

LEVEL 8 ADVENTURE MODULE

FIFTH EDITION FANTASY #8

EYE OF THE LEVIATHAN



BY CHRIS DOYLE



EYE OF THE LEVIATHAN

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EYE OF THE LEVIATHAN

By Chris Doyle

The *Eye of the Leviathan* is an adventure designed for use with the 5th edition of the first fantasy roleplaying game. It is intended for four to six 8th-level characters and can be completed in a single session. A variety of character classes is suggested to tackle the challenge of solving the despicable murder of an innocent, and thwarting the diabolical schemes of

a powerful brine vampire. The adventure is set in and around a small fishing port located on the windswept craggy cliffs of an ocean. The author draws on two inspirations for this adventure: *The Pearl*, by John Steinbeck, and an unnamed adventure plot by the author's astonishing wife, Lisa.

BACKGROUND

The quaint fishing village of Port Scuttle is situated along the temperate rocky shoreline of the coast. On the banks of a protected natural harbor are weather-beaten docks, cobblestone roads, and a ramshackle collection of wooden and stone buildings. A few hundred folk hardened by the relentless battering winds and sea, most of which ply the open waters for a living, call the village home. Although the locals are insular, they do welcome passing ships heading up and down the coast laden with all manner of trade goods. These ships often anchor in the harbor for a day or night while re-supplying for the remaining journey, the crews partaking in raucous revelry in one of the local taverns.

Elendira is a poor local fishmonger who resides in a dilapidated two-story building on the harbor front, with her blind stepfather upstairs. There was always something “odd” about the awkward young lass, but folks never could put a crooked finger on what. A few weeks back, while filleting a massive tilefish, Elendira extracted a massive pearl from its gullet. The lustrous sphere was a full 6 inches in diameter, the darkest shade of ebony, with drab green swirls. Enraptured by its beauty, and the sinister tug of something else, she proclaimed her find to the locals, and soon all knew of her good fortune. Surely a pearl that massive would be worth a fortune in gold, and the lass had filleted her last smelly fish. But none in the port had the funds or desire to purchase such a treasure. Soon, she put the word out to traders: the pearl was for sale—for a fair price!

Within a tenday a merchant ship arrived, around the same time a thick clinging fog settled into the harbor. But the merchant, Lord Iychthus, was not responding to

Elendira's offer of the pearl's sale. Instead, he was attracted to the dire call of the pearl itself, an evil minor artifact called the *Eye of the Leviathan*. Lord Iychthus is actually a brine vampire from the inky depths of the ocean, and is working for a mysterious cabal bent on claiming the artifact for their own nefarious designs.

Lord Iychthus easily tracked down the whereabouts of the pearl from the locals shortly after arriving at the port. Passing himself off as a gem merchant, he arranged to meet Elendira in a tavern, The Cocked Cockle, to bargain for the pearl. She did not bring the gem with her, but provided the prospective buyer with detailed sketches and measurements. During the meeting, Elendira resisted his charming guile and not only refused to sell him the pearl, she outright rebuffed his request to be invited into her house to examine the gem himself. Lord Iychthus could sense the child's supernatural resistance to his charm, and suspected (correctly) some type of latent fey power. Although she promised to consider his generous offer for the pearl, Lord Iychthus stormed out of the tavern frustrated. But soon, he hatched a scheme to acquire the pearl, and perhaps the girl, for his masters.

Lord Iychthus required a pawn, and Mathias, a local cleric of Pelagia, was an easy choice, especially since he enjoyed invigorating nightly swims in the harbor. The vampire charmed the priest during one of these swims, and particularly enjoyed corrupting a man of the cloth into serving as a lackey. Unable to enter the fishmonger's domicile on his own, he commanded the priest to confront Elendira and take possession of the pearl. In addition to recovering the pearl for his new master, Mathias was to “convince” her to join Lord Iychthus to fulfill a greater destiny.

Pelagia soon abandoned Mathias, which further tormented the once-devoted priest. With but a few hours to prepare, Mathias tried to resist the urge to fulfill his master's commands. But in the end, his very soul broken and alone, Mathias took matters into his own hands. That very night, he confronted Elendira in her shop. In a battle of inner turmoil, Mathias plunged his rapier through the girl's heart, slaughtering her in an instant. Although he had regrets for ending a sweet innocent life, he cherished the thought that Iychthus would not have the child as a pawn. He grabbed the pearl and fled, leaving just enough clues that the authorities would know where to follow. After concealing the pearl in a hidden Sanctuary of Pelagia, the distraught priest returned to his chapel. Following a few more preparations, a grief-stricken Mathias took his own life, anxious to reunite with his beloved deity.

The heroes are left to decipher the deeds of a devout cleric, who might still have a role to play in this grim tale, while preventing a powerful undead lord from recovering an evil artifact.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

This adventure begins with the characters already in the harbor town of Port Scuttle. It is the responsibility of the GM to devise an appropriate plot hook to get the characters to the port, and their motivation to solve the murder. A few suggestions are presented.

- The characters are enjoying the comforts of a local tavern, The Cocked Cockle. They are approached by the captain of the local militia, a barrel-chested man with long red hair named Bartholomew. He offers the characters an appropriate reward if they would investigate a recent crime for the local government.
- The characters are working for a powerful patron, likely a wizard or a sage. They are sent to Port Scuttle to follow up on rumors on the finding of a massive black pearl, a treasure of interest to their patron.
- The characters run into trouble with the local authorities and face possible jail time. In exchange for dropping all charges, the characters are "hired" to investigate a recent murder, and if possible bring the guilty party to justice.
- If one of the characters is a cleric or paladin dedicated to Pelagia, he/she receives a vision regarding the finding of the pearl, its corrupting effects, and its malignant influence on the church of Pelagia. The character desires to make haste to Port Scuttle to investigate.

Quest: Investigate the Murder of Elendira and Recover the *Eye of the Leviathan*. Regardless of the hook used, the characters' goal is to investigate the murder of a young local fishmonger. If possible, they need to bring the perpetrator to justice, and ideally they should recover the *Eye of the Leviathan* before it falls into the clutches of Lord Iychthus.

RUMORS

It is assumed that the characters have been in port for a few days and nights before the murder. Therefore, they might have had a chance to pick up a few rumors that could pertain to this adventure. Roll a 1d8, or assign an appropriate rumor. The GM is encouraged to design a few more rumors.

D8 Rumor

- 1 A local fishmonger found a massive black pearl in the gullet of tilefish. What a lucky find! (True.)
- 2 Mathias, a local priest, is more obsessed with his deity than helping the local folk. He skims from the offering plate, I tell ya! (False.)
- 3 Fishing in the bay and nearby waters has been poor the past week or so. Strange tidings, if ye ask me. (True.)
- 4 Strange glowing lights have been seen in the harbor and bay recently. Whatever the foul source, it's probably scaring all the fish away. (True.)
- 5 A thick fog settles into the harbor each morning, although it seems to clear somewhat at night when the sea breeze picks up. We haven't seen the sun in days! (True.)
- 6 On calm nights, outside of town, one can hear the somber wailing of the Grey Lady on the moors. (True, but unrelated to this adventure.)
- 7 The Cocked Cockle is a front for a local thieves' guild. Be mindful of those serving wenches. They are easy on the eyes, but if you are distracted, ye coin pouch will be lighter. (False.)
- 8 Altar Rock is the highest point around these parts. On a clear night, you can see the dim lights of Fair Haven to the south. (Although it's true that Altar Rock is the highest point, Fair Haven is several leagues to the south and can't be seen.)

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure does not deal with the characters' journey to Port Scuttle. The adventure begins in area 1, a fish shop located on the docks of the harbor, the scene of a brutal murder.

AREA 1 – THE FISH SHOP

Read or paraphrase the following:

On entering the dimly lit fish shop, your nostrils are assaulted by the pungent stench of the sea. The stone floor, although clean, is stained with years of fishy entrails. Large metal grates are scattered about to prevent water from pooling, as it melts away from several large tables with recessed surfaces designed to be stocked with ice to keep fish cold. The tables are empty, awaiting the next morning's fresh catch. A few oil lamps hang from the ceiling, focusing the light on the tabletops. A wooden stairway leads to an upstairs, and a long counter is situated at the back of the shop.

Your eyes are drawn to the grisly sight, sprawled over the counter like a discarded doll. A young lass, no more than 20 summers you'd guess, is slumped over the counter in a pool of blood. Her blood-soaked clothes are plain and have seen better days, being adorned with many patches. Her unkempt long brown hair conceals her visage. On the back wall behind the counter is displayed an array of cleavers, fillet knives, and even small saws. Although this deadly assortment of weapons is within easy reach, it appears the lass did not struggle against her assailant.

The fish shop is a two-story wooden building. The lower level is a 40-foot-by-40-foot shop, while the upstairs is an apartment with two small bedrooms and a common area. (The second floor is not included in the maps because it is such a simple space; the GM can improvise if needed.) The shop-front wall slides open for ease of customer ingress and egress on fair weather days. Behind the counter is a single door, usually unlocked, that leads to a storage area.

The front room is the site of a grisly murder deep in the night. The following morning, Elendirā's blind father, Gunner, made his way down the stairs and discovered the scene, although due to his lack of sight and state of shock, he doesn't really comprehend what occurred. A neighbor responded to his screams, and notified the town guard. Gunner has since been led away to grieve at a nearby residence. If the characters track him down for information, they only receive incoherent ramblings about his daughter.

The town guard are not skilled with murder investiga-

tions. On orders from Bartholomew, they have secured the area, but have not disturbed the interior of the shop. Elendirā's body is still slumped over the counter. Examining the body reveals a single piercing wound to the heart. Death was probably quick and reasonably painless. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a rapier was used to deal the killing blow, but no weapon can be found.

SPEAKING WITH THE DEAD PART I

If the characters cast *Speak with Dead*, the hysterical Elendirā can provide important clues to the murderer. The characters are limited to five questions, and her answers are often short, full of sobs, and repetitive. Some of the phrases she might say include:

"No, you can't have it"

"Mathias, why my friend? Why?"

"But what of Pelagia's wisdom?"

"The Pearl? Is she calling to you, too?"

"Deny the Eye..."

"I feel cold, as though the warmth is leaving me"

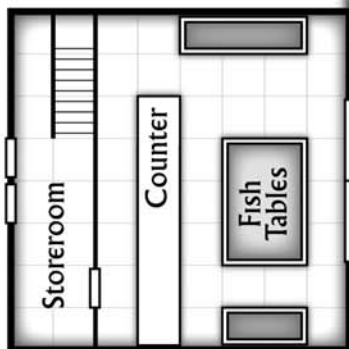
Lockbox. Under the counter is a secret compartment with the door ripped open. On the floor is an opened metal lockbox, 2-foot square, the key discarded nearby. It is empty, save for a grimy piece of silk. This was the resting place for the *Eye*, long since removed by Mathias. In an unlocked wooden coffer still in the compartment is the family savings: 112 sp, 47 gp, and two small gems (each worth 25 gp).

Clues. The following clues can be discovered at the shop.

Medallion. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a small pewter medallion of a shell, set with three tiny white pearls on a broken silver chain (worth 35 gp), discarded under the counter. The medallion is a holy symbol of Pelagia, and is smeared with blood. Even though it appears to have been broken and discarded during the struggle, in truth this clue was planted by Mathias to lead the investigators to his temple. The medallion is depicted on Player Handout #1.

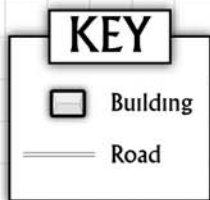
Area 1 – The Fish Shop

□ = 5 ft.

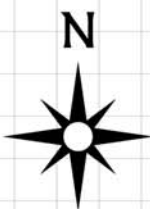


Area 3 –
Pelagia's
Womb

Overland View



□ = 500 ft.



Area 2 –
Temple of
Pelagia

Area 4 –
The Black
Orchid

Scuttle
Bay

Area 1 –
Fish Shop

Port
Scuttle



Ledger. Near the body is a blood-splattered ledger. The book contains a written record of all sales, plus general notes on fish suppliers, preferred species, and sketches on how to fillet cumbersome types of fish. A folded piece of paper used as a bookmark is inscribed with the following note:

Mathias: 10 p.m.

The note is blood-free, unlike the rest of the book, and was also planted by Mathias. It is written in different handwriting than the ledger, and can be discerned upon close examination or with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

If the ledger is examined for more than 5 minutes, the reader notes the same passage repeated in the same flowing script, scattered throughout the ledger, in the margins, at the top, etc. It reads, “Deny the Eye,” a cryptic phrase that indicates the evil pull the *Eye* had on the girl.

Blood Trail. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals a faint trail of blood that originates at the counter and Elendirā’s body. The trail leads to the exit, to the dock, and to the water’s edge out front, where Mathias discarded the murder weapon. A rapier with an ornate ivory-carved pommel (worth 75 gp) can be discovered with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check in about 6 feet of water, lodged in the mud and sand of the harbor bottom. Another successful DC 17 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that the blood trail heads north, before disappearing altogether.

Asking Questions. If the characters think to interview any neighbors or folks who might have seen something, a successful DC 16 Charisma check after about an hour of questions reveals that a local heard what could be described as an altercation in the shop late last night. A single figure exited the shop, a distinct splash was heard, and the figure hastened away to the north. The splash was the sound of Mathias tossing the rapier into the harbor.

DEVELOPMENTS

The characters should have enough clues to lead them to the Temple of Pelagia (area 2), located a short walk outside of town to the north. If the characters get stuck and are at a loss where to head next, have Bartholomew summon them. He asks them to travel to the temple and seek the council of Mathias, a local priest.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

Divide 250 XP among the characters if they find enough clues and head to the Temple of Pelagia on their own.

AREA 2 – THE TEMPLE OF PELAGIA

A short 15-minute uphill walk north of Port Scuttle is a simple stone temple dedicated to Pelagia, the local patron of the sea. The Coral Queen, or the Singing Sea as she is often called, is worshipped by bards, fishermen, sailors, and others who ply the oceans. Her temple rests on a rocky overlook a hundred feet above Scuttle Bay, constantly buffeted by stiff ocean winds. A worn trail winds through a small graveyard to the main entrance of the temple, area 2-1.

GENERAL FEATURES

Outer Walls. The temple is constructed of smooth stone. The main worship area is 25 feet high with a slate peaked roof. The main worship hall (area 2-2) has six slit-like openings, with shutters that are opened during worship to bathe the hall in the serene wailing of the winds. The wooden shutters are typically closed when service is not ongoing, and require a successful DC 13 Strength check to open, but only a Small or smaller creature can pass through the opening. However, three are open when the characters arrive.

Stained Glass Window. The east wall is occupied by a massive stained glass window, depicting a seascape with whales in song, and selkies (half woman/half seal creatures) frolicking about. This window looks out to the sea, and is situated 20 feet above the living quarters (area 2-3) of the temple.

Secret Door. There is a secret door in the south wall that leads to the priest’s quarters. It is difficult to locate from the outside, amid a few bushes, requiring a successful DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check to find and open. It can be opened by pressing the appropriate flagstone.

AREA 2-1 – THE MAIN ENTRANCE

When the characters approach the temple for the first time, read or paraphrase the following:

A short hike up a meandering path leads your band to an isolated stone structure. The path winds its way through the haphazard collection of worn headstones of a graveyard. A stone staircase leads to a pair of iron-bound wooden double doors.

The front doors are locked and require a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to pick, or a successful DC 20 Strength check to burst open. If attempting to break down the door, several characters can work together, granting advantage to the character with the highest ability modifier.

Before Mathias enacted his plan the night before, he took the time to place a *glyph of warding* (cast with a 4th-level slot) on the front doors; it is released if they are opened before the *glyph* is dispelled. The faint traces of the *glyph* can be detected with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If triggered, the *glyph* erupts in piercing whale song that causes 27 (6d8) thunder damage to all targets in a 20-foot-radius sphere around the door. Each creature in the area of effect can attempt a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, with success indicating half damage.

AREA 2-2 – MAIN WORSHIP HALL

When the characters enter this hall, read or paraphrase the below:

This voluminous hall is at least 50 feet long and 20 feet wide, with a wood rafter ceiling that stretches 25 feet overhead. The north and south walls are stone, adorned by slit-like openings that nearly stretch from the floor to the ceiling. A few are open, creating a cross breeze and a gentle, soothing wail. Six rows of worn dark wood pews line the cobblestone floor. At the far end of the hall is an expansive stained glass window, dazzling in the sunlight, depicting a seascape flush with whales and a myriad of other sea life, tended by half woman/half seal creatures. In front of the stained glass window is an 8-foot-long misshapen pink coral altar with a pitted surface and a mostly flat top. To the left and right, iron candelabras holding well-used pink candles flank the altar. Light blue tapestries adorn the north and south walls by the altar.

This area is the main worship hall dedicated to Pelagia. Twice a week, Mathias presided over ceremonies here, attended by most of the residents of Port Scuttle. By the time the characters arrive here, the main worship hall is unoccupied. The pews are normal, although if crouched behind, they provide half cover (+2 to AC and Dexterity saving throws). The candelabras are each worth 25 gp, and are fashioned to resemble entwined whales. The tapestries are each worth 60 gp, but are quite bulky (weighing nearly

30 pounds each). They conceal alcoves to the north and south. The south alcove has a raised dais for choir singers, while the north area is a ready-room, containing vestments and mundane religious accoutrements. In each alcove, an unlocked door leads to stairs descending to Mathias's living quarters (area 2-3).

Altar. There is a secret compartment on the floor behind and under the altar that even Mathias was unaware of. It contains a secret stash of magic items stowed away by a previous cleric of the temple who never divulged its location. It can be located with a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check, although it's also locked. The key is nowhere to be found, but the lock can be picked with a DC 17 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Inside the compartment are two *potions of greater healing*, three bone scroll tubes (containing clerical *spell scrolls of lesser restoration*, *beacon of hope*, and *flame strike*), and a mace with a clam-shell head. The weapon is a *mace of brilliance* (see appendix A).



DEVELOPMENTS

The characters are free to take the hidden magic items and use them as long as it benefits Pelagia's cause. If Mathias was aware of these items, he would have left them out so the characters could find them. Recovering the *Eye of the Leviathan* and combating Lord Iychthus are indeed worthy tasks in Pelagia's opinion. If the characters take the items, but fail to complete their quest, feel free to have Pelagia deal some form of minor punishment, such as the *bestow curse* spell. If the characters find the items, but refuse to "loot the temple" of a benign deity, that act is also noticed by Pelagia. She grants one character a *Charm of Radiancy*. For the next 7 days, all weapon damage inflicted by that chosen one is considered radiant, as the weapon flashes brilliantly on impact.

AREA 2-3 – LIVING QUARTERS

After a short trek down a flight of stairs, there is an unlocked door. When the characters open the door, read or paraphrase the following:

The door opens to reveal a cozy living area with a plush carpet and plain furniture. But your immediate attention is drawn to a gruesome scene. Hanging above a nearby table is the limp form of a male human with a tight noose around its now broken neck. The thick rope leads up to one of the wooden ceiling rafters, with the other end attached to a plain sack bulging with contents. The figure was middle-aged, sported a trimmed beard, and had flowing brown hair graying in locations. He wore the simple robes of the clergy, and clutches a shell-shaped holy symbol tightly even in death. A piece of parchment is pinned to his cloak at his chest.

This chamber served as the simple living quarters for Mathias, the cleric responsible for this temple. A battered wooden table with four chairs is pushed into one corner, its surface covered with several thick books. Behind the table is a well-used hearth with a blackened interior, and still-warm embers. Several pots and a worn cauldron are stacked nearby among a small pile of logs. In the opposite corner of the room is a single bed covered with wrinkled sheets and blankets pockmarked with numerous holes.

Secret Door. There is a secret door in the southern wall that leads to the outside. It's somewhat easier to find on this side, requiring a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check to locate. The door can be opened by pulling down a lantern hook located to the right of the fireplace.

SPEAKING WITH THE DEAD PART 2

If the characters cast *Speak with Dead* on Mathias they can learn a few cryptic clues, but only after loosening the noose (so feel free to have them waste a question). His responses are somewhat cryptic due to the state of mind that led him to suicide. The GM should use discretion on what is revealed, but some responses are:

"I had to do it. I had to! Please forgive me Pelagia..."

"Books are Knowledge, and knowledge can be a key..."

"He came from the depths, and I could not resist his sway..."

"Beware the sign of the Ebony Orchid..."

"Deny the Eye..."

Clues. Mathias left several clues in this chamber to give hints to investigators on the whereabouts of the *Eye*. However, these clues are not obvious or have been encrypted, since Mathias fully expected Lord Iychthus to eventually come to investigate.

The body was Mathias, a cleric of Pelagia and the murderer of Elendiria. A quick search of the body reveals that death was indeed caused by hanging. Still clutched in his hand is a holy symbol of Pelagia in the shape of scallop shell composed of coral and set with three pearls on the upper surface. Show Player Handout #1 to the players. The holy symbol is useful for discovering the hidden path in area 3-1. On his belt is an empty rapier scabbard inset with carved ivory (worth 45 gp) that matches the pommel of the rapier discarded in the water at area 1.

Parchment Message. This is Mathias's Lament written in Terran. Mathias assumed that Lord Iychthus, being a creature of the sea, would have a difficult time translating the message. There is a book on the table that could be used to translate the message. If the characters translate the message, show Player Handout #2 to the players.

Inscription on the Wall. The west wall has been hastily defaced with the phrase "Deny the Eye," over and over, in numerous languages. There is also a cryptic map of sorts. It depicts three irregular shaded circles in a hemispherical pattern. Ten footprints lead from the left-most circle to a star. Show Player Handout #3 to the players. This is indeed a map to a hidden item located in area 3-2.

Books on the Table. There are three books on the table, all of them useful to the characters.

“Taking the Mental, Out of Elemental Languages.”

This text is a dry beginner’s guide to the elemental languages. Inside this book, at the start of a chapter on Ter-ran, is a scrap of paper used as a bookmark. This scrap can be discovered with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Per-ception) check, or automatically if the book is carefully examined. The scrap contains a cipher to reveal a hidden message on the parchment attached to Mathias. Show Player Handout #4 to the players if this clue is found. If the PCs use Mathias’s Lament as the key and translate the cipher, they get the following passage:

Below Altar Rock

Rests the Eye

In Pelagia’s Womb

The Lady’s Symbol

Reveals the way

“Creatures of the Deep Abyss.” This thick book is a field guide of denizens of the inky depths of the oceans, and contains line drawings of a dizzying array of bizarre piscine creatures, including a few humanoid races. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a dog-eared page. It marks a section describing the possible existence of a variant aquatic vampire. Mathias guessed (correctly) that Lord Iychthus was such an undead creature from the deep, so he marked the page hoping inves-tigators could glean clues how to combat this foe. After studying the section for at least 30 minutes and a success-ful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, the reader can gain the following information on a brine vampire:

- Brine vampires are harmed by direct sunlight and ra-diant damage, just like terrestrial vampires.
- Brine vampires are weakened by contact with solid earth. Consecrated soil thrown at them acts as holy water.
- Brine vampires are immune to the effects of water (fresh or salt) and are actually quite comfortable in these mediums.
- A stake in the heart still can immobilize a brine vam-pire, but burying the body in consecrated soil perma-nently slays the undead.

“Hymns of Pelagia.” This is a thin book containing sev-eral hymns and musical arrangements used during the worship of Pelagia. A folded paper bookmark simply states in rushed script, “Her music can even soothe the stones...” These hymns are useful in area 3-1, to soothe creatures during that encounter.

Sack. The sack attached to the opposite end of the rope is a *bag of holding*, full of fine black sand (about 500 pounds). It appears to have been used as the counter-weight for the hanging, but close inspection reveals that the rope is tied off to the ceiling rafter, and the sack is just for show. If a character inspects the sand a success-ful DC 15 Wisdom (Religion) check reveals the sand is consecrated. The sand can be used as a ranged weapon against the brine vampire with the same effect as a holy water vial, but with a range of only 5 feet.

Box Under the Bed. Tucked under the bed is a flat wooden box that can be easily located. The box has been left obviously unlocked and contains the following items: a ruby-encrusted silver herring-like fish (worth 250 gp); a shark leather pouch containing 17 cp, 11 sp, and a gold engagement ring set with a tiny diamond (worth 300 gp); and a small metal box holding eight vials of holy water.

DEVELOPMENTS

Before the characters leave the temple to continue their investigation, run Event #1.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

For each clue that the PCs recover (deciphering the parch-ment, recovering the holy symbol, using the books to get information, finding the holy water, and understanding the usefulness of the sand) award 50 XP to each character.

EVENT #1 – THE DARK ALLIES MOVE

It takes a few hours for Lord Iychthus to discover that Mathias did not complete his mission as planned. Since it's now daylight and Lord Iychthus can't easily move about to investigate, he sends a group of allies from his ship to the temple. They use a pair of rowboats from area 4-1 to travel to the temple. The group includes two **swarms of carrion gulls** summoned by Iychthus, three **Black Orchid pirates**, eight **pirate zombies** wearing heavy cloaks to disguise their appearance, and a **death priest** named Marek. This encounter can be staged in the main worship hall (area 2-2) or just outside the temple near the front door (area 2-1).

Regardless of where the attack occurs, the same basic tactics are employed. The pirates hang back and use their crossbows, using either the gravestones in area 2-1 or the pews in area 2-2 for half cover. The zombies push forward and engage in melee, preventing foes from reaching Marek. Marek hangs back as well, casting spells. On the first round, Marek uses an action to blow a whistle that signals the nearby carrion gull swarms to attack. They join the encounter in 2 rounds, or 3 rounds if the battle occurs inside the main worship hall (area 2-2) as the swarm needs to squeeze through the window slits (assuming they are still open). If the characters did not trigger the trap on the front door, Marek has a zombie trigger it, which destroys the zombie.

After blowing the whistle, Marek casts *kraken's tentacles* either in front of the temple doors, or just outside of the door to inhibit the party's movement. This spell requires concentration, but he can still cast *command* or *spiritual weapon* (a tentacle) as needed, or attack with his *tentacle rod* (it has 15-foot range) while maintaining concentration. If the *kraken's tentacles* spell is disrupted, he casts *bestow curse* on a fighter-type or *silence* on a wizard-type. In melee, he casts *shield of faith* and *inflict wounds* as appropriate, or relies on *tentacle rod* attacks, preferring to focus all three attacks on one target.

The zombies and carrion gull swarms fight mindlessly until destroyed. Marek also fights to the death, fearing Lord Iychthus' wrath, although if incapacitated he could be convinced to surrender. The pirates flee if Marek is killed or incapacitated. They flee south (and are easily tracked) to a secluded cove where two large rowboats are moored. They use the boats to flee back to the *Black Orchid*.

SWARM OF CARRION GULLS (2)

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

AC: 12

Hit Points: 36 (8d8)

Speed: 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

Damage Resistances: bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities: charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: -

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm: The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny gull. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Beaks: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage, or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the creature must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 7 (2d6) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. The creature dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

PIRATE ZOMBIE (8)

Medium undead, neutral evil

AC: 10 (armor scraps)

Hit Points: 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed: 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: Wis +0

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages: understands Common, but can't speak

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Special Equipment: The pirate zombie wears rotting scraps of leather armor and wields a rusty cutlass.

Undead Fortitude: If damage reduces the pirate 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 pirate zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Rusty Cutlass: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

BLACK ORCHID PIRATE (3)

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

AC: 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points: 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Special Equipment: A Black Orchid pirate wears leather armor, and carries a cutlass and a light crossbow (with 20 bolts). He has a pouch with 2d6 gp and a tattoo on his left forearm.

ACTIONS

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

Light Crossbow: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

MAREK, DEATH PRIEST

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

AC: 14 (chain shirt)

Hit Points: 45 (7d8 +14)

Speed: 30 ft.

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

Skills: Medicine +5, Persuasion +3, Religion +3

Senses: passive Perception 13

Languages: Common

Challenge: 3 (700 XP)

Special Equipment: Marek wears a chain shirt and carries a *tentacle rod*. He also carries an iron key which unlocks the door to his room on the *Black Orchid* (area 4-4), and a small silver whistle (worth 22 gp).

Spellcasting: Marek is a 7th-level spellcaster that uses Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13; +5 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared from the cleric and sorcerer spell lists:

- Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, guidance, light, resistance*
- 1st level (4 slots): *bane, command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
- 2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, silence, spiritual weapon*
- 3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, speak with dead*
- 4th level (1 slot): *kraken's tentacles* (see appendix B)

ACTIONS

Multiattack: Marek makes three attacks, only when wielding the *tentacle rod*.

Tentacle Rod: Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., up to three targets. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage. If Marek hits one target with all three attacks in one round, the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On failure, the target's speed is halved, it has disadvantage on all Dexterity saving throws, and it can't use reactions for 1 minute. In addition, on each of the target's turns, it can take either an action or a bonus action, but not both. At the end of each turn, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effects on itself with a success.

A short squat human wearing purple robes and a black belt advances with determination. An ornate purple tattoo depicting a tentacled beast is prominently displayed on his forehead, wrapping around his eyes.

DEVELOPMENTS

It requires a DC 14 passive Wisdom (Perception) check to notice each Black Orchid pirate has the same tattoo on his left forearm. The tattoo depicts a black flower (an orchid) with writhing tentacles behind it. Show Player Handout #5 to the players. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (History) check reveals these are crew members of the *Black Orchid*, a merchant ship known to ply these waters. This information can also be gathered in Port Scuttle with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the characters spend at least 10 gp in bribes, they get advantage on this check. Most folks can point out the *Black Orchid* moored in the harbor (area 4), or the characters could follow fleeing pirates to it.

Following the clash with Lord Iychthus's allies, the characters have a choice where to go next. They can proceed to Altar Rock (area 3-1), or to Lord Iychthus's ship, the *Black Orchid* (area 4). A character can recall the location of Altar Rock with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check, or by simply asking a local from Port Scuttle.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

For each carrion gull swarm defeated, the characters get 100 XP. For each Black Orchid pirate or pirate zombie defeated, the characters are awarded 50 XP. For defeating Marek, the characters are awarded 700 XP.

AREA 3-1 – ALTAR ROCK

Altar Rock is located just over 3 miles to the north of Port Scuttle, and is the highest elevation (550 feet) in the area.

When the characters approach the collection of menhirs, read or paraphrase the following:

A short gradual upland trek north along the coast brings your band to this windswept location, situated at the summit of the sea cliff. The din of waves crashing hundreds of feet below is drowned out by the near-constant bite of a salty wind. A seemly haphazard collection of nine standing stones, each drab gray and perhaps 6 to 7 feet tall, encircle a slab of darker rock with a flat surface, nearly 15 feet long. One could almost easily imagine the slab serving as an altar.

Altar Rock is a natural flat rock that forms the centerpiece for an ancient open-air shrine dedicated to Pelagia, complete with nine menhirs (massive standing stones). Before the temple (area 2) was constructed, locals would trek to this wind-swept location for worship and to commune with the sea goddess on matters of import. It is rumored that the favored of Pelagia (almost always druids or clerics dedicated to her) who make the pilgrimage to Altar Rock to die remain behind as eternal guardians of the shrine. This is not far from the truth, and the characters get the sense they are being watched while inside the standing stones.

If the characters have deciphered the clue in Mathias's Lament, Pelagia's Womb should be located under Altar Rock. Pelagia's Womb is actually a grotto located at the base of the sea cliff. The only way to get to the grotto is via a treacherous meandering path located near the shrine, but hidden with a permanent *hallucinatory terrain* spell (caster level 16), as indicated on the map. There are two ways to dispel the spell and gain access to the path. The easiest way to dispel the illusion is by using Pelagia's holy symbol (such as the one clutched by Mathias in area 2-3). The hard way is the defeat the guardian of the shrine.

One of Pelagia's faithful indeed watches over this sacred site: an **ancient galeb duhr**, once a powerful druid. Using her False Appearance trait, she watches the characters with great interest. If the characters touch the altar, dig

in the soil, or try to locate the hidden passage to Pelagia's Womb, she becomes hostile. With her first action she animates four **menhirs** (actually the stony forms of other faithful), then wades into melee. The animated menhirs are instructed to surround the characters and prevent them from escaping, and will use lethal blows if necessary.

Pelagia is the deity of bards and favors song, especially whale song. If one of the characters succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check while playing music inspired by Pelagia, or singing a hymn in her honor, all of the animated menhirs attack with disadvantage for as long as the performance continues. The book of hymns located in area 2-3 provides a clue to this function, and is suitable material for those gifted in music or song.

A successful DC 15 passive Perception check reveals that the ancient galeb duhr has an engraved depression on the center of her chest. Actively searching characters notice the depression with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, made at advantage. The depression is shaped like a scallop shell with three pearls along the outer shell edge. Placing a holy symbol of Pelagia in the depression ceases the ancient galeb duhr's and animated menhir's attacks, and dispels the *hallucinatory terrain* effect concealing the hidden path to Pelagia's Womb. With a stony smile, the ancient galeb duhr says, "With the Lady's blessing, follow the way," and beckons the PCs to the hidden path.

However, placing a holy symbol in the depression on a galeb duhr's chest in the middle of combat is easier said than done. To do so, the bearer of the sym-

bol must successfully grapple the ancient galeb duhr, with the PC's Strength (Athletics) check made at disadvantage. If at least one other character uses the Help action, the check is made normally. If another character is successfully playing music or singing (as above), the check is made with advantage. If the bearer rolls a natural 1 during an attempt, he drops the symbol, which lands 1d10 feet in a random direction.



ANCIENT GALEB DUHR

Large elemental, neutral

AC: 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 126 (12d10 + 60)

Speed: 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances: bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages: Common, Terran

Challenge: 8 (3,900 XP)

False Appearance: While the ancient galeb duhr remains motionless it is indistinguishable from a normal menhir.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The ancient galeb duhr makes two slam attacks.

Slam: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Animate Boulders (1/Day): The ancient galeb duhr magically animates up to four menhirs it can see within 60 feet of it. The menhirs remain animated for as long as the ancient galeb duhr maintains concentration, up to 1 minute (as if concentrating on a spell).

The ancient galeb duhr towers at nearly 9 feet tall. Its stony body is somewhat shaped like a curvaceous female humanoid, adorned with scattered patches of vibrant mosses.

ANIMATED MENHIR (4)

Medium elemental, neutral

AC: 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 85 (9d8 + 45)

Speed: 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances: bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages: Terran

Challenge: -

False Appearance: While the animated menhir remains motionless it is indistinguishable from a normal menhir.

ACTIONS

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

Each of these squat, stony creatures has rough-hewn humanoid features. They lumber forth with effort on blocky legs and uncaring lifeless eyes.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

If the characters defeat the ancient galeb duhr, or use the holy symbol to cease its attack and discover the hidden path, divide 3,900 XP between the characters.

AREA 3-2 – PELAGIA’S WOMB

After the *hallucinatory terrain* effect is dispelled, the characters can easily locate this hidden path. It can also be located if seen from above, such as with a *levitate* or *fly* spell. The winding path is treacherous at best, and is considered difficult terrain. Have each character make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw while traveling down the path. A character that fails the saving throw suffers 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from a fall, and until he regains at least 1 hit point, his walking speed is reduced to 15 feet from a leg or foot injury.

When they reach the bottom, read or paraphrase the following:

Battered and even bruised, you finally reach the bottom of the trail, an ebony sand beach. The scent of the briny ocean is strong here, amid the washed-up driftwood, kelp fronds, and other flotsam. Nearby is a natural crack perhaps leading to a grotto, although the entrance is filled with about a foot of water.

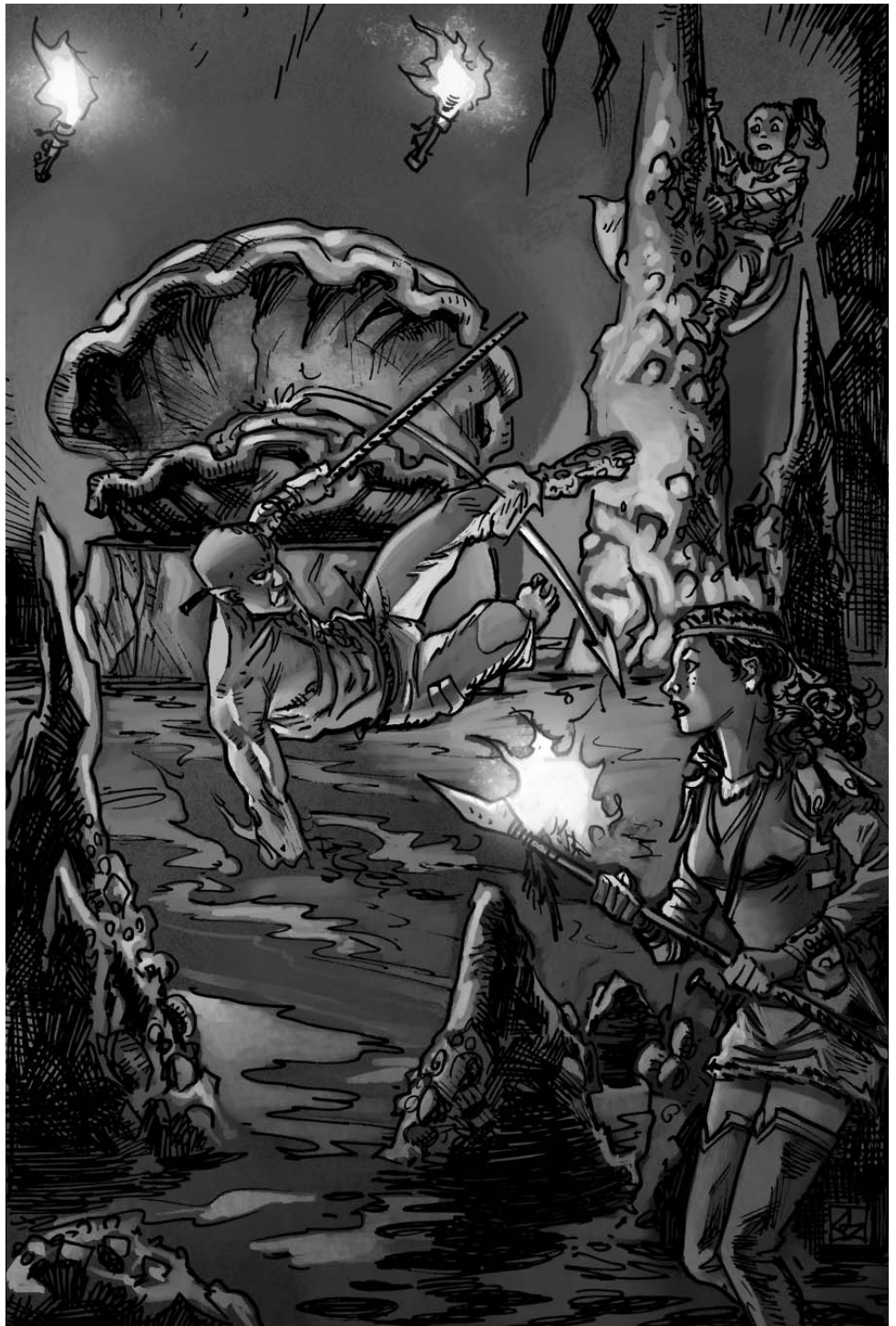
The characters recognize the sand from area 2-3 as likely coming from this beach. The beach is in a secluded cove, and since it’s low tide, numerous sharp rocky outcrops and coral reefs can be seen in the surf. It would be very difficult, if not impossible to land a boat on this tiny beach, except in the calmest of conditions.

If the characters enter the grotto, read or paraphrase the following:

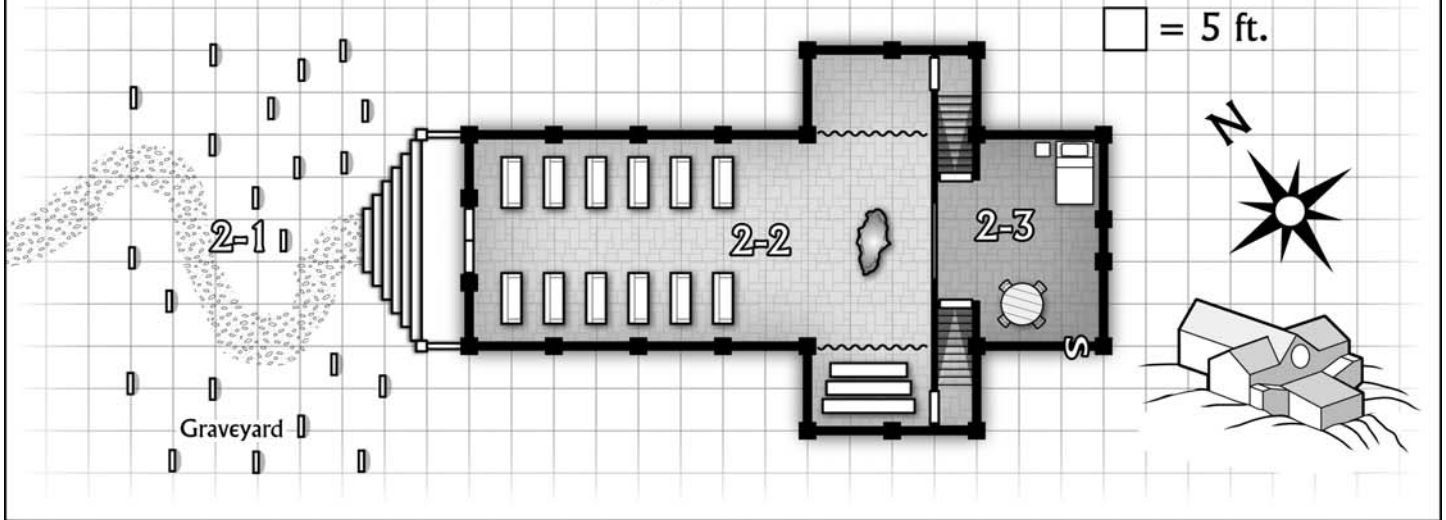
The water is chilly at first, but only about 2 feet deep. A short passage soon opens into a natural chamber, perhaps 60 feet in diameter, bathed in soft light from several flickering torches placed on the walls. The floor is still covered with water, although three stalagmites peek above the water’s surface by several feet. To the right, along the north wall is a natural dais leading to a shelf, covered with black sand. Nestled into the sand is an enormous clam, at least 7 feet in diameter with a pure white-ridged shell, pockmarked with colorful barnacles. Its

mouth is agape, revealing a black-purple lustrous interior. Cradled in the soft fleshy interior is a massive black pearl with dark green streaks. You shudder with a brief chill, as if the pearl is peering into your very soul.

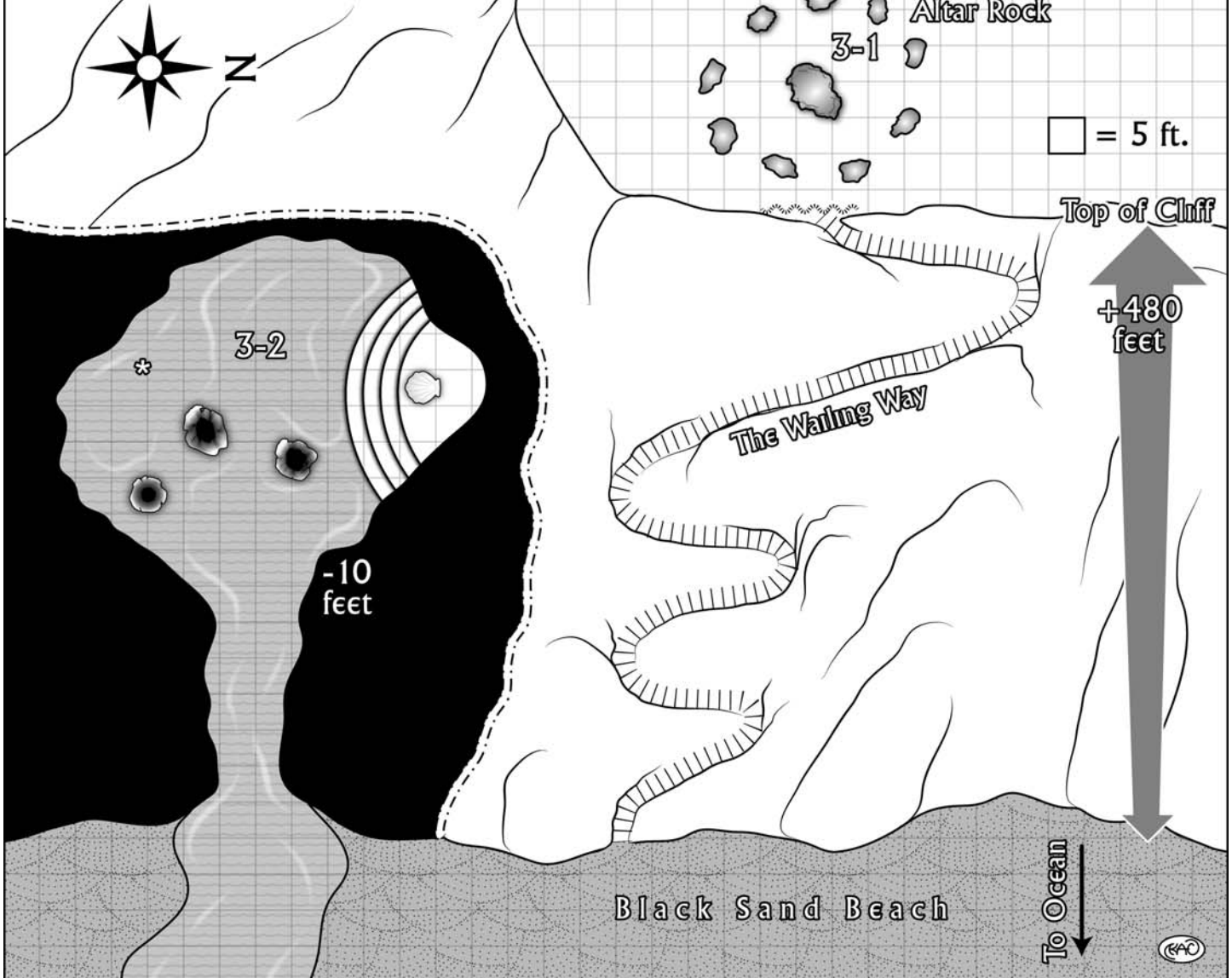
This is Pelagia’s Womb, another sacred site, that’s been used for centuries even before the shrine on the cliff above. In days since past, devout clerics of Pelagia would be laid to rest in this chamber, following elaborate rites and worship. On the outgoing tide, the body would begin its journey to meet the sea goddess herself. It is here that



Area 2 – The Temple of Pelagia



Area 3 – Pelagia's Womb



Mathias hid the *Eye* after stealing it from Elendira, shortly following her murder. He hoped that Pelagia would protect the *Eye* from the clutches of Iychthus. However, the evil of the *Eye* has already corrupted this holy place.

There are four torches, each enchanted with a *continual flame* spell that provides suitable illumination in this chamber. The stalagmites can be used as half cover. The floor is sand and is covered by 1 to 3 feet of water (assume it is low tide when the characters arrive). Movement through the water is considered difficult terrain.

To Deny the *Eye*. Hidden at the spot marked with an “*” on the map is a watertight metal scroll tube pushed into the sand about 1 foot deep. If the characters know where to look, the scroll tube can easily be found in a few minutes. The location is 10 paces (for a size Medium humanoid) due west of the southern stalagmite. This location is depicted in a crude sketch on a wall in area 2-3. The waterproof scroll tube contains several sheets of paper torn hastily from a book. The pages detail an evil artifact in the form of a massive black pearl created by the kraken, called the *Eye of the Leviathan*. The pages hint at a few of its powers, its corrupting effect, and possibly methods to destroy it. (See appendix A.) Mathias hid this information here to give others an opportunity to destroy what he could not.

The massive clam, actually a **corrupted barbshell**, was once a benign beast tended to by the faithful of Pelagia. Mathias thought it was fitting that he hid the *Eye* here, assuming his goddess would protect it. But the *Eye* corrupted the beast, and now it is twisted and evil. As the characters approach to within 10 feet of the clam, it attacks with its fleshy harpoon at a random target, likely with surprise at the GM’s discretion. The beast fights to the death, although being mindless, it can’t harness any of the *Eye*’s special powers.

To complicate matters, an **oceanic chuul** has been attracted to the evil call of the *Eye*, and investigates. A few rounds after the corrupted barbshell attacks, the oceanic chuul attacks from behind the party. It tries to use the water to conceal its approach. Unless the characters specifically state they are watching the rear for other attacks, the oceanic chuul’s Dexterity (Stealth) check is made at advantage. It attacks a nearby target with both pincers, attempting to establish a grapple. If it poisons a target it then lets go to focus on others, especially any near the *Eye*. It fights to the death, lusting for the corrupting influence of the *Eye*.

CORRUPTED BARBSHELL

Large beast, neutral evil

AC: 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 94 (9d10 + 45)

Speed: 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	1 (-5)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills: Perception +1

Damage Resistances: cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses: blindsight 20 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages: -

Challenge: 3 (700 XP)

Amphibious: The corrupted barbshell can breathe air and water.

Fleshy Harpoon: The corrupted barbshell has a fleshy harpoon strand that can be attacked and severed (AC 14; 15 hit points; immunity to bludgeoning and piercing damage). Destroying the fleshy harpoon deals no damage to the corrupted barbshell.

ACTIONS

Harpoon: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). A grappled target is restrained. Only one target can be grappled at a time.

Reel: A grappled target can be reeled in 10 feet as a bonus action each round at the beginning of the corrupted barbshell’s turn. A target can prevent this forced movement with a successful Strength contest, although the corrupted barbshell gets to attempt this contest with advantage.

Crush: A grappled target that enters the corrupted barbshell’s space takes 20 (3d10 + 4) points of bludgeoning damage each round. The check to escape the grapple is now made at disadvantage.

OCEANIC CHUUL

Large aberration, chaotic evil

AC: 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 125 (14d10 + 48)

Speed: 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills: Perception +6

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages: understands Deep Speech but can't speak it

Challenge: 6 (2,300 XP)

Amphibious: The oceanic chuul can breathe air and water.

Sense Magic: The oceanic chuul senses magic within 120 feet of it at will. This trait otherwise works like the *detect magic* spell, but isn't magical itself.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The oceanic chuul makes two pincer attacks. If the oceanic chuul is grappling a creature, it can also use its tentacles once.

Pincer: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft.,

EVENT #2 – MATHIAS RETURNS

Mathias was a devout cleric of Pelagia, and even though he battled through the enchantment to do the right thing, the results were not as expected. Pelagia watched from afar as one of her dedicated flock was manipulated by evil that led to despicable acts. For some reason, perhaps Pelagia is aware of danger the *Eye of the Leviathan* in the hands of a brine vampire lord poses, she has granted a gift to her servant: the spark of unlife. But not a mindless spark with no purpose—instead, Mathias has returned as a **revenant**, bent only on revenge against Iychthus.

But Mathias, even in undeath, is no fool. If he confronts the vampire alone, he is likely doomed to failure that will be relived day after day, unable to escape his undead pris-

one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 15) if it is a Large or smaller creature and the oceanic chuul does not have two other creatures grappled.

Tentacles: One creature grappled by the oceanic chuul must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned, the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success.

DEVELOPMENTS

Assuming the characters have recovered the *Eye*, the next step is to determine what it is and who wants it. If they have not done so already, tracking down the Black Orchid pirates is a logical next move. If the characters need some direction, feel free to run Event #2. The revenant can fill the characters in on some missed facts, and can be the encouragement they need to confront Lord Iychthus. Mathias knows he has no chance to defeat the brine vampire on his own, so allying with the characters is logical.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

If the party defeats the corrupted barbshell, divide 700 XP among the characters. If the party defeats the oceanic chuul, divide 2,300 XP among the characters. If the party locates the hidden scroll tube, award them 250 XP.

on. But if he can ally himself with the heroes, together they can defeat the brine vampire, bring a small dose of justice to Elendira, and prevent a powerful artifact from falling into the clutches of evil.

This event can occur whenever the GM sees fit to get the characters back on track with a confrontation with Iychthus. If they follow all the clues at the temple, proceed to Pelagia's Womb to recover the *Eye*, and then head directly to the *Black Orchid* to defeat Iychthus, Mathias can make a dramatic appearance during the final battle on the ship. But if the characters fail to pick up on an important clue, or feel their work is done once they have the *Eye*, Mathias could step in to nudge the characters towards the finale.

MATHIAS THE REVENANT

Medium undead, neutral

AC: 12

Hit Points: 136 (16d8 + 64)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws: Str +6, Con +7, Wis +7, Cha +7

Damage Resistances: necrotic; psychic

Damage Immunities: poison

Condition Immunities: charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages: Aquan, Common

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Regeneration: Mathias regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes fire or radiant damage, this trait does not function at the start of his next turn. His body is destroyed only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Rejuvenation: When his body is destroyed, his soul lingers. After 24 hours, his soul inhabits and animates another corpse on the same plane of existence and regains all of his hit points. While the soul is bodiless, a *wish* spell can be used to force the soul to go to the afterlife and not return.

Turn Immunity: Mathias is immune to effects that turn undead.

Vengeful Tracker: Mathias knows the distance to and direction of the creature against which he seeks revenge (Lord Iychthus), even if on another plane of existence. If Lord Iychthus dies, Mathias becomes aware of this fact.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: Mathias makes two fist attacks.

Fist: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is the creature against which Mathias has sworn vengeance, the target takes an extra 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, Mathias can grapple the target (escape DC 13) provided the target is Large or smaller.

Vengeful Glare: Mathias targets Lord Iychthus if he can be seen and is within 30 feet. Lord Iychthus must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target is paralyzed until Mathias deals damage to it, or the end of Mathias's next turn. When the paralysis ends, the target is frightened of the revenant for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if it can still see Mathias, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

If the PCs aid Mathias in defeating Lord Iychthus, which in turn releases his soul to attain final peace, divide 1,800 XP between the characters.

ROLEPLAYING MATHIAS

Mathias, even in death, is devoted to Pelagia and her teachings. He obtains another holy symbol, and constantly holds or fidgets with it obsessively, almost as if it is the link between his undead state and this world. He speaks in few words, and his voice is painfully dry, scratchy, and labored. He often mutters, "Deny the Eye" to himself. With a broken neck, he has a difficult time making eye contact while speaking.

Although he understands the need to work with the characters, his ultimate goal is to defeat Iychthus as soon as possible, so that he can finally rest in peace. He tries to work with the characters, even following orders, as long as he is getting closer to his goal. But once in the presence of Iychthus, he likely abandons strategy, and attacks with relentless fury.

AREA 4 – THE *BLACK ORCHID*

The *Black Orchid* is a small galley measuring 90 feet long by 30 feet wide. There is a forecastle, quarterdeck, main deck, hold level, and bilge level. The ship sports a single mast, adorned with a black sail. The prow is shaped like several twisted tentacles.

GENERAL FEATURES

Anchor Chain. A massive anchor, attached to a stout chain, holds the *Orchid* in place. The anchor chain can be climbed with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

Wooden Construction. The *Black Orchid* is primarily composed of ebonywood, a dark hardwood that is somewhat resistant to rotting following exposure to water. Unless one of the crew tosses a rope ladder over the side, climbing the hull requires a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check. Being of wood construction, the ship is susceptible to burning, but the general dampness of the wood adds a degree of difficulty to the process. After working for about 10 minutes' time, a suitable amount of oil or alcohol (three or more flasks) and combustible material, there is a 75% chance the ship catches on fire.

Doors. Ship doors are labeled in the text if they are locked or unlocked. Somewhat flimsy, these doors have AC 14, 10 hit points, and can be broken open with a successful DC 12 Strength check.

Portholes. All interior cabins have at least one porthole. These are usually open, although opening a closed porthole only requires a successful DC 10 Strength check. A Small or smaller creature can squeeze through a porthole as an action.

Crow's Nest. This perch is about 100 feet above the main deck. It can be reached by climbing the rigging with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. A **Black Orchid pirate** is stationed here on look-out, although he sometimes (40% of the time) dozes off.

Crew. The ship is crewed by 11 **Black Orchid pirates**, eight **pirate zombies**, a **pirate captain**, and a **death priest**. Some of this force was likely encountered in Pelagia's Temple (area 2), and the rest are on the ship in various locations as described in the key below.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The *Black Orchid* is considered Lord Iychthus's lair, and therefore has the following regional effects:

- The ship attracts an increased population of carrion gulls, bilge rats, and even vampire squid.
- During the day, a 1,000-foot diameter cloud of thick billowing fog surrounds the ship. This area is considered lightly obscured.
- Lord Iychthus is aware of all creatures in contact with the ship, so he can't be surprised. As long as he is on the ship, this awareness can be used to take lair actions each turn.

LORD IYCHTHUS'S LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Lord Iychthus can harness the power of his lair (the *Black Orchid*) to cause one of the following effects:

- A part of the ship (the rigging, an oar, or a door) animates to attack a nearby creature. Treat this as a melee weapon attack with a +8 to hit. If the attack hits, it causes 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.
- A nearby sail, net, or rope attempts to entangle up to two targets no more than 10 feet apart. Each target must succeed a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained (escape DC 17).
- A part of the ship (the railing or a deck board) uses a special melee attack to shove or trip a target. The target must make a contested Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check against the ship's equivalent Strength check (+10). Failure indicates the target takes 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and is either knocked prone, or if within 5 feet of the ship's railing, is shoved over the side of the ship and into the water. In this case, allow the shoved target a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, with success indicating the target grabbed the railing and now dangles over the side of the ship.

GETTING TO THE SHIP

The ship is moored in the Port Scuttle harbor about 2,500 feet from the docks. It takes about 20 minutes for a rowboat to reach the *Black Orchid*. The characters can use their own boats to make the trek, recover the boats used by the landing party (Event #1) if fleeing pirates were followed, or they could rent a large rowboat at the docks for 12 sp a day (but the owner requires 50 gp in collateral). Of course, high-level characters could also use magic to get to the ship.

Characters in the water are subject to the standard underwater combat rules (Player's Handbook p. 198), and swimming and underwater visibility rules (Dungeon Master's Guide pp. 116-117). If a target enters the water within 500 feet of the *Black Orchid*, he attracts the attention of 1d4 **vampire squid** which begin to attack in 1d4 + 2 rounds. A total of 12 vampire squid can be encountered in this matter.

Unless the characters use magic to conceal their approach to the ship, they need to succeed on three contested Dexterity (Stealth) checks against the look-out pirate's passive Perception score of 11. The fog grants disadvantage to the pirate (passive Perception 16) on the first two checks, but not the third check. If discovered the pirate shouts an alarm, and any pirates on deck (area 4-1) begin to attack the following turn using crossbows, or a ballista as appropriate.

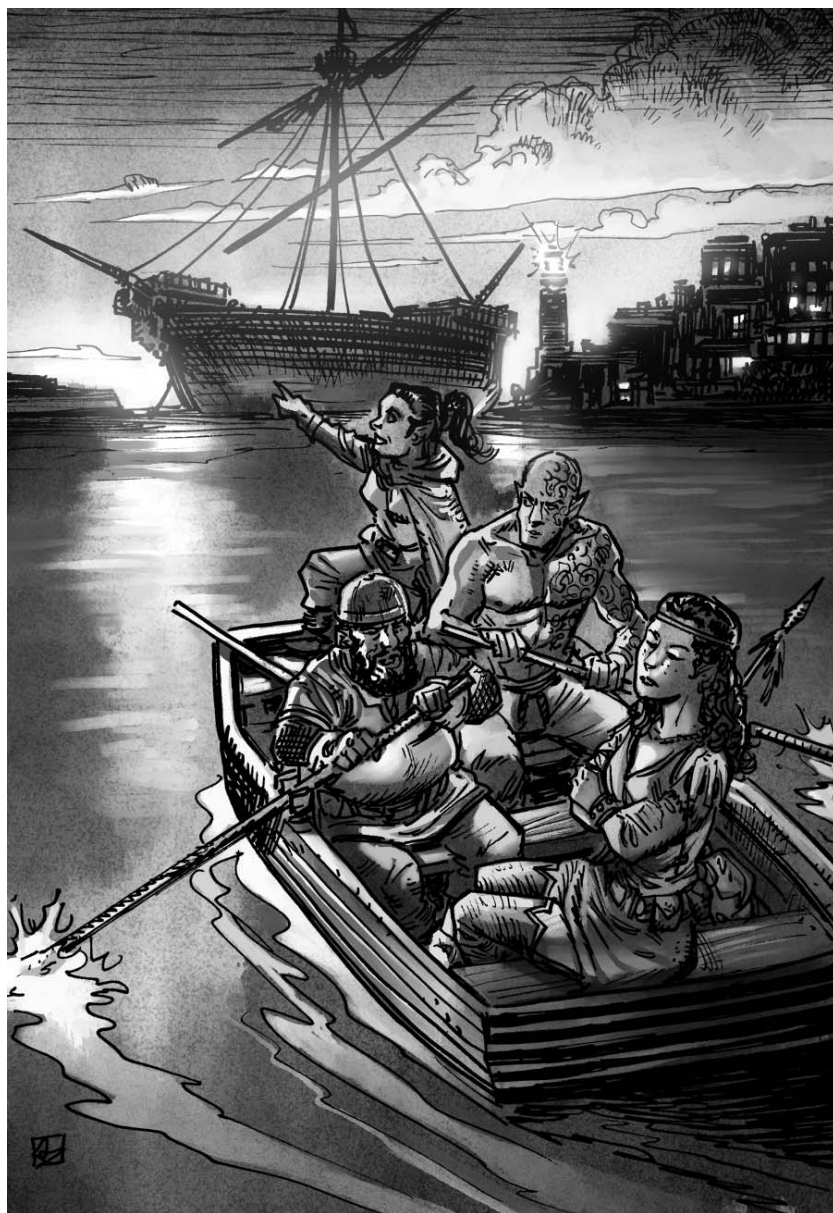
Characters swimming underwater cannot be spotted by the pirates on deck. If swimming at the surface, similar Dexterity (Stealth) checks contested against the pirate's passive Perception are required to reach the hull undetected.

If the characters are discovered approaching the ship, the crew's starting attitude is hostile. It's up to the GM to determine if the characters have any chance to alter the pirates' attitude with magic, bluffing, or other social interaction, or if they sneak on board unnoticed. In all likelihood the pirates attack on the main deck. See the key below for starting locations of the crew and inhabitants of the ship. Any pirates on the main deck (area 4-1) attack at once, with several bringing one or more ballistae to bear if possible. Any remaining pirates from belowdecks arrive after 3 rounds, while Captain Finderhook

arrives after 4 rounds. During round 6, two **swarms of carrion gulls** join the fray. Lord Iychthus is aware of the assault shortly after it begins, and can use any of his lair actions while the characters battle his crew. He does not join the battle, preferring to confront the characters belowdecks (and out of the sunlight.)

LARGE ROWBOAT

AC 14; 26 hit points; starts leaking at half its hit points. If not plugged, a leaking boat sinks in 2d4 + 2 rounds. A typical large rowboat can carry six Medium-sized creatures plus gear.



VAMPIRE SQUID (12)

Medium beast, unaligned

AC: 11

Hit Points: 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed: 0 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills: Perception +2

Senses: blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages: -

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Water Breathing: The vampire squid can only breathe underwater.

ACTIONS

Tentacles: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 11). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 5 (1d8 +1) piercing damage from the vampire squid's beak each turn. The vampire squid can only grapple one target at a time.

REACTIONS

Dazzling Display (1/Day): If the vampire squid takes damage, it can use its reaction to emit a bioluminescent burst of light. All creatures with sight within 10 feet of the vampire squid must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, or become dazzled until the end of their next turn. A dazzled target has disadvantage on all attack rolls and Dexterity saving throws

About 5 feet long, these reddish-brown cephalopods have striking blue eyes and fleshy webbing between their tentacles.

SWARM OF CARRION GULLS (2)

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

AC: 12

Hit Points: 36 (8d8)

Speed: 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

Damage Resistances: bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities: charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: -

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm: The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny gull. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Beaks: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage, or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the creature must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 7 (2d6) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. The creature dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

For each vampire squid and swarm of carrion gulls defeated, divide 100 XP among the characters that participated in the battle.

KEY TO THE BLACK ORCHID

AREA 4-1 – MAIN DECK

The main deck actually comprises the three decks. The quarterdeck is at the aft (rear) of the ship, while the fore-castle deck is at the fore (front) end of the ship. A short stairway from the main deck leads to each. The mast is located on the main deck, and 100 feet overhead is a crow's nest (not depicted), typically occupied by a single pirate. A 10-foot-square hatch leads to the hold level (area 4-6). Hanging off the sides of the hull are four large rowboats, each equipped with oars and suitable for six passengers. Two of these might be missing, used by the crew that encountered the characters in the Temple. Doors lead to the crew's quarters (area 4-2), Captain Finderhook's quarters (area 4-3) and Marek's quarters (area 4-4).

Ballistae. Two ballistae are mounted on swiveling bases on the fore-castle, already loaded. Two crates of heavy bolts, each holding 15 missiles, are nearby. Each weapon requires a crew of two, and it takes an action to load, and an action to aim and fire.

Heavy Bolt: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120/480 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d12) piercing damage.

During the day, 1d6 **Black Orchid pirates** are on the various decks engaging in mundane tasks. The remaining pirates are in area 4-2, and respond in 1d3 rounds. Unless on alert, at night only 1d2 pirates are on the main deck.

BLACK ORCHID PIRATE

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

AC: 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points: 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Special Equipment: A Black Orchid pirate wears leather armor, and carries a cutlass and a light crossbow (with 20 bolts). He has a pouch with 2d6 gp and a tattoo on his left forearm.

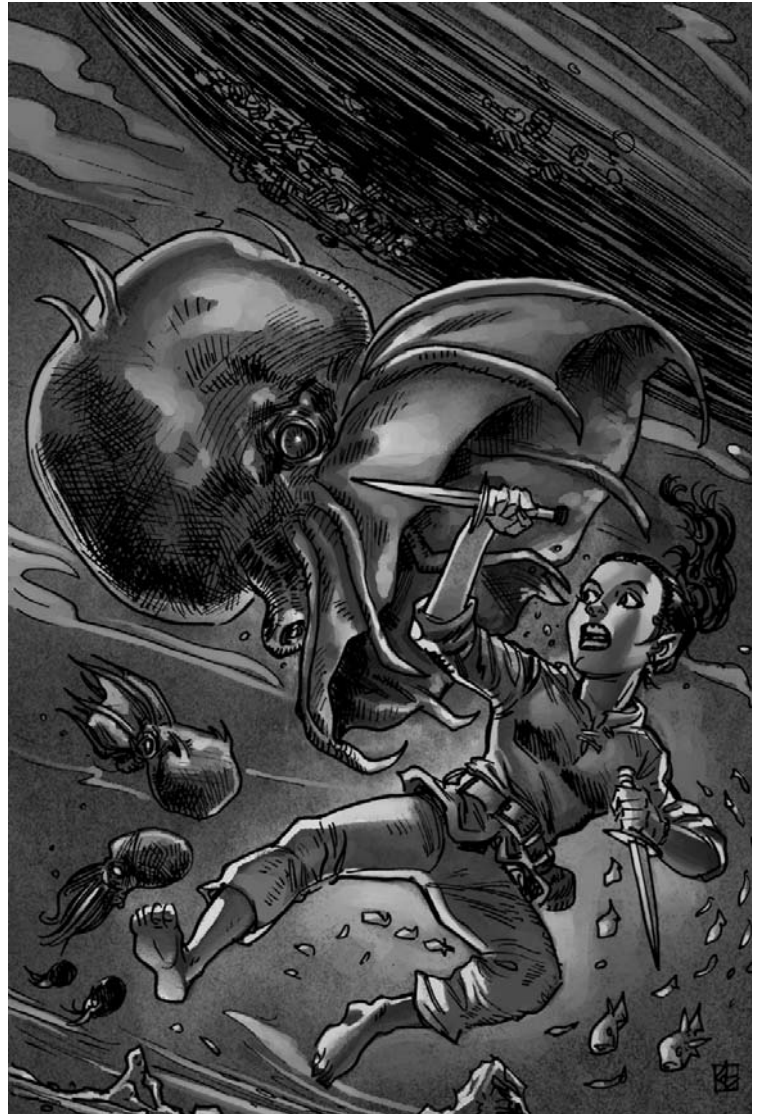
ACTIONS

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

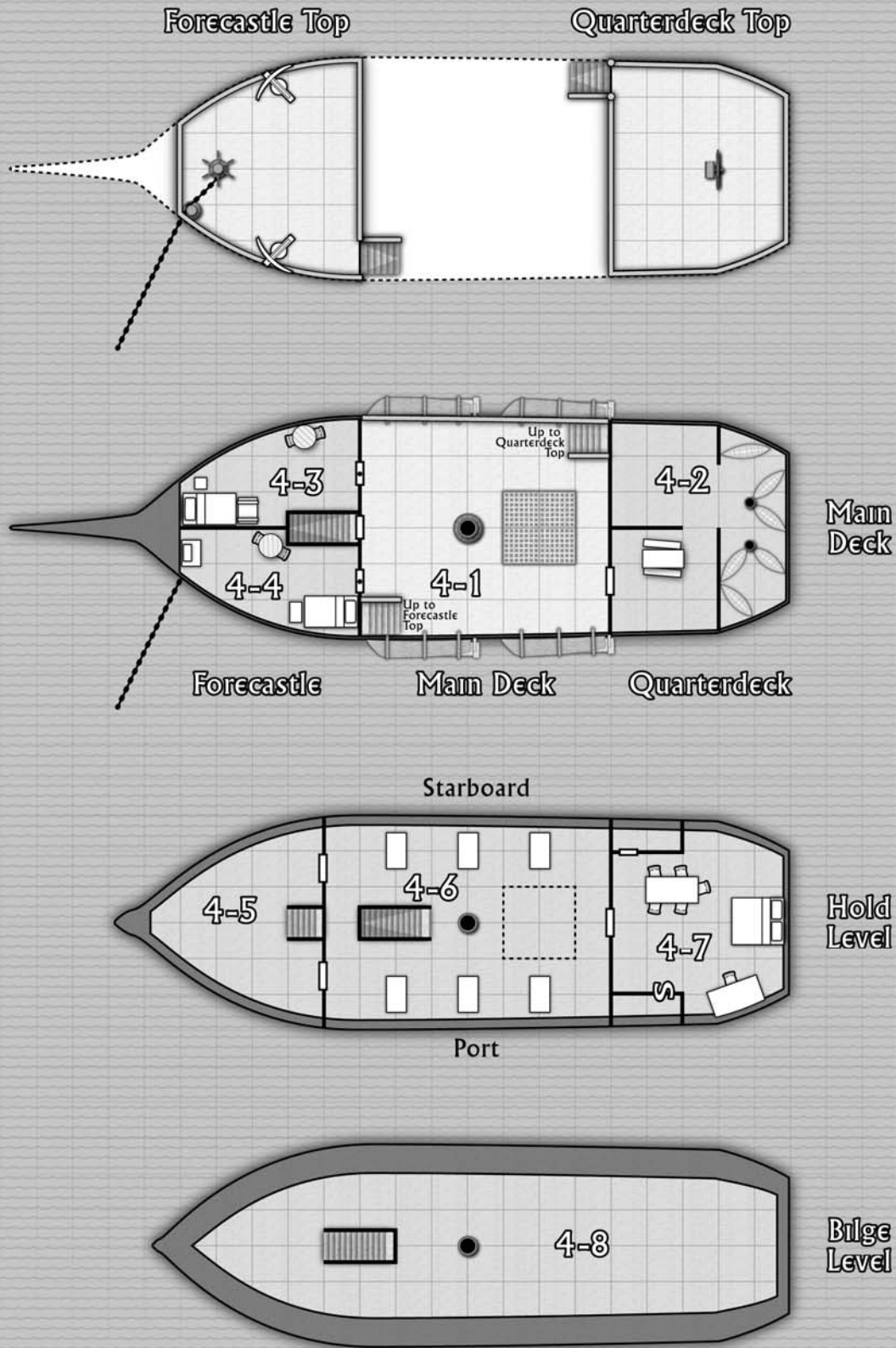
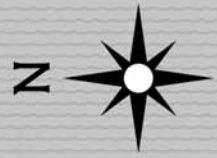
Light Crossbow: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

For each pirate defeated, award the characters 50 XP.



Area 4 – The Black Orchid



□ = 5 ft.



AREA 4-2 – CREW’S QUARTERS

This spacious area serves as the crew’s quarters and mess hall. A partitioned area holds a worn table and benches (attached to the deck), and a small wood-burning stove. An array of pots and pans dangle from hooks on the low ceiling and walls.

The crew area is a tangle of hammocks (12 total), situated two-high to conserve space. Twelve sea chests and a few lockers crowd the available wall space.

Personal Effects. Each pirate maintains a sea chest or locker. All of these are locked with a simple padlock. Keys are either carried by the individual pirate, or are hidden in the quarters somewhere. Each lock can be picked with thieves’ tools and a successful DC 13 Dexterity check. Each contains a variety of clothes, a small cache of coins (3d12 cp and 2d8 gp) and 1d3 small personal effects. See the table below for example items, but the GM is encouraged to create more:

D12 Item

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | collection of fossil shark teeth (worth 3 gp) |
| 2 | teak snuffbox, ivory pipe, and pipe weed (worth 32 gp) |
| 3 | silk scarf smelling of perfume (worth 8 gp) |
| 4 | pouch with three small pearls (each worth 15 gp) |
| 5 | malachite dice set (worth 35 gp) |
| 6 | wood scroll tube holding (GM’s choice) a real treasure map or sappy poetry |
| 7 | small vial of Sea Urchin Poison (Injury) (A creature subjected to this poison must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.) |
| 8 | collection of 37 brass, silver, and gold buttons (worth 17 gp total) |
| 9 | small box of spices derived from kelp and seaweed (worth 21 gp) |
| 10 | six ancient bronze coins depicting a kraken (worth 3 gp each to a collector) |
| 11 | small book of pencil artwork (worth 15 sp) |
| 12 | sharkskin dagger scabbard set with mother-of-pearl (worth 45 gp) |

BLACK ORCHID PIRATE (8)

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

AC: 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points: 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Special Equipment: A Black Orchid pirate wears leather armor, and carries a cutlass and a light crossbow (with 20 bolts). He has a pouch with 2d6 gp and a tattoo on his left forearm.

ACTIONS

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

Light Crossbow: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

DEVELOPMENTS

There are 11 total pirates aboard the ship, although three were likely encountered at the temple (area 2). If any escaped that encounter, they are present on the ship.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

For each pirate defeated, award the characters 50 XP.

AREA 4-3 – CAPTAIN’S QUARTERS

The **pirate Captain Finderhook** resides in this chamber. When not barking orders to his lazy crew, he can be found here sleeping or loafing about. If he hears a commotion on the main deck, he responds in a few rounds, ready for battle. The door is typically locked (the captain carries the key), or it can be picked with thieves’ tools and a successful DC 16 Dexterity check.

The spacious chamber contains a large wooden bed, a locker, a locked sea chest, and a few small tables and plush chairs, all attached to the deck to prevent movement.

Sea Chest. The chest is locked, and requires the key, or can be picked with a set of thieves' tools and a successful DC 18 Dexterity check. The lock is trapped with a **mechanical poison needle trap**. It can be discovered with a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check and disarmed with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. Failure on this check triggers the trap. If triggered, the needle causes 1 piercing damage and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution check, or suffer 16 (3d10) poison damage and become poisoned for 1 hour.

The chest contains a silver dagger set with rubies (worth 125 gp), a wooden box holding 375 gp, a bottle of elven wine (worth 55 gp), a marble statuette of a mermaid (worth 275 gp), and a case of 12 silver-tipped crossbow bolts.

PIRATE CAPTAIN FINDERHOOK

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

AC: 17 (+1 studded leather armor)

Hit Points: 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws: Str +3, Dex +6, Wis +2

Skills: Athletics +3, Deception +4

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: Common

Challenge: 3 (700 XP)

Special Equipment: Finderhook wears +1 studded leather armor and carries a *cutlass of life stealing*, a normal cutlass, and a light crossbow (with 20 bolts), plus a set of keys.

Two-Weapon Fighting: When Finderhook takes the Attack action and attacks with his *cutlass of life stealing*, he can use a bonus action to attack with a light melee weapon that he's holding in the other hand.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The pirate captain makes two attacks with his *cutlass of life stealing*.

Cutlass of Life Stealing: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage. When a 20 is rolled on the attack roll, this

magic weapon inflicts an additional 10 points of necrotic damage if the target is not undead or a construct. Also, the pirate captain gains 10 temporary hit points.

Cutlass (off-hand attack): *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

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

A wiry human wearing black leather armor studded with hard barnacles flashes a quick smile. He has wild black hair held in place with a silk bandana, and a trimmed goatee on an otherwise clean-shaven face. He brandishes a pair of cutlasses, one with a bright blade, the other dark and dull as night.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

If the party defeats the pirate captain, divide 700 XP between the characters.

AREA 4-4 – MAREK'S QUARTERS

The door to this chamber is locked (Marek carries the key), or it can be picked with thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check.

The quarters beyond are spacious, adorned with a simple wooden bed, a table, several chairs, and a wooden altar, all attached to the deck. The altar is pushed against the back wall, with a few pillows scattered in front of it. On the altar are several wax candles, and a silk cover (worth 45 gp). The altar is hollow, and a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the trip to slide it open. Inside are several books on the worship of foul evil deities, two silver incense burners shaped like a demonic head (each worth 75 gp), and a case of nine sticks of incense (worth 110 gp). A copper offering plate (worth 7 cp) still holds 17 sp.

DEVELOPMENTS

Marek is encountered during Event #1, in area 2. If he survived and escaped, he can be encountered here. After casting *shield of faith*, he responds to any commotion on the main deck in a few rounds.

AREA 4-5 – STORAGE

An unlocked door leads from the main deck to steps that provide access to this storeroom on the hold level. A pair of doors here lead to the hold (area 4-6).

This area is full of crates and casks. Most of the crates contain dried food, salted fish, meat jerky, and grains. A few crates hold mundane supplies such as hand tools and nails. The casks mostly are full of fresh water, although a few are empty, one contains poor quality rum (worth 10 gp), and one cooking oil. Two small casks are full of solid tar for repairs. Several bolts of cloth (sail material) and wooden planks are stacked along one wall.

AREA 4-6 – HOLD

This damp, dark area has only a 7-foot ceiling. It's generally unlit, unless the hatch to the main deck (area 4-1) is open. A thin stairway leads down to the bilge level (area 4-8), and an unlocked door leads to Lord Iychthus's quarters (area 4-7). Three worn wooden benches line each side of the hull. Long oars reside nearby in racks, and sliding windows can be opened to deploy the oars.

DEVELOPMENTS

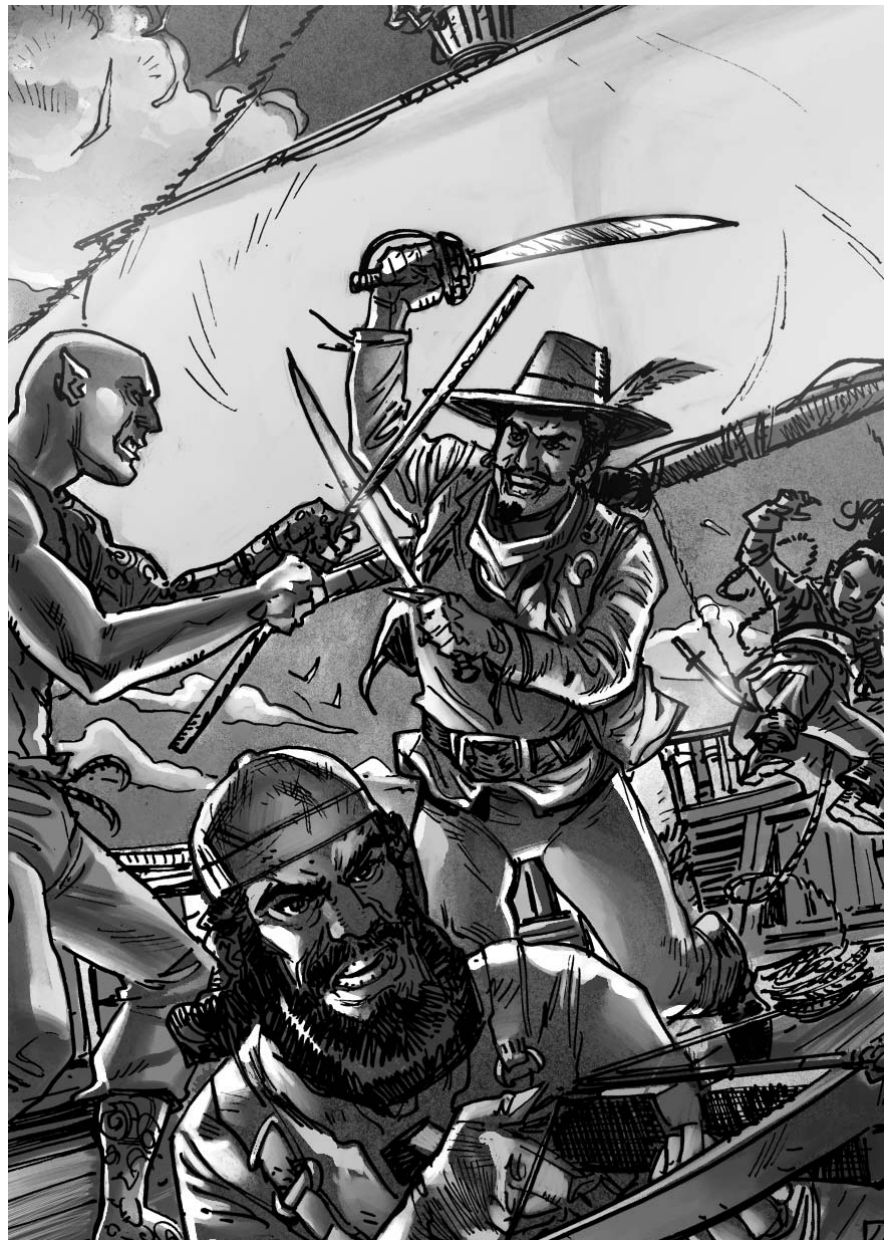
A group of pirate zombies are used to perform rowing and other menial tasks on the ship. These undead were likely encountered during Event #1 (area 2), and there is no chance they can be found here.

AREA 4-7 – IYCHTHUS'S QUARTERS

The door to this chamber is always unlocked. No one dares enter without permission from the Lord of the *Black Orchid*. The ceiling here is a full 10 feet high, and the floor is covered with thick plush carpet. A

long table covered with sea charts is to the left, while a wrought-iron bed is pushed against the far wall, under several larger windows. To the right of the bed is a writing desk strewn with books and papers.

Lord Iychthus, a brine vampire, resides in these quarters. The sea charts on the table are worth 225 gp, and cover several silver measuring tools (worth 65 gp as a set) and an ornate bronze astrolabe (worth 750 gp). The bed is covered with silk covers (worth 85 gp) and three silk pillows (each worth 10 gp). The books and papers on the desk include navigational notes and a trade ledger (which a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals to be fake). Another book, covered with a strange leather hide (worth 125 gp), details an ancient underwater civilization, but it's not clear if it's fact or fiction. A bookmarked page reveals a few notes about a powerful ar-



tifact called the *Eye of the Leviathan* (description, hints on its powers—incorrect—and potential ways to destroy it).

Secret Chamber. Along the port wall is a secret door that can be located with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. Picking up a loose floor board unlatches the door, which can be slid open, revealing a 5-foot-deep-by-10-foot-wide closet. Previously a smuggling hold, Iychthus now uses it for his prized treasure. Inside is a straw-lined wooden box holding six bottles of deep gnome wine extracted from fungus. An acquired taste, each bottle would fetch 150 gp if a buyer could be found. Three bulging sacks are next to the box. The first one holds 1,765 sp, the second 644 sp and 998 gp, and the last one holds 1,333 gp and 229 pp. Three bolts of silk (worth 110 gp, 275 gp, and 440 gp, respectively) lean up against one corner.

A large iron-bound oaken chest with a massive padlock also rests in the closet. The chest is locked, but not trapped. Iychthus carries the only key, an ornate skeleton key shaped like a demonic creature set with tiny rubies (worth 225 gp for the lock and key set). Picking the lock requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. Inside is black leather sack holding 31 chunks of lapis lazuli each worth 50 gp. Under the sack is graywood puzzle box (worth 55 gp; requires a DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) check to open) holding four *potions of water breathing*. Wrapped in a piece of dragon turtle hide (worth 70 gp) is a matching set of pearl jewelry, including a ring (550 gp), gold tiara (885 gp), and necklace (1225 gp). Finally, a *helm of underwater action* and a *folding boat* can be found at the bottom of the chest.

Lord Iychthus is aware of the party's presence as soon as they set foot on the ship. He waits in this chamber while his crew defends the ship, softening up the opposition. If he has both uses of his Children of the Dark Sea ability left, he even summons a few swarms of carrion gulls to aid his crew above deck. Meanwhile, he uses lair actions against opposing forces as appropriate, preferring to toss targets over the side where he knows hungry vampire squid await. When the battle is over, assuming the characters have the upper hand, he confronts them on deck (area 4-1) (if it's night) or in the hold (area 4-6). He begins the confrontation summoning several swarms of bilge rats (from area 4-8), followed by charming a victim. He then gleefully wades into melee, relying on his resistances and regeneration while employing his lair and legendary actions as appropriate. If reduced to half of his hit points, he uses his Shapechanger trait to escape out a porthole, allowing him a chance to regenerate before resuming the attack above deck or below. If reduced to 0 hit points, he is forced to flee to the bilge level (area 4-8), his resting area.

LORD IYCHTHUS, BRINE VAMPIRE

Lord Iychthus is an intelligent foe, and uses his Shapechanger and Regeneration traits to continue his confrontation against the characters. Give the characters several opportunities to reduce him to 0 hit points, but eventually, these hit-and-run tactics can get frustrating for the characters. If the GM desires, at some point Iychthus simply flees the ship, content to return to his masters. He makes the perfect recurring villain, eventually returning with reinforcements to recover the *Eye*, and exact revenge on the characters. The undead Mathias can remain with the characters to provide an interesting NPC, but only if the characters' priority remains the defeat of the brine vampire

LORD IYCHTHUS

Medium undead (shapechanger), lawful evil

AC: 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 144 (17d8 + 68)

Speed: 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws: Dex +9, Wis +7, Cha +9

Skills: Perception +7, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances: necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses: darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages: Aquan, Common

Challenge: 13 (10,000 XP)

Special Equipment: Lord Iychthus wears a fancy red cloak, a matching wide-brimmed hat, and black *boots of the zephyr* (see appendix A). He carries a skeleton key but no weapons.

Shapechanger: If Lord Iychthus isn't in direct sunlight or standing on solid ground, he can use his action to polymorph into a Tiny carrion gull or a Medium cloud of mist, or back into his true form.

While in carrion gull form, Lord Iychthus can't speak, his walking speed is 5 feet, and he has a flying speed of 30 feet. His statistics, other than size and speed, are unchanged. Anything he is wearing transforms with

him, but nothing he is carrying does. He reverts to his true form if he dies.

While in mist form, Lord Iychthus can't take any actions, speak, or manipulate objects. He is weightless, has a flying speed of 20 feet, can hover, and can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can do so without squeezing, although it can't pass through water. Lord Iychthus has advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws, and is immune to all nonmagical damage except the damage he takes from sunlight.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day): If Lord Iychthus fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Misty Escape: When Lord Iychthus drops to 0 hit points outside of his resting place, he transforms into a cloud of mist (as in the Shapechanger trait) instead of falling unconscious, provided he isn't in sunlight or standing on solid ground. If he can't transform, he is destroyed.

While he has 0 hit points in mist form, he can't revert to his vampire form, and must reach his resting place within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once in his resting place, he reverts to his vampire form. He is then paralyzed until he regains at least 1 hit point. After spending 1 hour in his resting place with 0 hit points, he regains 1 hit point.

Regeneration: Lord Iychthus regains 20 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or standing on solid ground. If he takes radiant damage, or damage from holy water or consecrated soil, this trait does not function at the start of his next turn.

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

Vampire Weaknesses: Lord Iychthus has the following flaws:

Forbiddance. Lord Iychthus can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of its occupants.

Harmed by Standing on Earth. Lord Iychthus has disadvantage on all attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks while standing on earth.

Stake to the Heart. If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into Lord Iychthus's heart while he is incapacitated in his resting place, he is paralyzed until the weapon is removed.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. Lord Iychthus takes 20 radiant damage when he starts his turn in sunlight.

While in sunlight, he has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Vampire Form Only): Lord Iychthus makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Unarmed Strike (Vampire Form Only): *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, Lord Iychthus can grapple the target (escape DC 18).

Bite (Squid or Vampire Form Only): *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by Lord Iychthus, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and Lord Iychthus regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target completes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then placed in water rises the next night as a brine vampire spawn under Lord Iychthus's control.

Charm: Lord Iychthus targets one humanoid he can see within 30 feet of him. If the target sees Lord Iychthus, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed. The charmed target regards Lord Iychthus as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under Lord Iychthus's control, it takes his requests or actions in the most favorable way it can, and is a willing target for Lord Iychthus's bite attack.

Each time Lord Iychthus does anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until Lord Iychthus is destroyed, is on a different plane, or takes a bonus action to end the effect.

Children of the Dark Sea (2/Day): Lord Iychthus magically calls 2d4 swarms of carrion gulls or bilge rats, provided the sun is not up. While outdoors, Lord Iychthus can call 3d6 vampire squid instead. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies and obeying spoken commands. The beasts remain for 1 hour, until Lord Iychthus dies, or until he dismisses them as a bonus action.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Lord Iychthus can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Legendary actions are regained at the start of Lord Iychthus's turn.

Move: Lord Iychthus moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Unarmed Strike: Lord Iychthus makes one unarmed strike.

Bite (Costs 2 Actions): Lord Iychthus makes one bite attack.

Adorned in fancy crimson clothes, the sickly gray-green flesh of this humanoid glistens with moisture. A wide-brimmed hat conceals his bald head, but his piercing red eyes penetrate the gloaming shadows nevertheless. Blood-red gill slits on each side of his neck betray an aquatic origin, as he cracks a confident smile.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters have not yet encountered Mathias the revenant (Event #2), his soaked form climbs over the railing and enters the fray. Mathias points to Iychthus with a crooked finger and utters a raspy curse, while using his Vengeful Glare action. For a brief moment, Iychthus appears unnerved, but he quickly recovers. Mathias then closes to attack Iychthus with his pummeling fists, his relentless assault only ceasing in defeat or when Iychthus flees. Mathias uses his Vengeful Tracker trait to find Iychthus and finish the deed.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

If the characters permanently destroy Lord Iychthus, divide 10,000 XP among them.

AREA 4-8 – BILGE

The bilge level of the ship has a 6-foot-high ceiling, although the floor is covered with 1 foot of stagnant sea water. The floor is considered difficult terrain. The dashed line on the map denotes the curved shape of the hull.

The upper floor between the hold and bilge levels is mostly hollow, and serves as the lair for several **swarms of bilge rats**. While on the ship, Lord Iychthus is limited to calling four swarms with his Children of the Sea trait. The bilge rats will not interact with the characters, aside from the occasional glimpse or brushing up on a character's leg underwater, unless summoned by Iychthus.

SWARM OF BILGE RATS (4)

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

AC: 10

Hit Points: 32 (7d8)

Speed: 30 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances: bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities: charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses: darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages: -

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell: The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm: The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bite: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm is at half of its hit points or fewer.

DEVELOPMENTS

The bilge level serves as Lord Iychthus's resting place. If defeated above deck, he retreats here if able, and submerges his body under the foul stagnant water, regaining 1 hit point after an hour of rest. The characters need to find his body if they want to destroy him permanently.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

For each swarm of bilge rats defeated, award 50 XP to the characters.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the characters defeat Iychthus, Mathias's soul is released from his undead body, and with a smile and a wink, he departs to serve his goddess in the afterlife. Award the characters 1,800 XP for releasing Mathias's soul. Award them an additional 2,500 XP if they recovered the *Eye*.

The town of Port Scuttle has very little offer in reward for powerful characters, but if they are willing to wait for a week, and assuming nobody comes forth to claim the *Black Orchid* (GM's discretion), the town gifts the galley to them, a prize worth 15,000 gp.

APPENDIX A: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

BOOTS OF THE ZEPHYR

Wondrous item, very rare

These black leather boots have iron soles inscribed with runes. While both boots are worn, they allow the wearer to move normally while floating 4 inches above the ground. The effect allows the wearer to cross or stand on unstable surfaces, such as water or lava, and ignore the effects of difficult terrain. The wearer also leaves no tracks.

EYE OF THE LEVIATHAN

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

The *Eye of the Leviathan* is a lustrous pearl, a full 6 inches in diameter, colored inky black, with random drab green swirls. The surface of the pearl is cool to the touch, yet has a calming effect.

Wrought by eldritch forces of kraken sorcerers, this powerful artifact has a gradual corrupting effect on those who possess it. Once attuned to a creature, the pearl bestows several beneficial magical effects. First, it grants a +2 Wisdom bonus. Twice per day, it can be used to cast *clairvoyance*, and once per day it can be used to cast *freedom of movement*. The *Eye* acts as an enhanced *pearl of power*, recalling two spells per day up to 5th level.

Corruption. The *Eye* has one major detrimental property. Each day the *Eye* is attuned to a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or have its alignment shifted one rank closer to chaotic evil. For morality, good shifts to neutral, and then neutral shifts to evil. For society and order, lawful shifts to neutral, which then shifts to evil. For each day that the creature succeeds

the saving throw, the DC increases by 1 cumulatively. Following a shift in alignment, the Wisdom saving throw resets to DC 13. For example, it would take a lawful good target four failed saving throws to progress to chaotic evil (lawful good to lawful neutral, to lawful evil, to neutral evil, and finally to chaotic evil).

If the characters decide to destroy the *Eye*, they can use the scroll in area 3-2 or the book in area 4-7 to begin the investigation on how to handle such a powerful artifact. See appendix A for suggested methods of destruction. Further research and consultation with a wise sage or wizard would likely be required before such a quest could be attempted. If Iychthus escaped, he is sure to clash again with the characters as they attempt to destroy the *Eye*. Even if they defeated him, the mysterious cabal (to be fleshed out by the GM) sends another powerful agent to recover the *Eye*. But, that is another tale to tell...

Destroying the *Eye*. There are several ways rumored to destroy the *Eye*:

- Bathe the *Eye* in the flames of a phoenix plumage for 5 turns.
- Submerge the *Eye* in the blood of an efreeti prince heated to a boil on the Elemental Plane of Fire.
- Encase the *Eye* in stone from the effects of a gorgon's breath, while being held by virgin, and then shatter the rock.

MACE OF BRILLIANCE

Weapon (mace), rare

This mace has a head shaped like a clam and composed of the purest coral, with pronounced ridges on its outer shell. The handle is wrapped in selkie leather inlaid with lapis lazuli.

When you hit a fiend or undead creature with this magic weapon, you inflict 1d6 additional radiant damage. You can use a bonus action to hold the mace aloft and command it to shed bright light in a 10-foot radius, and dim light in another 10-foot radius, for up to 30 minutes. This power is usable once per day.

APPENDIX B: NEW SPELLS

KRAKEN'S TENTACLES

4th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 90 feet

Components: V, S, M (a piece of dried kraken flesh, or a small vial of kraken ink)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Squirming brown tentacles fill a 20-foot-square area on the ground that you can see within range. At the center of the tentacles is a beak-like maw. For the duration, this area is considered difficult terrain.

When a creature enters the affected area for the first time on a turn, or starts its turn there, the creature must suc-

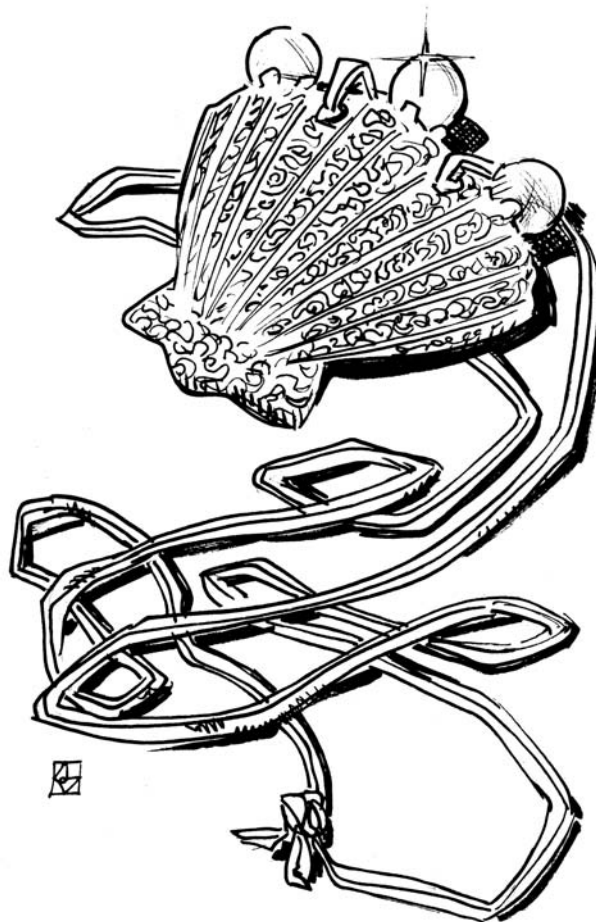
ceed on Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 bludgeoning damage and become restrained by the tentacles until the spell ends. Up to two creatures that start their turn in the area and are already restrained by the tentacles take 2d8 piercing damage from the beak.

A creature restrained by the tentacles can use an action to make a Strength or Dexterity check (its choice) against the caster's spell save DC. On a success, it frees itself, but still must move out of the area of effect, or risk re-capture by the tentacles.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot 5th level or higher, the tentacle damage increases by 1d6 and the bite damage increases by 1d8 for each slot above 4th.

APPENDIX C: PLAYER HANDOUTS

PLAYER HANDOUT #1 PELAGIA'S HOLY SYMBOL



PLAYER HANDOUT #2 MATTHIAS'S LAMENT

A handwritten note scribbled on a piece of parchment:

*AS I DRAW MY FINAL BREATH,
AND SLIP BELOW THE WAVES
TO YOUR ALTAR, I PRAYED AND PRAYED.
BUT THE ROCK DID NOT SWAY.*

*FINALLY, I EMBRACE MY RESTS,
YET I DO NOT KNOW THE WAY!
MY EYE IS FIXED ON THE GOAL,
HAVE PATIENCE TO GUIDE MY WAYWARD SOUL.*

*IN SOFT SORROW I BEG THEE,
GRANT ME SWEET PELAGIA'S GIFT,
SO THAT I MAY RETURN TO HER WOMB.
MY JOURNEYS END SHALL BE SOON.*

*I ENSHROUD MYSELF IN THE LADY'S CARESS,
A SYMBOL OF HER LASTING PROTECTION.*

*SHE REVEALS ALL TO ME,
AS I BASK IN THE RADIANCE,
I EMBARK ON MY WAY.*

DENY THE EYE....

PLAYER HANDOUT #3 INSCRIPTION ON THE WALL



PLAYER HANDOUT #4 THE CIPHER

This is a jagged scrap of paper, used as a bookmark. It depicts a series of numbers:

1-2-3	1-3-3	1-4-3
2-1-5	2-2-6	2-3-2
3-1-1	3-2-4	3-3-8
4-1-5	4-1-6	4-2-2
4-3-2	4-4-5	4-5-5

PLAYER HANDOUT #5 BLACK ORCHID TATTOO

This small picture depicts a tattoo on the forearm of a human pirate. The tattoo is a black flower (an orchid; pictured to the right). The petals (5) are ebony, with thin white striations. The labellum (center part) is white with a crimson splatters pattern (almost like blood). Instead of the four branches as depicted, replace with two curled kraken tentacles from behind the orchid. The gray tentacles are barbed with wicked suckers, lighter in color.



FIFTH EDITION FANTASY

EYE OF THE LEVIATHAN

A LEVEL 8 ADVENTURE

Fifth Edition Fantasy is here! This adventure module is fully compatible with the fifth edition of the world's first fantasy RPG, and is ready to play in your home campaign!

Murder! Ripples of shock pour through the wee hours of the sleepy fishing shanty of Port Scuttle. An innocent young fishmonger, beloved by the locals, has been brutally murdered in her own shop. Stunned by the grisly act, the typically hardened townsfolk turn to powerful heroes to investigate the gruesome deed. Could the fishmonger's recent discovery of a massive black pearl be a possible motive? The heroes' goal is to not only bring the perpetrator to justice, but determine the twisted purpose behind the ghastly act. Concerned townsfolk decry that the evildoer must hang for his or her despicable crime. Yet when the heroes finally track down the murderer, he is already dead by the noose, and the investigation has truly only begun. Clues hint at even darker designs, as an ancient evil stirs to reclaim a once lost malevolent relic.



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