



CHAPTER 2. ASSAULT ON THE GHOST HOLM

The sea-faring orcs of the Odzedoz clan have grown more and more dangerous over the last few months. Just recently, the tribe attacked the fishing village of Haver during a hurricane. Now, comes word that the meddlesome orcs have captured a respected Castlegraspian noble's daughter. Led by the loathsome Mega the Brash, the orcs make their home on a 200-foot spire of rock off the coast of an island called the Ghost Holm. Of course, the orcs aren't the horrible things that live on the forgotten island.

Assault on the Ghost Holm is a 2nd-level Fifth Edition adventure for 3-5 characters. Characters who survive the adventure should reach the 3rd level by its conclusion. This is the second chapter in the Hand of Eight adventure path. It can be played as part of the larger adventure or as a one-shot.

The campaign is intended to be set in the DM Dave crowdsourced campaign world of Omeria, but can just as easily be inserted into another coastline in a high magic campaign setting.

BACKGROUND

Despite being a noble's daughter living in the coastal city of Castlegrasp, Nadia Mansouri's done well to distance herself from the luxurious lifestyle often associated with the Mansouri name. Instead, Nadia, one of Omeria's leading philologists, busies herself in the large libraries and scroll vaults of the city.

A few nights ago, as Nadia returned home from another night of reading through ancient Elsathian texts, two cloaked men approached her in the street. Without a word, the pair tried to grab her. Of course, Nadia is a noble's daughter and is

well-versed in the use of a dagger. She got one in the shoulder and the other in the thigh and fled.

Unfortunately, the third—a massive, white-mohawked orc—caught her by surprise and knocked her unconscious with the butt of one of his black handaxes. A city guard walking his beat saw the trio load the girl on the backs of three horse-sized vultures then take off. The guard got an arrow off, taking out one of the riders, but the other two escaped with Mansouri. The captain of the guard immediately identified the felled rider: Odzeboz pirates.

Nadia's father Baariq flew into a frenzy at the loss of his daughter, swearing he'd put a bounty of 1,000 gp per orc scalp. But his advisors knew that the best course of action was to keep the matter quiet. All they had to do was wait for the orcs to send a ransom letter. Three days later, the letter came:

"If you hope to see your daughter alive, bring 10,000 gold pieces in a simple wooden crate to the old pirate caves at the Ghost Holm. Send only one man, unarmed in a rowboat. Once we have received and counted the gold, we will return the girl with your man. Any hint at soldiers, adventurers, or assassins, and the girl gets a spear through one of her pretty brown eyes."

Under advisement, Baariq Mansouri agreed to the terms. He would send his most trusted bodyguard Tazim Hajji with the gold. While his advisors comforted him repeatedly that he would see his daughter alive again, it didn't matter—Mansouri's pride was wounded. He would have vengeance for this crime as a clear message anyone else who would dare mess with the Mansouris.

MEGA'S PLAN

Mega wants the gold, certainly. But Mega also wants the girl, especially if he's in possession of *Prime*. Within the last two

weeks, Mega secured the services of a mercenary doppelganger named Vista. Vista was paid handsomely to assume the appearance of Nadia Mansouri following her capture. After the ransom exchange, Mega would trade the Faux-Nadia for the gold (or book). Then, he would flee north with the real Nadia and the book to meet his brother at the western edge of the Basilisk's Spine.

Faux-Nadia, Vista would continue the ruse for as long as necessary. After all—who doesn't want to live the life of a wealthy noblewoman for a while?

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Lord Baariq Mansouri of Castlegrasp travels north to the fishing village of Haver to seek Alfoghistr "Alfie" Sapphirebuster. Sapphirebuster carried the Mansouri banner during the Attack of Regrets fifteen years prior. Unfortunately, once he arrives, he discovers that Sapphirebuster is no longer interested in covert missions, no matter how much Mansouri wishes to pay her. If the characters participated in defending the town during the Odzedoz attack (see *Chapter 1. Storm of Mega*) three and a half weeks prior, Sapphirebuster recommends that Mansouri speaks with them instead.

Should the characters take Mansouri's offer, they must sneak into the orc's fortress atop Jando's Spire in the Ghost Helm, find his daughter, and rescue her. If the characters take the mission, they are given passage by boat to the western edge of the island. Soon, the characters discover that orcs aren't the only danger on the island. Animated suits of armor—relics of an old war—haunt the swamps and forests of the Ghost Holm.

From there, the characters must circumvent notice of the orcs and head towards the ruins of Jando's Spire. This is a particularly difficult mission as it requires the characters to use stealth to sneak past a small army of orc pirates without being noticed. Getting across the spire, they enter the town ruins, discover Nadia and her captives, and make an escape before they're killed by the Odzedoz orcs.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

If the characters are still in the village of Haver following the conclusion of *Storm of Mega*, then they will need to have reasons for staying there for the last few weeks. They're free to spend time performing downtime activities and helping the villagers rebuild after the storm. Then, once Lord Mansouri arrives, they might be eager to jump at the opportunity to take the clandestine mission. In addition, there are other threads leading from *Storm of Mega* and this adventure that the characters may follow.

WHAT IF MEGA IS DEAD?

This adventure assumes that Mega survived *Storm of Mega*. If this isn't the case, replace Mega with his younger brother, Xnath, using the same stat block and motivations. The plot remains unchanged.

(Oh, instead of a mohawk, Xnath keeps his long, white hair in a ponytail.)

THE ANCIENT BOOK

It's possible that the orc pirate's leader, Mega, escaped with the ancient book *Prime*. If this happened, then the kidnapping wasn't random. As a philologist, Nadia Mansouri has the ability to translate the text. Mega, realizing the book's value, wants to know exactly what is inside the book and how he can leverage its power.

Even if Mega didn't flee with the book (or even survive *Storm of Mega*), and Ruhmeid Nammud had the book, the orcs kidnapppers in Castleburg weren't there just to grab Nadia. Their first mission was to kill Nammud who fled with the book to Castleburg. Successfully accomplishing that—the old man's body appears in a gutter a week after Nadia's kidnapping—they grabbed Nadia and fled.

THE BOOK FOR THE GIRL

If the characters stopped Mega in *Storm of Mega* from collecting the book and went so far as to recover the book from Nammud (ideally, tossing the turncoat in Haver's jail), then Mega (or his successor) doesn't want 10,000 gp for the girl. He wants Mansouri to convince the characters to trade the book for the girl. If this is the case, when Mansouri arrives in Haver, he won't seek his old banner woman, Sapphirebuster, but he'll seek the characters directly.

AN OLD FRIEND

It's possible to run this adventure without ever having run *Storm of Mega*. If this is the case, one or more of the characters knows Mansouri personally. When Mansouri arrives in Haver, he requests their help with the same mission: land on the backside of the island, sneak onto Jando's Spire and save Nadia. Keep in mind that you can incorporate this angle even if you are running the Hand of the Eight adventure path.

THE WISE SHIRT

It's been three weeks since a hurricane rocked the Weysevain Coast and the fishing village of Haver (see *Chapter 1. Storm of Mega* for details about Haver). During the hurricane, a band of orcish pirates named the Odzedoz attacked. Casualties were limited, but a handful of traveling sages on the southside of the town was found murdered.

Celebrated heroes of the conflict, the characters have spent the last few weeks helping rebuild. They are free to participate in downtime activities. Refer to the DMG or XGtE for ideas on the types of downtime activities that they can take.

Also, during that time, Haver's popular drinking spot, the Wise Shirt's offered two of its rooms for the characters rent-free for a month as a way for saying thanks for their assistance during the pirates' incursion.

When the adventure begins, the characters are relaxing in the bar. The bartender, Bezka Wells (LG female half-elf **noble**) keeps the drinks flowing. While her attention is never fixed too long on one single guest, she has been seen chatting (flirting, really) with the town's burgomeister, Rhukhim Mastid (LN male Ditimayan human **veteran**). Also staying at the tavern's inn is a peculiar gnome named Valcyrn Vorpos (N male gnome **noble**). Vorpos hails from the north of the Basilisk's Spine in Knotside. He and a trio of apprentice

mage narrowly escaped with their lives when the Odzedoz orcs attacked the local sages' guildhall at the south end of the village. The event left him deeply troubled. On more than one occasion, the characters have heard the gnome screaming in the night. Currently, he's quietly nursing a whiskey at the bar.

BAARIQ MANSOURI

Eventually, Baariq Mansouri (LN male Ditimayan **noble**) enters the bar flanked by two well-armed bodyguards (LN male Ditimayan **veterans**).

A figure steps into the light of the tavern door, the afternoon sun to his back. He stomps the wet sand from his riding boots and enters. Just behind him are two armed guards. The man is roughly six-feet tall and dressed in the blue-and-purple livery of a Castlegraspian noble. He strokes his well-trimmed beard and looks directly at you.

"I believe it is you who I am looking for," says the man before walking over.

However Baariq heard of the characters, he introduces himself and explains the recent events that have led him here including Nadia's kidnapping at the hands of the Odzedoz and the ransom.

Then, in a lowered voice, he makes his offer:

"These orcs have stolen my heart from me. And I am a Mansouri—we do not let such insults pass lightly. As my man delivers the ransom to the orcs, I want you to sneak onto their island, find my daughter, and slay the bastards who took her. Do this, and I will pay you handsomely."

Mansouri places a fat coin pouch on the table in front of you.

"That is a downpayment of 800 gold pieces. I will double it when you bring me back my daughter. Triple it if you bring me the head of the orc who leads the Odzedoz. What say you?"

Mansouri will give the characters as much time as they need to consider his offer, but no more than an hour. He can be found near the Eastgate chatting with the Von Doral dwarves,



REPLACING VORPOS WITH NAMMOD

It's possible that Ruhreid Nammod (NE male Ditimayan human **mage**) is still alive following the orcish incursion from the first chapter and that no one knows he was involved. If this is the case, it might make more sense to place Nammod in the role of Vorpos.

many of whom served under his banner during the Attack of Regrets.

Either way, this is where Mansouri wishes to discuss how the assault on Ghost Holm will transpire.

WHAT VORPOS KNOWS

Unless the characters and Mansouri took the conversation somewhere else, it's likely that the gnome scholar, Valcryn Vorpos heard the entire thing. What intrigues him most about the kidnapping isn't the who or what, but more the why. After Mansouri departs. Vorpos gets the characters' attention.

"Nadia Mansouri! Nadia Mansouri!" the gnome says, his eyes wide with anxiety. "She's not just some noble girl. She's central Omeria—if not the entire continent's—most sought after mind in the field of philology. It all makes sense! It all makes sense!"

Wherever the book, *Prime*, currently is, Vorpos knows that Nadia's kidnapping has something to do with it and its contents. She is one of the few people on the entire continent who could decipher the book's ancient languages.

"With the orcs recently attacking the sages' guildhall at the Sparkling Lookout and now this high-stakes kidnapping, it's simply too big of a coincidence!"

At this point, the characters may want to know more about the book and its origins. Here is what Vorpos learned about the book in the short time he possessed it:

- The book is written in an ancient language that has not been read or spoken for over one thousand years.
- No spells can decipher the language. Spells and effects such as comprehend languages have no effect. In fact, such spells have the opposite effect, making the words even more indecipherable.
- It's possible that the book is the long-lost tome, *Prime*. Although *Prime*'s true function is not totally clear, the book is said to be unspeakably evil and capable of granting any who can understand it great power.

"If the book is in the hands of the Odzedoz orcs and they are using Nadia Mansouri to decipher its contents," the gnome says, "it's possible that all of the Weysevain Coast could be in grave danger."



THE GHOST HOLM

The ransom exchange is set for sunrise three days from when the characters meet Mansouri. After the characters have agreed to Mansouri's rescue mission, he secures them a ride on a fishing boat the very next morning. He also gives the characters a *wand of fireworks* and 2 *potions of healing* each.

The boat, piloted by a grumpy, old drunk friend of Alfie Sapphireburster's named Darebumli Onxybrow (CN male Von Doral dwarf **commoner**) sails for a day along the outskirts of the Ghost Helm. Once Onxybrow's ship is roughly 15 miles west of the island, Onxybrow sets the characters out in a rowboat under the cover of night. Mansouri paid Onxybrow to keep his boat there for two days. With a case of Castlegraspian wine—*Alnab min alma'Mansouri 1071*, no less—it's unlikely that Onxybrow will

go anywhere anytime soon.

It will take the characters 5 hours to reach the island in the rowboat, arriving approximately one hour after midnight. Once on the island, the characters have five hours to cross the seven-mile stretch of the island, sneak into the Odzeboz camp, cross over the Janto Spire, and rescue Nadia. After she is safe, they must give a signal, firing a flare from the *wand of fireworks* that Mansouri gave them.

Chewing his nails to the point of bleeding, Mansouri will be standing by on a Castlegraspian warship 20 miles south of the Ghost Helm. Once the signal is given by the characters, he and a militia of 50 **guards**, 8 **veterans**, and 2 **knights** will attack the Odzedoz's anchored ships. Otherwise, he will have to surrender the ransom as requested.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise stated, the Ghost Holm has the following features.

Coastline. The coastlines are rocky and have plenty of boulders. Except for the two-mile stretch that travels through the swamps, they're one of the easier ways to get around the island. Of course, the chance of getting spotted by an Odzedoz patrol increases significantly.

Forests. Like much of the Weysevain Coast, palms, willows, and poplars grow here. The floor itself is covered in thick shrub. Because of the coverage that the forest canopy offers, the chance of the Odzedoz lookouts spotting the characters is reduced. The trade-off, however, is that much of the forest counts as difficult terrain.

Mountains. The Ghost Holm's mountains have been well worn by age and are passable on foot. Regardless, they are still difficult terrain. Furthermore, Odzedoz orcs watch the island from watchtowers.

Swamps. The southwestern corner of the island near the Lagoon of Wisps is covered in muddy, insect-infested swamps. The swamps are difficult terrain. In addition, the chance of encounters with wisps and suits of animated armor increases while traveling through the swamp (see below). Fortunately, the Odzedoz will go nowhere near the swamp.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

As the characters travel from the western side of the island to Jando's Spire, there is a chance once each hour that they could encounter something. To determine if an encounter happens, determine which of the four types of terrain described above that the characters are traveling through. Then see which set of encounter dice you must roll.

Terrain	Random Encounter Dice
Swamps	1d6
Forests	2d6
Mountains	3d6
Coast	4d6

Roll the dice to determine the nature of the encounter on the Ghost Holm Encounters table below. Encounters marked with an asterisk are described after the table.

GHOST HOLM ENCOUNTERS

Result	Encounter
1	1d2 will-o'-wisps
2-4	Animated armor*
5-11	No encounter
12-15	Spotted by orcs*
16-18	Orc patrol*
19-24	No encounter

Animated Armor. Fifteen years ago, Ghost Holm and Jando's Peak, in particular, were the staging ground for northern warships during the Attack of Regrets. Knowing the strategic importance of Jando's Peak and the island, an armada of warships from Odonburg landed on the west

coast. They magocrats had their fair share of humanoid soldiers, but their elite ranks were filled by suits of animated armor. Outside of the explosion that destroyed the Bridge of Dreams, the Odonburg incursion was mostly a failure. The mages escaped, leaving behind dozens of mindless automatons. Now, the animated suits of armor wander the western end of the island looking for their masters. When they are unable to find their masters, the default to their next course of action: attack. There is usually no more than a single suit of **animated armor** encountered at a time. And they are varied states of disrepair and malfunction. Before the encounter begins, roll on the Animated Armor Malfunction table below to determine what special circumstances there are. On a result of "No malfunction," the animated armor operates as normal, attacking any creature it finds.

ANIMATED ARMOR MALFUNCTION

d6 Malfunction

1-3	No malfunction
4	The armor is heavily rusted. It acts as if under the effects of a <i>slow</i> spell. Its CR is 1/2.
5	The armor is missing its lower half. It is considered prone and its movement is 5 ft (as it crawls). Its CR is 1/2.
6	The armor has gone berserk. It has advantage on all of its attack rolls and attacks made it against are with advantage. Also, it can its bonus action to take the Dash action on each of its turns. Its CR is 2.

Orc Patrol. A group of 1d4 orcs with 1 wolf patrol the area, looking for trespassers. Being creatures with darkvision, they don't use light, so unless the characters are moving at a slow pace, it's unlikely that they will notice the orc patrol until it's right upon them. Patrolling orcs have been ordered by Mega to rush to the nearest post (see Spotted by Orcs below) and raise the alarm. Otherwise, the characters have a chance to hide until the patrol passes.

Spotted by Orcs. At regular intervals, especially on the coast and through the mountain passes, the orcs have built lookout posts o 20-foot high watchtowers. There are two orcs per post. If the characters are traveling at a slow pace, there is a chance that the characters may spot the orcs before the orcs spot them. If the characters have a higher passive Perception check than the orcs (the orcs have a 10 for Passive Perception), they can see the orc before they are spotted and have 1 round to react. Otherwise, the orcs spot them first. On the spotter orc's turn, it rings a bell attached to its tower. The bell can be heard for a mile. From there, alarms raise throughout the entire island eventually reaching Mega and the rest of Jando's Spire.

KEYED ENCOUNTERS

There are four notable locations on the island, their positions marked on the map of The Ghost Holm on page 4.

1 - LANDING

Unless the characters wish to specifically do otherwise, the characters land in this hex on the western end of the island. The western coast is unpatrolled, so the characters can safely leave the rowboat onshore.

2 - THE GORGON

While it may be one of the most dangerous spots on the island, the Wisp Swamp is virtually free of orc patrols and spotters. However, the signs of war are still here. When the characters arrive at the edge of the mire, read the following:

For the last ten minutes you've been traveling, the ground has grown increasingly muddier and wet. Soon, you're surrounded by a gray swamp. After traveling a few hundred feet, the willows part, revealing quite the sight: a ship of some sort, likely a magic-powered airship, in ruins. Time and the salt weather have not been kind to the ship. Its balloon lies in tatters among the trees. The hull is split open like a ripe cantaloupe, the swamp's waters filling its innards. Painted across the stern is the ship's name: The Gorgon. If there was anything worth discovering among the wreckage, it will be impossible to find it

The Gorgon's job was to offload animated suits of armor onto the island. Before it could find a safe spot to land, its balloon was hit by a fireball. The ship crashed into the swamp, killing almost all of its crew. Meanwhile, the animated suits of armor sunk to the watery depths of the Wisp Swamp.

As the characters approach the Gorgon, 4 **animated suits of armor** rise from the mire. They're heavily rusted from years of sitting at the bottom of the marsh. Treat them as if they are all under the effects of a *slow* spell. Their CR is 1/2.

3 - STRATEGO PASS

What was once a goat path now acts as an important trail for the Odzedoz. When the characters enter this hex, read or paraphrase the following:

Sixty feet ahead of you, you see what looks like two thirty-foot-tall watchtowers bookending a narrow passage through the crags. Atop each of the watchtowers are two orcs. A ship's bell has been hung on a pole at the center of the watchtower. Clearly, it's an alarm system set up by the orcs.

Here, the characters are faced with a tough decision. They can fight the four **orcs**, or they can go around it. Going around the pass adds an extra hour of travel time to their quest. This could make or break the mission as time is running out.

If one orc is taken out, chances are that the second orc in the roost will notice and raise the alarm. If both orcs in one watchtower are taken out, the two orcs in the companion tower will notice the others' absence at the end of their next turn. Once the alarm is sounded, there's no going back.

Should the characters best the orcs, they can travel through the pass. The pass makes traveling through the mountains easier—it's no longer difficult terrain. However, the chance for an encounter increases. While the characters travel through the pass, roll once every thirty minutes for a random encounter instead of every hour.

4 - JANDO'S SPIRE

Jando's Spire is detailed in the next section.

JANDO'S SPIRE

Jando's Spire was once a community of sailors, traders, and smugglers. Its strategic location and fog-swept spires made it the perfect spot for warships to mount offensives. During the Attack of Regrets, northern warships used the Spire as their base of operations. The bridge that once connected the Spire to the rest of the Ghost Holm, the Bridge of Dreams, was destroyed by Odonburgian warblimps. The remains of the homes and businesses that covered its flat top now lie at the bottom of the bay in the channel.

The characters are sure to arrive in Jando's Spire in one of two spots, either the southern coast (Area 1) or the northern cliffside (Area 2). Regardless, read the following:

The trees break, revealing a clearing. Lit by the dim light of pale Ricoanus and crimson Yuduyama, you can that 100-foot in front of you the clearing ends with a sheer drop overlooking the crashing waves below. 200-feet from the cliff face you see it: Jando's Spire. While this side remains encased in darkness, the Spire has a few torchlights throughout the ruined buildings that were once home to the citizens of Jando's Spire fifteen years ago. The biggest point of interest on the Spire is the large castle at the far eastern edge.

There are Odzedoz orcs everywhere.

The Spire itself is 200 feet above sea-level. It's climbable, certainly, but the easiest way into the Spire is through a set of caves in its southern base. The only trouble is, that's how the Odzedoz enter the spire as well.

No matter what the characters do, they will have to sneak to the spire, find a way to its top, then make their way to the crumbling castle where Nadia is held.

TRAVEL THROUGH JANDO'S SPIRE

Using the map above, the characters can move 6 hexes per minute if they move at a normal pace. They can choose to move stealthily at 4 hexes per minute, or they can move quickly and suffer a -5 penalty to their passive Wisdom (Perception) checks. See chapter 8 of the *PHB* for details on travel pace.

GETTING SPOTTED

Every minute that the characters travel through Jando's Spire, roll a d20.

- If the characters are moving at a **normal pace**, they are spotted on a result of 17-20.
- If the characters are moving at a **slow pace**, they are spotted on a result of 20.
- If the characters are moving at a **fast pace**, they are spotted on a result of 13-20.

When spotted, the orcs raise the alarm (see below). Then, 1d4 + 1 **orcs** arrive in 1d4 rounds.

CLIMBING DOWN THE WESTERN CLIFF

The biggest challenge the characters will face is climbing down the cliff to the water below without being noticed.



JANDO'S SPIRE

1 HEX = 50 FEET

With a rope, the characters can rappel down the western cliff to the tumultuous water below the Spire at a rate of 30 feet per round.

If the characters move at a slower rate of 20 feet per round, they descend using Stealth, using the cliff's rocks to hide.

The characters can also move at a rate of 40 feet per round, quickly rappelling down the cliff face. This makes the group easier to spot. They are spotted on a roll of 10 or higher.

CLIMBING UP THE SPIRE

If the characters forego the Pirate Caves, they will need to climb the spire. Of course, climbing the Spire is a whole lot more difficult than rappelling down the western cliff. There are no ropes and the cliffs have been worn smooth by the

winds and waves of the might Omerian Ocean. Each round that a character climbs up the Spire, they must make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. If they fail their check, they make no progress. And if they fail their check by 5 or more, they fall, landing in the rough ocean waters below, taking 2 (1d4) falling damage for every 10 feet they fall. From there, they will need to make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. Failing that, they are pushed 100 feet out to sea by the riptide.

HIGH ALERT

If the island is on high alert (from the character's being spotted and the bells sounding) all checks to spot the characters are made with advantage. Plus, it's unlikely that

any of the orcs standing guard around the Spire and the western cliff will be surprised. Still, be sure to reward player ingenuity.

KEYED ENCOUNTERS

The following locations are keyed to the map of Jando's Spire on page 7.

1 - SOUTHSIDE

A collection of abandoned residential homes looks over the nearby cliff. Anything of value that these buildings once had have long since been looted by the Odzedoz. There are two **orcs** standing guard on this end of the cliff.

2 - NORTHSIDE

An old manor building sits atop a hill overlooking Jando's Peak. It was once the home of a powerful Jandorian smuggler. Now, it acts as a barracks for the Odzedoz orcs. There are two **orcs** outside, and three more **orcs** inside. The rest of the orcs that would normally be sleeping here are making preparations for the exchange in the morning.

3 - COLLAPSED BRIDGE CHANNEL

Once the characters are in the water at the bottom of the cliff, they can hide in the water. The water here is extremely rough, made worse by the ruins and rocks. Each round that a character moves through the water without some sort of support, they will need to make a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check each turn to swim against the powerful riptide. If the character sidles along the rooftops of the houses and debris of the collapsed bridge, they can make the check with advantage. Failure results in them being pushed 100 feet out to sea, and if they fail the check by 5 or more, they're pulled under and begin to suffocate. On their next turn, they can make another DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to resurface.

4 - PIRATE CAVES

The Spire's old smuggler caves are still very much intact and in regular operation. Refer to the Pirate Caves section below for details.

5 - THE QUACKING LUTE TAVERN

Should the characters make it through the pirate caves, they will emerge through an old secret entrance in the basement of the Quackling Lute Tavern. The orcs have maintained the Tavern and kept it in relatively good shape. Guarding the exit from the Pirate's Caves below are two **orcs**.

6 - JANDO'S SPIRE PROPER

Much of the old town lies in ruin, although there are a few lanterns lit here and there lighting the way to the Griffinwatch Ruins at the eastern end of the Spire (Area 7). If the characters should get distracted from their mission and decide to search the buildings, there's a 5% chance that they find something of value in each of the old homes or businesses. Refer to the *DMG's* individual treasure charts (0-4) for details on what they find.

If Mergigoth is traveling with the characters, he can surpass all of the guards here—there's no need to roll for being spotted.

7 - GRIFFINWATCH RUINS

Once a mighty fortress at the eastern edge of Jando's Spire, this keep is now the center of operations for the Odzedoz orc clan. It is detailed further in the Griffinwatch Ruins section below.

THE PIRATE CAVES

Originally a loading zone for the smugglers who called the Spire home, now, these old caves are used as the main access point into the Spire. If the characters can't or won't climb the Spire, they must go through these caves. This will be a bit like running the gauntlet as a heavy concentration of Odzedoz orcs are working here.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise stated, the Pirate Caves have the following general features.

Ceilings. Within the man-made chambers and corridors, the ceilings are 10-feet high and made of hewn stone braced with wooden timbers.

Doors. The doors are wooden doors braced with iron and hung on iron hinges. Most have staining from salt deposits.

Floors. Within the complex, the floors are hewn stone with overlaid limestone tile. Many of the tiles are cracked.

Lights. Lit torches are hung all throughout the caves. Even so, there are still plenty of shadowy recesses.

Sound. Noises and voices travel far in the cave, echoes bouncing off walls. Any orc that yells out will instantly be heard by all other orcs in the complex.

Walls. The walls in the man-made complex are brick and masonry.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following areas reference the Pirate Caves map on page 9.

1A - NORTH TUNNEL ENTRANCE

It's assumed that characters entering this way do so by swimming across the Collapsed Bridge and the turbulent channel between the Spire and the western cliffs. If this is the case, read the following:

Just a few feet ahead, a 40 foot-tall, 15-foot wide opening in the face of the spire stands before you, the ocean water lapping into it. Torch lights flicker within the cave. Even over the waves, you can hear the guttural speech of orcs.

Anyone who understands Orcish hears a pair of orcs discussing the sunset ransom exchange. A few jokes are made regarding the "condition" for the girl after she's handed off.

Of the two ways to enter, this is the most difficult, as there are two lookouts posted by a campfire roughly 70 feet from the entrance (Area 2b), then another on the cliff just above them (Area 5b).

The tunnel itself is only large enough to fit rowboats and the smaller karvis used by the Odzeboz.

THE PIRATE CAVES

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



1B - SOUTH TUNNEL ENTRANCE

Although more turbulent, the southern entrance in the pirate cave is a safer bet for entering unseen by the Odzeboz. If the characters enter by swimming through the Collapsed Bridge channel, read the following:

Just a few feet ahead of you you see a wide, flat opening in the eastern face of the spider. It seems that it opens into a large, torch-lit cave in the underside of the spire. A small bay inside the cave hosts two tethered Odzeboz karvis, their Crushing Wave flags flying high.

It's hard to hear anything over the crashing waves from this point in the cave. Furthermore, the current pushes against any who try to enter the cave this way. If the characters wish to swim into Area 2a from this entrance, they each must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. Failure results in them being pushed back out into the

Collapsed Bridge channel and failing by 5 or more means that they are pushed 100 feet from the Spire into the dark waters of the Omerian Ocean.

2A - CAVE HARBOR

Torches keep most of the area well-lit except for the southern portion of the cave, just beyond the karvis. Read:

The cave's small harbor is approximately 50 feet by 70 feet. Two Odzeboz karvi longships are tethered to a narrow dock at the center of the cave and a rowboat with supplies—likely ill-gotten gains—is tethered to another dock against the southern wall. A wooden-door connects the southern dock to a man-made complex. At the east end of the cave is a sandy beach with another, long dock. The beach is approximately 30 feet deep before it hits the naturally hewn stone wall of the cave. There is a mined tunnel at the center of the eastern cave



wall. In the northern cave wall, there is a 10-foot-wide by 10-foot high hole that overlooks the entire area.

The water in the harbor is 10-feet-deep at its deepest point. A half-blind **giant octopus** nicknamed Wobbly by the orcs lives in the water. While wobbly doesn't particularly enjoy the taste of humanoid flesh, any creature that swims through his lair is likely to disturb him enough for him to see what's going on. Once he discovers that it's a humanoid—especially if it's a humanoid that's attacking—he'll retreat to a narrow pocket at the bottom of the lake. Still, the surprise should be enough to make a character yelp, thus drawing the attention of the orcs.

If the characters enter through the southern tunnel (Area 1b), they will be able to use the parked karvis as cover as they move through the water. Plus, the shadows against the southern wall make it easy for them to get onto the dock and move through the door leading to Area 6. A single orc guard watches from the arrow port in Area 6. She is the only complication that the characters will face.

2B - CAMPFIRE

A pair of orc guards tend to a campfire at the northern part of the shore. With lookouts to the north and south, they spend most of their time chatting. Occasionally, Mergigoth from Area 5a steps to the ledge to chastise and remind the pair to keep watch.

Anything that happens in this area is likely to be noticed by the orc guard in Area 5b.

2C - HARBOR BEACH

The beach at the eastern edge of the cave is free of guards, however, it is well lit. It's nearly impossible for the characters to come onto the beach without being noticed by the orcs in Area 2b, 2c, or the arrow slit at Area 6.

If the characters haven't met Bril yet, they can hear her crying from the beach.

2D - BRIL

If the characters haven't encountered Bril yet, read the following:

This rough-hewn tunnel is barely 5-feet wide and 5-feet tall. Fifteen feet in, another tunnel branches off to the north. From there, the torch lights end and there is only darkness beyond. From within the darkness, you think that you can hear someone crying, pleading in an unusual language.

The language is Sylvan. Bril, a **selkie** (see the Appendix), is chained to the wall of the end of the tunnel. She begs the orcs to free her, promising she won't tell anyone who captured her. The orcs captured her a week ago as she was swimming through their harbor looking for fish. Amused by her transformative nature, the orcs have kept her chained in the cave. They feed her fish heads and command her to sing with false promises of emancipation.

Bril is friendly but somewhat childlike and naive. Upon meeting the characters, she promises them great rewards, telling them that her father is a "powerful and just king of the sea" (although this isn't true, Bril believes that it's true).

Bril isn't much of a fighter, nor does she wish to stay in the cave any longer than she needs to, so it's unlikely she'll join the party. If freed, she immediately makes for the harbor and leaps into the water, immediately transforming into a seal. From there, she swims away.

3 - EMPTY ROOM

This room is 20-feet wide east-to-west and 10-feet wide north to south. There are two exits from the room. In the center of the north wall, a corridor leads to a flight of stairs. At the south

is an exit blocked by a wooden door. Other than a few bits of jetsam, the room appears to be empty.

4 - MERGIGOTH'S "OFFICE"

Whether the characters raise the alarm or not, read the following description when they enter this room:

This room is roughly 20-feet wide east-to-west and 10-feet wide north-to-south. There are two exits, one to the north and one to the east, both blocked by wooden doors. A cluttered mess of barrels, chests, random furniture, and other oddities fill nearly every inch of the room. In the northwest corner, an obese orc sits on top of a table peeling a potato. "So you are here to save the girl," he says to you in Common, in a tone that sounds like he's been expecting you.

Mergigoth was once one of Mega's captains. Mega saw Mergigoth as too ambitious and decided to demote him. Mergigoth was no longer allowed to sail with the rest of the Odzedoz fleet, and would instead watch over the pirate caves. With a well-developed taste for pillaging, Mergigoth saw this as a grave insult—possibly worse than death. He's been waiting for the perfect opportunity to get back at Mega and take over the Odzedoz.

Mergigoth introduces himself. He's a typical **orc**, however, like Mega, Mergigoth is a little smarter than other orcs of the Odzedoz (he has an Intelligence score of 11). Without deceit, he explains his situation to the characters. He mentions that he can get them to Mega and Nadia Mansouri without drawing attention to themselves, but will only do so if they promise to kill Mega no matter what.

In the storage room that Mergigoth calls his "office", there are three chests filled with Odzedoz clothing and armor, as well as the black, curved great axes the orcish pirates are famous for carrying. Here is Mergigoth's plan: Under the cover of darkness, Mergigoth can escort the characters dressed as orcs through the Quackling Lute upstairs, through the orc-laden Jando's Spire Proper, and into Griffinwatch ruins. From there, Mergigoth will lead the characters directly to Mega and Nadia.

If the characters agree, Mergigoth lets them get dressed. He then does exactly as he stated. Mergigoth can easily get past all of his subordinates, introducing the disguised characters as recruits from the other end of the island who claim they spotted something. "They saw adventurers on the island," he repeats. "We're headed straight for Mega to report."

Mergigoth can get past every sentry until he reaches the vultures (see Area 2c in Griffinwatch Ruins).

5A - RUBBISH CAVE

This dark, natural cave is roughly 20-feet by 20-feet. There are two exits. The first is a natural tunnel that leads into a well-lit cavern to the southwest. The second is set into the eastern wall and blocked by a wooden door. There is litter everywhere.

5B - NORTH LOOKOUT POINT

A lone **orc** stands in this chamber looking out over the underground harbor. The orc is armed with a light crossbow. It is a 20-foot sheer drop from the southern edge of the chamber to the beach below (Area 2b).

6 - SOUTH LOOKOUT PORT

This room is 20-feet wide east-to-west and 10-feet deep north to south. There are three doors out of the room, one in the north wall, one in the east wall, and one in the south wall.

A single **orc** sits on a stool looking through an arrow slit that faces the underground harbor. He's armed with a light crossbow.

7 - BARRACKS

This room is 15-feet wide north-to-south and 10-feet wide east to west. There is a door to the north and one to the south. Four unmade bunks take up the majority of the room.

Normally, there would be sleeping orcs here. With the Spire making preparations for the ransom drop, it's all hands on deck, so these barracks are empty.

Treasure. If the characters spend at least a minute tossing the room, they find 2d12 sp among the orcs' possessions.

8 - LOUNGE

This room is 10-feet by 10-feet with exits to the north and south. There is a table with stones bearing strange runes at the center of the table. It smells strongly of rotten meat and spilled beer here.

The runes are part of a popular orcish game called Krihurgradh. The gaming set is worth 5 sp.

9 - SPOILS ROOM

This room is locked. A character can make a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using proficiency in lockpicking tools to pick the lock, or it can be broken down with a successful DC 15 Strength check. The latter will undoubtedly draw the attention of any living orcs within earshot. Mergigoth (see Area 4) has a key to the area. However, he will dismiss it as nothing more than a storage room, hardly worth looking in.

This small 10-foot by 10-foot square room holds barrels, crates, and chests filled with goods. They all seem to be in good shape and all seem to bear the symbols and crests of different Weysevaini cities and townships.

The trade goods weight approximately 700 lbs. If turned into Castlegrapsian authorities, the characters will earn a 10 gp reward. Otherwise, the goods are worth 100 gp in the open market and will take at least a week of downtime to offload (with a heavy chance of complication, no less).

GRIFFINWATCH RUINS

Once a powerful fortress at the eastern end of Jando's Spire, this old castle now sits in ruins, its walls and rooves toppled by the Odonburg magic during the Attack of Regrets. Mega has claimed the main meeting hall as his audience chamber and throne room. It's there he keeps Nadia Mansouri.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise stated in an area's description, the ruins have the following features.

Ceilings. In the few rooms that still have rooves, the ceilings are made of wooden slats braced with timbers. For the parapets, rooves, and towers, stone tiles are laid over the top of the wooden slats, providing an additional layer of support.

Floors. Within the keep itself, the floors are made of laid stone tiles. The courtyard was once paved, but time and heavy use have worn away most of the tiles, revealing the dirt and stone of the Spire. Aggressive shrubs and vines grow over everything.

Light. There are a few torches lit through the keep, but most of the light comes from a massive bonfire at the center of the courtyard area 2a.

Walls. The walls that still stand are made of heavy limestone blocks and set into place with mortar. The castle's outer walls are 3-foot-thick, and the inner walls are 1 1/2-foot thick. Vines and moss grow over everything. Because of the age and weather to the outer wall, they are easier to climb than the Spire itself. A character lacking a grappling hook needs only a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to climb. Just as before, a failure results in no forward progress, and failure by 5 or more results in the character falling.

Wind. The keep sits at the top of a hill on the eastern edge of the Spire, overlooking crashing waves 200-feet below. Wind pushing through the ruins sometimes makes an eerie, low-pitched whistling sound.

KEYED ENCOUNTERS

The following area descriptions are keyed to the map of the Griffinwatch Ruins on page 13.

1 - ENTRANCE

The massive keep looms overhead. Walking up the steep path to where the fortress's front gate once stood, you see that much of the north side of the keep remains intact whereas the southern side is mostly destroyed. It's dark outside the keep, but through the rubble of the destroyed southern gate tower, you see a massive bonfire blazing in the courtyard.

Two **orc** guards stand outside the gate and a third keeps a post in the still-standing northern gate tower. All three are armed with light crossbows. If the characters are traveling with Mergigoth, he informs them both that they are to report sightings of adventurers directly to Mega. A third guard

2A - WESTERN COURTYARD

A massive bonfire at the center of this 45-foot by 35-foot courtyard illuminates everything. The area where the keep's gate once stood is at the western end of the courtyard. So the south, much of the keep's outer wall has collapsed down the south side of the keep's motte, leaving only boulders and debris. At the north are a collection of buildings, some destroyed, other intact. To the east stands the impressive keep itself. While the forty-foot high keep's walls western side remains intact, it's clear that the front of the keep has taken considerable damage. It appears that the entry to the keep itself is through another gate to the east of the bonfire. Unlike the gate to the east, both of the gate towers by the western gate are still standing, as is much of the outer wall there.

Four **orcs** wander around the courtyard. The light of the huge bonfire makes it easy to spot any trespassers sneaking into the courtyard.

Two more **orc** guards are posted in the watchtowers by the inner gate (Areas 5a and 5b).

If the vultures are still in their roost (see Area 2c), they can smell the characters from the courtyard, recognizing that they aren't orcs, especially if Cheeko is among them (see Chapter 1 for details on Cheeko).

If Mergigoth is with the characters and they are outed—either through actions of their own or by one of the vultures—he immediately turns on the characters and reveals their presence, knowing that he'd rather give them up than face the axes of his brothers and sisters (nevermind the fact that he led them to the keep in the first place).

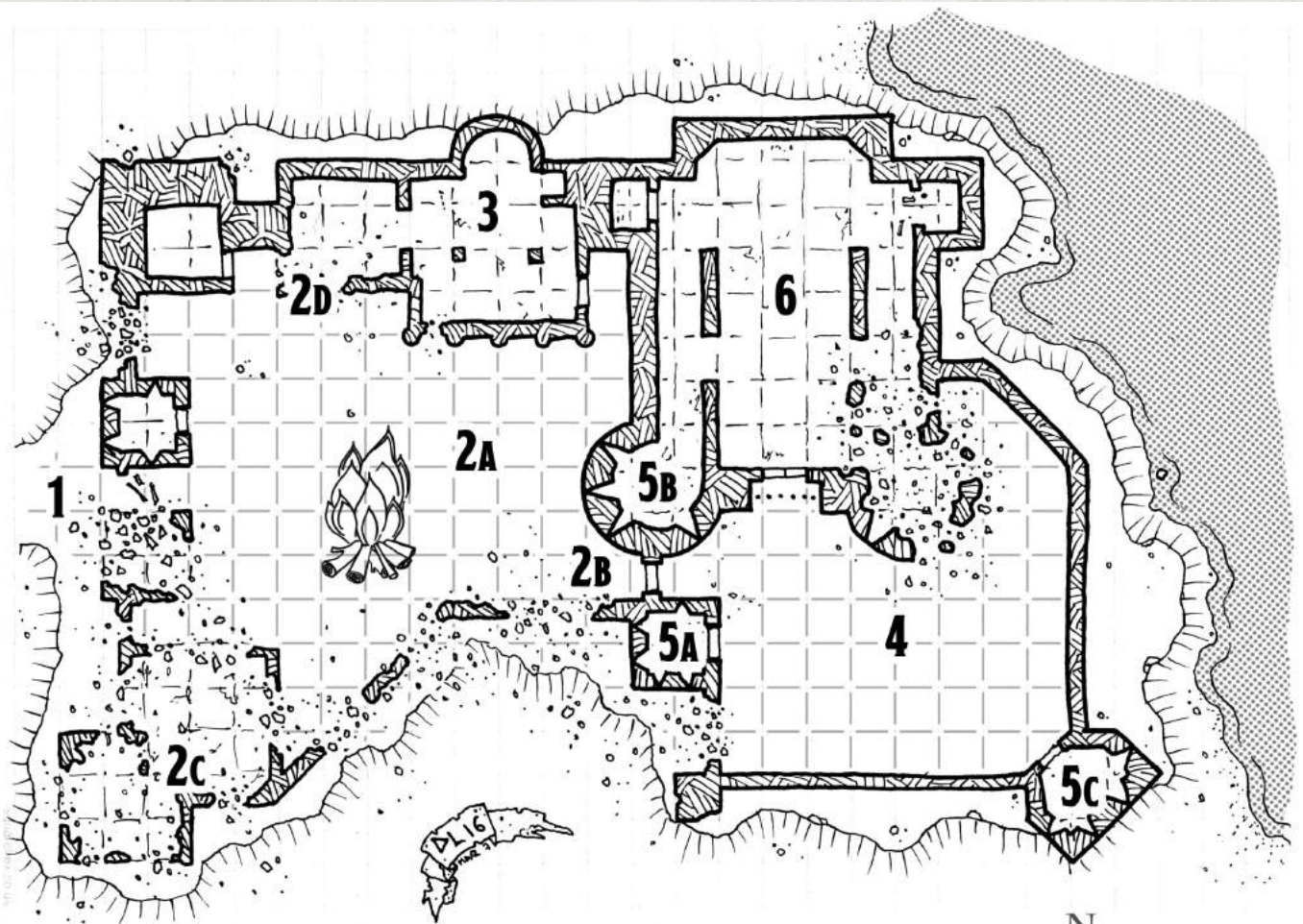
2B - INNER GATE

There are no guards standing outside the inner gate, however, two **orc** guards armed with light crossbows watch from the two gate towers (Areas 5a and 5b). The large door that divides the courtyards is unlocked and unbarred, but makes an incredibly loud noise when opened. While many of the orcs are used to it, the orcs in Areas 5a and 5b will immediately take notice if it opens.

2C - VULTURE ROOST

Three **giant vultures** fight over the carcass of a seal. If Cheeko survived during the Storm of Mega and interacted with the characters, the moment the characters step into the courtyard he smells them—even if they're disguised. Cheeko flutters into the courtyard to find the characters. Although Cheeko can't speak form complete sentences, he can utter a few **orcish** words such as the words for human, elf, and hero.

Cheeko wastes no time to reveal the presence of the characters and attack. He seeks revenge against any character who dealt damage to him. Cheeko will try to grab one of the characters then fly over the keep and deposit them in the ocean. A character that Cheeko drops over the ocean must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the character falls 200 feet into the ocean, taking 50 (20d4) damage from the fall. On a successful saving throw, the character grabs a hold of Cheeko's legs, preventing the bird from dropping them again.



GRIFFINWATCH RUINS

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



2D - KITCHEN RUINS

This was once the Keep's old kitchen. It's one of the few sections of the western courtyard that isn't bathed in light from the bonfire. If the characters make it to this section of the courtyard and successfully hide, they can use their action to watch the movements of the orcs in the courtyard from the vantage point. If they do, the next check they make to move stealthily is made with advantage.

3 - DINING HALL

This room is roughly 20-feet by 20-feet. Two large, oaken tables with multiple benches take up the majority of the chamber's center. There are three exits. In the center of the eastern wall is a wooden door. Directly opposite of the door is an archway that exits into a collapsed building that looks like it may have once been a kitchen. Finally, part of the southern wall is destroyed, giving you a clear view of a large courtyard

beyond. At the center of the courtyard is a huge bonfire.

A pair of nude, drunken **orcs** snore under one of the benches, their armor and gear scattered haphazardly around the room. Nothing short of an explosion will wake the couple from their post-coital slumber.

4 - EASTERN COURTYARD

Only the light of the twin moons light this 40-foot by 30-foot courtyard. Most of the keep's old wall is still intact save for a large hole in the southwestern corner that overlooks the ruined rooftops of buildings south of the motte. There is an exit to the west—a door flanked by two 30-foot tall towers. At the north side of this courtyard, the keep looms over the rest of the fortress. There is a lowered portcullis that blocks entry into the keep, however, that doesn't matter. The keep's

northeastern tower is a crumbled mess, exposing the illuminated interior within.

There are no guards in this courtyard as the guards in Areas 5a, b, and c are more concerned with attacks from outside. The portcullis hasn't worked in years. Mega and his orcs enter Griffinwatch through the collapsed southeastern tower. They pass through the northernmost point—a character who makes a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check that there are no footprints that lead through the rubble at the southern edge of the ruined tower.

Trap. Any creature who walks through the southern part triggers an explosive device hidden against the keep's southern wall. Any creature standing in the area where the tower once stood must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. A target takes 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one. The explosion causes a thunderous boom audible out to 300 feet.

5A - SOUTHERN GUARD POST

A lone **orc** stands in this tower. Its attention is on the southwestern portion of Jando's Spire and anyone who passes through the inner gate (Area 2b). The orc is armed with a light crossbow.

5B - INNER GUARD POST

A lone **orc** stands in this tower. Its attention is on the courtyard beyond. There is a winch inside this post that used to operate the portcullis to the keep; it's broken. The orc is armed with a light crossbow.

5C - SOUTHWESTERN GUARD POST

A lone **orc** stands in this tower. It stares out at sea through a spyglass built onto a bolted-down turnstile in the center of the room. The spyglass, if removed, is worth 1,000 gold pieces. Despite knowing its value, Mega felt it was more valuable doing what it was made to do.

6 - GRIFFINWATCH KEEP

If the characters enter the keep stealthily, read the following:

As you sneak into the keep, you see a trio of long shadows on the wall cast by a pair of creatures just out of sight. The two are having a conversation. The largest creature—from the sounds of it, an orc—says to one, "Tomorrow, we will hand you over for the ransom. Get your rest tonight. You'll need it." The second voice—likely a human female—replies, "Yes, I understand."

After the characters hear this, or if they were not able to sneak into the keep, read the following:

The huge chamber before you is 40-feet deep north-to-south and 35-feet wide east-to-west. The ceilings are 40-feet high and mostly intact. A wooden throne sits near the northern wall. Behind it, hung with nails, is a flag depicting a white wave overcoming a human skull on a black field. The first is a tall orc with a white mohawk.

At the center of the room, lit by a single torch hung on a partition 5-feet from the easternmost wall, stand three figures. The centralmost figure is a large orc. He wears a long, blue coat like that of a sea captain and two wicked-looking black handaxes on each hip.

Two human women flank either side of him. Both look exhausted and downtrodden, wearing matching dull gray clothes. What's most interesting about the women, however, is that they appear to be identical twins. Both have the same dark hair, same brown eyes, same olive complexion that match the description of Nadia Mansouri.

The orc, of course, is **Mega** (see Mega's stats in Chapter 1). The woman to his right is Nadia Mansouri (NG female Ditimayan human **noble**) and the woman to his left is a **doppelganger** named Vista that has assumed Nadia's appearance. Using its detect thoughts ability, the shapeshifter is a near-perfect copy of the noblewoman, going so far as to mimic her exhaustion and traumatic stress.

If the characters sneak into the room without Mega or the doppelganger noticing them, they witness Faux-Nadia grab the real Nadia by the arm and pull her towards a closet in the northwestern corner. Nadia meekly pleads as the doppelganger shoves her inside, shuts, and locks the door. From there, it should be obvious she's an imposter.

Otherwise, if the characters are noticed by Mega or the doppelganger, this is how the scene plays out:

"By the Gods!" gasps the woman to the right of the orc. While the orc and the other woman seem surprised by your appearance, she starts sobbing and runs towards you.

At this point, the characters will need to roll for initiative to decide what to do. On her turn, the real Nadia will use her action to run to the characters for assistance. Mega, thinking quickly, grabs the fake Nadia and puts the blade of one of his axes to her neck.

"You shifty doppelganger!" the large orc yells at the woman who ran to you. "How dare you try to save your own neck!" He then turns to you, "This is the real girl, fools. That one is a doppelganger trying to con its way out. One false move and I'll slash the real girl's throat."

Mega's goal is to make the characters think that the Nadia that ran to them is the fake Nadia and not the real deal. Of course, the real Nadia immediately protests as the fake-Nadia pleads to the characters as Mega's hand axe comes dangerously close to her/its neck.

The orc chief hopes that during the confusion, he can use Faux-Nadia to escape. While he wants to possess the real Nadia, he isn't willing to lose his life for the girl. There are other philologists in the world. The doppelganger, Vista, continues to play its role as Nadia, going along with Mega's escape plan. Mega hopes to find the quickest way out of

the situation, either by finding a large group of orcs to distract the characters, a giant vulture he can mount, or even his ship. Worst case scenario, he'll leap from the spire into the ocean below. His coat is a *seafarer's jacket* which might help him survive the fall (at your discretion). You can learn more about the seafarer's jacket on [the Griffin's Saddlebag](#).

If all else fails, Mega and the doppelganger will fight their way out of the situation. Both have a keen sense of self-preservation and would rather flee than die at the hands of a group of adventurers. Mega isn't above surrendering himself to the authorities, either, especially if the real Nadia survives.

ADVENTURE CONCLUSION

There are a lot plot threads potentially open at the adventure's conclusion. Here are a few outcomes to consider:

- It's possible that Mega and the doppelganger's deception paid off and the characters killed the true Nadia. The doppelganger, seeing a fortunate opportunity, continues its ruse and "rejoins" Baariq Mansouri in Castlegrasp as the nobleman's daughter.
- Mega may surrender himself to the Castlegraspians. If he does, he's interred in the Castlegraspian dungeon. Having escaped prisons before, Mega's hardly afraid of a city dungeon.
- There is a possibility that Mega started the adventure in possession of *Prime*. If this is the case, he played it smart. The day before the characters snuck into Jando's Spire, Mega entrusted the book with his first mate, Gluronk. Gluronk's instructions were clear: she was to camp on the northside of the island. If Mega didn't contact her twenty-four hours after the ransom drop, she was to take a boat from the island and head north to find Mega's old brother, Gradba.
- If Mergigoth is still alive at the adventure's conclusion, he assumes leadership of the Odzedoz. Knowing that the Castlegraspians would never let the orcs remain in the area, Mergigoth and the Odzedoz evacuate up north up the Weysevain Coast to find a new home.
- Once the characters give the signal with the *wand of fireworks* (if they saved Nadia, that is... or whoever they think is Nadia), in four hours the Castlegraspian warship arrives at the Spire and starts pelting the ruins with its catapults and ballistas.
- In the rare case that Nadia survived and the characters are in possession of *Prime*, she's intrigued by the nature of the book and hopes that she can study it (this is even more so the case if Nadia is actually Vista, who recognizes that the book must have quite a bit of value attached to it.)

The characters can leave the island the way they came, rejoining Onyxbrow. They can also find a place to wait and watch the Castlegraspian ship lay waste to Jando's Spire. Afterward, Mansouri sends a rowboat to retrieve the group.

Baariq is true to his word. He pays 800 gp for the rescue of his daughter and another 800 gp for the head of Mega. He then gives them an additional 200 gp for their discretion in the matter.

The adventure is continued in the next chapter of the *Hand of the Eight, The Raven God*.

SELKIE

Selkies are mysterious fey creatures that live near coasts. In their original form, they appear as ordinary seals (although some claim they can tell a selkie's nature by the twinkle of intelligence in its eyes). Selkies can transform into humanoids, typically elven women. Interested in the affairs of humanoids, particularly sailors, they use their shapechanging ability to get involved in the lives of landwalkers. However, selkies have difficulty understanding humanoid customs. On more than one occasion an over-curious selkie meddled in the lives of landwalkers causing irreparable harm as a result.

Some sailors say that saving a selkie from a net can bring a sailor good luck. While others believe that it may bring a curse.

SELKIE

Medium fey (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +3

Skills Athletics +3, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Shapechanger. The selkie can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid or into its true form, a Medium seal. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed with it. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Expert Swimmer (Seal Form Only). While in seal form, the selkie has advantage on ability checks related to swimming.

Actions

Bite (Seal Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 - 1) piercing damage.

Rapier (Humanoid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Art by Dyson Logos and Shutterstock. Setting by Cze/Peku, DMDave, The Griffin's Saddlebag, Paper Forge, and IADnDMN. Story by DMDave