# MITHRILPUNK

# The Legend of Old Crank



A 5th Edition Adventure for 7th Level Characters

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*When a pair of merchant vessels go missing, the party is called to ensure the owners cannot collect on their insurance. Will they pull off the job without attracting unexpected attention?*

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# MITHRILPUNK

# Adventure Background

Longinus Bluescale, shield of the bankers, is an up and coming player in the legitimate (for Skyfall) insurance business. He has managed to acquire a book of business faster than many would believe possible, all thanks to the vast personal wealth of the Bluescale tribe of Lizard folk. Using this wealth, he has purchased insurance contracts for several mid-level shipping concerns and has enjoyed quite a bit of profit in recent months.

Now Longinus has a problem, because two of the ships have failed to arrive, allegedly brought down by pirates. Unfortunately, Longinus has an even bigger problem: the Bluescale tribe are a bunch of savage bumpkins possessed of nearly no wealth. Unless Longinus can find proof that the ships were brought down by something that isn't covered by the contract, he is going to face some very uncomfortable questions and likely a much more uncomfortable execution. Luckily, he knows a few hired hands that have the skill and creativity to "prove" the ships weren't taken down by pirates.

Longinus Bluescale:
The very picture of a refined lizardfolk, Longinus favors fine pipes, deep red wines, and expensive bloody steaks of origin best left undisclosed. Born to a savage and feral tribe, he nonetheless managed to convince the bankers he is the scion of a refined and wealthy tribe.

# Adventure Summary

In this adventure the party is hired to *"discover the truth"* (**manufacture the truth**) of the fate of a pair of shipping vessels (**any fate is fine so long as it isn't a covered peril**). They must first learn the true fate of the ships and then ensure that no one else can possibly do the same. Along the way, they will plumb the depths of the ocean and explore a forgotten island. Upon discovering the truth (**it was definitely pirates**) they must deal with the issue (**kill the pirates**) and obtain evidence (**destroy evidence**) to prove that a mythical being "Old Crank" destroyed the insured vessels (**a blatant lie**). If they can pull this off, a very wealthy (**nearly broke**) banker will owe them immensely (**try to have them killed**).

# Episode 1 – A Crash Course in Insurance

In this episode, the party is called to meet their patron, Longinus Bluescale. Along the way another interested party offers them a side job, and they must deal with the usual dangers of the city.

After some investigation and preparation, they set sail toward one of two potential lead locations.

## Encounter 1.1 – Called to the Meet

This encounter serves to pull the party into the action. The characters have earned a reputation as people who can get things done. You should take a few minutes to change the tone of the conversation to reflect the party's previous exploits.

**Read or Paraphrase:**

> You've managed to run out of coin again; that last job didn't end up paying quite as well as you expected, what with all the bribes it took to get the watch off your tails. Luckily, the message just delivered to you bears the waxen seal of the Banker's Guild.

## Sidebar: The Banker's Note

> This note reeks of affluence and opulence. The parchment is of the highest quality and the ink is flecked with gold. The handwriting is swooping and precise.

> "Your presence is requested by the most respected lord of the Banking Guild, Longinus Bluescale. Make haste forthwith to his residence for a matter both urgent and lucrative. Discretion is of the utmost importance."

The party can take one of dozens of paths through the city to meet Longinus, many of which are at least reasonably safe. Assuming the party has been living in the city for any appreciable time, they should be able to avoid any real trouble. If they are new to the city, or have a foolish reputation, they are likely to run into a confidence game or a ruffian looking for quick coin. Should you need a random encounter while in the city consult the following table or use it for inspiration.

### Random City Encounter (roll a d20)

1-10: No Encounter

11-12: Firewatch (Roll 1d6 1-2 crooked watch looking for a bribe, 3-4 suspicious of the party, 5-6 busy dealing with a crime scene)

13-15: merchant or other seller of wares, 25% chance to have a pick pocket attempt to lift something off a character

16-18: Local Muscle (gang, private guard, or other depending on the locale) takes exception to the party being in their neighborhood, could turn violent unless dealt with.

19-20: Tourist stops to ask for directions, 50% chance someone tried to pickpocket the tourist.

Regardless of whether the party runs into trouble, they have a chance to realize they are being tailed. If anyone in the party makes a DC 15 Insight check, they have the feeling they are being watched. Anyone who makes the Insight check can also make a DC 17 Perception check. On a success, that character knows the party is being tailed.

If the party tries to turn the tables on the people tailing them, you have some options. If you want to play up the
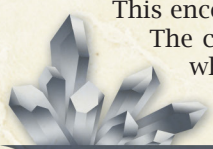
mystery of why they are being followed and by whom, have the assassins trailing them disappear into what seems like thin air once the party makes their move, then have the feeling of being watched/tailed come back in later scenes. If you think the party could use a little more information before meeting with Longinus, have the assassins from Encounter 1.4 approach them as soon as they realize they have been made.

## Encounter 1.2 – The Meet

In this encounter the Party interacts with Longinus and depending on how well they impress him, they get a different version of the truth of the situation at hand.

**Read or Paraphrase:**

> The Banker's office is as you'd expect: secure, refined, and opulent. There is a certain appearance of modesty to the decorating but it is a façade. Everything is exquisitely crafted and surprisingly sturdy. Your potential employer, Longinus Bluescale, studies you carefully as he appraises your worth.

Before he gets down to business, Bluescale will attempt to get the measure of the party. How well they impress him directly impacts not just the pay for the mission, but the information he provides and potentially his decision of how to handle them after they accomplish their goal.

The party can impress Longinus here or convince him they are nothing but a cudgel to be used and discarded. To simulate this, keep track of "points"; any time the Party does something he approves of add a point and if they do something he doesn't approve of, subtract one or more points. Longinus judges each character individually as well as the group as a whole. To facilitate this he asks each character a question. He expects that character to answer without reliance on a "face".

### Example Questions
· What is the most impressive job you have ever pulled?
· If it came down to saving your comrades or completing the mission for me, which would you do?
· What is more vital, Stealth or Guile?
· Sword, Knife, or Smile? Why?
· Tell me about a time when a mission went wrong.
· Why should I trust you?

There are no "Right" answers to the above questions but there are answers that will sway Longinus.

### Likes
· Honesty
· Unoffered Third Choices (i.e. when choosing between mission and comrade, and answer like "my contingency plan would prevent this scenario")
· Confidence
· A balanced approach
· Answers appropriate to the speaker's skills
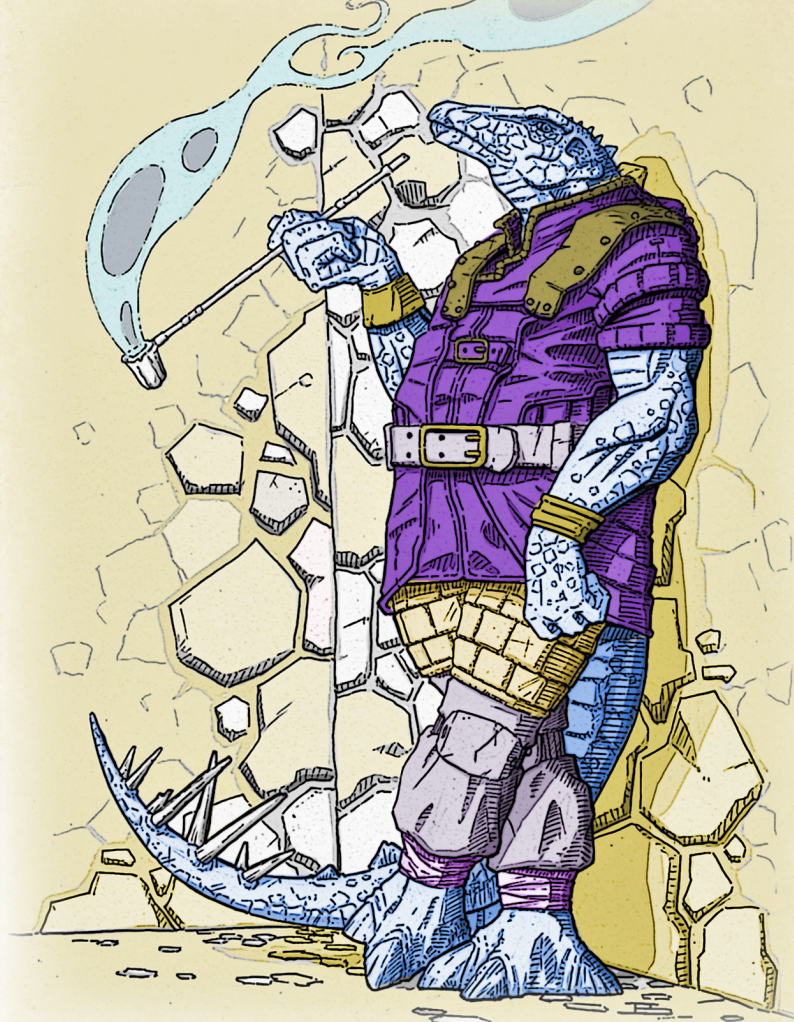
(a barbarian for instance would get points for choosing a direct (likely violent) approach while a bard would not.

### Dislikes
· Lying unconvincingly
· Too much flattery
· Deferring to another to answer a question
· Answering immediately without considering
· Considering too long before answering

### Longinus' Opinion
Depending on how many "points" the party gains Longinus has the following rough outlook:

-5 Longinus lies through his teeth, offers a generous salary for the work and enacts a plan to outright murder the party when they return

-2 to – 4 Longinus feels confident but a bit cautious in duping the PCs. He offers generous pay and plans on Murdering the PCs but is open to changing his mind and is wary of the PCs

+1 to -1 Longinus feels his odds of getting away with murdering the PCs are low but believes he can dupe them, he'll offer a modest payday with potential bonuses (that he intends to never pay)

+2 - +4 Longinus is confident in the PCs accomplishing their mission, but doubts he has the ability to dispatch them if they get out of hand. Rather than a generous salary, he offers them a substantial number of banking guild favors.

+5 Longinus is concerned the PCs are too good for the job and sure to find his dark secret. With a bit of pressure, he caves and the PCs basically end up with a banker in their pocket if they pull the mission off.

## Information Provided by Longinus

If your party is more morally minded than most, Longinus is aware of it and tailors his information to make himself sound like a victim. For example, he will indicate that he knows the ship's owners are in league with the suspected pirates and needs the party to remove the evidence to protect himself from fraudulent claims. Otherwise he fairly bluntly tells the truth about wanting to get out of paying the contracts (but not the truth about his finances).

- Two ships The Red Coin and Fate's Knave have been reported missing. He can provide basic details of the ships (see sidebar)
- Longinus will have to pay a substantial sum if the ships were brought down by pirates or the weather. He is hiring the party to investigate what brought the ships down.
- He makes it abundantly clear that by "investigate" he means ensure by destroying and/or planting evidence. He suggests that perhaps the best scenario is if the ships were destroyed by something clearly not covered by the policy, something like "Old Crank"

Longinus is a sharp negotiator. If he thinks the party is too moral for the insurance fraud he is attempting to perpetrate, he will offer to pay them no more than 900 gold. If he thinks they understand his need to fabricate evidence that the ships were destroyed by some outside force, he will pay them up to 1500 gold. In either case, he starts lower and works his way up to that maximum only if forced to by shrewd negotiators.

## SIDEBAR: THE RED COIN

The Red Coin is a ship that has seen many captains over the past twenty years. Rumor persists that the name of the vessel comes from the amount of blood on the coin of the captain. At least three previous captains have been murdered, and others disappeared under questionable circumstances.

The truth is far more mundane, the vessel is amongst the most boring and stable ships in the Mariners' fleet. Its true captain "Manyface" is a doppelganger, and the murders and disappearances are all just excuses for him to trade in for a new, more exciting persona.

Typically, The Red Coin travels through the dangerous waters near the Godbone Reef to the Dragonfly Isles where it exchanges the finished goods from Skyfall for the raw gems and fossilized manabones of the great beasts that once roamed the isles. These raw materials are returned to the city and the process begins again.

## SIDEBAR: FATE'S KNAVE

Fate's Knave is a newer vessel, smaller than most traders but quite a bit faster and more maneuverable. Her captain is Nemesis Cloud, a flit woman who responded to derision to her last name "Fluffy Breeze" by overcompensating. Despite her crew's good natured jokes concerning her names, Fate's Knave is a successful trader and makes runs through pirate infested waters to a variety of locales, including on occasion Corsair's Drift.

## SIDEBAR: OLD CRANK

Old Crank is something of a myth but more akin to a ghost story. Supposedly Crank is a free willed salver golem as big as any great wyrm. Though his origin is lost to the ages, it is something of a Skyfall drinking game to come up with stories of his past. There are dozens or hundreds of these tales floating around but the common threads are Crank is one of the first salver golems, his sentience was borne of a destructive rage that leveled a city, he walks the ocean floor searching for something, and destroys two out of every three vessels he comes upon.

## Encounter 1.3 – Gather Intel

The party travels around the city gathering what info they can to point them in the right direction.

This section of the adventure is fairly open-ended. There are a few core things the players need to accomplish and depending on their talents, connections, and play style, these things can be accomplished in many different ways. We have listed 5 locations that might play into the investigation. Feel free to add, subtract, or modify as needed.

### What the Party Needs to Learn/Do

- Determine where each ship went down

They may also benefit from learning additional details such as:
- Crew Manifest
- Cargo Log
- Planned Destinations

## EXPANDING THE ADVENTURE

Whenever you see a section like this one in the adventure, we are calling out an area where you might be able to expand that section of the adventure. The adventure will run perfectly without including any of these events or information. However, if you're the type of GM that enjoys expanding on published adventures to make them your own, this is the sidebar for you. These sections don't include game rules or monster entries. We think they might be fun additions to the adventure for your group, but the real benefit is to hopefully spark ideas for you, as well as give you an idea of where to add things that

won't require a major overhaul of anything later in the adventure. If you do decide to use any of the ideas presented, or come up with any awesome ideas of your own, please reach out to us at mithrilpunk. com and let us know! We love to hear from GM's who really take our adventures to the next level!

## The Mortuary

The mortuary is one of the strangest bars in Skyfall (and that says a lot). It is a fine stone building cut into the wall on the dodgy end of The Dregs, making it the nicest building in the district by a large margin. Its clientele is its true distinction. The Necromancers from the Lightless Deeps blow off steam here after long shifts in the corpse pits, skeletoriums, and hospitals (necromancers being the finest surgeons in the city). The wait staff are immaculately dressed, silver plated skeletons, and there is a banshee bard on many nights. Ordinarily the Mortuary is a great source of tips and gossip about the latest murders in the city, but since the ships went down well outside the city, there isn't much to be learned here through casual gossip.

If the party is willing to spend a fair amount of coin (300 gold) the resident Necromancers can complete a ritual trying to sense where the crews might have died. They can provide a rough location of the Forgotten Island.

The Necromancers pay close attention to skilled crews that carouse here. They are both keeping an eye out for trouble and judging whether someone useful walks through the door.

As long as the party does not try to pick a fight, the Mortuary is one of the safest bars in the city. Should the party try to start a ruckus, the skeletal wait staff, banshee bard, and ghoulish bouncers make a formidable fight. Should they keep up the shenanigans, the Necromancers themselves and their more powerful undead creations will ensure that the party joins the wait staff on a permanent (terminal) basis.

### EXPANDING THE ADVENTURE

At your discretion, the party might attract the attention of one of the free willed undead that lurk in the shadows of this bar. Word of their interest might reach the keen ears of the Bloody Eaters of Flesh, a ghoul pirate crew led by a ghast named Cannibal Jack. Jack is always on the prowl for both a fine meal and solid recruits for his ship. He might consider the party one, or the other… or both.

If you decide to pursue this thread, Jack and crew would make an excellent encounter toward the end of the adventure. We encourage you to come up with a terrifying encounter to really scare the party.

### Mariners Library

The Mariners Library catalogues and stores copious amounts of data and documents on all vessels and shipping concerns in the city. It is an excellent place to learn of planned voyages, check manifests, and nearly look into any other aspect of the business of the Mariner's Guild. It is also restricted to Captains and those they personally grant access.

Should the Party gain access, either by owning a ship themselves, gaining the trust of a captain, or bribing the door guards, they can learn quite a bit here. At a minimum they can obtain planned voyage information, cargo and crew manifests.

With some luck or clever roleplay they can convince the librarian (Peter 3 Fingers) to review the charts and he can point out the Godbone Reefs as an ideal spot to ambush the Red Coin.

Rumors persist that the Mariner's guild keeps one of its best investigators hidden in a secret room watching the comings and goings of the library. Those with a pro-Mariner's bent argue this is to prevent piracy since the library offers a great deal of useful information on ship whereabouts. Others argue the guild does it as a way to better control its members. As with most things in the city, both are true and there are probably several other hidden agendas at play as well.

### EXPANDING THE ADVENTURE

If you are looking to add an encounter somewhere in the adventure, the Mariner's spies might target the party before they leave the city. Perhaps they are suspicious of Longinus or had their own investigation of the Red Coin going before it disappeared.

### Crow's Nest

This rowdy bar is famous with locals and travelers alike. Located near the Promenade, hanging from one of the highest portions of the cave, it is often the first stop of many overland travelers after leaving the Exchange. It is known for being a safe place for business or pleasure, having two very strict house rules: "No weapons unsheathed" and "No spells of harm". Those who break these rules face Zuth, a full-blooded troll bouncer of impressive stature. His demeanor suggests he will not be gentle.

A friend of the first mate of the Fate's Knave drinks here regularly. If the party can get on his good side (a few rounds of expensive drinks ought to do it), he can reveal full details on that vessel's travels.

A ship can be obtained here for the going rate. It is difficult to do anything here without prying eyes; there are so many private nooks and dark corners that most people trying to be secretive avoid any sensitive conversation in the Nest.

### Privateer's Gallery

The Privateer's Gallery is part museum, part trophy case, and part pirate crew recruitment. The licensed pirates of Skyfall (Privateers) display their choicest

booty in this finely appointed hall. Each privateer crew provides ample security, as attempting to steal pieces belonging to other crews is something of an ongoing friendly game of one-upmanship.

The privateers here can provide likely ambush sites near the Godbone Reefs. One crewman, Jarissa Sharp-Tongue, can confirm wreckage on an island near the Fate's Knave's planned course.

Passage on a vessel can also be secured here.

Once the party has gained enough evidence to point them to the Godbone Reefs (the Red Coin) and the Forgotten Island (Fate's Knave) they can proceed.

## Encounter 1.4 – A Counter Offer and a beat down

During this encounter the party runs into the mysterious figures that have been tailing them. Assuming they fight well enough, their tails offer them a counter proposal to Longinus' mission.

Note: This encounter can occur any time during the investigation scenes in Encounter 1.3, or immediately after. It must happen before the party leaves Skyfall to begin their investigation.

**Read or Paraphrase:** (Assumes the PCs at least had a hunch they were being followed, modify to suit the events of your session)

The sense you are being watched weighs on you, but it is a reality of life in the city. You know too well to discount the feeling but cannot do much to act on it. There are just too many hiding places for you to keep track of everything. It is no surprise when a shadowy figure hops off a nearby rooftop to land in your path.

### Items of Interest

The assassins are not actually here to kill the party; rather, attacking the party is their version of asking after the party's family.

The pair is well known in the city. Characters in the thieves' guild or with other such criminal backgrounds will likely know of them (DC 12 Intelligence check).

As long as the party isn't overly rude and doesn't take extreme offense at being attacked, this fight will end when one of the pair is reduced before 30% health.

**Setup**
Gallivar
Cerathwyn

**Tactics:** Gallivar and Cerathwyn work as a team of deadly assassins. Typically, Gallivar reveals himself to their targets to draw attention away from Cerathwyn, who will get advantage on her Stealth check unless the party specifically mentions looking out for additional creatures besides Gallivar. If Cerathwyn goes undetected, she should get a surprise round. As noted in the items of interest section above, the assassins aren't interested in doing permanent damage to the party, nor are they willing to fight to the death unless given no choice.

**Treasure:** If the assassins are suitably impressed, they will leave a gift of siltstrider's armor and a greater potion of healing in the player's cabin on whichever ship they decide to depart on.

## CAPTURING THE FEEL

This fight is more of a semi-friendly sparring match than a fight to the death. If the players don't seem to get it, drop hints. If the players don't care and try to

## The Counter Offer

Once the encounter with the two assassins is resolved, if the assassins survived, they will deliver the Mariner's Guild's counter offer. If the party presents evidence that the ships were sunk by pirates or another peril covered by the insurance agreement (whether that evidence is real or manufactured), they will match the payment offered by Longinus plus 10%, as well as owe them a favor to be named later. This favor can be nearly anything within the Guild's power, as long as the result doesn't harm the guild or cause a loss of income greater than 500 gold.

## Encounter 1.5 – From Corsair's Drift, with love.

Though this seems like a random assault, the party been targeted by agents of the powerful pirate league behind the attacks on the ships. With short notice, the league was only able to pull together this motley group.

**Read or Paraphrase:**

Judging from the obvious stares and feigned disinterest you've little doubt that the half dozen or so people standing next to the merchant cart up ahead are going to try to attack you. You are also fairly certain there are a pair of snipers laying in the rigging beneath the hovels to the east. If you turn around now you can probably avoid them all together or you could show them what happens when some fools try to jump your crew.

The thugs and criminals pulled together to ambush the party haven't worked together before. This lack of synergy and their poor ambush combine to give the party a surprise round.

## Items of Interest

- Merchant Cart cover
- Ducking over a railing
- Trying to fight while in the rigging

**Setup**
2 Snipers
3 Thugs
2 Squidface Killers

*Tactics:* The snipers and thugs are fairly inept, but they won't fight to the death. If the fight turns against them, they will try to save their own skin. The squidfaces have a bit more backbone and will stick around until they are all that is left before trying to break contact and run away.

*Treasure:* During the battle, a small crowd has gathered and is now watching the party intently.

After a moment, a guard shoulders his way through the crowd, quickly surveys the scene, and makes the signal for "10% cut?". If the party agrees, he quickly disperses the crowd, giving the party time to search the bodies of their ambushers. Otherwise he shrugs and the crowd surges forward and strips the bodies in a flash as soon as the fight is over. If the party agrees to give him a 10% cut, they can search the bodies to find an alchemical grenade (bane), a quicksilver potion, 5 gems worth a total of 50 gold pieces, and 100 gold pieces in various other coinage.

After the party has routed the thugs, they may want to try to question any survivors. The Jets went to great pains to ensure these idiots had no information to tie them back to the gang. Each was hired by a go between; none really knew more than to show up here, meet the others, and try to jump the party.

## SIDEBAR: BOOKING PASSAGE

There are always ships in the city, coming and going. Booking passage or hiring a crew is never really difficult in the way it might be in other cities. For most games the specifics of the hiring process and the minutia of the cost, risk, and various options is probably not something you'd spend much time on. If it is, you probably have house rules that work for it perfectly. So we are just going to present a few flavors of ship, crew, and captain to provide you with story ideas.

If you want to discuss the minutia, please drop us a line on Mithrilpunk.com and we will discuss your ears off.

The Ruler is a princely well-appointed vessel with ties to the Banker's Guild. She is a large and well protected ship, but a bit slow. Her captain, Phenifar Rigsby III, is a surprisingly down to earth man with a penchant for very fine hats.

Shear Razor, a former pirate vessel the Shear Razor recently made the jump to official privateer. There's an edge of danger to every interaction with the crew until they decide they like you, at which point you have two dozen tough pirates ready to take your side in

**Skyfall** ✗

**Last known location of Corsair's Drift** ✗

**Godbone Reefs - Wreckage Site 1** ✗

**Forgotten Island - Wreckage Site 2**

any dispute. Shelaza the Witch runs the ship and her temper is matched by her aptitude with arcane magic.

The Hatchet is a sturdy, if somewhat plain, vessel crewed by Firewatch washouts. The Hatchet often takes anti-piracy work or other jobs that are framed as being for the good of the city. A little-known fact is that the Firewatch will occasionally wash out some of their better recruits to fill the ranks of this ship; they find it useful to have an off the books crew able to unofficially advance their interests. The Captain is Fred Hatchet, whose left hand was lost and replaced with a hatchet.

# Episode 2 – Of Sunken Reefs and Forgotten Islands

To locate clues on the first sunken ship (The Red Coin), the party must brave the deadly Godbone reefs. This is…not a great idea.

## The Godbone Reefs

The captain can provide one squid potion for each member of the party, as well as weapons that function well underwater such as nets and spears. Clever party members may also request weights to help them sink. Weighted characters can move at half speed along the sea floor rather than swim. If the party did particularly well in their negotiations with Longinus, the captain will provide each of the party members with potion of healing as well.

## Sidebar: Underwater Combat

If your players need a refresher on underwater combat, you can read them the following:

"You can hold your breath for 1 minute, plus 1 minute per point of Constitution modifier, minimum 30 seconds. When you run out of breath or if you start choking, you can survive for 1 round per point of Constitution modifier, minimum 1 round.

After that number of rounds, at the start of your next turn you drop to 0 hit points and are dying. You can't regain hit points or become stabilized until you can breathe again.

You move at half speed underwater, unless you have a swim speed. Rough water might require a Strength (Athletics) check to swim. Creatures with a swim speed would have advantage on such checks.

If you have a swim speed, melee attacks work like normal. If you don't, you have disadvantage unless the weapon is a dagger, javelin, shortsword, spear, or trident. Ranged weapon attacks beyond normal range automatically miss. Within normal range, you have disadvantage unless the weapon is a crossbow, a net, or a weapon thrown like a javelin, spear, or trident (but not a hand axe, for example).

## Stinging Reefs

For all of the encounters within the reef described below, getting too close can be (read: is) extremely dangerous. Whenever a creature ends its turn within 5 feet of the reef walls, the reef seems to come alive and reaches out hungrily. The creature must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. Success means the creature successfully evades the grasping, stinging reef. A creature that fails the save must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 1d10 poison damage and becoming paralyzed on a failed saving throw. Paralyzed creatures receive a new save at the start of their turn to shake off the paralysis. Note that if a creature is somehow forced into the reef, they will need to make the save immediately.

## Encounter 2.1 – Quite Shocking

**Read or Paraphrase:**

Reefs beautiful and deadly fill the oceans of the world, but few are as beautiful or as deadly as the Godbone Reef. Legend says the reef is built on the bones of the ancient god of stinging and poisonous sea life. Whether this is true or not is anyone's guess, but it is indisputable that this area has the most painful and terrifying collection of sea life of any charted locale.

It also happens to be the likely resting place of The Red Coin and your next destination. As you drift down toward the sea floor, you can make out a promising entrance to the otherwise extremely foreboding reef. You can also make out a handful of large eels swimming languidly just outside the entrance.

The eels are hungry, and will eventually move to attack the party even if they don't approach right away.

**Setup**
4 Fulminator Eels

*Tactics:* The eels are vicious, but unintelligent, and will fight to the death. They attack directly, using their electric bite whenever it is available. They aren't smart enough to try and maneuver multiple creatures into their death burst.

Once the eels are defeated, the party can enter the reef proper.

## Encounter 2.2 – Horrors Under Foot

**Read or Paraphrase:**

The first area inside the reef is significantly warmer than the surrounding waters. Bubbles of heated air drift upward from the silt floor. Occasionally a blast of steam will erupt from the floor, causing silt to rain slowly down through the water.

**Setup**
1 Burrowing Horror
3 Icosapods

As the party enters this room, give them an opportunity to spot the Icosapods blending into the silt floor (Perception DC 15). They can't see the burrowing horror, as it is roughly 5 feet under the silt floor. The burrowing horror should get a surprise round, as will the icosapods unless the party spots them.

### Steam Vents

Throughout this room are a massive number of steam vents that occasionally erupt. The monsters in the room are familiar with them, and avoid them instinctively. At the start of each round, roll 1d20. On the initiative count rolled (losing all ties), choose two characters at random. A steam vent erupts near or directly under those characters (as well as other locations throughout the room). Those characters must
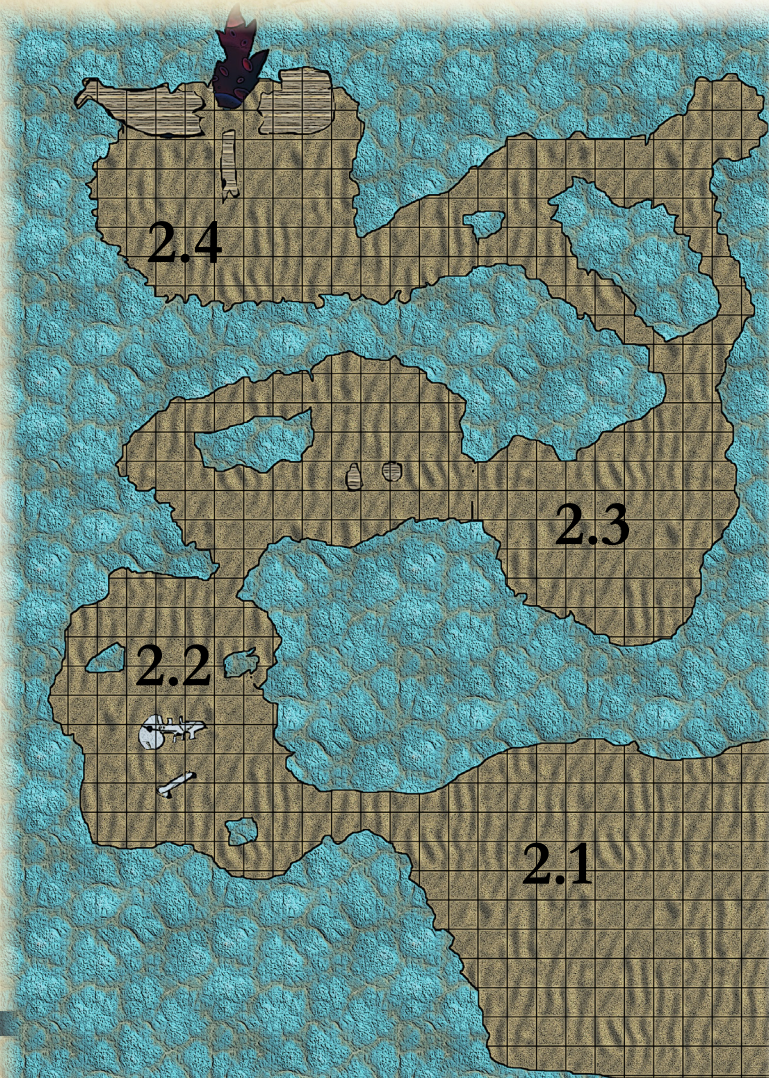
make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 1d10 fire damage and is pushed 10 feet in a random direction (including up). Note that this could force a creature into the Stinging Reef.

*Tactics:* The creatures don't work together, but the icosapods have learned that they have a solid shot at picking up scraps whenever the horror finds its dinner. The horror fights to the death, but if it dies the icosapods will flee if below half health.

Once combat is over, the party can move carefully through the room and should be able to avoid the steam vents without major issues.

## Encounter 2.3 – Kelp me! This is Confusing

**Read or Paraphrase:**

> The reef continues into a room covered from floor to ceiling in vine-like kelp. You can't see past the kelp forest well enough to make out an exit, but you don't see any obvious threats either.

There are no monsters in this area. However, when disturbed, the kelp secretes a poisonous fluid into the water that causes madness and hallucinations (see Maddening Kelp).

The kelp forest is very dense. Within the kelp, anything within 10 feet is lightly obscured, while anything beyond that is heavily obscured.

### Maddening Kelp

Whenever a creature ends its turn within the kelp, it must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. Each round the creature remains in the kelp, the DC increases by one until the creature fails the saving throw. On a failed save, that creature is confused as the spell, except it lasts until the creature successfully saves and shakes off the effect. Once a creature shakes off the confusion, it is no longer affected by the kelp (see Capturing the Feel, below)

### CAPTURING THE FEEL

> Be sure to play up the claustrophobic nature of the kelp forest. If they get even a little separated, their allies become vague shapes in the dark. Once a creature fails the save for the *confusion*, they should also being hallucinating, and that should explain their actions. For example, if their *confusion* roll is to attack the nearest creature, they should see a horrifying sea beast launch itself at them through the kelp rather than their ally. Think of the effect of Scarecrow's poison in Batman Begins. Even when they roll "act normally", they should feel as though they are getting a glimpse of sanity in a sea of madness, with reality peeling away at the edges.

If the party can successfully make their way

through the Maddening Kelp, they can make their way to the wreckage and continue their investigation.



## Encounter 2.4 – Wreckage

**Read or Paraphrase:**

> After you claw your way out of the kelp forest, you can just make out the wreckage of a ship ahead of you. It looks as though the wreck is being slowly drawn into a black pit. You can feel a slight tug in the water even now. Between you and the ship, a pair of the burrowing monstrosities you saw earlier are snapping and fighting over the body of an eel, while a second eel swims above them. As soon as you clear the kelp, they immediately stop and turn toward you as one. A pair of the twenty-legged crab-like creatures lift themselves out of the silt at the same time, and all five creatures stare at you menacingly, then rush toward you

**Setup**
2 Burrowing Horrors
2 Icosapods
1 Fulminator Eel

Unlike the prior encounters, the creatures in this area fight together, and are far more coordinated than they have any right to be. There is no obvious explanation for this (See The Black Pit sidebar).

*Tactics:* The burrowing horrors attempt to burrow and then grapple a pair of targets. The eel will focus on one grappled target while the icosapods will focus on

the other, going so far as to delay their turns until the horrors have acted and attempted to grapple someone before taking their turns and deciding their targets. All the beasts fight to the death.

## EXPANDING THE ADVENTRURE

The wreckage of the ship sits broken and splintered over a black pit. There is a slight feeling of being tugged toward it from anywhere in the room. The ship will eventually sink into the rift, but it will take a number of days. Of course, you shouldn't tell the players that! Let them think they have a serious time pressure before the ship is gone. You can even have the ship shift menacingly as they investigate. There is nothing to force a character into the maw of the pit, but that may not stop them. We intentionally leave the source of the pit vague, only hinting at its sinister nature with the sudden intelligence and malevolence of the creatures in this area. The pit is extremely menacing, and any character that asks should immediately feel as though the pit is incredibly dangerous and off-putting. However, if they insist on exploring the pit, you'll need to be prepared to pivot the adventure significantly. Perhaps the pit is a portal to a demonic undersea demi-plane, or a sinkhole into an ancient city under the bedrock of the ocean? Or you could just kill them for being dumb enough to walk into the black death pit thingy, that's your call.

### Investigating the Wreckage

In investigating the ship, the party can find a few details of interest to their investigation.

The damage to the ship's hull seems to have come from under the water line primarily. The holes are indicative of something heavy and blunt smashing through the hull.

Since it has clearly hit the reefs on the way down, it's hard to rule out striking the reefs as a cause of the damage. However, one hole looks as if it was intentionally drilled in the side.

If the party obtained manifests of the Crew of the Red Coin, they can note that one of the bodies, a partially eaten squidface, is not on the roster.

*Treasure:* In the course of their investigation, the party will find a coral blade, a rotting sack filled with 300 gold pieces, and a small figurine carved into the likeness of a panther. The figurine is nonmagical, but it is worth 200 gold pieces to the right kind of fence in Skyfall (who would most likely use it to trick a mark into thinking it was magical).

### The Forgotten Island

In search of a survivor of The Fate's Knave, the party find themselves on an island inhabited by ghosts.

This island is one of many that dot the waters of the

## The Forgotten Island

**Wreckage Site**

**Shrine**

ocean in this region. A small sandy crescent with a bit of jungle, spectacular fishing, and a modest mountain (glorified hill) at its center. But for the temple built on the hill, this island would be entirely uneventful.

About a century ago, a cultist fled the religious persecution of Skyfall and brought his followers here to the island. At first, the group, dedicated to honoring those lost at sea, had a peaceful if somewhat dull existence far from their old home. When they woke a connection to the demon realm, their cult became twisted and dark. Driven by dark magic and sinister voices, the cultists expended their lives in the creation of a shrine to the Sunken Prince, demon lord of drowned and restless sailors.

Now the island acts as a sort of beacon for those spirits who died at sea. Once they arrive on the island, they are unable to leave and are slowly drawn toward the shrine where they lose any vestige of their old selves and become infused with hate and evil.

From the coastal waters of the island there are two obvious landmarks. The first is a great stone structure toward the center of the island and the second is the ruins of a small village on the southern end. The eastern side of the island is covered in strange rocks shaped vaguely like teeth, but it is otherwise uninhabited.

### Encounter 2.5 – Talky Ghosts
**Read or Paraphrase:**

This village was portably once a fishing town or perhaps a stop for a trader or pirate outfit.

The houses are raised affairs made of the local jungle wood with rooves of braided leaves. You immediately notice scores of apparitions and spirits flitting through the village as if going through some sort of daily routine.

The spirits here have not yet been fully twisted by the dark magic of the temple. Many are recently deceased and generally no more evil than they were in life, others are nearly transformed into the twisted spirits found deeper in the island. If the party is careful they can avoid fighting with most of the spirits or possibly avoid a battle altogether.

## Dealing with the Ghosts

The ghosts for the most part seem to believe they are going about their normal business in a small port town. If the party does anything to disrupt this illusion (attack the ghosts, point out they are in a ruined village, or anything similar) the ghosts become hostile and will probably attack.

If the party leaves the ghosts alone they can avoid an attack but won't be able to get much information.

The ghosts all appear to have been sailors or had other maritime professions. Judging from their appearance, they all died at sea.

If questioned (and not angered), the ghosts all indicate they felt a pull to the island.

If asked about recent arrivals, they can recall a male human (this is Monder Ames, the survivor) arriving recently and heading toward the interior of the island.

**Setup**
4 Howling Apparitions

*Tactics:* Lots of ghosts, but they only set off four of them if they trigger combat at all.

*Treasure:* If the party successfully defeats the apparitions or manages to conduct a search without interfering with their work and setting them off, they can find a small chest that appears to be waterproof.  With a little effort (DC 14 to pick the lock, or DC 15 to break), they can open it to find three scrolls inside (silt trap, crystal guardians, and sandblast), as well as powdered gemstones of various types worth roughly 250 gold.

## Encounter 2.6 – It had to be monkeys
**Read or Paraphrase:**

The jungle closes in around you, and the air is heavy with the buzzing of insects and the occasional rustle of foliage. Without warning, the jungle erupts in a swarm of bone and fur as dozens, perhaps hundreds of tiny monkeys with decaying flesh and skeletal fingers burst out of the plants surrounding you.
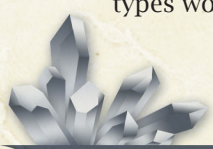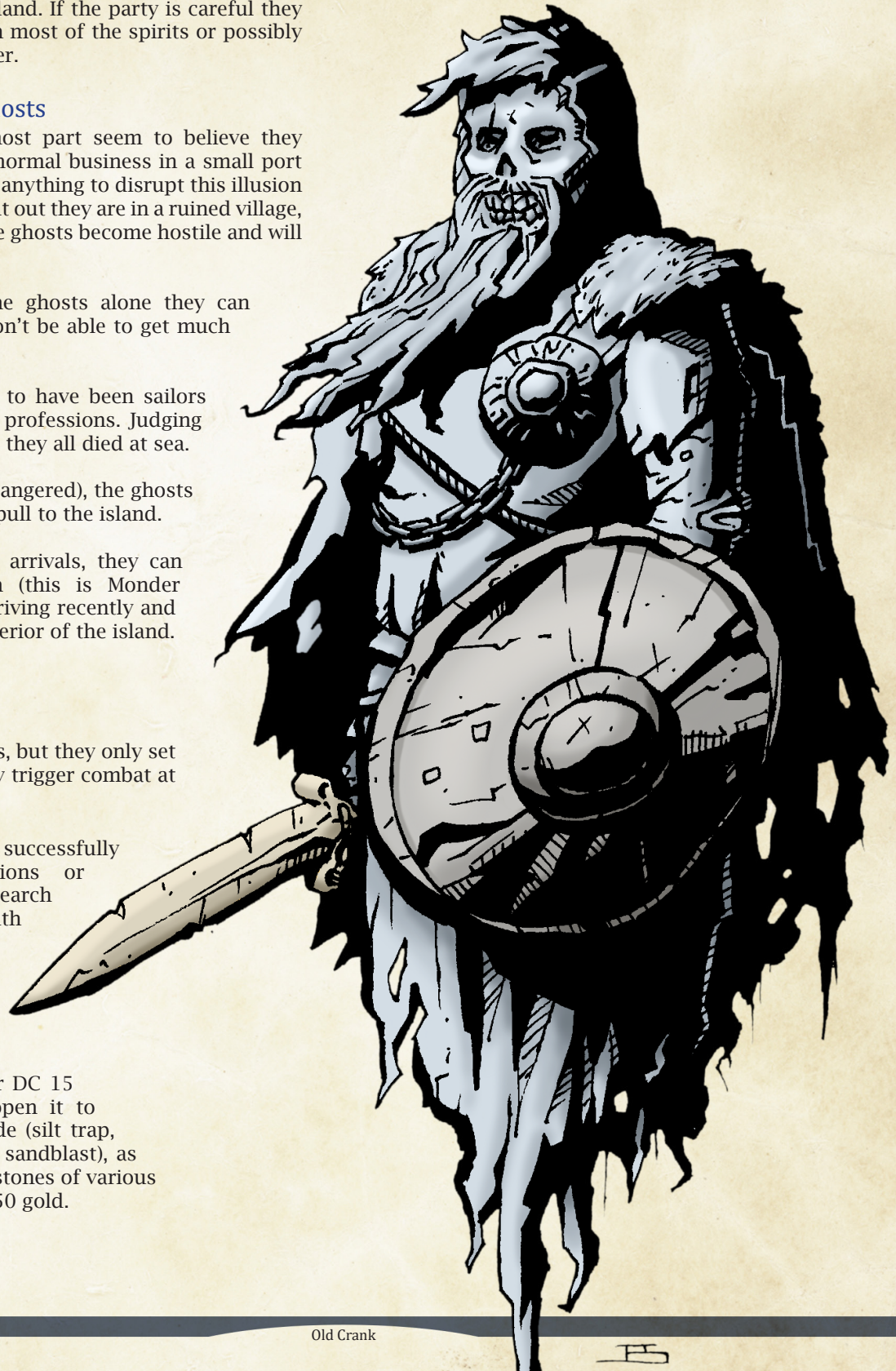
Whether by following clues gained from the ghosts at the village or just watching the inhabitants long enough to realize they all seem to be drawn inland, the party should eventually make the trek toward the structure at the center of the island. Along the way they are likely to have to traverse some jungle. That's usually a bad idea when there are zombie monkey swarms in the trees. Too bad nobody told the party about the zombie monkeys.

## Items of Interest

The monkeys love to collect shiny objects, or at least they did in life. Now they mostly collect victims. If you are looking to plant a seed for a future adventure, a locket, or amulet, or other similar shiny item could easily still be clutched in the tiny rotting fist of one of the monkeys.

### Setup
3 Zombie Monkey Swarms

### Skeletal Parrot Hoard

Each round on initiative 15 (losing all ties), a flock of skeletal parrots sweeps through the party, snapping and clawing as they go by. Make the following attack against each character within a 20-radius of a point of your choice: +5 to hit, 1d6+2 (5) slashing damage. If the party wants to make opportunity attacks (or normal attacks) against the skeletal parrots, they have an AC of 12, a +2 bonus to Dexterity saves, and a -1 penalty to all other saves. Any damage dealt to a parrot will kill it. If the party kills at least 4 parrots between fly-by attacks, you should skip the next round of attacks on the party. The parrots do not attack in waves big enough to be slaughtered wholesale with area spells like fireball. Killing a total of 20 parrots will disperse the hoard, as will killing the monkeys.

*Tactics:* The monkeys are ravenous, and will fight to the death trying to devour the party. They fight without any real tactics, and simply swarm over as many characters as possible.

## Encounter 2.7 – Malevolent Guardians

### Read or Paraphrase:

> While nothing about this island has been particularly normal, as you get closer to the center of the island, there is a palpable feeling of wrongness. You can almost feel the negative emotions swirling over you; clearly something unnatural and evil is here.

As the party nears the center of the island, the demonic power of the place has a warping effect on the ghostly inhabitants. Those at the village were nearly normal people (aside from being dead), but those at the center are warped, twisted, and evil. A pair of these float about the area, ready to usher other ghosts to the temple or destroy any living beings foolish enough to draw near.

## Items of Interest

Despite hiding very well, the intense aura of hatred flowing off these ghosts is strong enough to sense them. As an alternative to perception checks, the ghosts can be located with Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (Arcana).

### Setup
2 Malevolent Apparitions

*Tactics:* One apparition begins the encounter in the material plane, while the other begins in the ethereal plane. They try to position themselves so that the party might waste some attacks on the ethereal apparition. The apparition on the material plane opens with Horrifying Visage then wades into melee with Withering Touch and Devour Soul. The ethereal apparition spends a turn trying to draw fire, then as soon as the party realizes they can't affect it, it enters the material plane and follows the same tactics as the other apparition.

## Encounter 2.8 – Xokorzar the Demon Pirate

### Read or Paraphrase:

> The structure at the center of the island turns out to be a shrine or small temple, shaped roughly like a skull facing heaven. Thin green smoke wafts up from the sockets of its "eyes" and its gaping mouth yawns open revealing the entryway.

The shrine is small and the pirate lord found here spends most of his days enthralled in the dark ritual that is summoning the dead to this place. He is instantly aware of the party when they approach unless they are for some reason not living beings.

## Items of Interest

If the party chooses to avoid combat, the pirate lord will not pursue them directly, but they will find themselves harried by relentless spirits (use howling apparitions) until they leave the island.
If the party looks inside they see another living being (the survivor of the wreck) though he looks gaunt and drained as though his life force has been removed. He is too far gone to interact with the party unless healed, and if the party gets any closer than the entry way, they will certainly find themselves in combat with the demon-possessed pirate lord.

### Setup
1 Demon-Possessed Pirate Lord

*Tactics:* The pirate lord is a terrifying melee combatant. It will try to get as many enemies as possible into its Aura of Corruption, then try to reach the back line and unload a full round of great scimitar attacks on a lightly armored foe like a wizard or archer.
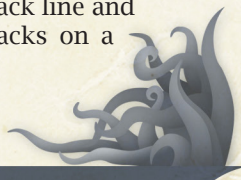
**Treasure:** In addition to Crackers (see Sidebar), the party can search the pirate lord to find a potion of greater healing, an alchemical grenade (cursed), and a pouch containing 30 platinum pieces.

## Sidebar: Crackers, the demon lord

In ages past, a dark avian terror roamed the skies of the dark realm of demons. None who spoke this dread demon lord's name lived long. Most heard the flapping of great wings and saw the flash of a blood red beak before dying in horror and agony. The only clues to their deaths: an occasional jet black feather limned with a fiery red light. In the great book of Demon Lords stored in the secret vaults beneath the undead library, the story of Ekralar the Winged Silence is told in detail. Even among those scholars, there are few who realize the ultimate fate of the avian lord.

Crackers, the zombie parrot, is all that is left of this once powerful and terrible being. When Ekralar made a move against a far more powerful and influential demon lord (many tales suggest Orcus, but others differ) he was defeated utterly and cast into the form of a demon parrot. He was doomed to personify everything about birds which Ekralar the Winged Silence hated. Crackers is an insane, evil (though forbidden by ancient demonic magic from acting on it overtly), foul mouthed parrot who cannot die. He possesses all the terrible cunning he ever had, but is unable to string together a sentence more than 3 words long without the word "Crackers" in it. He flies though life looking for a strong shoulder to perch upon and targets for his inventive insults.

### Questioning the Survivor

The survivor Monder Ames has been through a lot. The full story is beyond his ability to tell, as his time with the demon pirates has warped him substantially. He can recall and will tell the party the following:

· The ship's lookout felt they were being followed. He wasn't sure by who or what.
· The attack came suddenly from below; there was a sudden splintering sound, then pirates were boarding from below.
· He got a brief look at the ship as it sailed away, it had a dive helmet for a periscope, almost like the stories of Old Crank.

With the survivor's information and the notes from the wreckage of the red Coin, the party should be able to surmise the following:

· Both vessels were attacked by pirates, with some sort of submarine.
· The pirates appear to want people to believe that Old Crank is behind the attacks.
· Other than Skyfall, there are few ports with any active submarine crews. A DC 14 Intelligence check (Proficiency with Water Vessels applies) will point to Corsair's Drift. If the PCs noted the squidface corpse in the sunken vessel, this check becomes DC 10 as there is only one place with a squidface

population that might have a sub.

# Episode 3 – Stopping pirates from stealing gold so bankers can steal gold

After learning all they can from their investigation of the wrecks, the party should set sail for Corsair's Drift, either to end the pirate threat for the Mariner's, or to eliminate the witnesses who could contradict Longinus and potentially force him to pay out the insurance claim. As they approach a particularly dangerous reef, the ship is assaulted by a massive sea monster that forces them into the reef. After a harried chase through the reef, the monster's dinner is interrupted by the pirate submarine that sank the other ships. The party will have to fight their way aboard the sub in order to dislodge the grapple buried in the hull of their ship. Unfortunately, Old Crank has something to say about it…

## Capturing the Feel

Unlike the previous two episodes, Episode 3 is effectively one massive extended scene. There is no downtime between each of the events described in this episode. It starts with the sea monster attack and ends once Old Crank is forced to retreat. As such, you'll need to pay careful attention to the party's resources as they progress through the episode.

## Beginning the Scene – Did it have to be tentacles?

**Read or Paraphrase:**

Rain hammers the deck as the ship lies at anchor for the evening outside a reef on the way to the Drift. Without warning, the lookout shouts and points toward the stern just as you hear a gargantuan, bestial bellow. The ship quickly becomes a flurry of shouting, running, and climbing as massive tentacled pseudopods erupt from the churning water at the rear of boat. The captain immediately begins shouting orders to cut the anchor line and set sail for the reef.

The party should quickly realize that while the reef is incredibly dangerous to sail at night, it may be their only hope to knock the beast off of the ship.

## Unique Mechanics

The simplest way to handle this scene is to use the chase rules, with some fairly large modifications. Unlike a normal chase, the monster has already caught the prey, so the party will need to help the ship's crew in every way they can. They'll have a number of options described below to do just that, but as always, reward player creativity! If

they can think of something cool that would make a difference in breaking free of the beast, let them have at it! If the party isn't sure of what to do, the captain will give an order, but this should only be used if a player really can't think of anything and needs some assistance.

## Running the Chase

The "chase" starts with the monster and the ship at rest relative to each other. As long as the monster is attached to the ship, the beast will move with it. Each round, the ship will move based on its current speed (see "Special Chase Rules") at the start of initiative. Then, each player should receive a turn in the normal initiative order. To end the round, roll on the event table, then increase the number of tentacles connected to the ship by three as the beast establishes its grasp. If the beast has no tentacles attached to the ship at the end of a round, it instead moves 60 feet closer to the ship. If the beast ends that movement within 10 feet of the ship, it latches back onto the boat with one tentacle. If the monster ever has all 8 tentacles attached to the ship, the ship can no longer move until at least one tentacle is removed.

## Special Chase Rules

To simplify this scene, use the following round sequence:
1. Ship Movement
2. The party acts in initiative order
3. Roll on the Event Table
4. Monster attaches 3 tentacles, or moves and attaches 1 tentacle

### Ship Movement
The ship moves based on how much sail has been let out. Luckily for the party, there is a stiff wind at their backs. Refer to the Suggested Actions section for how players can set the sails. Warn the players that going too fast can risk damaging the ship on the reef.

### Suggested Actions
The following suggested actions should help you respond to nearly anything the players try to do.

*Increase or Decrease Sails*
At the start of the scene, the ship's speed is 40 feet. A character can make an Athletics check as an action to increase the ship's speed by 10 feet. This action can only occur once per round. The DC is set by the ship's current speed as shown below. The ship's maximum speed is 80 feet.

| | |
|---|---|
| 40 feet | DC 14 |
| 50 feet | DC 15 |
| 60 feet | DC 16 |
| 70 feet | DC 17 |

*Attack the Tentacles*
The tentacles can be attacked or targeted with spells. Each tentacle has an AC of 16, and is immune to any spell or effect that requires an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma saving throw. If the attack or spell deals at least 10 points of damage, that tentacle is dislodged from the ship.

*Scouting the Reef*
A character can attempt to scout the reef ahead of the ship as an action. The character must succeed on a DC 15 Perception check or Intelligence check. If the check succeeds, the ship can ignore any "Reef" event that is rolled this turn. Multiple characters can attempt this check, but successes after the first have no additional effect.

*Rally the Crew*
A character can attempt to rally the crew of the ship as an action. The character must succeed on a DC 15 Performance check. If the check succeeds, roll twice on the event table this round. If either roll is 1 – 10, there is no event. If both dice roll an event, use the lower die to determine which event occurs.

*Lead a Work Party*
A character can take control of a work party as an action. The character must succeed on a DC 15 Persuasion check. If the check succeeds, the party gains advantage on any checks made to overcome an event rolled this turn (if applicable). Note: This is particularly important for the two ship events, where failure could lead to very serious problems.

## Chase Event Table

1 – 10. No Event

11. (Reef) The lookout spots a reef at the last second, forcing the ship to veer sharply to avoid running aground. The ship takes 1 point of damage for every 10 feet of speed above 60 feet, and the party needs to make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save that character is jostled into a railing, mast, or other obstacle and takes 1d8 bludgeoning damage.

12. (Monster) The great beast lets out a bellowing roar, sending a shudder through the hull. Each character on the ship must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, that character takes 1d8 thunder damage and is incapacitated for one turn.

13. (Reef) The ship must cross a shallow sandbar just under the water to continue. The ship's speed is reduced by 20 feet and the party needs to make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, that character is thrown from their feet and has the wind knocked out of them. On the next turn, that character has disadvantage on checks made during their action.

14. (Monster) A massive tentacle erupts from the water, and tries to wrap around a random party member. Make an attack at +8 against a random party member. On a hit, that character takes 1d8+4 bludgeoning damage, is grappled, and is lifted 15 feet into the air. A single attack dealing at least 10 damage will cause the tentacle to drop the player, or the grappled player can use their action to escape the grapple (DC 15).

15. (Ship) There is a breach just below the water line, causing the ship to begin taking on water. Immediately, and each round afterward, the ship slows by 10 feet. If the ship's speed reaches 0 feet, the ship founders and begins sinking (effectively party death unless they are extremely clever). Make it clear that this is far worse than other problems and needs to be addressed immediately unless they want swim with the giant ship-eating monster. The party can rush below and start working on the breach. To repair the breach, the party must get at least one success per party member on a Water Vehicles check. These successes can be made across multiple rounds, and can be made by any character (so one person could make all 4 for a party of four, or the party could divide them up).

16. (Reef) The lookout misjudges the distance to the reef and the ship moves too close to avoid it. The reef slams into the side of the ship, dealing 1d4 damage and slowing the ship by 10 feet. Choose one character on the deck. That character must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, the character slams into the ship railing and takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage. On a failed save, the character is thrown over the edge and barely manages to hang on. On the character's next action, the character must use their action to climb back onto the deck. Alternately another character can help them.

17. (Monster) The monster's tentacles flail violently around the deck, causing panic among the crew. The party must make a DC 15 Persuasion or Intimidation check to keep the crew steady. If at least half the party succeeds, the crew rallies. If more than half the party fails, all actions next turn have disadvantage.

18. (Reef) The lookout spots an opening in the reef, but it's really narrow. Each character must make a DC 15 Perception check to assist the navigator. If at least half the party passes the check, the ship successfully navigates the gap, and the reef knocks one of the tentacles free. If less than half the group passes, the ship clips the reef, taking 1 damage and slowing 10 feet.

19. (Monster) The monster slams a tentacle into one of the party members. Choose a party member at random and make the following attack: +8 to hit, 2d6+4 bludgeoning damage.

20. (Ship) The beast manages to wrap one of its tentacles around the main mast of the ship. If the tentacle isn't knocked free, the beast will eventually snap the mast, which will drop the ship's speed to zero and allow the beast to devour the ship at its leisure. To dislodge the tentacle, the party must deal at least 30 damage to it. Each round it isn't dislodged, the ship takes 3 structural damage.
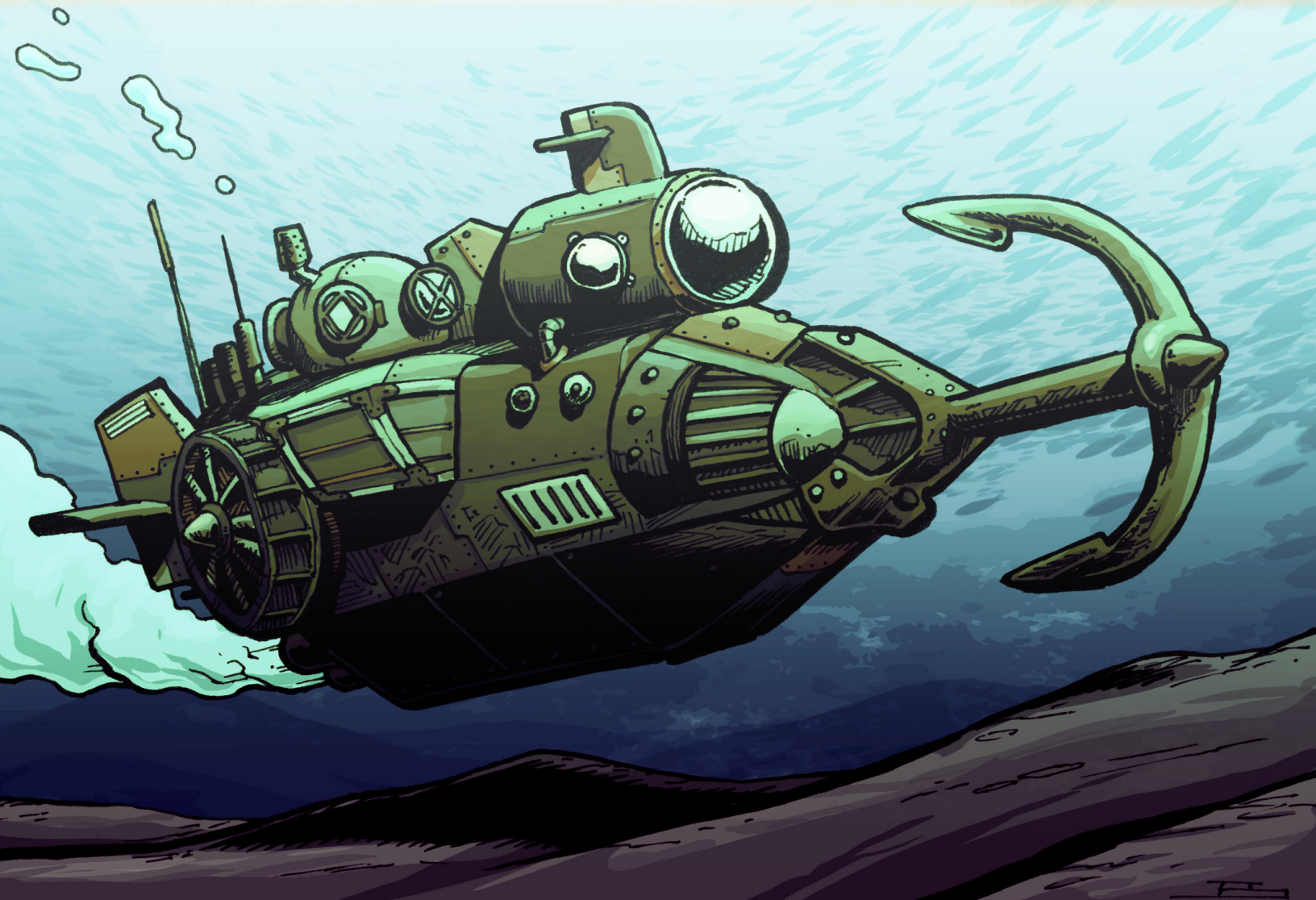
## Concluding the Chase

The chase ends whenever the ship has travelled 500 feet through the reef, or has taken 15 points of structural damage. If the ship takes 15 or more structural damage during the chase, it will have an impact in the final encounter. The ship takes structural damage in one of two ways: damage caused by reef or ship events on the Chase Event Table, or damage caused by the monster's tentacles. The reef and ship events above detail how and when they damage the ship. At the start of each round, the ship takes 1 damage if 4 or more tentacles are attached. If all 8 tentacles are attached, the ship instead takes 2 damage.

**Read or Paraphrase:** The following text assumes that the party narrowly escapes the reef with the monster right on their heels.

> Your ship surges forward as you finally escape the reef. The beast bellows just under the surface and you can feel it through the planks beneath your feet. Just when you think you're finally rid of the thing, the monstrosity erupts from the water and lunges toward your ship. The tentacled horror is even bigger than you had realized, almost half the size of your ship. Before you have time to react, you hear a loud thump just before the beast hits the side of the boat, following by splintering wood and the beast's shrieks of agony. The leviathan seems pinned to your ship, and you can just make out a cable stretching out of the monster's back into the dark sea below.

Give the party a moment to go "What the hell?", then immediately move into the next encounter.

## Encounter – Boarded by Pirates

Just as the party overcomes the shock of having a giant monster pinned to their boat, pirate boarders swarm up the opposite side of the boat, clear the railing, and launch into an assault.

**Setup**
2 Squidface Thugs
4 Pirate Boarders

At the start of the encounter, the monster is pinned to the starboard side of the boat, while the boarders have climbed over the port railing, and the party is stuck in the middle. Neither side should get a surprise round.

Each round on initiative 15, failing all ties, roll on the following table (1d4):

1. The monster's flailing rocks the ship. Each creature on deck must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.
2. A tentacle slams down on the deck. Choose one creature on the deck at random and make the following attack: +6 to hit, 1d10+5 (10) bludgeoning damage.
3. The submarine pulls strongly at the ship, causing it to heave to the side. Each creature on the deck treats all movement as difficult terrain this turn.
4. The monster bellows in rage and agony. The creatures on the deck can feel it in their bones. They must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, becoming Deafened for 1 minute on a failed save.

*Tactics:* The monster does not participate directly, but is pinned to the ship and flailing in its death throes. The boarders fight to the death, knowing their punishment would be to go overboard anyway. The squidface thugs open with Ink Jet before wading into melee, while the pirate boarders pair off and try to take advantage of Gang Up and Sucker Punch.

After the party has defeated the boarders, the encounter immediately ends. If the party is low on resources, feel free to end the encounter a little early by having one of the flailing tentacles knock a boarder into the sea. Then **Read or Paraphrase:**

> As the final boarder dies, the beast's flailing finally slows to a pitiful twitching and writhing. Unfortunately, your ship is still impaled by the sub's harpoon. Your best chance to keep the ship free is to disengage the submarine's grapple arm.

## Boarding the Sub

The party should quickly realize that the grapple arm controls have to be inside the submarine, and that they'll need to board the submarine. If they don't, or they insist on trying to dislodge the grapple, make it clear that the time it would take to hack the grapple free would probably sink the ship, and even if it didn't, the submarine could just fire the grapple again once it was disconnected. Cutting through the steel hawser connecting the grapple to the sub would take even longer, and will guarantee that the ship sinks.

The party can reach the submarine in a number of ways. They can swim if they are willing to brave the seas (Athletics DC 12 to swim at half speed, DC 17 to swim at full speed), or they can climb the hawser connecting the sub to the grapple imbedded in the ship (Athletics DC 12 to climb at half speed, DC 17 to climb at full speed). A variety of magic spells or items could make the transition easier as well. As always, let your players come up with creative ways to make the transition.

The ship is about 60 feet away from the submarine. How they get there isn't particularly important, but you should express the tension in the scene. They aren't making two Athletics check, they are hanging from a tight rope as waves slam into them and the seas between the two vessels churn hungrily.

Once the party reaches the submarine, move to the next section of the scene.
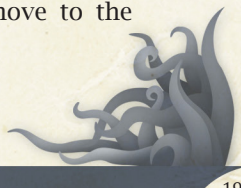
## Capturing the Feel

This scene assumes that the party will think that climbing down a hawser to breach a submarine and take it over is a great idea. Of course, not all parties would necessarily do that. Some may insist on dislodging the grapple from the boat. It shouldn't be easy, but you shouldn't just say "No" either. Instead, if the players are exceedingly clever and find a way to rapidly dislodge the grapple, be prepared to improvise the next section. Perhaps the ship does sink, and the pirate crew fishes them out of the water, forcing them to talk their way out of being robbed and executed. Or maybe Old Crank shows up and they are forced to work with the pirates to hold him at bay. Either way, don't punish your players for not "following the script", so to speak.

## Encounter – Their Own Medicine

**Read or Paraphrase:**

After fighting through the storm-lashed seas to reach the submarine, you quickly find the top hatch and wrench it open. Dropping into the submarine, you find yourself inside the submarine's cramped engineering section, where a surprised dwarf looks up at you from where he was examining the submarine's crystalline power source.

**Setup**
1 Dwarven Engineer
2 Pirate Crew (use Pirate Boarders)

The party should get a surprise round if they dropped quickly into the hatch. If they delayed for any reason, the engineer and his staff are ready for them, and neither side should get a surprise round.

**Tactics:** The engineer focuses on using Cheap Shot to hit multiple people in the cramped space of the crystal compartment, while his two assistants try to stay together to use Gang Up and Sucker Punch. They all fight to the death.

**Treasure:** The party can quickly see that the Engineer carried a rod on his belt etched with blueprints. This is a mechanic's rod.

## Encounter – Storming the Bridge

**Read or Paraphrase:**

After dealing with the engineer, you quickly make your way to the bridge to take control of the ship and disengage the grapple. Of course, the bridge crew might have something to say about your plan.

**Setup**
1 Pirate Captain
1 Pirate First Mate
 2 Pirate Crew (Use Pirate Boarders)

Neither side should get a surprise round here unless the party ended the fight with the Engineer in a creative and quiet manner.

**Tactics:** The captain saves his reaction for Bark an Order, and otherwise wades into melee. The first mate and other crew members try to use Gang Up, especially the first mate whenever Cheap Shot is available. All the pirates fight to the death.

**Treasure:** The party most likely doesn't have time to find this until after Crank is defeated, but when they take the time to search the pirate captain, he is wearing the Last Fang of Shal'Krazard around his neck. They can eventually find another 300 gold hidden away in various cubby holes scattered around the sub.

## Old Crank

**Read or Paraphrase:**

With the captain slain, you quickly move to the grapple controls and disengage the harpoon. Just as the grapple has finished reeling back into the sub, you hear a titanic bellow and you are knocked from your feet as the submarine skews wildly to port. You quickly regain your feet and check the periscope, and what you see causes the bottom to drop out of your stomach. A massive salver golem, at least 60 feet tall, is climbing onto the reef and just took a swipe at you on his way up!

## Unique Mechanics

If things have gone roughly to plan, the party is in control of the submarine and their ship has been freed from the grapple. Each member of the party should take on one of the responsibilities of the submarine from the Player Handouts section: Communications, Engineering, Grapple Arm Operator, Torpedo Gunner, and Navigator. Rather than using normal actions, each player will control a pair of lair actions based on their role. Each action has hidden effects, some good and some bad. Keep the Old Crank GM Reference handy; it will make the fight significantly easier to manage!

### Fighting Old Crank

Fighting a 60 foot tall salver golem is no simple feat. Crank may well be indestructible, so the only hope of survival is to coordinate all 5 areas of the submarine and damage him enough to escape or destroy him.

### Old Crank Setup

Give each player one of the Submarine Role cards from the Player Handouts section. If you have less than 5 players, have one player control two Roles, or control one yourself as an NPC (and generally just do whatever the group wants that Role to do).

On the Old Crank GM Reference sheet, you should see that each Role has two ability options for the player to

choose from. One of them has a hidden positive effect, while the other has a hidden negative effect. The key to defeating Crank is using the abilities that positively reinforce each other in the correct order, which the players will have to discover through trial and error. As they use the abilities you should give them clues to help explain what is happening without giving it away directly.

Once the players have familiarized themselves with their options, have them roll initiative as normal. However, unlike normal combat, the players can go in any order they like, and they can change that order each round, as long as each player acts only once per round.

## Taking the Fight to Crank

After the players roll initiative, roll three initiatives for Old Crank, each at a +2 bonus. Old Crank doesn't have statistics like a normal monster. He is much closer to a force of nature. If you need to make a roll for Crank other than initiative, assume he has a +8 bonus. If a target attacks Crank, the DC to hit him is 15.

On his turns, Crank can move up to 60 feet and attack, or move 120 feet. If Crank hits with an attack, it deals 10d10 bludgeoning damage. We have intentionally left Crank extremely simple to run, as the Submarine Roles and Hidden Effects add layers of complication to this encounter. That doesn't mean Crank's turns should be boring! Describe his attacks inflicting massive damage (rolling 10d10 should help that), or the shockwave of a near miss rattling the bones of the party members on the submarine.

Crank will focus on the submarine unless the sub runs away from him for more than 1 round. If so, he will turn back and attempt to destroy the ship. The ship only has 200 remaining hit points and an AC of 12, so Crank should demolish it in short order.

## CAPTURING THE FEEL

Some groups may choose not to stick around to fight Crank, and can largely bypass this entire encounter. You should make it clear that to leave is to abandon the ship and its entire crew to Crank. The party should know that on the off chance there are survivors, they will have made enemies for life. If the party still decides to run, don't force them to stay. However, make sure that their decision has consequences. You could have the captain survive and begin plotting the party's downfall, or have one of the sailors survive and begin spreading the tale of their cowardice, making it difficult for them to find employers willing to hire them.

## The Submarine

The submarine is largely unfamiliar to the party, but they'll need to use it to fight and eventually escape Crank. The Submarine Role cards describe the submarine's attack options. If the submarine is attacked, it has an AC of 17 and 800 hit points. Make sure not to tell the players how many hit points the sub has. Instead just describe the damage it takes as it gets more and more severe. Use the damage on the submarine to build tension.

## Defeating Old Crank

Defeating Crank will require teamwork and coordination. Each role on the submarine (see Player Handouts) can use abilities that will help them fight off Crank, but there are hidden effects (see Old Crank Quick Reference) that the party will need to discover and work around in order to maximize their effectiveness and take Crank down.

To defeat Crank, the party must deal a total of 1000 damage. At that point, Crank is damaged enough to attempt to disengage and will allow the party to escape. However, parties brave enough (or stupid enough) to continue pressing the attack can destroy Crank by dealing a total of 1500 points of damage. If they do attempt to destroy him, Crank will stop trying to disengage and focus entirely on destroying the submarine.

After Crank is defeated, the party will have the run of the submarine, assuming it isn't damaged beyond repair (entirely up to you).

# CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Having solved the mysteries of the sunken ships, and faced a legendary creature of the blackest depths, the party have some choices to make.

What to do about the sub? The party has potentially gained control of a powerful submersible. If you want to open up a series of underwater adventures, you've just gained a great hook. Of course, the pirates or their backers are likely to want the vessel back.

What to do about the mission? The party needs to decide what to do about the mission. They got to the bottom of the situation and their report to Longinus will establish the "truth" as far as the city is concerned. They may have to choose between telling the truth to the Mariners and being rewarded, or supporting the lie told by Longinus and being rewarded. Either way they are likely to earn a friend and an enemy.

If the party failed to impress Longinus at the start and he planned on murdering them, he may reconsider depending on how well they did. If he does decide on murder, it will come in the form of several assassins attempting to engineer an unfortunate accident. Use stats for Gallivar and Cerathwyn or create your own. Be sure to stack the encounter set up against the party as Longinus will not underestimate them.

What about Crank? Legends and tall tales about Crank agree on few aspects; one common thread is that he doesn't let prey slip his grasp forever. Crank will eventually return for the party. It's just a matter of when and where. Perhaps the party would like to take matters into their own hands and find Crank's lair.

What about Corsair's Drift? "Luckily" the party were ambushed by the very people they set out to find, neatly
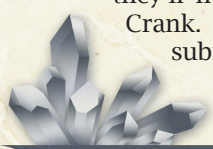
tying up that plot thread. What if luck had nothing to do with it? Perhaps the power behind the submarine pirates somehow knew the party would be coming and dispatched the pirates to stop them. A powerful force behind the scenes could be lurking in Corsair's Drift, and they certainly have their eyes on the party now. What's the next paying gig? Skyfall is an expensive place and the party's primary concern might very well be their next source of income. The Mariners, Longinus, and many of the NPCs in the rumor gathering locations in episode 1 might be excellent sources of future work.

# APPENDICES

The following section contains the Bestiary, Magic Items, Player Handouts, and Old Crank Combat Aid sections.

## Bestiary

### BURROWING HORROR
*Medium monstrosity, neutral*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural)
**Hit Points** 72
**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

| STR 18 (+4) | DEX 10 (+0) | CON 17 (+3) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 3 (-4) | WIS 11 (+0) | CHA 6 (-2) |

**Senses** tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10
**Languages** -
**Challenge** 3

**Amphibious.** The burrowing horror can breathe air and water.

**Burrowing Ambusher.** The horror can launch assaults without warning from under the ground. If a burrowing horror starts its turn with total cover (typically due to burrowing underneath a target), it has advantage on attack rolls for that turn, and any attack that hits a creature of Medium size or smaller also grapple that creature (escape DC 14).

#### ACTIONS
**Crushing Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d6+4 (11) piercing damage. If the target is grappled, this attack deals an additional 3d6 (10) damage.

### CERATHWYN
*Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)
**Hit Points** 72
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR 10 (+0) | DEX 17 (+3) | CON 14 (+2) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 14 (+2) | WIS 12 (+1) | CHA 8 (-1) |

**Saving Throws** Dexterity +6, Intelligence +5
**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +9
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
**Languages** Common, Elven, Thieves' Cant
**Challenge** 5

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

**Evasion.** If Cerathwyn is subjected to an effect that allows her to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, she instead takes no damage if she succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if she fails.

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

**Sneak Attack.** Once per turn, Cerathwyn deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Cerathwyn that isn't incapacitated and Cerathwyn doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

#### ACTIONS
**Multiattack.** Cerathwyn makes three short sword attacks.

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

**Blink Strike (Recharge 4 - 6).** Cerathwyn teleports up to 60 feet to an empty location she can see, then makes a short sword attack with advantage. If the attack hits, it deals an additional 8d6 (28) necrotic damage.

### CUTTHROAT
*Medium humanoid, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 12
**Hit Points** 16
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR 9 (-1) | DEX 15 (+2) | CON 12 (+1) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 7 (-2) | WIS 9 (-1) | CHA 10 (+0) |

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
**Languages** Common
**Challenge** 1/2

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

#### ACTIONS
**Multiattack.** The cutthroat makes two dagger attacks.

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

### DEMON-POSSESSED PIRATE LORD
*Large fiend (demon, possessed), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16
**Hit Points** 136
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR 19 (+4) | DEX 17 (+3) | CON 20 (+5) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 9 (-1) | WIS 12 (+1) | CHA 13 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Strength +7, Constitution +8, Wisdom +4
**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
**Damage Immunities** poison
**Condition Immunities** poisoned
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
**Languages** Abyssal, Common
**Challenge** 8

**Aura of Corruption.** Any creature that starts its turn within 15 feet of the pirate must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, that creature is incapacitated until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, that creature is immune to this aura for 24 hours.

**Magic Resistance.** The pirate has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

#### ACTIONS
**Multiattack.** The pirate lord makes 3 attacks with its great scimitar.

**Great Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit,
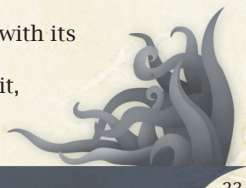
reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d8+4 (13) slashing damage.

## DWARVEN SNIPER
*Medium humanoid (dwarf), chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 12 (leather armor)
**Hit Points** 14
**Speed** 25 ft.

| STR 12 (+1) | DEX 13 (+1) | CON 14 (+2) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INT 8 (-1) | WIS 10 (+0) | CHA 6 (-2) |

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
**Languages** Common
**Challenge** 1/4

### ACTIONS
**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+1 (3) piercing damage.

**Light Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8+1 (5) piercing damage, or 1d8+10 piercing damage if the sniper has used True Aim against that target within 1 turn.

**Take Aim.** As an action, the sniper can choose to aim at one creature within range. The sniper gains advantage on its next attack roll against that creature before the end of its next turn, and the attack deals an additional 9 damage (included in its Light Crossbow attack) if it hits.

## FULMINATOR EEL
*Medium monstrosity, neutral*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural)
**Hit Points** 55
**Speed** Swim 60 ft.

| STR 17 (+3) | DEX 15 (+2) | CON 14 (+2) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INT 3 (-4) | WIS 10 (+0) | CHA 5 (-3) |

**Damage Immunities** lightning
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
**Languages** -
**Challenge** 2

**Aquatic.** Fulminator eels breathe water.

**Death Burst.** When a fulminator eel is killed, it discharges a burst of lightning in a 10-foot radius around itself. Creatures in the area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4d6 (14) lightning damage on a failed save, or half that amount on a successful one.

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

**Electric Bite (Recharge 5-6).** The eel makes a bite attack. If it hits, the target takes an additional 2d6 (7) lightning damage.

## GALLIVAR
*Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)
**Hit Points** 80
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Strength +5, Dexterity +4
**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2, Stealth +4
**Senses** passive Perception 12
**Languages** Common, Elven, Thieves' Cant
**Challenge** 4

**Ambusher.** In the first round of combat, Gallivar's speed increases by 15 feet, he has advantage on attack rolls, and any weapon attacks that hit deal an additional 2d6 damage of the same type as the weapon.

**Sneak** Attack. Once per turn, Gallivar deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Gallivar that isn't incapacitated and Gallivar doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

### ACTIONS
**Multiattack.** Gallivar makes three short sword attacks.

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

## HOWLING APPARITION
*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 12
**Hit Points** 39
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR 8 (-1) | DEX 15 (+2) | CON 10 (+0) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INT 10 (+0) | WIS 9 (-1) | CHA 16 (+3) |

**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant
**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons
**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
**Languages** -
**Challenge** 2

**Living Sound.** A screeching shade that starts its turn deafened or silenced takes 1d10 (5) psychic damage.

### ACTIONS
**Wail.** Choose one creature within 30 feet. That creature must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 4d6 (14) thunder damage.

**Horrific Screeching (Recharge 5-6).** Each creature within a 15-foot cone must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or take 3d6 psychic damage and become frightened for 1 minute. A creature frightened by this ability receive a new saving throw at the end of their turn, ending the effect for itself on a success. Creatures frightened by the shade will not attack it.

## ICOSAPOD
*Medium monstrosity, neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural)
**Hit Points** 22
**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

| STR 15 (+2) | DEX 12 (+1) | CON 16 (+3) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INT 5 (-3) | WIS 12 (+1) | CHA 4 (-3) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 11
**Languages** -
**Challenge** 1

**Amphibious.** The icosapod can breathe air and water.

### ACTIONS
**Piercing Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8+2 (5) piercing damage.

**Hooked Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6+2 (5) slashing damage. If the attack hits,

the icosapod spins violently. On land, this rips the hook out, dealing an additional 1d6+2 (5) damage. Under water the target is instead pushed 10 feet if it is Medium or smaller.

## REACTIONS

**Skitter.** Whenever an icosapod is hit with an attack, it can use its reaction to immediately move 15 feet along any solid surface without provoking attacks of opportunity.

# MALEVOLENT APPARITION
*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 11
**Hit Points** 45
**Speed** 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON |
|---|---|---|
| 7 (-2) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) |
| **INT** 10 (+0) | **WIS** 12 (+1) | **CHA** 17 (+3) |

**Damage Resistances** acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
**Damage Immunities** cold, necrotic, poison
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
**Languages** -
**Challenge** 4

**Ethereal Sight.** The apparition can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

**Incorporeal Movement.** The apparition can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

## ACTIONS

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

**Etherealness.** The apparition enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

**Horrifying Visage.** Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the apparition that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 × 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this apparition's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a greater restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

**Devour Soul.** One creature within 5 feet of the bloodstained spirit must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the target gains one level of exhaustion. If a creature dies due to the exhaustion caused by this ability, its soul is destroyed permanently (it cannot be resurrected by any spell below 9th level).

# PIRATE BOARDER
*Medium humanoid (any), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)
**Hit Points** 28
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON |
|---|---|---|
| 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |
| **INT** 8 (-1) | **WIS** 11 (+0) | **CHA** 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Thieves' Cant plus any two other languages
**Challenge** 1

**Gang Up.** The pirate has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the pirate's crew is within 5 feet of the creature, and that crew member is not incapacitated.

**High Seas.** The pirate has advantage on Acrobatics checks, as well as Dexterity saving throws made to avoid being knocked prone or forced to move.

**Sucker Punch.** As long as the pirate has advantage on an attack, that attack deals an additional 1d6 (3) damage.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The pirate makes two dirk attacks.
**Dirk.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+2 (4) slashing damage.
**Cheap Shot (Recharge 5-6).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+2 (4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is blinded, incapacitated, or restrained (pirate's choice) until the pirate's next turn.

# PIRATE CAPTAIN
*Medium humanoid (troll-blooded), neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (breastplate)
**Hit Points** 78
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON |
|---|---|---|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) |
| **INT** 14 (+2) | **WIS** 10 (+0) | **CHA** 8 (-1) |

**Saving Throws** Strength +6, Constitution +5
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
**Languages** Thieves' Cant plus any two other languages
**Challenge** 4

**Gang Up.** The pirate has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the pirate's crew is within 5 feet of the creature, and that crew member is not incapacitated.

**High Seas.** The pirate has advantage on Acrobatics checks, as well as Dexterity saving throws made to avoid being knocked prone or forced to move.

**Limited Regeneration.** At the start of his turn, if the captain is below half health, he regains 1 hit point.

**Sucker Punch.** As long as the pirate has advantage on an attack, that attack deals an additional 1d6 (3) damage.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The pirate makes two greatsword attacks.
**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d6+5 (12) slashing damage.
**Cheap Shot (Recharge (5-6).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+4 (6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is blinded, incapacitated, or restrained (pirate's choice) until the pirate's next turn.

## REACTIONS

**Bark an Order.** Whenever a creature within 30 feet of the captain makes an attack roll against one of the captain's crew members, the captain can use his reaction to shout an order. The crew member being attacked gains a +2 bonus to its armor class for that attack. If the attack still hits it, that crew member can immediately use its reaction to make a melee attack against the creature targeting it.

# PIRATE ENGINEER
*Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral*

**Armor Class** 17 (breastplate and shield)
**Hit Points** 95
**Speed** 25 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON |
|---|---|---|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) |

| INT 14 (+2) | WIS 10 (+0) | CHA 8 (-1) |
|---|---|---|

**Saving Throws** Constitution +5, Wisdom +2
**Damage Resistances** fire
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
**Languages** Thieves' Cant plus any two other languages
**Challenge** 4

**Gang Up.** The pirate has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the pirate's crew is within 5 feet of the creature, and that crew member is not incapacitated.

**High Seas.** The pirate has advantage on Acrobatics checks, as well as Dexterity saving throws made to avoid being knocked prone or forced to move.

**Sucker Punch.** As long as the pirate has advantage on an attack, that attack deals an additional 1d6 (3) damage.

**Tinkerer.** When a pirate takes a cheap shot on you, it's bad. When a pirate engineer does it, it's bad and it explodes. The engineer's Cheap Shot ability does an additional 6d6 fire damage to each creature within 5 feet of the target, excluding the engineer (included in the ability). Creatures in the area other than the target receive a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw to avoid this damage.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The pirate makes two wrench attacks.

**Wrench.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8+4 (8) bludgeoning damage.

**Cheap Shot (Recharge (5-6).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+4 (6) bludgeoning damage, plus each creature within 5 feet of the target other than the engineer takes 6d6 (21) fire damage, and the target is blinded, incapacitated, or restrained (pirate's choice) until the pirate's next turn. Creatures in the area other than the target receive a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the additional fire damage.

## PIRATE FIRST MATE

*Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)
**Hit Points** 45
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR 14 (+2) | DEX 15 (+2) | CON 12 (+1) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 12 (+1) | WIS 10 (+0) | CHA 11 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +2
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
**Languages** Thieves' Cant plus any two other languages
**Challenge** 2

**Brash Inspiration.** Whenever the first mate hits a creature with a Cheap Shot, the first mate can choose one crew member that saw the Cheap Shot. That creature deals an additional 3d6 damage on their next attack that hits before the first mate's next turn.

**Gang Up.** The pirate has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the pirate's crew is within 5 feet of the creature, and that crew member is not incapacitated.

**High Seas.** The pirate has advantage on Acrobatics checks, as well as Dexterity saving throws made to avoid being knocked prone or forced to move.

**Sucker Punch.** As long as the pirate has advantage on an attack, that attack deals an additional 1d6 (3) damage.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The pirate makes two battle axe attacks.

**Battle Axe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8+2 (6) slashing damage.

**Cheap Shot (Recharge 5-6).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d4+2 (4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is blinded, incapacitated, or restrained (pirate's choice) until the pirate's next turn.

## SQUIDFACE THUG

*Medium humanoid, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 16 (leather armor, shield)
**Hit Points** 33
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR 10 (+0) | DEX 16 (+3) | CON 12 (+1) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 14 (+2) | WIS 8 (-1) | CHA 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Athletics +2, Stealth +6
**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
**Languages** Common
**Challenge** 2

**Born for the Sea.** Squidfaces can breathe air and water., and have advantage on swim checks.

**Grasping Tentacles.** Squidfaces can manipulate objects or make grapple checks even while both hands are occupied.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The thug makes two short sword attacks.

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

**Ink Jets (Recharges on a Short Rest).** As an action, the squidface can spray ink in a 15 foot cone. Creatures in the area must make a Dexterity saving throw at DC 11 or be blinded until the end of their next turn.

## BONUS ACTIONS

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6+3 (6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). As long as the target is grappled, the thug has advantage on melee attacks against the target.

## ZOMBIE MONKEY SWARM

*Large swarm of Tiny undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14
**Hit Points** 36
**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR 8 (-1) | DEX 18 (+4) | CON 11 (+0) |
|---|---|---|
| INT 1 (-5) | WIS 10 (+0) | CHA 3 (-4) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
**Languages** -
**Challenge** 2

**Distracting Cacophony.** Creatures in the swarm's space cannot concentrate on spells and have disadvantage on attack rolls.

**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 monkey. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

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

## ACTIONS

**Slams.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 4d6 (14) bludgeoning damage, or 2d6 (7) bludgeoning damage if the swarm has half its hit points or fewer.

restrained (pirate's choice) until the pirate's next turn.
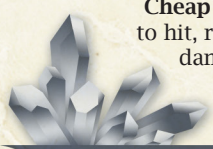
## Coral Blade

*Weapon (any slashing weapon), rare (requires attunement*

The blade of this weapon is covered in a thin layer of multihued coral. Whenever blood is spilled by this weapon, it always seems like there is less blood than you'd expect.

Your attacks with this weapon count as magical. In addition, if you are attuned to it, you can use each of the following abilities:

Paralytic Toxin. If you hit a creature with this weapon, you can activate this ability. If you do, the creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed for 1 minute. A paralyzed creature receives a new saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a successful save. After you use this ability, you must complete a long rest before using it again.

Stinging Toxin. If you hit a creature with this weapon, you can activate this ability. If you do, the creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 4d8 poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half that amount on a successful one. After you use this ability, you must complete a long rest before using it again.

## "Crackers", Familiar

Anyone capable of gaining a familiar (through the find familiar spell or a similar class feature) can use Crackers as a familiar. However, if you attune to Crackers (as though he were a magic item) and he is your familiar, you and he gain additional benefits.

While attuned to Crackers, he adds your proficiency bonus to his attack rolls and saving throws. In addition, you gain the following benefits:
You have advantage on all Arcana, Investigation, or Religion checks made regarding fiends or celestials.
Whenever you cast a spell that deals damage, you can choose a number of dice equal to your spellcasting ability modifier and re-roll them. You must use the new result. Once you've used this ability, you must complete a short rest before you can use it again.
As an action, you can regain 1 expended spell slot of 3rd level or lower. You must complete a long rest before using this ability again.

## Mechanic's Rod

*Wondrous Item (rod), very rare (requires attunement)*

This is a 3-foot long electrum rod etched from top to bottom with blueprints and schematics. Whenever its wielder casts fabricate, a new blueprint appears and the oldest blueprint fades.

You can wield this rod as though it were a +1 mace. It deals an additional 2d6 damage to Constructs. While wielding the rod, you can cast the mending cantrip at will. In addition, you can cast fabricate and you are considered proficient in all artisan's tools with regard to that spell. You must complete a long rest

before you can cast fabricate again using this rod.

## Siltstrider's Armor

*Armor (any light armor), very rare (requires attunement)*

This light armor constantly gives off the faint smell of salt water. It looks as though it has been worn at sea by various sailors for decades. The armor feels damp to the touch for anyone not attuned to it.

While wearing this armor, climbing and swimming do not cost you additional movement, and you can hold your breath for a number of minutes equal to your Constitution score. In addition, you can cast the fog cloud spell. You must complete a short rest before you can cast the spell again. While within a fog cloud created by this armor, you can take the Hide or Disengage action as a bonus action. While submerged, this ability creates an inky cloud instead of fog, but otherwise functions as normal for the spell.

## Last Fang of Shal'Krazad

*Wondrous Item, very rare (requires attunement)*

This amulet appears to be a simple corded necklace with a small white fang hanging from it. Upon closer inspection, the fang isn't from any identifiable creature, but seems to be chipped from a much larger tooth of some kind. See the Sidebar below for more information about this item.

While wearing this amulet, you gain a +1 bonus to Armor Class against ranged attacks. The first time you fall more than 20 feet, the amulet creates a 20-foot radius shell of faded blue energy, centered on you. The shell moves with you. You and any allies within the shell gain the benefits of the feather fall spell. After this ability is triggered, you must complete a long rest before it will activate again.

In addition, you can activate the amulet as an action, creating 20-foot radius shimmering green shell of energy centered on you. This shell does not move once activated. When you activate the amulet, you and each ally within the area gain 2d6 temporary hit points. Until the end of your next turn, you and all allies in the area have advantage on Dexterity saving throws. If you or an ally in the area succeeds on a Dexterity saving throw that would result in taking half damage, they instead take no damage. You must complete a long rest before using this ability again.

### Sidebar: Shal'Krazad

Legends say Shal'Krazad was the last of the true sea dragons that roamed the blue oceans before the leviathans came. His children were the first of the sky dragons and scions of what most consider to be "true dragons".

The fang is variously said to have been a gift to a proud and mighty Salt and Iron Paladin, a trophy taken by one of the original Reavers, and a fabrication by a talented Arcanist. Regardless of its source all agree in addition to its protective powers in possess a few quirks.

It nearly always points toward the equator, but from time to time points a different direction. It imbues upon its wielder a deep desire to bath in salt water at least once a day. It wielder develops an extreme dislike for cooked fish, but a strange appetite for raw fish.

## Squid Potion
*Potion, uncommon (very rare outside seafaring locales)*

This potion looks like nothing so much as jet black squid ink. When imbibed, you gain a swim speed equal to half your walking speed, you can breathe water, and you gain advantage on checks made to grapple other creatures. The potions lasts for 30 minutes before its effects fade.

## Quicksilver Potion
*Potion, rare*

This vial contains a few drops of a shimmering silver liquid suspended in a pale yellow fluid. When you drink this potion, you can immediately take the dash or disengage action. In addition, for the next minute, you can take the dash or disengage action as a bonus action.

## Alchemical Grenades
*Potion, rarity varies*

Alchemical grenades are a variant of normal potions designed to be thrown at enemies. As such, they are larger than a typical potion vial and weigh more. All alchemical grenades are thrown finesse weapons with a range of 20/40 feet, meaning they can be thrown using your choice of Strength or Dexterity. All alchemical grenades can target only the creature hit by the grenade, regardless of the spell imbuing the grenade. On a missed attack roll, there is a 50% chance the grenade shatters with no effect. If the grenade doesn't shatter, it can be retrieved and used again.

### Bane Grenade
*Potion (alchemical grenade), uncommon*

Whenever you hit a creature with this grenade, it must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or suffer the effects of the bane spell (no concentration required).

### Cursed Grenade
*Potion (alchemical grenade), very rare*

Whenever you hit a creature with this grenade, it must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or suffer the effects of the bestow curse spell (no concentration required). If the targeted creature fails its saving throw, determine the nature of the curse randomly.for trouble and judging whether someone useful walks through the door.

## Communications

The submarine has a communications station that will allow you to send signals to the ship and tell it which cannons to fire at Old Crank. Note: If the ship took 15 or more structural damage during the chase, each of the following attacks has disadvantage. On your turn, choose one of the following actions:

**Fire the Cannons.** The ship unloads a broadside of cannons at Crank. Make an attack against Crank with a +7 bonus. If you hit, you deal 8d8 bludgeoning damage to Crank.

**Fire the Binding Cannon.** The ship mounts one Eldritch Cannon on a swivel in the stern. Make an attack against Crank with a +8 bonus. If you hit, you deal 4d6 lightning damage, and Crank loses his next action.

## Navigation

You control the movement of the submarine, which is fairly standard for ships of this type. However, you have a pair of non-standard additions as well. On your turn, choose one of the following actions:

**Go go go!** Your console has a large green button with "GO!" taped over it. When you hit this button, the submarine surges forward. The submarine's speed for this turn is increased by 60 feet.

**Evasive Action.** Next to the green button is a red button with "ICE" taped over it. When you hit the button, the ship immediately begins surging in random directions. The next attack against the sub has disadvantage.

## Torpedo Gunner

The submarine has a large torpedo launcher installed illegally. The ship carries explosive torpedoes, as well as torpedoes that explode with ice. On your turn, choose one of the following actions:

**Fire the Torpedo.** You fire a standard torpedo at Crank. Make an attack against Crank with a +8 bonus. If you hit, Crank takes 10d6 fire damage.

**Frost Torpedo.** You fire a frost torpedo at Crank. Make an attack against Crank. If you hit, you deal 6d4 cold damage, and Crank loses his next action.

## Grapple Arm Operator

The submarine has an external grapple cannon and spotlight, controlled from a console on the bridge. On your turn, choose one of the following actions:

**Fire the Grapple.** You fire the grapple at Crank. It isn't likely to penetrate his armor, but it will probably hurt! Make an attack against Crank with a +8 bonus. If you hit, you deal 6d6 piercing damage.

**Activate the Spotlights.** You activate the massive spotlight on the submarine's hull, illuminating Crank. The Torpedo Gunner has advantage on the next attack it makes.

## Engineering

The submarine has a small engineering console that allows you to enhance and protect the ship by directing power to key subsystems. On your turn, choose one of the following actions:

**Empower Torpedo.** You divert arcane energy from the crystal powering the sub. Roll 10d6, and increase the damage of the next standard torpedo fired by that amount.

**Activate the Shell.** You divert arcane energy to the hull of the ship. The next time the submarine is hit by Crank, he takes 8d8 lightning damage.

# Old Crank Combat Aid

## Hidden Effects

Whenever the players activate abilities during this encounter, there are hidden effects depending on which actions they use. Review each Role below for more information. None of these effects are permanent, and if no duration is listed, it lasts until that player's next turn.

## Communications

**Fire the Cannons.** Launching the signal that tells the ship to fire the cannons also causes a short in the firing mechanism of the torpedo launcher. The next time the gunner tries to fire either torpedo, the attack has disadvantage. When this ability is used, describe the Communications player hearing an odd zapping sound, and the Gunner's console flickering.

**Fire the Binding Cannon.** Launching the signal that tells the ship to fire the binding cannon also routes additional power to the Engineer's console, causing the next use of "Empower Torpedo" to have double the effect. Describe the engineering console getting noticeably warmer.

## Engineering

**Empower Torpedo.** Activating this ability also runs additional power to the Grapple Cannon. The next time the grapple cannon is fired and hits Crank, the grapple manages to embed itself into his armor. Crank will rip it free at the start of the next round, but until then the ship and Crank are connected by a massive cable. Describe the entire party hearing a distant whirring sound coming from the direction of the grapple arm when this ability is used.

**Activate the Shell.** Activating this ability causes a power failure when the Navigator activates their "Evasive Action" ability. The next time that ability is activated, the submarine comes to a halt instead of evading. Crank gains advantage on his next attack against the submarine, instead of disadvantage. Describe the mild smell of smoke coming from the Navigator's console.

## Grapple Arm Operator

**Fire the Grapple.** Firing the grapple frees up power for the Gunner's torpedo launcher. The next attack the Torpedo Gunner makes gains a +4 bonus. Describe the gunner getting a little tingly whenever he is touching the firing handle.

**Activate the Spotlights.** Activating this ability closes a circuit in the Communication console, causing the opposite signals to come out. The next time Communications chooses to use an ability, the other ability is used instead. Describe sparks visibly arcing off of the Communication console.

## Torpedo Gunner

**Fire the Torpedo.** Firing the torpedo causes excess energy to cycle back into the ship's power crystal. The Navigator's "Go go go!" ability increases the ship's speed by 120 feet instead of 60 feet the next time it is used. Describe the Navigator's power readings go through the roof.

**Frost Torpedo.** The frost torpedoes are leaking coolant. Firing the frost torpedo causes ice crystals to spread across the hull and interfering with the Engineer's "Activate the Shell" ability. The next time the Engineer activates that ability, the ship takes 4d8 lightning damage (but the ability still works as normal). Describe the entire crew hearing a faint crystalline crackling sound, as though from far away.

## Navigation

**Go go go!** Activating this ability puts the ship in a perfect position, allowing the signals from the Communications console to get through much more clearly. The next attack the ship makes has advantage. Describe a soft hum coming from the Communication console.

**Evasive Action.** Activating this ability makes the grapple arm nearly impossible to control. The next time the Grapple Arm Operator fires the grapple, the attack has disadvantage. Describe the party hearing a loud clang from the hull, and the Grapple Arm Operator feeling stiffness in his controls.

## Old Crank Statistics

**Initiative** +2 (Crank acts 3 times per round)
**Hit Points** 1000 to flee, 1500 to kill
**Speed** 60 feet
**Armor Class** 15
**All Attacks and Saves** +8
**Damage** 10d10

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