journey. Those who do not drink from the shells, or who attack the elemental will be met with deadly force—apart from Guarcias who is protected by his ear-totem necklace (though the companions will not know that).

### WATER ELEMENTAL

Rank-equivalent: 6th	Armour Factor: 0
ATTACK 19, elemental power (d10, 6)	Movement: 15m
DEFENCE 14	STEALTH 10
MAGICAL DEFENCE 8	EVASION 4
Health Points: 26	PERCEPTION 14
	Reflexes: 11 (panoptical)

Immune to non-magical weapons.

GM: If any companions drink the water from the shells, then read the following aloud:

*As the water runs down your throat you feel refreshed, you fancy you can hear waves crashing in the distance, which slowly grow fainter.*

GM: Entering the archway brings the companions to Area 23, while the doors lead back to Area 9.

## 11. The Sea Cave

*To your right, a deep sandy channel snakes through the hazardous reefs and cuts across the southern edge of this small cove, passing beneath the large overhang of the sea-cave. At the mouth of the sea-cave, the beach narrows and hugs the left-hand side of the cave and is then covered by a stretch of seawater, which separates it from a wide, high sandbank further inside. Beyond, you can see that another, larger stretch of water separates the sand-bank from the far wall of the cave.*

GM: Entering the sea-cave from the beach requires the companions to easily wade across a knee-deep stretch of water to a sandbar and then cross another waist-deep section of the flooded cave. Although crossing the waist-deep section is straightforward, there is actually a steep drop-off on the right-hand side into a dangerous deep-water channel, where a fast-moving strong current can—depending on the time of day—sweep any swimmers out into the depths of the cave complex or out to sea.

When the companions reach the back wall of the sea-cave, read the following aloud:

*Just before you reach the back of the cave, the sand beneath your feet gives way to a slippery, rocky plateau that lies strewn with smooth boulders, pebbles and rock-pools full of shore-life. The deep, dark waters of the channel beside*

*you funnel waves down through the cave entrance that wash over scattered rocky outcrops before disappearing through a huge crack in the rock-face which has been eroded by the power of the sea. At the edge of the jagged chasm you can make out a thin, kelp-strewn rock ledge that follows alongside the channel into the gloom.*

GM: As long as the companions move at normal speed on the ledge they will be fine, but if attempting to move fast they must make a Reflexes check or pitch into the fast-flowing channel.

The ledge leads on to Area 12, while anyone caught in the deep-water channel will be swept on and out over the waterfall at Area 13.



### 12. The Grotto

*Stepping cautiously along the ledge, you enter a chamber of glistening granite that surrounds a deep wide pool of clear seawater which is connected to the channel through a small gap in the rock. The fish and crustaceans that swim in the depths of the pool dart quickly underneath fronds of seaweed at your appearance. The ledge continues on a circuitous route around the edge of the pool before it rejoins the channel on the other side and disappears into the depths of the sea-cave.*

GM: The grotto is a simple natural granite chamber some 15 metres wide. The small fish and creatures in the pool are normal coastal marine animals that have entered the pool via the channel.

*Here the slippery ledge ends at a high boulder, but a way ahead seems feasible by jumping over to the opposite side of the deep channel, then continuing for a while before crossing back across to a rocky plateau that you can dimly make out in the gloom ahead.*

GM: Reflexes check at climbing difficulty 12 is required at each crossing attempt.

The rocky plateau and the deep-water channel both lead to Area 13, while the slippery ledge leads back to Area 11.

### 13. The Dark Lake

GM: If the companions have entered here from the Grotto at Area 12, then read the following aloud:

*The last vestiges of light from the cave entrance fade away behind you, leaving you dependant on your torches to see the way ahead. The noise of falling water steadily increases as you proceed deeper into the cave, and then the short rocky plateau that you are standing on ends abruptly. To your right, the channel spills out over a sheer drop into a pitch-dark chasm before you. Beyond the plateau you cannot see a roof nor walls in the darkness ahead, but at the very edge of your torchlight you can make out—and hear—a large body of water below, into which the the channel pours.*

GM: The height of the rock plateau is 30 metres, but descending down into the dark, water-filled cavern is fairly easy if the companions have a rope. However, if the companions attempt to climb down into the cavern, they will find that the rock walls are wet and slippery, requiring a Reflexes check versus a climbing difficulty of 12, for every 5 metres of the descent.

The dark black lake in the cavern is chest-deep and weed-choked. Falling into the water is not dangerous, although it will require a successful Reflexes check for the adventurer to inhale some air before they spend a few rounds underwater orientating themselves. However, it would be better not to fall at all, as the splashing sounds may attract unwelcome attention.

Once the companions enter the waters of the lake, read the following aloud:

*Extending out into the darkness, the murky, slimy lake is choked with a foul rotting weed and the numerous crustaceans and molluscs that thrive upon it. Underfoot, you can feel a soft silty sand mixed with the dissolved remains of the weed.*

GM: The Dark Lake is approximately 100 metres across. Wading across the lake is at ½ normal speed. Any adventurer that wishes to try and charge across risks losing their footing and taking in a mouthful of foetid stinking water.

#### Encounters

Roll for every 2 minutes spent in the lake water. Add +2 to the roll if anyone falls, splashes or yells out.

**1d20 Result**

- 1-6 Conch Shell (harmless).
- 7-12 Large Crab (harmless).
- 13-15 Cone Shell. Exudes a strong poison if picked up with bare hands (see *Dragon Warriors*, p. 122).
- 15-17 1-2 Sentinel Crabs (see below).
- 18 1-3 Large Moray Eels.
- 19-20 1-2 Huge Conger Eels.

**SENTINEL CRAB**

Rank-equivalent: 2nd  
 ATTACK 14, each pincer (d4 +2, 3)  
 DEFENCE 5  
 MAGICAL DEFENCE 2  
 Health Points: 1d6 +4

Armour Factor: 5  
 Movement: 12m (20m)  
 STEALTH 12  
 EVASION 3  
 PERCEPTION 5 (darksight)

**LARGE MORAY EEL**

Rank-equivalent: 2nd  
 ATTACK 13, bite (d3, 2), weak poison from bacterial infection.  
 DEFENCE 5  
 MAGICAL DEFENCE 1  
 Health Points: 1d6 +8

Armour Factor: 0  
 Movement: 7m (15m), swimming 15m  
 STEALTH 18  
 EVASION 2  
 PERCEPTION 9 (normal)

**HUGE CONGER EEL**

Rank-equivalent: 3rd  
 ATTACK 16, bite (d8, 6)  
 DEFENCE 9

MAGICAL DEFENCE 1  
 Health Points: 1d10 +12

Armour Factor: 2  
 Movement: 5m (10m), swimming 10m  
 STEALTH 16  
 EVASION 6  
 PERCEPTION 13 (normal)



GM: Wading eastward eventually leads to Area 14, while climbing back up the waterfall leads to Area 12.

**Special Note:** If the companions have endured the terror of the Worms' Lair and are now making their final journey out of the caverns, then proceed to Chapter 5 for the final act of this adventure.

## 14. The Black Shore

*As you approach the opposite shore, the dim light reveals that the rock ceiling descends sharply to meet a beach of black sand and dried black seaweed.*

GM: When the companions set foot on the beach, read the following aloud:

*You finally reach the far side of the filthy, stinking lake and emerge onto slick black sands that slope upward. In the dim light ahead, you can make out the narrowing walls of the cavern's rock-face, which lead eventually to a jagged cleft in the rock.*

GM: The cleft in the rock leads upwards in a rough, undulating climb through Area 15. Wading westward leads back to Area 13.

## 15. A Long Way Round

*After a long hike through the twisting rubble-strewn tunnel, you eventually spot a large opening in the wall to your left, which overlooks a chamber full of dark filth. Meanwhile the tunnel continues straight ahead.*

GM: The chamber is the vault's sewer outflow. It is a dead-end, with both the original exit tunnel and the sewer having been sealed long ago by huge rockfalls and detritus. The area is unstable and any excavation by the companions will only result in more rocks sliding down to fill any holes they have cleared.

The northern route leads to Area 16, while the southern route leads back to Area 14.

## 16. Falling Rocks

GM: If the companions have entered via the long tunnel in Area 14, then read the following aloud:

*After ascending upwards through several jagged sloping tunnels that are covered with stones and pebbles underfoot, you find yourselves in a large natural rock chamber. Huge boulders and rubble litter the floor and deep fissures line the walls. As you enter, you hear some small rocks occasionally tumbling from the fissures.*

GM: However, if the companions have triggered a rockfall by opening the doors at Area 33, then read the following aloud:

*The narrow cleft in the rock comes to a sudden and completely end. A recent rockfall has sealed this tunnel with a profusion of great stone boulders and earthen rubble.*

GM: This location holds no danger for the companions... unless, of course, one of them is standing here when the rockfall is triggered! Any attempt to excavate the rockfall will only lead to more rubble falling down from above to take its place.

The northern route leads to Area 17, while the southern route leads back to Area 15. If the rockfall has been triggered, then the southern route is completely blocked.

### 17. The Sanctum of Sionus

*You have entered a large chamber of glistening white marble, where every surface is covered with a light film of dust that sparkles in the dim light. In the centre of the room you see an enormous marble statue of a naked muscular humanoid carrying a shepherd's crook with a single eye in the centre of his forehead. At the statue's feet are three bronze figurines of large rams, with eyes formed from large opals. Two dark doorways lead out of this room, but you can also make out a large crack in the southern wall, which seems as if someone could squeeze through it.*

GM: This statue is an animated guardian created by the sorcery of the high priest Acherades. The statue will not take any action, however, until the sheep are touched, at which point it will immediately attack anyone in the room, starting with the adventurer who touched them.

A plaque at the base of the statue reads in Ancient Emphidian; 'Polthus, Beloved Son and Shepherd of our Lord, Blinded by the Accursed One'.

#### STONE CYCLOPS

Rank-equivalent: 12th

ATTACK 24, crook (d6 +3, 7)    Armour Factor: 5 (stone)

DEFENCE 15    Movement: N/A

MAGICAL DEFENCE 11    STEALTH 4

Health Points: 52    EVASION 6

PERCEPTION 12 (panoptical)

GM: The statue is too large to be able to exit via the doors and appears to have been assembled within the room itself.

The brass rams are not animated and their eyes contain a total of six black opals, worth 100 florins each.

The western doorway leads to Area 18, while the northern doorway leads to Area 31. The cracked southern wall leads to Area 16.

### 18. A Small Corridor

*Beyond the doorway extends a corridor that is lined with walls of black and grey granite. You can see another doorway—identical to the one you have just entered—at the other end of the corridor.*

GM: Companions can only walk single file in this corridor. The western doorway leads to Area 19, while the eastern doorway leads back to Area 17.

### 19. The Hall of Figures

*You enter a long corridor constructed from grey granite. Upon the walls are painted strange primitive figures in black that depict men, horses and giants.*

GM: The western doorway leads to Area 20, while the eastern doorway leads back to Area 18.

### 20. The Sanctum of Anteus

*You emerge into a large granite room and see directly before you a huge, granite statue—perhaps 18 feet tall—of a rough-featured and heavy-set naked man. A door is set in the opposite wall, while a bronze door is set in the wall to your right.*

GM: A plaque attached to the statue reads in Ancient Emphidian: 'Anteus, Son of our Lord, Slain by the Thunderer's Bastard'.

Opposite the statue, the bronze door is jammed tight into the wall and requires a combined Strength of 25 to force open.

The bronze door leads to Area 27. The western



door leads to Area 24, while the eastern door leads back to Area 19.

## 21. The Arch of Amphitra

*Stepping through the archway, you enter a large hall. Its floor is a bright mosaic of blue and green tiles that depicts a lithe female form draped in seaweed and surrounded by large crabs and dolphins. A rivulet of salty water runs from a spring in the centre of the room and through an oddly shaped blue-green stone archway at the other end that can only be described as somewhat like a rounded lozenge. The space beyond the archway is obscured by a swirling veil of mist which smells of sea-spray.*

GM: The archway is an ancient device of great power. It is sacred to the ancient Emphidian female personification of the ocean, Amphitra.

If an adventurer extends an object (such as a rope or pole) through the arch in either its veiled or clear states, they will be able to pull the object back without damaging it. However, the object will be cold, drenched with seawater and—if it contained air—flattened.

If an adventurer extends an arm through the arch, it will feel icily cold, combined with the sensation of being painfully crushed. At the last moment before they pull it back they will feel a feather-light touch on their hand.

Anyone entering the archway will die within 2 combat rounds from drowning and crushing due to high pressure. As they die they will see hazy figures of young female forms surrounding them.

If an item is pushed through the archway, there will be a disruption to the mist a minute or so later and a different object will be pushed back through from the other side. The object pushed back will depend on what the companions have sent through. This will only happen a maximum of three times.

- ♣ A minor item will be replaced with a mother-of-pearl comb or a coral hairpin.
- ♣ A weapon will be replaced by a smooth brass target shield. The shield will not tarnish and is as strong as steel.
- ♣ A valuable item will be replaced with unearthly-looking gold jewellery that is dotted with large black pearls (worth 800–1800 florins).

Any adventurer attempting to grasp or capture the unseen individual or group on the other side of the portal will be in for trouble; the archway will begin to leak water in an increasing torrent for 6 rounds, after which the equivalent of a tsunami will burst out of the archway and through the chamber and beyond. Six rounds after this the archway will return to normal.

Any unsecured adventurer will be washed away through Area 23 and past the stairs into Area 10, where the water will drain away through small gaps around the walls and also at the base of the fountain. They will take 1d4 damage from the rough ride.

The only way out is back to Area 23.

## 22. Chamber of Three Wonders

*A brass and tin mosaic, encrusted with abalone and scallop shells, adorns the walls, floor and ceiling of this chamber. Before you in the darkness you can see three brass chests on the floor. Each is marked with a glyph; the first a flame, the second a shield, and the third a dolphin.*

GM: The chamber is 30 metres wide. Engraved in a stone set before the chests are the words in Ancient Emphidian; 'Wonders forged in honour of our Lord'.

Each chest is made of brass. All of the chests are about 1m long and half a metre wide.

### Flame Chest (D)

This chest contains three fist-sized glass objects. Each of these ancient globes contain a highly potent mixture of magnesium, methane and saltpetre. If shattered, the globes will explode with the same effects as a *Dragonbreath* spell that strikes everyone within a ten metre radius. These globes are incredibly delicate; anyone carrying them on their person is taking a terrible risk.

### Shield Chest (E)

This chest contains a brass wrist-guard that has been worked into the likeness of fish-scales. If worn it will add +1 to the wearer's armour class and will also allow the wearer to move at 2 × his normal movement rate in water.

## Dolphin Chest (F)

Opening this chest reveals a small dolphin-shaped mother-of-pearl brooch that is inlaid with silver. If the brooch pin is used to draw the wearer's blood while submerged in saltwater, they will take the form of a dolphin for two hours.

If an adventurer who has not drunk from the pool or otherwise paid homage to Poseidos touches the wonders, then there is a sudden surge of energy about the room and the strange mosaic unravels from the wall and forms into a spindly crab-like animated creature which attacks. The creature is an ancient fore-runner to guardians such as Gatekeepers and the like.

### GUARDIAN OF THE WONDERS

Rank-equivalent: 6th

ATTACK 19, claws (d8, 5)

DEFENCE 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 9

Reflexes: 11

Health Points: 15

Armour Factor: 4 (Brass and Tin)

STEALTH 14

EVASION 5

PERCEPTION 8 (panoptical)

GM: Any attempt to brute-force the northern door will cause a non-harmful slow-motion roof collapse, which buries the door and half of this room. The rockfall is unstable and any further excavation by the companions will only succeed in cascading more rocks down from above to fill the hole they have cleared.

The only exit from this room is back to Area 28.



## 23. An Altar Blasphemed

*You have entered a large oval room formed from marble and black granite, which rises up into a decorated dome inscribed with the patterns of crashing waves. Twin colonnades of beautifully fluted marble focus your attention down towards the far end of the room where, on a large platform raised two metres off the floor, sits a low altar decorated with scallop shells upon which a small bronze horse and a number of clay flasks can be seen. Beside the altar there are two archways; one to the left and one to the right. Knelt on the floor before the altar is*

*a hunched figure clad in a voluminous grey robe. As you approach it appears to be stirring.*

GM: As the companions approach the altar they will note that it appears to be run through with veins of black and that it seems for a moment as if these veins are throbbing; as if alive. Approaching will also cause the figure sat on the floor to begin rocking faster and faster. If they get within 2 metres of the figure, read the following aloud:

*Suddenly, the figure turns and hurls itself towards you! You can see that he is an emaciated man dressed in a filth-stained robe. His skin is torn in many places and his loosely hanging jaw exposes a mouth full of rotted teeth. He reeks of death and despair, and his eyes burn with madness.*

### ACOLYTE OF ACHERADES

Rank-equivalent: 4th

ATTACK 19, cursed touch (d8, 5)

DEFENCE 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 9

Health Points: 18

Armour Factor: 0

Movement 10m

STEALTH 14

EVASION 5

PERCEPTION 8 (normal)

GM: This ragged remnant is all that remains of the last of the acolytes that served Acherades in his descent; as the high priest fell into corruption he cursed all those who accompanied him.

As the acolyte dies, an expression of peace comes over his torn features and with his final breath he exhales in Ancient Emphidian, 'The golden shell...'

A strange depression is set into the wall next to the door in the southern archway. If anything is prodded or placed into it there is a heavy thud from behind the stone wall but nothing else appears to happen, at least not immediately. In fact the oil required to work the door's closing mechanism dried up millennia ago and unfortunately, without that lubrication the activation of the mechanism snaps a thin column of marble that supports the latch mechanism.

The broken latch in turn exerts far too much pressure on the already-fractured ceiling, which begins to crumble alarmingly and causes a non-harmful slow-motion roof collapse, forcing the companions to retreat and either fall down through Area 7 or go back to the cove and through the sea-cave if they wish to progress any further. Any attempt to excavate the rockfall only succeeds in sending more rocks down in a similar manner.

A search of the southern wall reveals a small recessed mosaic of a nautilus. If the nautilus carving is pressed firmly there is a grating noise from behind the wall. The wall section to the left slides back and to the right.

If the companions attempt to brute-force the secret door by any means, then it will cause a non-harmful slow-motion roof collapse that buries the door and half of this room. The rockfall is unstable and any further excavation by the companions will only succeed in cascading more rocks down from above to fill the hole they have cleared.

The eastern archway leads into Area 21, while the the secret door leads to Area 26. The western archway leads back to Area 10.

## 24. A Passage Broken

*You are in a long passage constructed from granite blocks. Crossing the passage, you can see a dark doorway at the opposite end that overlooks a deep, dank chamber. A raised stone staircase starts to lead down through the darkness below, but after just a few feet the stairway comes to an abrupt halt and drops off into darkness.*

GM: This staircase once led to private chambers but it collapsed long ago during the ancient earthquake, when water flooded through from the lake into the recess below. There is now a 10-metre drop from the broken staircase down to the bottom of this chamber.

If the companions jump off or climb down the broken staircase, read the the following aloud:

*Descending into the darkness, you find yourselves in knee-deep murky water, surrounded by rubble that appears to be the remnants of the collapsed staircase. All the surfaces are encrusted with glistening salt crystals. Amongst the debris, you suddenly notice a cluster of skeletons that are propped against one of the walls next to the fallen remains of the staircase.*

GM: The skeletons are dressed in the rotted remains of simple tunics and light jewellery. Someone with a knowledge of anatomy would conclude they are the bodies of 2-5 adolescent females.

When the earthquake shook the temple, the virgins were trapped in their quarters. For almost four weeks they survived before the weakest of them

died from starvation; the others were faced with a terrible dilemma....

If the companions attempt to wade across the chamber, read the following aloud:

*As you wade through the dark water into the middle of this chamber, the water both in front and behind you starts to ripple and splash. Suddenly, a skeletal arm covered in white crystals shoots out of the water in front of you and then quickly disappears back beneath the murk, while the splashing intensifies.*

GM: These two ghouls were once the last of the virgins, who lived on into undeath because of the fateful decision that they made. Both ghouls are almost entirely skeletal and are covered in a thick layer of salt-crystals.

The ghouls will take 2 combat rounds to pull themselves out of the silt before scrabbling to attack the companions.

### 2 GHOULS

Rank-equivalent: 4th

ATTACK 17, hands (d4, 3)

DEFENCE 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 7

Health Points: 12

Armour Factor: 0

Movement: 12m (25m)

STEALTH 15

EVASION 4

PERCEPTION 9 (darkvision)

GM: If the companions defeat the ghouls, then they will find that the opposite end of the broken staircase stands only a metre off the ground, and leads through a doorway into Area 25.

The low-set western doorway leads to Area 25, while the high-set eastern doorway leads back to Area 20.

## 25. Ladies' Chambers

*The sparse dormitory-type conditions here are in stark contrast to the rest of the temple. Several large perished piles of wasted wood and scraps of material cover the floor.*

*There are a number of small brass boxes beside these piles and a large burnished mirror takes up most of one wall. A mosaic covers another of the walls, which portrays a handsome man clothed in blue dress wearing a large elaborate collar of yellow jewellery. Marble shelves hold long-abandoned jars of powders and unguents, ivory hair combs and other feminine accoutrements. The*

## DRAGON WARRIORS

*floor at the far end of the room appears to slope gently downwards towards a collapsed wooden screen. Jutting from the end wall, you see a large stone trough of scummy water.*

GM: Formerly the virgins' living quarters, the piles of wood were once several simple cots. This room contains little of value except for some white powder (mercury-rich make-up), some oils that were once rose-scented and a pair of pearl earrings that lie beneath one of the collapsed cots (worth 15 florins).

At the top of the mosaic there can be seen some text, which translates as 'Beloved Acherades' in Ancient Emphidian.

A stone grating is inset within the floor at the rear of this room, half-covered by the wooden screen. The stone grate served as the drainage for the maids shower and privy.

If the companions open the grate then read the following aloud:

*Under the grating, you can see a drop of about 8 feet into a passageway covered with turgid black liquid.*

GM: The grating leads to Area 44, while the doorway leads back to Area 24.

## 26. A Secret Test

*Beyond the secret door you spy a small room with rounded edges and a series of gargoyle-like sea-creature statues mounted high above on the walls. In the centre of the room, stands a metre-tall delicately carved statue of a young nymph, fashioned out of serpentine and brass.*

GM: If the companions enter the secret chamber, then read the following aloud:

*The statue suddenly becomes animated and starts to dance an exquisite ballet upon its podium. For a moment you stare in wonder, until suddenly, a stone slab slams down behind you, sealing you inside the room! The pretty statue stops its merry dance, cocks its head on one side and rests its hands on its hips. As one, you all hear a cheery voice inside your head pronounce; 'Kiss Oceanos to prove your love for him!'. At this, salt-water suddenly starts to pour into the chamber from the gargoyle's mouths....*

GM: If any of the companions look at the ceiling, then read the following aloud:

*In the centre of the ceiling, above you, is a mosaic depicting a stern bearded face with crab claws emerging from his brow like horns.*

GM: This chamber was used as a final test for acolytes, who each received a token of Acherades' favour as a reward for passing.

Escaping from this trap is quite simple. If the companions are able to tread water then they can wait until the water gets to the ceiling and kiss or other wise apply gentle pressure to the carving of Oceanos's face. This will release a valve in the floor allowing the water to drain out. Striking at the face does nothing, only a gentle pressure will activate the release valve correctly.

When the water drains out, the automaton will kneel before the companions and retrieve a brooch in the shape of a nautilus from within her mouth.

The automaton will defend herself if attacked.

### NYPH AUTOMATON

Rank-equivalent: 13th

ATTACK 25, hands (d4 +1, 4)    Armour Factor: 5  
(serpentine and brass)

DEFENCE 19

MAGICAL DEFENCE n/a    Movement: 10m

Health Points: 31    STEALTH 15

EVASION 6

PERCEPTION 19 (panoptical)

## Nautilus Brooch

Anyone wearing this brooch will find that they are literally unsinkable. They will float on the surface of any body of water and will be able to support the weight of three grown men in such a manner.

The only way out is back to Area 23.

## 27. The God-Deceiver

*Beyond the door you can see a set of dark stone stairs that descend into a darkness that is filled with cobwebs and dust. After about 15 metres, the stairs end in a long chamber. A bed, stools and basin are arrayed around the room along with a number of perished wooden caskets. On the far wall of this chamber can be seen an elaborate frieze, which depicts a beautiful woman and sev-*

eral children, alongside an unknown central figure that has been defaced. However, your attention is drawn to a strange writhing shape that lies in the centre of the room, which appears to be covered with a large, heavy tapestry. The chamber is lit by a bright blue flame that dances in the air directly above the shape and causes wriggling shadows to play on the walls.

GM: The figures painted on the wall are that of Acherades, his wife and children.

If the companions advance towards the shape then read the following aloud:

*You become aware of an acrid smell of ammonia. Before you can do anything else, the wriggling shape unfolds itself from beneath the tapestry, revealing a tall dark-haired man with a closely shaved head atop a long, lean body. He is dressed in a stained white robe, but keeps the tapestry held about his shoulders as if it were a cloak. The figure stands motionless and stares directly at you.*

GM: If the companions speak to the figure, then it will make a strange strangled sound before replying in whichever language he was addressed in. He claims to be the high-priest Acherades, preserved and kept unharmed by his faith in his god-king, Sionus. He is now ready to make his way back to the surface and see the sun once again.

If the companions are not convinced by the claims of 'Acherades' then he will attempt to explain away those things that contradict his tale, or simply dismiss them as being of no consequence.

However, this creature is not Acherades—but rather the malignant being that answered his fevered prayers and shielded him from harm when the fury of Poseidos shook the island to its core. This being is a thing from a far more ancient world than even Acherades knew. In his vain attempts to reach his Lord via sacrificial rituals, Acherades unwittingly awoke this evil entity and pulled part of its essence back into the mortal world. This creature is, in fact, one of the least of the Phorcydes, children of the elder titan Phorcys, Father of Echidna.

The Phorcydi was entrapped behind the bronze door by Acherades himself, who realised that the Phorcydi wished to get to the surface so that it could spread its malign influence and grow far more powerful. If there are any female companions, then once the group reaches the surface the Phorcydi will attempt to seduce them if it can get them alone. Failing that, it will attempt to isolate the compan-

ions; killing the male members of the party one-by-one and attempting to breed with the female companions.

If the companions attack this evil god-thing then read the following aloud:

*Suddenly, his face contorts into a violently evil grimace and he bares his teeth in a hissing animalistic snarl. His eyes roll back in their sockets and you are shocked to witness russet-coloured spines rip out of his face, while the white robes and tapestry that hang about his torso are torn asunder by even greater spines that grow from his body. His arms and legs swell and their pallid skin splits completely asunder with a sickening noise, sloughing off to the floor in great swathes which reveal a pair of clawed lobster-like arms and a long lamprey-like tail. Finally, its facial skin tears apart, revealing eyes like pitch-dark black pits and the terrifying jaws of some deep-sea horror.*

GM: Upon witnessing this horrific transformation into the Phorcydi's true form, the companions are subjected to a Fright Attack of 18, after which the Phorcydi leaps to the attack!

#### PHORCYDI

Rank-equivalent: 10th

ATTACK 18, large claws (1d6 +3, 10) or bite (1d4 +3, 8)

DEFENCE 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6

Reflexes: 17

Health Points: 44

Armour Factor: 5 (3 vs magical or bronze weapons, 2 vs magical bronze weapons)

Move: 30m/60m swimming

STEALTH 12

EVASION 9

PERCEPTION 18 (darksight)

Immune to cold attacks.

Breathes under water.

Immortal (returns to Phorcys if killed, may not walk the earthly plane again for 800 years).

Within the remains of the wooden caskets that litter this room can be found the following items:

- ♣ A golden ritual crown that is studded with sapphires (worth 250 gold pieces).
- ♣ A replica conch shell made from gold (worth 500 gold pieces).
- ♣ A large serpentine box (worth 5 gold pieces). This coffer contains 6 sealed clay flasks, each marked with Poseidos' glyph. The flasks all contain healing potions.
- ♣ A small stone box with a corroded brass lock that contains nothing save for a finely engraved recess

in the form of a scallop shell; whatever it once contained, the box is now empty.

The only way out of this chamber is back to Area 20.

## 28. Chamber of Three Pools

GM: If the companions have entered via the antechamber at Area 30 then read the following aloud:

*You enter a large chamber built entirely of white marble, speckled with silver flecks. Rows of columns run the length of the room, while between them sit three deep pools of water. Each pool seems to glow with a strange blue luminescence. The centre pool has a low ramp that leads down to it. In the opposite wall is you see a brass door, while a bronze door is set in the right-hand wall.*

GM: However, if the companions traversed here from the sewer at Area 43 then read the following aloud:

*You emerge gratefully into the air, gasping for breath. There is a shallow ramp running down into this pool which allows you to lever yourself out. You are in a large chamber built entirely of white marble which you recognise from earlier as being the room with three sacrificial pools.*

GM: All three pools are 20 metres deep and filled with sea water. This is a sacrificial chamber with each pool dedicated to a different ancient Emphidian deity:

### Pool of Oceanos (A)

The pool dedicated to Oceanos contains a large number of broken oars weighted down with lead.

### Pool of Poseidos (B)

The centre pool is dedicated to Poseidos, and contains the remains of dozens of horses—their yellowed skeletons picked clean and sightless skulls staring up at the surface. Unlike the others, a slight current can be detected beneath the surface of the centre pool. At the bottom of the pool lies a bronze opening wide enough for a man that is completely clogged with dirt.

### Pool of Amphitra (C)

The pool dedicated to Amphitra contains a large number of bronze and mother-of-pearl depictions of seahorses and dolphins. Anyone looking into Amphitra's pool will note a small golden object lying amid the other offerings. Diving down to it will require some preparation but is by no means impossible—especially so if an air bladder were used. It is a golden scallop shell, inscribed with a prayer to Poseidos. The other offerings in Amphitra's pool are worth between 2-4 florins as curios, but anyone removing them will have to resist a Magical Attack of 18 (rolled in secret) or be cursed to fall overboard the next time they step on board a boat or ship. Removing the scallop shell, however, does not trigger this curse.

### Golden Scallop Shell

This palm-sized replica of a scallop shell has been exquisitely crafted from solid gold. It is actually the key to the secret door in Area 41.

The eastern brass door leads to Area 22, while the southern bronze door leads to Area 29. The western door leads back to Area 30. Poseidos' pool leads down to Area 43.



## 29. The Forbidden hall

*This hall is made from smooth blocks of grey stone and carved with decorative scrolls and shells along the edges where it joins the ceiling. It extends for some forty metres before ending at a set of grey stone doors.*

GM: Half-way along the hall lies a pit that is 10 metres long by 2 metres deep. It is covered only by a thin layer of delicately buttressed slate that is dressed to look almost exactly like the rest of the stone floor. There is ample room to edge around the pit if it is discovered. Roll for a Perception check against a Stealth of 10.

If any adventurer steps on the slate, then read the following aloud:

*Suddenly, your leading foot falls straight through the floor—which shatters without resistance—and before you realise what is happening you have already toppled forwards through a wafer-thin material that you had mistakenly assumed was solid stone! At the bottom of this cunningly disguised pit, you crash upon the all-too-real floor and walls, which are lined with razor-sharp coral, anemone spines and sharpened razor-shells....*

GM: The pit will inflict 1d6 Health Points of damage to anyone that falls into it. A further 1d4 Health Points will be lost per round as they struggle to escape. Reduce the damage incurred by the adventurer's Armour Factor.

Once the companions have progressed south past the pit, read the following aloud:

*This grey stone door is decorated with carvings of crabs and conch shells. The handles are made from serpentine and alabaster.*

GM: The southern door leads to Area 37, while the northern door leads back to Area 28.

## 30. Ante-Chamber

*The door opens inward, revealing a richly furnished room, lined with columns and decorated with friezes of nereids and dolphins. There is a solid-looking stone door on the other side of the room. Once, long ago, the benches at the walls might have been richly upholstered leather and sandalwood... but they are now nothing more than ruined scraps.*

GM: The eastern door leads to Area 28, while the western door leads into Area 31.

## 31. T-Junction

*Three passageways meet at this junction. A large carving of a bright red crab adorns the wall here.*

GM: Pressing the crab's shell causes the wall to swing outward, revealing a secret passage.

The secret passage leads north to Area 32, while the southern passage leads to Area 17. The western passage leads to Area 33, while the eastern passage leads to Area 30.



## 32. The Cavern of Lost Hope

GM: If the companions have entered the cavern via the secret door in Area 31, then read the following aloud:

*A short flight of stone stairs leads down and fans out to meet a large natural cavern where a strange mist covers the ground to knee-height. The air is chill and fresh here, with the smell of salt-water. As you enter, a short series of strange chirrups and squeaks echo out of the gloom. Amid the mists, you fancy that you can see the near-shore of an underground lake that extends out into the darkness.*

GM: However, if the companions have just fallen through the abyss at Area 7 then read the following aloud:

*Time seems to run in slow-motion as you flail helplessly through the air into a pitch-dark high chasm, your ears deafened by the roaring stone and earth around you that dashes against your body. A glimpse of fog below you fills you with fear and then you plunge through it...*

*Mercifully, your fall is broken by cold, frigid waters that lie beneath the mist, though rocks and earth erupt the surface of the water above you and—miraculously—you swim, stagger and stumble out of harm's way alive. Groggily, you stand in the mist-covered waters and pant for breath, while your ears ring from the shock of the rock-fall.*

GM: The cavern is 40 metres high, but the lake is mostly shallow—between waist and chest-height at most—and the water is clear and without plant life.

## The Island (G)

Those members of the party who are wading across the cavern will eventually come within sight of the island, at which point read the following aloud:

*As you wade on through the eerie mist-shrouded lake you begin to make out the shape of an island in the darkness ahead.*

GM: If the companions continue onwards, read the following:

*A chill scene confronts you as you step upon the island, and rise above the mist. The dessicated, skeletal body of a man is slumped before a large, smooth lump of granite marked with black stains, and atop the boulder lies a long green-black dagger. The body appears to be dressed in rich blue robes that have long-since been reduced to tatters and wears a number of pieces of bronze jewellery, engraved with images of horses and sea shells. Beyond the dead figure, you spy a large number of sticks that jut out above the grounded fog.*

GM: If the companions inspect the sticks then read the following aloud:

*As you near the sticks, you suddenly reach a horrendous realisation. They are not sticks at all—they are, in fact human bones, and you are walking among the remains of many bodies. Some are adults, but worst still most are the leering grins of children and infants.*

GM: This cavern is where Acherades performed those terrible sacrifices he did not want others to know about. His wife and his infant daughter lie here, as do a number of infants which ‘died at birth’ and were ‘buried in the catacombs’. It was these sacrifices which led to the destruction of the temple when Poseidos turned his eyes back upon the world, and it was these blood-lettings—along with the fervent rites and prayers of Acherades—that drew the attention of the ancient demon-god Phorcys and called forth his spawn; the Phorcydi. Acherades tricked the Phorcydi into accompanying him ‘to the surface’ and trapped the spawn within his chambers; then he returned to this cavern and killed himself in despair at what he had wrought.

### Xathosedge

A viscerously curving brass dagger that has tarnished over the centuries. Anyone picking up this accursed weapon receives a short-lived but harrowing vision of themselves as Acherades, plunging the blade deep into the struggling figure of his own son and feeling an overwhelming sense of impotent rage and

hopelessness as they witness the gruesome murder. The adventurer who grasps the dagger is subjected to a Curse with a Magical Attack of 15; roll 1d100 divided by 2 on the Curse table (see *Dragon Warriors*, p. 123).

While in possession of the blade they will occasionally hear an evil laughter at the edge of their hearing, which appears to emanate from any nearby human remains. However, regardless of whether the afflicted adventurer still possesses the dagger, they may also retain some small fraction of Acherades’ knowledge after the original vision has past; kindly GMs may pass on pertinent knowledge about aspects of the ruins and its inhabitants as momentary flashbacks if they so wish.

The only way out is back via Area 31.

## 33. The hall of Penitents

*Before you stands a broad hallway of simple granite and two rows of high marble pillars. At the far end of it—perhaps thirty metres away—stands a pair of elaborately carved massive brass double doors. The doors hang off their hinges at a strange angle and every inch of them is covered in a weaving pattern of concentric whorls. A jagged crack runs horizontally across this room, splitting it almost in half. Half-way along the hall lies a small stone plinth.*

GM: The great brass doors are precariously balanced and any attempt to open or move past them will bring down both the doors—in much the same way as in Area 9. Opening this door triggers a rock-fall at Area 15, sealing it and forcing the companions to find the only other way out—through the sewers.

Engraved on top of the plinth is a scallop shell held in crab claws. The carving represents the seal of Oceanos, the plinth being previously a place for penitents to place offerings as they moved along the hall, and nothing more.

The doors lead to Area 34, while the passage leads back to Area 31.





## 34. Mirrored Doors

*The long, narrow stairs lead down to a small, compact room that is utterly dominated by a large double-door of finely wrought polished bronze set in the opposite wall.*

GM: The doors lead to Area 35, while the stairs lead back to Area 33.

## 35. The God-King's Audience Chamber

*As the bronze doors part, they reveal a huge chamber criss-crossed with massive marble columns and huge buttresses. These great fluted columns are a pale cream colour with black basalt bases and crowns. The floor is tiled with glazed ceramic slabs in blue and white that echoes a matching high-vaulted ceiling some sixty feet overhead. A great carved face of a stern bearded man—obviously that of Poseidos—juts impressively from the centre of the right-hand wall. Against the opposite wall is a majestic marble dais and a huge throne; clearly once the domain of a great and mighty monarch.*

### Face of Poseidos (h)

GM: This enormous 10-metre wide carving of the great titan has a gap between its teeth, in which a gold necklace has been jammed. The necklace is worth 8 florins. Acolytes used to place their hands in between the teeth to swear an oath and the last acolyte hid the necklace here during the earthquake, hoping to come back and retrieve it at a later date. There is no danger from the carving and one may take the necklace without fear. Perhaps once upon a time Poseidos watched oaths taken here, but no longer.

### Dais and Throne (l)

As the companions approach the dais along the southern wall of this chamber, read the following aloud:

*Contrasting starkly with the blue and cream-coloured hall, you approach the imposing dais of white marble that rises along the wall here, topped with a towering*

*throne of exquisitely sculpted brass and a dozen large decorative scallop shells sculpted from deep purple quartz arrayed around it. Upon the throne, you see a large trident and an ornate wreath constructed from sea shells.*

GM: An inspection of the throne will reveal three small holes, close together in a straight line in the stonework on one side. This is a lock that controls the secret door that is contained in the back of the throne. However, the companions will not know that the secret door is there—no matter how hard they search. The key to this lock is the trident replica (see below).

### Shell Wreath Replica

This is a facsimile of the Shell Wreath that is hidden in the secret treasure vault in Area 42. This replica is only worth about 20 florins as a curio.

### Trident Replica

This is a facsimile of the Trident of the Fallen Reef, which lies in the secret treasure vault in Area 42. This trident is hollow and worthless as a weapon. If the Trident is placed into the holes in the throne, then a secret door in the back of the throne sinks down into the floor, revealing a 2 metre-wide passageway behind it.

If the companions approach the southern wall, read the following aloud:

*Before you lies a doorway of granite and basalt, covered in elaborate carvings of dolphins and horses.*

GM: The western basalt door takes the companions into Area 36, while the secret door leads to Area 38. The eastern brass doors lead back to Area 34.

## 36. The hall of Shadow

*As you step through the door you emerge into a long, dark hall. The walls and floor are formed from black basalt and the entire hall is pitch black.*

GM: This hall was once used as a punishment cell for wayward acolytes and virgins, who were locked in here for a day or two at a time. A temple virgin was locked in here when the earthquake occurred

and she was forgotten in the ensuing panic. She endured for two weeks before she perished; her fear and panic attracting the attentions of a Nightmare that still dwells within. Her skeleton lies at the far end of the room curled into a fetal position.

Half-way across the hall, the door will begin to close behind them. If the companions allow the door to close they will find that there is no handle or lock on this side. Though a troop of hardy adventurers will be able to break the heavy bronze door down given time (2–3 hours), the Nightmare will take advantage of the distraction to begin plaguing them with fears and visions and attempt to overwhelm their minds, such as a loud rumbling earthquake that sends deep cracks splintering across the walls and threatens to bring the whole of the stone ceiling down on top of the hopelessly trapped companions.

### Nightmare

The Nightmare cannot be detected because it has no physical presence in the real world (see *Dragon Warriors Bestiary*, p. 71). If any companions possess an Eye of Foreboding it may (60% chance) flicker here. The Nightmare will try to put all the adventurers to sleep, matching its Magical Attack against their Magical Defence. Having entered their sleeping minds, the Nightmare takes control of their dreams, though it will not allow them to know they are dreaming, as it can make its dream-images utterly realistic.

This particular Nightmare will subject the companions to a horde of weird and disturbing experiences, beginning with the delusion that a powerful earthquake is sending deep cracks through the walls and ceiling, threatening to crush the hopelessly trapped companions in the dark chamber. In the midst of this, they are suddenly rescued by Dino—who is actually the dream-form of the Nightmare—that which the companions must kill in order to destroy the Nightmare.

If an adventurer dies in the dream (or suffers a similarly conclusive fate such as maiming, insanity or imprisonment) he must roll to wake up. He rolls 1d20, adds his rank, and must exceed his Psychic Talent score. Failure to make the roll means that the adventurer suffers in reality whatever befell him in the dream—a slain adventurer never wakes, an adventurer chained in the Nightmare's dungeon becomes catatonic, and so on. At the same time, all

other adventurers trapped in the dream get to roll to see whether their companion's fate shocks them into waking up; a roll of under Intelligence on 2d20 is needed for this.

Magical Attack: 19  
Stealth: Infinite  
Perception: 20  
Vision: Panoptical

The only way out of this chamber is back to Area 35.

## 37. Chamber of Oceanos

*Beyond the door you find a small white temple-chamber, carved with representations of Tritons and crabs. It features four large round Doric columns and a central dais on which is set a conch shell.*

GM: If the conch shell is blown here, a brief sea-breeze blows through the room and the companions will find they have been healed of 2d6 Health Points worth of wounds. The horn only works within this room and only once per day.

The only way out is back to Area 29.

## 38. A hidden Stairway

*The two-metre wide stairway that extends downwards beyond the secret door is paved with polished tiles. After a few steps the stairs turn abruptly right at a small landing.*

GM: If the companions continue their descent, read the following aloud:

*You follow the stairs down to the right, after which the stairs continue for about sixty metres before bearing right once more. Ahead, the stairs proceed thirty metres further down, then another landing turns back towards the left.*

GM: If the companions continue their descent, read the following aloud:

*Pressing on, you continue your descent even further and round the landing. Another twenty metres below you, the stairs appear to finally end in a small chamber.*

GM: The stairs lead down to Area 39 and also back up to Area 35.

## 39. Brass-etched Doors

*At the bottom of the stairs, you reach an ante-chamber with two large brass doors, elaborately decorated in images of cavorting Nereids and horses... some images bring a blush to even the most worldly of you.*

GM: These doors are built of solid brass, 2 feet thick, and are powerfully enchanted. Only one who has pledged to one of the three ancient Emphidian gods or made an offering of some sort in the temple may open the doors. Any other adventurer attempting to do so is struck with a Magical Attack of 24—if they do not resist they will find themselves obsessively intrigued by the carvings and struck with lascivious urges of a hippophilic nature. They will then attempt to leave the temple at the first opportunity and act upon these urges. This compulsion will wear off after three hours.

The doors lead to Area 40, while the stairs lead back to Area 38.

## 40. The Idol Room

*The huge doors swing inwards to reveal a magnificent high-walled chamber of white marble inlaid with shining gold. Six statues of Nereids stand in a row to both left and right—as if standing guard—before a truly gigantic twenty-metre tall figure of Poseidos worked in marble, serpentine, and gold which looms at the far end of the chamber. Behind the huge statue you can see two massive marble urns.*

GM: The companions will get the distinct impression the statue is scowling down at them as they approach, this is due to the artisan's skill rather than any magic.

Both of the huge urns are attached to the floor.

### Horse Urn (J)

One of the urns is covered in images of white horses and contains a large number of worked brass and mother-of-pearl tokens, each of which has a prayer inscribed upon its back.

### Dolphin Urn (K)

The other urn is illustrated with dolphins and contains a large number of bone and marble fish hooks, some of which still pierce faded pieces of leather.

If the companions successfully search the wall behind the statue—in between the two urns—they will find a small catch recessed into the stone. Pushing the catch will cause a small wall-section to slide down, revealing a short stairway that leads down.

The stairway leads down to Area 41, while the brass doors lead back to Area 39.

## 41. Passage to the True Vault

*This hallway is a long, straight granite passage with a curved roof but no other ornamentation of any kind. Torch brackets hang at regular intervals along the hall. You can see that the hallway comes to a dead-end a scant ten metres away. In the center of the wall is a depression the shape of a scallop shell.*

GM: The wall indentation is in fact a lock, and the key is the golden scallop shell from Area 28. If the companions place the golden shell into the indentation, then read the following to them:

*The rock wall before you suddenly begins to tremble, and then a large section of it cracks and falls outward, leaving a roughly triangular entry to a chamber beyond.*

GM: The triangular secret door leads to Area 42, while the rectangular secret door leads back to Area 40.



## 42. The Vault of the Ocean

*You step through the secret door into a great chamber of white marble, carved with hundreds of ornate representations of the sea and marine animals upon its walls and ceiling, which is supported by two wide pillars. The floor is crowded with arrays of golden statuary, pots and urns sealed with wax. In the middle of this vault, circled around a huge marble sculpture of a conch shell, you see a mass of open bronze caskets, which appear to contain*

## DRAGON WARRIORS

*bars of serpentine, aquamarine and a large number of pearls. A formidable array of ancient weaponry and armour hangs upon the walls.*

GM: Though doubtless impressed by the haul of priceless wealth on display and pocketing several handfuls of jewels for himself, Guarcias will immediately demand that the companions must 'Find the Compass!' as his obsession with it overflows.

## The Treasure

GM: In the pile on the floor, the companions may find:

- ♣ Countless examples of ancient Emphidian statuary (worth 2,500 gold pieces in total).
- ♣ Sealed pots of rare spices and fragrant oils (worth 10,000 gold pieces in total).
- ♣ 970 pearls (worth 10 florins each).
- ♣ Countless serpentine jewels (worth 1,000 gold pieces in total).
- ♣ A multitude of aquamarine gemstones (worth 2,500 gold pieces in total).
- ♣ An extremely rare black opal (worth 50,000 gold pieces in total).
- ♣ **Wavecutter:** A bronze shortsword with a mother-of-pearl hilt. This is an enchanted +1 blade that will never rust, tarnish or dull.
- ♣ **Gullscry:** A large bronze and leather shield of classical Emphidian design. This enchanted

shield confers a +4 bonus if worn as the only form of armour, otherwise it merely affords a +1 bonus.

- ♣ **Kelpwrack:** A large black-stained javelin with a wickedly barbed head, this enchanted +1 javelin subjects all those it hits to a curse with a Magical Attack of 19. If successful, the curse induces a phobia; the fear of water.

Sionus' secret treasury is within the great marble conch shell which lies at the centre of the room. There is no way to reach it without physically breaking through the marble sculpture, which would take 9 man-hours.

Inside the stone conch are the following artefacts:

- ♣ **The Shell Wreath:** The wearer of this necklace becomes immune to any mind-affecting sorcery with a Magical Attack below 21.
- ♣ **Trident of the Fallen Reef:** This is an enchanted +2 triple-pronged spear, which confers a +3 bonus versus Kappa.
- ♣ **The Compass of the Eternal Sea.** This impressive artefact can guide a ship's captain to any place that he desires with pin-point accuracy. However, it will only function correctly for a direct descendent of Sionus's bloodline.

If the Compass is found, then Guarcias will immediately take possession of it.

The only way out is back through the triangular secret door to Area 41.

## CHAPTER 4

# THE WATER TRAP

THE COMPANIONS MAY think that their worries are over, but they are in for a most unwelcome surprise; the fabulous treasures of Xathos are booby-trapped! The instant that any adventurer carrying any item from the vault exits the Idol Room (Area 40), read the following aloud:

*As you cross the threshold of the doorway, you suddenly hear a loud rumbling, grinding noise from far above, which stops after a few seconds. You hesitate for a second and then... an unceasing torrent of water crashes round the landing above you and starts cascading down the stairs towards you!*

GM: When Acherades died, the sacred rite that permits the safe removal of treasure from the vault was also lost. The enchanted Idol that stands guard over the Vault has seen the the companions' thievery and opened sluice gates in the secret staircase, just below the throne room at Area 38. Seawater is now pouring in and within 15 combat rounds the whole of the space from Area 38 right through to Area 42 will be flooded. The companions are now faced with a mad dash and swim back up the staircase to the throne room in order to avoid drowning. The air-bladders that the sailors are carrying may prove to be very useful here!

Assuming that the companions have escaped drowning, they will attempt to leave—and should be alarmed to discover that there is no obvious way out of the vaults; they are trapped! Instead, they will need to find one of the entrances to the sewer—

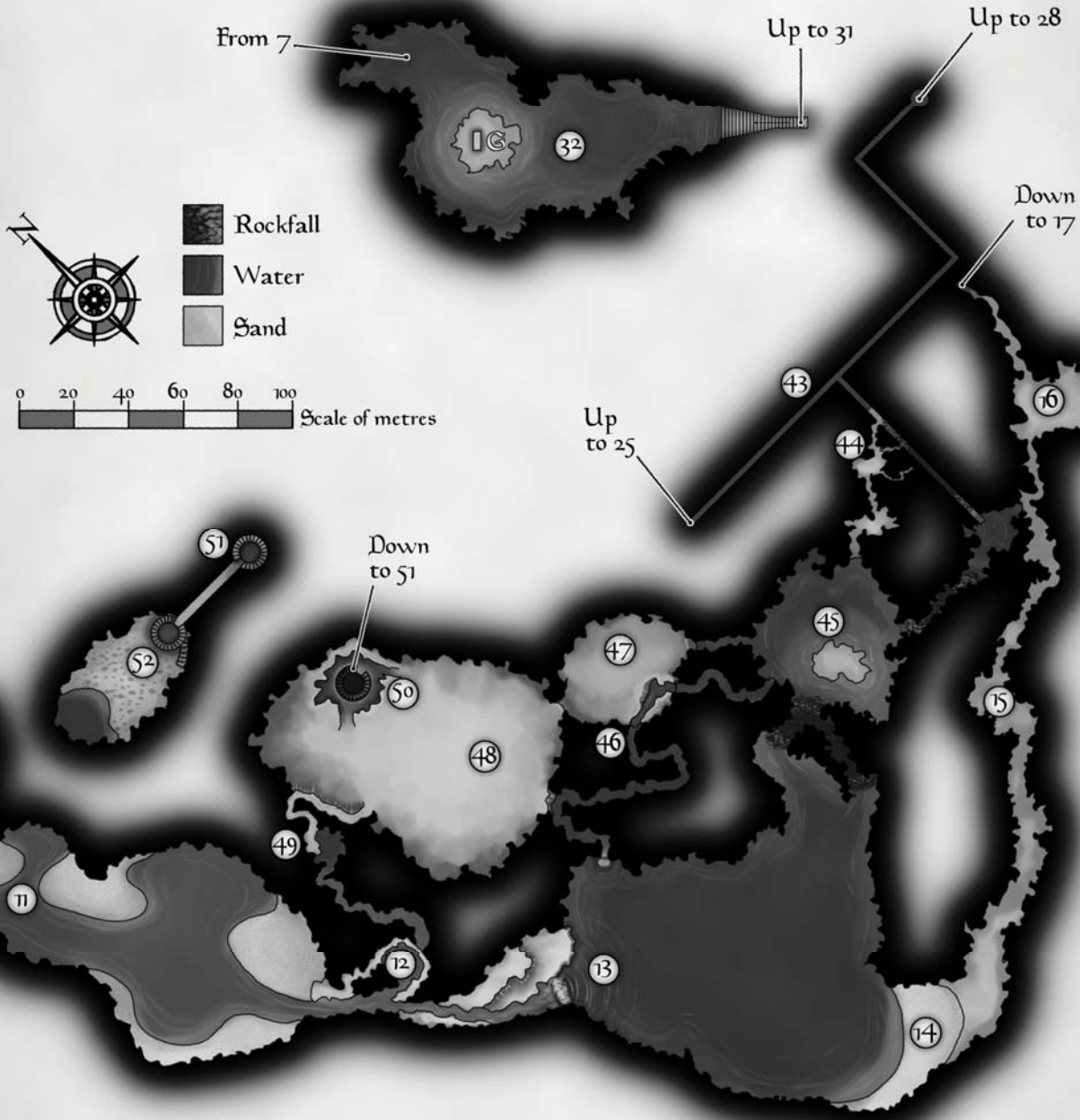
either via Poseidos' pool at Area 28 or the virgins' living quarters at Area 26.



## The Caverns

- 43. A Filthy Sewer
- 44. Diversion
- 45. The Worms' Lair
- 46. Run for Your Life!
- 47. Tight Spaces
- 48. Twilight Zone
- 49. Dive Time
- 50. The Sparkling Cavern
- 51. Under Pressure
- 52. A Vision in Bluescale
- 53. A Lady Scorned
- 54. Lost Time

# The Caverns



## 43. A Filthy Sewer

*The turgid, crusty mush that your feet squelch into is quite revolting. Ahead, the sewer quickly ends in a dead end, but behind you the tunnel stretches on into inky blackness.*

GM: The only way onward is to follow the sewer northwards. If the companions do this, then read the following aloud:

*After a while the sewer branches; the conduit that you are in continues straight ahead, but on your right another section joins at right-angles. Filthy water runs towards you along the sewer and then flows to your right, along the new passage.*

GM: At this junction, the way forwards lies to the south. However, if the companions choose to ignore this and continue eastward instead, then read the following aloud:

*The wet, muck-ridden sewer is very long and straight, and eventually turns left, then some time later it winds back to the right. Finally, the sewer ends at a dead-end, at the base of which you see a large bronze channel from which water trickles out. The channel seems to be blocked with ages-old detritus and from the edges of the channel large cracks extend the length of the wall.*

GM: The southern sewer leads on to Area 44, while removing the detritus in the eastern sewer allows the companions to gain access to Poseidos' water-and-bone-filled pool in Area 28. The western grating leads back to Area 25.

## 44. Diversion

*Ahead, the sewer is blocked by a mass of ancient filth, rocks and rubble. A jagged crack runs almost the entire length of this tunnel towards the rockfall, while another fissure in the right-hand wall seems just large enough to walk through.*

GM: Any attempt to excavate the rockfall will fail—more debris will fall down into the sewer. Feel free to imply that continuing may cause a cave-in.

If the companions continue onward through the fissure, then read the following aloud:

*The narrow rocky tunnel zig-zags downwards, progressing quickly through two small rock-strewn natural chambers before it finally dips down and empties out into a very large cavern up ahead.*

The southern rock fissure leads on to Area 45, while the northern sewer leads back to Area 43.

## 45. The Worms' Lair

*As you step forward into this broad cave, your feet enter a lake of knee-deep earthy water that extends on into the blackness. In the middle of the gloomy cavern, there sits a low mound of rocks while away in the darkness you hear some faint splashes.*

GM: This 50 metre-wide cavern is full of murky brown water and small 'rocks' that will brush against the companions' feet as they wade onwards. The water quickly deepens to roughly waist-depth.

The cavern is the lair of many Huge Grey-White Moray Eels—each almost 5 metres long—which are lying in wait beneath the surface of the water. The companions should occasionally see a momentary glimpse of something large and white on the surface of the water in order to keep the tension up. The mound and the 'rocks' are actually a huge number of animal bones.

If the companions discover the bones or reach half-way across the lake, then read the following aloud:

*Suddenly, enormous white jaws attached to a couple of huge writhing white bodies burst from the water and leap towards you!*

GM: The eels attack in three pairs, and after one combat round each pair swim away under the murky water for two combat rounds. In total there are eighteen eels; as each one dies have the companions see another new eel snake through the water from the eastern side of the cavern to take its place. The aim here is not to kill the companions but scare them—the companions should be left in no doubt whatsoever that fighting the eels is a hopeless task and that their best option is to flee this killing ground as fast as possible. Wading across the cavern is at ½ normal speed.

After the first combat round, read the following aloud:

## DRAGON WARRIORS

*Guarcias suddenly reaches up to his neck and removes a curious necklace from beneath his tunic. It consists of two very oddly shaped white triangles on a length of leather cord. He rips it off and brandishes it at the eels—who momentarily shy away from it—while he swiftly wades off into the gloom.*

GM: Guarcias has decided to abandon the companions to the eels and is making off into Area 47 by himself.

If the Phorcydi is still alive, then it horrifically mutates into its true form (see Area 27) before entering into a titanic battle with the eels.

### 6 HUGE GREY-WHITE MORAY EELS

Rank-equivalent: 3rd

ATTACK 15, fangs (d8, 5)

DEFENCE 7

MAGICAL DEFENCE 2

Health Points: 14

Armour Factor: 2

Movement: 5m (12m)

swimming 12m

STEALTH 11

EVASION 5

PERCEPTION 6

Vision: Blind. Treat as Darksight within the caverns and lake; they know their lair well and have an enhanced sense of smell.

The southern tunnel leads to Area 46, while the western tunnel leads to Area 47. The northern tunnel leads back to Area 44.



## 46. Run For Your Life!

If the companions have entered via the tunnel from Area 45, then read the following aloud:

*The waist-high water in the tunnel finally transitions to a knee-deep layer of viscous mud studded with rocks that covers the whole floor. The slick mud sucks at your legs while behind you the voracious eels burst from the water and pursue you at speed across the mud!*

GM: If the companions have entered via the scree slope from Area 47, then read the following aloud:

*The loose rocks suddenly give way beneath your feet and you lose your footing, sliding uncontrollably down the steep slope! You tumble helplessly amid the stones, before falling a further 5 metres straight down through a small opening at the bottom into an intersecting mud-filled tunnel that leads left and right. To your left you hear the ominous rasping and deep hissing of several voracious huge eels as they slither towards you down the tunnel!*

GM: An ascent up the loose scree slope is treacherous and has a Difficulty Factor of 20. The western tunnel continues to slope ever upward and wading through this knee-deep muddy passageway is at  $\frac{1}{4}$  normal speed, with a -1 penalty to all Evasion rolls. Though the adventurers are severely hampered by the deep mud underfoot, the eels can snake over the top of it at  $\frac{1}{2}$  normal speed.

The eels begin 8 metres behind the adventurers and will slowly close that gap down. The companions can attempt to simultaneously run away and throw rocks or other heavy items at the eels in an attempt to stun them; a critical hit will stop the eels in their tracks for one combat round while the adventurers wade onwards.

If the companions decide to make a stand against the eels or attempt to head eastward to Area 45, then the eels will press their attack. Use the advice given in Area 45 to run the encounter... the companions will find that there is nothing to gain by fighting the eels except pain and death.

After following the meandering tunnel for approximately 125 metres, the companions will encounter a small side-tunnel in the right-hand side of the main passageway that stands one metre off the ground and then plunges steeply downwards. The eels will not follow the companions through this precarious crevice. This perilous descent leads down to Area 48.

The main tunnel continues weaving for a further 25 metres, after which read the following aloud:

*The tunnel suddenly empties out onto a narrow ledge in the centre of a sheer precipice. Around you is a vast swathe of dark nothingness that vanishes into a silent abyss below. Behind you, Guarcias Iniguez suddenly races into view, fear writ large in his face as you all hear the monstrous eels closing rapidly.*

GM: The companions are faced with a stark choice: either they jump, or they fight the eels to the bitter mortal end.



If the companions jump, then read the following aloud:

*Your heart skips a beat as you plummet head-long down through the dark air, while above you hear the hissing eels slither quickly out of the cave exit, falling close behind you into the pitch-black void below... For what seems like an eternity you hang in the pitch-darkness, wind rushing past and then... you plunge into a large body of chest-high liquid. Breaking back to the surface you choke on the foetid salt-water—as the dreaded eels crash down into the stinking brine just metres behind you!*

*Almost immediately the scummy water broils and seethes as a scene of deafening carnage erupts all around you; the very water seems alive as marine animals fight, swim and leap into the air in utter mayhem.*

GM: The companions have jumped into the filthy infested waters of Dark Lake. Refer to Area 13 for more information on the lake and its inhabitants. The high tunnel outlet that the companions leapt from cannot be seen from the Dark Lake itself.

If Guarcias is still alive at this point then read the following aloud:

*Guarcias suddenly surfaces from the brine, his mysterious necklace floating away as he coughs up scummy water. The gaping maw of a huge Grey-White Eel swiftly follows and clamps over his head with a sickening bone-crunching ‘crack’ and writhes him back beneath the foaming waters.*

GM: Please note that this is an alternative death-scene to that depicted in Area 52, in the eventuality that the companions have failed to visit that location. Guarcias Iniguez dies here, torn apart by the voracious eels.

Meanwhile, chaos reigns as the Huge Eels fight it out with everything else. With the Huge Eels preoccupied, the companions are able to make a fighting escape out across the Dark Lake towards the waterfall. As the companions retreat, they will encounter an assortment of hostile lake creatures that attempt to take a bite out of the companions before swimming away; roll a random encounter from the table at Area 13 for each of the next 2d4 combat rounds, after which the adventurers will be free to wade across the Dark Lake as normal.

The water that the companions may jump into is the vast Dark Lake at Area 13, while the steep

descent via the side-tunnel leads to Area 48. The treacherous scree slope leads up to Area 47, while the eastern tunnel leads back to the Worms’ Lair at Area 45.

## 47. Tight Spaces

GM: If the companions have entered via the Worms’ Lair at Area 45 then read the following aloud:

*Eventually, this tunnel starts to slope upwards and gives way to a knee-deep layer of viscous mud that saps your strength. Shortly ahead, you see that the tunnel stops at a narrow near-vertical shaft that leads above. Suddenly, the eels burst from the water behind you and continue their pursuit!*

GM: The 10-metre climb up the rock shaft has a Difficulty Factor of 13. Luckily for the companions, the eels are unable to climb the shaft.

Once the companions reach the top of the shaft, read the following aloud:

*Ahead, you can see a profusion of tiny tunnels and chambers that weave throughout the heavily weathered rocks. The gaps between the rocks are extremely tight and it appears unlikely that you could make your way through the small crawlspace fully encumbered as you are. The walls appear to be strong sheets of calcite, occasionally dotted with small cracks or vents in the walls of the crawl spaces—though they seem far too small to permit egress. Perhaps you might become lost down here in the inky blackness for all time...?*

GM: This area is a small, unmappable maze which is designed primarily to induce fear and uncertainty in the companions. It consists of several numbered micro-areas, which are termed ‘Sections’.

Within each Section, the adventurers should be given several vague horizontal directions that are restricted to the Area boundary as marked on the caverns map (see page 38). The adventurers then decide which direction in which to travel. However, to determine where the companions really end up, secretly roll 1d4 and add (even number) or subtract (odd number) that to the current Section. For example, if the companions are at Section 47.5 and a 3 is rolled, then the next Section would be 47.2. Regardless of the die roll, the Section must always

change by at least 1; for example, if the companions are at Section 47.1 and a 3 is rolled, then the next section would be 47.2.

Keep a note of which Section the companions are currently occupying and also their previous Section. If the companions attempt to retrace their steps in this maze, then they should be permitted to return to their last Section but will be too disorientated to retrace their steps any further; secretly roll for a new Section instead.

In order to make any progress through the tiny tunnels in this Area, the companions are required to leave their backpacks, two-handed weapons and armour behind. A select number of smaller items can, of course, be pushed in front of the companions through the passageways. Crawling through these tiny crawlspaces is at just 10% of normal speed, with an effective Evasion score of 0.

The companions risk becoming stuck in these tiny crevices. Roll 1d20 for an Intelligence check every time an adventurer moves into a new section; if they fail then they will succumb to hysteria and experience a severe panic attack that lasts for 5 minutes, during which time they will shiver uncontrollably and be unable to move. Any adventurer that experiences three such episodes in successive Sections will become permanently afflicted by claustrophobia (see *Dragon Warriors*, p. 125).

While they traverse this area, the companions will occasionally observe the menacing sight of the Huge Eels stalking the adventurers through the small gaps in the tunnel walls.

If the companions entered via the Worms' Lair at Area 45 then start at Section 47.1, otherwise, if the companions entered via the Twilight Zone at Area 48 then start at section 47.9. If the companions entered by levitating up via the scree slope at Area 46, then start at Section 47.5.

If the companions attempt to exit this maze back down the vertical shaft at Section 47.1, then the ravenous eels will confront them and stop them in their tracks. Refer to Area 45 for guidance on how to run this encounter.

Eventually, the companions will arrive at either Section 47.5 or Section 47.9, where exits from this maze can be found.

*47.1 Several cramped water-logged tunnels and a small vertical shaft converge at this point. Loud rasping and hissing echoes from the vertical shaft.*

GM: The small vertical shaft leads eastward to Area 45.

*47.2 A stream of water courses out of the wall here, flowing away into dozens of partially submerged crawl-spaces that surround you.*

GM: The water is seeping through fissures in the rock floor and is at a stable depth.

*47.3 Your clothes scrape on the damp tunnel's ceiling and floor as you crawl onwards through the tightly twisting tunnels.*

GM: Reduce each adventurer's Intelligence check by -2 during this Section.

*47.4 The narrow tunnel sharply bends back and forth here, making it very difficult for you to negotiate through it.*

GM: Reduce each adventurer's Intelligence check by -4 during this Section.

*47.5 Shortly ahead, the wet tunnel floor dips sharply down and is replaced by a loose scree slope that descends steeply into darkness.*

GM: The scree slope leads down to Area 46.

*47.6 You arrive at a pool of water which forms the confluence of several water-logged crawl-ways.*

GM: The water in the pool is rank and contains the leering bleached skeleton of a young moray eel.

*47.7 The tunnel is almost fully submerged here, forcing you to take gulps of air in the few air pockets you can find.*

GM: Reduce each adventurer's Intelligence check by -2 during this Section. Any adventurer that possesses an air bladder may breathe the air within to ignore this modifier.

*47.8 You push on through deep water-filled tunnels and hope that you reach an air-pocket.*

GM: Reduce each adventurer's Intelligence check by -2 during this Section. Any adventurer

that possesses an air bladder may breathe the air within to ignore this modifier.

47.9 *A number of small water-filled tunnels meet here at the top of a steeply sloping cliff.*

GM: The high cliff leads westward to Area 48.

GM: The scree slope at 47.5 leads down to Area 46, while the high western cliff at 47.9 leads to Area 48. The small eastern vertical shaft at 47.1 leads back to the Worm's Lair at Area 45.



## 48. Twilight Zone

*You hurriedly clamber down the treacherous rock-face, constantly losing your footing and sliding ever deeper into the caverns. The air becomes cold and all the rocks here are slick with moisture. After some time the stone beneath your feet levels out somewhat and you find that you are in a strange twilight world of stalactites and stalagmites, where small saltwater springs leak from the walls and ceiling, leaving crystalline trails down into the pools that dot and occasionally fill the bewildering tangle of caverns ahead. The huge eels, meanwhile, are nowhere to be seen.*

GM: The companions have entered an unmappable maze which hides the entrance to an enchanted faerie realm and its elusive inhabitants. In contrast to the desperate phobia-inducing antics at Area 47, this maze evokes an eerie atmosphere. It consists of several numbered micro-areas, which are termed 'Sections'.

Within each Section, the adventurers should be given several vague horizontal directions that are restricted to the Area boundary as marked on the caverns map (see page 38). The adventurers then decide which direction in which to travel. However, to determine where the companions really end up, secretly roll 1d4 and add (even number) or subtract (odd number) that to the current Section. For example, if the companions are at Section 48.6 and

a 3 is rolled, then the next Section would be 47.3. Regardless of the die roll, the Section must always change by at least 1; for example, if the companions are at Section 48.19 and a 4 is rolled, then the next section would be 48.18.

Keep a note of which Section the companions are currently occupying and also their previous Section. If the companions attempt to retrace their steps in this maze, then they should be permitted to return to their last Section but will be too disorientated to retrace their steps any further; secretly roll for a new Section instead.

If the companions have not already encountered the nereids at Area 52, then secretly roll a d6 each time that they move to a new Section, excepting Section 48.9. On a roll of 1 or 2, a random adventurer glimpses a humanoid figure at the very edge of their vision, at which the figure quickly and silently dodges away out of sight. On a roll of 3, the figure throws a small sea-shell at the companions before retreating. The character will not be able to tell much about the figure in the gloom other than it is a darkly coloured humanoid with a long head of hair.

Meanwhile, a random adventurer with a Psychic Talent score of 13 or higher will experience the sensation that they are being watched and will also 'hear' a young woman call out their name in a hushed voice. Any companions that attempt to follow or track the humanoid will find that the trail leads one Section towards 48.9 before stopping, either in mid-chamber or at a rock-face; the figure is not bound by normal physics and is able to walk on the walls and ceiling in order to escape the companions. The companions are, of course, being shadowed by one of the inquisitive nereids from Area 52.

While they navigate this maze, the companions will occasionally be alarmed by the sight of harmless but startling pale worms, glass-like shrimps and crabs that inhabit the caves in this Area. The creatures are blind but have very sensitive hearing.

If the companions entered via the tunnel at Area 46 then start at Section 48.1, but if they entered via the crawlspaces at Area 47 then start at Section 48.3. If the companions entered via the flooded sinkhole at Area 49 then start at section 48.18. Otherwise, if the companions entered via the sparkling cavern at Area 50 then start at section 48.9.

Eventually the companions will arrive at either Section 48.1, Section 48.9 or Section 48.18, where exits from this maze can be found.

## DRAGON WARRIORS

48.1 *A number of rough passageways meet at the bottom of an upward-sloping tunnel.*

GM: The steep easterly slope leads up to Area 46. The slope has a climbing difficulty factor of 9.

48.2 *In the centre of this dark tunnel you see a small pool of what appears to be water.*

GM: The rocks here are dark red and although the water is clear and harmless it tastes of rusty iron.

48.3 *Many tunnels converge here at the bottom of a high cliff that ascends into pitch darkness.*

GM: The 45 metre-high easterly cliff leads up to Area 47. The cliff has a climbing difficulty factor of 13.

48.4 *Strangely shaped channels twist their way throughout the dark floor of this cave.*

GM: The channels are approximately one metre high.

48.5 *Although this chamber carries on ahead, it slopes away sharply at an odd angle.*

GM: The 15 metre-high slope and walls have a climbing difficulty factor of 11.

48.6 *You find that you are surrounded by a profusion of stalactites, stalagmites and rock pools.*

GM: The water in the pools is shallow, clear and harmless.

48.7 *Stacked on the floor of this small rock chamber, you can see several piles of brightly coloured sea-shells.*

GM: The shells are nothing more than decorative playthings for the nereids. However, under one pile of shells lie three intact oyster shells, each containing a large white pearl (worth 300-800 florins).

48.8 *This cavern is filled with many great stalactites and stalagmites, some of which form huge columns from ceiling to floor.*

GM: Regardless of any die roll, the companions will encounter the humanoid figure here, as described above—unless they have already been to Area 51.

48.9 *High columns of rock form a maze of passageways in all directions while, water pools in between their massive frames.*

GM: If the companions have yet to descend the enchanted shaft at Area 50, then they will also see a shimmering light that emanates from a rocky archway; this is the enchanted entrance to a sparkling faerie cavern which will be otherwise completely concealed and totally undetectable—even to sorcerous magic. The archway leads to Area 50.

48.10 *In this cave, large stalactites and stalagmites can be seen all around you. The floor is covered in water.*

GM: Regardless of the die roll, the companions will encounter the humanoid figure here, as described above—unless they have already been to Area 51. The water is shallow and clear.

48.11 *Moisture drips from the ceiling of this chamber into a pool of water that covers most of the floor.*

GM: This deep pool is formed of clear water and inhabited by a great many of the strange albino creatures that populate this underworld, as described above.

48.12 *A low overhang requires you to crouch down beneath it as you push onwards through these passages.*

GM: Passing through this Section is at ½ normal speed. This Section loops back to earlier in the maze; roll 1d10 for the exit roll and re-roll any even numbers.

48.13 *This chamber consists of a large void in the rock, the floor of which is littered with a considerable amount of rubble. Your footsteps echo in the still air.*

GM: This unstable cavern is approximately 30 metres across. In this section there is a 40% chance of 1d10 small boulders falling from the ceiling as a result of a very loud noise or damage to the rock-face.

48.14 *You see that the side of this cave drops sharply away before ascending back up again at the other side. A pool of water covers the floor.*

GM: The 20 metre-high walls in the cave have a

climbing difficulty factor of 11. The waist-deep pool is full of harmless clear water.

48.15 *The damp walls and floor of this chamber are completely covered by some sort of strange yellow-brown moss. A faint trickling of water reaches your ears.*

GM: The moss is mildly toxic and should be treated as a weak poison (see *Dragon Warriors*, p. 122).

48.16 *You emerge into a cavern where a small stream of flowing water cuts across your path and through a low rock formation.*

GM: The rock formation is a head-height natural bridge above the stream and has a climbing difficulty factor of merely 4. The stream consists of harmless clear fresh-water that disappears into very small cracks in the rock-face on either side of the cavern.

48.17 *The passage meanders back and forth, moisture trickling down the walls to the rock-strewn floor all the while.*

GM: Companions with a Perception score of 13 or more will notice that several small smooth-grey stones appear to be slowly moving. They are actually a peculiar form of harmless local crustacean.

48.18 *A large smooth-sided tunnel diverges into an array of smaller rock passages at this point.*

GM: The large tunnel leads westwards to Area 49. The northern archway leads to the enchanted cavern at Area 50, while the smooth western tunnel leads to the flooded sinkhole at Area 49. The steep easterly slope leads back up to the tunnel at Area 46, while the high easterly cliff leads back up to the small maze at Area 47.



## 49. Dive Time

*The sloping tunnel twists steeply up and around for quite a long while before finally looping back down a short distance, at which point you begin to hear the noise of gently swelling water. The smell of salt-water fills your nostrils as you emerge at the top of a small chamber that encloses a large pool of water, which brims with all manner of marine plant and animal life.*

GM: The chamber is formed of natural granite approximately 15 metres wide. The pool is a tidal sinkhole connected via an underwater passage to the Grotto Pool at Area 12. It is, of course, full of salt-water and normal coastal marine animals that have entered the pool via the Grotto.

To reach the Grotto and regain their freedom, the companions will have to jump down into the sinkhole and make a final desperate 75-metre underwater swim. Even worse, however, the sinkhole is occupied by a very large and very old Octopus, which will attack them on sight.

### LARGE OCTOPUS

Rank-equivalent: 8th

ATTACK 18 per individual arm, beak (d8, 8), tentacles (see below)

DEFENCE 8

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

Health Points: 40 for the main body, with an additional 5 points on each of the 8 individual arms.

Armour Factor: 1

Movement: 2m (5m), swimming 40m

STEALTH 16

EVASION 7

PERCEPTION 10 (normal)

Tentacles (d6, 5) Damage is from crushing damage applied the round after the tentacle hits. If more than two tentacles hit—regardless of whether they pass through armour—the adventurer will be pulled towards its beaked maw and attacked by that two combat rounds later.

GM: If any of the companions begin to drown during this encounter, then one of the nereids from Area 52 will suddenly swim into the underwater passage and join the companions, whereupon any companions within 20 metres of the nereid will suddenly find that they are temporarily able to breathe underwater. The octopus will not attempt to attack the nereid—no doubt due to the mystical powers of the sea-nymph—and it will instead shy away into the darkest corner of the passage that it can find, leaving the companions free to swim onwards to safety.

Once past the octopus, the underwater passage narrows and eventually empties into the dark kelp-choked depths of the Grotto Pool at Area 12. This secret passage is not visible from the Grotto itself. The nereid—if it has made an appearance here—will stay within the underwater passage and refuse to swim up into the Grotto Pool. However, the octopus will take advantage of this opportunity to follow the adventurers inside the pool, attacking them again just as they break the surface.

The flooded sinkhole leads to the Grotto at Area 12, while the northern tunnel leads back to Area 48.

### 50. The Sparkling Cavern

*The way ahead opens out into a small cavern lined with long seams of sparkling quartz. Roughly hewn rock stairs spiral downwards around the edge of a large circular opening in the middle of the chamber, which is surrounded by various scattered sea-shells.*

GM: The sea-shells that cover the floor once belonged to both normal sea creatures and also the albino creatures found elsewhere in this Area. The shaft's enchantment absorbs any noise from further down below—including echoes.

If the companions have already traversed the enchanted shaft at Area 51, then once the companions leave this cavern they will never be able find it again, no matter how long they search for it—such is the power of its faerie magic.

The rough-hewn stairs descend into the deep shaft at Area 51, while the archway leads back into the maze at Area 48.

### 51. Under Pressure

*The rough-hewn steps lead you ever further down into the damp and deathly silent gloom. Above and below you, the shaft is pitch-black. Slowly, the atmosphere begins to change—it gets even colder and you start to hear a high-pitched whining noise in your ears.*

GM: The companions are descending towards a high-pressure chamber that lies many hundreds of metres below, and they will suffer a great deal of discomfort as the air pressure builds. The air pressure

in the shaft is regulated by an aeons-old enchantment that not even the greatest of human sorcerors could hope to fathom or affect.

Proceeding down the deep spiral stairs slowly makes the companions' symptoms worse; commencing with the adventurer possessing the lowest Strength score, the companions will progressively experience earaches, migraines, sudden nosebleeds, blurred vision and finally nausea.

However, just as the companions start to become fearful for their lives, have them suddenly sight the bottom of the shaft; a faint blue glow that spills out from a side-tunnel down in the darkness. At the same time, they will hear echoing up from the tunnel several strange and enchanting voices that sing like the 'murmured whispers of angels'. If they push on downwards to the tunnel, then read the following aloud:

*As you draw nearer to the blue light below, the pain and sickness that has been ailing you slowly begins to clear. The beautiful singing seems to call out to you, though you cannot understand what it means. Finally, bathed in the strange blue glow, you see a smooth rock surface at the bottom of the deep shaft and stare ahead into a shimmering blue tunnel that leads forward.*

GM: This passage has been carved from a dark rock and is streaked with many long seams of brightly luminous blue crystals that sparkle on the damp walls. The blue crystals are enchanted by faerie magic, which is the source of their light. If the companions press onwards, then read the following aloud:

*The eerie 'music' gets louder as you follow the tunnel until it eventually ends at another downward-leading spiral staircase that jinks first right and then left, cut this time with smooth precision from the glowing rocks.*

GM: The luminous blue tunnel leads to the Faerie Cavern at Area 52, while the stairs lead back up to Area 48.

### 52. A Vision in Bluescale

*The staircase winds its way out into the middle of a large cavern in the glowing blue rocks. At the far side, a large body of very dark water reflects light from the*

*glowing ceiling and walls back all round the chamber. The remainder of the cavern has a floor covered in a smooth 'beach' that is broken at intervals by glowing rocks, large clusters of translucent blue crystals and a myriad of sea-shells.*

*You are immediately transfixed by the sight of several enigmatic and completely naked women that are watching you carefully and appear flawlessly beautiful to your eyes. They possess dappled blue skin, triangular ears and long dark hair that frames their exquisitely smiling faces. Your heart skips a beat as you spy several of them reclining on the cavern floor while others swim and bob in the water.*

GM: A powerful faerie glamour is present both within this cavern and its eight mysterious inhabitants. Immediately subject all companions to a modified form of the *Enslave* spell with a Magical Attack of 24 (spell expiry roll does not apply). Furthermore, in every subsequent round, any adventurer that is not yet enslaved is again subject to the same spell.

This enchanted faerie-realm is populated by mysterious nereids—the enigmatic nymphs of the ocean depths—and their combined glamour has overwhelmed the companions. To the *Enslaved* adventurers, this whole encounter will seem like a hazy dream over which they have little control. Nereids are very inquisitive, and they will giggle as they approach the transfixed companions. These faerie creatures are passionate beings of simple needs and wants, caring nothing for intricate artifacts and other petty mortal concerns. The companions are little more than toys for the nereids to play, caress and cavort with. Water Elementals and those with the highest Looks scores will receive the most attention from these amorous ladies.

Despite their lack of conversation, the companions will note a resemblance in the way the nereids speak to the few muttered words that they have heard issuing from Guarcias' cabin during the sea-voyage from Ferromaine.

The environment in the cavern is protected by an ancient enchantment that covers the extremely high-pressure seawater beyond. Any adventurer that approaches within 5 metres of the the water will find that their symptoms from Area 51 will return with a vengeance and will immediately lose 1d6 Health Points. If any adventurer is foolish enough to press on and enter the icy water itself, then they will find that it will crush and kill them within 2 rounds due to high pressure.

If Guarcias is still alive, then after some time read the following aloud. Note that any adventurer possessing the ear-totem necklace will receive a similar fate.

*In your dream-like euphoria you suddenly notice that Guarcias has also entered the cavern and is standing beside you, completely enraptured. A nereid approaches him and starts to caress him before suddenly noticing his necklace, which she carefully removes from his tunic. Hanging from the necklace is the horrific sight of what appears to be two white triangular ears, and you notice that they are strikingly similar in shape to the nereid's own blue ears. The very air seems to freeze as all the faerie creatures gaze in apparent horror at the severed ears before fixing Guarcias in an intense stare as an air of cold menace fills the cavern.*

*With Guarcias still enraptured, the nereid facing him uses one hand to lift him aloft by his throat—seemingly without any effort—as the air in the cavern becomes charged with static electricity. He chokes and gags in the vice-like grip but does not struggle.*



GM: The powerful influence of the nereids is now overwhelming all the *Enslaved* companions; if they attempt to help Guarcias then they must roll 1d20 for a Psychic Talent check. If they succeed, they find that although they can move, their actions are so treacle-slow that the other nereids easily disarm them, and any magic-users will fail to have any clear spell-casting thoughts. Adventurers that fail the check are simply unable to move; they can only watch as events unfold in front of them.

If any non-*Enslaved* adventurers try to intervene, then they will be met with the full spell-casting abilities of the seven nereids.

*After perhaps a minute, the nereid hurls Guarcias thirty metres straight through the air into the cavern wall, where he strikes it head-first with a sickeningly loud 'crack'. The lifeless body of Guarcias falls to the floor, trailing large swathes of blood all over the rock-face.*

*The beautiful faerie creatures turn their attentions back to you. Your intensely pleasant dream has suddenly been transformed into a waking nightmare.*

GM: Guarcias Iniguez dies here in a pool of his own blood. However, please note that if the companions fail to visit this location, then an alternative death-scene is depicted in Area 48.

Each nereid now takes hold of an *Enslaved* adventurer's face and peers deeply into their eyes. Though the companions do not know it, their lives hang in the balance... the nereids are in actuality delving deep into the adventurers' souls to determine whether they are worthy of living. Subject all companions to a Magical Attack of 24 and hand a private note to each player who succeeds, which informs them that they are able to feel the nereid inside their mind and that it knows everything that their adventurer can see and feel. They are not permitted to share this information with any other players. All companions, in ascending order of Magical Defence, must then recite out loud a short flashback from their adventurer's most memorable past encounter with either (1) a nereid; (2) a mermaid; (3) a whale/dolphin, or (4) any other large sea-creature.

Once all the flashbacks are complete, the nereids will react. If any adventurer has cruelly harmed a nereid, mermaid, whale/dolphin or any large sea creature in a way that cannot be justified (e.g. an unprovoked attack on a walrus) during their flashback then the nereids will mete out a proportionate fate on the helpless adventurer, which may even include death! However, if they showed kindness to the creature then they will be rewarded—firstly with a very warm and passionate embrace and then with a rare necklace made from sea-shells seamed with quartz crystals. Each necklace would be highly prized by a Water Elementalist; as it allows the Elementalist to call upon an extra 5 Water-aspected Magic Points once per month. The remaining companions will now find that they are able to move once again.

By sifting through the companions and Guarcias' memories, the nereids have become aware of their captive sister on the *Artiglio*. If the companions have discovered the Compass then the nereids will remove it from Guarcias's still body and place the ear-totem inside before finally handing it to the 'kindest' of the companions. If not, then the nereids will simply hand over the ear-totem.

Finally, the nereids will make it abundantly clear that the companions must leave immediately and return to their ship.

## Nereids

Rank-equivalent: 7th	
ATTACK 15, hands (d3, 2)	Armour Factor: 0
DEFENCE 9	Movement: 15m (30m), swimming 85m
MAGICAL ATTACK 24	STEALTH 25
MAGICAL DEFENCE 12	EVASION: 6
Health Points 21	PERCEPTION 15 (elfsight)
Magic Points: 25	

Nereids appear as voluptuous and highly athletic human females, though their skin may vary from pale-blue to blue-black in colour and is dappled with lighter green and aquamarine. Their features tend towards classical exotic beauty—perhaps what humans might think to be Mungodan and Minjian in form—and they possess neat pointed ears which conceal a small set of gill slits. They can swim mercurially fast within their own aquatic domain, and are fleet of foot even when on land.

The elusive nereids are, according to legend, the daughters of the great Sea God, though other traditions paint them as fay creatures that are as much mistresses of the briny depths as the Elves and their kin are to the forests of the land. Whatever their mysterious origins, they usually dwell deep beneath the waves in the company of mermaids, dolphins and the great whales, rarely coming into contact with the world of mortals—so much so that they have long since vanished from the memories of most mortal inhabitants of Legend. However, on occasion a nereid might venture to shore—particularly if there is a pleasant grotto where she can spend her time listening to the words of the strange mortal folk that the waves bring to her ears.

Like mermaids, nereids are highly intrigued by all beautiful objects and creatures, which they find intensely fascinating, until their short-lived curiosity fades and the object of their playful ardour is cast aside... which is not a particularly healthy outcome if said object is an unfortunate sailor who has been brought down to their glittering caverns among the reefs and ravines of the abyssal deep.

These fay creatures have the considerable powers of a 7th-rank Water Elementalist specialising only in the water element—including Raw Power—and



often manipulate tidal currents, storms and the like for whimsical entertainment or simply to express their emotions. Nereids also possess an uncanny ability to *Enslave* other creatures in a manner that is similar to the spell used by White Ladies but is not subject to a Spell Expiry Roll, though it may be lifted at the nereid's whim. Furthermore, they also have the ability to read the thoughts of those that they have *Enslaved* if they gaze directly into their eyes at short range.

They can also cast *Illusion* at will, which may be maintained by the nereid's will and life force and remain in effect indefinitely or until dispelled. Also, air-breathers within a 20-metre radius of a nereid will find they can breathe underwater without difficulty, although this only lasts for as long as the nereid is within 20 metres of the individual.

Like other faerie, the nereids share certain mystical fay traits such as having no soul, an extremely long lifespan and the ability to hide in their natural environment—in this case water—and not be seen by any non-nereid of below 5th rank if they so

wish. Furthermore, they possess an allergy to iron—which prevents nereids from accessing their powerful magical abilities if bound by that metal, unless ordered to do so by the one who bound them.

Killing a nereid is said to bring down the wrath of the very sea itself upon the killer, which takes the form of a *Curse* with a Magical Attack of 24. Any sea-going vessel that an afflicted adventurer is aboard must roll three extra times on the Ocean encounter table for every voyage, and even worse, if the adventurer immerses himself in the sea then all manner of poisonous, betoothed and generally unpleasant aquatic denizens within a 100m radius will converge on his location. Even dolphins will turn savagely upon the hapless individual. There is also a 75% chance that the next time the adventurer goes swimming that a sudden rip tide will drag him out to sea. This curse may be lifted by sacrificing a high-value weapon or item that the character owns at a consecrated shrine dedicated to a sea deity or saint associated with the ocean.

The spiral stairs and tunnel lead back to Area 51.

## CHAPTER 5

# WRECKING OF THE ARTIGLIO

DEALING WITH SUPERNATURAL faerie creatures is always fraught with danger—and nereids are no exception. At this point, there are two possibilities for the final act, and the companions will only be able to experience one of them:

- ♣ If the companions have not encountered the nereids at Area 52, then proceed to Area 53.
- ♣ However, if the companions did encounter the nereids at Area 52, then proceed to Area 54.

Note that in both of the above cases, the following information still holds true:

The six wolf-knights on board the *Artiglio* have no qualms about allowing the companions to approach Guarcias's cabin and will allow the companions to enter, as his final orders to the wolf-knights before leaving in the rowboat only involved barring 'sailors' from entry. The door will swing open easily to reveal a sparse room with a number of large chests and a garderobe. Shackled in the corner in heavy iron chains they will discover Guarcias's secret prisoner; a small slight figure dressed in a dirt-streaked voluminous cloak, chained by irons to the corner of the room. For a full description of the captive nereid, see page 48.

If the nereid is released from her chains then the six wolf-knights on board the *Artiglio* will be released from their glamour and revert to their true form—wolves—pacing around the deck of the *Artiglio* in confusion. After a minute or so the companions will hear distant wolf howls from the

island—in response all the wolves aboard ship will leap overboard and begin paddling out to shore.

Refer to Area 52 for a full description of nereids and their abilities.

An inspection of Guarcias's quarters reveals some trunks full of rich clothing and several small chests piled high with gold and jewelry. If any of these items are touched then the clothes will transform into dried, reeking bullkelp and seawrack, the gold to polished beach stones and the jewellery to seashells and driftwood. There is not a single item of value to be had.

### 53. A Lady Scorned

*Emerging from the darkness of the caves, you find that it is an eerie moonlit night, where the white sand of the beach glows in the darkness. You spot the Artiglio gently bobbing on the rolling swell and the ship's boat on the shore where you left it.*

If the companions ready the boat and set off for the ship, then read the following aloud:

*Clambering aboard, you push off in the rowboat. As you pull for the Artiglio through the treacherous channels, you begin to hear calls from the sailors aboard ship.*

GM: The sailors will help the companions back aboard the *Artiglio*, where Captain Ferrucci imme-

diately enquires as to the whereabouts of Guarcias—as well as Dario and Alessandro, if they are also not with the companions.

The nereid's past experience at the hands of Guarcias has been an ordeal, to say the least. Once her shackles are removed the companions will have only a few seconds to explain themselves before she begins to vengefully re-enact her captor's crimes on anyone who happens to be present (casting *Infllict Wound* every round). She will start furiously screaming at an incredibly high pitch, continuing to do so as she fights and casts spells. Three combat rounds after being released from her shackles, the abused nereid will destroy the cabin door in an explosion of splinters and stalk onto the deck. One combat round later, six of the beautiful nereids from Area 52 will surface in the waters around the ship, drawn by their sister's earlier cries.

A wise group of companions who cease any combat, or any adventurer who shouts out that Guarcias is dead or throws Guarcias's ear-totem necklace at the abused nereid, will cause her to suddenly cease her spell-casting onslaught and allow them to speak their piece. After they have spoken she will cock her head as if listening to music that only she can hear, then grin a smile of utter euphoria and dive off the ship into the sea to join her sisters, disappearing beneath the foaming waves in a scattering of pearlescent scales.

However, whether the abused nereid is calm or not the fate of the *Artiglio* has already been sealed, as the other nereids summoned a great sea-storm when they heard her screams of distress; read the following aloud:

*A high wind springs up as if from nowhere and quickly transforms into a howling gale. Static electricity courses through the nereid's limbs, discharging into the air around her while overhead, lightning and thunder cracks and lashing rain fills the air. Within seconds the rain increases to a torrent and a raging tempest ravages the Artiglio, heaving it to-and-fro on high-crested waves that drive it headlong towards the jagged reef that fills the bay.*

*The ship suddenly convulses and lists heavily to port, throwing everyone on board around like skittles as you hear shouts of distress from the sailors, while the fearful sound of splintering timbers confirms your fears—the bottom of the ship is being torn asunder on the rocks. And yet, the doomed Artiglio crashes ever onward through the tumult.*

GM: The *Artiglio* has foundered on the reef; it immediately loses 12 Ship Points and begins taking on water. The storm will take another five minutes to run its course, but the *Artiglio* will eventually capsize in just 3d6 combat rounds, so the crew and the companions will have to abandon the ship in short order. All on board the ship will be instantly released from any faerie glamour.

Any companions that are foolish enough to continue the fight will bring down the full combined fury of all seven nereids; their spell-casting powers will summon fearsome waterspouts, huge waves and savage rip tides that pound the *Artiglio* mercilessly. The ship will be forced ever onwards through the rocks, causing a further 1d4 Ship Points of damage every combat round.

If the *Artiglio* is reduced to 0 Ship Points then it will completely break up, whereupon all aboard are pitched into the rolling sea and the nereids will dive away. In this case, those that roll under their Reflexes will avoid drowning and wake up later on the beach, while all those that possess air bladders will automatically drift their way safely to shore.

**Note:** Proceed to Chapter 6, on page 53.



## 54. Lost Time

*You move through the caves, threading your way past the sea channel, your skin is scoured and scratched raw and salt sea-spray stings your eyes and irritates your wounds. As you finally wade out into the open air you realise that night has fallen, and you look up to see the eerie cold light of the moon and stars bathing you in their cold pale light.*

*Looking out to sea, you are unable to locate the Artiglio. After some moments you turn your eyes towards shore only to discover with a shock that the ship has been wrecked and lies partially submerged on the treacherous reef.*

GM: Though they are completely unaware of it, almost a month has passed while the companions were inside the enchanted nereid cavern at Area 52. During that time a great storm has dashed the *Arti-*

*glio* upon the rocks, despite Captain Ferucci's best efforts to prevent it. To the confused companions, however, the experience in the nereid cavern will appear to have lasted merely minutes.

The graves of three sailors that died in the shipwreck are now visible on the cliff top at Area 1. After the wrecking, Captain Ferruci, Dino and the six remaining sailors have taken up residence in the valley. They have moved into the old guardhouse and have almost finished converting the ship's boat into an ocean-going vessel. Ferruci and his crew will be extremely surprised to find that the companions are still alive after all this time. First-mate Dino will tell the companions that six of Guarcias's crazy guards are still on the wrecked ship, guarding the girl in Guarcias's cabin.

When the companions decide to inspect the shipwreck, read the following aloud:

*You make your way through shallow waters, climbing carefully over sharp coral and weathered stone towards the wreck. The side of the ship closest to shore is heavily buckled, and appears easy enough to climb.*

GM: Climbing the side of the side has a Difficulty Factor of 7. If the companions board the ship, then read the following aloud:

*You clamber over the gunwhale. The six knights lie on the deck in a heap but they raise their heads as one and stare at you with fierce eyes—though their faces are gaunt with hunger and their bodies thin as smoke. They*

*do not stir as you cautiously make your way on board the waterlogged remnant of the *Artiglio* in the bright moonlight.*

GM: Everything of value on the *Artiglio* has already been looted by the sailors.

Once the companions free the captive nereid she will embrace the adventurer who had the most contact with the nereids at Area 52 and deeply smell their clothes. This will probably be one possessing the Compass and/or the ear-totem, unless one of the other companions took the nereids up on other more 'earthly' offers. The nereid's joy at rediscovering her sisters will dispel any thoughts of vengeance on mortals.

The nereid will channel her unrestrained power and run her hands over her body, old scars and tortured tissue falling away to the floor as fish-scales, until she appears completely unmarked from her long captivity. Any Sorcerors amongst the companions may realise that the shed nereid scales, if collected, are highly sought-after ingredients in Potions of Water Breathing.

The companions will then be permitted a short audience with her, wherein she will relate the full truth about the vile Guarcias. Once satisfied, she will walk out onto the deck, where she will cock her head as if listening to music that only she can hear, then grin a smile of utter euphoria and dive gracefully off the ship into the sea, disappearing beneath the waves. All on board the ship will be instantly released from any faerie glamour.

# CHAPTER 6

# BEYOND XATHOS

ESSENTIALLY THIS IS the end of the adventure. Without the *Artiglio*, the companions are now marooned on this remote waterlocked rock along with the remains of the ship's crew.

Having endured a rather unpleasant experience with humans, the nereids on Xathos will be reluctant to have any more dealings with mankind for quite some time to come. If the companions attempt any further contact with the nereids via the Arch of Amphitru then they will receive no response. Similarly, if the companions attempt to search the twilight caves then they will be unable to find the enchanted shaft that leads to the deep-sea faerie cavern.

Fortunately for all, there is plentiful food, water and shelter on Xathos for the companions and crew to rest and heal their wounds, but their next objective is surely to return to the mainland.

For their part, the old Xathosians—including Voula the Weaver and Alexandros the Vinter—are contented on their homely island and will not be interested in leaving. The former crew of the *Artiglio*, however, have no such qualms and are eager to return to any friendly sea-port as soon as possible. Captain Ferrucci and Dino, if they are alive, may be the only people capable of navigating the companions back to the continent and they will drive a hard bargain with the weary treasure-laden adventurers in exchange for their services.

If the companions have encountered the Phorcydi, then its actions will, in the coming weeks, lure several other infernal demons to the island—in this

case small gremlins—which will plague the adventurers with forbidding portents and ill fortune, eventually following the luckless adventurers across the sea (see *In From The Cold*, p. 20).

Several suggestions for commencing this fateful journey home are discussed below:

## The Others

Another Ferromani ship moors at the island after three months or so. Word has finally filtered through to others of the island's hidden valley; the Knights Capellars have hired freebooters who make landfall and 'ask' that the companions act as guides, using brute force if necessary. This may well prove an opportunity for the companions to either sign on with the Knights Capellars or seize the new ship for their own. The Capellars' landing party would consist of perhaps one 6th-rank Knight, two 3rd-rank Knights and 6 Sailors/Hotbloods (see *Friends or Foes* and the *Dragon Warriors Rulebook*).

## The Watcher

After several weeks, and apparently by sheer good fortune, a powerful and inquisitive 'sorcerer' chances upon the island while scrying and offers to 'rescue' the companions via a mystical portal... but why? Who, or perhaps more importantly, what is this seemingly benevolent entity? Perhaps it is a malignant lesser demon that has been drawn to Xathos by the awakening of the Phorcydi, who is tempting

them with an offer of escape (see *In From The Cold*, p. 16)? Where exactly does the strange portal lead and what high price will the ‘magician’ exact from the unwary adventurers if they accept? This is likely to be a false opportunity; a brief sorcerous sojourn that merely leaves the companions stranded back on Xathos, perhaps poorer both in spirit, health and wealth.



### The Damned

Months later, a sturdy but seemingly abandoned longship of Coradian manufacture drifts slowly past the island on the tide. If the companions board the vessel, they will find it eerily silent and empty, but nonetheless it is sea-worthy and has sails in good working order. If the companions’ commandeer the vessel then it will serve them well... for a time.

Before long, however, the ship will become lost and becalmed under strange stars and even stranger mist-shrouded seas. All those aboard will begin to see and hear events that seem completely real but actually have no basis in reality; instead they are reliving the echoes of traumatic past events that befell the original crew of this cursed vessel and its psychotic war-mongering captain. Schizophrenia and paranoia will surely follow as the companions begin to re-enact the roles of the previous occupants and turn on each other, eventually arriving at a desperate conclusion; that they must flee the possessed ship before they murder their friends.

### A Speck on the Ocean

Other opportunities notwithstanding, in the meantime the companions and the sailors will likely have to make the best of their unfortunate situation and convert the ship’s boat into an ocean-going vessel that can brave the savage sea and reach the mainland.

However, embarking on such a journey in a small boat with limited rations will be fraught with danger, not least of which are the large sea-borne predators that will surely stalk the mariners. Can the boat survive the stormy seas intact? Will the sailors and the companions turn on each other as thirst and hunger take their toll?

### Wrapping Up

At the mercy of wind and tide, the legendary blood-soaked odyssey that awaits the companions on their perilous sea-voyage home—especially if they have been foolish enough to murder a nereid or board the Ship of the Damned—might well see them blown many hundreds of leagues off-course and wrecked weeks later on unknown foreign lands; perhaps to the dark and dangerous continent of Mungoda, or the secluded kingdom of Beorsca or the strange and elusive hidden-realm of Tirandor (you’ll find the last two described in the supplement *In From The Cold*, on pp 62, 70 and 80), or possibly even farther, far across the great western ocean to a mysterious new continent where many more wonderous spectacles await, yet to be discovered.