



FROG GOD GAMES ADVENTURES

THE BLACK SPOT

by Gary McBride



5TH EDITION
COMPATIBLE

THE BLACK SPOT

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THE BLACK SPOT

BY GARY MCBRIDE

A FIFTH EDITION ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 5TH LEVEL

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

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

THE TALE OF *THE FLYING FORTUNE*

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

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

A TREASURE SPOTTED

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

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

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

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

LOYALTY, RESCUE ATTEMPTS, AND DOOM

The Flying Fortune approached slowly and cautiously. They dragged the man out of the water and found him horribly lacerated. He was already dead. Suddenly doubt filled the first mate. Something was out there, and both ship’s boats were already launched. Years of nautical experience demanded he pull the ship back to a safe distance and wait for morning’s light, but he could not bring himself to abandon the captain and his mates.

Hesitantly, the acting commander ordered the ship even closer to the exposed reef and then, with a thundering crash, the ship struck the hidden rocks beneath the water. The whole vessel shuttered and lurched. The brig grounded, and *The Flying Fortune*’s fate was sealed. The sound of shattering hull planks followed by horrid screams resonated from below decks — more than merely the sounds of running aground. Something had broken into the ship and was attacking the crew below.

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

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

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

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

THE BEST LAID PLANS OF EXTRADIMENSIONAL INVADERS

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

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

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

NEEDS AS BLACK AS HELL

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

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

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



ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Black Spot is an adventure for four to six Tier 2 characters. It is a tale told in four parts, and should provide sufficient adventure for multiple sessions. Though intended for use with Razor Coast, this excursion is set on an indeterminate point upon the high seas, so it could take place almost anywhere in the fantasy world of your choosing.

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

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

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

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

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

HOOKS

The characters' time aboard *The Sealord's Blessing* may begin as a business relationship. Experienced characters gain working passage as the ship's security contingent, providing protection against buccaneers and sea beasts. Characters new to the Razor Sea and the Blessing may book passage aboard the vessel on their initial journey to Port Shaw. The characters must think themselves fortunate indeed to find a captain so worried about security that he would grant them free passage, board, and modest pay in exchange for a promise to help defend the ship.

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

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

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

The captain carries two *potions of healing*, two doses of paralyzing poison, 20 crossbow bolts, spyglass, thieves' tools, 22 gp, and a diamond worth 400 gp and he wears a *+1 chain shirt*.

CLUES AND RUMORS

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

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

CLUES

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

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

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

RUMORS

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

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

THE REAL "BLACK SPOT"

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

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

PART ONE: SHADOWS UPON A MOONLESS SEA

SYNOPSIS

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

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

If the characters wish to talk to the crew, there are a few colorful characters for them to meet aboard the *Blessing*. Most of the crew are **sailors** (see **Appendix**), but a few, as noted, have their own stat blocks in the **Appendix**. See below for details.

FIRST MATE BARTON "DANDY" HANDERLY

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

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

Handerly carries two *potions of greater healing*, 20 crossbow bolts, 24 gp, and a silver holy symbol of Quell worth 50 gp.



GUSTAV "GLOOMY GUS" EIDESPRECHER, ABLE SEAMAN

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

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

CARLTON "PREACH" RASKERS, QUARTERMASTER

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

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

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

PUNAWAI, ABLE SEAMAN

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

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

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

ENCOUNTERS

IN SEARCH OF *THE FLYING FORTUNE*

BACKGROUND

The characters arrive on the docks of Port Shaw in preparation for their voyage aboard *The Sealord's Blessing*. Captain Riggs is not available to greet them, but the other members of the crew — most notably First Mate Barton Handerly — are present to welcome them aboard and address the necessities: showing them to their quarters, introducing them to life aboard ship, and other preliminary matters. After this brief indoctrination, the ship is prepared for the high seas. As the ship departs from Port Shaw and sets out to the open sea, you may read or paraphrase the following.

The Sealord's Blessing leaves port with the dawn tide. A fair breeze fills the mainsail and soon land is but a memory lost in the morning mist. First Mate Barton Handerly has the wheel but, with so constant a wind, finds little to do but make sure the morning shift does not slack their duties. A handsome sailor with a friendly smile — though perhaps a little overdressed in his fine burgundy waistcoat — Handerly seems a personable sort. He even takes a moment to instruct some of the younger sailors on how to use the gunwales and rigging to maneuver the ship's deck until they get their sea legs. "It's a fine day for sailing! The wind is good and steady. If this holds we'll shave a day off our journey easy," he says with a laugh. The journey has begun . . .

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

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

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

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

"Save your poetry for the whores back in port, Handerly!" the Captain snaps. "The Razor is no place to let your guard down, and we're a long way from home yet."

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

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

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

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

FIRES IN THE FOG

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

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

ABOUT *THE SEALORD'S BLESSING*

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

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

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

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

THE SEALORD'S BLESSING

Two-Masted Caravel, Gargantuan vehicle (18 ft. by 90 ft.)

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 350 (Threshold 15)

Speed 5 knots average, 10 knots max (oars 1 knot)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	7 (-2)	20 (+5)	0 (-5)	0 (-5)	0 (-5)

Capacity 45 crew, 10 passengers

Hull Reinforced wood construction

Max Cargo 8 tons

Movement *The Sealord's Blessing* moves either with its oars or its sails.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"I see nothing," he pronounces.

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

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

THE FLYING FORTUNE'S APPEARANCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE CAPTAIN’S TREACHERY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A TIME TO POISON

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

LIAR, LIAR

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

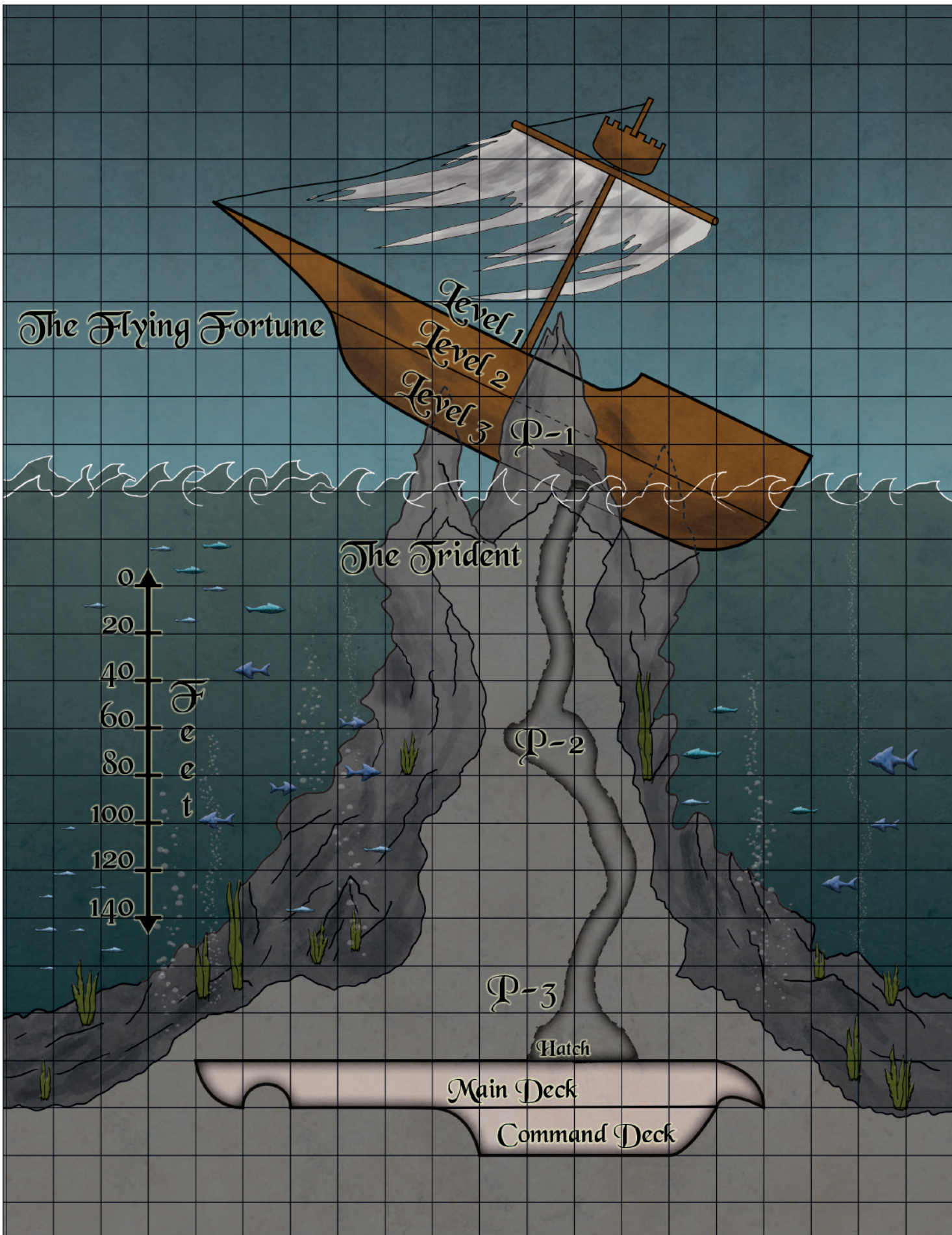
Second, the characters can confront Captain Riggs if they find the smuggler’s hold (Area 19) and discover Titus’ journal that explicitly names the captain as the master of *The Flying Fortune*. Once again, Captain Riggs attacks when his story falls apart.

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

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

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

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



EDITOR'S NOTE: WHAT ABOUT MAGIC?

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

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

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

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

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

HELP FROM THE SHIP?

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

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

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

Each sailor wears a chain shirt and carries a spear and 1d8 gp

PART TWO: THE FLYING FORTUNE

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

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

ECOLOGY OF THE SEAMOUNT

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

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

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

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

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

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

LORD OF THE MOUNT

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

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

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

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

THE SEAMOUNT

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

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

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

THE FLYING FORTUNE LEVEL I:

UPPER DECKS

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

Thanks to the wind, it is also surprisingly dry and devoid of slick algae. It only takes a successful DC 5 Strength (Athletics) check to climb to the summit. Once atop the summit, the characters emerge on the upper deck at Area 1.

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

EFFECTS OF WIND AND WAVES

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

1. ENTRY POINT

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

2. MAIN DECK

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

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

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

If any character falls through the rotten deck, the subsequent crash

The Flying Fortune

1 square - 10 feet

Level 1: Upper Decks



Level 2: Amidships



Level 3: Lower Holds



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

Keen observers can garner additional information among the mess. Any character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check confirms the ship is in poor shape, but it has not been submerged. The captain's voiced concerns about the ship being eventually submerged are unfounded. This wreck is stranded high and dry.

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

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

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

2A. MIZZENMAST

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

3. THE CROW'S NEST

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

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

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

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

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

4. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

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

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

"And what does that prove? C.R. are common enough initials. In fact, there is another sailor aboard the Blessing — Carlton Raskers — with the same initials. Christopher Robinson is no longer with the crew, alas. There was a fine sailor. He retired to Port Shaw. Perhaps he's missing his hankies . . ."

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

5. QUARTER DECK

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

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

6. CREW'S MESS

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

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

7. GALLEY

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

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

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

If confronted with this pin, the captain acts shocked. He disputes the belaying pin originated on the *Blessing*. He attempts to dismiss it as a strange coincidence, or attributes the belaying pin to the *Blessing's* sister ship, which is a fabrication.

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

8. FORE DECK

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

THE FLYING FORTUNE LEVEL II: AMIDSHIPS

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

9. WATERLOGGED STAIRS

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

However, if a creature fails to notice the danger and steps onto the crumbling steps, the creature and any adjacent companions fall through the stairs unless they succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the victim plummets 30 feet onto a bed of sea urchins. The character takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the plunge and must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

10. SAFE STAIRS

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

11. CREW QUARTERS

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

12. AMIDSHIPS HOLD

This large open space was once used to hold excess cargo that could not be stowed in the lower hold. It was also used for extra bunk space if that was ever needed. Now it is a rotten place. Untold amounts of seawater have seeped through. However, unlike the upper deck where the floor has grown treacherous, here the floor has given way. The map marks a large section of the floor that is simply gone. The cargo hatch to the lower decks is still present, but warped and rotten. Two hatches in the deck lead to ladders descending to the lower deck. The ladders are still sturdily mounted to the ship's hull.

13. SHIP'S STORES

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

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

14. CABIN

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

15. CABIN

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

16. CABIN

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

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

17. NAVIGATOR'S CABIN

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

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

Treasure: The shredded charts are stained with gore and arterial spray. They have largely rotted away from the rain and weather now leaking through the broken portholes. However, the golden sextant (worth 520 gp) lies hidden among the refuse. Characters locate the navigator’s cherished mariner’s tool with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. The charts and writing would be valuable, but they have all been ruined by wind and exposure.

THE FLYING FORTUNE LEVEL III: THE LOWER HOLDS

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

18. LOWER HOLD

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

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

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

19. SMUGGLER'S HOLD

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

The smuggler’s hold is not empty. It contains a skeleton dressed in tattered rags holding a shortsword and a tied black leather book. It wears a gold ring on its bony finger adorned with a stylized eagle (worth 5 gp). A spilled bottle of ink, a melted candle, and a rotted feather quill sit beside him. This is all that remains of Titus Weatherby. Titus was with the first officer on deck when the sailors made their last stand. By sheer luck, he survived the first rush of the encephalon gorgers and managed to dive through the cargo netting. He didn’t escape unscathed. One of the gorgers gave him a nice gash along his leg. He limped to the lowest hold as he listened to the slaughter unfolding above him. He knew the secret of the hold and secured himself inside, intent on waiting out the monsters and then making a break for land.

He survived his immediate injuries, and stopped the bleeding by using his own shirt as a bandage. The sounds of combat died down, and there was no doubt in his mind who had won the day. He could hear the monsters prowling the ship looking for survivors. One of them even came close enough to scrape one of their blades across the wood of the hidden hold. They never found him, though, and after a few hours he was certain they had returned to the hell from whence they came.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I'll never know, I guess. And in the end what does it matter? I can only pray to whatever gods may be listening that someday, in some manner, proper vengeance will answer the carnage brought upon the *Fortune's* crew today.

Keep me, Lords of the Sea.
— Titus Weatherby

CONFRONTING CAPTAIN RIGGS WITH THE JOURNAL

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

CONFRONTING CAPTAIN RIGGS WITH THE RING

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

FULFILL A LOST BOY'S DYING WISH

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

BECOME A PUBLISHER

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

20. FLOODED HOLD

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

The flooded portion of the hold also holds a deadly surprise. A nearly intact, barnacle-encrusted sea chest sits in about five feet of water. In fact, this is one of the Engineer's more amusing projects. Using its dark sciences and the flesh of a polymorphous sea slug found in local reefs, the Engineer created an aquatic **mimic** (the mimic can breathe in air or water and it regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point). Worse, the tissues of the creatures the Engineer used regenerate with terrifying speed.

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

21. THE BREACH

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

PART THREE: DOWN INTO DARKNESS

SYNOPSIS

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

P-1. TOP OF THE PASSAGE

The lowest hold of *The Flying Fortune* contains the breach where the so-called “vile slashers” first entered that doomed ship 7 years ago. Past the breach is a wide tunnel that leads down into the solid rock of the Trident. When the mi-go ship materialized upon this plane, it did so within the solid stone of the seamount. Not only did this cause tremendous damage to the vessel, it also embedded the craft within the seamount. The Engineer jury-rigged a repair to create the illusion that lured *The Flying Fortune* to its doom. That passage is the only way to access the mi-go craft.

If Captain Riggs is still with the characters, he feigns ignorance about the tunnel. He claims it looks like a lava tunnel and seems eager to convince the characters to venture down. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals he is wrong and this is no natural passage. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals it was formed by alien magic akin to *stone shape*. A Wisdom (Insight) check that defeats Captain Riggs’ Charisma (Deception) check confirms the wily captain is hiding something about his knowledge of the passage.

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

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

P-2. WELCOME GARDEN

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

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

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

P-3. THE VIRIDIAN PORTAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

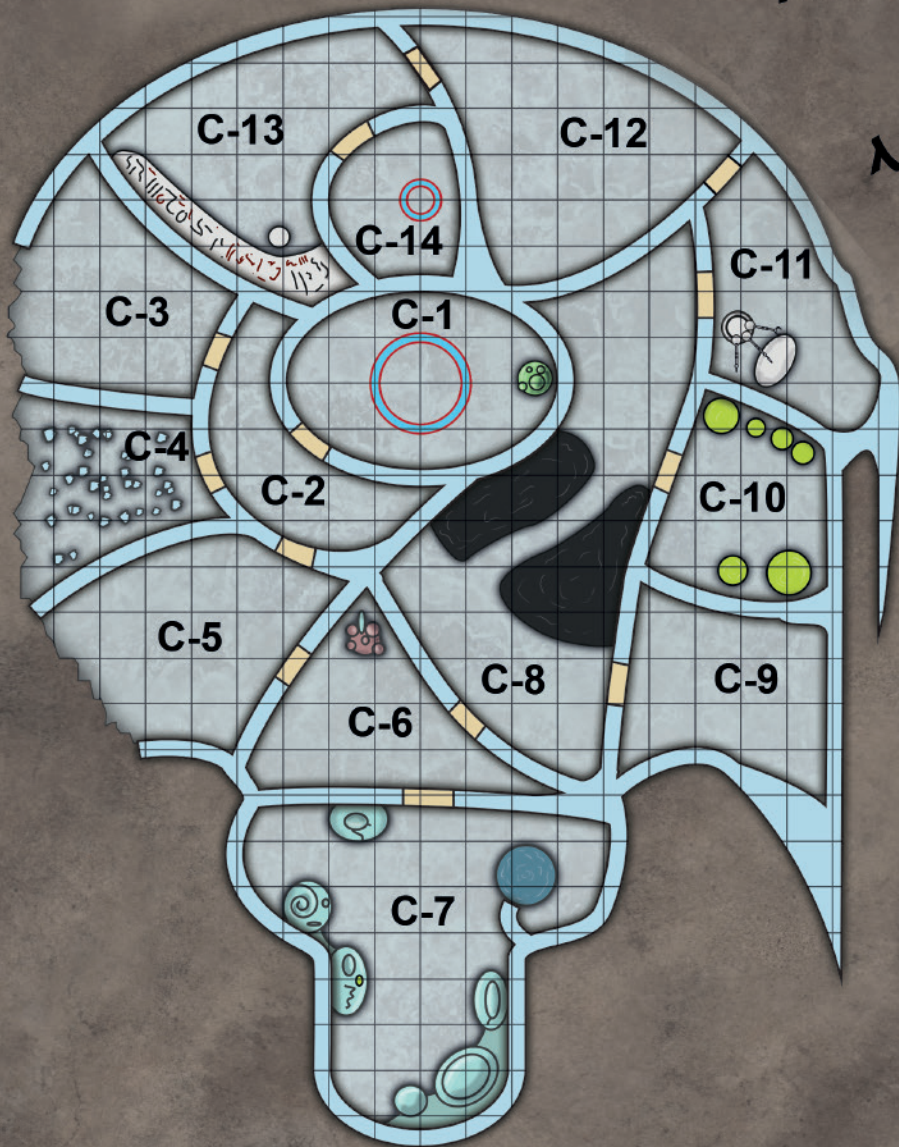
PART FOUR: NOT OF THIS WORLD

SYNOPSIS

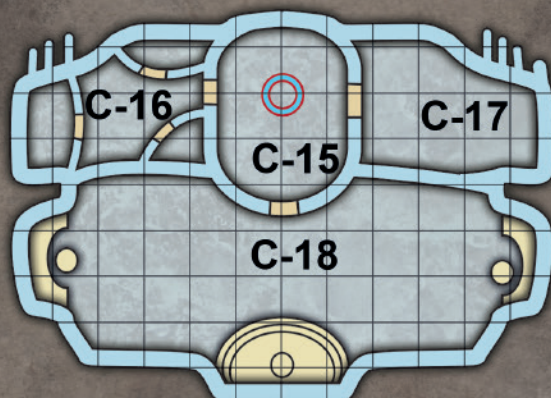
At last, the characters enter the brain collector’s craft. In the upper levels, this adventure was a mystery requiring investigation. Uncertainty as to what foul fate befell *The Flying Fortune* drove the characters forward. As the characters take their first step into the mi-go craft, matters shift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

The Neh-Thalggu Craft

1 square - 10 feet



Main Deck



Command Deck

LEVEL I: MAIN DECK ENCOUNTERS

C-1. COLLECTION CHAMBER

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

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

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

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

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

If the characters linger too long in this chamber after disabling or avoiding the trap, the encephalon gorgers in Area C-5 storm this chamber. From this point forward, the Engineer is no longer trying to take prisoners.

It is possible that the gas trap in the collection chamber actually works. If the characters fail to defuse it, everyone could fall unconscious. If so, the adventurers are in grave danger, and it becomes unlikely all of them survive. The Engineer sends the encephalon gorgers to collect the victims, strip them of all their possessions, and deposit the naked characters into individual holding cells in Area C-16. It waits until the characters regain consciousness (the knockout gas interferes with its tissue processing procedure) and then selects a random character 1 hour later. The encephalon gorgers drag the chosen character into the vivisection laboratory and restrain him or her. The process of metabolizing the character into every component the Engineer requires takes hours, dealing 11 (2d10) necrotic damage each hour. The screams echo throughout the craft. The processing ends when the victim dies. After finishing off one character, the Engineer sends its lackey to fetch another until it "processes" them all.

C-2. VAULT OF MANY DOORS

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

C-3. MEAT LOCKER

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

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

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

C-4. SHOOTING GALLERY

This chamber is a wreck. The jagged stone ripping through the ship's brass superstructure that appeared in only one corner of the adjoining meat locker dominates the entire western wall (see Area C-3 for identifying the ship's means of arrival). Debris covers the floor and sharp, minute spines of jagged stone pierce every flat surface. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals traces of some long-dried, blue-green ichor. This is encephalon gorgor blood from where the Engineer's crew died. Any trace of what this chamber's original function was is no longer evident.

C-5. CAVERN OF BLADES

This large, empty, cavernous compartment is a guardroom housing the reanimated remains of the Engineer's crewmates (**encephalon gorgor zombies**, see **Appendix**), now his personal shock troops, called the "vile slashers" in Titus' journal from Area 19. When not on duty, they sit motionless waiting for the Engineer's commands.

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

THE MIND OF THE ENEMY

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

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

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

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

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

If the characters confront the Engineer with these lies, the Engineer does not argue. You may read or paraphrase the Engineer's reply.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Arcana) check spots the spike embedded in the creatures' heads. Yanking the spike out of the encephalon gorgon causes the creature to no longer communicate with or accept commands from the Engineer. However, the monster resorts to its natural tendencies and attacks the characters without provocation. Removing the spike requires the creature to grapple the encephalon gorgon and then use a bonus action to remove the spike with a successful DC 20 Strength or DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check. The sudden shock to the encephalon's system deals 14 (4d6) psychic damage to the freed creature.

C-6. ALTAR OF THE BRAIN GOD

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

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

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

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

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

C-7. CHAMBER OF THE CEASELESS STORM

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

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

C-8. LEECH TANKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

If the Engineer ever gains control of a character (and they are restored to positive hit points), the abomination's first priority will be to get as many of the invaders as possible out of its vessel. When this is done or if this proves impossible, the controlled character immediately turns upon his comrades, attacking until slain or subdued.

C-9. ENGINEER'S PROJECT

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

C-10. GLOWING GROTTO

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

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

C-11. VIVISECTION LABORATORY

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

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

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

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

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

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

C-12. EMPTY CHAMBER

At first glance, this chamber seems entirely empty save for two doors. However, there is a small glowing pad with a ruby set into it. It is affixed to the wall near the western door. Touching the ruby while the ship is powered prompts strange circular furniture to rise out of the floor. This was the ship's dining and meeting room. There are six twisted and bent seats around a large ovoid table. If anyone tries to pry out the ruby while the ship's power is on, they trigger an **electrified trap** (6d6 lightning damage) as the circuit shorts out. The trap deals no damage if the ship's power is off, during which time the ruby can be removed with minimal effort. Locating the trap requires a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check, while disarming it takes a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools or a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Treasure: The ruby is worth 250 gp.

C-13. THE AMETHYST HARMONIUM

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

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

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

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

C-14. PILLAR OF LIGHT

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

Normally, this shimmering beam of light levitates anyone stepping into it down to Area C-15 on the command deck. However, the Engineer is watching the characters via a small jewel-eye in the southeastern corner of the compartment. As soon as anyone steps in the beam of light, the beam shuts off. Any creature in the beam abruptly plummets 20 feet down to the next level. The fall deals 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. The Engineer knows that this nasty little trick won't stop the characters at this point, but anything to soften them up is welcome. When the Engineer extinguishes the beam, the characters must climb down to the next level through the open hole in the floor.

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

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

LEVEL II: COMMAND DECK

C-15. LANDING PAD

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

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

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

C-16: HOLDING CELLS

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

C-17. VARICOLORED GARDEN

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

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

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

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

C-18. THRONE OF THE ENGINEER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Engineer carries a *wand of lightning bolts*, a *potion of clairvoyance*, tinker's tools, jeweler's tools, and six pieces of jade worth 100 gp each

PART FIVE: CONCLUSION

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

SELF DESTRUCT IN T-MINUS...

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

“You have won . . . nothing.”

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

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

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

The gist of this requires no understanding of mi-go or the strange language of the control system. The Engineer has rigged the ship to blow. Clever players likely realize their peril and flee for the exit with no further prompting. Anyone else must succeed at a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to realize what is about to occur. This event is not meant to result in a total party kill. It is intended to ensure that the characters do not end with free reign over the strange machinery of the mi-go craft, thus making unwanted changes to the campaign world. So, as long as the characters flee the craft without delay, they have no difficulty escaping before the entire seamount erupts in a great plume of rock, coral, and boiling seawater.

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

Clearly, it is now time to leave.

ALIEN INVASION AVERTED

With the Engineer's death, the characters have eradicated this threat to the Razor once and forever. The explosion is so titanic it even collapses a good portion of the upper seamount, which removes a navigational hazard. The tip of the Trident has been forever blunted. Of course, the shattered remains of *The Flying Fortune* also sink beneath the waves. Even more importantly, with the loss of their scout, the aliens turn their attention to other worlds and other atrocities. The characters likely never know how close their home world came to calamity. Perhaps, if one of our accidental heroes is a devout follower of a deity, that person learns the truth in vague visions and portentous dreams. Perhaps it is enough that the adventures have slain these obviously alien aberrations and looted their craft.

CAPTAIN HANDERLY AND *THE SEALORD'S BLESSING*

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

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

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

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

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

THE WIDOW'S ERRAND

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

CAPTAIN RIGGS AND THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND

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

"So here's to poor old Captain Riggs, as fine a sailor as you'll ever meet. He was a fine gentleman of fortune who, alas, the gods saw fit to consign to a terrible fate. Mourn him, lads, aye mourn him. But take some comfort in this. We were fortunate indeed not to share in his misfortune. For I saw it myself when I was delivering wine to his cabin during one of his binges. Upon his left hand—the black spot!"

THE REDEMPTION OF CAPTAIN RIGGS

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

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

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

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

TROUBLESHOOTING

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

My characters do not want to go with Riggs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The characters do not want to go through the breach.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX: NEW CREATURES

BARTON HANDERLY

Medium humanoid (high elf), chaotic good

Armor Class 12 (studded leather)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. Barton's innate spellcasting ability is

Intelligence (spell save DC 10). He can innately cast the following spell, requiring no material components:

1/day: *prestidigitation*

Actions

Multiattack. Barton makes two melee attacks.

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

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

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

Equipment

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

BIO-ORGANIC SLIME

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 7

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

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

Damage Vulnerabilities fire, cold

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, poison, slashing

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

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

Languages –

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

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

Corrosive Form. A creature that touches the slime or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of wood that hits the slime corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to –5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of wood that hits the slime is destroyed after dealing damage. The slime can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood in 1 round.

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

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

Actions

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

Devour (recharge 6). Once it is adhered to a creature, the bio-organic slime begins to devour the flesh of the creature. On each turn, the creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 13 (3d8) acid damage. On a successful save, the target takes half the acid damage. This effect ends if someone uses an action to scrape the slime off of the target.

CLOCKWORK ABOMINATION

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (8d10 + 32)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dexterity +4, Constitution +7

Skills Athletics +9, Perception +3, Stealth +4

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

Damage Immunities poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Infernal

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

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

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

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

Actions

Multiattack. The clockwork abomination makes one Bite attack and one Slam attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target.

Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

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

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

CLOCKWORK WEAVING SPIDER

Tiny construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 24 (10d4)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

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

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

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

Actions

Multiattack. The weaving spider makes two Trimming Blade attacks or two Needle Shuttle attacks.

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

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

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

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

COLTHYN RIGGS, CAPTAIN OF THE SEALORD'S BLESSING

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. Captain Riggs makes three melee or ranged attacks.

Poisoned Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. A creature who fails takes 24 (7d6) poison damage and is paralyzed while a creature who succeeds takes half as much damage and is not paralyzed. A paralyzed creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on a success.

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

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

Reactions

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

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

Equipment

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

ELEMENTAL, LIGHTNING

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)

Speed 50 ft.

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

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

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

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

Actions

Multiattack. The lightning elemental makes two Touch attacks.

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

THE ENGINEER (MI-GO)

Medium plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (8d8 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

Saving Throws Strength +7, Constitution +9, Charisma +5
Skills Arcana +11, Deception +9, Medicine +6, Perception +6, Stealth +8

Damage Resistances cold, radiant

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 240 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Mi-Go, Void Speech

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Actions

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

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 14 (3d6 + 4) slashing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). If both claw attacks strike the same target in a single turn, the target takes an additional 13 (2d12) psychic damage.

Reactions

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

Lair Actions

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

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

Electrical Discharge. The Engineer manipulates the ship's energy to call down lightning bolts as though it had cast the *call lightning* spell. The Engineer cannot use this lair action if the ship's engines are inoperable.

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

Equipment

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

MURDER CROW

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +7

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. The murder crow makes one Bite attack and two Claws attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 8 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 10 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

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

MUSTARD JELLY

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d8 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

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

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

Damage Immunities acid, force, lightning, poison

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

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

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

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

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

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

Poison Aura. At the start of each of the jelly's turns, each creature within 15 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target cannot regain hit points, and it takes 14 (4d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The poisoned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature who has succeeded on its saving throw is immune to the mustard jelly's aura for 24 hours.

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

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target.

Hit: 11 (2d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). A mustard jelly can have up to five targets grappled at a time.

Reactions

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

PUNAWAI

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 (hide armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

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

Actions

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

PUTRID HAUNT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Resistances bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

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

Actions

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

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

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

SAHUAGIN LORD

Large humanoid (sahuagin), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6, Int +5, Wis +5
Skills Perception +8
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Sahuagin
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

Limited Amphibiousness. The sahuagin lord can breathe air and water, but it needs to be submerged at least once every 4 hours or start to suffocate.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The sahuagin lord makes one Bite attack and two Claws or Trident attacks.

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

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

Trident. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage, or 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.



SAILORS

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

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

Equipment

Chain shirt, spear, 1d8 gp

STRANGLE WEED

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 34 (4d10 + 12)

Speed swim 5 ft.

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

Damage Resistances fire

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone, stunned, unconscious

Senses Tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. The strangle weed makes up to four Frond attacks.

FronD. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). The strangle weed has four fronds, each of which can grapple only one target.

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

ZOMBIE, ENCEPHALON GORGER

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands Common, Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Encephalon, but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

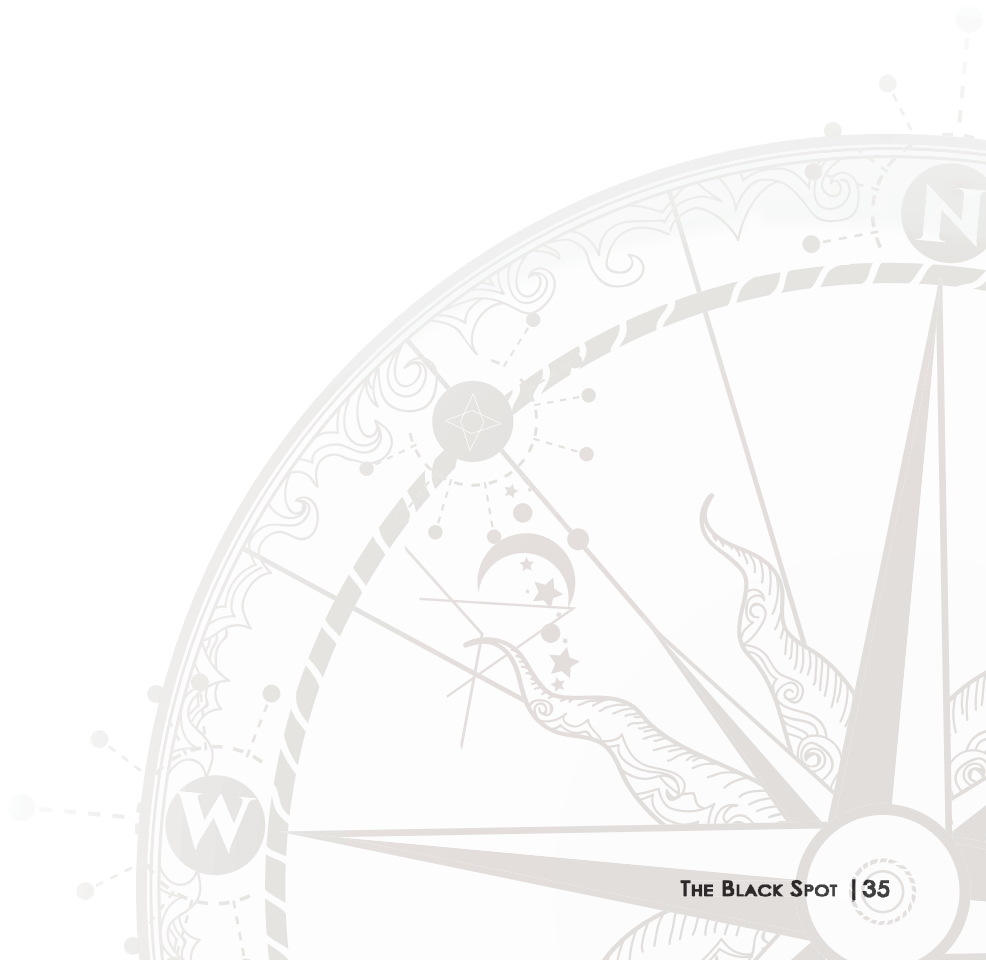
Actions

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

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 10 (2d8 + 1) slashing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 12).

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



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THE BLACK SPOT

by Gary McBride

The first mate drew his blade and formed up what was left of the crew. They steeled their courage and waited for whatever nightmare gave birth to the horrid noises below deck to emerge topside. When the creatures finally ventured into the moonlight, the men's courage broke. They had never seen such otherworldly monstrosities.

The creatures ripped into their faltering ranks and slaughter reigned.

A young but literate sailor named Titus was clever enough to flee...

The Black Spot is an adventure for four to six characters of 5th level. It is a tale told in four parts and should provide sufficient adventure for multiple sessions. This adventure can be used as an excursion anywhere upon the high seas, so it could take place almost anywhere in the fantasy world of your choosing.



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