

RAZOR COAST™

Treasures from
Heart of the Razor



RAZOR COAST

HEART OF THE RAZOR

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HEART OF THE RAZOR
CHAPTER ONE

BLACK SPOT

by Gary McBride

“Gather round, lads, and listen close, or you’ll have the devil to pay! There are terrors upon the sea worse than breaking waves and lashing winds. Be wary in your wandering and wayfaring that you never travel with a man who bears the black spot upon his flesh, dark as the ace of spades. The tales you’ve been told are false, lads! The black spot does not spell doom to those who bear it. It brings terror and ruin upon whoever sails with the marked . . .”

—Last recorded words of Garis Mather before shipping out on *The Flying Fortune*

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Tale of *The Flying Fortune*

The Flying Fortune sailed for Port Shaw with a hold full of common cargo and wine casks. A two-masted brig, shipshape and trim, she was a humble lady of the sea, crewed by a motley collection of sailors from a dozen kingdoms all united in the promise of profit and perhaps a modicum of adventure. However, as soon as the ship left port, bad omens accumulated. The Captain brought his luggage aboard in black bags — black, the color of death. He chanced fate by leaving on a Friday, and as soon as the ship left its moorings, cormorants and ravens — death birds — flocked to her rigging. The men might have ignored one of these omens, but all together they heralded unavoidable disaster. Every night the old salts endlessly harangued the green recruits about their coming doom as the candles burned low.

Initially, the cruise defied the portents. The ship cut the waves without incident as her veteran captain, Colthyn Riggs, expertly navigated the Razor Sea. The weather blew fair, if blustery, and the ship made good speed. One day, a lookout even spotted a pod of spinner dolphins frolicking in the ship's wake. The crew took it as a good omen. Even the most determined of doomsayers began to believe their luck had shifted.

A Treasure Spotted

One night, with the moon barely a sliver in the sky, a sentry spotted strange glimmers of light off the port bow. Captain Riggs soon appeared on deck and surveyed the dark water with his spyglass. What he saw amazed him. He spied a distant sea ridge barely peeking above the waterline. A smashed sea chest surrounded by gold trade ingots lay atop it, sprayed by the breaking waves and glittering in the faint moonlight — a fortune ripe for the taking.

Captain Riggs beamed at the discovery, and ordered his men to bring the haul aboard their ship. The men cheered their good luck and toasted the captain's words with an extra ration of grog. All aboard were certain the gods smiled upon them, but they were wrong.

The Flying Fortune veered from its course and approached the treacherous extrusion. The captain quickly organized the ship's two longboats and personally led the party to collect the treasure. From the deck of the ship, the remaining crew waited anxiously. The ship's mate paced back and forth. He was uncertain about the entire venture, but his lot was to follow orders and await his captain's return. His fears proved well-founded when a shout of alarm rang out from across the water proclaiming that the captain was injured, followed by the unmistakable sound of splintering wood. Then the lanterns of the longboats went dark.

The first mate rushed to the gunwales and used a borrowed spyglass to peer into the night sea. He saw a broken boat, and a man floating face down in the dark water. He gave the order to bring the ship closer. The men hesitated, uncertain about approaching the mysterious reef. Much of it lay hidden beneath the waves at unknown depths — but still the ship's mate urged them forward.

Loyalty, Rescue Attempts, and Doom

The Flying Fortune approached slowly and cautiously. They dragged the man out of the water and found him horribly lacerated. He was already dead. Suddenly doubt filled the first mate. Something was out there, and both ship's boats were already launched. Years of nautical experience demanded he pull the ship back to a safe distance and wait for morning's light, but he could not bring himself to abandon the captain and his mates. Hesitantly, the acting commander ordered the ship even closer to the exposed reef and then, with a thundering crash, the ship struck the hidden rocks beneath the water.

The whole vessel shuttered and lurched. The brig grounded, and *The Flying Fortune's* fate was sealed. The sound of shattering hull

planks followed by horrid screams resonated from below decks — more than merely the sounds of running aground. Something had broken into the ship and was attacking the crew below.

The first mate drew his blade and formed up what was left of the crew. They steeled their courage and waited for whatever nightmare gave birth to the horrid noises below deck to emerge topside. When the creatures finally ventured into the moonlight, the men's courage broke.

They had never seen such otherworldly monstrosities. The creatures ripped into their faltering ranks and slaughter reigned. A young but literate sailor named Titus was clever enough to flee rather than fight to the last. He slipped into the smuggler's hold and bit his tongue. As death gurgled right outside his refuge, Titus made a panicked entry in his journal, recounting the terrors of that night.

Outside, the abominations spared no one and hauled what they wanted below the waves. They cared nothing for gold or treasure — only for the fresh flesh of sailors. The luckiest of the crew died swiftly, but a few survived to see the interior of a strange and alien ship. They were to be pitied above all others, as they were dragged to face the Vivisectionist's knife.

Strangely, Captain Riggs survived, but he lost his crew that night — not to mention his eternal soul. An inhuman master now rules the captain. To ensure his loyalty, it placed the black spot on his left hand and returned him to the world of men, there to perform his master's grim bidding.

The Best Laid Plans of Extradimensional Invaders

No one in this age of humanity's power believed that creatures from another reality watched this world keenly and closely. They lusted, envied, and desired what they saw. And in their avarice, they built a vessel with only one purpose — to punch a hole into the world of Lloeygr, and slip in enough arcane equipment to construct a great portal from where invasion could begin. The portal would not be constructed on dry land where men could easily see and thwart it. Instead, it would be built at the bottom of the ocean. And from there, the doom of this age would begin.

The mi-go known as the Engineer came to Lloeygr as part of this dread errand. It travelled with a small crew of encephalon gorgers tasked to create a foothold for invasion by countless more of its alien, merciless ilk. But perhaps the gods do care for mortal men, for the mi-go miscalculated, and its ship materialized within the solid stone of a seamount rather than in open waters.

The alien ship shuddered and wrecked. The crash instantly killed all but one of the brain collector crew. The vessel would never travel again. It would seem the world was saved not by heroic deeds, but by sheer dumb luck. Or perhaps it is simply that everything — even otherworldly magic and mechanisms — runs afoul of the hidden shoals of the Razor Coast.

Needs as Black as Hell

The alien vessel's sole survivor was the only crewmember who could repair the ship and restore its weird machinery to functionality. Certain the ship was beyond repair, the Engineer could still accomplish its terrible mission, but it needed something to fix its bioarchaic devices — raw material. Living flesh and sentient brains; the more intelligent, the better! The Engineer worked tirelessly towards its purpose, wasting nothing. Using the corpses of its encephalon gorger crew as well as captured humanoids, it constructed gruesome and murderous servants.

The Engineer also created the illusion that drew *The Flying Fortune* to its doom, and from that raid gained yet more servants and raw material with which to progress repairs. It replenished its own brain collection and even managed to create a new bioarchaic horror. It called this new creation the black leech, a control symbiote perfectly suited to enslaving human minds. It surgically implanted the black leech into the flesh of the captured Captain Riggs, leaving the telltale black spot upon his left hand at the point of incision.

The Engineer next gave Riggs a command: “BRING MORE!” Then it released the captain upon a makeshift raft with a few provisions and a small pouch of diamonds. A passing vessel rescued Riggs and carried him to Port Shaw. Using this wealth, Captain Riggs built a new ship and christened it *The Sealord’s Blessing*. The Blessing now plies its trade between Port Shaw and more distant coasts. It advertises itself as a humble merchantman, but the truth is far more sinister. This ship is a passage of the damned. It is a vessel with only one purpose — to fulfill the Engineer’s needs. And those needs are black as Hell.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Black Spot is an adventure for four to six characters of 5th level. It is a tale told in four parts, and should provide sufficient adventure for multiple sessions. Though intended for use with Razor Coast, this excursion is set on an indeterminate point upon the high seas, so it could take place almost anywhere in the fantasy world of your choosing.

The Black Spot is an adventure of exploration and mystery. While traveling with Captain Riggs, the PCs discover the wrecked ruin of *The Flying Fortune* and a hoard of gold. Using the allure of this tantalizing treasure, Captain Riggs convinces the PCs to accompany him aboard Fortune to lay claim to its wealth. Once onboard, the captain tries to steer the party towards his waiting master; however, PCs can unmask his deception by piecing together the clues at hand. They may even deduce Riggs’ true purpose. If not, Riggs leads the PCs deeper into the bowels of *The Flying Fortune*’s shattered hulk until they reach the deck linking the wrecked ship to the Engineer’s other-dimensional craft.

At first, the Engineer toys with the PCs while they descend deeper into its trap, but the party’s cunning and competence eventually trouble the supremely confident mi-go. As the party circumvents or survives his devious snares and slays his impressive minions, the Engineer abandons the plan to capture the PCs and harvest their organic components. Instead, it focuses on killing the invaders who threaten its plans. The PCs finally confront the Engineer within the control room of its ship, where they must defeat the hideous creature or leave the Razor Coast open to an invasion by the warmongering brethren of its wretched race.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The PCs must board *The Sealord’s Blessing* for this adventure to occur. How can this be accomplished? There are as many answers to this question as there are player characters. All that truly matters is that for some reason, the PCs must travel by ship and then choose *The Sealord’s Blessing*. Alternatively, the GM might simply replace the Blessing with whichever ship they choose and have it captained by Riggs. Several possible hooks are provided below.

Once aboard and traveling, downplay the journey’s beginning. This is just another voyage. At first, there is nothing remarkable about this cruise. Then, the strangeness mounts — odd fires at sea, a wrecked ship, an over-eager captain who is clearly lying about this ship, the missing corpses, signs of a vicious attack, and a passage down into darkness. Here are several hooks to bring the PCs aboard *The Sealord’s Blessing* at the start of the adventure.

Hooks

The PCs’ time aboard *The Sealord’s Blessing* may begin as a business relationship. Experienced PCs gain working passage as the ship’s security contingent, providing protection against buccaneers and sea beasts. PCs new to the Razor Sea and the Blessing may book passage aboard the vessel on their initial journey to Port Shaw.

The PCs must think themselves fortunate indeed to find a captain so worried about security that he would grant them free passage, board, and modest pay in exchange for a promise to help defend the ship.

Seasoned adventurers out of Port Shaw may book passage aboard the ship en route to perform another mission, perhaps espionage against the Pirate Confederacy or Armada. Maybe they acquired a treasure map to Garr Bloodbane’s gold, and luck has it that the Blessing’s course passes near their intended goal. What good fortune to find a captain so agreeable that he alters his ship’s course to deliver them to the isle.

Perhaps this journey is merely a hop to another outpost or village to acquire new wares or seek employment in another locale. *The Sealord’s Blessing* trades throughout the Razor Sea. How lucky the PCs are to find such inexpensive berths aboard this merchant vessel! The captain seems unusually eager to take on adventurers. Could he be a retired adventurer himself, sympathetic to the wandering life?

Captain Riggs might hire the PCs as guards for his merchant activities on and off shore. He weaves a tale of backstabbing trade partners, increasing piracy, and dangerous waters as justification for hiring the PCs in this capacity. Without them, his ship is in danger as he conducts business throughout the Razor. The PCs are perfect for this duty and will be handsomely paid at journey’s end.

Clues and Rumors

Cautious PCs may seek information about the Blessing before voyaging aboard her.

There is little to give a clue as to its awful purpose. *The Sealord’s Blessing* also plies its trade without incident to reinforce its cover. Not every journey of the Blessing involves visiting the wreck of the Fortune. The brain collector’s mission is slow, and there is time to conduct normal voyages to avoid attracting too much attention.

This journey will be the captain’s third return to the wreck of *The Flying Fortune* since he received the spot. He is careful to completely change out his crew between each such journey so no one aboard has ever seen the strange scenario that allows the captain to deliver bodies to the brain collector. Though the captain is a well-respected veteran of the sea, no crewmember has served aboard his ship for more than a few months. None of the rest of the crew is a party to this conspiracy.

Clues

The most suspicious thing about the Blessing is the captain himself. Captain Riggs has not adapted well to alien mind control. He is a moody ship’s master and frequently flies into a fury at the gentlest of slights. His rages do not persist, however, and he quickly regains his senses. Then he inevitably sinks into one of his deep depressions and inescapable bouts of melancholy. He sits alone most nights in his cabin drinking large volumes of wine and watered whiskey. He gains a few passing moments of freedom from the relentless symbiote’s control in the depths of drunkenness. At these times, all he can do is weep. Such is his sorrow and regret over what he has done and what he must yet do.

Captain Riggs does not wish to sacrifice his entire crew to the brain collector, nor does the brain collector need that many brains and bodies immediately. At this time, the monstrosity needs only as many as there are PCs. The captain knows the PCs are adventurers and is fully aware that those who participate in so dangerous a profession arouse no suspicion when they go missing. In short, they are perfect for his master’s needs.

Towards this end, when Captain Riggs first meets the PCs he is overly accommodating. He agrees to let them travel free if they promise to serve as the ship’s security or perform another duty onboard the ship. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he is almost desperate to get them aboard his craft. The party may suspect that the captain is unduly worried about pirate attack or perhaps hiding some other secret. It should not yet enter

their darkest dreams what fate the captain truly plans for them.

Rumors

Save for the idiosyncrasies mentioned above, Captain Riggs is a competent enough captain. *The Sealord's Blessing* is a fine vessel, shipshape and lovingly lorded. Captain Riggs has an impeccable reputation about the local ports as a fair and even-handed ship's master (which might arouse some suspicion when his behaviors mentioned above are observed at sea). Captain Riggs and *The Sealord's Blessing* are so nearly synonymous in these waters that few recall he once commanded *The Flying Fortune*. If the PCs choose to investigate the captain before taking passage aboard his ship or ask questions of the crew or fellow passengers while aboard, they can attempt a Charisma check to gather information. A successful attempt gains the information at the appropriate DC plus all the information from lower DCs. Each PC may make only one attempt. Additionally, this information can be given out in the form of roleplaying at the GM's discretion.

% ROLL	Information Gained
10	Captain Riggs is a fine and veteran captain with a good reputation
15	There are whispers that the captain is troubled by some unknown affliction. Whatever it is, no one is certain of its nature or true source.
20	Riggs is known to have once captained a ship called <i>The Flying Fortune</i> . The ship mysteriously disappeared under unknown circumstances, and the captain alone survived. Since that tragedy, Captain Riggs has been a ghost of his former self.

THE REAL "BLACK SPOT"

The black spot has its origin largely in literature rather than reality. Robert Louis Stevenson invented it for his seminal pirate novel *Treasure Island* (published as a book in 1883) as the symbol of a man marked for death by pirates.

However, some suggest Stevenson based the black spot on the historical practice of Caribbean pirates giving the ace of spades to a traitor or informer. Since the card has only one black spot on it, it was meant to imply that the traitor was put "on the spot."

PART ONE:

SHADOWS UPON A MOONLESS SEA

SYNOPSIS

The first part encompasses the PCs' voyage on *The Sealord's Blessing* en route to *The Flying Fortune*. This journey aboard the ship proves mostly uneventful. With little direct danger, you may wish to skip over this prologue and get quickly to the "meat" of this adventure. However, if your PCs desire more roleplay or want to

get to the bottom of the captain's melancholy, this is the chance to indulge them.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

If the PCs wish to talk to the crew, there are a few colorful characters for them to meet aboard the *Blessing*. See below for details.

FIRST MATE BARTON "DANDY" HANDERLY

The first mate is the longest-serving member of the captain's crew, which is not saying much. He has served just a few months aboard the *Blessing*. He is a genuinely friendly man by nature, particularly to any female members of the party. Though the captain barks and snaps at Handerly often, the first mate is the only other man aboard ship that Captain Riggs ever trusts with the wheel.

Mr. Handerly has a peculiar fascination with fine clothes. He is always smartly dressed. Sailing is dirty work and yet somehow Handerly is always finely attired and immaculately appointed. One of the reasons for this is that Handerly uses his innate spellcasting to clean and press his garments. With this cantrip and a supply of cleaning materials, his clothes are always neat and in fine shape. He is careful to never cast a spell in sight of the crew for fear of inflaming their superstitions.

BARTON HANDERLY

Medium humanoid (high elf), chaotic good

Armor Class 12 (studded leather)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Barton has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. Barton's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 10). He can innately cast the following spell, requiring no material components: 1/day: *prestidigitation*

Actions

Multiattack. Barton makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, Barton can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that he can see within 30 feet of him makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand Barton. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if Barton is incapacitated.

Equipment

Two potions of greater healing, 20 crossbow bolts, 24 gp, a silver holy symbol of Quell worth 50 gp.

GUSTAV “GLOOMY GUS” EIDESPRECHER, ABLE SEAMAN

At first glance, Gustav must seem to be the unhappiest member of the crew. Gustav is a walking encyclopedia of portents and omens — all of them bad. Still, if one gets past his gloomy disposition, **Gustav** (lawful neutral male human) is a competent sailor and a stalwart friend to those to whom he takes a shine. Though relatively new to the Blessing, Gustav has been a sailor since he was a little boy more than 40 years ago!

Gustav is a thick, rough, balding man with enormous red chop mutton sideburns and a moustache. He always wears green and considers it a lucky color. If asked why, he matter-of-factly replies it is the same color as the land. Though the superstition may sound ridiculous, in his 40 years at sea he shipwrecked twice and obviously survived both times.

CARLTON “PREACH” RASKERS, QUARTERMASTER

At first glance, “Preach” looks like the ship’s resident parson. He dresses modestly and frequently quotes from the holy text of the sea god Quell, which he claims to have committed to memory. He always wears a humble, hand-carved wooden holy symbol. All these affectations only serve to obfuscate the most mercenary and amoral member of the crew.

“**Preach**” (neutral evil male human rogue) is a walking, talking black market. He does his shipboard job competently enough. The Blessing is well supplied and its crew well fed. However, “Preach” supplements his income by smuggling illegal goods from one port to the next and by selling vices to the crew. He keeps about a quarter of the Blessing’s complement well supplied with dragonsmoke.

If the PCs try to use his services, “Preach” has a few potions and poisons he is willing to sell. He has two doses of oil of taggit he is only too happy to relinquish for 350 gp a dose. He will not say exactly where it came from other than to claim that Quell’s bounty provides.

PUNAWAI, ABLE SEAMAN

The first thing that strikes observers about Punawai is that he is big and uncouth. His fingers are thick, and his eyes seem wild. His skin bears jagged tribal iconography, the ink of the tattoos such a deep blue they appear to run black. He is strong and muscular, and wears little save for tattered pantaloons and a fine sharkskin hide shirt adorned with teeth, spines, and barbs from a dozen different types of sea beasts.

Punawai is an outcast Tulita whose human blood mingles with the children of the sea. By all appearances, he is a savage. His tribe expelled him for no crime other than his heritage. The “more civilized peoples” of the Razor treat him like a freak show escapee. He should be a monster, but Punawai is anything but. He is a stoic observer of the world, an old soul who hears the whispering wisdom of the sea with every wave. Only in battle, when the frenzy of the fight swirls all about him, does Punawai let go and become the monster he appears.

Punawai has little time for those who judge him because of his blood. When Punawai is annoyed, he pushes the offenders overboard.

PUNAWAI

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 (hide armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. Punawai has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his allies is within 5 feet of him and the ally isn’t incapacitated.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Punawai can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack damage.

ENCOUNTERS

IN SEARCH OF THE FLYING FORTUNE

Background

The PCs arrive on the docks of Port Shaw in preparation for their voyage aboard *The Sealord’s Blessing*. Captain Riggs is not available to greet them, but the other members of the crew — most notably First Mate Barton Handerly — are present to welcome them aboard and address the necessities: showing them to their quarters, introducing them to life aboard ship, and other preliminary matters. After this brief indoctrination, the ship is prepared for the high seas.

As the ship departs from Port Shaw and sets out to the open sea, the GM may read or paraphrase the following.

The Sealord’s Blessing leaves port with the dawn tide. A fair breeze fills the mainsail and soon land is but a memory lost in the morning mist. First Mate Barton Handerly has the wheel but, with so constant a wind, finds little to do but make sure the morning shift does not slack their duties. A handsome sailor with a friendly smile—though perhaps a little overdressed in his fine burgundy waistcoat—Handerly seems a personable sort.

He even takes a moment to instruct some of the younger sailors on how to use the gunwales and rigging to maneuver the ship’s deck until they get

their sea legs.

“It’s a fine day for sailing! The wind is good and steady. If this holds we’ll shave a day off our journey easy,” he says with a laugh.

The journey has begun . . .

The Sealord’s Blessing is now on course for *The Flying Fortune*. The first leg of the journey is uneventful as the PCs get their bearings aboard the ship. During this portion of the journey, the PCs are free to interact with the ship’s crew, as Captain Riggs remains in his quarters and laments the actions he is about to undertake. To numb his pain, Captain Riggs turns to his old friend, a nonjudgmental bottle of alcohol.

He keeps his cabin door locked and refuses to leave his quarters. Unlocking the door requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity check with thieves’ tools, while physically forcing the locked door (AC 17, HP 15, Damage Threshold 5) open can be accomplished with a successful DC 20 Strength check or damage. Such an unwanted intrusion elicits a fiery reaction from the melancholy captain, especially if the characters break the door down. He rants and raves for several minutes about the sanctity of privacy before he finally calms down. Once he does, Captain Riggs profusely apologizes for his outburst and returns to his quarters where he remains until midday. When midday arrives, the GM may read or paraphrase the following.

Captain Riggs emerges from his cabin at midday. He is a grim man dressed in a faded captain’s jacket and heavy duelist’s gloves with a rapier at his side. Despite the fair weather, he wears not even the hint of a smile. “Report, Handerly!” growls the captain.

“The cruise goes well, sir. We couldn’t pray to the Sea Lord for better weather. A pity you missed the morning launch. I’ve rarely seen the sea so calm and . . .”

“Save your poetry for the whores back in port,

Handerly!” the Captain snaps. “The Razor is no place to let your guard down, and we’re a long way from home yet.”

The first officer only nods. The Captain’s mood seems to soften a bit. “Anyway,” he continues, “you did a fine job getting us out of port. I’ll take the helm for a while, Mister Handerly. You can relieve me in the evening.”

The captain lets out a loud bark to his crew. “Trim the foresail to port, men! Let’s see how much open water we can cover while the wind lasts!”

Soon, under the captain’s expert hand, the *Blessing* splits the waves like an arrow through the wind. A fine salt spray mists over the forward decks, and sailors scamper to and fro to obey the captain’s bellowed commands.

PCs approaching Captain Riggs encounter a moody man whose demeanor changes at the drop of a hat. One minute, he is honest and forthcoming, and the next evasive and confrontational. He speaks in vague generalities and avoids answering questions, especially when they delve into sore topics such as *The Flying Fortune’s* fate. If the PCs press Captain Riggs about such matters, he feigns ignorance.

FIRES IN THE FOG

GMs should run this encounter when they are ready to end the first part of the adventure.

The Sealord’s Blessing approaches *The Flying Fortune’s* wreckage. It is important to remember Captain Riggs is aware of what is about to transpire, but he is also an unwilling participant. Captain Riggs is not feigning ignorance; he just wants to forget.

ABOUT THE SEALORD’S BLESSING

The Sealord’s Blessing is a 90-foot-long caravel with two masts and a complement of 45-plus sailors. The main sail is large and square. The mizzen is triangular (or lateen). Further, a foresail juts from the ship’s bow off an angled foremast (or bowsprit as it is sometimes called). It is a fast ship, hampered only by a large hold, designed to carry as much cargo as possible for a vessel of this size. With an empty hold, her draft rides shallow and could theoretically navigate many rivers, though it has never been used for this purpose.

It has one weapon, a ballista, mounted on the quarterdeck near the rear of the ship. The ballista is intended as a defensive weapon and can fire flaming bolts designed to set the rigging of pursuers alight long enough for this fleet ship to escape. Notably, the custom-made ballista bolts have trident points.

The most unusual feature of the craft is its many distinctive adornments from which the ship draws its name. The ship is covered in carvings and holy etchings dedicated to Quell, God of the Seas. It is almost as if the ship’s builder believed it would be less prone to mishap if every flat surface honored the Sea Lord.

The ship’s figurehead is a nude mermaid reaching out as if to make an offering to the sea. The door to the captain’s cabin is covered with a scene of a great bearded merman spearing a kraken that has its tentacles tangled in the ironwork hinges. The deck planks are studded with graven shells bearing reverent sea-elven inscriptions singing the praises of the King Beneath the Waves. Dolphins and tritons frolic along the length of the ship’s gunwales. Even the humble belaying pins are adorned with stylized images of the mighty Sea Lord.

Midnight passes uneventfully on *The Sealord's Blessing*, but shortly thereafter, the ship's watch notices something strange in the distance. The GM may read or paraphrase the following.

It is already after midnight when a thick fog rolls in and quickly shrouds the ship in mist. Visibility drops to nothing. Small gusts of wind stir and roil the mist and bring with them a slight chill unusual for these warm, tropical waters.

And then the peace and quiet of the ship shatters. The sentry calls out. "Fire! Fire on the starboard bow!" The call is loud enough to awaken even the deepest sleeper.

The sentry's alarm arouses the crew and most likely the PCs too. Sleeping PCs hear the cry by succeeding at a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check if their cabin door is closed, or a DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check if it is not closed. It takes a few rounds to make it on deck amid the confusion. The party can take precautions during the commotion or run headlong into the fray. Once up top, it quickly becomes apparent that there is no fire and that the sentry is actually calling out about a fire on the water some distance away. The GM can read or paraphrase the following to describe the scene.

Sailors mill about topside, uncertain of what needs to be done. The captain is quickly on deck as well, still buttoning his faded jacket as he moves to see the cause of this alarm.

"Fire?! Where? I see no flame!" demands the Captain.

"Not on the ship, sir. Off the starboard bow!" explains the sailor.

"What? Where?" says the surprised Captain Riggs. The sailor points emphatically. The captain opens his spyglass, a finely made item adorned with a stylized golden eagle, and scans the horizon.

"I see nothing," he pronounces.

"It was there, Captain. I swear it! A fire in the mist, clear as morning," exclaims the agitated sentry.

"Calm down, my lad. I believe you. Well, whatever it was, it appears to be gone now . . ."



The Flying Fortune's Appearance

At this point, everyone on deck who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the faint outline of the mist-shrouded Fortune stranded atop a reef some distance away. At this range, they can make out few details — it's a ship sitting high above the waterline, unmoving in the mist. If no one sees *The Flying Fortune*, then Captain Riggs claims to see it and points out the wreck. (Captain Riggs does not need to roll; he knows it's there.)

As *The Sealord's Blessing* moves in for a closer look, observers notice the ship sits high on the waterline, as if it ran aground against a jutting object. Signal lanterns and calls offering aid elicit no response from the wreck. No nameplate graces its bow. After some debate among the crew and perhaps the PCs, Captain Riggs announces he wants to draw alongside the ship to investigate the strange nameless ship further. The GM may read or paraphrase the following.

Captain Riggs assesses the situation and announces his intended course of action. "Hmmm . . . there may be survivors aboard. We should investigate. This is not part of the usual duty, men, so I'll take volunteers. The volunteers will split any salvage we find. I'll lead the party personally.

"I'll not lie. This could be dangerous. Who knows what you'll find aboard a wrecked ship here in the Razor? Mister Handerly, you'll have command while I'm gone. So, who will join me, lads?"

The sailors look down at their shoes. An old salt everyone calls Gloomy Gus mutters something about bad omens. It seems that tonight the Captain is desperately short on volunteers . . .

Hopefully the mention of both a heroic rescue and the allure of treasure prompt the PCs to eagerly volunteer for the mission. None of the superstitious sailors step forward. More cautious adventurers may try to convince the captain to wait until morning. Captain Riggs is hesitant to wait and makes a case for immediate action. He pleads the morning tide may drag the ship beneath the surface, and any survivors will need immediate assistance. If these arguments fail to sway the PCs, he even resorts to subtly questioning their courage.

The captain does not board the wreck alone. Ultimately, if the PCs stand their ground and demand the delay, he acquiesces. He lets out a heavy sigh and acts as if he came around to their line of thinking. He invents a logical explanation for inaction and begrudgingly waits. By morning, the fog grows thicker and the ship — once visible as a shadow — fades into utter obscurity. The overcast day appears to be doing little to burn off the fog, and it even begins to sprinkle a soft rain. At this juncture, Captain Riggs grows impatient and once again pleads his case for taking action. If the PCs agreed to act as the ship's security contingent, Captain Riggs appeals to their sense of honor and duty to defend their employer against danger — and he is heading over! Captain Riggs refuses to accept no for an answer, and he pulls out all stops to convince the PCs to accompany him on a small dinghy and head out into the mist towards the shadowy wreck. Adventure waits!

THE CAPTAIN'S TREACHERY

This adventure turns on the PCs exploring the wreck with an unwilling traitor in their midst. Always keep in mind the captain is trying to lure them to their doom at the hands of the Engineer. The captain's black spot is not visible — he always wears gloves. The Captain accompanies the PCs through much of the ship, so the following encounter actually unfolds across the course of exploring *The Flying Fortune's* wreckage.

At first, Captain Riggs tries to take command and lead the expedition to board the Fortune. He offers them equal shares of the salvage. Experienced sailors who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check find the captain's offer rather odd. Traditionally, the captain gets at least a double share of any salvage recovered by his vessel. If the PCs question the captain's generosity, he concocts an explanation for his unusual offer by claiming that once they disembark from *The Sealord's Blessing*, they are all equals.

As a rule, the captain tries to deflect concern away from himself at every turn. He issues dire warnings to be prepared for anything, and implores the PCs to keep their wits at all times. Captain Riggs pretends to be the PCs' ally as he lures them to their deaths or to enslavement at the hands of his alien master.

However, Riggs knows nothing of the current dangers aboard *The Flying Fortune*. He knows nothing about the murder crows who've made the crow's nest their roost or the rotting upper deck. And he certainly does not know that a sailor named Titus trapped himself in the smuggler's hold that fateful day, long ago.

Captain Riggs desires to keep the actual search of *The Flying Fortune* to a minimum and get down to the lower hold as soon as possible. He is afraid any amount of time spent searching the ship will lead to his ruse coming undone. He wants to get his victims onto the brain collector's craft, so they can be captured and processed.

Wary or suspicious PCs who carefully watch the captain and succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check feel something is amiss. They notice the captain seems very familiar with the ship, despite his words about exploring this "strange vessel." When called out on this discrepancy, the Captain lies by claiming that his first command was aboard a ship almost identical to this one.

This is a blatant falsehood, so Captain Riggs must succeed on a Charisma (Deception) check to pass off this lie as truth. The captain is under alien mind control, but he is no fool. He realizes the PCs are dangerous, and he would rather not face them all at once. Given the chance, he tries to arrange situations where the PCs can be taken on one or two at a time. In his mind, the best solution would be to not face them at all and to let the Engineer dispose of them.

A Time to Poison

The brain collector also provided the captain with a very unusual poison that could come in handy. This powerful paralytic shuts down the body while leaving the mind active and undamaged. Captain Riggs has coated his blade with this poison. Ideally, the Captain waits until the PCs are fighting either the strangle weeds in **Area P-2** or the encephalon gorgers in the Engineer's craft. While the PCs are absorbed with battle, he stabs his victim with his poisoned blade. Clever PCs would be wise to keep this from happening. The captain is a challenging enough opponent on his own. Combined with another foe, he could make a battle dangerous indeed!

Liar, Liar

Of course, there are numerous opportunities for the PCs to realize the Captain is lying to them. First, there are handkerchiefs monogrammed with the Captain's initials within the captain's quarters (**Area 4**). He dismisses such evidence as a coincidence, but if the PCs become belligerent or demand he disarm, he attacks instead.

Second, the PCs can confront Captain Riggs if they find the smuggler's hold (**Area 19**) and discover Titus' journal that explicitly

EDITOR'S NOTE: WHAT ABOUT MAGIC?

A spell like *zone of truth* fails where a Wisdom (Insight) check might not, because it is not actually Captain Riggs telling the lie. Not even the leech in his brain tells the lie. It is merely the mechanism of conveyance, like a radio. The Engineer tells the lies through the black leech, and thus through the captain. Unless the Engineer is in the area of a spell like *zone of truth*, the magic will not detect the lie in the captain's mouth.

The black leech implanted in the captain's brain is the Engineer's masterpiece of bioarchaic mind control, inserted into his brain during a long and painful surgical procedure. A simple *dispel evil and good* meant to break enchantments cannot free the Captain from the Engineer's control nor can a *dispel magic* rid him of the leech. An *antimagic field* stops the leech from receiving any of the Engineer's new commands, but this spell does not expel the leech, nor do they stop it from forcing the captain to obey those commands it already passed on to him. Nothing short of a *wish* can free him from the leech.

names the captain as the master of *The Flying Fortune*. Once again, Captain Riggs attacks when his story falls apart.

Third, the captain is not a perfect liar. If he tells the PCs a bald-faced, direct lie and they become suspicious, a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals the captain has been charmed or enchanted, although the enchantment blocks him from discussing this fact. In fact, the captain does nothing to encourage the suspicion that an alien mind controls him.

If the PCs detect the mental control, the black leech, for example, is magical and challenge him on these matters, he attacks. Similarly, attempts to free him from the brain collector's mental control — for example, by casting *remove curse* on him, see **Area C-8** for more detail — provoke Captain Riggs to attack.

If the captain falls below 0 hit points, the black leech crawls out of his left hand, leaving behind a trail of black mucus and coagulated blood. Once the black leech leaves his body, he is no longer under the Engineer's control. He immediately takes 2d10 psychic damage. If Captain Riggs regains consciousness, he immediately breaks into tears. He is almost mad from the terrible things he was forced to do and the horrors he witnessed. He begs the PCs to slay him and see he gets a proper burial far away from this cursed place.

He can relate a few pieces of useful information in exchange for a merciful end. He shares the story of *The Flying Fortune* and how he came to be the Engineer's slave. He can also draw a crude sketch of the ship's layout. He knows the brain collector is a bizarre and powerful plant from another dimension, though he is unsure of what it is. He also knows the Engineer can cast convincing illusions. He has seen the encephalon gorgers in action and knows how vicious they can be.

COLTHYN RIGGS, CAPTAIN OF THE SEALORD'S BLESSING

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +4, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +5, Deception +4, Intimidation +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Black Leech. The Engineer can telepathically communicate with Captain Riggs as long as they are on the same plane of existence. Captain Riggs also suffers disadvantage on saving throws against attacks made by the Engineer against him.

Actions

Multiattack. Captain Riggs makes three melee or ranged attacks.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the Captain can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that he can see within 30 feet of him makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the captain. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the captain is incapacitated.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Redirect Attack. When a creature the captain can see target him with an attack, the captain chooses an ally within 5 feet of him. The captain and the ally swap places, and the chosen ally becomes the target instead.

Equipment

Two *potions of healing*, +1 *chain shirt*, two doses of *poison* (see below), 20 crossbow bolts, spyglass, thieves' tools, 22 gp and a diamond worth 400 gp

Before emerging upon the deck of his ship to see the fire in the mist, the captain poisoned his rapier with a toxin duplicating the effects of Wyvern Poison. The captain is a competent deceiver, and with his poisoned blade he believes he has a good chance of taking down an enemy with a sharp stroke.

Therefore, his preferred method of dealing with the party is to divide them, ambush a single PC, and then drag the still living victim down the hole to his master. If for any reason he is forced into hand-to-hand combat, he uses his superior initiative to strike once and then flees, hoping to lure his pursuers into the alien craft. He willingly engages in protracted battle only within the confines of the alien vessel. Remember the captain's mind is not his own. The Engineer controls the captain, and would gladly sacrifice this servant to achieve its own ends.

If the PCs are captured and processed, Captain Riggs returns to *The Sealord's Blessing* alone and in a panic. He spins wild stories of sea monsters (describing the monsters as being shark-men) and then orders the ship to flee. At the next few ports, he'll rotate out the crew. When he has a fresh batch, he takes on new passengers and repeats the deadly ruse.

HELP FROM THE SHIP?

It is possible that the PCs, especially if they've been beaten back or had a party member captured, return to *The Sealord's Blessing* without Captain Riggs. Run this encounter with Barton Handerly in that eventuality.

First Mate Barton Handerly is suspicious but if persuaded (either through an impassioned plea with a successful DC 15 Charisma check or an outright lie with a successful Charisma [Deception] check) he may agree to send a party to accompany the PCs back to the ship. He is particularly susceptible to pleas to aid the captain. Grant advantage to Charisma or Charisma (Deception) checks made using this tactic.

If persuaded, Mister Handerly handpicks a small contingent of six of the "stouter lads" led by Punawai to aid the party. These armed sailors accompany the adventurers into battle. Though brave, these sailors are not fanatics. If half of these sailors fall, the rest flee for their lives. First Mate Handerly refuses to go himself, unless magically compelled. No coward, but a man of responsibility, he was ordered to stay with the ship and he intends to follow that order. If the PCs compel Handerly, he proves a competent enough combatant.

SAILORS

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage or 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage is used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Equipment

Chain shirt, spear, 1d8 gp

PART TWO:

THE FLYING FORTUNE

This part covers the Fortune herself and is designed to be both a mystery to determine *The Flying Fortune's* fate and a scene of horror as it becomes all too evident something monstrous happened aboard this ship. *The Flying Fortune* is devoid of much real danger. Instead, this section of the adventure should focus on establishing an eerie mood and foreshadowing the true horrors to come.

As the party explores the wreck of *The Flying Fortune*, play this up. Try to keep the players on edge. Doors squeak loudly when opened. Decks creak and bend. When a PC reaches to investigate something a small crab leaps out and scuttles away. These small starts presage the true horrors lurking in the lower hold and even further below.

ECOLOGY OF THE SEAMOUNT

This sea-covered mount has no name amongst the terrestrial folk, but tribes of sahuagin once named the mount Zarna Vestria, which roughly translates to the Trident of the Sea King. The Trident is an accurate name, for the mount has not one peak but three, and together they form a dangerous navigational hazard.

Although dangerous to ships, sea life thrives here. Coral festoons the mountain slopes — stag horn, brain, and pillar — forming an atoll, a great ring that circles the peak and makes navigation even more treacherous. Fish teem in the millions — a riot of color and diversity schooling and shoaling all about the crusted seamount.

Rays, eels, squids, octopi, shrimp, crabs and mollusks of all sorts are also common sights amongst the reefs. Native to the Trident is a great population of blue clawless spiny lobsters. Almost unknown elsewhere, they infest the slopes of the mount. These lobsters are delicious and would fetch a high price in port (5 gp per lobster). But the true wealth of the Trident is not in lobster meat. Instead, at the base of the seamount lives a population of ancient giant oysters. Within their shells lie ten of the finest black pearls in all the Razor Sea. These especially fine specimens are worth 300 gp each.

Alas, harvesting the pearls is dangerous indeed. The venerable oysters themselves are no threat, however, another common resident of the Trident is the ravenous quipper. These small, cantankerous fish congregate in swarms. Their preferred prey is other sea life, of course, but they also have grown accustomed to devouring sea birds that sometimes perch when the mount's peak is exposed. As a result, they have learned that when something falls in the water, it means food. Thus, anyone diving into the water has a 25% of attracting **2d3 swarms of quippers**. The PCs have, in this adventure, no reason to pursue this trove or even a hint of its existence. A pearl diving expedition braving quippers, the Kane-moni (see below), and other aquatic terrors could make a fine side quest for GMs inclined to expand upon it.

SWARM OF QUIPPERS (2d3)

XP 200

hp 28

CR 1

Being not one mind but millions of frenzied fish, the swarm has only one goal — to eat as much as possible. Therefore, the swarms always move to include as many living targets in their area as possible. The quipper schools disperse when reduced to zero hit points. At that point, the swarm either flees for lack of numbers or is distracted eating its dead members. Either way, the vicious little bastards are no longer a threat.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

LORD OF THE MOUNT

Use this optional encounter to spice up the journey to *The Flying Fortune* or to complicate retreat from it.

The most-feared hunter on the submerged mount is an outcast aquatic humanoid who appears in a small number of Tulita legends as the Kane-moni (literally the “Man Swallower”). Known as Aranalima (the “King Snapper”) in its native tongue, this **sahuagin baron** feeds his enmity for all manner of elves by attacking passing vessels and killing members of this despised race.

At most times, the Lord of the Mount descends beneath the waves and waits for a ship’s wake to disturb the water. When this occurs, the aquatic nobleman surfaces and quickly scans the decks searching for elves among the ship’s company. If he spots none, and the ship’s defenses appear formidable, the baron retreats beneath the surface and waits for a better opportunity. However, if the sahuagin sees any elves onboard, or the boat appears vulnerable, the Lord of the Mount telepathically commands any sharks within range to join his attack. He then boards the vessel and flies into a wild rage, concentrating his attacks on wounded foes.

The Kane-moni is a strictly optional encounter. The Kane-moni can make any retreat from the boat more interesting. Perhaps when the PCs are fleeing from the exploding craft at the end of the adventure, they could encounter this monstrosity. Regardless, he is out there in the water waiting for the right moment to strike.

SAHUAGIN LORD

Large humanoid (sahuagin), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6, Int +5, Wis +5

Skills Perception +8

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Sahuagin

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The sahuagin has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn’t have all its hit points.

Limited Amphibiousness. The sahuagin can breathe air and water, but it needs to be submerged at least once every 4 hours to avoid suffocating.

Blood Frenzy. The sahuagin can magically command any shark within 120 feet of it, using a limited telepathy.

Actions

Multiattack. The sahuagin makes three attacks: one with his bite and two with his claws or trident.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Trident. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 +

5) piercing damage, or 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage if used with two hands.

THE SEAMOUNT

The Flying Fortune sits atop the tip of a seamount in the open waters. As the PCs approach the wreck, the GM may read or paraphrase the following. This description assumes that the PCs approach at night. If the PCs approach by day or have darkvision, GMs should modify the description to indicate there appear to be holes in the hull below the waterline. See **Area 20**, below, for additional information on this underwater way to enter and leave the ship. When ready to describe the Seamount and *The Flying Fortune*, GMs may read or paraphrase the following:

The sea is calm and black, like a great dark mirror. All around, a dense fog swirls. Every stroke of the paddle stirs the mist, creating small wisps and eddies that tremble and die away in the all-enshrouding bank. Pushing through, the ship soon comes into view. It’s a brig by the look of it, two hundred feet long at least, and in rough shape. The sails are so tattered and torn as to be scarcely there. The rigging is frayed and rotten. The main mast still stands straight and tall, bearing a rugged crow’s nest, but the mizzen has snapped and collapsed across the broken quarterdeck. The quarterdeck itself is obscured by the tangle of debris.

The summit of a great stone peak lifted the ship out of the water. Beneath it a seamount extends down into the black depths, almost as if some massive giant used the submerged mountaintop to impale the vessel. As the dinghy comes close enough to board her, there are no signs of life. There are not even corpses; it is as if the entire crew simply vanished. Upon the bow, this doomed ship’s nameplate is conspicuously absent—whether removed by the whims of nature or the intentions of others remains to be seen. Rocky protrusions brace her sides offering access to the top deck.

THE FLYING FORTUNE LEVEL I: UPPER DECKS

The easiest way to get up onto the deck of the ship is to climb the small seamount peak — the central point of the Trident — where it emerges. The seamount’s protruding summit is easy to reach from a dinghy. The seamount with its gentle slope and many handholds has become a natural ladder onto the upper decks.

Thanks to the wind, it is also surprisingly dry and devoid of slick algae. It only takes a successful DC 5 Strength (Athletics) check to

AFFECTS OF WIND AND WAVES

Age, rot, and water have taken their toll on *The Flying Fortune's* infrastructure. The ship's wooden doors swelled over time. Therefore, it takes a successful DC 15 Strength check to force them open.

climb to the summit. Once atop the summit, the characters emerge on the upper deck at **Area 1**.

Suspicious PCs may try to board the ship some other way. There is nothing to stop them. However, the two lesser seamount peaks are much steeper and do not reach all the way to the deck. The ship's hull is fragile in places and may not support the full weight of climbers. The easiest alternate way is to somehow tie a line to the back of the quarterdeck (**Area 5**) and climb up. Of course, magical methods, such as *fly* or *levitate*, are an option for some parties. However, delaying the PCs boarding the Fortune only delays the adventure, so this task works best if GMs grant access readily.

1. ENTRY POINT

Perched above the main deck in the crow's nest (**Area 3**), a **lone murder crow** patrols for intruders or a meal. It has darkvision and decent vision, so it likely spots intruders making their way onto the craft. PCs attempting to board the main deck or upper decks unnoticed must succeed on Dexterity (Stealth) checks exceeding the murder crow's passive Perception. Success allows the PC to traverse the climb undetected. See **Area 3**, below, for detailed stats and tactics.

2. MAIN DECK

The upper deck of *The Flying Fortune* is in shambles. Wind, rain, and salt corrosion have turned what was once a fine vessel into a debris-strewn wreck. Fallen and tangled rigging, splintered masts, broken beams, and rotten wood create a natural obstacle course. The entire deck is treated as difficult terrain.

There is some peril to moving about the deck. A portion of wooden planking on *The Flying Fortune's* main deck is rotted. (This is marked by dotted lines on the map.) It creaks and strains if any Medium creature walks upon it. It only collapses, however, if two Medium creatures, one Large, or four Small creatures walk upon the weakened wood. When it gives way, anyone standing on it falls through the equally rotten middle deck and slams into the hull of the lower hold, **Area 18**.

Detecting an area with rotted wood requires a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. This hazard constitutes a structural defect rather than an intentionally created trap. Therefore, characters cannot disarm or deactivate this peril. They must either avoid such areas entirely or procure sufficient building materials and manpower to repair the weakened decking.

If any PC falls through the rotten deck, the subsequent crash deals falling damage based upon the distance the creature plummets and makes a tremendous amount of noise, alerting the murder crow in the crow's nest and the clockwork weaving spiders within the lower passage (**Area P-3**). The murder crow eagerly attacks, especially if the PCs have been separated, wounded, or cast into disarray. The clockwork weaving spiders gather information about the adventurers and then report their findings back to the Engineer when an opportunity presents itself.

Keen observers can garner additional information among the mess.

Any character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check confirms the ship is in poor shape, but it has

not been submerged. The captain's voiced concerns about the ship being eventually submerged are unfounded. This wreck is stranded high and dry.

Anyone succeeding by 5 or more on the previous check realizes another thing. This is not a recent shipwreck. This ship has been here at least a few years. The Trident is not exactly a common place to visit, but trade ships occasionally come near enough to see this anomaly. Yet the blatantly obvious wreck has remained unexplored all this time. The answer to this enigma is actually quite simple: anyone who investigates this ship encounters its guardians — both above and below. So far, there have been no survivors.

PCs who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check discover a savage battle took place here. There are crossbow bolt heads scattered about the debris. Wood shafts and feather fletching are largely rotted or blown away. There are a few broken blades and splintered spear hafts amongst the jumble as well.

The tarp, which once covered the cargo hold is long gone. From there, PCs can look down and see **Area 12**. Anyone investigating the mainmast notices claw marks and impaled spearheads sunk deep into the wood without a check. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the ruined ballista at **Area 5**, allowing the PC to deduce the crew desperately fired a ballista bolt and pinned an enemy to the main mast with a single, powerful blow. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals another thing. The pinned creature freed itself from the impalement and continued its brutal rampage. Whatever attacked this ship was monstrous.

2A. MIZZENMAST

This small stub of wood is all that remains of the ship's second sail. The bulk of the mast fell into the sea, partially crushing the railing of the quarterdeck, **Area 5**. If anyone bothers to closely examine the broken pole and succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check the search reveals this mast was not cut down or collapsed from age, but was instead blasted apart by a *lightning bolt*. This was the Engineer's doing.

3. THE CROW'S NEST

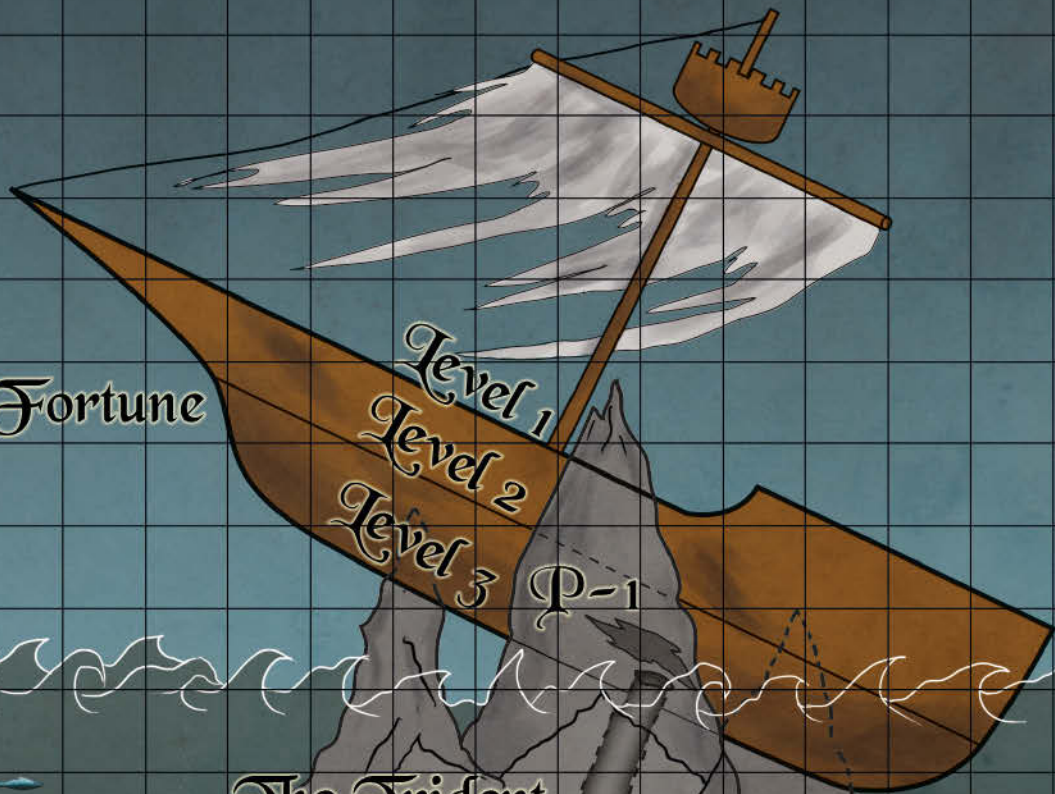
A lone **murder crow** roosts up in the apropos crow's nest. This undead monstrosity reaches an impressive height of four feet with a nine-foot wingspan. Although it appears like an ordinary crow from afar, its size belies the truth. Its diet usually consists of whatever carrion the sea disgorges, but the bleeding flesh of humanoids suffices.

The crow's nest is a large wooden platform atop the main mast, surrounded by a wooden palisade. Two men could comfortably stand on this platform and keep watch over the ship and its surroundings. There used to be ladder up to the crow's nest, but it broke off some time ago and is nowhere to be seen. Climbing up is therefore challenging without some sort of aid. The crow's nest is almost 60 feet off the deck and requires successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks to scale the rotten mast.

Although it lacks any noteworthy intelligence, the murder crow waits for the right moment to attack. It peeks through breaks in the crow's nest fencing and remains perfectly still while spying on the PCs, giving it advantage on its Dexterity (Stealth) check while motionless.

If the PCs separate, fall through the floor, or otherwise make a disturbance while investigating the upper decks, the murder crow seizes the moment and attacks. This voracious predator lacks patience. If the PCs spend ten minutes on deck without triggering any of the preceding conditions, it attacks anyway. The taste of recently deceased flesh is just too delicious to resist.

The Flying Fortune



The Trident



P-1

P-2

P-3

Hatch

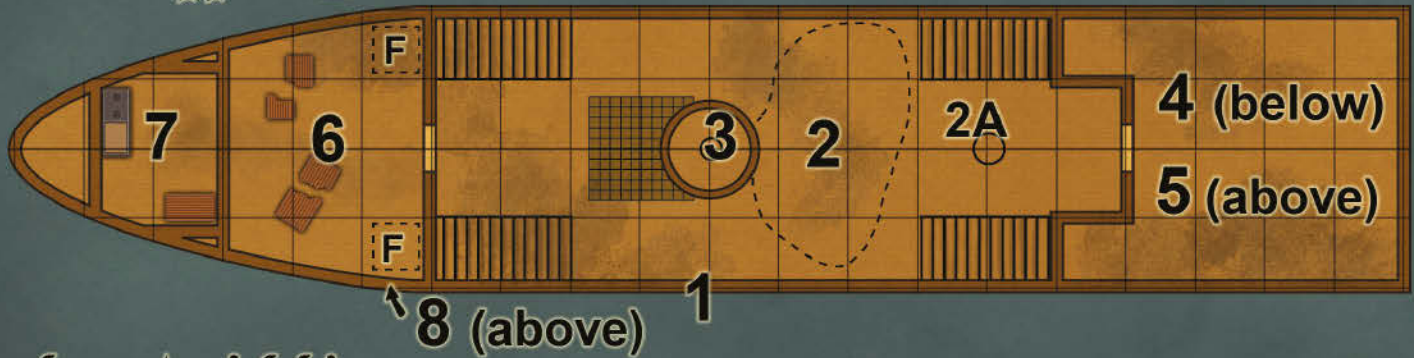
Main Deck

Command Deck

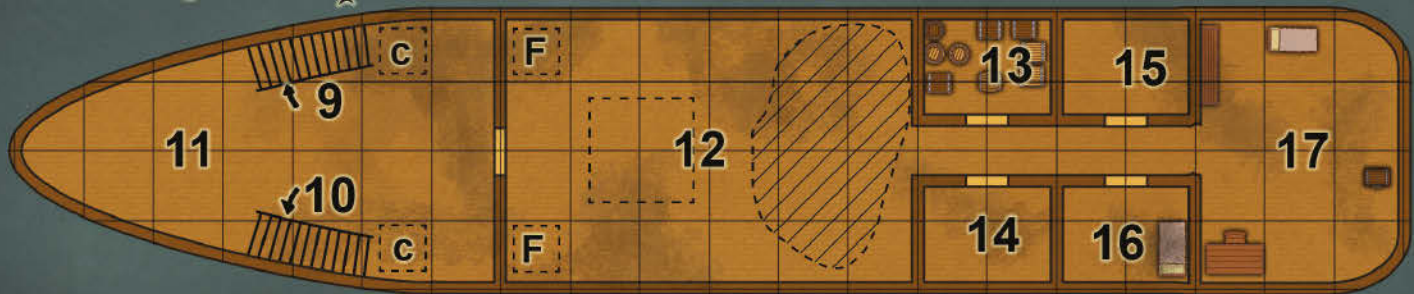
The Flying Fortune

1 square - 10 feet

Level 1: Upper Decks



Level 2: Amidships



Level 3: Lower Holds



MURDER CROW

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Death Throes. When the murder crow dies, it explodes into a murder of crows. These smaller swarms continue to relentlessly attack all living creatures within sight. Use the statistics for a **swarm of ravens** for the murder of crows.

Actions

Multiattack. The murder crow makes three melee attacks: two with its claws and one with its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d8 + 1) slashing damage.

Eye Rake. If the murder crow hits a target with both claw attacks in the same turn, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded as the Lord of Crows scratches and tears at the target's eyes. The blindness can be removed if a character spends their action to attend to the blinded target, and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check, or by a lesser *restoration* spell.

This creature appears to be a crow about 4 feet tall. Its feathers are tattered, blood-soaked, and matted against its rotting form. A decaying stench emanates from it as it circles overhead.

4. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

This massive compartment once served as the captain's private suite, the officer's dining room, and as weapon storage. At first glance, the large ransacked cabin seems empty of anything but broken furniture degraded by 7 years of exposure to the elements. There are signs of a great struggle everywhere — broken furniture, gouges in the wood, and stains of long-dried blood. There is a broken full-length mirror along with a busted sea chest and the tattered remains of what was once a fine wardrobe.

If the clothes are examined, there is still an intact set of monogrammed silk handkerchiefs. They are soiled and tattered in places, but the letters "C.R." are visibly embroidered on the handkerchiefs. Attentive PCs may note these are Captain Colthyn Riggs' initials. If confronted with this "evidence," the captain cocks an eyebrow and scoffs. The GM may read or paraphrase the following:

"And what does that prove? C.R. are common enough initials. In fact, there is another sailor aboard the *Blessing*—Carlton Raskers—with the same initials.

Christopher Robinson is no longer with the crew, alas. There was a fine sailor. He retired to Port Shaw. Perhaps he's missing his hankies . . ."

Treasure: Scattered near the busted sea chest there is a pile of gold coins — 312 gp altogether. Whoever or whatever raided this ship was not interested in gold.

5. QUARTER DECK

The quarterdeck of *The Flying Fortune* was once the heart of both defending and controlling the ship. There were two ballistae mounted on swivels as well as the great wheel that turned the rudder. Now the wheel is simply gone, slashed off its mount and rolled into the sea. Both ballistae are ruined — one destroyed so completely it is virtually unrecognizable. The second is simply wrecked and points down toward the main mast, where the evidence of its last fired missile still resides.

There are signs of battle everywhere, but what is completely lacking is even a single corpse. Perhaps that is understandable. Years of exposure, the carrion feeders, the beating sun, and the caustic salt could have reduced bodies to nothing. It is, however, eerie to realize the PCs stand in the very spot where at least a dozen men died, and there are no traces of it save for the occasional crossbow head and a few links of battered chainmail.

6. CREW'S MESS

The battle seems to have been largely over before it got to this compartment of the ship. Further, the walls and ceiling are comparatively intact. As a result, this room is not in terrible shape. A couple of tables are intact, and the chairs still sit upright. A few broken wine bottles and scattered cards reveal what at least some crewmembers were doing before something called them to battle. Two unlocked hatches in the floor of this chamber open to reveal stairs that connect the crew's mess to the crew quarters. The stairs are detailed below as **Area 9** and **Area 10**.

Treasure: There are also 4d6 gold pieces scattered atop the tables and on the floor.

7. GALLEY

This was once the ship's galley. There are several breaks in the wall and deck boards above. Time, salt, and spray have not been kind to this abandoned kitchen and now it is in utter shambles. Any food that may have once been stored here has completely moldered away long ago. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices an engraving in the lintel above the door to **Area 6**. It says, "*The Flying Fortune*," the ship's name and a clue to anyone who gleaned the name of Captain Riggs' last command when gathering information at the beginning of the adventure.

There remains one additional item of interest here. On a previous journey to the Fortune, the captain ambushed a victim and knocked the poor lad cold. The captain's victim now numbers among the ghosts in the craft beneath. However, when the victim fell, he dropped a belaying pin he took from the *Blessing* to use as an improvised weapon. That belaying pin is still in the galley underneath the only intact table. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check locates it.

The belaying pin is one of the distinctive items from the *Blessing*. The handle is carved with a stylized version of the Sealord (a bearded elderly merman holding a trident). This small club is proof that someone from the *Blessing* has been aboard the Fortune before.

If confronted with this pin, the captain acts shocked. He disputes the belaying pin originated on the *Blessing*. He attempts to dismiss

it as a strange coincidence, or attributes the belaying pin to the Blessing's sister ship, which is a fabrication.

The captain stammers for answers to this riddle, but the more he talks, the more likely he trips himself up. Should the PCs catch him in a lie, the flustered captain shrugs his shoulders and provides no further commentary about the belaying pin. This item is not proof of treachery, but it should make alert PCs suspicious that not all is as it seems. Likewise, if they recognize the name of the ship as being the one he previously commanded, he merely states their information is faulty and remains tight-lipped about it even if caught in a lie.

8. FORE DECK

The top deck of the ship thrust high into the air after the wreck. The angle here is steep enough that debris has not accumulated. However, there is nothing here of any interest, value, or danger.

THE FLYING FORTUNE

LEVEL II: AMIDSHIPS

A fair portion of this middle level of the ship has rotted away, and now lies in a great heap in the lower hold. Still, there are a few points of interest.

9. WATERLOGGED STAIRS

These stairs are rotted and waterlogged. Beneath them lies urchins feeding on the algae that grow in the pool. The urchins have effectively created a pit trap onto poison spikes. Locating the pit requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Because this is not a deliberately created trap, there is no way to disable the hazard. It is best avoided.

However, if a creature fails to notice the danger and steps onto the crumbling steps, the creature and any adjacent companions fall through the stairs unless they succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the victim plummets 30 feet onto a bed of sea urchins. The character takes 3d6 falling damage from the plunge and must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

10. SAFE STAIRS

This sturdy set of stairs has mostly avoided the worst of the weather and is still stout enough to support several people at once. They groan and creak a little, but they hold.

11. CREW QUARTERS

This large compartment is empty save for a few tattered hammocks, deep gouges cut in the floor, and a few spots of old dried blood. Two stairs lead up to hatches in the overhead. (See **Area 9** and **Area 10** for more details.) A single door leads to the amidships hold. Although there was obviously a great slaughter here, there is surprisingly little remaining evidence. The location is sheltered enough from the rain and winds to expect at least some remains, but there is nothing — not even a single bone.

12. AMIDSHIPS HOLD

This large open space was once used to hold excess cargo that could not be stowed in the lower hold. It was also used for extra

bunk space if that was ever needed. Now it is a rotten place. Untold amounts of seawater have seeped through. However, unlike the upper deck where the floor has grown treacherous, here the floor has given way. The map marks a large section of the floor that is simply gone. The cargo hatch to the lower decks is still present, but warped and rotten. Two hatches in the deck lead to ladders descending to the lower deck. The ladders are still sturdily mounted to the ship's hull.

13. SHIP'S STORES

There is actually a tarnished nameplate with the words "Ship's Stores" still held to the door by a single resolute nail. Something tore the door open, breaking the lock that once secured this chamber. It hangs only slightly open, still attached to the frame by its battered hinges. Inside, this room is a jumble of boxes, hundreds of feet of rope, a spilt bag of nails, a leaking barrel of pitch, and many less identifiable moldering items of uncertain age. Water has leaked through the battered hull and done a lot of damage. However, a sound 100-ft. rope still hangs in great coils from hooks on the wall.

Treasure: There is a small crate pushed in the corner that contains a dozen still-sealed brown glass bottles without labels. Locating the crate requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. The bottles hold high quality cognac shipped as a special order. Without labels, the liquor is still worth 10 gp a bottle. If the PCs somehow identify the vintage, this is a case of collectible triple-distilled brandy worth 50 gp a bottle to the right buyer.

14. CABIN

This is a small cabin, empty save for a few broken pieces of barely recognizable furniture.

15. CABIN

This is another small cabin. There is a minor breach only a few inches across in the northern bulkhead that has allowed water to seep in and form a pool on the floor. The time spent moldering in this salt pool means that very little is left.

16. CABIN

This is the most intact of the three small cabins. The bunk in this cabin is completely intact, having been spared both weather and monster attack. It is tightly made and looks usable.

Treasure: A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a small bag of coins a passenger stashed under the bed. It contains 12 pp and a small silver butterfly pendant (value 120 gp) bearing the inscription "for Rutherin."

17. NAVIGATOR'S CABIN

The door to this cabin has been ripped from its hinges, and the frame splintered by something large and heavy. The navigator's cabin served as both his quarters and the ship's chart room. Like the rest of the ship, it is now a wreck.

When the navigator heard the breach in the lower hold, he did not flee to the upper deck. Instead, he began to gather his precious charts and prized golden sextant hoping to salvage them. That delay allowed the Vivisectionist to corner him in this cabin. A few telltale signs of that grisly struggle are all that remains today. The construct ripped the door off its hinges demonstrating an extremely strong creature tore through this room.

Treasure: The shredded charts are stained with gore and arterial spray. They have largely rotted away from the rain and weather

now leaking through the broken portholes. However, the golden sextant (worth 520 gp) lies hidden among the refuse. PCs locate the navigator's cherished mariner's tool with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. The charts and writing would be valuable, but they have all been ruined by wind and exposure.

THE FLYING FORTUNE

LEVEL III: THE LOWER HOLDS

This part of the ship is wrack and ruin. The lower holds conjoin *The Flying Fortune* to the Engineer's vile craft.

18. LOWER HOLD

When the encephalon gorgers penetrated the vessel, they rampaged through this hold, destroying everything in their path. This hold was full of common trade goods and carefully wrapped wine bottles set in wooden racks. Now there is only devastation — bent metal and broken glass. However, one intact item of some value hides amidst the debris.

If the PCs search through the rubble and succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check, the character discovers a small iron strongbox buried under the debris. A successful DC 15 Strength check lifts up enough rubble to retrieve it quickly. Otherwise, it takes 6 minutes of work to reach the box. The loud racket may attract the interest of a clockwork weaving spider (see **Area P-3** below) during one of its routine sweeps of the passage.

Treasure: The box is locked with a stout padlock requiring a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools to unlock and open it. Otherwise, the characters can pry it open with a successful DC 25 Strength check or batter it into pieces (AC 17, HP 15, damage threshold 10), although the latter approach destroys the box's fragile contents. The padded strong box holds five carefully packed bottles of wine. They are a rare '75 Vyrathea vintage. The Vyrathea Vineyards are famed for including rare healing herbs in their wine. As a result, each full glass of this wine is treated as a *potion of healing*. However, given their age, the alcohol is more potent and one glass of Vyrathea counts as three for purposes of determining whether the imbiber becomes intoxicated. There are four glasses of this healing wine per bottle and each bottle is worth 225 gp.

19. SMUGGLER'S HOLD

The Flying Fortune was not just an honest merchantman but also a part-time smuggling vessel. The hold is small, as smuggling was never the Fortune's primary business. But if the duties on a few luxury or exotic items were deemed unreasonable, they could be stowed here away from the eyes of the harbormaster.

The smuggler's hold is not empty. It contains a skeleton dressed in tattered rags holding a shortsword and a tied black leather book. It wears a gold ring on its bony finger adorned with a stylized eagle (worth 5 gp). A spilled bottle of ink, a melted candle, and a rotted feather quill sit beside him. This is all that remains of Titus Weatherby.

Titus was with the first officer on deck when the sailors made their last stand. By sheer luck, he survived the first rush of the encephalon gorgers and managed to dive through the cargo netting. He didn't escape unscathed. One of the gorgers gave him a nice gash along his leg. He limped to the lowest hold as he listened to the slaughter unfolding above him. He knew the secret of the hold and secured himself inside, intent on waiting out the monsters and then making a break for land.

He survived his immediate injuries, and stopped the bleeding by using his own shirt as a bandage. The sounds of combat died down,

and there was no doubt in his mind who had won the day. He could hear the monsters prowling the ship looking for survivors. One of them even came close enough to scrape one of their blades across the wood of the hidden hold. They never found him, though, and after a few hours he was certain they had returned to the hell from whence they came.

Only then did Titus realize a terrible truth. There was no way to open the smuggler's hold from the inside. It was never intended to carry passengers. He tried to force it open, but his wounds and dehydration sapped his strength. After hours of vain effort, he passed out from exhaustion and died of thirst several days later. But at least he escaped the horrors of the brain collector's vessel.

By design, these holds are not easy to find. A wooden knothole must be carefully pressed to open the panels and gain access. If one does not know what to look for, it can be tricky to locate the exact knothole.

A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the knothole. It is a testament to how well the mechanism was made. Although time and moisture have taken their toll on the rest of the ship, it still functions perfectly. If the PCs discover the hold, they find the remains of Titus Weatherby, along with his journal. If they turn to the last entry in it, read or paraphrase the following:

It is certain then. After hours of trying, this hold is stuck fast, and I'm at the very end of my strength. It was never made for passengers, only for smuggling. I was clever enough to hide from the foul beasts, but not clever enough to secure water and provisions. What are the chances that someone finds the Fortune before thirst and the bleeding from my opened leg claim me? Not good, I think.

It's a hard thing to look death in the face, but I reckon I must. My only regret is that my mother will never know my fate. If anyone finds this, please see that Caroline Weatherby in Sander's Landing receives this journal. She'll want it, and it's of no real value to anyone else.

I guess I should be angry at the captain. It was his greed that drew us to this place. When he spied the treasure through his eagle-glass, he went mad for it. But I can't. Old Riggs was a good man. Still is, I hope. And he was only doing what was right by us. The gold was a trap. Aye, I see it now. A trap to lure us into the arms of these devilish creatures.

I don't know what they are or where they came from. I don't know what they want. They didn't look entirely alive to me. They lumbered like I've heard that the walking dead do. Maybe that's what they were. But in those stories, the undead always have a master. I wonder who is the master of those vile slashers?

I'll never know, I guess. And in the end what

does it matter? I can only pray to whatever gods may be listening that someday, in some manner, proper vengeance will answer the carnage brought upon the Fortune's crew today.

Keep me, Lords of the Sea.

– Titus Weatherby

Confronting Captain Riggs with the Journal

The journal reveals some interesting facts. A captain named Riggs, owner of a fine spyglass decorated with an eagle, commanded *The Flying Fortune*. The ship was lured onto the rocks by the sight of treasure and boarded from below by beasts Titus dubs the vile slashers (encephalon gorgor zombies). This damning evidence indicates Captain Riggs is somehow involved in this conspiracy. If the PCs confront Captain Riggs with this revelation and demand an explanation, the captain has no answer. Instead, Riggs attacks with his poisoned blade and tries to make a break for the mi-go ship hoping to lure the PCs down to their deaths. See **Part One** for more details about the captain's treachery and how it might play out.

Confronting Captain Riggs with the Ring

If the PCs are subtle, they learn a thing or two from the captain. If they show him Titus' ring, the captain immediately recognizes it. Captain Riggs considered Titus to be almost like a son. He never saw his body amongst the dead, and always hoped the lad somehow defied the odds and escaped. Even in his enthralled state, the captain is briefly visibly rattled if such definite proof of Titus' death is presented to him. His emotions get the better of him. His eyes briefly mist with tears. His countenance grows more grim than usual, though a strange blankness quickly reasserts itself. No attentive PC can miss the strangeness of the moment. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) determines some spell or supernatural effect is at work.

Fulfill a Lost Boy's Dying Wish

Titus was an unusual sailor. He was literate, and the son of a successful merchant. His mother made him promise before he went to sea that he would practice his letters and keep a journal of all his travels so that he could tell her about them when he returned. In a frail and dying hand, Titus paused from trying to escape to keep his promise to the mother he would never again see. He made one last entry in his journal in the darkness of this hold using a scavenged candle and the ink and pen he always kept with him. Titus wrote the entry hoping that it would someday make its way back to his mother. She still lives in a small fishing village on the mainland of Akados. She would be eternally grateful to learn the fate of her boy, though the stingy woman offers little in the way of reward.

Become a Publisher

Anyone who takes the time to read the journal in full learns something else of interest. Titus was a very bright boy, and a competent writer. Detailed in this book is the tale of a young man's life of adventure on the high sea. It is a poignant story of coming of age upon the Razor Sea and the eventual tragedy of a death by matters utterly beyond his control. It makes a fine novel, if anyone were so inclined to expand upon it and publish it.

20. FLOODED HOLD

The back sixth of the lower hold is actually beneath the water line and flooded. This seawater wreaked havoc on the integrity of the ship, and a substantial portion of the hold's decking is missing. Therefore, this is another way to enter or exit *The Flying Fortune* if the PCs don't mind swimming.

The flooded portion of the hold also holds a deadly surprise. A nearly intact, barnacle-encrusted sea chest sits in about five feet of water. In fact, this is one of the Engineer's more amusing projects. Using its dark sciences and the flesh of a polymorphous sea slug found in local reefs, the Engineer created an aquatic mimic. Worse, the tissues of the creatures the Engineer used regenerate with terrifying speed.

This unique monstrosity lurks in flooded hold and feeds off the crabs and small fish seeking refuge here. An adhesive pseudopod attacks anyone who approaches or tries to retrieve the sea chest.

MIMIC
XP 450
hp 58

CR 2

Notes: This unique mimic has the amphibious trait, allowing it to breath air and water.

21. THE BREACH

This is a hole in the bottom of *The Flying Fortune*. It was made 7 years ago when the encephalon gorgers burst up through the hull of the floundering ship and began their murderous work. It is not flooded and leads down into darkness within the seamount itself.

PART THREE:

DOWN INTO DARKNESS

SYNOPSIS

This brief section covers the passage that connects the Fortune to the mi-go craft. Physically and tonally, this portion is a point of transition. The dread and mystery of the wreck above start to be replaced with otherworldly strangeness and weird horror.

P-1. TOP OF THE PASSAGE

The lowest hold of *The Flying Fortune* contains the breach where the so-called "vile slashers" first entered that doomed ship 7 years ago. Past the breach is a wide tunnel that leads down into the solid rock of the Trident. When the mi-go ship materialized upon this

plane, it did so within the solid stone of the seamount. Not only did this cause tremendous damage to the vessel, it also embedded the craft within the seamount. The Engineer jury-rigged a repair to create the illusion that lured *The Flying Fortune* to its doom. That passage is the only way to access the mi-go craft.

If Captain Riggs is still with the PCs, he feigns ignorance about the tunnel. He claims it looks like a lava tunnel and seems eager to convince the PCs to venture down. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals he is wrong and this is no natural passage. A successful

DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals it was formed by alien magic akin to *stone shape*. A Wisdom (Insight) check that defeats Captain Riggs' Charisma (Deception) check confirms the wily captain is hiding something about his knowledge of the passage.

The passage at the top is completely lightless and very wet. Water seeps through the walls, making them quite slick. Fortunately, handholds are plentiful. PCs can scale the walls by succeeding at a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. However, there are plenty of anchor points at the top, and a secured rope makes the descent much easier. Algae and tangles of tough seaweed grow everywhere. If the PCs are short of rope, there is some in the ship's stores amidships.

The passage descends about 220 feet into the very heart of the mountain.

P-2. WELCOME GARDEN

Roughly in the middle of the passage is a wide spot choked with seaweed and other bizarre aquatic growth. This is no natural formation. The Engineer purposefully widened the passage here and cultivated 2 **strangle weeds** to capture intruders. There are patches on either side of the tunnel.

The strangle weeds do not attack the captain because he bears the black spot. However, they eagerly entangle anyone else who enters their 20-foot reach. Once per day the Engineer sends his clockwork weaving spiders (see **Area P-3** for additional details) to see if the strangle weeds caught anything.

STRANGLE WEED

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 34 (4d10 + 12)

Speed swim 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances fire

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone, stunned, unconscious

Senses tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Camouflage. The strangle weed has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes in any terrain with ample surrounding plant life.

Actions

Multiattack. The strangle weed makes four melee attacks.

FronD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). The target is

grappled. The strangle weed has four fronds, each of which can grapple only one target.

Strangulation. At the start of each of its turns, the strangle weed attempts to strangle a creature grappled by it. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage and begin to suffocate. On a successful save the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and is able to still breathe. For guidelines on suffocation, refer to the player's manual.

Strangle weed is not a versatile combatant. It attacks and tries to constrict its foe to death. The strangle weed fights to the death, continuing to attack and take more prisoners until it is destroyed.

P-3. THE VIRIDIAN PORTAL

The passage terminates at a hemispherical cavern that is far too regular in shape to be natural. In the center of the cave, set into the floor, is a portal that looks as if it is made of jade or perhaps green glass. Though it seems like it should be quite fragile, the portal turns out to be as hard as steel.

Viridian Portal: AC 19, HP 30, damage threshold 10

This is the hatch into the mi-go craft. It has a very strange alien lock on it that can be picked with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools. However, if Captain Riggs is with the party, the door simply opens automatically at the party's approach. This is the Engineer's doing. The mi-go has not gone to all the trouble to get these victims to its lair only to lock them out. It is only too eager to invite these "guests" inside its craft. In other words, the spider welcomes the flies.

When the portal opens, the entryway is still not entirely clear. A hazy green miasma covers the circular hatch. It is completely transparent and does nothing to harm the PCs. In fact, anyone who passes through the miasma immediately benefits from having a *lesser restoration* spell cast upon them. This miasma has also been attuned so it blocks seawater from entering, thus preventing the craft from flooding. This miasma disappears if the portal is completely wrecked (i.e. reduced to 0 hit points) or the craft is powered down (see **Area C-7** below). Passing through the miasma gives the Engineer an exact count of the people who enter its vessel. Destroying the miasma lets it know that someone is at its door. Either way, it activates the trap in **Area C-1** immediately.

If the PCs haven't encountered them before, there are 4 **clockwork weaving spiders** hanging from the hemispherical cavern. These mechanical constructs resemble ordinary spiders with long spindly legs, a spool of thread attached to their abdomens, and an appendage with a sharp blade. The monsters climb up and down the walls with tremendous ease.

The clockwork weaving spiders hide and begin recording the moment the PCs pass through the portal. When the PCs vacate the area, they report back to the Engineer. They attack only if discovered.

CLOCKWORK WEAVING SPIDER

Tiny construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 24 (10d4)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages understands Common
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Immutable Form. The weaving spider is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The weaving spider has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiaction. The weaving spider makes two trimming blade attacks or two needle shuttle attacks.

Trimming Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8+3) slashing damage and possible unmaking.

Poisoned Needle Shuttle. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed. The target repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success.

Unmaking. The weaving spider's speed and its slim, sharp blade can slice cloth, leather, and paper into scraps very quickly. Whenever a weaving spider's trimming blade attack roll exceeds the target's armor class by 5 or more, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or one of their possessions, chosen randomly, becomes unusable or damaged until repaired (GM's choice).

The clockwork weaving spider can be found in the **Tome of Beasts** from **Kobold Press**.

PART FOUR

NOT OF THIS WORLD

SYNOPSIS

At last, the PCs enter the brain collector's craft. In the upper levels, this adventure was a mystery requiring investigation. Uncertainty as to what foul fate befell *The Flying Fortune* drove the PCs forward. As the PCs take their first step into the mi-go craft, matters shift into the realm of weird horror. Each chamber of the obviously otherworldly craft reveals new perils and new strangeness. GM's are encouraged to accentuate the weird. Remember nothing aboard this craft was intended for use by any race native to this world. Even the doors, which unless sealed and locked by the Engineer, slide open on the approach of any sizable biomass, should seem strange and disturbing to the party. How much more so the Engineer's extradimensional technology...or the Engineer itself?

LEVEL I: MAIN DECK ENCOUNTERS

C-1. COLLECTION CHAMBER

Located directly below the Viridian Portal (**Area P-3**), this ovoid chamber is nothing more than a trap. The chamber is 20 feet tall and a beam of light shines from the Viridian portal down to the floor below. The chamber itself is made of what looks like brass with regular braces curving up towards the portal in the center of the ceiling. There is a circular door far larger than any human would need in the southwest portion of the chamber. In the center of the eastern wall, there is what looks like a column of liquid glass banded with clockwork brazen fittings.

The Engineer has rigged this chamber to be a non-lethal trap. After all, he wants to collect his specimens alive for unspeakable experiments. Anyone stepping into the beam of light floats gently to the floor, as if affected by *feather fall*.

As soon as the first PC lands on the floor, the column begins to hum with purpose and bubbles circulate through the liquid glass. One round later it begins leaking a thin gray poison gas. The poison does not affect constructs, undead, aberrations, anyone implanted with a black leech, (though the captain feigns being affected), or the mi-go. The door to the southwest is sealed and requires a successful DC 25 Strength check or a DC 25 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools to open it, but it unseals when the trap finishes discharging.

The trap's flaw stems from the Engineer's arrogance and disdain for humans. The Engineer did nothing to hide or protect the trap. It sits on the eastern wall of the collection chamber, completely unconcealed (successful DC 0 Intelligence [Investigation] or DC 0 Perception [Wisdom] check). It clicks, whirrs, and bubbles as it begins to function, thus giving the PCs a chance to disarm it. It takes a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools to deactivate the trapped device. A PC has 1d4 rounds to disarm the trap before it releases a plume of poison gas affecting everyone within 30 feet. A creature who inhales the poison gas must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 4 hours. The poisoned creature is unconscious. The creature wakes up if it takes damage.

The Engineer did not bother to hide the device because it believes the inhabitants of this world are too stupid to be able to do anything about its powerful and advanced technology. The fact there might be a rogue in the party clever enough to simply shut it off did not occur to the Engineer's self-perceived superior intellect. After its failure, it takes the PCs' potential threat more seriously.

If the PCs linger too long in this chamber after disabling or avoiding the trap, the encephalon gorgers in **Area C-5** storm this

chamber. From this point forward, the Engineer is no longer trying to take prisoners.

It is possible that the gas trap in the collection chamber actually works. If the PCs fail to defuse it, everyone could fall unconscious. If so, the adventurers are in grave danger, and it becomes unlikely all of them survive. The Engineer sends the encephalon gorgers to collect the victims, strip them of all their possessions, and deposit the naked PCs into individual holding cells in **Area C-16**. It waits until the PCs regain consciousness (the knockout gas interferes with its tissue processing procedure) and then selects a random PC 1 hour later. The encephalon gorgers drag the chosen PC into the vivisection laboratory and restrain him or her. The process of metabolizing the PC into every component the Engineer requires takes hours, dealing 2d10 necrotic damage each hour. The screams echo throughout the craft. The processing ends when the victim dies. After finishing off one PC, the Engineer sends its lackey to fetch another until it “processes” them all.

C-2. VAULT OF MANY DOORS

This is a curving hallway with four circular doors. It is made of the same brass material as **Area C-1**. There is nothing here of any danger or value. However, if the encephalon gorgers from **Area C-5** are dispatched from the collection chamber, they must pass through here first.

C-3. MEAT LOCKER

This chamber is a gallery of nightmares. The ceiling is adorned with several dozen bent iron hooks. Close examination reveals they were manufactured from common items taken from *The Flying Fortune*. A corpse hangs from almost every hook. There are several dolphins, a tiger shark, a manta ray, and a large deep-water squid as tall as a man. Right alongside hang a merman, two tattooed Tulita fishermen, and what must be — judging from the bones — a dwarf. There are less identifiable chunks of flesh, bone, and meat dangling alongside the identifiable bodies.

All the corpses show evidence of delicate surgery. All are missing their brains. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals most of these creatures were vivisected — the surgery performed upon them while they were still alive.

This room is cold. Ichors from dozens of corpses coagulate on the brazen floor. In the back of the chamber, the room is twisted. Sharp jagged needles of stone and brass jut out, evidence of the devastation inflicted upon the ship when it arrived at the seamount. The source of this devastation (that the ship actually materialized within the seamount rather than simply crashing into it) is identifiable with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

C-4. SHOOTING GALLERY

This chamber is a wreck. The jagged stone ripping through the ship’s brass superstructure that appeared in only one corner of the adjoining meat locker dominates the entire western wall (see **Area C-4** for identifying the ship’s means of arrival). Debris covers the floor and sharp, minute spines of jagged stone pierce every flat surface. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals traces of some long-dried, blue-green ichor. This is encephalon gorgor blood from where

the Engineer’s crew died. Any trace of what this chamber’s original function was is no longer evident.

C-5. CAVERN OF BLADES

This large, empty, cavernous compartment is a guardroom housing the reanimated remains of the Engineer’s crewmates, now

THE MIND OF THE ENEMY

The Engineer is not a passive opponent. The mi-go knows the PCs are coming to visit thanks to a weak telepathic link to the PCs through the black leech. While the range is limited, the Engineer has been in broken communication with the captain since the Blessing drew within a few miles of the seamount. It has prepared its bizarre vessel for intruders, positioning minions at key points throughout the ship.

The Engineer is not omniscient, however. It only knows exactly what the PCs are doing if it has a clockwork weaving spider recording their whereabouts. It also knows if a portal is opened or if any of its various sensors are activated. The text notes when the PCs encounter sensors feeding information to the Engineer.

If the Engineer has a weakness, it is overconfidence. The PCs are not the first group to be lured to the vessel. Between the strangle weeds, its clockwork weaving spider spies, the enslaved captain, the collection chamber (**Area C-1**), and the so-called vile slashers, defeating visitors to its craft always proved easy. Until the PCs defeat or bypass those measures, the Engineer observes, but only feels eager for new brains to enter its grasp.

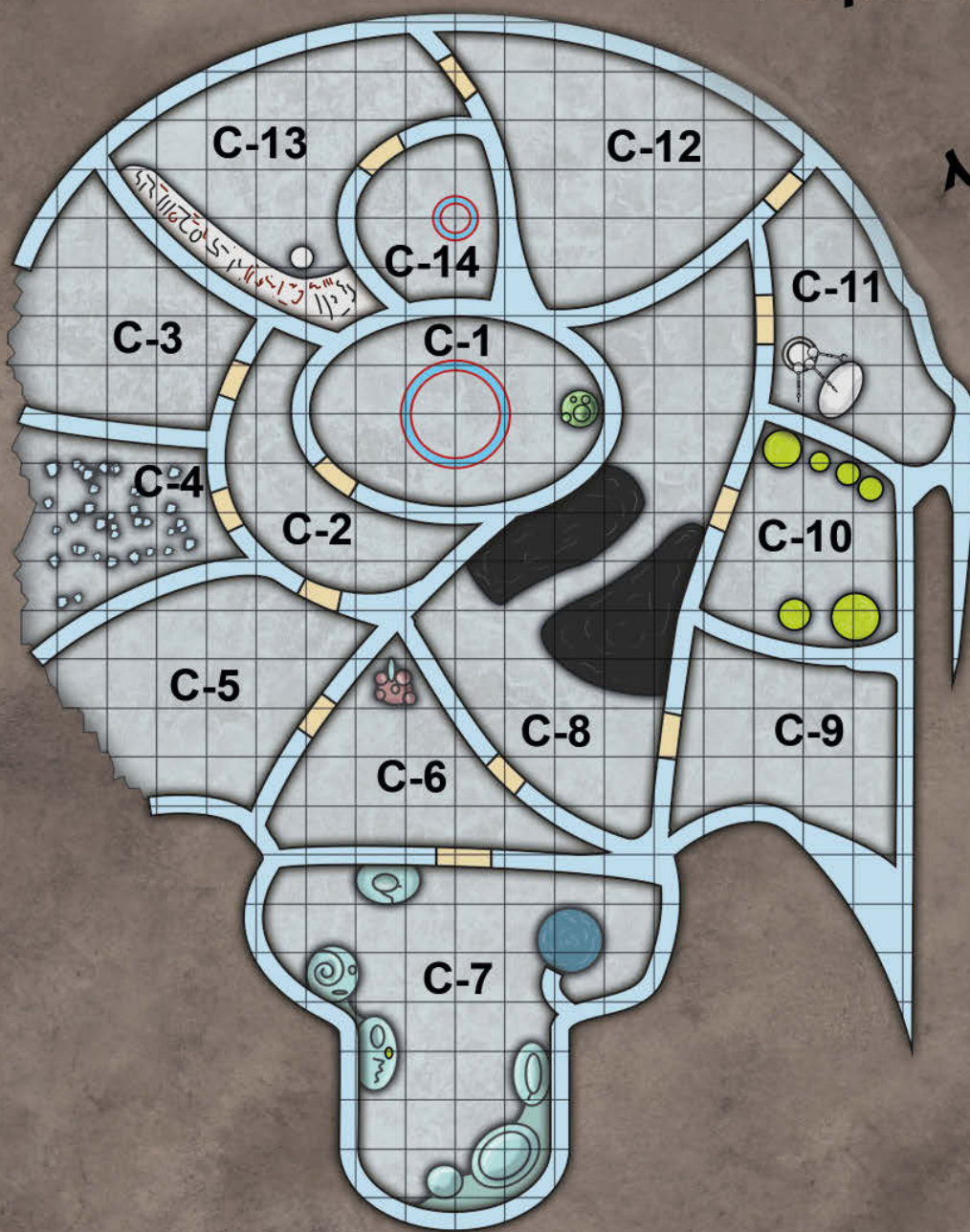
However, when the adventurers enter **Area C-6**, the Engineer abruptly realizes things have gone horribly awry. Although the PCs don’t realize it, they now have access to the Engine room (**Area C-7**). If they smash the lightning columns in that chamber, the Engineer loses the ability to use its workshop, which requires power, and also loses its personal defenses, rendering it starkly vulnerable. It also means the Engineer is unable to complete its mission. If they smash the lightning columns in **Area C-7** then through random violence they may have accidentally saved the world from a brain collector invasion.

To avoid this catastrophe, the Engineer tries to lure the adventurers away from **Area C-7**. After the PCs enter **Area C-6**, it seals the portal into that chamber and places a lightning field over it. These fields are costly. They drain massive amounts of energy and resources, but the Engineer has no choice. It must protect the engine room. It then orders the ghosts in **Area C-9** to immediately attack the PCs. It is also willing to sacrifice one of its precious clockwork weaving spiders to lure them into **Area C-8**, hoping to drop the party into the leech tanks.

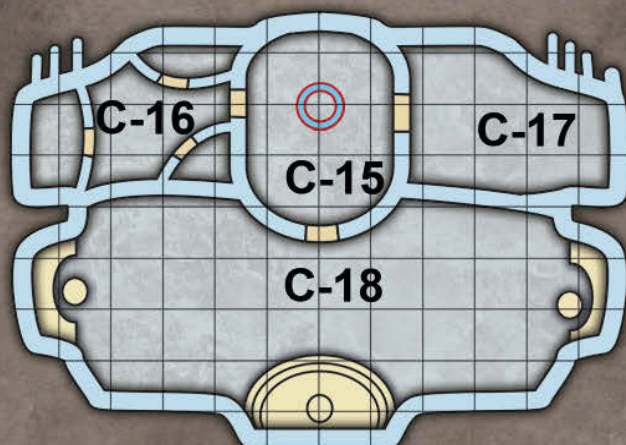
If these ploys fail, the Engineer’s game grows desperate. It is luring the PCs deeper and deeper into the ship, closer to itself. Every piece of gear in this vessel is irreplaceable and precious, and yet it sacrifices them all one by one to destroy these invaders. After the PCs defeat the encephalon gorgers, tables turn and now the adventurers become the invaders. They are no longer victims being lured to their deaths, but have launched an assault that the Engineer must stop at all costs.

The Neh-Thalggu Craft

1 square - 10 feet



Main Deck



Command Deck

his personal shock troops, called the “vile slashers” in Titus’ journal from **Area 19**. When not on duty, they sit motionless waiting for the Engineer’s commands.

The encephalon gorgers worked alongside, yet subordinate to the Engineer during the ship’s travels, attacking as a form of shock troops. Although they outnumber the Engineer, the undead aberrations recognize the Engineer’s superiority and still defer authority to it, largely because it drove a jade spike, which functions as the control rod, into each of their heads. Like the black leech, the spike makes them obedient to the Engineer. The technology of this rod is far beyond anything of this world and does not function beyond the confines of the ship. However, each 8-inch-long piece is worth 300 gp for its precious stone and odd crafting.

The spike allows the Engineer to see and speak through these monstrous vessels of dead flesh. If the PCs have been particularly destructive and have already discovered that the captain is under alien control, the Engineer may use the slashers to speak with them. The slasher speaks in Common with a whispering raspy voice. The GM may read or paraphrase the following statements made by the Engineer:

“Wait. I am the Engineer. This is my ship.

There is no need for us to war. I was attacked by the outsiders without provocation. We are from different worlds, you and I, and so our ways are strange. I mean you no harm. Go and never return. Soon I will repair my ship and leave your world forever. Soon we will be only memories to each other. Please go.”

This statement is full of lies. If the PCs read Titus’ journal, they know the Engineer lured the Fortune onto the rocks without provocation. If they saw the corpses in the meat locker, they know this thing has no regard for human life. And from the horrid slaughter perpetrated upon the crew of the Fortune and subsequent visitors, they know this monster is not misunderstood.

The only reason the Engineer makes this statement is because it fears the adventurers may have the upper hand. If the PCs go now, the Engineer lets them leave. But soon afterward, they hear more tales about ships disappearing near the Trident. The Engineer will never leave until its grim and disastrous work is completed — or until someone kills it.

If the PCs confront the Engineer with these lies, the Engineer does not argue. The GM may read or paraphrase the Engineer’s reply.

“If you will not leave, then you will die. And know this . . . I will use your still living flesh to craft my masterpiece. You will all be part of the gate. And as your mind boils away in slow agony, your last pain-mad thought will be the realization that you helped make your world mine forever . . .”

And with that, the encephalon gorgers attack. They employ only one tactic, charge and kill. They fight to the bitter end. The monsters assault everything that enters this chamber except for the jade bats, the Engineer, and anyone implanted with a black leech.

ZOMBIE, ENCEPHALON GORGER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 90 (12d8+36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	3 (+4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands Common, Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Unique (Encephalon), but can’t speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Multiattack. An encephalon gorgor makes two attacks with its claws.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) slashing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 12).

Mindfeed. One creature grappled by the encephalon gorgor must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) psychic damage and its Intelligence score is reduced by 1d4, taking half as much damage with no Intelligence reduction on a success. The target dies if this reduces its Intelligence to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

This creature is a hairless, pale-skinned humanoid with leathery white, semi-translucent flesh. It is a bit taller than an average human, with features that are delicate and precise. The creature’s arms and legs are spindly, and each end in just four digits. It has an alarmingly long tongue and small eyes, with nictitating membranes.

A successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check or Intelligence (Arcana) spots the spike embedded in the creatures’ heads. Yanking the spike out of the encephalon gorgor causes the creature to no longer communicate with nor accept commands from the Engineer. However, the monster resorts to its natural tendencies and attacks the PCs without provocation. Removing the spike requires the creature to grapple the encephalon gorgor and then use a bonus action to remove the spike with a successful DC 20 Strength check or DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana). The sudden shock to the encephalon’s system deals 4d6 psychic damage to the freed creature.

C-6. ALTAR OF THE BRAIN GOD

This triangular chamber has three doors. The doors on the east and west wall are unlocked. However, the southern door buzzes and hums with a protective field. In the northern corner, a large brass column covered with strange writing and topped by a massive dome displays the image of a brain. There are strange projections and what looks like a small niche at the bottom of the column.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check leads to the intuition this area does not serve a religious purpose. Failing the check leads to the conclusion this is an altar to the brain collector’s deity and that it places offerings in the niche. The truth is that the ship’s vending machine has been unplugged for some time, and it is completely out of mi-go snacks.

The southern exit from this chamber is locked, sealed, and electrified with a humming protective field. This alone should pique the PCs' interest. When a creature touches the entryway, it triggers an **electrified trap**. The trap deals 6d6 electricity damage to the creature, though a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw takes half as much damage. It takes a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the trap, and a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools to deactivate it.

Mounted on the wall to the left of the door, about 6 feet off the ground is a plain, 1-ft.-diameter golden circle about a foot in diameter. This object is not electrified. This bioarcanic lock lowers the field and opens the door. This lock can be opened with the golden control stave found in **Area C-11**.

When the PCs breach this chamber, the Engineer grows genuinely worried. The intruders were never supposed to get this far into the craft. The time has come to take desperate measures. If the captain is still with the PCs when they enter here, he attacks a spellcaster with his poisoned blade while the PCs are engaged in disarming the trap.

C-7. CHAMBER OF THE CEASELESS STORM

When the PCs gain access, they find a dazzling variety of incomprehensible alien machinery on the other side of the door. Great columns of glass and brass writhe with lightning that seems almost alive. The energy creeps up and down the columns like serpents of liquid energy. Strange crystals pulsate and move. Incomprehensible writing hovers in front of the columns like ghosts. Everything here is so strange and unfamiliar it defies explanation or comprehension. To the PCs' eyes, this chamber must appear as the heart of a great lightning storm that never ceases. However, the PCs can easily understand one thing. At the very back of the chamber in a small glass cage sits a single blue sapphire of remarkable size and purity. This is the entire chamber's control crystal, and it ensures that this machinery functions.

Coursing through the weird machinery of this chamber is a sphere of living lightning. This is the living embodiment of the quasi-sentient energy that powers this ship. If the PCs attempt to touch, damage or steal anything here, the lightning elemental attacks.

ELEMENTAL, LIGHTNING

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 102 (1d10 + 36)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Electric Form. The elemental can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. A creature that touches the elemental or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) lightning damage. In addition, the elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that

creature takes 5 (1d10) lightning damage.

Illumination. The elemental sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light in an additional 30 feet.

Short Circuit. For every 5 feet the elemental moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 psychic damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The lightning elemental makes two touch attacks.

Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) lightning damage.

C-8. LEECH TANKS

The portal into this chamber is unlocked. This large compartment is dominated by a large vat of inky black liquid set into the floor. A curving path traverses over the liquid, which roils as if is stirred by some unseen agent. It is in this path that the Engineer has bred thousands of black leeches in order to create an army of servants like Captain Riggs.

The Engineer monitors this chamber via a jade jewel-eye set in the northernmost corner of this irregular chamber. The jewel-eye resembles a small jade sphere mounted into the wall. The eye (AC 13, HP 4) can be discovered with a successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check and easily destroyed. There are also three portals in this room along the eastern wall. They are all unlocked.

As long as the jewel-eye is functional, the Engineer can cast *major image* through the sensor. After the ghaunts from **Area C-9** attack, the image of the Engineer appears on the other side of the vat. It emerges from the northernmost portal and begins to act, as if it is casting a spell. The hope is to draw its enemies into charging across the bridge. As soon as a few PCs are on the bridge, the Engineer activates the actual trap and the bridge suddenly melts away, dumping anyone on the structure into the leech tanks. Detecting this devious **collapsing bridge trap** requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom Perception check, while disarming it demands a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools. Without the Engineer's intervention, the black leeches pose no immediate danger to the adventurers. Anyone in the middle of the bridge when it collapses gets no save to avoid taking a splash. Anyone within two squares on an edge must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to dash to the nearest edge. The tank itself is 10 feet deep and requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to stay afloat. A successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check is necessary to pull oneself out over an edge without help from others. Creatures who fall into the leech tank come under attack from **3 putrid haunts** acting as hosts within the vats.

If more than one PC ends up in the tank, the Engineer's illusion lets out a wicked rasping laugh and taunts their predicament.

"You should have fled when you had the chance."

This taunting hopefully causes the PCs to attack the illusory Engineer with spells, thus wasting their resources.

PUTRID HAUNT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages –

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dead Still. Treat a putrid haunt as invisible while it's buried in swamp muck.

Swamp Shamble. Putrid haunts suffer no movement penalties in marshy terrain.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) bludgeoning damage.

Vomit Leeches (Recharge 6). A putrid haunt can vomit forth the contents of its stomach onto a target within 5 feet. Along with the vile and mud from its stomach, this includes 2d6 undead leeches that attach to the target. A creature takes 1 necrotic damage per leech on it at the start of the creature's turn, and the putrid haunt gains the same number of temporary hit points. As an action, a creature can remove or destroy 1d3 leeches from itself or an adjacent ally.

The putrid haunt can be found in the **Tome of Beasts** from **Kobold Press**.

If the Engineer ever gains control of a PC (and they are restored to positive hit points), the abomination's first priority will be to get as

many of the invaders as possible out of its vessel. When this is done or if this proves impossible, the controlled PC immediately turns upon his comrades, attacking until slain or subdued.

C-9. ENGINEER'S PROJECT

This storage chamber holds one of the Engineer's more charming side projects. It keeps **6 ghosts** created from the corpses of the crew of *The Flying Fortune* in this hold. The undead immediately attack any who enter.

GHOST
XP 450
hp 36

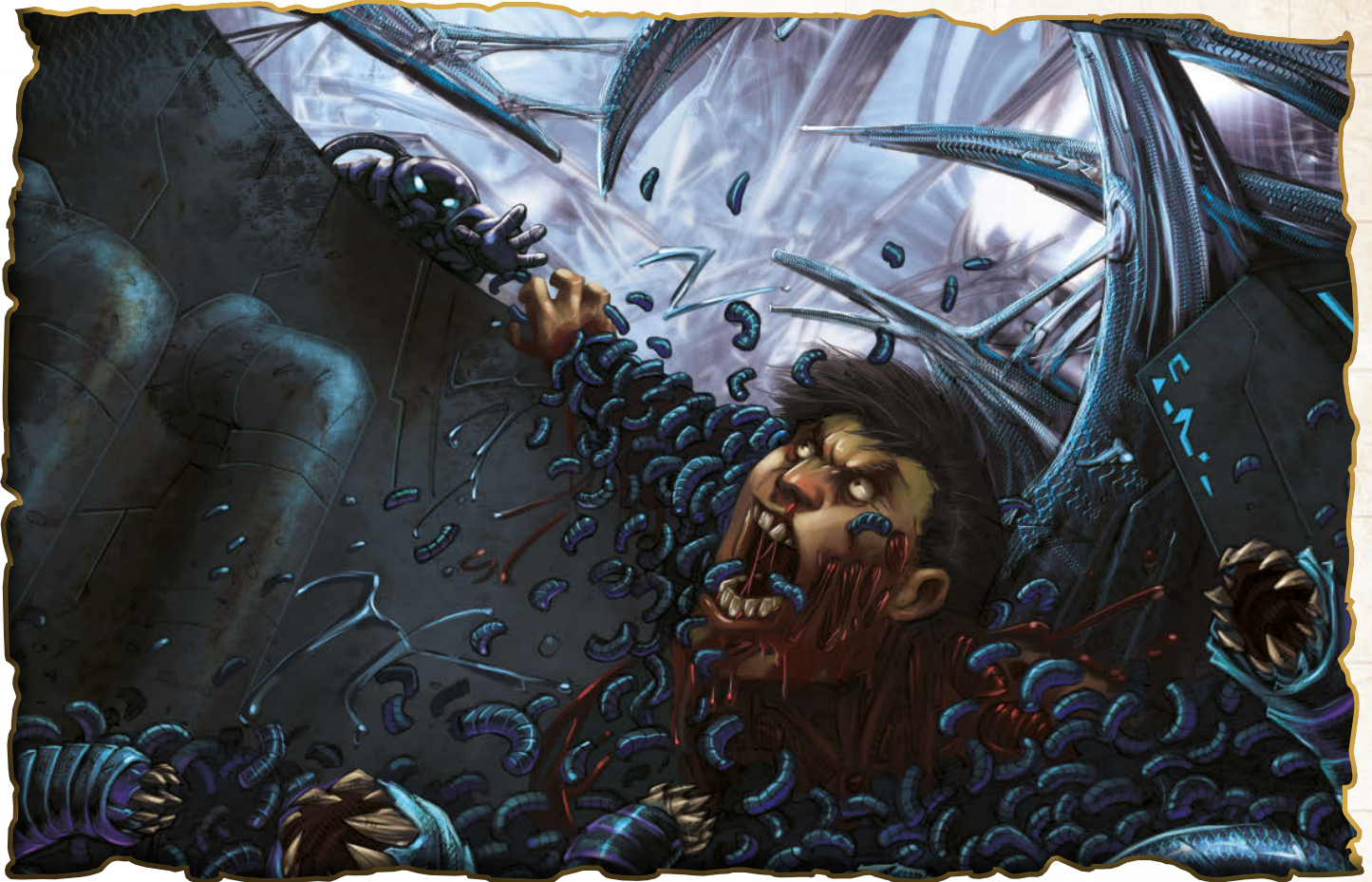
CR 2

C-10. GLOWING GROTTO

These are the ship's food banks — strange cylinders and tubes of brass and steel. It is here that the mi-go transforms captured fish and algae into the nutrient paste it needs to survive. Raw protein is fed into the food banks and converted into living bioorganic slime.

Unfortunately for the PCs, they too contain all the necessary food components the nutrient paste desires. If anyone steps within 5 feet of these glowing food banks, the slime leaps at them. The slime does no damage to living creatures other than animals and humanoid. It is more than happy to dissolve the captain into mush, however.

The bio-organic slime attacks any suitable prey within touch range (*Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target). On hit, it secretes a paralytic toxin (successful DC 15 Constitution save or the creature is poisoned for 1d4 minutes. A poisoned creature is paralyzed.) When it paralyzes a victim, the slime begins to devour its flesh and turn it into an additional patch of bioorganic slime. It



deals 1d6 necrotic damage per round. On the first round of contact, the bio-organic slime can be scraped off a creature (destroying the scraping device), but after that it must be frozen, burned, or cut away with a slashing weapon (dealing the appropriate damage to the victim as well). Sunlight, any attack dealing cold or fire damage, or a *lesser restoration* spell destroys this patch of slime. Wooden objects take 2d6 points of acid damage per round. It does not harm metal but can penetrate the gaps and seams in armor in order to secrete its slime and devour those wearing metal armor.

BIO-ORGANIC SLIME

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 7

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire, cold

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, poison, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages –

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Adhesive. The bio-organic slime adheres to anything that touches it, or that it touches. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the bio-organic slime is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

Amorphous. The slime can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. **Corrosive Form.** A creature that touches the slime or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the slime corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to –5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the slime is destroyed after dealing damage. The slime can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

Spider Climb. The slime can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Sunlight Lethality. The slime takes 100 radiant damage when it starts its turn in direct sunlight.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) bludgeoning damage and 18 (4d8) poison damage. The target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

Devour (Recharge 6). Once it is adhered to a creature, the bio-organic slime begins to devour the flesh of the creature. On each turn, the creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 13 (3d8) acid damage. On a successful save, the target takes

half the acid damage. This effect ends if someone uses an action to scrape the slime off of the target.

C-II. VIVISECTION LABORATORY

The portal into this chamber is unlocked, and weird machinery beyond the knowledge or science of this world fills the room. Here the Engineer implanted the control rods into the encephalon gorgers and implanted the black leech into Captain Riggs. He also processed the crew of *The Flying Fortune* using the Vivisectionist (**clockwork abomination**), the cruel construct that dominates this chamber.

The Vivisectionist looks like a haphazard assembly of gears and clockwork devices shaped into an insectoid form propelled by four legs. Although it cannot be charmed, the foul creature shares the Engineer's goals, happily working under the guidance of its otherworldly master.

The Vivisectionist is a fiendish construct the Engineer uses to torture victims that fall into its clutches. With this machine and its own dark sciences, the mi-go extracts living brains intact and places them within its own sacs. Victims are tied down on the great ovoid bed and dissected alive. It is as sure a torture as anything that the minds of the wicked have ever conceived.

The Vivisectionist is a precious and irreplaceable piece of technology to the Brain Collector. It never intended to use this as a combatant, but it may be the Engineer's last line of defense.

The Engineer orders the bizarre automaton to attack anyone who enters this chamber, and the automaton performs its duty with brutal precision.

THE VIVISECTIONIST (CLOCKWORK ABOMINATION)

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (8d10 + 32)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+6)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dexterity +4, Constitution +7

Skills Athletics +9, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Infernal

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Additional Legs. Four legs allow the clockwork abomination to climb at a speed equal to its base speed and to ignore difficult terrain.

Piston Reach. The abomination's melee attacks have a deceptively long reach thanks to the pistons powering them.

Immutable Form. The clockwork abomination is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Infernal Power Source. When a clockwork abomination falls to 0 hp, its infernal battery explodes. Creatures within 10 feet of the clockwork abomination take 14 (4d6) fire damage, or half damage with a successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw.



Actions

Multiattack. The clockwork abomination makes one bite attack and one slam attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) piercing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) bludgeoning damage.

Breath Weapon (Recharge 5–6). The clockwork abomination's Infernal Power Source allows it to breathe fire in a 20-foot cone. Targets in this cone take 22 (4d10) fire damage, or half damage with a successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw.

The clockwork abomination is found in the **Tome of Beasts** by Kobold Press.

Treasure: In its haste to arrange for the PCs' capture, the Engineer made a blundering mistake. The Engineer left its golden control stave sitting on one of the side tables. In addition, the PCs can loot a small collection of onyx gems (value 600 gp) from the Vivisectionist's body.

C-12. EMPTY CHAMBER

At first glance, this chamber seems entirely empty save for two doors. However, there is a small glowing pad with a ruby set into it. It is affixed to the wall near the western door. Touching the ruby while the ship is powered prompts strange circular furniture to rise out of the floor. This was the ship's dining and meeting room. There are six twisted and bent seats around a large ovoid table. If anyone

tries to pry out the ruby while the ship's power is on, they trigger an **electrified trap** (6d6 lightning damage) as the circuit shorts out. The trap deals no damage if the ship's power is off, during which time the ruby can be removed with minimal effort. Locating the trap requires a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check, while disarming it takes a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools or a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Treasure: The ruby is worth 250 gp.

C-13. THE AMETHYST HARMONIUM

This strange chamber has two unsealed portals, and a single great machine that spans the full length of the southern wall. The bizarre artifice looks like a great piano or harmonium adorned with countless crystalline keys made of amethyst.

The Engineer spends a great deal of time here when it is not busy with its many projects. It sits in front of the Harmonium rapidly pressing buttons, as strange holographic images dance about and weird noises fill the room. The images' meaning is beyond the ken of humanity, but these strange sights and sounds soothe the Engineer.

If anyone tries to smash the device while the ship's power is on, they receive a nasty shock. The machine is highly electrified, and any damage causes a savage backlash. The **electricity trap** duplicates the effects of the trap encountered in **Area C-12**.

Treasure: The extremely fragile Harmonium can be looted and smashed without danger once the power is off. The PCs can collect 4,200 gp in amethysts and platinum wire. This, of course, irrevocably ruins the contraption and both sorrows and enrages the Engineer.

C-14. PILLAR OF LIGHT

This chamber is locked. However, the bioarchanic lock can be defeated with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools. The squishy quasi-living material (AC 17, HP 30, damage threshold 10) can also be bludgeoned to a pulp.

Normally, this shimmering beam of light levitates anyone stepping into it down to **Area C-15** on the command deck. However, the Engineer is watching the PCs via a small jewel-eye in the southeastern corner of the compartment. As soon as anyone steps in the beam of light, the beam shuts off. Any creature in the beam abruptly plummets 20 feet down to the next level. The fall deals 2d6 damage. The Engineer knows that this nasty little trick won't stop the PCs at this point, but anything to soften them up is welcome. When the Engineer extinguishes the beam, the PCs must climb down to the next level through the open hole in the floor.

The jewel-eye resembles a small jade sphere mounted into the wall. The eye can be discovered with a successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check. It is very fragile (AC 11, HP 4) and can be easily smashed. If the PCs smash the eye before standing in the beam of light, the Engineer turns off the beam of light 2 rounds later hoping to catch a PC using it.

The Engineer only reactivates the light pillar under special circumstances, as the pillar is a transport device, not a weapon. It is designed to be safe. The Engineer disabled the safeguards to turn it into a pit trap. It requires 5 rounds to reset the safeguards and return the light pillar to normal operation. However, if by chance the party abandons an unconscious PC in the shaft, the mi-go will slowly repower the pillar, raise the victims back up, and repeatedly drop them again and again until they are quite dead.

LEVEL II:

COMMAND DECK

C-15. LANDING PAD

This is where the pillar of light from **Area C-14** deposits its passengers. This room is empty save for three portals in the south, east and west walls. Unless the PCs have shut down the power for the ship, the southern portal hums with a blue variation of a *wall of force*. This wall functions like the spell, however, the PCs can destroy it with brute force (AC 19, HP 40, damage threshold 20). If the PCs removed the control crystal from the engine room (**Area C-7**) and powered down the ship, this portal is deactivated when they arrive.

There is another way to bypass the field, but it is dangerous. Anyone who wields the golden control stave (found in **Area C-11**) can phase through the portal. As a standard action, the PC must touch the stave to the wall and hold it there to turn off the field. The door itself is not locked.

The danger here is that the Engineer can use an action to reactivate the field and then focuses its wrath on whoever bears the control stave. This might very well divide the party while they face the most dangerous opponent on the vessel. See **Area C-18** for details on battling the Engineer.

C-16: HOLDING CELLS

This unlocked portal opens into a chamber featuring three transparent walls with small doors. These are holding cells where the Engineer keeps living prisoners until they are ready to be experimented upon and vivisected. The cells are empty unless the Engineer captured a PC or a crewmember. They can only be opened from the outside or can be battered open from within (AC 19, HP 30, damage threshold 20). There is a small jewel-eye in this room above the door. It is otherwise identical to the sensor in **Area C-14**.

C-17. VARICOLORED GARDEN

This is the Engineer's workshop. The room is filled with tables full of strange tools and devices, including several pieces of magical gear and equipment. There are several large clear tanks of water and countless jellyfish. The Engineer uses these tanks to grow various poisonous compounds, including the poison smeared on the captain's sword. Among the other equipment is an unfinished seventh clockwork weaving spider (see **Area P-3**).

There is a small jewel-eye in this room above the door. It is otherwise identical to the sensor in **Area C-14**. Using the jewel, the Engineer observes the PCs and waits until they are in this chamber. It then seals the door. The tanks rupture and flood the chamber to a depth of about 3 feet. The deadly **mustard jelly** is now free and immediately attacks the PCs.

This is the Engineer's last desperate attempt to slay the PCs. It pains the mi-go to damage its own workshop, but the sacrifice is worth it if the mustard jelly slays these relentless intruders. The sealed door can be opened with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools or battered down (AC 19, HP 30, damage threshold 15).

MUSTARD JELLY

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d8 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities acid, lightning, *magic missile*, poison

Condition Immunities blind, deafened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, restrained, stunned, unconscious

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Adhesive. The jelly adheres to anything that touches it, or that it touches. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the jelly is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

Amorphous. The jelly can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Grappler. The jelly has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the jelly is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

Poison Aura. At the start of each of the jelly's turns, each creature within 15 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target cannot regain hit points, and it takes 14 (4d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The poisoned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Spider Climb. The jelly can climb difficult surfaces,

including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. A mustard jelly makes one slam attack and one grapple attack.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). A mustard jelly can have up to five targets grappled at a time.

Poisoned Embrace. Any creature grappled by the jelly must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until this poison ends, the target is paralyzed and takes 18 (4d8) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Reactions

Split. When a jelly that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new jellies, if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new jelly has hit points equal to half the original jelly's, rounded down. New jellies are one size smaller than the original jelly.

Treasure: The workshop's valuables include a platinum screwdriver worth 250 gp, a tungsten-carbide hand drill worth 200 gp, and six spools of copper wire worth 100 gp each. In addition, there is *mithral plate armor*, a *helm of telepathy*, *mariner's studded leather armor*, and 3 *beads of force*.

C-18. THRONE OF THE ENGINEER

Inside the room is the only living mi-go aboard this craft — the Engineer. It sits on a great rotating command chair on top of a raised dais. Strange crystalline controls surround it and hazy holographic images of any rooms that still have intact jewel-eyes float in the air around it.

There are two other command consoles on the ship where other crewmembers would normally sit when the craft pierced the veil of worlds. Those consoles are now shut down, and all control is routed to the Engineer's throne.

The mi-go itself is an alien-looking plant. Its frightening heads resemble humanoid brains. Insectoid appendages protrude from its central stem, while the malevolent creature waddles on two thick legs. Stubby wings attached to its back surprisingly have enough strength to carry the monster aloft.

This mi-go also has a small piece of jade surgically implanted within its own flesh along the crown of its central mass. This strange implant allows it to remotely control and receive messages from its jewel-eyes and black leeches.

It snarls at the PCs as they enter the throne room and speaks in a raspy whisper they should know well by now. The GM may read or paraphrase the following:

“So this is what you want, eh? You seek the honor of being killed by me personally? You shall have it!”

And with that, the battle begins. If the captain is somehow still with the PCs and under the Engineer's control, he also joins in, defending his true master to the last of his strength.

The Engineer sitting upon the throne is an illusion created by *major image*. The actual brain collector is invisible in the northwestern corner of the room. It allows the PCs to spend a round hopefully discharging their most powerful spells and magic items at its empty throne and then reveals itself by unleashing a *lightning bolt* that catches as many of them in its area as possible.

THE ENGINEER (MI-GO)

Medium plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (8d8 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	21 (+5)	25 (+7)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Strength +6, Constitution +8, Charisma +4

Skills Arcana +10, Deception +7, Medicine +5,

Perception +5, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances cold, radiant

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 240 ft., passive

Perception 15

Languages Common, Mi-Go, Void Speech

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Astral Travelers. Mi-go do not require air or heat to survive, only sunlight (and very little of that). They can enter a sporulated form capable of surviving travel through the void and returning to consciousness when conditions are right.

Disquieting Technology. The mi-go are a highly advanced race, and may carry items of powerful technology. Mi-go technology can be represented using the same rules as magic items, but their functions are very difficult to determine: identify is useless, but an hour of study and a successful DC 19 Arcana check can reveal the purpose and proper functioning of a mi-go item.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The mi-go does an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a claw attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the mi-go that isn't incapacitated and the mi-go doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Spellcasting. The Engineer is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks). The Engineer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *fire bolt*, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *false life*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility*, *magic mouth*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *major image*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, *locate creature*, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *animate objects*, *dominate person*

Actions

Multiattack. The mi-go makes two attacks with its claws.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6+4) slashing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). If both claw

attacks strike the same target in a single turn, the target takes an additional 13 (2d12) psychic damage.

Reactions

Spore Release. When a mi-go dies, it releases its remaining spores. All living creatures within 10 feet take 14 (2d8+5) poison damage and become poisoned; a successful DC 16 Constitution saving throw halves the damage and prevents poisoning. A poisoned creature repeats the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on itself with a success.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Engineer takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects. It can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

Anti-Gravity. The Engineer can levitate an unwilling target on a failed DC 19 Constitution saving throw as though it had cast the *levitate* spell. The levitated creature falls back to the ground on initiative count 20 on the next round and takes falling damage, if applicable.

Electrical Discharge. The Engineer manipulates the ship's energy to call down lightning bolts as though it had cast the *call lightning* spell. The effect lasts until the initiative count 20 on the next round. (The Engineer cannot use this lair action if the ship's engines are inoperable.)

Hologram. The Engineer creates a holographic image of itself or one of the encephalon gorgon zombies as though it had cast the *major image* spell. The image lasts until the initiative count 20 on the next round.

Equipment

Wand of lightning bolts, *potion of clairvoyance*, tinker's tools, jeweler's tools, six pieces of jade worth 100 gp each

Tactics: When the Engineer becomes visible, it does everything possible to keep from being flanked by these little insects. After its first *lightning bolt*, it flies away to another corner of the chamber. However, if the Engineer realizes the PCs can pursue it, the mi-go abandons focuses on damage output, burning through its offensive spells with reckless abandon. In addition, it uses its lair actions to confuse and befuddle its adversaries. When it exhausted its allotment of spells, it turns to its vicious claws rending its victims into a gory mess. The Engineer has nowhere else to run. Cornered, it fights to the death.

PCs may use a *see invisibility* spell or similar magic to spot the concealed Engineer. Similarly, PCs who were affected by the Engineer's *major image* spell in **Area C-8**, may attempt to disbelieve the illusory Engineer.

PART FIVE: CONCLUSION

This act covers everything that happens after the Engineer's death. With its defeat, the Engineer tries to gain vengeance through one last act of desperation — it detonates the ship. As the PCs flee, they realize that they have defeated a great evil and ensured that one small corner of the Razor Sea is no longer choked with nightmares.

SELF DESTRUCT IN T-MINUS...

As the Engineer falls defeated, it speaks. The voice it projects is half in a distorted version of the Common tongue and half Void Speech. It reverberates with raw, pure anger at this affront. It is laden with a driving need for revenge. The message is brief. It raps:

“You have won . . . nothing.”

This is the Engineer's parting gift to a world it has worked tirelessly to destroy. It could not destroy all of civilization, so this alien terror must content itself with only blowing up the Trident. The Engineer has rigged a dead-man switch that if it is ever slain, the vessel would unleash its power core and explode with tremendous force. No matter what the PCs destroyed onboard the ship, the power core remains intact. It lies deep beneath the deck surrounded by the seamount's stone.

When activated, the Engineer's throne pulsates and glows. Angry violet light flashes as ear-splitting claxons ring out. The Engineer has initiated the process to unleash the lightning in full. In just a few moments, this craft will vaporize. In the language of Mi-Go bizarre warnings are given.

Bio-fulminatory manumission countdown initiated. Manumission executed in seventy-seven meggon-fractals.

The gist of this requires no understanding of Mi-Go or the strange language of the control system. The Engineer has rigged the ship to blow. Clever players likely realize their peril and flee for the exit with no further prompting. Anyone else must succeed at a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to realize what is about to occur.

This event is not meant to result in a total party kill. It is intended to ensure that the PCs do not end with free reign over the strange machinery of the mi-go craft, thus making unwanted changes to the campaign world. So, as long as the PCs flee the craft without delay, they have no difficulty escaping before the entire seamount erupts in a great plume of rock, coral, and boiling seawater.

However, the GM should still create tension. Have everyone attempt Dexterity checks to flee at the best possible speed. Have parts of the ship spew arcs of violet electricity near the PCs. Great beams of the hull's superstructure begin to collapse and buckle. Weird machinery is crushed and leaks out green and violet fluids that begin to mix and bubble furiously. A strange modulated voice makes regular announcements in a language no one speaks and yet everyone understands.

Clearly, it is now time to leave.

Alien Invasion Averted

With the Engineer's death, the PCs have eradicated this threat to the Razor once and forever. The explosion is so titanic it even collapses a good portion of the upper seamount, which removes a navigational

hazard. The tip of the Trident has been forever blunted. Of course, the shattered remains of *The Flying Fortune* also sink beneath the waves. Even more importantly, with the loss of their scout, the aliens turn their attention to other worlds and other atrocities. The PCs likely never know how close their home world came to calamity. Perhaps, if one of our accidental heroes is a devout follower of a deity, that person learns the truth in vague visions and portentous dreams. Perhaps it is enough that the adventures have slain these obviously alien aberrations and looted their craft.

Captain Handerly and *The Sealord's Blessing*

The Sealord's Blessing witnesses the fireworks and quickly appears on the scene to pick up survivors. The PCs have no trouble convincing the first mate Captain Riggs perished in the explosion. In fact, First Mate Handerly is amazed anyone survived. He greets wild stories of submerged vessels and extradimensional horrors with a fair portion of initial skepticism and disbelief. But still, he is a superstitious sailor and can likely be convinced of almost anything given time and a modicum of proof.

Proof, of course, is something the PCs almost certainly have if they care to show the first mate any strange collection of jewels they recovered from the craft. Handerly looks upon these items with wonder and makes no further inquiries about them. He only remarks the world is full of strange wonders beyond count.

Regardless of what the PCs share, Handerly takes possession of *The Sealord's Blessing* in Captain Riggs' absence, becomes Captain Handerly, and perhaps gains a good measure of respect for the bravery of the PCs. At the GM's discretion, Captain Barton Handerly could become a useful contact and ally in Port Shaw. At the very least, he is a skilled sailor in possession of a fine ship. Since it is unlikely that the PCs have their own ship by this point in their careers, this makes him a valuable friend indeed.

Whatever treasure the PCs collected from the wreckage is theirs to keep. Neither Handerly nor any of the sailors want anything to do with such unusual and possibly cursed wealth. The only exception might be the captain's spyglass. If Handerly sees that our heroes possess that distinctive item, he asks for it so that he may return it to the captain's widow in Port Shaw — Marlena.

If the PCs refuse, Handerly does not fight them, but he loses a great deal of respect for them and considers them little better than petty thieves. If the PCs give up the glass, he is impressed with their sense of honor. He may even allow the PCs to return it to the widow Marlena themselves. The captain's widow has no use for the spyglass and so offers it to the PCs, but only if they help her with this one errand...

The Widow's Errand

The nature of the widow's errand is left entirely up to the GM and may serve as a fitting way to entangle the PCs in another adventure in the Razor Coast saga.

Captain Riggs and the Birth of a Legend

The voyage back to Port Shaw is uneventful, but one of the older sailors a few nights later shares tales of Captain Riggs. He ends with the following words, which the GM may read or paraphrase.

“So here's to poor old Captain Riggs, as fine a sailor as you'll ever meet. He was a fine gentleman of fortune who, alas, the gods saw fit to consign to a terrible fate. Mourn him, lads, aye mourn him. But take some comfort in this. We were fortunate indeed not to share in his misfortune. For I saw it myself

when I was delivering wine to his cabin during one of his binges. Upon his left hand—the black spot!”

The Redemption of Captain Riggs

If the PCs spare the captain, remove his black leech and do not honor his request for an easy death, Riggs may survive the adventure. If the PCs deliver the captain back to his wife in Port Shaw, the Captain eventually recovers from the Black Spot. He rediscovers his sanity in time with the help of his beloved Marlena and eventually returns to command the Blessing.

In this version of events, Captain Riggs is forever in the debt of the brave heroes who spared his life and won his redemption. They always sail for free aboard the Blessing, and he even surrenders the use of the captain's cabin to them. But even more importantly, they have no more loyal friend in Port Shaw than the newly restored Captain Riggs. He knows every breath he draws, every day he enjoys, it is because of the PCs. Exactly how useful he is or what he discovers for our heroes is up to the GM, but Riggs makes an excellent way to introduce new adventure hooks to the party.

Even more than Riggs himself, they also gain the friendship of his wife Marlena. Marlena has little use for boats and is a permanent resident of Port Shaw. Instead, she prefers to make her fortune as a brilliant alchemist (neutral female human wizard). She has no interest in being an adventurer, but she is able to help the PCs, creating potions for them from time to time at cost and providing valuable information in arcane matters from her contacts among the alchemists of Port Shaw.

Marlena is particularly pleased to have the old Colthyn Riggs back. Since the wreck of *The Flying Fortune*, he's been cold and distant. But after losing the Black Spot, Captain Riggs is back to being the man Marlena fell in love with all those years ago. She heals his wounds and sets him once more about a fine course. And in all of Port Shaw, there is likely not a happier couple.

TROUBLESHOOTING

There are always things that can go wrong in an adventure. Here are a few suggestions that might help resolve those problems.

My PCs do not want to go with Riggs.

There is no adventure if the PCs don't board *The Flying Fortune*. So, as the GM, it is your task to find a motivation that will get the PCs aboard the boat. Sorry. This is one the adventure turns upon. Let's talk about it some more.

This adventure assumes a group of PCs seeking excitement, treasure, and glory. For many groups, just the hint of mystery and treasure is enough to motivate them to action. Others may require a slightly different tack.

If the PCs are a pack of paladins, noble heroes, and good clerics, perhaps instead of seeing a flame, the sentry instead hears a cry of despair. Reframe the boarding of *The Flying Fortune* as primarily a rescue mission, and the PCs should be set.

If the PCs are motivated by coin above all else, then Captain Riggs could observe that it might be *The Flying Fortune*. That ship was lost in these waters some years ago carrying a cargo of plate silver and pearls. This is of course a complete deception. But still, that tidbit should get the greedy cadre salivating for what lies in the ship's hold.

Alternately, if the PCs are money-motivated but express suspicion that gold oh so conveniently appeared just now (the Engineer's illusion, but they don't know that), Riggs can point out there have been seaquakes of late and opine that the seismic activity must have shaken loose some treasure from the Fortune. Since the quakes really did happen, this is something Handerly and the crew confirm when asked.

If the group hunts monsters by profession then emphasize the danger. Emphasize to them that something worse than mere shoals and reefs must bedevil the craft. There are no lanterns, no ship's boats and not a single sign of life. Remember that Riggs has an ally — the Engineer, who is capable of using illusions to bait the lure. Be creative and set the PCs upon a path to adventure.

The PCs do not want to go through the breach.

Everything said about getting them on the boat applies here as well. The treasure/monster/survivors must be down there! Fortune favors the bold.

No, it didn't work. They took one look at the hole ripped into the seamount and fled the Fortune.

Unless the PCs slay the Engineer, the danger remains, festers, and in time grows. Even if the Engineer didn't manage to capture this particular prey, it won't stop hunting for more. Perhaps a few levels later, the PCs hear tales of another ship disappearing near the Trident. This time the Engineer has grown even stronger. Add a few other aberrations the brain collector has managed to create and this adventure could easily suit a 7th or 8th level party. And the next time the PCs visit the wreck, they can be certain that the reason all of these new victims met their grisly end was because they were too cowardly to face whatever lies down the hole. Will they again give in to cowardice or will they at last become the heroes they were meant to be?

My PCs figured out immediately that Captain Riggs is an infiltrator.

This is not a problem. It simply means they are a clever or perhaps paranoid band of PCs. After the captain is defeated — whether he is slain or not — the black leech can wriggle out of his glove and slither towards a new host. The fact the captain was not a bandit, but somehow being controlled should appeal to PC curiosity. What is going on here? What happened to *The Flying Fortune*? Use the mystery to move the adventure forward.

My PCs ended up with X piece of world changing alien technology.

Nothing works outside the craft. The strange, semi-sentient energy force that surges through the mi-go ship powers it all. Outside, the technology is simply a broken curiosity. A collector might pay a few gold for it, and a clever wizard or alchemist might be able to salvage a few useable parts. But other than that, it is junk.

My PCs have flooded the alien craft. Do all the monsters drown?

No. The Viridian Portal (Area P-3 above) has a special field that keeps seawater from entering the craft in any substantial quantity. The monsters don't drown. If your PCs somehow destroy or defeat this field, then fine — let them flood the craft. This can actually be a very unique way to explore the dungeon.

Still, none of the creatures in it drown. The Engineer dons his gill symbiote and now functions perfectly well underwater. The mustard jelly and black leech swarms are now free to roam the ship. The ghaists, the vile slashers, and the Vivisectionist never needed to breathe. And the engine room (the Chamber of Ceaseless Storms) has its own protective field that keeps sea water out.

My PCs somehow convinced the first mate to send lots of sailors instead of just a few.

Perhaps, if charmed, Handerly could be coerced into sending as many as two dozen sailors and even himself. Ultimately, the sailors are more of a hindrance than they are an aid. Down in the tight quarters of the craft, they are slaughtered by strangle weed, poison gas, vile slashers, and worse. Mostly they make a lot of noise, get in the way and flee in terror when confronted by true monsters. Bringing a large compliment of sailors, honestly, does little to make the PCs lives any easier.

My PCs refuse to take the hint and aren't fleeing the ship after the Engineer's death! Is this really a total party kill?

The author has occasionally been accused of being a nice GM. I would give them two more warnings. Have the ship lurch violently, and have everyone attempt a DC 20 Constitution saving throw to avoid taking 4d6 lightning damage. If they're still not running for the exit, then have the ship electrify as the reactor core is breached and semi-sentient lightning floods the vessel. Everyone must then succeed at a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or take another 4d6 lightning damage.

After you warned them three times the ship is about to explode and they still haven't fled ... yeah, even I am not that nice. This is a total party kill. Maybe the next adventurers are better able to take a hint.

My PCs want to take over The Sealord's Blessing. They forced the Captain to sign an order just before he died or plan to take it by force.

There is always the option that if the PCs come up with a clever way to take the ship, you should let them. Remember they are stealing a ship. There are likely plenty of people in port who know who the rightful owner of the Blessing should be. That makes for a rich source of adventure and could even lead to the PC's turning pirate. But if you feel it is yet too early for the PCs to have their own vessel, there are ways to keep the ship out of their hands.

The crew of the ship does not stand for such a takeover. They have been well treated by Riggs and Handerly and have no desire to set sail under the command of reckless adventurers who are likely to get them all killed. They mutiny, and even if the PCs win, this leaves them with a ship they likely have little ability to sail. *The Sealord's Blessing* drifts at sea until it is hit by a freak storm that wrecks it upon a nearby island.

And what is on that island? That is up to you

HEART OF THE RAZOR
CHAPTER TWO

SINFUL WHISPER

by Tom Knauss

They tell of a lonely island that bears Great Pele's footprints. An isle seared by a mother's vengeance for the evil wrought on Her beloved children - and where gods smite the earth, only fools dare tread. On the Razor, 'tis folly, indeed, to walk any ground She condemned.

Yet still, mortals come. Legends of a secret magic hoard, the fate of a missing whaler, and the strange tale of a lone survivor beckon to shores grown as lush and inviting as a siren's irresistible song.

"This way", encourages a sly whisper adrift on the wind. "Come, and I shall make you mine."

From ruins where once She trod in wrath, the temptations of an ageless evil speak after centuries of silence.

Sinful Whisper is a 5th-level adventure of supernatural and psychological horror set on a mysterious island on the Razor Coast grown verdant with time. Here the characters must overcome both their deepest fears and most banal desires to combat a depravity so deep it survived the retribution of a goddess.

From ruins where once Great Pele trod in wrack and wrath, the temptations of an ageless evil speak after centuries of silence. *Sinful Whisper* is an adventure of supernatural and psychological horror set on a mysterious island grown verdant with time. Here the PCs must overcome both their deepest fears and most base desires to combat a depravity so deep it survived the retribution of a goddess.

Although the adventure incorporates elements from *Razor Coast* from *Frog God Games* into the story, the GM can remove those references and add features of his or her own choice to set this tale in another locale.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Demonic Piggyback

When the sea was young and the Razor newborn, the great fiend Demogorgon came and fouled the pristine waters with his cruelty and malice. From an unspeakable act of violence, Demogorgon soiled the Razor forever with his wretched seed, the Krakenfiend Harthagoa. But, unbeknownst to the mighty demon, a tiny demon attached itself to Demogorgon, just as a remora clings to a shark.

During the act of fathering Harthagoa, the demon loosed its bonds and drifted in the Razor's pure waters until it landed on Dolentla Island, or as the Tulita called it, the Whispering Shores. The Tulitas native to the island fell under the demon's sway and worshipped it as a god. They called it Thalasskoptis, or "The Whispering Liar". There, aided by the plentiful maht fields, it feasted on their minds and souls and swelled into a demonic prince. To appease Thalasskoptis, the Tulitas sacrificed every other child born to the tribe. Appalled by these ghastly rites, the other Tulita tribes shunned Dolentla Island and its inhabitants.

The Elf-Tulita Wars

Then, an age ago, the elves came from across the sea from the green realms of Akados and aspired to claim the Razor as their own. To further their ambitions, they defeated the Tulitas and built their mighty stronghold of Sammerlock Sails and a secret, magical laboratory on Dolentla Island. At first, Thalasskoptis welcomed the arrival of fresh minds, but the monster also found someone it did not expect – Urthlan the Fiendbinder, a legendary elf wizard with a specialty for binding magic. Urthlan crafted enchanted stone totems and gossamer mithral that imprisoned Thalasskoptis. He and his apprentices attempted to control the demon prince and use the fiend as a weapon against the Tulitas, but Thalasskoptis's mind refused to bend, even to the mighty Urthlan. As the months passed and the war between the elves and Tulitas dragged on, Thalasskoptis resisted and grew stronger. Then, an angry goddess changed Thalasskoptis's fortunes.

The Tulitas beseeched Pele for aid, and the wrathful goddess answered their prayers. She laid waste to Sammerlock Sails, leveling the fortress' battlements and silver spires into smoldering lava and molten metal and transforming its lush courtyards and gardens into scorched earth.

Dolentla Island did not escape Mother Pele's ire. The elf wizards there attempted to battle against her, but to no avail. She slew every elf on the island, as Thalasskoptis feasted on their accursed souls. Unlike Sammerlock Sails, Pele did not turn the island into a smoldering wasteland, allowing Thalasskoptis to survive. The Tulitas avoided the island, and for decades the fiend brooded and waited for fresh mortals to wander into its proverbial web. And once again, fate intervened.

The Fate of Colonial Thieves

When the invaders' tall ships appeared on the horizon, the wisest Tulitas knew the world was about to change forever. They came to these shores searching for the fruits of the land and those of the sea. The Whale, the Tulitas' benefactor for countless generations, was

their prized jewel. As they depleted their numbers by the hundreds, the Tulita watched and wept in silent reverence.

When the thief Delano Ambrose defiled a Tulita shrine and stole a jar of sacred ambergris from Whale itself, the great Tulita druid, Qualmaga, decided it was time for Whale to reclaim what it had lost. Using his potent magic, he imbued a whale with intelligence and charged it with a primary task — to find Whale's ambergris and punish the one who stole it. After a long search, Qualmaga's whale found its quarry.

The whale located Captain Delano Ambrose and his whaling ship, the *Lashed Harpoon*. The cunning whale lured the ship near the shores of Dolentla Island and rammed the ship, smashing its hull into splinters. Those who drowned turned out to be fortunate, as a crueler fate awaited the survivors who made it to shore. The uninhabited island seemed peaceful and beautiful, but its appearance belied its sinister nature. A primeval villain waited, eager to corrupt fresh souls with vile nightmares of barbarism and brutality.

In short order, Thalasskoptis bent the survivors to his will. Even Qualmaga's whale became its unwitting servant. Tormented by dark dreams, the men and women of the *Lashed Harpoon* forsook their humanity and succumbed to the beasts within them, urged on by a tempting whisper to indulge their banal desires and engage in unspeakable acts of depravity. Their unearthly host warped their minds into twisted masses of impulsive delight, depriving them of reason, logic, and compassion. All the while, the insidious being grew stronger and dreamt of escaping its bonds and claiming the world of men.

As the years passed, the fate of the *Lashed Harpoon* became an enduring legend. Intrepid explorers tried their luck at finding the missing ship, but every attempt failed.

History Repeats Itself

Two weeks ago, Jacinth Deepwarder, an elf and the niece of Viscount Senegar Deepwarder, led a new expedition to find Dolentla Island; however, for a reason other than locating the *Lashed Harpoon*. Over the past few months, the bored noblewoman had taken a keen interest in her ancestry, scouring through weathered tomes and dusty ledgers. As her research progressed, she came to believe that Dolentla Island concealed a great mystery in regards to her quest. The expert dilettante - but novice archaeologist and sailor - helmed her pleasure vessel, the *Dulcimer*, in search of her prize.

Accompanied by her "crew" of Port Shaw's most decadent elite, she set sail for Dolentla Island. Jacinth's intuition proved greater than her seamanship or wisdom. As the ship neared the coast, Qualmaga's whale sprang into action and destroyed the vessel along Dolentla Island's western shore. Alerted by the racket, the *Lashed Harpoon*'s monstrous castaways entered the water and dragged the *Dulcimer*'s crew kicking and screaming back to the cove on Dolentla Island. That is, all except for its terrified captain, Jacinth, who drank a *potion of invisibility* and slipped away into the darkness. The cowardly Jacinth paddled away from the island and was returned to Port Shaw by a passing ship that later found her adrift upon the sea.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In Port Shaw, the player characters are recruited to venture to Dolentla Island and rescue the *Dulcimer*'s marooned crew and/or investigate the disappearance of the *Lashed Harpoon*, which also vanished in the same waters 20 years earlier. After some preliminary inquiries within the city, the player characters set sail for Dolentla Island. On the high seas, the journey proves difficult and the PCs encounter everything from a monstrous assault to stowaways and slave ships in rebellion.

The PCs continue their journey and arrive off the shores of Dolentla Island, where Qualmaga's whale – now under Thalasskoptis's sway – attacks their boat as part of his plan to bring more castaways to the

island. The malevolent demon feeds on life energy, which he uses to attenuate the strength of his magical prison.

The PCs discover the sad fate of the *Lashed Harpoon*'s survivors when they arrive on Dolentla Island. Known as hawanis, the ship's men and women are now monstrous creations filled with rage and wanton lust. The same fate awaits the PCs and the *Dulcimer*'s crew, unless they can stop it.

As the party makes its way through the jungle in search of answers, the PCs may explore the island's five keyed locations, including the *Lashed Harpoon*'s wreckage, a maht field, and an ancient Tulita shrine to Thalasskoptis where the PCs engage in their first telepathic contact with the island's conniving overlord.

The ancient Tulita shrine stands atop the elves' secret laboratory, which serves as Thalasskoptis's prison. As the PCs make their way within the laboratory, the manipulative fiend fills their minds with pointed warnings to leave and empty promises, including revealing the location of the elves' secret treasure vault.

If Thalasskoptis's efforts to dissuade the PCs fail, it prepares for battle. Depending upon the PCs' actions at the ancient Tulita shrine, Thalasskoptis may be very close to freedom or still firmly confined by its magical bonds. Here, the PCs face a choice. They can leave the island in exchange for Dolentla Island's secret treasures, or they can rid Dolentla Island of its malevolent master once and for all.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins in Port Shaw, the only permanent colonial bastion on the Razor Coast. If the PCs are new to Port Shaw, allow them some time to take in its many sights, sounds and attractions before setting the adventure's chain of events into motion. PCs from Port Shaw may dispense with a full-scale introduction to the bustling city and engage in a few encounters that yield a few useful bits of information for their upcoming excursion.

As the PCs' extracurricular activities wind down, a buzz pulses through the city. Rumors swirl about the mysterious disappearance of several noteworthy scions to Port Shaw's wealthiest families. The city's gossip mill goes into full gear. Was it a deliberately staged disappearance or a murderous love triangle at sea? Was it a high seas robbery or a drunken night of excess gone terribly wrong? Only a few loyal friends and family members believe Jacinth's story about

a murderous whale. Whatever the cause, Port Shaw's elite demand answers, and someone must get to the bottom of the sordid affair.

Hooks

The GM may use one of the following hooks to draw the characters into the adventure or create an alternative method of involving the heroes in these events.

Hook 1 — The Irritated Elven Diplomat

There are several ways to get the PCs involved in the matter. Viscount Senegar Deepwarder wants to put the scandal to bed as quickly as possible, so he seeks the PCs' assistance in the matter, especially if they have already performed a service for him in the past. The Viscount is displeased with his niece's recklessness and lack of honor, but he puts his family's reputation ahead of his personal ire. The viscount may also contact the PCs if they have made a name of themselves within the city, or if they frequent his favorite watering hole, the Kraken's Gullet. The viscount offers 5,000 gp to the PCs if they accompany his niece Jacinth to Dolentla Island, rescue the *Dulcimer*'s crew, and absolve him of any role in the incident.

Hook 2 — Concerned Parents

There is no shortage of coin offered by Port Shaw's rich and famous to locate the men and women abducted from the *Dulcimer*.

Kurt Tolcrist and Lady Tolcrist offer a generous reward of 4,000 gp to any brave adventurer who returns their socialite daughter, Genevieve Tolcrist, to Port Shaw. Other families issue rewards, but the Tolcrist's reward is the most lucrative. As high browed aristocrats, Kurt and Lady Tolcrist are insufferably smug and condescending about their wealth. However, they care deeply for Genevieve and are willing to increase the reward to 6,000 gp if the PCs make a strong impression upon them and also succeed on a DC 15 Charisma check. The Tolcrist and the other families blame Jacinth for the disappearances and do not believe her "killer whale" story, but those opinions are kept private rather than aired in public.

Hook 3 — The Guild Takes Notice

The Cartographers and Explorers Guild also takes an interest in the matter for more selfish reasons. They believe Jacinth's story about the whale, and they also share her opinion Dolentla Island hides a lucrative and possibly historically valuable secret. The group speculates that the whale may have attacked the *Lashed Harpoon* all those years ago, and its remains may have washed onshore onto Dolentla Island. Current members and potential members are asked to venture to Dolentla Island and discover the truth.

Rumors

PCs may learn the following information by gathering information from local residents with successful Charisma checks or they may pry information from a reluctant source with a successful Charisma (Intimidation) check while in Port Shaw. For each successful check at that level, provide one new rumor at that DC or from a lower one if the ones at the current DC have already been heard.

DC 15

Jacinth Deepwarder is the niece of Viscount Senegar Deepwarder. She is a spoiled playgirl and a marginal sailor. It was a fool's errand for her uncle to purchase the *Dulcimer* to accommodate her wild pleasure cruises.

The *Dulcimer* entered dangerous waters near Sammerlock Sails, a ruined island fortress. Pele herself destroyed the elven stronghold. Experienced captains steer a wide berth around the main island and the nearby Dolentla Island. Even from a distance, crewmen report seeing eerie lights and hearing unearthly sounds from the islands.

Jacinth claims that a whale attacked the ship and destroyed it. That's complete nonsense. She probably got drunk and ran the ship aground on Dolentla Island.

DC 20

Mariners reported seeing the *Lashed Harpoon* enter the area of Sammerlock Sails twenty-odd years ago, but the ship and its crew disappeared without a trace. Explorers have spent nearly as much time searching for the ship, but no one has ever located any trace of the missing vessel. Of course, none ever landed on Sammerlock Sails or Dolentla Island looking for the ship.

DC 25

The elves concealed something on Dolentla Island near Sammerlock Sails. Speculation includes a magnificent armory, a cache of experimental weapons, a treasure trove, or an artifact belonging to Pele.

The *Lashed Harpoon* was more than a whaler. Its captain, Delano Ambrorse, was also a reputed smuggler who stored ambergris and other valuable oils in a secret cargo compartment.

The Tulita of his day loathed Delano Ambrorse. Reputedly, they refuse to deal with his descendants to this day.

PART ONE:

LEARNING THE FACTS
AND SETTING SAIL

During their stay in Port Shaw, the PCs may gather supplemental background information from a variety of sources, but all investigative roads ultimately lead to Jacinth Deepwarder, the lost ship's only known survivor. After meeting Jacinth and deciding whether the spoiled elf will join them or not, the party secures a ship and heads for Dolentla Island.

MEETING JACINTH

Selfish and haughty are the two words that best describe Jacinth Deepwarder. Jacinth treats other people as if they were actors flitting about a stage just for her amusement. PCs working for the viscount are escorted immediately to meet Jacinth to get her side of the story. PCs in the employ of the Tolcrists, another family, or the Cartographers and Explorers Guild must go through the viscount to speak with Jacinth. A polite, written request or an eloquent statement (successful DC 10 Charisma [Persuasion] check) is enough for the viscount to grant an audience with Jacinth. The viscount is wary of subjecting his niece to an interrogation that may potentially embarrass his reputation, but a cover-up could make the situation even worse. Indiscretions are one thing, but a rude gesture to a fellow aristocrat is ruinous for business and one's social calendar.

If granted an audience, the PCs meet Jacinth in a private suite on the third floor in the Kraken's Gullet. The viscount is also present for the meeting. When the PCs meet Jacinth, read or paraphrase the following.

A wiry, well-coiffed young elven woman in a noblewoman's finery sits at an ornate table in a resplendent suite. She nurses a glass of expensive wine, but her facial expressions and darting eyes betray that something else occupies her mind. Her hand trembles gently as she sips the drink and struggles to maintain her composure. She glances pensively towards the viscount, who reassures her with a firm nod.

For the first time in her life, Jacinth faces a predicament that cannot be solved with a coin purse or a flash of charm. This realization frightens her, but it does not make her any less aloof. Jacinth reveals information casting her in a favorable light, but she omits details that are not flattering to her. Jacinth volunteers the following account without coaxing. The GM may read or paraphrase the following.

Two weeks ago, my friends and I set out on an expedition to Sammerlock Sails to contribute to the scientific and historical community of Port Shaw. As we approached the western shore of Dolentla Island five miles away from our final destination, a monstrous whale crashed into the ship and sundered it in half. Everyone went overboard and swam towards the nearby island. As we made our way closer

to the beach, humanoid monsters leapt into the water and attacked us. The creatures looked human, but they also seemed feral, as if they were mad. I tried to fight, but the monsters knocked me unconscious. They must have thought I died, because when I came to, the creatures were gone. I looked for my friends, but I could not find them in the darkness. I then found a large piece of driftwood and paddled towards the shipping lanes. A passing ship rescued me a few days later and returned me to Port Shaw.

Jacinth's friends on the expedition consisted of the scions of many of the finest families in Port Shaw: Genevieve Tolcrist, Maximilian Sidrow, Joshua Bonedeuce, (a distant cousin of Gregory Bonedeuce), Lenora Duhamel, Tordell Rivery, Susanna Bellstead, and Elizabeth Stansport. When asked about the scientific and historical significance of the expedition, she becomes very vague and evasive. If asked about any injuries she sustained in the wreck or the battle, she reassures the PCS she has made a full recovery.

Of course, Jacinth lies about the trip's purpose, its destination, and about fighting off the monsters. She was actually headed to Dolentla Island to investigate its hidden treasure. When she fell into the water, she drank a *potion of invisibility* and left her friends to die. PCs can detect her lies with a successful Wisdom (Insight) check or by magical means. Jacinth has no physical injuries or resultant scarring, but refuses any request for an examination unless the viscount or a PC forces her to allow one. Jacinth stands by her story; however, PCs can extract the truth by succeeding on a DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check or magically compelling her to speak the truth.

The viscount interjects if he feels that the PCs are too aggressive. He is particularly sensitive to the PCs' insinuations if someone else employs them. When the PCs cross the line, the viscount ends the interview. He denies any requests for a second interview unless the PCs succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation) check or Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the PCs fail either check by 5 or more, he threatens to have the Municipal Dragoons arrest them if they do not leave him and his niece alone.

Jacinth, however, wants badly to return to Dolentla Island to unlock the island's buried secret, and the PCs provide the ideal opportunity for her to accomplish this goal. Even if things go badly during their interview, Jacinth later seeks out the PCs anyway and volunteers to head another expedition back to Dolentla Island as a means of setting things right.

Part of her genuinely wants to atone, but her primary mission is to find and acquire the island's lucrative treasures. To get back into the PCs' good graces, she admits to quaffing the *potion of invisibility*. She is ashamed of what she did, but she also believes fighting the monsters would have been futile. It is not altogether necessary for Jacinth to accompany the party on their expedition, but her inclusion will provide good opportunities for roleplaying throughout the adventure.

JACINTH DEEPWARDER

Medium humanoid (high elf), neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +6
Skills Deception +7, Investigation +8, Perception +4, Performance +7, Stealth +9
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Elvish, Thieves' Cant
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of her turns, Jacinth can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/turn). Jacinth deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of hers that isn't incapacitated, and Jacinth doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. Jacinth halves the damage that she takes from an attack that hits it. She must be able to see the attacker.

Equipment

Antitoxin, a bronze ring (25 gp), soap, a pouch with 42 gp, four pearls (50 gp each), the Deepwarder signet ring (250 gp), perfume, and a crude nautical map of the Razor Coast and Sammerlock Sails region.

Notes: Throughout the adventure, Jacinth's opinions and insights on specific matters are addressed in the "Jacinth's Take" side boxes.

Tactics Not renowned for her bravery, Jacinth Deepwarder relies upon her shortbow and the courage of others to keep far away from danger. Jacinth snipes enemies from afar. In a pinch, Jacinth calls upon her speed to escape a sticky situation. Above all else, she is most concerned with keeping out of harm's way. Her battle motto is minimal risk and maximum reward.

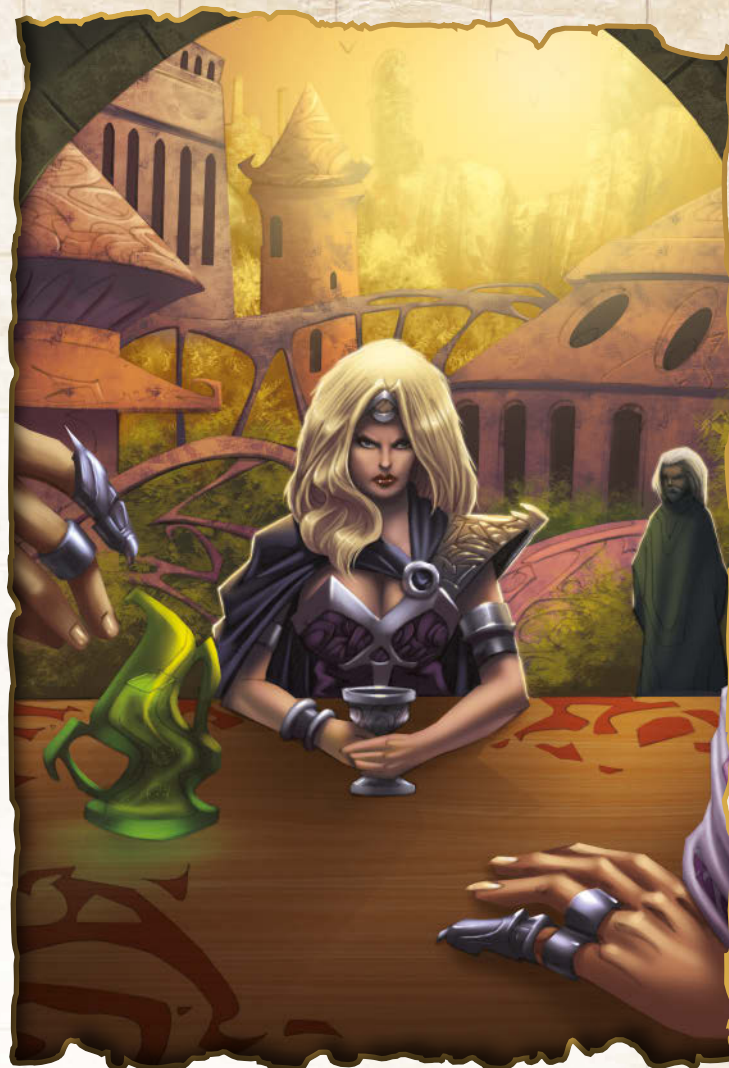
Even if the PCs do not meet with Jacinth Deepwarder, they should have enough information to deduce that the *Dulcimer* sank near Dolentla Island. For example, the PCs might interview more of the missing persons' family members who mention their loved one made an offhand comment about sailing to an island near Sammerlock Sails. Alternatively, a visit to Port Shaw's docks uncovers a few ship captains who remember Jacinth bragging about plotting a course to Dolentla Island.

SECURING A TALL SHIP AND A CAPTAIN TO SAIL HER

For those running a *Razor Coast* campaign, **Chapter 5** details the ships and captains that are available for hire in Port Shaw, if the PCs decide to forego Jacinth's services. In addition to those listed in that resource, the PCs can also explore the following options:

The Winking Dolphin

Barron Tanislaws, a cantankerous old miser, owned this sleek, fast moving caravel until his death 6 months ago. Barron left no will or other



written statement of his intentions, so two alleged relatives with dubious lineage claim joint ownership of the vessel. Because of their cloudy title, **Jeremiah Winship** (NE male human **rogue**) and **Hezekiah Winship** (NE male human **rogue**), the two brothers who lay claim to the caravel, jump at any chance to sell the caravel and take the first ship out of Port Shaw with their ill-gotten proceeds. Jeremiah and Hezekiah are more akin to carnival barkers than men of noble descent. PCs purchasing the boat run the risk of legitimate heirs coming forward and making a claim on the vessel. **Cost: 7,500 gp but negotiable.**

The Line of the Deep

This well-maintained, medium-sized fishing trawler belongs to a fisherman, **Len Argoth** (NG male human), who just lost his arm to a shark bite. He's heard other people recently bitten all fell ill and died. Len frantically paces the docks, worried about contracting an illness and the possible repercussions to his family if he were to perish. He constantly asks passersby to feel his head for a fever or to tell him if he's going to die. Len's fears are misplaced. He is not ill, but there is no convincing him otherwise. Having a cleric of Quell actually cast or just pretend to cast *lesser restoration* on him is the only thing that placates his fear. If the PCs accomplish this, Len sells the boat for 3,200 gp. If they do not, Len starts his bargaining at 8,000 gp and goes from there. **Cost: 4,000 gp.**

In addition to the vessels for sale, the PCs may hire an independent ship captain to sail them to Dolentla Island. **Sig Phillips** (CN male human sailor) is a skilled navigator and pilot, but he's also addicted to dragonsmoke, which he tries to hide to no avail. **Jayne Kellmoor** (NG female half-elf sailor) is another option. She is not as experienced as Sig, but she also does not come with his baggage.

JACINTH WANTS TO WHAA?

While Jacinth Deepwarder insists she is the obvious choice to captain a vessel to Dolentla Island, would you want her for your captain? With the *Dulcimer* so much sea wrack, Jacinth and the PCs must find another ship on which to sail. Arrogant and greedy to the last, Jacinth insists she captain any boat the PCs hire – even explaining this “obvious fact” to the PCs as if the actual captain of the ship was not standing right there!

Jacinth knows she is stuck with the adventurers, but the thought of sharing treasure with a less deserving ship’s captain leaves her decidedly put out. Jacinth eventually backs down on the issue, but not without a fuss. While at sea, Jacinth hawks the real captain’s every move, and shakes her head in disapproval whenever the captain does something differently than she would (which is practically all the time). The captain is likely to reach his boiling point soon enough, but Jacinth slinks away from any physical confrontation and goes to a safe location until the situation subsides. She then sulks for several hours and resumes her irritating behavior at the earliest opportunity.

PART TWO SAILING TO DOLENTLA ISLAND

A PRAYER FOR THE DEPARTING

With their provisions intact and a ship at the ready, the PCs set sail for Dolentla Island. GMs may read or paraphrase the following as the PCs leave port.

The mooring rope is untied, the sails unfurl, and the captain takes the helm with an eye towards distant shores. In the background, the jagged rocks and sinister reefs guarding the beaches and peeking through the water remind everyone that the Razor Coast is, above all else, aptly named. The ship lurches forward, and in a last wayward glance towards shore, there’s a brief glimpse of a Tulita native clutching a seashell necklace and mumbling a brief prayer under his breath. The scene repeats itself on nearly every pier, as spouses, children, friends, and family bid farewell and offer prayers for a safe return for the seafaring men and women of the Razor Coast. After witnessing these touching scenes, all

eyes slowly return to the seemingly endless canvas of blue that lies ahead. The peaceful azure landscape holds many surprises for those who sail across her. The serious and worried expression on everyone’s face reinforces this cruel fact.

Sailing along the Razor Coast and across the open seas is a dangerous proposition even for an experienced captain and crew. Life at sea is harsh, and the conditions should remind PCs that no sea voyage is an easy one. Storms, rough waves, and the ocean’s denizens present unique challenges. GM’s are encouraged to use the weather rules provided in the **Appendix of *Razor Coast***, and/or those provided in **Chapter Three of *Dead Man’s Chest* by Necromancer Games** and in addition to weather and navigational dangers, challenge the PCs with these four encounters. These encounters do not need to be run in order, but the adventure works best if GMs run **Encounter 4** near Dolentla Island rather than on the open waters.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE IRON BASTION

Slave ships are too common on the high seas, but the *Iron Bastion* is not the typical slave ship. A few hours ago, the *Iron Bastion* set sail with a fresh delivery of slaves, including - unbeknownst to them - a native sorcerer named Ko’oku’wa who disguised himself as a personal valet. Shortly after arriving on the vessel, Ko’oku’wa magically charmed the ship’s captain, Barnabas Hazeltree. Ko’oku’wa then cajoled the Captain to release the slaves from their shackles and have them perform menial tasks onboard the ship as a means of testing their worth and boosting morale.

Although the crew is grateful that they have been relieved of their mundane chores, Ko’oku’wa’s friendliness with the captain irks DeMasso Guillard, the ship’s first mate and his two direct subordinates. The mates suspect Barnabas is suffering from fever or an illness, which they believe accounts for his odd behavior. Barnabas’ attitude towards them is unchanged, but Barnabas also trusts the advice of a slave, which the racist mates find utterly deplorable. They do not want to risk a mutiny charge, so they walk a fine line by interpreting his orders in the most liberal manner possible. For instance, the crew obeyed Barnabas’ order to release the slaves from their shackles and allow them to move freely about the ship, however, the mates did not wholly obey a subsequent order to disarm. They interpreted the order to mean that the regular crew should disarm (not the officers as well), so they locked the crews’ light crossbows and ammunition in the ship’s hold. The slavers still wield clubs, however, which they monotonously beat against the palm of their free hand while waiting for any excuse to use them against the slaves.

When the PCs come within visual range of the *Iron Bastion*, its first mate, DeMasso Guillard, waves towards the PCs’ ship, hoping to gain their attention. If he succeeds, he invites them aboard his ship for parley that he says may be to their financial benefit. He is accompanied by Buckley Culmaster and Flint Brannid, the second and third mates respectively. The PCs present the perfect solution to his dilemma. DeMasso cannot directly challenge the captain’s orders, but the strangers can act as his proxy. Ko’oku’wa also faces a problem. If Ko’oku’wa cannot charm Barnabas again when the spell expires, the slavers are going to beat him and his fellow slaves into submission or even kill them for an attempted rebellion. If he gains the PCs’ sympathy, they would be useful allies against the slavers.

DeMasso greets the PCs when they board the *Iron Bastion*. He explains that the ship’s captain is unwell, and the crew would appreciate if the PCs would speak to him on their behalf. For their efforts, DeMasso offers the PCs a valuable family heirloom, a brass mariner’s astrolabe (500 gp value). The first mate has an ulterior motive for his proposition. If the PCs restore order on the ship,

he plans to report Barnabas to his superiors, which may result in DeMasso being promoted to captain.

On the other hand, Ko'oku'wa has an agenda as well. His *charm person* spell expires within the next 15 minutes, so he needs to convince the PCs to intervene on his behalf. Ko'oku'wa waits for DeMasso to make his move, and he then accompanies Barnabas to meet with the PCs.

Ko'oku'wa and Barnabas arrange to meet with the PCs in the captain's quarters. Ko'oku'wa never strays more than a few feet from the captain's side, and he sometimes whispers into Barnabas' ear as he converses with the PCs.

The PCs can sense that Barnabas is under the influence of an enchantment with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check. During the meeting, Ko'oku'wa serves dinner to Barnabas, cutting his food with a knife and then using the knife to place the morsels into the captain's mouth. The PCs may interpret this as the ultimate act of servitude, however, Ko'oku'wa is doing it as a contingency plan just in case the *charm person* spell wears off mid-sentence. Ko'oku'wa gauges where the PCs' sympathies rest. If he believes they are willing to aid him and his fellow slaves, he explains the situation and asks for their help. Otherwise, he abruptly ends the dinner and demands that the PCs leave immediately and return to their ship.

KO'OKU'WA

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 46 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +5, Cha +6

Skills Arcana +4, Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dragon Ancestor. Ko'oku'wa has a black dragon ancestor. Whenever he makes a Charisma check when interacting with dragons, his proficiency bonus is doubled if it applies to the check.

Elemental Affinity. Ko'oku'wa adds his Charisma modifier to damage when he casts a spell dealing acid damage.

Spellcasting. Ko'oku'wa is a 6th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following sorcerer spells available:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, dancing lights, friends, prestidigitation, ray of frost*

1st (3 slots): *charm person, ray of sickness, sleep*

2nd (3 slots): *detect thoughts, suggestion*

3rd (3 slots): *fear, water walk*

Tides of Chaos. Beginning at 1st level, Ko'oku'wa can manipulate chance and chaos to gain advantage on one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw. This can only be used once per long rest.

Actions

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

JACINTH'S TAKE

Besides being haughty and arrogant, Jacinth Deepwarder despises the Tulita people. She demands that the PCs restore order to the slavers' ship. Of course, she is unwilling to risk her own neck in the process, but if the PCs aid Ko'oku'wa, she expresses her opinion as to how foolhardy and illegal the act is at every opportunity for the remainder of the journey.

Equipment

Simple kappa clothing, sandals.

The PCs are forced to decide whether they wish to aid Ko'oku'wa to free the slaves, or assist DeMasso and suppress the rebellion. To complicate matters even further, the captain of the PCs' ship, if it is not Jacinth, may interject his or her opinion on the matter. There is little time to formulate a plan. Ko'oku'wa's charm spell expires 15 minutes after the PCs board the vessel, at which point the PCs cannot help but get involved for one side or the other.

The PCs may aid the slavers in putting down the rebellion, assist the slaves in gaining their freedom, or simply watch the drama unfold and not interfere. In any case, the slaves and the slavers engage each other in a chaotic combat that spills across the entire deck of the ship. Slaves and slavers engage in a bloody hand-to-hand struggle where men from both sides are thrown overboard and the combatants use every piece of equipment and dirty trick in the book to gain the advantage. The deck is quickly awash in blood and corpses.

If the characters side with the slaves, the PCs square off against **Captain Hazeltree** and his **3 mates** (use the **bandit captain** stat block), leaving the rest of the combatants to battle it out amongst themselves. If the PCs fight alongside Captain Hazeltree, they battle against **Ko'oku'wa** and **6 slaves**. In this case, the GM should include **25 slaves** in the battle, rather than 16. The extra 9 slaves fight against Captain Hazeltree and the 3 mates. Singled off against either set of opponents, the encounter becomes more challenging without bogging down into a protracted, complicated slugfest. In the end, the PCs' combat against either the Captain and his mates or Ko'oku'wa and the slaves determines the revolt's outcome.

If the PCs seek information about Dolentla Island or the Sammerlock Sails area in general, Ko'oku'wa and the Tulita slaves describe it as a "bad place". If positively disposed to the adventurers, Ko'oku'wa admits that in ancient times, the Tulitas who lived on Dolentla Island turned their backs on the old gods and made blood sacrifices to a dark entity.

Questioning the crew reveals they did see a whale in the island's general vicinity. They were at sea when the whale attacked Jacinth, so they know nothing of her ordeal. There are **20 slavers** (use the **thug** stat block) excluding Barnabas and the three mates. In contrast, there are 53 Tulita slaves including women, children and the elderly. Ko'oku'wa and 16 or 25 of his fellow slaves are the only individuals capable of fighting, and they are currently unarmed.

CAPTAIN BARNABAS HAZELTREE

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +6, Wis +3

Skills Athletics +5, Deception +5

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Sea Legs. The captain has advantage on saving throws against being knocked prone, as long as the effect doesn't also deal damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with his scimitar and one with his dagger. Alternatively, he makes two ranged attacks with his daggers.

+1 Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Equipment

Potion of healing, antitoxin, studded leather +1, +1 scimitar.

TULITA SLAVES

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 39 (6d8+12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +4, Constitution +4

Skills Athletics +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Pack Tactics. The slave has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the slave's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The slave makes two melee attacks, both with his unarmed strike.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage.

Equipment

Simple kappa clothing, sandals

PCs who aid the slavers and suppress the uprising may receive a reward upon their return to Port Shaw; however, if there is any notoriety about the event, the Tultitas henceforth treat the PCs as pariahs.

On the other hand, PCs who assist Ko'oku'wa and the Tultitas earn their gratitude. In this event, the *Iron Bastion's* owners do not echo their sentiments. When the PCs return to Port Shaw, the owners of the *Iron Bastion* may seek recompense for the loss of their cargo and the fate of their crew. PCs working for Viscount Senegar Deepwarder or one of the other noble families might earn enough clout among Port Shaw's elite to reach an amicable settlement on the matter. Otherwise, the PCs may have a future encounter with the *Iron Bastion's* angry owners and/or their hired thugs.

For GMs using this adventure to supplement the published *Razor Coast* campaign, failure to assist Ko'oku'wa and the Tultitas results in Milliauka and Mokoli Ali'i viewing the PCs in a hostile light and refusing to aid them in any way unless the PCs perform an act worthy of redemption, such as freeing Milliauka from prison or defeating Dajobas' minions. Alternately, PCs who assisted Ko'oku'wa earn Milliauka and Mokoli Ali'i's gratitude as well.

Treasure: If the PCs search the crew and the ship, they locate a scrimshaw whistle (100 gp), a pouch with 4 pearls (50 gp each), a gold ring with an image of a dolphin (50 gp), an amethyst brooch (25 gp), 8 gold bars (100 gp each) and 589 gp.

ENCOUNTER 2: STOWAWAY

A week ago, a shark bit John "Filthy Jack" Lyverly, a local tough and general ne'er-do-well, on the leg. The wound was superficial, so Filthy Jack thought nothing of it. However, over the last few days, the untreated wound festered into a gangrenous laceration.

Filthy Jack handled this problem just like he deals with any situation that he cannot beat to a bloody pulp; he inhaled dragonsmoke. But for once, dragonsmoke failed to numb his mind or ease the pain. In fact, it just made things worse.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, Filthy Jack snuck onboard their ship and hid in the cargo hold where he took yet more dragonsmoke, which ultimately rendered him unconscious. Fearful of discovery or someone else stealing his precious dragonsmoke, Jack took considerable time squeezing into a hard-to-find location, which grants him advantage on his Dexterity (Stealth) check. He remains in that state for at least several hours and possibly even a few days before he regains his senses. PCs successfully searching the ship find him involuntarily shaking and curled in the fetal position covered by a thick lather of cold sweat. He cannot be roused from his stupor, absent using an effect that could negate dragonsmoke's intoxicating properties, such as *lesser restoration* or other magic.

If the PCs revive Filthy Jack, he is extremely agitated. Not only did the PCs wake him from his deep slumber, but the excruciating pain from his infected injury returns with a vengeance. Filthy Jack doubles over and writhes in pain as he rants and raves. If the PCs restrain or attack him, Filthy Jack flies into a wild rage and attacks. Filthy Jack can attempt a Strength check to snap any restraints, or he can lash out at his attacker if unrestrained.

If the PCs do not find or otherwise disturb him, Filthy Jack regains consciousness at some point during the journey to Dolentla Island. This turn of events finds him in a dreadful state. The wound thoroughly reeks, and he teeters on the verge of insanity. He turns again to dragonsmoke, but the potent narcotic accelerates his descent into madness, inflicting him with a form of long-term madness.

Twelve hours after awakening, the already psychopathic criminal bursts from his hiding spot looking for a literal punching bag. He charges onto the deck and attacks the closest living creature with reckless abandon. All the while, he rants about the agony wracking his body.

FILTHY JACK LYVERLY

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brave. Filthy Jack has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Filthy Jack hits with it (included in the attack).

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Filthy Jack can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but against rolls against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. Filthy Jack makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) bludgeoning damage, or 13 (2d8+4) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit* 6 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Equipment

Potion of water breathing.

If faced with imminent defeat, Filthy Jack retreats into the ocean and tries to swim back to Port Shaw or a nearby habitable island.

ENCOUNTER 3: DRAKON FISH

Pushed away from Dolentla Island by its indigenous residents, this lone **drakon** scans the water's surface in search of prey. The drakon's vision is good, even at night, so when it spots a disturbance, it dives underwater and approaches the ship from beneath. The drakon is large enough to capsize a small rowboat or raft, but it lacks the strength and size to damage a larger vessel. When confronted with such a craft, the drakon comes up alongside the hull and uses

its wings to fly onto the deck, grab a target, and pull it below the surface. If it succeeds, it drags the creature underwater and dives into the water to simultaneously escape and drown its victim. If that fails, the drakon simply tries again.

The drakon is most concerned with self-preservation so if it is close to unconsciousness, the monster takes to the skies and flies away at maximum speed. It is possible to detect the drakon prior to its attack; however, doing so requires a successful DC 17 passive Perception check. Success reveals the presence of a large creature swimming rapidly towards the surface. Once visible, the drakon appears as a large, purple snakelike creature with leathery wings and a serpentine tail.

DRAKON

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 105 (14d10 + 28)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	10 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances acid

Condition Immunities paralyzed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dissolving Gaze. When a creature that can see the drakon's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the drakon, the drakon can force it to make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw if the drakon isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 3 (1d6 acid damage, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the acid damage it takes (which ends after a long rest), and it's paralyzed until the start of its next turn. Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes at the start of its turn to avoid the saving throw. If the creature does so, it can't see the drakon until the start of its next turn, when it chooses again whether to avert its eyes. If the creature looks at the drakon before then, it must immediately make the saving throw.

Actions

Multiattack. The drakon makes one bite attack and one tail attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage plus 10 (4d4) acid damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit* 8 (1d8+4) bludgeoning damage.

Acid Breath (Recharge 5–6). The drakon exhales acidic vapors in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area takes 28 (8d6) acid damage, or half damage with a successful DC 13 Constitution saving throw.

ENCOUNTER 4: CASTAWAYS (CR 6)

Ever the opportunists, a coven of sea hags is using the *Dulcimer* tragedy to their benefit. The 3 **sea hags** saw the aftermath of the attack from afar, so they crafted a makeshift raft from the wreckage

and are pretending to be castaways in need of rescue. The coven lies on the raft beneath a torn sail shielding them from the sun and concealing their identities until would-be rescuers come within range of their horrific appearance abilities.

The sea hags do not respond to any verbal cues from the PCs or their shipmates; however, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals something is moving underneath the torn shroud. Once the ship draws close to the sea hags, they leap out from beneath the sail. Anyone who witnesses this spectacle is subjected to the hags' horrific appearance. After the initial shock, the hags gaze at the ship's apparent leaders using their death glare attack and attempt to succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to grab any the ropes and makeshift ladders draping the ship to clamber aboard the vessel and kill the crew. The hags forego melee attacks and attempt to debilitate the strongest opponents with repeated uses of their death glare attack or spell drawn from those available to a coven. If one of the hags dies, the coven dissolves forcing the monsters rely upon melee attacks. If the PCs ignore the raft, the sea hags abandon it and swim after the PCs' vessel to attempt a night assault against the crew. In either case, if the battle goes poorly, the sea hags jump overboard and swim away to safety.

SEA HAGS

XP 1,100

hp 52

CR 4

PART THREE

DOLENTLA ISLAND

APPROACHING THE ISLAND

After navigating the treacherous journey to Dolentla Island, the PCs spy their first glimpse of their intended destination from a mile away. From this distance, only the waters around the island and its general features are visible. At this point, the GM may read or paraphrase the following.

In the distance, a small, lush tropical island, only about a mile across, comes into view. Even from afar, it is clear that the shoreline is well-guarded by natural obstacles. Razor sharp rocks and coral reefs protrude above the water line or lurk just beneath the water's surface. These dangers are most heavily concentrated around the eastern and southern beaches, making it impossible to navigate a ship close to shore from either direction. Although still treacherous, the western and northern approaches appear more feasible. Rock formations and small coral reefs are still in the way, but they are not as dense as the other approaches. An uneasy feeling hangs like a dense fog over the deck as the island looms ever closer.

The water surrounding the island is not very deep. At the PCs current location, the ocean reaches a maximum depth of 30 feet. The ocean is relatively still, and the island's beaches are gently tickled by small waves that roll across its sand before harmlessly washing back out to sea. There are no overt signs of danger, but the ocean bears the evidence

of past tragedies. The PCs notices a plank of wood, an item of clothing or another personal effect floating on the surface with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. These items are predominantly found in the waters west of the island, with a lesser concentration on the north and south sides of Dolentla Island. Strangely, there is no evidence of human remains anywhere in the vicinity.

ENCOUNTER 5: QUALMAGA'S WHALE

Beneath the serene waters, **Qualmaga's whale**, the same beast responsible for destroying the *Lashed Harpoon* and the *Dulcimer*, awaits its latest prey. Decades ago, Qualmaga, a Tulita druid, imbued the whale with sentience; however, its newfound intelligence could not resist the dreadful whispers and empty promises of an ungodly evil.

Qualmaga's whale abandoned its former purpose, and now serves Thalasskoptis. The whale lies in wait beneath the surface, endlessly circling the island searching for another ship to ram and destroy. Thalasskoptis needs survivors to fuel its escape plan; therefore, the whale waits until the ship is less than 500 feet from shore before it attacks. It makes every effort to ram ships north or west of the island, because the waters on those sides of the island are less treacherous. When the whale begins its attack, read or paraphrase the following.

The water ripples as if a mighty earthquake opened the ground beneath the ship. A huge whale hurtles towards the ship at breakneck speed, almost literally parting the sea in two as it churns through the open water. The creature seems intent on crashing headlong into the ship.

QUALMAGA'S WHALE

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d12 + 36)

Speed 0 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +4

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Echolocation. The whale can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Hold Breath. The whale can hold its breath for 30 minutes.

Keen Hearing. The whale has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (6d6 + 5) piercing damage.

The whale attempts to destroy small vessels by dealing damage to them. Otherwise, the awakened beast tries to capsize larger ships by ramming into the boat and tipping it over. Treat the whale's attack as if it were shoving a creature. Therefore, if the whale succeeds on a

DC 15 Strength check against a small vessel, such as a rowboat or keelboat, the ship lists onto its side and takes in water. The whale must succeed on a DC 20 Strength check to topple a larger ship.

If the whale succeeds at capsizing or destroying the ship, the PCs find themselves adrift at sea. The PCs must swim to safety or find another means of staying afloat and getting to shore. The waters are calm, so swimming towards the shore requires only a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. If the whale destroyed the ship, the PCs can grab debris from the ship and use it as a rudimentary floatation device, which grants the PC advantage on the preceding check. How difficult the trek to shore is depends upon the PCs' location when the ship went down. Of course, these issues are moot if the ship survives the whale's attack intact, in which case the PCs can attempt to land onshore by boat. However, the PCs face another problem as Dolentla Island's insane inhabitants greet the newfound arrivals.

MAKING LANDFALL

After the whale attacks, the PCs are closer to the island and can see additional details of the island. The GM may read or paraphrase the following.

Thick, green grass and tropical trees cover most of Dolentla Island's predominately flat landscape. The dense vegetation makes it difficult to see beyond the coastal boundaries, but crudely hacked trails blaze a path into the island's interior. The palpable

sense of dread deepens, as eerie sounds and strange sights emanate from every corner of the island. A groan, a flash of light reflecting off feral pupils, macabre wind chimes, ear piercing screams, and the stench of burning maht add to the pall of doom hanging in the air.

As mentioned earlier, the eastern and southern beaches are virtually inaccessible by ship. The reefs and jagged rock formations stretch more than 200 feet from shore forming narrow chutes and dangerous rip currents. Even a small rowboat is nearly incapable of navigating a path through these hazardous waters; however, if the

JACINTH'S TAKE

Jacinth is animated and apprehensive about arriving at Dolentla Island. She is closer to her desired goal, but the traumatic ordeal has scarred her. Jacinth reiterates that the whale attacked the *Dulcimer* off the island's western shore, and the monsters attacked them on the western beach while they were still in the water. Jacinth can identify debris or personal effects from the *Dulcimer* or its crew should the PCs locate them.



PCs insist on attempting to row ashore in such a conveyance, they must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity check every round to weave their way through the treacherous waters. Failure indicates that the boat strikes an obstacle and is either lodged on a natural barrier (50%) or sustains damage from the impact and begins sinking (50%), which may destroy the boat. It is possible to swim to shore, but doing so requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check every round. Even creatures with swim speeds treat the waters as difficult terrain because they are attempting to avoid hazards in the shallow water. See **Encounter 6** below for details on what the PCs encounter here.

The western and northern shores are far more hospitable, but also present their own obstacles. Even at 150 feet from shore, the water reaches a maximum depth of 5 feet along these coasts, requiring the PCs to take a smaller craft ashore from at least that far out or even allowing taller PCs to walk to shore. PCs who must still swim to the beach can do so with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check every round. See **Encounter 7** below for what awaits the PCs here.

ENCOUNTER 6: SOULS OF THE DROWNED

This encounter occurs when the PCs approach the island from the east of the south.

Thalasskoptis is unprepared for creatures coming ashore via these less hospitable approaches. However, the way is not unguarded. Cadavers, undead sailors who perished in the perilous waters, prowl the rocks and reefs seeking to kill those who enter their territory. Through the millennia, the shores of Dolentla Island have seen their share of tragic shipwrecks, murderous mutinies and pirate melees. The unfortunate souls who lost their lives in these events haunt the island's shores seeking to spread their miserable hate to the living.

The main cadaver force is led by Wily Roger, a vindictive captain marooned here ages ago by his mutinous crew. Set adrift in a small rowboat with four loyal crewmembers, the captain and his men died in the treacherous rocks and rip currents guarding the eastern shore. Wily Roger and his trusty band have haunted the waters around Dolentla Island ever since. They avoid Thalasskoptis's minions and flee from them on sight. For that reason, they usually troll the eastern and southern shores, where the hawani are less prevalent.

The cadavers cannot drown; therefore, they prefer ambushing creatures near rock formations, coral reefs and rip currents. If possible, they attempt to capsize a passing boat or pull its occupants over the side and into the water. Wily Roger, the **cadaver lord** wears a waterlogged gentleman's coat and rotting leather boots and has burning red eyes. Accompanying him are **4 cadavers**. These undead monsters emit a disgusting stench and appear as gaunt corpses with wrinkled, leathery skin coated by a thick layer of barnacles. Streams of water drip from their appendages and torso.

WILY ROGER, CADAVER LORD

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, telepathy with all undead within 120 feet

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Aura of Desecration. The cadaver lord and all undead within 20 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Cadaver Fever. A creature who was clawed or bitten by a cadaver lord must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw at the beginning of his next short or long rest. Failure indicates the character is infected with cadaver fever. An infected character gains one level of exhaustion immediately and must repeat the saving throw at the end of every long rest. Each failed saving throw adds one more level of exhaustion; a successful saving throw at the end of a long rest means only that the character's condition doesn't worsen. The character recovers fully when he or she makes successful saving throws at the ends of two consecutive long rests, or when *lesser restoration* or other magic is cast on the character.

Reanimation. When reduced to 0 hit points, a cadaver lord is not destroyed; rather it falls inert and begins regaining 1 hit point per round. Hit points lost to magical weapons or spells are not regained. When the creature reaches its full hit point total (minus damage dealt by magical attacks and weapons), it reassembles itself and stands up, ready to fight again. Scattering or even destroying the pieces of its body don't prevent it from magically reassembling and reanimating. If *gentle repose* is cast on the cadaver lord when it is at 0 hit points, it can't reanimate. A *bless* spell delays the reanimation, causing the creature to regain 1 hit point per minute instead of per round.

Actions

Multiaction. The cadaver lord makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage plus the target may be infected with cadaver fever. A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a cadaver under the cadaver lord's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The cadaver lord can have no more than six cadavers under its control at one time.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage plus the target may be infected with cadaver fever. A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a cadaver under the cadaver lord's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The cadaver lord can have no more than six cadavers under its control at one time.

Scare (1/Day) One creature of the cadaver lord's choice within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the cadaver lord is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success.



CADAVER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cadaver Fever. A creature who was clawed or bitten by a cadaver must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw at the beginning of his next short or long rest. Failure indicates the character is infected with cadaver fever. An infected character gains one level of exhaustion immediately and must repeat the saving throw at the end of every long rest. Each failed saving throw adds one more level of exhaustion; a successful saving throw at the end of a long rest means only that the character's

condition doesn't worsen. The character recovers fully when he or she makes successful saving throws at the ends of two consecutive long rests, or when lesser restoration or other magic is cast on the character.

Reanimation. When reduced to 0 hit points, a cadaver is not destroyed; rather it falls inert and begins regaining 1 hit point per round. Hit points lost to magical weapons or spells are not regained. When the creature reaches its full hit point total (minus damage dealt by magical attacks and weapons), it reassembles itself and stands up, ready to fight again. Scattering or even destroying the pieces of its body don't prevent it from magically reassembling and reanimating. If *gentle repose* is cast on the cadaver when it is at 0 hit points, it can't reanimate. A *bless* spell delays the reanimation, causing the creature to regain 1 hit point per minute instead of per round.

Actions

Multiattack. The cadaver makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage plus the target may be infected with cadaver fever.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) slashing damage plus the target may be infected with cadaver fever.

ENCOUNTER 7: UNWELCOMING PARTY

This occurs regardless of which beach the PCs land upon. A welcome sandy beach is now in sight, but whales and rough seas are not the island's most formidable defense. PCs struggling to reach land must contend with the madmen and women who survived the trek before them. Thalasskoptis's servants, the hawanis, take concealed positions in the foliage, waiting to leap from their hiding spots and attack their victims until they fall unconscious. before dragging them away to their master.

The *Lashed Harpoon's* unfortunate survivors now roam Dolentla Island as Thalasskoptis's obedient minions. Known as the hawanis, they are monstrous caricatures of their former selves. Although still physically human, their minds are filled with savage, lustful thoughts. When the PCs encounter these wild creatures, the hawanis are charged with one task — to bring Thalasskoptis fresh minds to control.

When Qualmaga's whale attacks the PCs' ship, a group of **3 hawanis** conceals themselves on the western shore, and another group hides on the northern shore as they await the arrival of more survivors. The hawanis take up positions amid the shrubs and brambles that line the narrow beach. This allows them to leap from their hiding spots and enter the water in a single round. The hawanis have sufficient time to gain advantage on their Stealth checks as long as the hawanis remain motionless.

Thalasskoptis directs the hawanis to move to the eastern and southern shores if Qualmaga's whale capsized or destroyed the ship on those sides of the island. In that event, the hawanis race to that location and hide. Only the closest group of hawanis can make it to that side of the island under normal circumstances. PCs spending an inordinate amount of time in the water or on the beach may encounter two groups of hawanis.

HAWANI
XP 700

CR 3

hp 52; see **New Monster** appendix for complete stats.

When the hawanis spot the PCs, they rush forward and dive into the water. The hawanis begin melee by relying exclusively on their bite attack, which may cause the creature bitten to fall asleep. The hawanis do not abandon this strategy even in the face of imminent death.

After death, the PCs can examine the bodies in greater detail. A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Insight) check confirms their human origins, while a check succeeding by 5 or more determines they are at least middle-aged with a few older group members. (The hawanis wear no clothing, so it is obvious the group is exclusively male.)

The group of hawanis not involved in the attack remains in hiding for another 10 minutes. Afterward, they resume searching the island for prey, return to the *Lashed Harpoon's* wreckage, travel to the maht field, or pursue the PCs.

EXPLORING THE MYSTERIES OF DOLENTLA ISLAND

After braving the hazards at sea and offshore, the PCs realize the *Dulcimer's* survivors are now in the hands of the hawanis. The PCs must track down more of the mysterious creatures to have any chance of rescuing the *Dulcimer's* survivors.

This proves easy, because the only prudent way to traverse the jungle's unbelievably thick foliage is along the trails left by the hawanis. These crudely hacked paths allow the PCs to travel through the foliage without impediment. PCs straying from these thoroughfares encounter heavy undergrowth that constitutes difficult terrain.

Because of the lush tree canopy, most of the jungle is considered

dimly lit even during daylight hours. Although Thalasskoptis and the hawanis dominate the island, numerous indigenous small animals and birds live in the untracked jungle. Presented below are two encounters the GM may use during the PCs trek through the jungle covering Dolentla Island. Moreover, the hawanis move exclusively along these trails, which function like deer trails or rudimentary roads. The PCs are much more likely to encounter hawani bands on and around these travel arteries than in the uncharted jungle.

In the aftermath of the hawani attack, PCs can easily follow the hawanis' trail back into the dimly lit jungle. The GM is free to decide if the hawanis the PCs are tracking came from any of the key locations along the trail. The hawanis may visit any of these areas in pursuit of a meal.

On the trail, GMs should read or paraphrase the following:

A meandering trail is the only unobstructed path through a maze of trees, undergrowth, and tangled vines. The jungle beyond is dimly lit with the exception of an occasional beam of light piercing the canopy and illuminating the jungle floor. In the distance, the occasional sounds of snapping branches and bloodcurdling screams echo through the untamed vegetation.

Because it was a secret magical laboratory, the elves built traps around the island to ensnare Tulita spies and other unwelcome visitors. As the PCs move through the jungle they have a chance to encounter one of the elves' hidden surprises if they leave the trails or stray beyond the confines of an encounter area. Presented below are several examples of traps the PCs may encounter in the jungle. There is a cumulative 20% chance of encountering such a trap for every 10 minutes the PCs spend in the jungle (select from below or roll d4).

In addition to elf-made dangers, natural hazards also abound off the beaten track. The most unpleasant of these is the toxic pollen of the colorful but sinister magenta wailer vine. Often found wrapped around the trunks of trees or clinging to high branches, the vine's vibrant flowers are home to its mind-altering pollen. PCs can identify the flower's distinctive coloring by succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check, which also reveals its hidden danger. The airborne pollen floats on even the gentlest of breezes, exposing anyone within 50 ft. of the plant to its effects. A magenta wailer is encountered with a cumulative 10% chance for every 10 minutes spent off the beaten path in the jungle.

Magenta Wailer Pollen (Inhaled)

Any humanoid who inhales this airborne plant matter must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature can't use reactions and suffers disadvantage on saving throws made against illusions while poisoned in this way.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER 1: THE HAWANI WARPATH

Thalasskoptis commanded the hawanis on the beach to bring him fresh minds to control; however, hawanis encountered in the island's interior dispense with such restraint. These vicious predators are on the hunt for food or on the PCs' trail. The hawanis have little to fear on the island, so they move across the roads with no regard for stealth until they detect the first sign of their quarry. The hawanis then attempt to ambush their target. Like the hawani parties found on the beach, this group is entirely male.

NEW TRAPS

Spiked Pit Trap

Mechanical trap

Concealed beneath a layer of fallen debris, branches, and leaves, it takes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to locate the seemingly deliberate placement of vegetation atop the concealed 20-ft. deep pit. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check confirms the character's suspicions about the covering to the pit. When discovered, the trap can be avoided by simply walking around it or permanently disabled with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools. A creature falling into the pit takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes lining the pit's bottom as well as 7 (2d6) falling damage.

Camouflaged Pit Trap

Mechanical trap

Like its preceding counterpart, vegetation and loose materials heaped upon the entrance conceal the trap's presence. The chances of locating and disarming this trap are the same as the spiked pit trap. A character who falls into the 30-ft. deep pit takes 10 (3d6) falling damage from the unexpected plunge.

Cordon of arrows Trap

Magical trap

Whenever a creature comes within 30 feet of the four pieces of concealed ammunition or ends its turn there, a crossbow bolt springs from the ground to strike it. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 piercing damage. The ammunition is then destroyed. The trap ends when no ammunition remains. It takes a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check to detect and disable this trap.

Giant Javelin Trap

Mechanical trap

Despite the humidity and passage of time, this spring-loaded trap concealed within the underbrush launches a large javelin whenever a creature steps onto a hidden pressure plate beneath the dirt. Because of its extreme age and multiple moving parts, it takes a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice one or more of its components, and a successful DC 10 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools to permanently deactivate the trap. A creature who triggers the trap must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (1d10) piercing damage from the javelin.

HAWANI

XP 700

CR 3

hp 52; see **New Monster** appendix for complete stats.

Tactics The hawanis immediately fly into a blind rage and savagely attack with their claws and bite attack. These hawanis do not take captives; they go for the kill.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER 2: IT'S ALIVE!

The hawanis do not know fear, but they have just enough sense to avoid the island's largest predators, the indigenous shambling mounds. These walking carnivorous plants thrived during the elves' heyday on Dolentla Island, but Pele's destruction of the elves nearly resulted in their extinction as well. The survivors have rebounded nicely, and have even developed a taste for hawani flesh.

The shambling mounds hunt alone and blend in with the surrounding jungle. They prefer ambushing prey from a concealed position. Therefore, a shambling mound with enough time to cover its tracks has advantage on its Stealth check. If the PCs fail to notice the carnivorous plant, the shambling mound surprises the victim and lashes out with its slam attacks. Shambling mounds are also attracted to the sound of battle, so any combat with the hawanis may attract the attention of a nearby shambling mound (at the GM's discretion).

SHAMBLING MOUND

XP 1,800

hp 136

CR 5

LOCATIONS CONNECTED BY HAWANI TRAILS

The makeshift roads and paths cutting through the jungle connect the following the following points of interest on Dolentla Island.

DI. WESTERN COVE

Qualmaga's whale attacked the *Lashed Harpoon* and the *Dulcimer* in the island's western waters. As a result, the survivors and any associated wreckage came ashore at this location. PCs searching the area for clues must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to spot any item of significance. Success uncovers personal items belonging to the *Dulcimer's* crew, such as a torn shred of women's clothing, part of a woman's shoe, a shred of fine linen from a man's pants and several buttons. If one of the PCs succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check, that PC locates a silver brooch with an amber inset. If the PCs continue to actively search the area, another DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check unearths a rusted harpoon tip buried beneath a few inches of sand. This artifact came from the *Lashed Harpoon*, and it can be recognized with a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or a DC 20 Intelligence (History) check.

Qualmaga's whale broke the *Dulcimer* into pieces, but much of the *Lashed Harpoon's* forward section survived intact and ran aground on the beach. In a herculean effort, the *Lashed Harpoon's* survivors hacked a trail through the forest and dragged the whaler's remains more than a quarter mile through the undergrowth and labyrinth

JACINTH'S TAKE

Jacinth can identify the silver brooch as belonging to Elizabeth Stansport, one of the *Dulcimer's* passengers.

of trees to a muddy clearing, where it remains to this day. They undertook this monumental task not only to procure shelter, but also to preserve its precious cargo. Although the passage of more than two decades has erased any discernible trail, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a subtle difference in the flora along the *Lashed Harpoon's* route into the wilderness. PCs actively searching this patch of ground locate a faint trail with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. The trail leads directly to the *Lashed Harpoon's* wreckage (see **Area D2** for details.) The remains of the trail are considered normal jungle and have the same chances of encounters as wandering elsewhere off the path (see "Exploring the Mysteries of Dolentla Island" above).

All of the *Dulcimer's* passengers did not survive their ordeal with the hawanis. Maximilian Sidrow resisted their attempts to render him unconscious, which forced the hawanis to resort to greater violence. The hawanis left Maximilian for dead, as they were instructed to bring live captives to Thalasskoptis. However, Maximilian was alive, yet unconscious and badly injured. When he regained consciousness, Maximilian dragged himself into the jungle to apparent safety. However, the exhausted and weakened Maximilian fell into one of the elves' many camouflaged pits leftover from their days as Dolentla Island's rulers. Maximilian died at the bottom of the insidious trap. PCs searching the area can locate the trail leading to Maximilian's final resting place with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. However, Maximilian's spirit does not rest in peace.

Maximilian's violent and untimely death left his angry soul searching for vengeance. Rather than the hawanis who attacked him, he directs his hatred toward the woman he holds responsible for his earthly demise, Jacinth Deepwarder. Maximilian's **ghost** attacks anyone he encounters, demanding in an unearthly howl that his foes "Bring me Jacinth! Bring me the coward! Jacinth! Jaaciiiiittthhhh!"

GHOST
XP 1,100
hp 45

CR 4

Tactics: Maximilian singles out Jacinth if she accompanied the PCs to shore; otherwise, he attacks the closest target. He calls Jacinth a coward, a traitor, and a commoner (the worst insult he can think of) throughout the combat. If Jacinth is not there, he demands to know her whereabouts so he can exact his revenge. In any given round of combat, there is a 20% chance that Maximilian pleads for the PCs to bring his body back home for proper burial even as he continues fighting them.

Before he died, Maximilian saw Jacinth quaff a potion and suddenly vanish into the night, leaving him to fend for himself. His burial in what is essentially an unmarked grave proved the last straw for the proud

JACINTH'S TAKE

Jacinth is truly frightened and horrified by Maximilian's fate. In a surprise move, the selfish aristocrat begs Maximilian for forgiveness and breaks down in tears. If she did not admit to drinking the *potion of invisibility* earlier, she finally acknowledges doing so. After this confrontation, Jacinth changes for the better. She realizes her actions had real consequences, and she is more determined than ever to save the other passengers. She becomes less haughty and much more cooperative with the PCs, contributing when and how she can..

aristocrat. Maximilian longs to confront his former friend, Jacinth Deepwarder, and receive proper burial in his family's mausoleum.

Accomplishing these goals gives Maximilian's restless spirit peace, otherwise his ghost restores itself 2d4 days after its destruction and resumes haunting. Maximilian's ghost disappears forever if he confronts Jacinth and his body is returned to Port Shaw for interment in his family's burial vault.

Treasure: Maximilian's body still bears the following items: +1 *leather armor*, a family heirloom opal ring (100 gp), and a pouch with a vial of antitoxin, an ivory comb (20 gp), five agates (10 gp each), and 68 gp. Taking his family heirloom without permanently destroying his ghost also earns Maximilian's enmity. The ghost, tied to the missing items, searches for them and seeks vengeance against the thief. Once stolen, returning the item to him or his family becomes an additional condition to his ghost's permanent destruction.

D2. WRECK OF THE LASHED HARPOON

Two decades ago, Qualmaga's whale struck the *Lashed Harpoon* and broke the ship in two. The aft section tore apart and sank to the bottom of the sea, while the forward section ran aground on Dolentla Island's western beach.

Before madness fully gripped Captain Delano Ambrose, skipper of the *Lashed Harpoon*, he ordered the castaways to heave the ship's forward section into a muddy clearing atop a hill more than four hundred yards from shore. The new location prevented the ship

MAHT AKA "GRANPAPPY BLACKSKULL"

A thick black root, named for the island of its origin, maht may be dried then chewed like jerky or smoked. Burning maht smells like anise. Smoking or ingesting maht subjects the user to a form of short-term madness. While under the influence of maht, the creature has advantage on melee attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on scent. Although maht enhances the user's aggression and primal instincts, its dulls the user's reflexes. The creature can use either an action or a bonus action on its turn, but not both. The preceding effects last for 1d10 minutes.

When the effects subside, the creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, otherwise the creature is poisoned until it smokes or ingests maht again. This time, the effects last for 1d10 minutes, but the creature suffers from long-term madness for 1d10 x 10 hours instead of suffering from short-term madness. When the madness ends, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw; otherwise the creature is once again poisoned until it smokes or ingests maht. As before, the effects last for 1d10 minutes, but the creature develops a type of indefinite madness and is poisoned whenever it is not under the influence of maht.

The addiction can be cured in the same manner as curing madness while the victim suffers from short-term or long-term madness or with a *remove curse* spell. Only a *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic can relieve a creature afflicted with indefinite madness.

from washing back into the sea but, more importantly for Captain Amborose, the site offered an unobstructed view of the surrounding area. The strategic position allowed him to better defend his ill-gotten booty from would-be thieves.

Prior to setting sail, the whaler and smuggler secretly loaded a hidden compartment in his cargo hold with a jar of ambergris (2,500 gp), 10 jars of aboleth oil (50 gp each) and 5 jars of kraken ink (250 gp each) he had stolen from an ancient Tulita holy site dedicated to Whale. What Captain Amborose did not know was that the first jar contained sacred ambergris from Whale itself. When the great Tulita druid, Qualmaga, learned of the theft, it was the final straw. He charged his whale with a primary task — to return the ambergris to its sacred temple and punish the transgressor who stole it. Qualmaga's whale partly accomplished its task, having sentenced the offender to a fate far worse than any Qualmaga could have imagined.

Greed clings tenaciously to the soul even in the face of madness and evil. Absent a direct command from Thalasskoptis, the elderly captain never strays far from his treasure. **Captain Amborose** is always encountered here, lurking within the wreck, but he may be accompanied by the group of **3 hawani**s previously stationed at **Area D1** if they have not already been encountered.

Captain Amborose is the only hawani who still wears clothing. His waterlogged captain's waistcoat hangs from his bony shoulders, and his tattered trousers tenuously wrap around his gaunt hips as he attacks any who threaten his treasures.

HAWANI
XP 700

hp 52; see **New Monster** appendix for complete stats.

CR 3

The hidden smuggler's hold has long since been exposed by the elements and jungle so that a search of the wreckage finds it with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. Within the jar of ambergris and the jars of oil and ink are the only items of any value aboard the dilapidated husk of warped wooden planks and rusted nautical gear.

Once freed from Thalasskoptis's corrupting influence, Qualmaga's whale resumes its quest to recover the stolen ambergris and punish the offender who took it — or any who in turn steal it from Captain Amborose. The rare shamanic markings on the ambergris jars identify its significance as an ancient holy Tulita relic. Tulita PCs recognize the symbols as such by succeeding on a DC 10 Intelligence (Religion). All others must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) or Intelligence (Religion) check to understand the ambergris' significance. The ambergris radiates a powerful magical aura, and spells such as *legend lore* provide insight to the ambergris' origin and its religious significance.

CREATOR'S NOTE: ADULT THEMES AHEAD

Thalasskoptis despises its bonds and longs to escape. Thalasskoptis needs life energy to sever the magical tethers confining it to Dolenta Island, and no entity gives the abomination more life energy than sacrificed newborns. For this reason, the hawani are creatures that exhibit sexuality, and they are molding the *Dulcimer's* castaways in their image. Because of this, the sections detailing the ancient Tulita shrine and Thalasskoptis's Prison contain some adult themes. GMs with a younger audience may want to omit or tone down the descriptive text.

For those running a *Razor Coast* campaign, returning the ambergris to Qualmaga or to the sacred shrine on the Bonedown of the Ancients earns the gratitude of the Tultitas, especially Moloki Ali'i and Milliauka, as well as Qualmaga's whale. The noble beast might assist the party as they travel in the Pearl Eye Atoll or even join the adventurers in their final battle with the Krakenfiend later.

D3. Maht Field

Previously believed to be confined exclusively to the island that bears its name, a small patch of the narcotic black root known as maht or Granpappy Blackskull grows in an isolated clearing not far from the *Lashed Harpoon's* wreckage. Thalasskoptis's Tulita worshippers brought the addictive plant with them and cultivated it in this massive field. Since the Tultitas' departure, the indigenous flora has reclaimed much of the field and reduced the maht crop to a mere fraction of its former yield. Over the decades, the hawani have acquired a taste for smoking the narcotic root even though they are beyond the point of contracting madness. This begs the question as to whether or not maht plays a role in the transformation from human to hawani. The usage of maht by the hawani also serves to illustrate its powerfully addictive physical properties. There is no set encounter at this location, but the PCs may encounter hawani who traveled here for a quick smoke.

D4. ANCIENT TULITA SHRINE

In the days before the elves arrived on Dolentla Island, the native Tultitas worshipped Thalasskoptis as a god and dedicated a shrine in the demon's honor.

The shrine is the focal point of hawani "life," as it sits above the chamber where Thalasskoptis is imprisoned and serves as the focal point for the transformation ceremony from human to hawani. The unholy site's physical features have eroded with age, but the immortal being's potency remains intact. The shrine is at the center of a clearing atop the highest point of Dolentla Island. It consists of a badly damaged stone statue of a tentacled creature standing in front of a sickening, crimson-stained coral altar. An unearthly gasping moan that sounds like a fish struggling for breath emanates from beneath the altar, however, the eerie sound pales in comparison to the ongoing spectacle. At this point, the GM may read or paraphrase the following.

The pungent aroma of burning maht and the sickening sound of bone crunching against bone to the rhythm of a pulsating drumbeat fuel a frenetic atmosphere as two men and four women mindlessly cavort around a blood-stained coral altar. This unholy shrine sits in the shadow of a weathered statue depicting a squid-like creature.

Three naked females of the feral species you have seen are gathered in a semi-circle before a roaring campfire, smashing humanoid femur bones against each other and pounding crude drums fashioned from hollow coconut shells and flayed skin as they howl in salacious delight at the lewd spectacle before them. These three creatures appear to be well beyond their childbearing years, yet all of them are in various stages of pregnancy.

Around them, the filthy human men and women feverishly dance to the frantic rhythm, even though they appear utterly exhausted. They wear what once were fine clothes, now reduced to rags, and engage in a suggestive performance that would make Port Shaw's most adventurous prostitutes blush.

The men and women are the survivors from the *Dulcimer*, part way through the transformation process into hawanis but still human. Since their marooning two weeks ago, they have been charmed multiple times, inhaled maht smoke, and developed deep psychosis. Even after the music stops, the *Dulcimer's* men and women continue to frolic around the altar, completely oblivious to the presence of newcomers.

The **3 hawanis** themselves are intoxicated by reveling in the sensual spectacle of the ongoing ceremony, and suffer disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to detect another creature's presence.

If the PCs intrude or interject in their activities, the crewmembers literally jump into the PCs' arms and do everything in their power to seduce the PCs, regardless of gender. If the PCs rebuff the castaways' advances (easy enough in their current odorous and filth-stained state), the encounter may escalate to physical violence. It is impossible to reason with or rationalize with Jacinth's former companions at this point. If the PCs must fight a traveler from the *Dulcimer*, use Jacinth Deepwarder's stats without her gear.

When the PCs interfere with the ceremony or after they attack the first hawani drummer, the rest howl for the adventurers' blood and launch themselves into the fray.

HAWANI
XP 700

CR 3

hp 52; see **New Monster** appendix for complete stats.

Thalasskoptis's stone statue can be recognized as Thalasskoptis with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check. It has no magical properties or other significance, but the coral altar is a different matter. PCs who succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check or Wisdom (Medicine) check can identify the altar's crimson stains as blood. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check uncovers an even more chilling discovery about the altar. The altar rotates 90-degrees in a clockwise direction, which reveals a hole filled with tiny, humanoid bones, infants sacrificed to weaken Thalasskoptis's temporal bonds. This fact should be driven home by the fact all three hawani women are pregnant, yet there are no children on the island.

The surviving members of the *Dulcimer's* crew are present and are Genevieve Tolcris, Joshua Bonedeuce, (a distant cousin of Gregory Bonedeuce), Lenora Duhamel, Tordell Rivery, Susanna Bellstead, and Elizabeth Stansport. They all suffer from severe mental illness. Thalasskoptis has repeatedly charmed them, and they have witnessed what they believed were the deaths of two friends and the hawanis' barbarity. The malevolent fiend telepathically communicates with them in their sleep, reinforcing the horrors they have seen or heard. They are now creatures of pure instinct lacking any inhibitions whatsoever. Restoring their humanity requires more than a *lesser restoration* spell.

At this point, they all suffer from severe psychological scars that can only be repaired by curing their mental disease, and then removing them from the island.

Their only saving grace is they did not inhale enough maht to develop an addiction for it.

When Thalasskoptis came to the Razor long ago, it did so by clinging onto Demogorgon, dropping away only when it was convenient for him to do so. This long-ago proximity to Demogorgon



has left Thalasskoptis with one unique attribute: its telepathy ability extends to a range of 1 mile. Being within Thalasskoptis's telepathy range brings the PCs into contact with its powerful mind, and once they have defeated the hawanis in this area, they come to its attention.

Thalasskoptis cannot charm the PCs, but that does not stop him from filling their minds with erotic thoughts, frightening images, and empty promises. Thalasskoptis's arrogance and haughtiness always filter through in its communications with the PCs, but it is not a fool, either. It offers the PCs the opportunity to leave the island unharmed, with one condition — to leave one man and one woman from the *Dulcimer* behind and never return.

However, the demon has perhaps made a fatal error in its taunting of the party, because by its very communications likewise gives the party the sense that whatever it is that has contacted them lies somewhere under their very feet.

Should the party agree and depart, the moment they are at sea, Thalasskoptis reneges and commands the whale to attack their ship. This time, Thalasskoptis wants to destroy the ship and kill everyone onboard.

If the PCs choose to stay and try to find what sort of foul creature has control of the island, they can locate the path to Thalasskoptis's Prison from here with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. Alternatively, a PC can spot a rudimentary side trail leading down the south side of the elevated promontory by succeeding on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. Following this trail leads to **Area D5** below.

D5. THALASSKOPTIS'S PRISON

This area is detailed in Part Three below.

THALASSKOPTIS'S ESCAPE PLAN

The imprisoned demon feasts on death, especially those of newborn souls. Each death weakens the bonds confining him here to a varying degree. For this very reason, the demented fiend transformed the *Lashed Harpoon's* crew and passengers into creatures with enhanced libidos who could rapidly reproduce offspring even well beyond their normal childbearing years. With the inclusion of the *Dulcimer's* passengers, Thalasskoptis believes his time for escape is close at hand. The demon surmises it only needs a handful of souls to liberate it from its magical cage.

PART FOUR

THALASSKOPTIS'S PRISON

Thalasskoptis's complex is a unique combination of Tulita and elven architecture. The Tulitas constructed the shrine atop the hill and Thalasskoptis's inner sanctum. When the elves came, they painted over the gruesome images of death and sacrifice that adorned the walls. The elves added the living quarters and bedchamber. More importantly, Urthlan built the air-sculpted basalt totems and gossamer mithral bindings that trap Thalasskoptis in this location. The elves then concealed the laboratory's entrance with powerful illusion spells, but since their demise, the entrance is plainly visible and frequently used by the hawanis and the *Dulcimer's* crew, which allows the evil demon to see and charm his guests.

The entrance is built directly into the south side of the hill that supports the shrine at **D4**. The earthen passageways and chambers are reinforced by stone blocks quarried from the shoreline centuries ago. The ceilings are 10 feet high unless otherwise specified. The wooden doors open at the slightest exertion. The elves also cast *continual flame* spells on numerous, small quartz stones they embedded into the ceilings. The light emitted by the stones bathes the complex in varying degrees of bright light and dim light.

Special Considerations

The conniving demon continues his telepathic chatter with the PCs, taunting them by telling them that they face an eternity as his thralls. When he senses the PCs drawing near, he alerts the hawanis in **H9** to the intruders' imminent arrival.

H1. COMPLEX ENTRANCE

A finely polished stone corridor bores into the side of the hill and descends twenty feet before ending in a pair of closed, wooden doors.

Once protected by illusory magic, the passage granting access to the elves' secret laboratory now stands unguarded. Over the centuries, the paint has degraded, partially revealing the graphic images of sacrifice and blood that decorated the corridor during the Tulitas' era. The faint images depict a tentacled being bathing in a pool of blood. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check allows the PCs to discern these images.

H2. COMMON ROOM

Two long, warped wooden tables surrounded by eight stools dominate the far end of the room. The ruins of two stone statues are strewn about the floor. An archway on the east wall opens into an adjoining corridor, and two barrels of stagnant, brackish water are near the entrance.

The statues are made from limestone, and each depicted Urthlan the Fiendbinder. PCs can identify the statues' subject by succeeding on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (History) check. The water is foul tasting and malodorous. A character who drinks the water is poisoned for 1d4 minutes unless the creature succeeds on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw.

H3. KITCHEN

Thick grime covers nearly every inch of this kitchen. There is an iron grill filled with ashes, a serviceable hearth, and a preparation area with rusty iron knives and other utensils.

The hawanis have no need for food preparation, therefore, the kitchen has remained unused for centuries. The preparation materials here are useless and irreparable, but the grill and hearth are functional once they are properly cleaned.

H4. GENERAL LIVING QUARTERS

Six beds line the walls. Each is covered with a moldy fur that emits a foul odor. Open wooden chests sit in front of each bed.

The elves assisting Urthlan in his magical research shared this common bedchamber. The chests contain an assortment of elf clothing ravaged by dry rot and other sundry items. The hawanis stripped the area of any valuables two decades ago and offered them to Thalasskoptis as tribute. There are currently **2 hawanis** lurking about in here that immediately attack when the PCs enter.

HAWANI

XP 700

CR 3

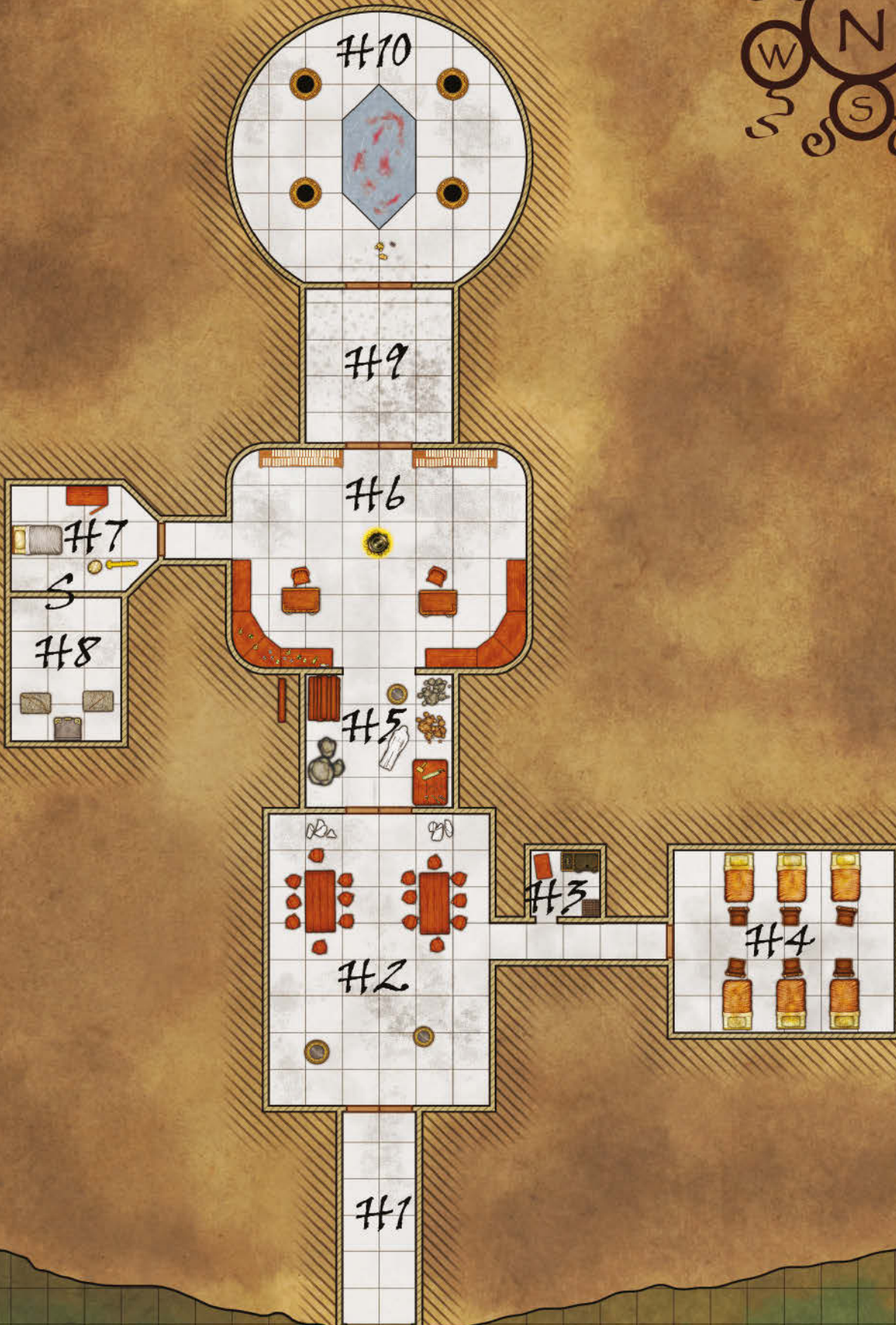
hp 52; see **New Monster** appendix for complete stats.

H5. WORKSHOP

An assortment of metallurgic, stonecutting, and woodworking tools and equipment fill an impressive workshop. Raw materials needed for each craft rest on the floor near the appropriate work area. There are three large blocks of stone and a partially completed stone statue, a pile of surprisingly viable timber, and two mounds of metallic ore. An archway built into the far wall leads into an impressive adjoining laboratory.

Map of Hawanaponi's Prison

1 square - 5 feet



Elven artisans plied their craft in this workshop. Currently a **giant rhinoceros beetle** has taken up residence in here and is munching on the bloody remains of a small peccary it killed in the jungle outside. It is 10 feet long with a grayish-brown carapace and a horn protruding from between its mandibles. It is something of a mascot to the hawanis who occasionally bring it fresh meat, and as a result it leaves them alone. It attacks the PCs on sight, however.

BEETLE, GIANT RHINOCEROS

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Symbiotic Vermin. Any living creature other than another giant beetle that ends its turn adjacent to a giant rhinoceros beetle must make a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) piercing damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target that was not adjacent to the beetle at the start of the beetle's turn. *Hit:* 18 (3d8+5) piercing damage.

The three stone blocks include sandstone, basalt and a block of quartz. The unfinished stone statue was intended as a sandstone bust, however, it was only in the early stages of completion. The elves used basalt infused with ruby dust to create the stone totems that comprise Thalasskoptis's prison.

Treasure: A set of jewelers' tools can be gathered from the corner of the room near the incomplete statue. The large pieces of timber include pine, alder, teak and mahogany (100 gp each but each weighs 200 lbs.). Similarly, carpenters' tools are found on the workbench in the near corner.

The metallurgy portion of the workshop includes a furnace, anvil, and raw metal ores. Most of the ore consists of iron and tin, but there are seven large deposits of mithral (100 gp each) scattered in the pile. A PC can spot the shiny metal by succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. PCs can identify the mithral deposits by succeeding on a DC 10 Intelligence check. The elves fashioned the mithral into gossamer mithral, which is the second physical component of Thalasskoptis's prison.

H6. MAGICAL LABORATORY

Despite the apparent passage of centuries since its usage, a faint whiff of dried resin and other pungent, organic materials hangs in the air of this laboratory, particularly in the vicinity of an iron cauldron that rests atop an elevated fire pit surrounded by the

URTHLAN THE FIENDBINDER'S GUIDE TO THE DIABOLIC

Wondrous item, rare

This leather-bound book features the image of a screaming demon on its front cover. Its pages are scribed in Elvish. If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, you gain advantage on saving throws made against magical effects created by fiends and on Intelligence (Arcana) checks pertaining to fiends. The book then loses its magic, but regains it in a decade.

vague, circular outline of charred incense etched into the floor. There are two large bookcases on the far wall that are stuffed with dusty tomes and dog-eared ledgers. Hundreds of clay, ceramic, and glass jars and vials rest on two rows of shelving that line the near walls. There are also two intricately carved wooden desks and chairs.

Urthlan's laboratory was at the cutting edge of magical research in its day, and in this spacious room, the masterful wizard concocted potions, scribed scrolls, and created wondrous magic items, armor, and weapons. The cauldron is empty except for a pungent, sticky residue coating its rim. A DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the substance as *sovereign glue* that was used to bind Thalasskoptis's mithral chains to the stone totems imprisoning it. The desks have an unlocked drawer each, however, both desks are empty. The jars and vials on the shelves once contained an assortment of potions and magical components, but the overwhelming majority evaporated long ago.

Treasure: Three potions have survived — *diminution*, *greater healing*, and *invulnerability*. There are 214 tomes and ledgers in the bookcase, and they are all written in Elvish. Each is valued at 2d6 gp with a few noteworthy exceptions: *A Study in Planar Travel* and *Inquiries of Planar Origins* are two rare and unique works worth 250 gp each. The magic tome, *Urthlan the Fiendbinder's Guide to the Diabolic* (see side box), stands at the forefront.

H7. URTHLAN'S QUARTERS

Urthlan spent his free time here and kept his most valuable belongings in a secret vault adjoining this chamber. When the party enters, read or paraphrase the following:

This elegant bedroom exudes quiet magnificence in its decor. An expertly crafted four poster canopy bed covered by an exotic fur rests against the far wall. A nearby armoire is partially open and contains a variety of fine clothes and a wooden stool shaped in the form of a mushroom sits in front of a golden harp.

The golden harp is not only a wondrous musical instrument; it is also the mechanism for opening the room's secret door. PCs must make a Perception check to locate the secret door, however, the mechanism for opening the door is not immediately apparent. The door is reinforced with an *arcane lock* spell. Alternatively, PCs who intently examine the harp notice an inscription on its neck with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check or a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. The language is Common, and the inscription says, "a foolish elf found a clever elf when he looked up high." The inscription is a cryptic riddle Urthlan engraved onto the harp in case he forgot the sequence of notes that open the secret door. To open the secret door, the harpist must play the notes A, F, E, F, A, C, and then high E in sequence. At the GM's discretion, solving the puzzle earns the PCs 1,100 XP.

Locating the secret door requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check, while deducing the harp's role in opening the portal demands a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the PCs cannot figure out how to open the door and instead try to bash it in with brute force, they must either succeed on a DC 25 Strength check or bust through it by dealing damage to it (AC 17, HP 25, damage threshold 15)

Treasure: The bed is carved from alder and covered by a winter wolf pelt (175 gp). The armoire's two drawers are partially open. The armoire contains 16 men's outfits including nobleman's clothing, wizard robes, and less formal attire—all fitted for an elf. The five most impressive outfits are worth a combined 350 gp, while the remaining outfits are worth 2d6 gp each.

H8. URTHLAN'S VAULT

Urthlan used this guarded vault to store items he could not or did not want to carry.

An exquisite longbow of remarkable quality and a wand each rest on two stone pedestals. There is a closed iron chest on the floor behind the pedestals.

Urthlan charged a **crypt thing** with protecting his vault. The crypt thing is surprised by the intrusion and welcomes the PCs' arrival. The crypt thing attacks only if the PCs enter the room or attack him, otherwise he engages the PCs in polite conversation through the doorway.

If the PCs ask him about Thalasskoptis, he refers to the demon as "oh, that thing." He mentions that Urthlan seemed fascinated with the fiend, but he never understood his obsession with the creature. He wryly remarks that in the end, he and Thalasskoptis share one thing. They were the only ones Pele spared.

CRYPT THING

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +6, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Weapons. The crypt thing's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiaction. The crypt thing makes two melee attacks with its claws.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) slashing damage and 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Teleport Other (1/Day). As an action, the crypt thing can teleport all creatures within 50 feet of it to a randomly determined location. A creature effected by the crypt thing's Teleport Other must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to avoid being teleported.

An effected creature is teleported in a random direction (roll 1d4: 1 – north, 2 – south, 3 – east, 4 – west) and a random distance (1d10 x 100 feet) away from the crypt thing. Roll randomly for each creature that fails its saving throw.

If the affected creature would arrive in a place already occupied by an object or another creature, the affected creature takes 4d6 force damage and is not teleported.

The shortsword is a *flame tongue*, while the wand is a *wand of magic missiles*. The iron chest is closed, but unlocked. There are 4 scrolls, one each of *false life*, *misty step*, *spider climb*, and *web*, a *cloak of protection* +1, six pearls (50 gp each) and 2,509 gp.

H9. THALASSKOPTIS'S ANTECHAMBER

The Tulitas used this antechamber to deliver blood sacrifices to Thalasskoptis. Since the elves imprisoned the demon, this room serves as an antechamber to Thalasskoptis's prison.

Despite someone's efforts, no amount of paint or perfume could remove the copious blood splatters on the walls, ceiling, and floor or the stench of death in this chamber.

The 3 **hawanis** are Thalasskoptis's last line of defense against invaders. They lunge into combat using their claw and bite attacks.

HAWANIS

XP 700

hp 52; see New Monster appendix for complete stats.

CR 3

H10. THALASSKOPTIS'S PRISON

Four eight-foot-tall sculpted basalt totems covered with intricately carved runes stand bound to one another with gossamer strands of mithral. These monoliths surround a diamond-shaped pool of disgusting, stagnant water laced with streams of fresh blood. Blood droplets rhythmically fall from the ceiling and splash into the water below. Coins and

other personal belongings are heaped into a pile in front of the pool. Crudely drawn images of horrific violence and deviant behavior painted in what appears to be blood cover the surrounding walls.

The disgusting sketches that cover the walls are in fact painted in blood. The coins and personal belongings heaped in front of the pool belonged to the *Dulcimer's* crew, however, they also include other items Thalasskoptis accumulated over the years.

Thalasskoptis, a powerful demon, awaits the PCs here. The basalt totems and gossamer mithral are enchanted with a unique combination of the spells *forcecage* and *imprisonment*, although the prison does not duplicate the exact effects of either spell. They radiate strong evocation and abjuration magic. When Urthlan first constructed the prison, Thalasskoptis could not move at all. As Thalasskoptis's power grew and the strength of Urthlan's magic waned, it has pushed the boundaries further. Thalasskoptis can teleport anywhere within this chamber, though the magical tethers deal 15 (3d10) radiant damage to the demon when it does so and return it to its prison at the beginning of its next turn. While confined within its prison, Thalasskoptis is restrained. When it teleports elsewhere in the chamber, the demon is not restrained.

Although this battle would normally exceed the abilities of 5th-level characters, the demon's bonds impede its fighting ability. While restrained within its prison, Thalasskoptis makes melee attacks with disadvantage while the PCs gain advantage on melee attacks made against the demon. The PCs may deduce this crucial fact through direct observation or a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. While teleporting to another location frees it from the restrained condition, the monster takes radiant damage from the short-term jaunt and returns to the confines of its prison at the beginning of its next turn.

THALASSKOPTIS (THALASSKOPTIS DEMON)

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d10 + 80)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +9, Wis +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, psychic, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, prone, unconscious

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Thalasskoptis's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). Thalasskoptis can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *animate dead*, *charm person*, *clairvoyance*, *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel magic*, *fear*, *suggestion*, *teleport*

3/day each: *dominate monster*

Toxic Ink (3/day). Thalasskoptis can squirt a cloud of poisonous ink into air or water. The ink creates 60-foot

radius sphere centered on Thalasskoptis, and it lasts for 1 minute. The cloud is stationary; it doesn't move with Thalasskoptis. The area inside the cloud is heavily obscured. Creatures other than Thalasskoptis in the ink cloud must make a successful DC 17 Constitution saving throw against poison or be stunned for as long as they remain inside the ink cloud.

Actions

Multiattack. Thalasskoptis attacks four times with tentacles, or it attacks twice with tentacles and either uses one innate spell or emits a toxic ink cloud.

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10+4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is stunned, the attack is automatically a critical hit.

Legendary Actions

Thalasskoptis can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Thalasskoptis regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bite: +8 to hit (one creature grappled by Thalasskoptis). *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage and the target must make a successful DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 2d8 poison damage and be poisoned for 1d6 rounds.

Innate Spellcasting: Thalasskoptis casts a spell it can cast at will.

Tentacle Grab: Thalasskoptis makes one tentacle attack. If this attack hits, the target is also grappled.

Tactics Thalasskoptis's favorite tactic is to grapple its enemies and attempt to drown them in the water, which is 5 feet deep. On subsequent rounds, Thalasskoptis resorts to its toxic ink ability, stunning as many foes as possible while trying to exercise mental control over its remaining adversaries using *charm person*, *suggestion*, and if necessary, *dominate monster*. Thalasskoptis relies heavily upon its resistances to lessen the damage from melee attacks. If a PC possesses a magical weapon or an item that bypasses its resistances or damage immunities, it uses its tentacles to attack the creature. If Thalasskoptis senses escape is near, it attempts to kill the youngest creature, hoping the death weakens its bonds enough to free it. Once freed, Thalasskoptis casts *teleport* to escape to the furthest point possible. When it leaves the complex, Thalasskoptis heads for the western shore and contacts Qualmaga's whale to meet it so that it can leave the island. When escape and victory seem unlikely, Thalasskoptis resorts to bargaining and threats. It tells the PCs about Urthlan's secret treasure vault and Whale's sacred ambergris. It offers these items and safe passage off the island in return for its life.

BI JACINTH'S TAKE

Her friends' sad fate proves too much for Jacinth to bear. She breaks down and confesses she took her friends along on an expedition to Dolentla Island to discover a secret elven magical laboratory. She also believes that the laboratory plays some role in what happened to the *Dulcimer's* passengers.

Thalasskoptis Released

Depending on what transpired at **Area D4**, Thalasskoptis may be very close to slipping his bonds. If all three pregnant hawanis died in that combat, their deaths as well as those of their unborn fetuses leave Thalasskoptis on the verge of escape. To increase the scene's dramatic effect, the death of a character during the combat causes the stone totems to violently shake. The demise of a second character causes the gossamer mithral to fray. A third death completely liberates Thalasskoptis from its bonds. Furthermore, with each death, the amount of radiant damage it takes when it teleports elsewhere in the chamber is reduced by 1d6.

Should the PCs leave Thalasskoptis alive with a single hawani female also alive, the demon frees itself within a season. Should the party abandon a female humanoid on the island — Jacinth for instance — the demon frees itself in six months.

Treasure: In addition to clothing and other personal effects, the items belonging to the *Dulcimer's* crew found within Thalasskoptis's prison include 189 gp, an ivory cameo (50 gp), a bronze and sapphire necklace (100 gp), the Duhamel family signet ring (250 gp), a bronze bracelet (25 gp), and one amethyst (10 gp). Naturally, the *Dulcimer's* crew expects the PCs to return these items to them rather than keep them for themselves. The items beneath those belonging to the *Dulcimer's* crew are unclaimed. They include 6 +1 arrows, a ring of protection +1, an oathbow, sovereign glue, a bead of force, boots of elvenkind, a cloak of elvenkind, and 1,906 gp.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Thalasskoptis's destruction frees Dolentla Island from its oppressive grip. However, the creatures that suffered under its insufferable yoke do not experience immediate relief. The hawanis are too broken and twisted to restore back to humanity. Deprived of their master, the remaining hawanis become beings of raw anger and rage. Their unnatural fertility also ends, dooming the hawanis on Dolentla Island to eventual extinction. The *Dulcimer's* crew no longer hear Thalasskoptis's wicked voice in their minds, but they face a long and grueling recovery from their physical and psychological injuries.

JACINTH'S TAKE

Denial has always served Jacinth well. An excellent coping mechanism, she turns it on full flow and begins to babble aloud and repetitively how her friends deserve their fates for failing to act more intelligently or to hide better or for being easily persuaded or... Unless a PC intervenes with a passionate in-game speech or succeeds on a DC 20 Charisma check, Jacinth soon convinces herself she holds no fault in events and grows beyond any redemption.

However, should the PCs successfully intervene in her desperate attempt to deny culpability, the formerly obnoxious Jacinth accepts responsibility for what she has done and vows to make things right. She does everything she can to help her friends recover from the ordeal and offers recompense to Maximilian's family for their loss. She takes this opportunity to change as a person, and pledges undying friendship to the adventurers — a commitment which she'd rather die than fail to uphold.

It is possible that the PCs themselves are stranded on the island if their own vessel was sunk by Qualmaga's whale. If so, and they are unable to affect repairs to their own vessel, then another ship dispatched by the viscount arrives 2–3 weeks later. Choose one of the vessels-for-hire in this adventure, the **Razor Coast** campaign, or one of your own design. This one will not make landfall but rather was sent to scout out the situation to see what became of the PCs. If Jacinth was not already with the PCs, then she is certainly aboard this ship. If the PCs can signal the ship from the island, they will send a longboat to pick them up. As long as the demon is dead, then the whale will not make any aggressive moves towards this ship... at least initially.

The PCs have several additional matters to address before returning to Port Shaw. There remain the issues of Maximilian Sidrow's ghost, Captain Delano Ambrorse's stolen sacred ambergris, and the fate of Qualmaga's whale, which is linked to the pilfered ambergris. With Thalasskoptis dead, Qualmaga's whale resumes its original task — to punish the thief who stole Whale's ambergris. The PCs can solve both dilemmas by returning Whale's ambergris to its sacred temple at the Bonedown of the Ancients, to Tulita priests who still practice the old ways, or to the Whale itself. If the party leaves the island without somehow informing Qualmaga's whale of their intent or with the express intent of keeping or selling the ambergris, then Qualmaga's whale hunts them.

The more delicate problem is how to handle Jacinth Deepwarder's role in the whole affair if she did not accompany the PCs to Dolentla Island. The information gathered from Maximilian Sidrow's ghost and the *Dulcimer's* crew (should they recover a portion of their senses) is not favorable for Jacinth.

Jacinth's rescued friends eventually corroborate Maximilian's story that Jacinth drank a potion and disappeared. Viscount Senegar Deepwarder expresses outrage at the suggestion his niece behaved in a cowardly fashion. He demands the PCs keep the allegations to themselves, and he goes as far as to offer them an additional 1,000 gp for their silence.

The families of the other members of the *Dulcimer's* expedition also express outrage, directed squarely at Jacinth Deepwarder. The families consider taking the matter to the Municipal Dragoons for proper justice, however, the viscount and the families detest scandals so much that the parties discreetly settle the sordid affair with monetary recompense. Nonetheless, Jacinth becomes a pariah, making her a virtual exile among Port Shaw's elite. Port Shaw's elite welcome the PCs as heroes for rescuing the *Dulcimer's* crew and destroying the malevolent being that poisoned Dolentla Island.

Depending upon their actions on Dolentla Island and in dealing with the *Iron Bastion*, the PCs have gained valuable allies or made powerful enemies. For those running a **Razor Coast** campaign, these NPCs may appear on one side or the other in the party's battles against the minions of Dajobas and the Krakenfiend. For the moment, though, the PCs bask in the adulation they deserve for saving lives and ridding the Razor Coast of an ancient menace.

APPENDIX: NEW MONSTERS

HAWANI-FORSAKEN OF THALASSKOPTIS

This gaunt, feral humanoid has blood red eyes, leathery skin, and wicked claws. It moves with a simian gait and has a mouth full of oversized, pointed teeth. Despite its monstrous appearance, it is not unimaginable that the creature may have been human at one time.

HAWANI

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, stunned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft. (demons only)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Blind Rage. At the start of its turn, the hawani can gain advantage on Strength and Constitution saving throws as well as melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Thrall. A hawani has a telepathic link with its demonic master as long as the hawani and its demon overlord are on the same plane of existence. Its master can use this telepathic link to issue commands to the hawani or take total and precise control of the hawani, as if it were affected by a *dominate monster* spell. The hawani never receives a new saving throw to end this effect unless the link is dispelled or severed by magic.

Actions

Multiattack. The hawani makes three melee attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep for 1 minute. It wakes up if it takes any damage, or if another creature uses its action to awaken the sleeping creature if it is within 5 feet of him. The sleeping target can repeat the saving throw on each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful, or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this hawani's sleep effect for 24 hours.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit* 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage.

The oppressive yoke of Thalasskoptis's mental domination transforms humanoids into monstrous creatures devoid of inhibition and possessing only the weakest self-determination. In simplest terms, a hawani is an impulsive being of pure violence and id. Hawanis are created when

Thalasskoptis dominates the same creature more than twice in any 24-hour period, which renders the victim unconscious. When the victim regains consciousness, it rises as a monstrous thrall under Thalasskoptis's complete domination. Unfortunately, they remain humanoid enough to breed.

Hawanis typically give birth to broods of three to five young at a time, and they reproduce at a remarkable rate, giving birth to two or even three broods per year. Hawanis remain fertile until they die. Their offspring mature rapidly, reaching adulthood in six years, though few survive to that age. The hawanis' dark master feasts on the life force of the living and the very young its hawanis produce give it most of the energy it needs.

Hawanis lack any societal structure or political hierarchy other than performing their master's bidding. In the absence of their master, the hawanis devolve into beasts of mindless rage with a tendency to tear each other apart and, oddly, lose their ability to reproduce. The hawanis attack with unbridled ferocity, inflicting as much damage as possible with their claw and bite attacks. They fight to the death, as their own demise feeds their insidious master.

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