

BLACKTIDE COVE

THE CULT OF THE FISH-MEN

A century ago, during the Spellplague, pirates hid a treasure at a shrine in a remote area of Impiltur's coast. Can the heroes claim it from that which lurks there?

A 4-6 hour adventure for 6 characters of 6th to 8th level

WRITTEN BY **R P DAVIS**

THIS ADVENTURE CONTAINS MANY DANGERS, TOILS, AND SNARES. THE AUTHOR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR GRACE HAVING BROUGHT THEE SAFE THUS FAR, MUCH LESS LEADING THEE HOME.



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WELCOME!

Blacktide Cove is an adventure for experienced players with mid-level characters. It is set in Impiltur, a kingdom on the Sea of Fallen Stars in the Forgotten Realms. For more about Impiltur see the [Forgotten Realms Wiki](#).

The adventure can be easily dropped into any setting with a coastline on a large body of water. It is also suitable for convention play.

MECHANICS

This adventure is designed to be played using only the D&D 5th Edition Player's Basic Rules Version 0.3 (**PBR**), the Dungeon Master's Basic Rules Version 0.4 (**DMBR**), and the System Reference Document (**SRD**). Of course, the Player's Handbook (**PHB**), Dungeon Master's Guide (**DMG**), and Monster Manual (**MM**) contain all the information required and more, and you are encouraged to use them to their fullest extent.

Note: This adventure requires the use of the Monster Manual, for it features monsters not found in the SRD or DMBR.

Where the rules are referenced, the abbreviation will be given in parentheses, followed by the page where the item's details can be found, e.g., *Potion of Healing* (**PBR, p50**).

Damage is listed thus: 4 (1d6) – this means you can either simply impose 4 points of damage or roll 1d6.

Monsters are highlighted in **bold**. For your ease of use, when a monster is first mentioned you will find a reference given in abbreviation along with page number, e.g., **wight** (**DMBR, p50**).

Magic items, spells, and magic effects are highlighted in *italics*.

GENERAL NOTES

- Please familiarize yourself with the adventure by reading it thoroughly before play. The wise

DM knows what is going on so you can improvise if need be.

- Boxed text are to be read aloud to players. Please do not be a slave to the boxed text; feel free to paraphrase.
- It is wise to print the pages containing the adventure proper double-sided and to print the pages with monster statistics, maps, and player handouts single-sided. This assures ease of use in play.

Maps, important NPCs, new and unique magic items, and new and unique monsters are found in Appendices at the end of the adventure.

WARNING!

The encounters in this adventure have been calculated assuming a well-balanced party of six 7th level adventurers. The encounters are designed to reward clever play and punish the unwary. If your players are used to heedlessly rushing headlong at problems, their characters will very likely be quickly slain.

It is assumed that “well-balanced” means the core party roles of Warrior, Arcane caster, Rogue, and Divine caster are filled. The adventure is specifically designed to have something for every role to do. A party which lacks any of these roles **will** have a tough time.

If your party is larger or of a different level than that indicated, the adventure is likely still useful. Simply consider increasing or decreasing the number of foes the characters will face – if the encounter calls for 2 monsters, for instance, add another. Alternately, add a second wave of foes to a battle.

Non-combat encounters are also provided. They are crucial to the successful completion of the adventure. You may judge success without reference to die rolls, of course, though success/fail mechanics are provided should you wish to use them. The mechanics are listed as “DC [number] [ability] [skill] check,” e.g., “**DC18 Wisdom (Perception) check**”.

BLACKTIDE COVE

Then came they from the Far Realm, and made they there, 'neath the Sea of Fallen Stars, the passing strange realm of Xxiphu, whereat their Eldest still spawns them; and herein hath I shown that their thoughts, enough to unhinge the minds of mortals, tread dark and terrible paths where the very gods themselves hath adorned, ruled, and died in innumerable aeons. Thus, are the aboleths. If thou fearest them not, thou art mad indeed.

– Vaqir Zekh'r, The Far Realm: Real Yet Unreal

SUMMARY

The characters find a dusty old treasure map which points from a location they recognize to a remote point on Impiltur's coast. Traveling there holds many hazards, and what they find there may cost them their sanity – or their lives.

BACKGROUND

Pirates plague the shores of the Sea of Fallen Stars, even those of civilized lands like Impiltur. Sailing from hidden enclaves in the aptly-named Pirate Isles, they prey on shipping and attack isolated settlements. The Royal Navy of Impiltur shields the shores of the Easting Reach as best they can, but the influence of that body does not extend far into the open waters, and cannot be everywhere.

During the reign of Queen-Regent Sambryl in the 1340s DR, a bark of the Royal Navy, the *Waverider*, commanded by Lieutenant Kovus, came upon a pirate vessel looting a prize off the coast of Hlammach. The pirate ship – the *Sprite* – declined to give battle, her weapons outclassed by the *Waverider's*, and fled north with all sails set. *Waverider* pursued. For three days, the chase sailed on.

Of the thirty pirates who survived the *Sprite*, none ever returned save six hardy souls. A decade after their initial visit, these six set aside their oath and secretly returned to the Blacktide Cove, now known within the group as **The Caves**, hoping to collect their booty and retire from their murderous lives. Unknown to them, since their departure an **aboleth (SRD, p264)** had made the complex its lair, attracting many **kuo-toa (MM, p199)** who worship the aberration as a god.

The Cove's new inhabitants captured the pirates almost instantly, offering them up to their god. The aboleth

On the third night, as the *Waverider* stood two cables away preparing to fire her ballistae, the *Sprite's* captain in desperation dared the vicious shoals between Red Bluffs and Dilpur. Kovus declined to pursue his quarry so closely and laid off shore.

That night, with little moon, the *Sprite* drove herself hard onto an unseen shoal a bowshot offshore and foundered, her hull staved in. As Kovus and his officers debated their next steps, the *Sprite* came apart and sank. Kovus judged it too dark to search for survivors.

The *Waverider* put in at Dilpur and Kovus made his report, which prompted a Warsword expedition to that area of coastline. The King's men traveled to the ancient tower called *Dayvar's Light* and found remnants of the wreck of the *Sprite*, but no survivors. The detachment made a perfunctory search of the area, found nothing save flotsam and a few bits of wreckage, and returned to their barracks.

Their search was so casual that they failed to find the shrine where the survivors of the *Sprite* took shelter. Maintained by worshipers of Umberlee, *Dayvar's Light* and its cellars had been there for at least a hundred years before the pirates put the monks to the sword.

In the shrine's deepest cellar, the pirates hid what treasure they could salvage from the wreck of the *Sprite*. There they renamed the place Blacktide Cove. Also, they swore a savage oath that none should claim the booty until they could visit their revenge on Kovus and the *Waverider*. They then parted, seeking their separate ways to their old haunts within the Pirate Isles.

enslaved the pirates, using them as spies in the human lands above for the short time it took them to die. Thanks to the betrayal of their oath and the sin of their cruel slaughter of the monks, the pirates were denied the peace of death eternal. They remain, not quite dead yet not quite alive, as **wights (DMBR, p50)**. The aboleth set them to guard the land approaches to The Caves, where they dwell in the ruined lighthouse on the headland above the caves' entrance.

Thus have they remained for more than 150 years – until the heroes arrive.

SETTING THE HOOK

There are any number of ways to pique the players' interest:

- **We found a map:** The most convenient way to get the party's attention is to put a map to The Caves in the treasure of a previous adventure. Alternately, they can find the map as part of downtime activities, perhaps as a spellcasting character researches new magic, or from a sage studying old tomes. A successful **DC15 Intelligence (History) check** will reveal the *Waverider's* story in old Impilturian records, lending credence to the map's authenticity. Reveal the first five paragraphs of the Background to characters who make this discovery.
- **There's something strange going on:** Their patron informs them of strange tidings from fishermen along that stretch of coastline and gives them the mission to investigate the stories. Reveal the first five paragraphs of the Background. They get the map to help them find the place.
- **There's a Thing You Want in the Lair:** The characters hear a rumor of a powerful magic item in The Caves. The map is part of the information they uncover while researching the item's location. Reveal the first five paragraphs of the Background.

Irrespective of which hook you use, give the players the Pirate Map in the Appendix.

THE ROAD TO THE CAVES

The trip to The Caves will take four days, whether the party is horsed or on foot. The party will travel partly by road, partly overland. Much of Impiltur has gone from settled lands to seed, thanks to the incursion of demons and cultists, so they will be traveling through mixed wilderness and abandoned farmland which is rapidly returning to the wilderness from which it was wrested. Feel free to hand-wave actual distances.

Use the following table for random encounters. Roll 1d6 twice per day and twice per night; on a result of 1, a random encounter has occurred. Roll 1d6 again and consult the following table:

TABLE 1. RANDOM ROAD ENCOUNTERS

1d6	Encounter
1	Perytons
2	Druids
3	Bandits
4	Dragon
5	Hobgoblin Raiders
6	Warsword Patrol

Note: Once any encounter is experienced, it should not be repeated. Roll again or simply pick a different encounter.

Perytons (MM, p251) – Eight perytons are hunting and have spotted the party. **The perytons are worth 450XP each.**

Druids (MM, p346) – The party stumbles on a group of six druids performing a ceremony at an ancient stone circle. If unmolested, they will not hinder the party; indeed, unless the PCs are openly hostile, the druids are friendly.

The ceremony is devised to create a well of magic in the area to help keep demons away from the peaceful forest glens. The druids surround a gigantic sarsen, easily as tall as a hill giant. They stand in a circle within the ring of standing stones, chanting words of power. The chanting will crescendo to a peak when the sarsen will glow brightly with blue light. The PCs will feel the power flow through and around them, making their hair stand on end.

The PCs are expected to respectfully watch the ceremony without interfering. Druid and Ranger PCs are invited to take part in the ceremony. Should a PC druid or ranger do so, after the ceremony each injured party member will be offered the benefits of a *cure wounds* or *lesser restoration* spell, should they require it.

The druids are 450 xp per druid slain, should the PCs go completely mental and slaughter them. If the PCs simply watch the ceremony respectfully, **award 100 xp to each character. If they participate, award 250xp to each character.**

Bandits (MM, p343), led by two **Bandit Captains (MM, p344)** – The party is challenged by a band of cutthroats. There are 20 Bandits led by 2 Bandit Captains.

The bandits will not be overly hostile. If the PCs parley with them, they will discover the Captains are twin brothers – Berton and Farnell Atterton – who are descendants of the *Sprite's* first mate. They grew up hearing stories of the wreck of the *Sprite*, and have been searching the area seeking its treasure. They can add the story of the oath and the temple complex contained in **paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Background.**

If the PCs decline to parley, the bandits demand a ransom of them; their money and magic items, plus any riding and/or pack animals, in exchange for their lives.

If either or both Atterton is slain, or the gang suffers casualties of more than half their number (10), they flee into the woods. **Defeating the gang is worth a total of 1,400XP.**

Dragon, Adult Green (MM, p94) – This wyrm is away from her lair hunting and has caught the party's scent. She will fly overhead, using her *frightful presence* and *poison breath* before engaging in melee. She will also taunt the PCs the entire encounter. Her name is **Zokaintux**. If she slays a party member, she will attempt to *frighten* the rest. When she is reduced to half her hit point total, she will use her breath weapon again before attempting to fly away, vowing revenge. (NB: The party will have made a powerful enemy, as she has a pack of Cult of the Dragon cultists at her beck and call. Use this wisely and make your players' lives miserable.) The dragon's lair does not form part of this adventure. DM's discretion prevails here as to whether they choose to add one or not.

If the PCs somehow manage to slay her, award 13,000XP. Award half that for driving her off.

Hobgoblin Raiders – The PCs have come upon the trail of a hobgoblin raiding party consisting of 15 **hobgoblins (MM, p186)** led by a **hobgoblin captain (MM, p186)**. They are making no effort to be stealthy, having just brutally slain a group of human woodcutters. They are ransacking the woodcutters' wagons and belongings, looking for loot. **Defeating the Hobgoblins awards 2,200XP.**

Warsword Patrol – The PCs hear the jangling of armor and the sound of horses from the road ahead. The patrol is a mounted platoon consisting of 12 **guards (MM, p347)**, accompanied by a **priest (MM, p348)**, led by a **knight (MM, p347)** and a **sergeant** (treat as a **veteran; MM, p350**). The knight, **Sir Tobin**, will be very interested to hear of the party's exploits since departing on their quest. If the party has had any encounters, the knight will wish to hear the story or stories in minute detail, and have them recorded by the priest. If the PCs are injured, the priest will provide what healing he can.

If the PCs wish, they can camp with the patrol that night. If they choose to do so, during that night **Zokaintux** will attack, swooping in to use her breath weapon before trying to carry off a soldier (or PC) on which to snack.

PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

The characters will happen upon a few planned encounters while traveling to Dayvar's Light. Some are nuisances, others are deadlier. They are not keyed to any overland map.

RIVER CROSSING

Late in the first day's travel, read or paraphrase the following:

The path down which you trudge tops a slight rise, then falls steeply down through the trees. You can see the sun sparkling off the waters of the rapids of a small river. The river dances over rocks, thrashing and foaming and throwing up spray, as it finds its way downhill to the sea.

As you approach, you see that parts appear quite shallow, not too deep to ford, where others are too deep to see the bottom. There is a sturdy-looking rope bridge spanning the fifty yards or so across the flow.

The rope bridge is V-shaped, with a stout, thick rope to walk on and two smaller ropes on either side at the height of a man's chest on which to hold on.

The river is too deep and swift to be forded except by those of exceptional strength or will. Those attempting to force their horse across must succeed on a **DC20 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** to force the balking animal into the water, whence the character must succeed again or be swept away. Those who attempt to simply wade across must make a **DC20 Strength (Athletics) check** or be swept away downstream. The stream is strong; those falling in do not drown, though they may be battered on the rocks. A **DC20 Strength saving throw** signifies the character has managed to cling on to a boulder. Failing this saving throw results in the character taking 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage, but still manages to cling to the boulder into which she crashed.

The bridge is constructed such that it can only take the weight of two humanoid creatures at any one time. A

successful **DC15 Wisdom (Survival) check** reveals this. Creatures can only cross two at a time, so that one creature is halfway across before the second begins to cross. Exceeding this amount will cause the bridge to sag dangerously; ignoring this will cause it to break, spilling anyone on it into the river. In any case, the ropes are slick with spray and moss, which means creatures crossing the bridge must succeed on a **DC15 Dexterity saving throw** or fall into the rushing waters below.

Creatures falling into the river take 6 (1d10) falling damage and must make a **DC20 Strength saving throw**. Success signifies the creature has been swept a short distance downstream before managing to cling on to a boulder. Failure means the character takes an additional 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage, but still manages to cling to the boulder into which she crashed. Creatures who fall in must succeed on a **DC15 Strength (Athletics) check** to climb out.

As soon as the first two party members successfully cross, **giant frogs (MM, p325)** leap to attack. These lurk on the far side of the river, at the water's edge hidden in the reeds, giving them advantage on their **Stealth checks vs. the characters' passive Perception check**. If they gain surprise, they will attempt to attack Small creatures first with their **Bite** attack to **Swallow** them. (They adore Halfling and Gnome for their dinner!)

There are two giant frogs for every PC in the party. **The frogs have no treasure and are worth 50XP each.**

WERERAT "PILGRIMS"

Late on the second day's travel, read or paraphrase the following:

The path has widened into a well-traveled road. The trees have thinned, and you have seen several homesteads in the past hour. The sun is warm on your shoulders and the air smells of freshly-tilled earth.

As you approach a thicker copse of evergreen trees, you hear the faint sound of chanting. It sounds like a hymn, though at this distance you can't make out enough words to recognize to which god the hymn is being sung for.

In the copse is a group of **wererats (MM, p209)** posing as religious pilgrims traveling to a shrine of Chauntea on the coast. Unless the PCs are taking pains to be exceptionally stealthy in their travel, the lycanthropes hear the PCs plodding up behind and stop to waylay them.

They are overjoyed to find their path coincides with the parties and wish to join them, “... **for there is safety in numbers, is that not so, brothers? ...**” If the party agrees, the wererats will travel with the party and camp with them, planning to attack that night when most of the characters are asleep.

One of the wererats is dressed in the robes of a priest of Chauntea, and is rehearsed enough in the rites and liturgy of that faith to pass muster, except in the estimation of a real cleric or paladin of Chauntea; such characters will automatically note slight mistakes. A successful **DC15 Wisdom (Religion) check** will reveal the flaws to any character who wishes to make the check. A successful **DC12 Wisdom (Insight) check** reveals that not is all as it seems with this man, who calls himself Alaric. If taxed with the issue, such as if asked to cast a cleric spell, he will excuse himself that the nature of their pilgrimage forbids using magic until cleansed at the holy site toward which they are walking. If pushed, he and his fellows will immediately attack.

There are one and a half wererats for every PC, rounded down – for example, if there are six PCs, there will be eight wererats. They will fight until half their number are slain, whereupon the rest will do their best to flee. If they cannot flee they will surrender.

The wererats have 3d6 silver pieces (sp) each on them. The wererat called Alaric has 25 gold pieces sewn into the hem of his robes, as well as a **short sword +1**. **Each wererat is worth 450XP.**

THE DRYAD’S TREE

Early on the third day, read or paraphrase the following:

The path has narrowed again, passing into thick, ancient woods. The silvery boles of massive oaks and maples tower over you. Sunlight dapples the ground here and there, struggling to make its way through the canopy which vaults at least fifty fathoms over your heads.

As you round a bend in the path, you come upon a young woman sitting on a tree stump off to one side, holding her face in her hands and weeping. She lifts her tear-streaked face to you, and you see she is breathtakingly beautiful.

“Please,” she says, a sob catching in her throat. “Please help me. They are trying to kill me.”

Suddenly her face is wracked with pain and she cries out as she falls to the leafy ground. You cannot see any attacker.

The young woman is a **dryad (MM, p121)** named Almoris. Her tree, her home, is being attacked by a pack of **trolls (MM, p291)**, who think there is treasure within. She will lead the party the short distance to the glade where her tree can be found.

If the PCs refuse to help her, she will be most pathetic in her pleading. If they persist in refusing her, she will attempt to **charm** the strongest-looking character.

When the PCs arrive at her glade, they will see three trolls hacking at an ancient oak tree with flint axes. Should the PCs use **Stealth**, the trolls are so intent on their wanton destruction that their **passive Perception is at -5**, probably giving the PCs the element of surprise.

When the trolls engage in melee, they drop their weapons, preferring their claws and dreadful teeth to attack. **They will fight to the death and are worth 1,800XP each.**

Should the trolls be defeated, Almoris will insist on treating the wounds of any wounded PCs as much as she is able – she has three **Potions of Greater Healing** and a full

jar of **Keoghtom's Ointment** – and offers her glade as a place to rest.

The trolls have little treasure on them. One has a pouch with 140gp and two azurites worth 50gp each. If the PCs ask about their lair, Almoris knows approximately where it is located. It's a few miles through the woods to a cave.

If the party includes a Ranger whose **avored terrain** is forest, the lair will be found without difficulty, as the trail is very easy for a Ranger to follow. Other characters must succeed on a **DC15 Wisdom (Survival) check** or spend 1d4 hours quartering the forest, losing the trail and picking it up again, before finding the troll-cave.

The cave has no trolls in it. However, the entrance to it is trapped. Creatures approaching the cave must succeed on a **DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check** or risk falling into a cunningly-concealed pit trap, at the bottom of which are poison-coated stakes. The fall can be avoided with a successful **DC15 Dexterity saving throw**. A creature falling into the pit takes 11 (2d10) falling damage, plus 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes. It must then succeed a **DC13 Constitution saving throw**, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save. That creature is also **poisoned** for one hour.

Inside the cave is the trolls' treasure hoard; clay pots and jars full of coins, a small wooden chest full of gems, and a sack full of other things of no interest to the monstrous creatures, totaling:

- 700cp, 7325sp, 2165gp, 113pp in coins
- 7 carnelians worth 50gp each
- 7 garnets worth 100gp each
- 1 lb of platinum trade bars (500gp value in any large city)
- 2 lbs. of cooking spices (4 gp)
- 4 flask(s) of **Alchemists' Fire**
- A cask with 20 gallons of good ale (10gp)
- 4 wheels of cheese (10gp)
- In a small leather pouch containing a **Sling of Seeking** (see Magic Items in the Appendix) and 8 **Bullets +2**.

FRATERNITY OF THAROS

Around midday on the fourth day, the PCs will stumble upon a group of 12 demon **cultists (MM, p345)** led by a **cult fanatic (MM, p345)**, who is negotiating with a **hezrou (MM, p60)**.

Read or paraphrase the following:

About an hour ago, the path disappeared entirely, replaced by an ancient, overgrown road. The trees form a broad avenue, and through the grass your feet find cunningly-laid flagstones. Clearly this was once an important road, and it's heading in the right direction.

Suddenly, ahead you hear faintly the sound as of a thousand angry wasps buzzing, though strangely the noise has the pattern of speech. At the same time, a horrific stench, as of bodies dead for a week in the summer sun, assaults your nostrils.

Characters who speak **Abyssal** will recognize the language, though they are too far away to make out words. A successful **DC12 Wisdom (Religion) check** means the character remembers that such a voice is demonic. A successful **DC16 Wisdom (Religion) check** remembers that such a voice and such a stench can belong to one type of demon only – a hezrou.

Characters wishing to sneak up on the cultists can do so with a successful **Stealth check** vs the **opponent's passive Perception scores**; none of them are expecting trouble, as they are miles away from civilization and prying eyes, so they are not being especially watchful. Characters who spend a moment to watch and listen will learn from the chanting that the demon's name is Auxuduhr.

Axuduhr is very much irritated at being summoned and will grasp any opportunity to break the summoning circle and attack whatever it can. If the PCs slay the cult fanatic, the hezrou will be free to do what it likes; depending on whether or not the PCs are a threat to it, it may simply leave, seeking to wreak havoc on easier prey.

When the party attack, or are noticed by the cultists, the fanatic orders the cultists to attack and subdue the PCs.

Auxuduhr offers to help the PCs if they free him by slaying the cult fanatic. Use language such as, "If you free me by slaying this fool, I shall slay his minions. Let us feast together!" If the party intervene on behalf of the demon, the demon will not attack the party but instead join them in slaughtering the cultists.

When combat is concluded, Auxuduhr inquires if the PCs can send him home. If they can, for example with a **banishment** spell, award xp for the demon as if the PCs defeated it in combat. Should the PCs wish to negotiate with it, the demon will go as far as awarding the players the opportunity to summon him in return for their assistance, giving them a magical phrase which he will hear if on his home plane or the Prime Material:

Wmyl haf wih zmy lipy afgfvufr xe sudd tapy eydzulq ruqmz ajyr.

The PCs can use this phrase once, after which Auxuduhr will consider his debt paid.

If the party stand and watch, the demon finishes killing the cultists before asking if the party has someone capable of sending it home. If they do, and choose to do so, award XP for the demon as if the PCs defeated him in combat. If they are not capable, it snarls and moves off in search of someone that can; in this case, still award XP for the demon. If the party are capable, and Auxuduhr knows this, and they refuse to use this capability, Auxuduhr attacks them in fury.

Defeating the cultists is worth 1,100XP. The hezrou is worth 3,900XP.

DAYVAR'S LIGHT

In the late afternoon or early evening of the fourth day – just about when it's time to start thinking of finding a place to camp – the PCs arrive at the Light.

See Maps in the Appendix.

ARRIVAL

Read or paraphrase the following.

You leave the shelter of the trees, entering an area of heather and stunted, twisted bushes and small trees, bent and gnarled by the wind from the sea.

The wind whips your hair and clothing, bringing the salt tang to your nostrils. You can hear the pound of the surf, and see the waves crashing on the rocks far below as you thread your way along the clifftops toward the tower marked Dayvar's Light on your map.

As you approach, the tower, which is now largely a ruin, stands atop a tall cliff on a headland which juts out from the hills.

The closer you get, you get a sense of foreboding. Something is not right here.

Characters wishing to know what isn't right must succeed a **DC12 Intelligence (Nature) check** to notice that there are no birds, suddenly realizing that they have seen no wildlife for the past hour. As they get within a hundred yards of the Light, they will notice that the plants within 10 feet of the tower are dead, brown and withered, while they have been traveling thus far through lush vegetation.

The obvious structure to explore is the ruined tower. However, there is another entrance at the beach level.

Should the PCs wish to explore the beach area, they can attempt to descend the 100-foot drop to the rocks below.

Characters can climb down by succeeding on a **DC20 Strength (Athletics) check** or **DC20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**, as the wall is very slick with sea spray and rotting vegetation. Climbers who use a **climber's kit (SRD, p67)** make the check with advantage. A creature failing the check falls a number of feet equaling $1d10 \times 10$ and takes 4 (1d6) points of falling damage for every 10 feet fallen.

Climbers will be ambushed when they are about halfway through their descent by six **kuo-toa (MM, p199)**, led by a **kuo-toa whip (MM, p200)**. The kuo-toas will throw spears, and the kuo-toa whip will attack with **sacred flame**. After they make one volley of attacks, they will flee into the beach-level lair entrance and set another ambush, sounding a conch horn to alert the rest of the lair. A character struck by one of their attacks must succeed a **DC15 Strength (Athletics) check** or a **DC15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** to maintain their grip or fall $1d4 \times 10$ feet, taking 4 (1d6) points of falling damage per 10 feet fallen.

If the PCs seek an easier way down, they can succeed on a **DC12 Wisdom (Survival) check** and spend an hour to find a safe way down to the beach: an overgrown track which leads down a gentle slope to the beach. Failure on the check means it takes 2d4 hours to find the track; they still succeed, it just takes longer.

If the party pursues either of these routes, see **Beach Entrance**, below.

Six **wights (DMBR, p50)**, the undead remains of the oath-breaking pirates, inhabit the tower and upper level of the dungeon. If the characters approach the tower during daylight, only three of the six will be in the tower, lurking out of direct sunlight.

If the characters enter the tower, two will attack while the other rushes down the stairs to alert the others and set up ambushes. They will not leave the tower. If the characters engage with ranged attacks and decline to close to melee, all the wights will descend into the dungeon.

If the characters approach at night, all six wights will emerge from the tower and attack.

Should the PCs approach during daylight, be attacked, and decline to pursue the fleeing wights into the dungeon, they may decide to camp in or near the ruined tower.

Should the party think to do so, the ladder can be secured by closing the heavy trap door to which it is fixed. It can be further secured by piling rubble atop the trap door, the weight preventing it from being opened from below. If the party fail to guard the Beach Entrance to the dungeon's lower level, they will not prevent the wights from using stealth and attacking sometime after sunset.

Should the wights be able to attack after sunset, use their **Stealth check** against the **passive Perception of the party member on watch**. Remember to track the PCs' armor status (you **are** reminding them that they must take their armor off to sleep, aren't you?), and the rules to later don that armor if they wish it!

The wights prefer to use their **life drain** attack. If combat goes against them, they will retreat into the darkness of their tower lair rather than fight to the (final) death outside.

THE TOWER

Like most fortifications along this wild coast, the tower which was once Dayvar's Light was designed to be difficult to enter if those inside wanted you to remain outside. The only way to gain entry is by climbing up to the second-story level (via a ladder) and entering through the heavy oak door.

In days of old, defenders would have pulled the ladder up behind them. The wights have not. If the party chooses to check, they will note that the heavy oak door is unlocked and creaks with age when opened.

TOWER ENTRY

When the first PC opens the door, read or paraphrase the following:

The heavy wooden door, bound with iron, has protected this small keep for centuries. Although it appears to be still strong, you are surprised when you pull on the corroded black iron ring that it swings open with a creak. It's as though whatever's inside *wants* you to come in.

Allow the PCs time to check for traps and plan their next move. A successful DC12 Wisdom (Perception) check will show that there are no traps within this area.

When the party finally muster the courage to enter, read or paraphrase the following:

The doorway opens to the east, revealing a small room within the thick walls of the tower.

The south wall runs on your right some 25 feet. There is a door in the center of this wall, as strong-looking as the one through which you came. The wall to your left, north, curves around the tower's walls. There is a ladder consisting of corroded iron rungs set into the stones of that wall, leading upward to a trap door in the wooden ceiling.

The floor is made of the same stout wood as the doors.

The dust of centuries covers everything in this room. There is a faint unpleasant smell of rotten meat.

This was once the common room of the tower, where the small garrison prepared and shared their meals. Nothing remains of the furniture, which was smashed to kindling decades ago.

The smell comes from the closed door in the south wall. This door is also unlocked and leads to a small room in which there is a trap door in the floor. The trap door is also unlocked and not trapped. It leads to **Area C, Lower Tower**.

UPPER TOWER

When the first PC opens the trap door leading to the Upper Tower, read or paraphrase the following:

The ceiling of the keep has long collapsed onto the floor of this area. Arrow-slits look out over the sea and countryside. The area appears to hold nothing but rubble.

Unless the DM chooses otherwise, this area, aside from the rubble, is empty.

LOWER TOWER

When the PCs open the trap door (**marked F in the Tower Entry**), read or paraphrase the following:

The trap door is heavy, but firmly grasping the iron ring and giving the door a heave lets you wrench it upward.

A wave of vile miasma surges out of the ladder shaft revealed by the trap door, and you nearly drop it as your bile rises. Something down there is very much dead, and very much smells like fish.

From this point, creatures lacking *darkvision* will require a light source.

There are iron rungs set into the stones of the wall which lead 10ft down to the stone floor of the undercroft.

Thick vaults buttress the weight of the tower above. Crowding the small room is gear of war, clearly once intended for the tower's garrison. Ancient racks once held weapons, though the spears which remain are merely corroded spearheads on rotten hafts, all useless. Barrels once full of arrows and crossbow bolts now contain lumps of rusted arrowheads and shafts which crumble when touched. Everything in this room is rotten and decayed.

A path through the centuries of dust can clearly be seen, leading to a blank section of wall (**the door marked with S on the map**). There is a corroded iron torch sconce set into the flat stone wall. The charnel stench of death increases in potency as the PCs near the secret door.

A successful **DC10 Wisdom (Perception) check** will reveal the secret door and its opening mechanism – the metal sconce. When they open the secret door, read or paraphrase the following:

The secret door grinds open, unlatched by pulling the metal sconce. Stairs roughly hewn from the bedrock on which the tower is founded lead down, spiraling out of sight to your right.

Though it's hard to imagine, the rising stench here is even more foul.

The staircase leads down to **Area 1** of the upper dungeon level.

THE LAIR OF THE FISH-MEN

DAYVAR'S LIGHT LEVEL

Tower Level General Characteristics

Every squared surface is relatively smooth, hewn granite. Ceilings are 10 feet high. Non-squared surfaces of the map are natural rock cavern. Stalactites hang from the ceilings, which vary in height, though stalagmites have been removed. (All unless otherwise noted.)

All surfaces are slimy and wet, and are considered **difficult terrain**.

Any wights which remain will attack on this level. As the passages are interconnected, they use their lair to their advantage. More details follow in the individual area notes below.

AREA 1. STORES

The stone stairs, slick with moisture, spiral down until your feel as though you are deep underground. They spill out into a large cavern. Stalactites loom like icicles as the ceiling vaults easily 30 feet over your head, though visible signs show that most stalagmites have been removed. The cavern leads away to within the gloom to the east. To the southeast is a ledge about 5 feet above the floor on which you presently stand. The mouth of another, smaller, cavern leads away in

There is no immediate danger here. The floor is littered with ancient, moldering crates and barrels of what appears to be the remains of supplies for the garrison. Nothing of value can be found therein.

Should the party head east toward **Area 5**, they will be attacked in **Area 5** by wights coming from the hallways leading from **Areas 2-4**, as well as **Area 6-8**, and **Area 10**.

Any combat noise in **Area 1** has a 50% of attracting 2d6 kuo-toa from the lower level. If the roll indicates the party has been heard, they arrive within 1d12+4 rounds (a possible 2 minutes of in game time, which is ample for the kuo-toa to traverse that distance).

Combat anywhere on this level will attract the attention of the kuo-toa guards in **Area 8 (see Guard Room)**. These 'guards' will not engage unless they can do so with ranged weapons, which they will throw once before fleeing to fetch reinforcements.

AREA 2. PRIVIES

This small room has a four-hole plank against the west wall. Scraps of ancient paper are stuck on nails near each hole (the paper crumbles to dust the instant it's touched).

The privies are set over a fissure which empties into the sea. Soldiers used to clean it by sluicing the fissure with buckets of seawater carried up from below.

There is nothing of interest here.

AREA 3. BARRACKS

The passage emerges into a large room, fifteen feet north to south by nearly twice that east to west. The remains of bunkbeds line the north wall, with what looks to be the remains of soldier's footlockers nearby. All have been smashed.

There is a massive hearth in the south wall, with rusted iron cooking implements still in place. There is a long trestle table and benches in the center of the room. Plates, bowls, and cups are scattered across the table's surface.

When the entire party has entered this room, the remaining wights will rush in from the hallways and attack. The PCs can use the table to keep it between themselves and their foes, as it provides **cover (half cover for Medium creatures and three-quarters cover**

for Small creatures), and is **difficult terrain** for those attempting to traverse it.

A successful **DC12 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals, jumbled into the debris among the bunks and lockers, is a pouch containing two *Potions of Healing*.

AREA 4. BATHS

The doors leading into this room are unlocked. The door in the east is stuck; a successful **DC15 Strength check** will force it open, though doing so makes a horrid screeching noise which will attract the attention of the kuo-toa on the lower level.

This small room contains four large copper bathtubs, each green with age and tarnish. Copper pipes emerge from the north wall, one for each tub, each of which is fitted with a tap. There is a wooden stool next to each tub.

If the PCs crowd into this room and have not yet finished with the wights, any remaining wights will rush through the doors and attack.

There is nothing else of interest or value here.

AREA 5. TEMPLE

This large cavern is clearly a place of worship. Its walls were at one-time white-washed, though centuries of neglect and moisture have flaked off most of the covering. There are two statues at the western end of the cave; to the south is Shaundakul and to the north is Talos. At the eastern end is an altar on a ledge, behind which stands a statue of Umberlee. Niches in the walls hold shrines to other deities.

What arrests your attention, however, is the humongous pile of bones which covers the floor. The stench here is overpowering.

The ledge is 5 feet above the floor which presents an obstacle to movement unless the pictured stairs are used. Medium creatures can leap up without too much difficulty, treating the space the ledge occupies as **difficult terrain**. Small creatures must succeed on either a successful **DC12 Strength (Athletics) check** or a **DC12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** to leap or climb up.

The statue of Umberlee, or rather the approach to it, is trapped. A creature stepping between the altar and the statue must succeed a **DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check** or step on the pressure plate and trigger the trap: a 30-foot cone of ice, which shoots from Umberlee's outstretched hand. A spell or effect which detects magic will reveal an aura of evocation around the statue. Wedging a spike or piece of debris under the pressure plate disables the trap. A successful *dispel magic* spell cast on the statue (**DC15**) destroys the trap. If the trap is triggered, each creature in the fire must succeed a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 22 (4d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

A successful **DC20 Wisdom (Perception) check** or a **DC20 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals a secret compartment in the base of the statue of Umberlee. Above the secret compartment is an incantation:

"Peace, storm and wind, be still, and the sea will reveal her secrets."

Unless the incantation is said, the instant the statue of Umberlee is meddled with the statues of Shaundakul and Talos spring to life and attack; treat the living statues as **stone golems (MM, p170)**.

Inside the secret compartment is a *Trident of Warning* (see New Magic Items in the Appendix).

AREA 6. PRIEST'S QUARTERS

The door to this room is locked, but can be stealthfully opened with a successful **DC20 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check**. Alternatively, the door can be broken open using brute force with a successful **DC 20 Strength check**.

This small room contains little more than the remains of a bed, desk, and wardrobe, each collapsing with age. The wardrobe contains priestly vestments, which crumble when touched. The desk contains 1d4 books of interest to

theologians, each of which is quite fragile but solid enough to transport and worth 100gp.

Searching under the desk reveals a false compartment in one of the desk's drawers which contains the following items:

- 1 *spell scroll* containing the Cleric spells **Cure Wounds, Spiritual Weapon, and Lesser Restoration**.
- A small wooden box containing two **Potions of Greater Healing**.
- A **Ring of Protection**.

AREA 7. TUNNEL AND STAIRS

This tunnel descends rapidly. In some places the floor is merely sloped; in others, it pitches so steeply that stairs have been cut in (see **Area 8: Lair of the Fish-Men**).

AREA 8. GUARD ROOM

A pair of **kuo-toa** are usually detailed by their chief to stand guard here. The room smells strongly of fish, and there are discarded bones of small creatures littering the floor.

If the PCs have managed to traverse the level without attracting their attention and approach stealthily, compare their **Stealth check** to the kuo-toa's **passive Perception**. If the PCs win, the kuo-toa are *surprised*.

AREA 9. STORES & WIGHT'S LAIR

The natural tunnel expands into a cave, which is filled to the brim with ancient, rotting crates and barrels – more stores for the garrison of old.

This is where the wights made their lair, such as it was. A search will reveal the following, scattered among the crates:

- 2300cp, 1000 sp, 50 gp
- Gems: 7 @ 50gp each
- Two **Potions of Healing**
- **Spell Scroll - Acid Splash**
- **Spell Scroll - Entangle**

They will also find an ancient, tattered journal, the paper of which matches the paper on which their map is drawn. On the title page is written "Ship's Log – The Sprite – Dilpur."

Those characters taking an hour to leaf through the journal find a jagged, torn edge which matches one edge

of their map. They also find **Handout 1** (Appendix), which details the plight of the sailors who broke their oath to return.

AREA 10. STORES

This area holds large stone cisterns which once held fresh drinking water. Creatures investigating the cisterns see stains and marks which show they once held some liquid, long since evaporated.

When the party first enter this level, one wight will be lurking here.

LAIR OF THE FISH-MEN LEVEL

Lair Level General Characteristics

Every squared surface is relatively smooth, hewn granite. Ceilings are 10 feet high. Non-squared surfaces of the map are natural rock cavern. Stalactites hang from the ceilings, which vary in height, though stalagmites have been removed. (All unless otherwise noted.)

All surfaces are covered with a film of slime. The floor is slippery with decades of piscine filth, rendering it treacherous to traverse – any creature not making its lair in the dungeon which moves faster than a walk must make a **DC12 Dexterity saving throw** or fall prone at the end of its move. The stench is palpable.

BEACH ENTRANCE

If the PCs approach after abseiling down the cliff, the doors will be shut and barred from within, the kuo-toa having attacked and fled within the lair. If the PCs approach from the beach without regard to stealth, the doors will likewise be shut.

If the PCs approach stealthily, compare the **lowest Stealth check in the party** against the **highest Perception roll by the kuo-toa guards**. If the kuo-toa win, they will flee within the lair and prepare an ambush, leaving the doors open. If the PCs win, they surprise the two kuo-toa guards. Before battle is joined (or after the surprise round should the kuo-toa be surprised), they will strike one of the doors, making a gong-like sound to alert their fellows within.

Doors shut:

Having safely descended to the beach from the heights above, you approach where your map says the entrance to the cave should be. A few yards ahead, you see a cleft in the cliff-face, but instead of a cave mouth you are confronted with corroded bronze doors facing the sea. The doors are shut, and you see nobody about.

The doors are barred from the inside. They can be forced open by one or more creatures succeeding on a **DC30 Strength check**. Forcing the doors will make a horrible noise, alerting all within to intruders!

Doors Open:

Having safely descended to the beach from the heights above, you approach where your map says the entrance to the cave should be. A few yards ahead, you see a cleft in the cliff-face, but instead of a cave mouth you are confronted with corroded bronze doors facing the sea. The doors stand open.

The bright sunlight shows worked stone for the few feet it penetrates the portal.

A foul stench of dead, rotting fish and flesh assaults your nostrils.

AREA 1. HALL OF THE FISH-MEN

If the kuo-toa guards detected the PCs, or if the PCs force the door, the inhabitants will have organized an ambush in this room.

Tactical Note: In all encounters, the kuo-toa intend to capture the invaders, under orders from their god via their Archpriest, who desire any intruders be brought before them to be judged. Their first attacks will always be with their nets, as well as any mind-controlling or

charming magic. If those fail, they will attack normally until the PCs are unconscious. After capture, they will be taken to **Area 5**.

A short hallway, ornately carved, leads into an octagonal room, the ceiling of which vaults to a point in the center thirty feet overhead.

Archways carved into the living rock are in the north, south, and east walls; the carvings depict bipedal fish-men holding tridents and nets, their bodies twisting around each other in a sort of maniacal dance.

In the other corners are stone statues of leering, tentacled creatures the likes of which you have never seen, and hope never to behold in real life. Whether unknown demons or long-dead gods, their otherworldly hideousness revolts you.

Four stone columns consisting of intertwined tentacles twist from the domed ceiling to the floor, which features a mosaic of tiles in the center depicting a massive, square-pupiled eye.

If by some miracle the PCs have managed to enter here from the beach without combat or making noise, this room will be deserted. Otherwise, there will be a contingent of 9 **kuo-toa** here, lying in wait for the party.

Two will lurk by the doors, waiting to cast nets over the first creature to enter the room. Consider this a readied action by these two kuo-toa.

Four more will hide behind the pillars, throwing spears at PCs who enter, goading the PCs to charge at them.

Three others will duck in and out from the other archways, doing the same.

They will seek to avoid melee. If they cannot avoid melee, their first attack will be with their nets. If more than half their number is struck down, the remainder will attempt to flee.

Trapped Corridor

The hallway from Area 1 to Area 2 is trapped. The first square leading north from **Area 1** contains a pressure plate. Placing more than 40 lbs of pressure on the plate triggers the trap.

The trap consists of massive, scythe-like blades which swing pendulum-style across the corridor every ten feet from south to north. Thus, there is a blade ten feet in from **Area 1**, then another ten feet further on, then another five feet from the archway where the corridor issues into **Area 2**.

The trap requires a **DC18 Wisdom (Perception) check** to spot. It can be disarmed by wedging a piton or some other object under the pressure plate.

A creature triggering the trap will hear a metallic noise as it is triggered. Creatures crossing the threshold of the pendulous blades must succeed a **DC 16 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 22 (4d10) slashing damage on a failed save, or no damage on a successful one. This check must be made each time a creature passes a blade. A “no damage” result can be described as the creature successfully figuring out the timing and dashing through at the precise right moment.

Once activated, the trap cannot be disarmed. The pendulums will continue to swing until reset by the Archpriest, who – other than the aboleth – is the only creature in the dungeon who knows how to stop them from swinging and reset the trap. Placing things within the path of the blades will result only in the things being chopped to pieces.

AREA 2. HALL OF THE STATUE

This is one way for creatures to travel down to the lower level (**Areas 3, 4, and 5**). The other is via **Area 6**.

This room is easily 60 feet tall from its floor – invisible under a pool of water – to its vaulted ceiling. Flights of stairs circling the walls lead from the upper level to the lower, surrounding a massive statue. The walls are covered with mosaics depicting a beautiful woman holding a bolt of lightning riding storm-tossed waves. These mosaics are hard to see through the film of slime and decay.

The statue might once have been Umberlee. It has been literally defaced, the stone chipped smooth. Three great eyes, running in a vertical line, have been painted on the smooth surface.

The kuo-toa party is comprised of 10 **kuo-toa**, led by **kuo-toa monitor** and 2 **kuo-toa whips**. The kuo-toa will first make ranged attacks before closing to melee. The whips will use **bane**, then steer clear of melee, casting **sacred flame**. The monitor will lead the lesser kuo-toa in melee.

In melee, they prefer to use their nets, pincer staffs, and subdual attacks, in order to capture the PCs as above.

Don't forget these kuo-toa may have been augmented by surviving kuo-toa who fled the fight in **Area 1**!

The floor is entirely covered in seawater, ankle to knee-deep on Medium creatures, waist-deep for Small creatures. It is difficult terrain for the latter.

When the party fight is over and the party reaches the floor of the room, read the following:

There is a pair of massive stone doors leading away to the north-west. The doors are closed. They are covered with carvings possibly depicting Umberlee standing on cresting waves, smiting the ships of hapless sailors and casting them into a cruel sea. Each visage of the goddess has been defaced with three large eyes in a vertical line.

The doors are not locked, but are so heavy and crusted with filth they require a combined **DC30 Strength check** to move at all.

There is no treasure in this room.

AREA 3. PASSAGE TO THE POOL

There is another statue here, as well as a trap.

A short hallway forks just beyond another possible statue of Umberlee. The goddess's face has been chipped away, replaced with three leering eyes in a vertical line. The floor is under water, the tiles slippery under your feet.

Characters with a **passive Perception of 16** will notice the trap (**DC16 Wisdom (Perception) check** for those actively searching). When 40 or more pounds of pressure is placed on the square immediately before the statue, the floor drops away. A creature on that square must succeed on a **DC20 Dexterity saving throw** or be carried down a chute and into the sea, taking 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage from being battered. Success indicates the creature managed to grab hold of something.

Creatures within 5 feet of the trap when it is triggered must succeed on a **DC15 Dexterity saving throw** or be likewise swept away.

AREA 4A. THE SPAWNING POOL

This relatively small space is the kuo-toa's spawning ground. It is 20 feet deep; stepping into the room without succeeding on a **DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check** means the creature doing so will be going for a swim.

The pool is full of sticky, viscous foam. This substance is the deposited eggs from the tribe. Every creature in the room other than a kuo-toa must, at the start of its turn, succeed on a **DC12 Constitution saving throw** or be **poisoned** due to ingesting some of the spawn.

Two kuo-toa monitors guard the pool and will attack any creature entering therein. They will not abandon their posts unless commanded by their god (**the aboleth in Area 4b**).

AREA 4B. THE POOL OF REST

Note:

This is where you use ideals, bonds, and flaws against the PCs. The aboleth knows the greatest desires of any creature with which it communicates telepathically. It will then make promises to help the PC fulfill its wildest dreams. This should be a great temptation for the affected PC, and is an excellent opportunity for role-play.

This relatively small space is the lurking pool of the kuo-toa tribe's god – an **aboleth (MM, p13)**. This pool is 20 feet deep.

If by some miracle the PCs manage to get here without being noticed at all, the aboleth will be in this pool. Otherwise, it will be in the north end of **Area 5**. If the aboleth is reduced to less than half its hit points, it will retreat here.

The pool also contains the complex's treasure. All items are locked in large, heavy chests at the bottom of the pool.

Treasure:

- 200cp, 7000 sp, 2500 gp, 80 pp
- Gems: 8 @ 50gp ea.

- *Heward's Handy Haversack*
- *Potion of Clairvoyance*
- *Quaal's Feather Token - Whip*
- *Ammunition +2* (1 dozen crossbow bolts)
- *Javelin of Lightning*

AREA 5. THE GOD-POOL

The floor of this room is covered with seawater, just as **Areas 1 and 2**.

The northern end of the room, marked by steps down, is 10 feet deep. Kuo-toa attendants wait on the aboleth here, feeding it choice tidbits, caressing its slime (to which they are immune), and otherwise adoring it. While in this area, the aboleth may use its **lair actions**.

The aboleth can completely submerge itself in this part of the room, enabling its **mucous cloud** ability.

As soon as the aboleth detects the PCs, it will telepathically alert all kuo-toa within 120 feet to their presence. As soon as the PCs attack the aboleth, it will telepathically summon those kuo-toa to its aid.

The portion of the room nearest **Area 4a** is occupied by the **kuo-toa archpriest** and two **kuo-toa whip** attendants. They will be surrounded by 10 **kuo-toa**. There is an ornate throne, made of fish-bones and the shells of crustaceans, set in the center of the west wall. Here the archpriest sits in what it considers splendor.

If the kuo-toa hear the sounds of combat from the other end of the chamber, they will rush to aid their god.

In combat, the archpriest will first cast **spirit guardians**, then use spells as combat dictates. It will avoid engaging in melee unless absolutely necessary or the aboleth demands it.

The whips will also attack from range, using **sacred flame**.

All kuo-toa fight to subdue or capture the PCs, not kill them. The aboleth wishes to dine upon them, in order to consume their knowledge and experiences.

The aboleth will make every attempt to tempt PCs to consciously enter its service, using its telepathic powers

against the PC with the **lowest Wisdom score first**. It will use its *probing telepathy* power.

If temptation fails, it will attempt to *enslave* that PC. Enslaved PCs will be set against their fellows to protect the aboleth.

However, should the fight go badly for the aboleth, it will not hesitate to use its *grasping tide* lair action to draw the PCs closer, whereupon it will *psychic rage* or beat them to death with its tentacles and tail.

AREA 6A. ARCHPRIEST'S CHAMBER

Usually, the archpriest is either sitting in his chair or attending his god in **Area 5**. However, when not on duty he can be found here.

The walls and ceiling of this cavern room have been painted with some substance which makes it look whitewashed. A bed of seaweed is carefully arranged against the eastern wall.

Searching the archpriest's bed will reveal a large clam-shell coffer containing 12 x 50gp pearls.

AREAS 6B & 6C. MONITOR'S CHAMBERS

Their status as attendants to the god and archpriest make the kuo-toa monitors who live in these chambers special. They are seldom here, as they spend the majority of their time seeing to the needs and demands of their god and its apostle.

There is a 20% chance a monitor will be in a room.

The walls and ceiling of this cavern room have been painted with some substance which makes it look whitewashed. Beds of seaweed are carefully arranged against the walls.

If found in one of these rooms, the whips will bellow hymns of praise to their god and happily hurl themselves on the PCs' blades.

AREA 7. WHIP'S CHAMBER

There is a 40% chance 4 kuo-toa whips will be in this room. They will attempt to subdue the PCs before killing them.

AREA 8. SLEEPING CHAMBER

This room is strewn with rotting seaweed, atop which recline kuo-toa. At any given time, unless the aboleth is under attack, there will be 12 kuo-toa here, led by 2 kuo-toa monitors. They will attack to subdue the PCs before killing them, using their net attacks.

AREA 9. FOOD STORES

The walls of this room are tiled. It was once the living quarters for a priest.

This room is stacked from floor to ceiling with dead fish. The smell so foul as to defy description. Through the slime, you can see that the walls were once decked out in fine mosaics.

A successful **DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check** or **DC15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** results in a careful search of the room to reveal a loose flagstone, under which is hidden a waterproof sack. Inside the sack is a *Potion of Water Breathing*, a *Potion of Greater Healing*, and a smaller pouch containing 650gp.

AREA 10. ACOLYTE'S DORMITORY

At one time this was the dormitory for the colony of monks which lived in this complex. This is now the living area for some of the lair's kuo-toa. At any given time, unless the aboleth is under attack, there will be 2d6 kuo-toa here, led by 2 kuo-toa monitors. They will attack to subdue the PCs before killing them, using their net attacks.

Remnants of wooden furniture are scattered around this large room, mixed with mounds of seaweed presumably brought here from the beach outside. Two statues are in the corners of the western wall, each of a human woman, each of which has been literally defaced, the human features replaced by three eyes arranged in a vertical line.

If the PCs diligently examine the statue in the northwest corner of the room, they will find it can be moved. Concealed beneath the statue, in a small coffer, is a hoard of a dozen gems: a mix of Malachite, Turquoise, Obsidian, each worth 125gp.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Returning to settled lands can be as simple as returning to their starting point. The PCs can reach Dilpur in a few days by traveling south. Feel free to handwave travel times in order to make it take as long as you like.

Consult the **Random Encounters** beginning on **page 5**. You may randomize encounters for their journey home or simply select from those encounters they did not complete on their journey to Blacktide Cove.

If the PCs are badly hurt, or one (or more) of them has been killed, you may wish to forego combat encounters on their journey back to civilization and instead have them encounter the Druids and the Warsword Patrol. The druids will do their best to nurse their injuries. The soldiers will escort them to Dilpur, where they can take the ship home.

On the PCs' return to civilization, their story will surely spread. This should attract the attention of those who wish them ill. These may range from the normal thieves who might find the PCs' treasure easy pickings, to assassins sent by previous enemies, to the Attertons of **page 6** (if the PCs didn't slay them), to other descendents of the *Sprite's* crew who get wind of the hoard being recovered.

If the party encountered and wounded Zokaintux, cultists from the Cult of the Dragon will harass the PCs at every opportunity, as the dragon plots revenge.

If the party helped Auxuduhr escape, the Fraternity of Tharos will haunt their footsteps, as the Fraternity will

have determined through magic what went wrong. The Fraternity's memory is long.

Speaking of revenge, even if the PCs supposedly slay the aboleth, the aberration will reform in a relatively short amount of time, and with its inerrantly accurate memory will *certainly* remember every moment of its defeat at the hands of those mere mortals. It has decades – centuries – to plot its revenge. It **will** plot its revenge, and that revenge should follow the characters for the rest of their days.

Keep track of the number of kuo-toa of each type the PCs kill for XP purposes. The maximum possible XP award from defeating the various types of kuo-toa is in the following table:

Creature	XP each	#	XP subtotal
Kuo-toa	50	63	3,150
Kuo-toa whip	200	12	2,400
Kuo-toa monitor	700	12	8,400
Kuo-toa archpriest	2,300	1	2,300
		Subtotal	16,250

Other XP amounts are given in the respective encounters.

It is wise to cross off each encounter with a pencil as the PCs defeat it. Calculating XP should be easy using that as a guide, even if the players abandon the adventure partway through.

APPENDIX

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Sling of Seeking

Weapon (sling), very rare (requires attunement)

Once attuned, any stone or bullet fired from this sling veers toward its target, negating the armor-class bonus of a target which enjoys any bonus resulting from cover, as well as permitting her to attempt without penalty to hit a target which is lightly or heavily obscured.

Trident of Warning

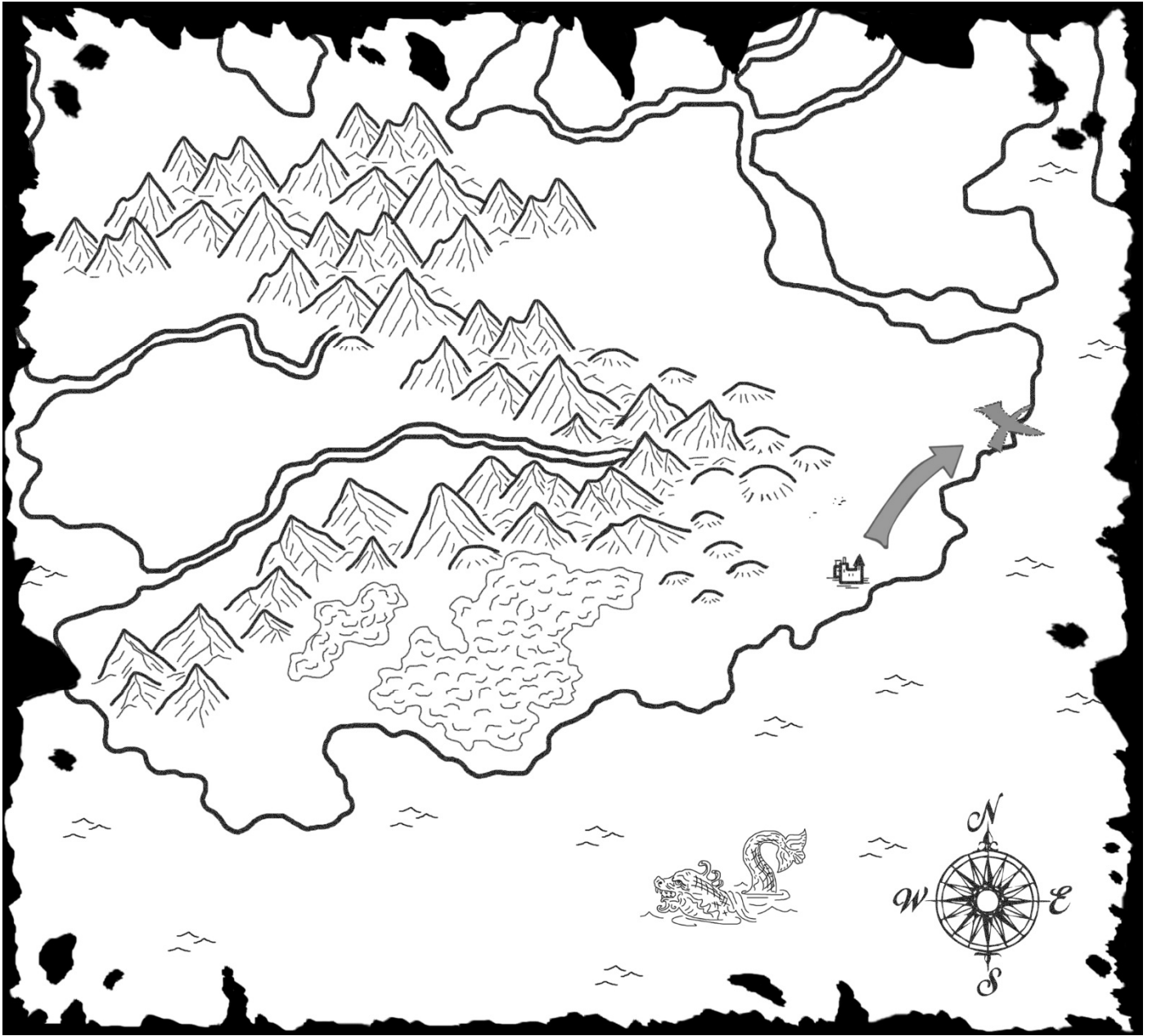
Weapon (trident), rare (requires attunement)

Once attuned, this magic weapon warns you of danger. While the weapon is on your person, you have Advantage on initiative rolls. In addition, neither you nor any of your companions within 30 ft of you can be surprised, except when incapacitated by something other than nonmagical sleep. The weapon magically awakens you and your companions within range if any of you are sleeping naturally when combat begins.

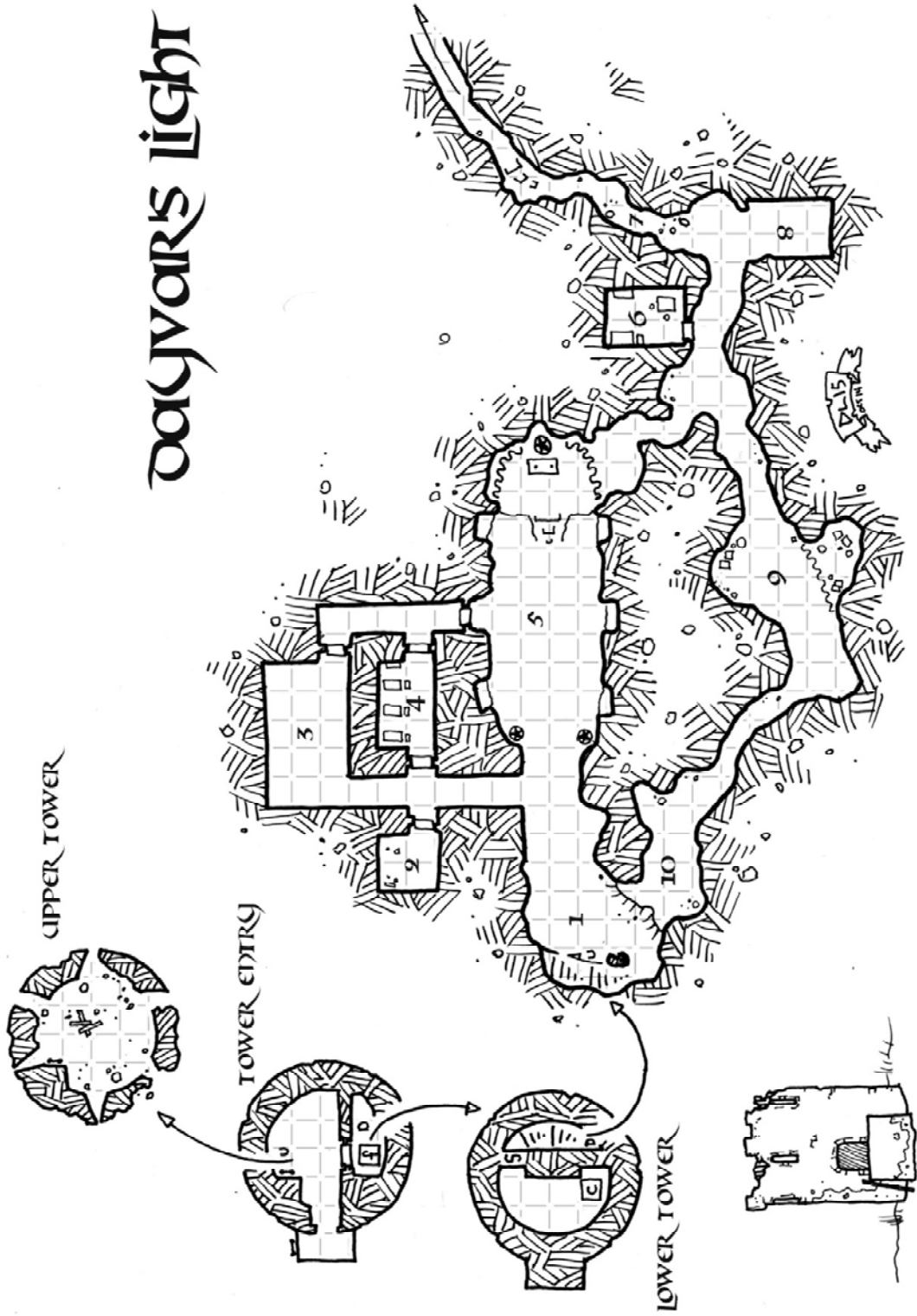
MAPS

Treasure Map Handout - Color

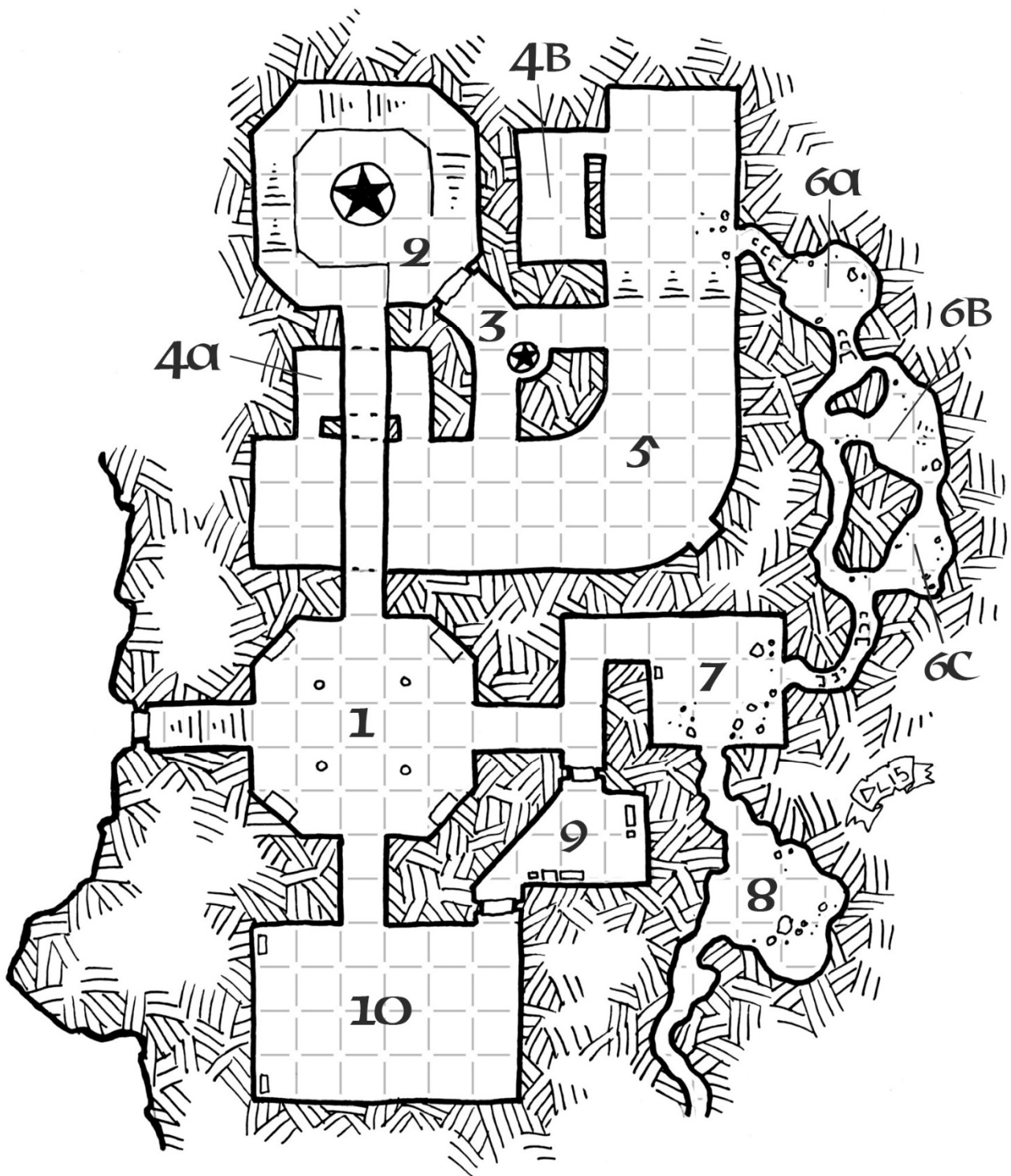




DAGYVAR'S LIGHT



LAIR OF THE FISH-MEN



HANDOUT 1

still can't believe we found this place after all this time. But the treasure is gone, stolen by those who came before us, and who have enslaved us, we who came seeking the booty. Holden and Renwick are dead, Morrow and Penney missing. There's only Draegan and me left. We're holed up here, waiting, waiting. For what? Death.

Draegan says he saw Holden walking last night, but I know that can't be true. I saw one of them fish-men put a spear clean through Holden's head. Right through it, and his brains come out the other side with it. But Draegan is an elf, and he says he knows about that kind of thing, so I reckon I have to believe him.

I can hear them fish-men. All the time with their chanting and hissing and whatnot. There's some kind of religion going on here, down below. We can't understand what they say, not even Draegan, but it's something god-like, sure as spray on the focsle.

And there's something else I hear. But not hear, like hear, but in my head. My mind. It whispers. It calls to me. It knows my secret, our secret, our oath. It knows we've betrayed our shipmates. It wants us to suffer for it. By all the gods, how does it know? It does. And it talks to me, in my dreams, in my wakeful mind when I'm on watch. It tells me it's coming for me, me and Draegan, and it's going to hold us to account. I keep praying, to whatever god's listening, that it doesn't find us.

I don't even want the gold no more. I want to be gone, back in my warm bed in Dilpur. But Draegan won't have none of such talk, so here we stay.

More tomorrow.

CREDITS

Edited by Ken Carcas.

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