

The Legendary Island of Khorant

A magical gateway on Level 5 of Dragon's Delve leads to the island of Khorant, which lies thousands of miles away but is nearly inaccessible except for the subterranean portal.

For nearly a thousand years, people have spoken of the mysterious, the mystic, the legendary island of Khorant. But facts were few about the place. One could find only rumors and hearsay, legends and myths. Located in the heart of the fabled Sea of Eternal Storms, Khorant is quite real, but almost entirely inaccessible to the outside world. The island is only 18 miles long and 12 miles wide, but it has a poignant history.

A thousand years ago, the Sea of Eternal Storms was far calmer, and a mighty civilization arose on the tiny island. Little is known of the ancient Khorantians, but the few native villagers on the island describe them as being elves or something very akin to elves... at least originally.

Their civilization rose quickly, and with astonishing advancements. They built a fantastic city of stone, wood, and glass at the heart of the island's jungle. But then something happened. Perhaps they took to worshipping dark gods. Perhaps they discovered a particularly foul kind of black magic lore. Perhaps both. Whatever the reason, the ancient folk of Khorant fell into depravity. They raided nearby islands for slave labor to build a terrible temple and doorways to realms beyond our own. Some legends claim they even learned to travel in time. Over time, they began to change physically as well as spiritually and mentally. They became almost fishlike in appearance.

Surely these corrupt, decadent, but extremely cunning and powerful folk would have one day created a mighty empire that would consume much of the world if not for two things. First, the Sea of Eternal Storms began to rage, perhaps in response to the sorcery unleashed upon the island. In short order, the sea cut the island off from the rest of the world. Second, even as the magical engineers on the island found a way to pass through the sea, the long-dormant volcano on the island erupted without warning. In a single day, most of the island was laid waste by the Angry Mountain's fire, ash, and poisonous gases.

Today, the jungle has returned. The city of the mighty Khorantians lies in overgrown ruins. The strange temple, however, on an island all its own just off the northwest tip of Khorant, remains.

Strangely, while the fiery flows of the volcano slew the entirety of the foul inhabitants of Khorant, many animals, beasts, and even some of the humans and lizardfolk on the

island as slaves all survived. Now their descendants all thrive on the island. If, however, the Angry Mountain was simply the instrument of the gods striking down at the evil nature of the ancient Khorantians, then perhaps its judicious strokes were not so strange after all.

But in the many years since the fall of the mysterious ancient islanders, newcomers have arrived. A hundred years ago, a desperate pirate and his crew entered the Sea of Eternal Storms and wound up shipwrecked on Khorant. They were neither the first nor the last to be shipwrecked here thanks to the unnavigable sea. In their explorations of the island, however, these pirates found the ancient secret the ancients developed to pass across the Sea of Eternal Storms. Today, their successors, under Captain Darkblood (who calls himself the Pirate King) base their depredations in the untouchable fortress called Skull Cove.

Even perhaps stranger still, the mystical nature of the island and the interplanar travels of the Khorantians drew the attention of a race of outsiders called the grahlus. These apelike slavers have established a slave-fortress on Khorant from which they launch interdimensional raids to gather more slaves.

Khorant holds many secrets and many surprises. And the gate on Level 5 of Dragon's Delve is likely the only means for most people to ever reach and explore this strange and exotic locale.

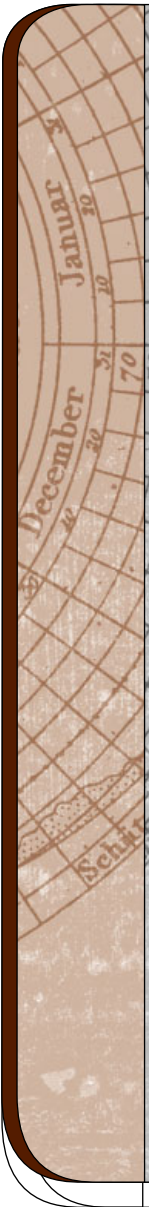
Details: The details of what Khorant is like vary depending on whether one is on the beach, in the jungle, or on the mountain at the center of the island. Each of these general locales shall be described along with specific locales and encounters in the articles in this category.

THE MYSTICAL NATURE OF KHORANT

The ancient Khorantians steeped themselves in lore and knowledge. To advance themselves and their civilization, they infused the island itself with magical power. As the race began to turn toward evil, however, so too did the mystical power of the island. Today, much of the taint of the past darkness is gone, but some remains, thanks in part to the ghosts of the past that linger here, hungry for vengeance.



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Dreams: Those sleeping on the island for the first time always have strange, disturbing, but perhaps somehow meaningful dreams. The dreams continue on further nights (or whenever the characters sleep) intermittently.

Some sample dreams might include:

- A spellcasting character cannot access his spells until he swears fealty to an unknown being that at times looks like a squatting demon, and at other times an octopus with terrible, piercing eyes.
- A character cannot keep from drowning, even though he is not underwater.
- A character finds herself in her childhood home, although it appears to be deep underwater. A massive shark-thing whispers to her, encouraging her to murder her family that sleeps there.
- A character is surrounded by shadowy, nightmarish creatures but at the last minute drives them off by holding aloft a green stone.
- A character is poisoned by a thorn in the jungle and the only antidote is the blood of her friends.
- A character is trapped in a deep pit until friendly lizardfolk pull him out.
- A character watches as creatures—tall, thin, almost fishlike humanoids—pray before a huge idol of a squid-headed demon, but are instantly slain as fire literally rains down upon them, spewing forth from the mountain at the center of the island.
- A character is on the deck of a ship next to an obviously undead sea captain holding a staff that looks like an octopus' tentacle stretched out. Suddenly, giant apes wearing armor and wielding weapons attack the ship and grab the character, carrying him off to be a slave.

Blood: Khorant has a special affinity for blood. At random times, when a character suffers a wound and the DM judges that blood from the wound is spilt upon the ground, the character should make a Will save (DC = amount of damage suffered from the wound). Failure means that the character immediately passes out for 1d4 rounds and has one of the dreams mentioned above. When he awakens, all damage suffered from that wound is healed, and a patch of thick, lustrous grass or other plant life grows where the blood spilt. The DM should not call for this save more than once on a given day, and no character should have to make it twice.

Further, at random times, when a character deals a foe a wound and the DM judges that blood from the wound is spilt upon the ground, the character should make a Will save (DC = amount of damage dealt). Failure means that the character goes into a rage exactly like a barbarian for 1d4 rounds screaming "Blood for the island!" The character has no memory of what happened during the rage.

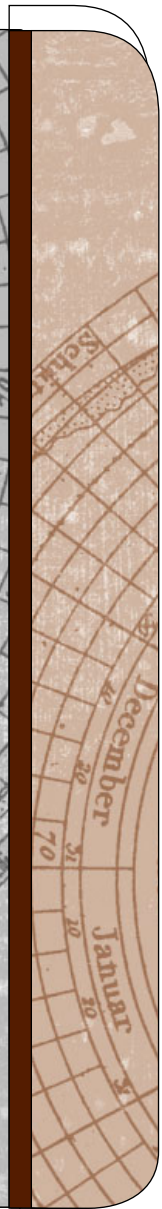


Natives to the island are immune to these effects, but those that are intelligent are very aware of them.

Ghosts: Khorant is a haunted place. Ghosts and spirits of the ancient Khorantians and their foul acts are everywhere. Players should be asked frequently to make Listen or Spot checks (DC 20). Those successful at a Listen check hear strange whispers in an unknown language or distant chants, drums, or screams. Those making the Spot check catch a glimpse of something out of the corner of their eye: strange, fish-eyed creatures skulking in the jungle, something slithering along the ground, or odd symbols (octopi, leering demonic faces, fish) carved into trees or rocks that are not there when they look closer.

Aka'ili Powder: Made from a mixture of plants growing only on Khorant, this blue-gray power must be thrown into the space of an incorporeal undead to be effective. (The incorporeal nature of the spirit does not come into play.) The undead must make a Will save (DC 20) or remain motionless (similar to being stunned, but not helpless) for one round. One dose is enough to affect one undead creature, and costs 25 gp.

Green Tourmaline: Special, uncut green tourmalines can be found on the island that allow a character to turn undead once as a 10th level cleric with a +3 Charisma modifier. Each time the tourmaline is used, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1, the gemstone crumbles to powder. These gems are worth 250 gp.





Maosh: This flowering plant grows everywhere on the island, but only on Khorant. When harvested and prepared correctly, it creates a paste that can cure certain diseases and afflictions (the DM should choose specific afflictions not normally easily cured, like the mimic affliction, that maosh paste can cure).

THE GATEWAY (EL 6)

Summary: A magical gateway brings the PCs to a mysterious tropical island.

Sights and Sounds: By day, it is bright as well as hot. By night, it is cool and still usually well-lit by the stars and moon. Sounds of the nearby jungle—animal calls and wind through the trees—are loud.

Grass and sand at your feet, you now stand on a tropical island. Judging by the position of the sun, to the east the vegetation quickly becomes a dense jungle. In the distance, towering over the trees, is a mountain of gray and black rock. To the west, the vegetation fades into soft, white sand dunes before reaching the rolling, azure waves of the sea. In the far distance over the waves, it seems as though a storm gathers. It is hot, and the smell of vegetation and salt water is thick. It would seem you couldn't be farther from Dragon's Delve, or, for that matter the Lost Duchy itself.

The Storm: The storm the PCs observe over the sea to the west remains out at sea. There are always storms rolling

across the Sea of Eternal Storms (hence the name), but they only very occasionally come to Khorant.

The Buried Chest: PCs searching around the gate may find a spot where something appears to have been fairly recently buried if they make a Search check (DC 18). Some adventurers coming out of the dungeon buried a stash here before exploring the island, and apparently never made it back. The wooden and iron chest is buried under about a foot of sand and earth, requiring about three man-hours to uncover. The chest is locked (DC 22 to open) and contains some rotting rations, a bag of 451 gp, sixteen torches, 100 feet of rope, three quivers with 20 arrows each, two smokesticks, a sunrod, a crowbar, and a lantern.

Inhabitant: A megaraptor prowls in the trees near the gate, looking for food, and a group of just-arrived PCs fits the bill quite nicely.

Megaraptor: hp 79

Tactics: Straight to the point, the megaraptor charges through the trees and pounces on the nearest PC. If it brings down a victim, it will attempt to pick the creature up and run off with it deeper into the jungle rather than stay and fight the angry allies of its meal.

Upping the Ante (EL 8): Oh heck. Go ahead and make a T-rex rather than a megaraptor. You know you want to.

REVISIT (EL 6)

The next time the PCs come to the gateway, such as when they want to return to the dungeon, an ettin has wandered

out of Dragon's Delve and is exploring Khorant, quite mystified. Thus, the ettin is easily surprised (−4 to its Spot and Listen checks). The ettin has been having a successful time rummaging around in the dungeon, and besides the fact that all of its weapons are masterwork—even his 4 javelins (+1 to all attack rolls)—it carries a large sack filled with 893 gp, 1,422 sp, and a human skull with two 100 gp uncut agates lodged in the eye sockets.

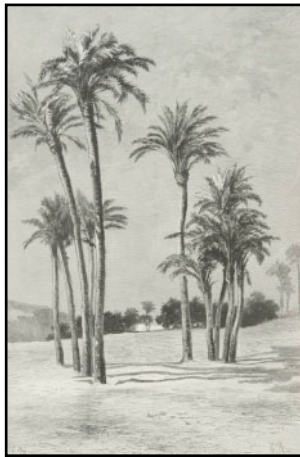
Ettin: hp 71; +1 to all attack rolls

Connections: This area connects to area 143.

THE BEACH (EL VARIES)

Summary: The beach around the edges of island, is likely the safest place on Khorant.

Sights and Sounds: The edges around Khorant are, by turns, either dunes of white sand as soft as sugar or are expanses of rough and jagged black rocks. A bit further from the shore, coconut palms and bamboo grow everywhere, as well as tall thick grasses.



Black and gray cliffs meet the water on the southwestern portion of the island, but most other areas have a relatively gentle slope down to the water.

There seems to always be a storm off in the distance over the ocean, but the skies above Khorant are normally clear. Storms on the island are most likely to come at night and are usually mild.

On the southwestern part of the island, PCs may see a ship coming to Skull Cove or leaving it.

Travel: Travel along the beach is not fast, but it's quicker than moving through the jungle. And safer as well. This is why most of the human natives of the island keep to the beach. A typical group of characters can move about a mile in an hour along the beach at a casual pace, or twice that if hurrying. The islanders can move two miles in an hour or five if hurrying.

Food: Characters interested in fishing, spearfishing, or foraging for clams, crabs, or other small prey, or harvesting coconuts will find food in abundance (+2 to all Survival checks).

BEACH ENCOUNTERS

Check for an encounter once every 12 hours, with a 1 in 6 chance of having an encounter of the DM's choosing.

GIANT CRAB (EL 6):

A massive crustacean comes up out of the sea looking for food. This monstrous thing is 18 feet across. Fortunately, it retreats back into the water if it suffers more than half its hit points in damage.

Giant Crab: hp 80; use huge monstrous scorpion stats without the sting

SHIPWRECK (EL 0)

The PCs see a wrecked ship on the beach off in the distance, or just off shore, amid some rocks. If they investigate, they find a few skeletons, but no survivors or signs of activity. Within the hold of the ship, however, might be as much as 1,000 gp worth of treasure items (no magic, but coins, ingots, perhaps some durable artwork or valuable dry goods). The PCs can have this encounter more than once. The DM can stage another encounter with this one, so that, for example, the giant crab or the digester uses the wrecked ship as a lair.

DIGESTER (EL 6)

A digester, the descendant of creations of the wizards in Dragon's Delve, now prowls the beach of Khorant. It attacks and fights to the death. The PCs can have this encounter more than once.

Digester: hp 70

MONITOR LIZARDS (EL 4)

A pair of monitor lizards moves across the beach to attack the PCs. They attempt to focus on one foe between them, using flanking attacks. If one of them is slain, the other retreats.

Monitor Lizards: hp 25 and 20

ISLANDERS (EL 3)

Six natives from Coral Village come down the beach, either hunting or to investigate strange visitors that one of their scouts spotted earlier (the PCs). If this is the first time the PCs have encountered the human natives of the island, they are wary and ready to fight at a moment's notice. However, a show of kindness from the PCs, or a good use of the Diplomacy skill and the islanders will become friendly.

Although listed as speaking Common, if the DM wishes, the islanders may speak only their own language and the PCs will need to use magic or some other means (good old pan-



tomime) to communicate. DMs not wishing to bother can have them speak Common, but should describe it as being a strangely accented dialect from that which the PCs speak.

Friendly natives can be a great source of information about the island. Particularly friendly PCs might even get brought to the village for lodging and food. The natives will not, however, accompany the PCs into the jungle, to the mountain, or to the Unknown Temple.

The PCs can have this encounter more than once.

Male Human (Neutral Good)

Warrior 1 **CR** 1/2

HD 1d10+1 **hp** 9

Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

Language Common

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

BAB/Grapple +1/+3

Attack +4 melee (1d8+2, longspear) or +3 ranged (1d6+2, javelin)

Fort +3 **Ref** +1 **Will** +1

Str 14, **Dex** 13, **Con** 13, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

Crucial Feats Dodge, Precise Shot

Other Feats N/A

Crucial Skills Balance +3, Climb +6, Swim +6

Other Skills Knowledge (nature) +3

Possessions masterwork longspear, 3 masterwork javelins, shell and bone necklace (5 gp). One in the group has a small wooden box with two doses of aka'ili powder.

THE JUNGLE OF TEETH (EL VARIES)

Summary: The Jungle of Teeth gets its name thanks to all the terrible beasts that dwell within it. It's an exceedingly dangerous place.

Sights and Sounds: The jungle is dimly lit during the day and pitch black at night. The dome of trees forever overhead blocks most sunlight and all starlight. PCs can find, however, breaks in the trees now and again where they can see the sky.

The jungle is thick with trees, ferns, vines, lianas, and flowering plants. It would be beautiful if it weren't so difficult to traverse and filled with danger. Moss-covered black boulders, hidden pools of water (sometimes filled with quicksand), and mounds of rotting vegetation make straight paths impossible, even with a machete or axe to clear away the underbrush and tangling vines. The air is filled with biting insects, pungent odors, and unfamiliar bird calls. Every great once in a while, one comes upon an overgrown rock that appears to have once been a part of a structure, although the shape and style of the building is entirely unfamiliar, and the graved glyphs and images on the rock—often something with a fish or cephalopod countenance—seem alien.

Travel: Travel through jungle is slow and difficult, without roads and paths. A typical group of characters can move about a half mile in an hour.

Food: Characters interested in foraging for fruit, berries, or other edible plants or hunting for small game (birds, lizards, frogs, hares, even small wild pigs) will find food in abundance (+2 to all Survival checks).

JUNGLE ENCOUNTERS

Check for an encounter once every two hours, with a 1 in 6 chance of having an encounter of the DM's choosing. This is an average of two encounters a day.

DMs should intersperse these dangerous encounters with non-deadly encounters, including small snakes, hunting cats, harmless mammals and lizards, birds, quicksand, thick patches of thorny briars, and so on.

See the map of Khorant.

SPIDERS WITH TEETH (EL 7)

Some of the oldest experiments conducted in the Aberrant Laboratories in Dragon's Delve used spiders as subjects. Some of these escaped to Khorant and flourished. These mutant spiders have mouths filled with sharp teeth and an extra set of legs that end in thin-fingered hands.

They frequently roam the jungle in packs and use their webs only to completely incapacitate those they've poisoned. They do not use their hands in combat, but their teeth increases their bite damage by one factor, so large spiders inflict 2d6+3 points of damage and the huge spiders inflict 3d6+6 damage with their bites.

Huge Monstrous Spider: hp 50

Large Monstrous Spider (4): hp 30, 27, 23, 21

The great number of these spiders explains the number of spider eaters that also live on the island. Some believe these mutant spiders to be intelligent, and claim to have seen them using tools, weapons, and shields. (This is up to the DM, but additional attacks and/or AC in addition to the greater bite damage would certainly equate to a +1 bump in CR for these monsters.)

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD (EL 7)

As the PCs make their way through the jungle, four spirits of the dead Khorantians appear, moaning their laments. Each looks like a semi-transparent burned elf with vaguely shark-like features marring their fey nature.

More dramatically, however, their incorporeal bodies are still smoldering, trailing ash, or even dripping hot lava. They leave burning footprints behind them, although these fade without a trace after 1d6 rounds.

The undead creatures operate as shadows, but rather than inflicting Strength damage, they inflict 2d6 points of fire damage with their touch.

Spirits (shadows) (4): hp 21, 20, 19, and 17

DEINONYCHUS AMBUSH! (EL 7):

Hiding in the jungle, these crafty sauropods lunge out trying to surprise foes, pouncing on those that appear easiest to bring down. They use flanking to help one another, and fight to the death.

Deinonychus (4): hp 40, 38, 33, 30

Those searching the area find the remains of a dead lizardfolk warrior, along with a masterwork longspear and a necklace with a Khorantian green tourmaline.

SHAMBLING MOUND (EL 6):

A pile of rotting vegetation rises up and attacks the PCs.

Shambling Mound: hp 60

The spot where the shambler was lying has a variety of bones, animal and human. Amid these bones lie an iron flask holding two doses of *oil of greater magic weapon*, a broken silver bracelet (60 gp), and a scroll of *neutralize poison* etched onto a series of bamboo shoots connected with string made from reeds.

CONSTRUCTOR AND THE PIT (EL 6)

The PCs walk along and come upon a natural pit, 20 feet wide and deep, filled with leaves and rotting vegetation. Those failing a DC 20 Spot check fall into the pit, and while the vegetation reduces the impact of the fall a bit, scratches and punctures from broken branches and jagged rocks likely more than make up for it. Due to the tangling vegetation, all physical actions suffer a -4 circumstance penalty. Climbing out of the pit requires a DC 15 Climb check.

Leaf- and Branch-Filled Pit: CR 2; location trigger; no reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 feet deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets; pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 20.

Meanwhile, in the tree immediately above the pit, a giant constrictor snake drops on a character that didn't fall in the pit. If all the characters fell in, it drops on the first character to climb out.

Giant Constrictor Snake: hp 69

WAR PIGS (EL 8)

The PCs stumble upon a quartet of dire boars. Stealthy characters might be able to sneak away before the boars know they are there (the boars have Listen and Spot +8), but anything that attracts their attention provokes an attack and the belligerent boars fight to the death.

Dire boars (3): hp 61, 59, 53, 50



THE RIVER OF THE SUN (EL VARIES)

Summary: The river running through the jungle offers its own unique dangers. You may need the Grahlus Island Map handout.

Sights and Sounds: A river flows down from the mountain to the sea. While at its source it is narrow and shallow, running quickly, it widens and deepens as the terrain levels, allowing the current to flow at a more leisurely pace. Here and there, the banks are steep and rocky, but more often they are gentle, muddy places. Bamboo grows along the shore, and the shallow water along the banks are thick with reeds and grasses. Insects near the river hang in dark clouds, biting anything and everything in sight. Frogs and birds are thick near the river, feeding on the insects, and the water teems with fish of all kinds.

The river offers no bridges, but occasionally one comes upon a small bit of overgrown, moss-covered stone that suggests that once an elegant span crossed the river at that point, though little of it remains today.

Travel: Travel along the banks of the river, or even in the water itself in places, is easier going than hacking through the jungle, but it's still slow. A typical group of characters can move about a half mile in an hour. On average, the River of the Sun is about 30 feet across, although in places its wider or narrower. Crossing the river is usually not too treacherous, as it moves fairly slow. However, in most places the center of the river is about 10 feet deep, and occasionally much deeper.

Food: Characters interested in foraging for edible plants, fishing (including spearfishing), or hunting for game come to drink at the river will find food in abundance (+2 to all Survival checks).

RIVER ENCOUNTERS

Check for an encounter once every hour, with a 1 in 6 chance of having an encounter of the DM's choosing. This is an average of four encounters a day. DMs should intersperse these dangerous encounters with non-deadly encounters, including small snakes, swarms of insects, harmless mammals and lizards, birds, large fish, and so on. If desired, regular jungle encounters can be added in here as well.

See the map of Khorant.

LIZARDFOLK (EL 5)

Five lizardfolk hunters come upon the PCs. These lizardfolk are initially hostile and look at the PCs as an easy meal, but a good use of Diplomacy could make them possible allies. If the PCs befriended Sessalli in area 140, this may be even easier. Each warrior has a gourd containing a *potion of cure light wounds*. The PCs can have this encounter more than once.

Lizardfolk (5): hp 14, 12, 11, 10, 9

TRICERATOPS (EL 9)

The PCs stumble upon a surly triceratops munching on plants growing on the riverbank. Sneaky characters can just quietly bypass it, and perhaps a distraction or something else could allow them to get away, but most other actions are

likely to provoke an attack. Fortunately, after an initial few rounds of combat, the triceratops is likely to leave, and will certainly allow its foes to retreat without further combat. The PCs can have this encounter more than once.

Triceratops: hp 200

THE GRAHLUS (EL 5)

Use this encounter only near the Grahlus Fort. A single grahlus warrior makes his way through the jungle back to the grahlus fort. It is not interested in fighting, but in getting back to the fort. If the PCs wished, they could follow the warrior to find the location of its stronghold. However, if attacked, the grahlus will fight without considering surrender. The warrior has three 100 gp pearls and the Grahlus Island Map handout in a bag. The PCs can have this encounter more than once.



Grahlus: hp 75

GRAHLUS VS. LIZARDFOLK (EL 8 OR 5)

Two grahlus warriors face off against a large hunting party of lizardfolk. Two lizardfolk already lie dead next to the water, and two are very injured. One of the grahlus has taken some serious damage. As long as the PCs don't charge into the thick of things and try to take on both groups at once, the combatants do not stop their fighting. The PCs could attempt to help one side or the other, wait to take on the weakened victor, or leave well enough alone and avoid the encounter altogether. If they wait until the battle is over, only one grahlus survives, but he's relatively unhurt. He has four 100 gp pearls and the Grahlus Island Map handout in a bag.

The PCs can have this encounter only once.

Grahlus (2): hp 72, 45

Lizardfolk (6): hp 14, 13, 12, 11, 5, 2

CROCODILES (EL 5)

Three crocodiles attempt to attack the PCs as the characters make their way along a particularly muddy section of the river's edge. The crocodiles are not hindered, but the PCs can only move at half speed and suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls, Strength- and Dexterity-based checks, and Armor Class while in the mud.

Crocodiles: hp 28, 22, 20

LIZARDFOLK HUNTER PIT (EL 5)

The lizardfolk have dug a deep pit, filled it with envenomed wooden spikes, and covered it with reeds and grass.

Spiked Pit Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset after 2d6 rounds; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 feet deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets; pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each); poison (giant wasp poison, DC 14 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 20.

THE JUNGLE RUIN (EL 7)

Summary: An ancient ruin stands in the middle of the jungle, with little to offer other than danger.

Sights and Sounds: The ruins are quiet. Far fewer birds and animals seem to live here than in the rest of the jungle.

A tangle of stone and broken glass rises up out of the jungle. Once great towers lie crumbled and in some cases melted as though burned with a terrible hot vengeance. The city is large, but it's impossible to see just how large since it has been utterly reclaimed by the all-consuming wilds.

Searching the Ruins: This was once a great city built by the Khorantians, with tall towers and domes of stone, metal, and glass. Filled with amphitheaters, plazas, and temples, it was a thing of strange, dark beauty. It was destroyed when the volcano last erupted, spewing lava and rock down upon the city.

It would take days or even weeks to search all of the ruins. Occasionally, a character might find a small broken piece of pottery still painted or pieces of stone still graved with symbols and pictures that seem off somehow. Humanoid figures seem both elven and yet piscine in nature. Actions carry out make no sense. There's an alien nature to it all.

The Screaming Obelisks: At a point of the DM's choosing, PCs come upon a few obsidian obelisks covered in what appear to be reliefs of faces. When the PCs draw near, the faces begin to scream in terror and agony. The faces are not carved, but in fact the remnants of spirits of Khorantians killed when the city was destroyed.

Any living, non-outsider creatures hearing the screams must make a Will save (DC 15) or freeze in place (as if held) in fear for 6 rounds. Those who make the save, are still shaken for 1d10 minutes. Those who fail the save are also shaken for 1d10 minutes after they can move.

Inhabitant: When the PCs encounter the screaming obelisks, it draws the attention of the ruin's only inhabitant, a chain devil bound to the ruins by a ritual performed there a thousand years ago. This horrible creature moves out to attack.

Chain Devil: hp 52

The Cave of Glass: Not far from the Screaming Obelisks lies a strange hole in the rubble, a sort of cavelike opening in a pile of massive dark green and black shards of glass. Around the entrance to the cave lie human skeletons (natives of the island) slain by the chain devil.

Within this cave lies the crystal skull. This skull of crystal bears a single rune on its forehead. Despite its somewhat gruesome appearance, the skull has all the powers of a rod of security. In addition, it has the ability to negate the summoning ward in the Unknown Temple. The natives in the Coral Village know of the skull, but fear the ruins too much to attempt to retrieve it.

See the map of Khorant

THE LIZARDFOLK VILLAGE (EL VARIES)

Summary: Along the banks of the River of the Sun lies a large village of lizardfolk with a few surprises. You will need the the Laozsed Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: Note that the lizardfolk do not use fire regularly, and so the village is completely dark at night.

Long, low huts made of reeds stand arranged in a chaotic maze around a central clearing. You see crested, scaly humanoid with long tails moving about the village, alert and ready for danger. In the center of the village lies a huge mound of foliage.

Huts: Although they vary in size, the huts are all multiple family dwellings or storehouses made of wood, grass, and reeds. Everything is kept very damp and the interiors of the huts are very cool in temperature.

Inhabitants: About 200 adult lizardfolk live in the village. All males and females are perfectly capable of fighting. Another 100 noncombatant hatchlings live in the village.

Lizardfolk (200): hp 11

Mound of Foliage: The leader of the village is a thin, old shaman that uses a controlled tendriculos to both help protect his people and maintain his own hold over the community. Laozsed (pronounced Lay-ohs-sed) avoids direct combat, preferring to use his spells to aid his warriors and let the tendriculos fight for him if need be. It does everything he commands, a gift from his deity. Show the players the Laozsed Illustration handout.

Tendriculos: hp 100



Laozsed**Male lizardfolk (Lawful Neutral)**

Cleric 8 CR 9
HD 2d8+2 + 8d8+8 **hp** 55
Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 1

BAB/Grapple +6/+6

Attack +7 melee (1d8+1, longspear)

Full Attack +7/+2 melee (1d8+1, longspear)

SA Death touch (granted ability), turn undead

SQ Hold breath

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 11, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 13

Crucial Skills: Concentration +10, Heal +6, Swim +4

Other Skills: Diplomacy +3, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Knowledge (religion) +3, Knowledge (local) +2

Crucial Feats: N/A

Other Feats: Brew Potion, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Spells: 6/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; CL 8, +6 melee touch, +7 ranged touch

4th—*divine power, inflict critical wounds, greater magic weapon*

3rd—*animate dead, dispel magic, magic vestment, prayer, speak with dead*

2nd—*bull's endurance, enthrall (DC 15), fog cloud, hold person (DC 15), spiritual weapon*

1st—*bless, cause fear (DC 14), comprehend languages, magic weapon, sanctuary (DC 14), shield of faith*

0—*create water, detect magic, detect poison, light, purify food and drink, resistance*

Deity: Vallassas. **Domains:** war, death.

Possessions: +1 longspear, masterwork large wooden shield, *potions of cure serious wounds, bull's strength, and neutralize poison, scroll of dispel magic, create food and water, and locate object, wand of cure moderate wounds (34 charges), holy symbol, six 100 gp pearls*



Vallassas: The obscure deity of the lizardfolk here, Vallassas (left) is the goddess of the jungle, violence, and death. Her domains are Law, War, and Death. Her favored weapon is the battleaxe.

One More Surprise: At the command of Laozsed, six young lizardfolk take to the sky mounted on giant mosquitoes that swoop down and attack



foes. The lizardfolk riders cannot make attacks, but they direct their mounts to make attacks. The giant mosquitoes use giant wasp stats, except that instead of the poison they grapple foes with Improved Grab initiation after a successful "sting" attack, then drain blood like a stirge at the rate of 1 point of Constitution drain per round after a successful hit.

Giant Mosquitoes (6): hp 40, 35, 33, 31, 30, 25

Tactics: Obviously, a direct assault against the village would likely spell the end of the PCs. Better to avoid it, and better still to make allies of the lizardfolk. If the PCs befriended Sessalli in area 140, this may be easier. If the PCs attempt to negotiate with Laozsed, he will attempt to convince them to attack the grahlus, trying to stress the number of humanoid slaves the ape warriors hold. He may also mention Vangell, another adventurer from Dragon's Delve who now lives among the pirates in Skull Cove.

Overall, the lizardfolk don't care about the Gateway, and steer well clear of the Jungle Ruins and the Unknown Temple. They have an uneasy truce with the people of Coral Village (who, Laozsed will say, know more about the ruins and the temple than the lizardfolk) and hate the grahlus. They have almost no contact with the pirates of Skull Cove.

Development: The grahlus, if left to their own devices, will soon launch a major attack against the lizardfolk village. See the map of Khorant.

THE CORAL VILLAGE (EL VARIES)

Summary: A community of humans dwells along the seashore. They can be valuable allies for the PCs.

Sights and Sounds: At night, the villagers have a central fire in the middle of the village and surround the perimeter with torches on bamboo poles. The sound of laughter is common here.

There's something almost preternaturally tranquil and lovely about the tiny collection of huts and other structures built near a small islet. People move about the little town, muscular, attractive, and smiling, their skin bronzed by the sun. Sugarlike white sand and lush greenery frame the nearly perfect picture.

The Village: The village consists of about two dozen grass huts and lean-tos built very near the shore. Each structure is decorated with shells and pieces of coral. A small stream flows near the village, providing fresh water for the inhabitants.

There is a supernatural aura about the village, but it is too subtle to be detected by a spell. When the gods struck down the Khorantians for their obscenely wicked ways, they blessed the human slaves they had taken and gave them their protection. Thus, while the folk of the village still have to



worry about predators when they leave, the village itself has never been attacked. It is a place of utter safety. The grahlus and the pirates, for example, would never consider attacking the village, although they could never actually explain why. This is an important part of the mystical nature of Khorant.

PCs seeking to attack the village or any of its inhabitants while in the village must make a Will save (DC 30) to do so. The villagers are under no such compulsion.

Inhabitants: The village has about 90 adult inhabitants and about 25 children of various ages. The adults can all be considered able warriors (it's a rough place to live), but the children are noncombatants. The folk of the village have no spellcasters, and find spellcasting fascinating and entertaining (never frightening).

The people of Coral Village appear to be the happiest, most joyous people the PCs have ever encountered, and their sincere good humor is contagious. The PCs might think that the people's good nature and good humor hides something sinister. That's OK. It's all the more surprising, then, when they discover that the village is what it appears to be.

Villagers

Male or Female Human (Neutral Good)

Warrior 1 CR 1/2

HD 1d10+1 **hp** 9

Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

Language Common

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

BAB/Grapple +1/+3

Attack +4 melee (1d8+2, longsword) or +3 ranged (1d6+2, javelin)

Fort +3 **Ref** +1 **Will** +1

Str 14, **Dex** 13, **Con** 13, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

Crucial Feats Dodge, Precise Shot

Other Feats N/A

Crucial Skills Balance +3, Climb +6, Swim +6

Other Skills Knowledge (nature) +3

Possessions masterwork longsword, 3 masterwork javelins, shell and bone necklace (5 gp). About one in ten has a small wooden box with two doses of aka'ili powder.

Paoshai: Paoshai (pronounced Pay-ohsh-eye) is the leader of the village, although she uses the same stats as everyone else. She is tall, confident, and wise, wearing a large, elaborate necklace of gold (worth 500 gp) and holding a massive +1/+1 *quarterstaff* that glows in the darkness and is covered with ceremonial shells, stones, and other fetish items.

If the PCs are respectful and friendly, she invites them to a nightly feast. If the PCs continue to be good guests and



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indicate capability and responsibility, she takes them into her confidence. Over the years, other adventurers have come through the Gateway from Dragon's Delve before, so she is aware of it. Some have been friendly, and some have not. If the PCs are willing to do something on behalf of Coral Village, she will reward them with some items the people have recovered from adventurers that have come before and met with bad ends (the island is a dangerous place).

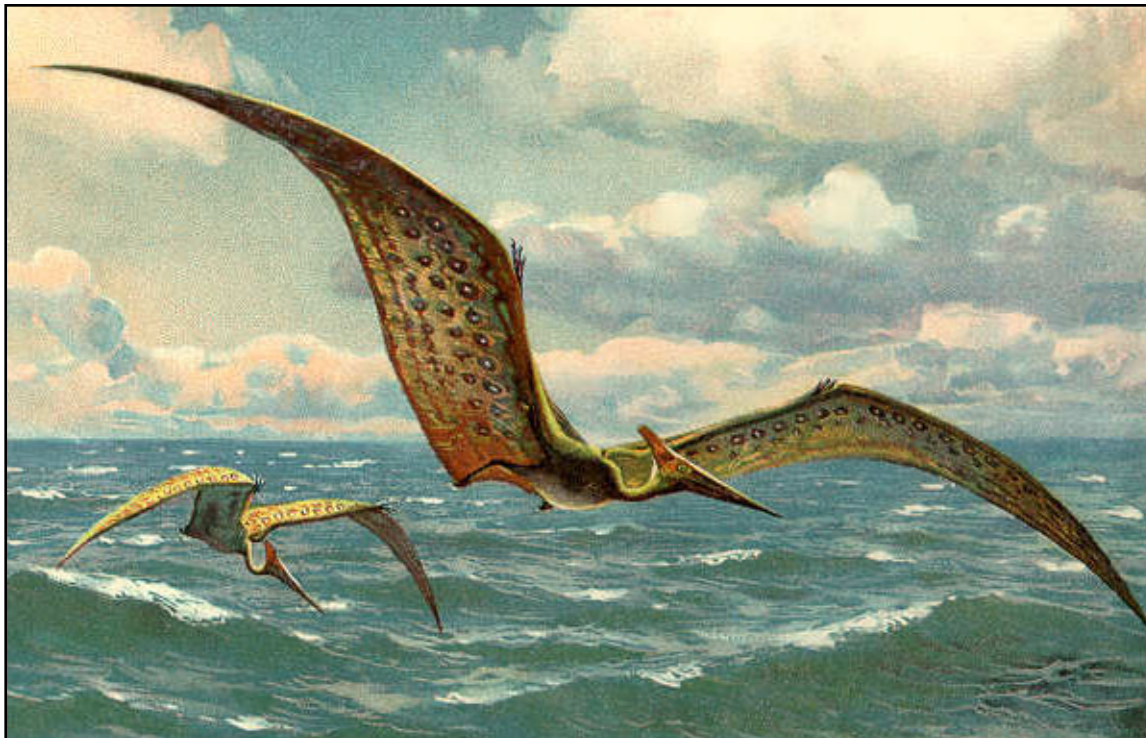
Paoshai asks the PCs to go to the Grahlus Fort and rescue the two most recent villagers that the grahlus have enslaved, Temaru and Aata. She warns them that the grahlus are too powerful for a frontal assault to work, but that there is a secret way in along the north wall. The slave pens, she tells them, are in the northwest corner of the fortress. She can provide them with very basic details of the fort and the grahlus as well. If asked for, she will send up to a dozen warriors with the PCs to help them (but that may make sneaking in harder, not easier).

If the PCs insist that they are not any good at subterfuge and sneaking into places, she will tell them that they could go to the topmost Peak of the Angry Mountain and speak to Tekuni, the fire god. He might be able to be convinced to help the PCs against the evil of the grahlus in the way that the gods acted against the ancients a thousand years ago.

If they succeed, or actually even if they just try, Paoshai will give the PCs the following:

- A wand of lightning bolt (5d6) (28 charges)
- 16 +2 crossbow bolts
- A bag of 540 gp, 321 sp, and 288 cp

If the PCs inquire about the Unknown Temple, Paoshai will warn them against that place. If they insist on going, she tells them that they should first go to the Cave of Glass



in the Jungle Ruin and find the *crystal skull* that will aid them there. No one from the village will accompany them to the ruin or the temple, but she will give them directions. If the PCs want to know more about past adventurers that came here, Paoshai tells them that a sorcerer from the Gateway named Vangell now dwells among the pirates at Skull Cove supposedly knows many secrets about the place known as Dragon's Delve. He may also know more about the Unknown Temple.

Development: If the DM wishes, a male PC might actually strike up a romance with Paoshai. She would never leave her people, but it would encourage the PC(s) to return to Khorant now and again (always to enjoy the absolute safe sanctuary of Coral Village, no matter what forces array against them), and would give them a special link to Dragon's Delve. The DM could then sprinkle in further adventure ideas on the island. And it would certainly be an exotic love story.

See the map of Khorant.

THE ANGRY MOUNTAIN

(EL VARIES)

Summary: The crown of Khorant is the massive but quiet volcano at the island's heart.

Sights and Sounds: Black and gray rock rises above the verdant green of the jungle like a massive hand reaching up

from the core of the earth. The lower slopes are steep and covered in trees, shrubs, and vines, while the upper portion of the mountain is stark rock cliffs rising to the double peak high above the island.

Travel: Moving along the rocky, foliage-covered ridges of the mountain is very difficult, and at times impossible. DMs may call for DC 10 or 15 Climb checks.

Food: Hunters and foragers will find this area about average for finding food and water.

MOUNTAIN ENCOUNTERS

Check for an encounter once every four hours, with a 1 in 6 chance of having an encounter of the DM's choosing. This is an average of one encounter each day. DMs should intersperse these dangerous encounters with non-deadly encounters, including loose footing (requiring a Climb check to avoid taking 1 point of damage), small snakes, swarms of insects, harmless climbing mammals and lizards, birds, and so on.

See the map of Khorant.

LANDSLIDE (EL 4)

Rocks come tumbling down upon the PCs from above, perhaps loosed by their own movements. Allow a Survival check (DC 15) or a Spot check (DC 22) to alert a PC to the danger beforehand so that it can be avoided. Otherwise, all PCs suffer 4d6 damage from falling rocks (Reflex save DC 18 for

half). Worse, if the PCs are in a precarious position, they must make Climb checks (DC 17) to avoid falling 1d6 x 10 feet, suffering another 1d6 points of damage for each 10 feet fallen.

PTERANODONS (EL 5)

A common and terrifying sight around the high peak of the Angry Mountain are gliding pteranodons. These winged dinosaurs are much larger than “normal,” and feed on almost anything on the island. They are also smarter than normal, which makes them doubly dangerous. For the pteranodons of Angry Mountain, use giant eagle stats. Two of them swoop down on the PCs while they climb. The PCs can have this encounter more than once.

Pteranodons (2): hp 30 and 26

SPIDER EATER (EL 5)

The spider eaters of the Angry Mountain are frighteningly common, swooping down into the jungle to feed upon the (mutant) monstrous spiders and giant mosquitoes there, although the mosquitoes are getting rare and most have been domesticated by the lizardfolk. The PCs can have this encounter more than once.

Spider Eater: hp 48

GIRALLONS (EL 8)

Two girallons attack the PCs. These mountain-dwelling beasts storm out of their cave for a quick and easy meal. Inside the cave, PCs can find a gruesome pile of bones and skulls, and among them a wand made of bone (Search DC 24 to find) that is a *wand of charm monster* with 18 charges. There is also a gold necklace with obsidian stones (350 gp) that requires no check to find.

Girallons (2): hp 60, 55

LIONS (EL 7)

Four hungry mountain lions attack the PCs when they are least ready for it. The lions don't attack unless they've got an advantage. In this case, it's the vertical terrain. They pounce from above along a ridge so steep that the PCs suffer a -2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls, Strength- and Dexterity-based checks, and Armor Class unless they make a Balance check (DC 15) each round. PCs using at least one free hand to hold on to something can make a Climb check instead.

Lions (4): hp 39, 35, 32, 30

LAVA CHILD AND BELKER (EL 7)

This might just be a combat encounter with some creatures thriving on the volcanic nature of the mountain. However, if the PCs attempt any kind of parlay, or mention “Tekuni, the fire god” (as described by folk in the Coral Village), the fire and smoke creatures do not attack. Instead, the PCs quickly find themselves surrounded by a dozen magmin. This escort shows them a secret cave and passage leading up to the Peak of the Angry Mountain.

Magmin: hp 12

Belker: hp 37

PEAK OF THE ANGRY MOUNTAIN (EL 12)

Summary: At the top of the mountain, a powerful volcano spirit resides. If the PCs find and befriend him, he could become their best ally on the island. You will need the Tekuni Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: A sulfurous mist is omnipresent here, obscuring vision (all creatures have concealment from 10 or more feet away, visibility beyond 20 feet is blocked). There is a steady rumble from beneath the ground.

You've found a spot at what must be the top of the mountain that is surprisingly flat and smooth. Black volcanic rock surrounds you, cut with cracks and steam-filled vents. Without warning, you find yourself in the presence of a tall, thin creature vaguely humanoid in form, but with smooth, dark red skin and features akin more to a reptile than a human. It gives off such heat that the air around it and the ground at its feet shimmer and even glow. “Why do you disturb Tekuni, God of Fire and Earth?” The figure's demand comes in a voice that rumbles from beneath your feet, as if the Angry Mountain itself speaks.

Reaching the Peak: The only way for the PCs to reach the peak of the Angry Mountain is through the secret passage on the Angry Mountain or through magic, such as a *fly* or *teleport* spell.

Inhabitant: Tekuni the fire god resides here. Tekuni is not actually a god, but he is an extremely powerful elemental being with some amount of dominion over both fire and earth, as he is a volcano spirit. He is lawful neutral, with a particular hatred of evil. Use efreeti stats with maximum hit points if combat should actually arise, except that rather than having the ability to grant wishes, he has control over when and how the volcano can erupt. This control is quite



precise. He can cause an eruption on the side of the mountain that sends a river of molten lava right to the grahlus fort (and only the grahlus fort) for example. This means that he has the ability to open up a crack in the rock below where a foe stands here, dumping them about 100 feet (10d6 falling damage) into a pool of lava (20d6 fire damage per round). Like with any pit, a foe can attempt a DC 20 Reflex save to grab hold of the edge before falling.

He also has the ability to summon 1d6 magmin or one belker as a standard action at will.

Tekuni: hp 100

Tactics: Fighting Tekuni would be unwise. Not only because in battle here at the peak he will continue to attempt to drop all foes into the interior of the volcano each round, but because he can be such a valuable ally. If seriously threatened, however, he will use his gaseous form to become sulphurous smoke and travel down through a nearby vent into the volcano himself.

Convincing Tekuni to help the PCs is simply a matter of pointing out that significant evil has once again begun to fester on the island. Specific descriptions of the evil at hand will make a better case. The DM may call for a Diplomacy check (DC 18), but characters that are sufficiently polite, submissive, and perhaps even complimentary will do well in Tekuni's presence, and it may be that no check is called for.

Tekuni will only use the volcano to attack one target (the pirates or the grahlus). If the PCs wish to have help against both, this will require a separate visit and the second time will be much more difficult to spur him to action. ("Have I not done much already? Can you not accomplish anything on your own?") In this case, a Diplomacy check (DC 20) will absolutely be required.

See the descriptions of Skull Cove or the Grahlus Fort for more specific consequences of Tekuni's involvement.

Under no circumstances will Tekuni leave the Angry Mountain.

Development: If the PCs were escorted here by the magmin and the belker from the encounter on the Angry Mountain, they will obey any and all of Tekuni's commands while here.

See the map of Khorant.

THE GRAHLUS FORT OVERVIEW

Summary: A wooden fortress stands in a clearing in the jungle, home to apelike grahlus and their slaves. You will need the Grahlus Fort Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: The fort is a noisy place, with grunts and growls from both the grahlus and their slaves filling the air.

A large flat area has been mostly cleared of trees. In the middle of this expanse stands a wooden palisade, appearing to be not overly old. The walls, wet with jungle damp and dark with moss and slime growth, rise up four times the height of a man, and the nine towers around the perimeter are at least 10 feet taller than that. A path leads up to a defensible gatehouse built about two stout gates of impressive size. The whole place smells of sweat, animal musk, and wet fur.

Show the players the Grahlus Fort Illustration handout.

The Wall: The walls of the fort stand 25 feet high and are two feet thick, made of lashed tree trunks. There is no walkway at the top, nor a means for anyone inside to see out or over the walls other than at one of the nine towers or the gatehouse.

The Buildings: There are three wooden buildings in the bailey, a large wooden keep, a storehouse, and a barracks.



These are all one-story structures about 20 feet tall. There are also four large pens made of bamboo, constructed like cages. These latter are for holding slaves.

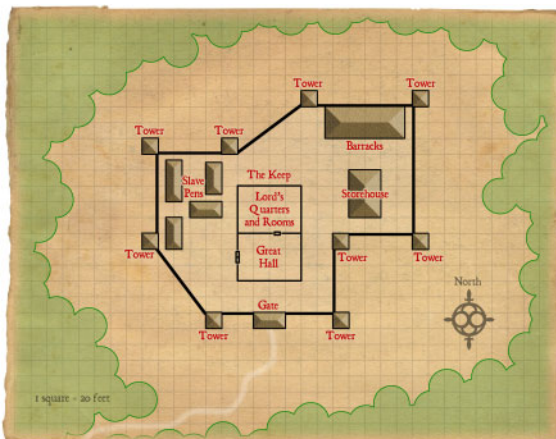
The Grahlus: Thirty grahlus warriors, in addition to their leader, Lord Darrulm, live here. If some of the grahlus are on a raid, only about 15 are present. Otherwise, it's more likely that visitors will find 25 or more warriors, although some will be asleep or otherwise resting.

The Slaves: The fort is also home to about 80 slaves. Most of these are human, but some are elves, dwarves, halflings, lizardfolk, orcs, and goblins. A few of these slaves are native to Khorant, but others are from far off lands or entirely different planes. Only about half can speak Common. The slaves do not always get along and some treat each other with as much brutality as their grahlus masters.

FORT ENCOUNTERS

The following are all individual grahlus fort encounter areas:

- Towers and Gate
- Keep: Great Hall
- Keep: Lord's Quarters and Rooms
- Slave Pens
- Barracks
- Storehouse



Background: The grahlus came here from another world a very short time ago. They brought slaves with them to build the fort and make heavy use of slave labor in all aspects of their life. Rather than relying solely on the inhabitants of Khorant for their slave labor, however, they prefer to make lightning-fast raids on faraway lands using magical portals.

The Grahlus' Tree-Portals: The grahlus understand the mystical nature of Khorant as well as anyone. That's why they came here from their own plane. Using special concoctions and rituals, the grahlus know how to turn any tree on the island into a magical portal. These portals can extend to other planes, or to locations on this world. They are temporary, however, lasting only an hour. Once created, a portal never goes to the same location twice. Further, the end points are random.

Thus, when the grahlus create a portal, they don't know what they're going to find. They send an expeditionary force of about 15 warriors through it to see if there are slaves to abduct and/or goods to plunder, but they have to return quickly.

The only non-random location to which the grahlus know can attune one of these tree-portals is their own world of Yragon, a place of thick, lush forests and many dangers.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the grahlus, he sends a river of lava rolling down the mountain right through the fort. This destroys the gate, most of the keep, and the middle part of the north wall. It starts most of the rest of the keep (as well as the jungle around it) on fire. All grahlus encountered have suffered 30 points of damage and five are dead. More details can be found in each specific encounter area.

TOWERS AND GATE (EL 5 AND 9)

Summary: The wooden fortress has nine towers and a massive gatehouse to provide for its defense.

Sights and Sounds: As grahlus cannot see in the dark, each tower and the gatehouse have torches burning in them at all times. The grahlus are noisy all the time.

An apelike face peers down from its high perch, looking for trouble.

The Towers: Each of the nine towers is 35 feet high. There is room for four grahlus in a tower, but unless a special situation arises, each tower has only one ape warrior serving as a lookout.

Ladders on the inside of the fort provide the only easy means of getting up to each tower. Note, however, that grahlus are good climbers and can get to the tower quickly even without the ladder.

The Gatehouse: Built over the massive gate, the gatehouse has room for eight grahlus but normally there are only four at any given time. In addition to their ability to hurl spears at approaching attackers, there are two murder holes built into the floor and covered with hinged wooden hatches from which they can attack anyone at or going through the gate.





Ladders on the inside of the fort provide the only easy means of getting up to the gatehouse. Note, however, that grahlus are good climbers and can get to it quickly even without the ladder.

The gate itself is normally barred with a tree trunk. It has a hardness of 5, 120 hit points, and a break DC of 32.

Inhabitants: Each tower has a single grahlus warrior within it, on watch. The gatehouse has four warriors. Each warrior has cover from ranged attacks (+4 AC +2 Reflex saves) and the ability to duck down as a move action for full cover.

Grahlus (1 or 4): hp 76 each

Tactics: The grahlus keep watch here, and if they spot an intruder, they call out a warning with a bellowing roar. They use thrown spears at invaders (+9 ranged attack, 2d6+6 damage), and have a supply of six per warrior.

Development (EL 1 or 0): If the PCs convinced Tekuni to use his power to attack the fort, the gatehouse is destroyed, and the four grahlus in it are dead. Only the four towers farthest from the center of the fort remain unburned and occupied. All grahlus encountered have suffered 30 points of damage.

KEEP: GREAT HALL (EL 5)

Summary: Within the central keep lies a room for all the ape-creatures to dine and celebrate.

Sights and Sounds: This room is lit during the day by high-placed windows and at night by torches in sconces on the walls. Sounds of work and deep, growled commands can be heard by anyone listening at the door (Listen check DC 16).



A large hall with a wooden floor stretches before you. Animal skins of all different types hang on the walls. Long wooden tables flanked by benches fill most of the chamber, with a massive, thronelike chair stands near the eastern wall with its own table. Skulls of animals and humanoids decorate the huge chair. The ceiling extends up 15 feet to the rafters, and 5 feet beyond that. The room reeks of old food, stale beer, and animal musk.

Inhabitants: Usually a single grahlus stands here, supervising 10 slaves either cleaning up after a meal, or preparing for the next one.

Grahlus: hp 79

Slaves (10): hp 5 each (they do not fight)

Tactics: It's very unlikely that the single grahlus here will stay to fight on his own for too long. Much more likely that he will run to get the lord's guards in the rooms to the north.

Treasure: Against the side of the throne rests a bejeweled masterwork greatsword (550 gp). Lord Darrulm uses the sword as a symbol of his rank rather than as a weapon, and frequently leaves it here between meals or audiences.

Development

(EL 4): If the PCs convinced Tekuni to use his power to attack the fort, the keep is utterly destroyed by a river of lava. The lava is already cooling, but is still very hot to the touch (2d6 fire



damage per round). Small, bits of the keep walls on the east and west edges still smolder. All grahlus encountered have suffered 30 points of damage.

Revisit (EL 13): If the PCs return, it may be meal time, at which case, this room is filled with grahlus warriors and Lord Darrulm himself. Including the lord, there are 16 grahlus here. However, by tradition, the grahlus feasting here are not armed or armored. Their weapons armor, and gear are in a rack by the door. Without swords or shields, the grahlus make two claw attacks (+13 melee, 1d4+6 damage) in addition to their bite. They can still pounce and rend. They have AC 13.

The only exceptions are the Lord's Guards, two grahlus who remain armed and armored at his side. They have more hit points, but otherwise are standard grahlus.

There are also 20 slaves catering to their apelike masters' every whim.

Lord Darrulm wears a +1 ring of protection. He carries *potions of bull's strength*, *cure serious wounds*, *see invisibility*, and *levitate*. He also carries two flasks of acid and two flasks of alchemist's fire.

Grahlus (13): hp 76

The Lord's Guards (2): hp 85

Lord Darrulm: hp 99; AC 21

Slaves (20): hp 5 each (they do not fight)

KEEP: LORD'S QUARTERS AND ROOMS (EL 8)

Summary: Within the central keep lies Lord Darrulm's personal chambers. You will need the Pirate Letter handout.

Sights and Sounds: These rooms are lit during the day by high-placed windows and at night by torches in sconces on the walls.



These chambers are filled with the skins, skulls, and bones of various conquests, from tigers to dinosaurs, from humans to ogres. Some of these trophies appear quite fresh. The furnishings are somewhat crude, and the entire place reeks of gore and animal stench.

Layout: The north half of the keep is, at least in comparison to the south half, a maze of small rooms. No hallway helps connect Lord Darrulm's bedchamber, a chamber for his guards, the treasury, a room with a stone-lined bathing pool, and two different storerooms here. They just all fit together in a jumble.

Amid the grisly trophies in Darrulm's bedchamber, PCs will find a letter from the pirate king Captain Darkblood. It is a falsely fawning agreement to trade a suit of plate armor for galley slaves. Show the players the Pirate Letter handout.

Inhabitants: The only grahlus allowed in these chambers are Lord Darrulm and his two guards. The grahlus leader is always attended by five slaves who act as the fat ape's hands and legs at times, bringing him whatever he needs so he need not move.

Lord Darrulm wears a *+1 ring of protection* and his weapon is a *+1 keen longsword*. He carries *potions of bull's strength*, *cure serious wounds*, *see invisibility*, and *levitate*. He also carries two flasks of acid and two flasks of alchemist's fire.

The Lord's Guards (2): hp 85

Lord Darrulm: hp 99; AC 21; +1 to attack and damage with his sword, crit range 17–20.

Slaves (5): hp 5 each (they do not fight)

Treasure: Lord Darrulm has amassed a large treasury of goods and treasures stolen while his warriors have raided and pillaged. In one room (not even locked, because the grahlus have no knowledge of locks), PCs can find three chests, each full of coins (1,820 gp, 2,576 sp, and 3,144 cp, respectively). There is a silver coffer (worth 175 gp) containing 15 pieces of jewelry, each worth 100 gp. Lastly, the room holds a statue of a horse 3 feet high done in gold worth 2,000 gp but weighing 500 lbs.

Development (EL 6): If the PCs convinced Tekuni to use his power to attack the fort, the keep is utterly destroyed by a river of lava. The lava is already cooling, but is still very hot to the touch (2d6 fire damage per round). Small, bits of the keep walls on the east and west edges still smolder. All grahlus encountered have suffered 30 points of damage and one of the Lord's Guards is dead. Lord Darrulm stands in the middle of the bailey (or as close as he can get) and screams and roars in incoherent rage.

SLAVE PENS

Summary: The grahlus keep their slaves in large bamboo cages.

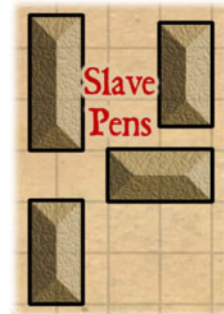
Sights and Sounds: At night, only the torches in the towers above illuminate the slave pens. The air is filled with the sounds of misery.

Huge cages made of bamboo poles lashed with rope contain dozens and dozens of people here. Most appear to be human, but there are elves, dwarves, and halflings too. You even see a pair of lizardfolk crouching together in a corner, and... that fellow must be an orc. Those two small things you thought at first were children you now see are goblins. In every case, however, these individuals appear well-acquainted with the ape-warriors' whips and fists, and ill-acquainted with food, decent clothing, or proper care of any kind.

A single grahlus warrior walks amid the cages with what seems to be an arrogant sneer, holding a whip rather than his sword.

The Pens: The pens are actually 8 foot tall bamboo cages. Any given section of one of the pens' walls or the doors has a hardness of 5, 20 hit points, and a Break DC of 24. The doors, however, are not locked, but merely lashed closed with rope that is tied into a knot. Getting this open requires no check, just 2 rounds of action. The thick rope has a hardness of 1, 10 hit points, and a Break DC of 22. The slaves don't untie the rope because they know that if a grahlus sees them doing so, they'll be beaten, perhaps to death.

The Secret Way In: Near the tower just to the northeast of the slave pens, a careful Search (DC 22) reveals a loose section of wood that can be pulled up enough to allow a Medium or smaller creature to slip beneath the wall. If the PCs have



the location described to them (such as by Paoshai), they get a +5 bonus on their Search check. This secret “door” does not remain open unless someone actually holds the wood up.

Inhabitants: Generally, only a single grahlu warrior is on the ground watching over the slave pens. There are three towers nearby, and the ape monster in each is tasked with not only watching out toward the jungle, but also down toward the pens. The grahlu on the ground has a large whip and a club as well as his sword with which to beat and punish the slaves.

There are around 80 slaves in the fort, but usually only about 50 of them are in the pens at any given time. These slaves are underfed, mistreated, weak, and demoralized.



Grahlu: hp 76

Slaves (50): hp 5 each (they do not fight)

Temaru and Aata: These two young people from Coral Village have been whipped and beaten like the others but haven't been here long enough to be overly weak from malnourishment. They will help fight if freed, although they are not very powerful.

Temaru and Aata

Male or Female Human (Neutral Good)

Warrior 1 CR 1/2

HD 1d10+1 hp 4 (down from 9)

Init +1 Speed 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

BAB/Grapple +1/+3

Attack +3 melee (1d3+2, fist) or +2 ranged (1d2+2, thrown rock)

Fort +3 Ref +1 Will +1

Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 11

Crucial Feats Dodge, Precise Shot

Other Feats N/A

Crucial Skills Balance +3, Climb +6, Swim +6

Other Skills Knowledge (nature) +3

Development (EL 8): If the PCs convinced Tekuni to use his power to attack the fort, the pens are all empty, with the two easternmost pens burned down or currently on fire. The slaves are milling around the area, cowed by the heat and flames, with four grahlu warriors watching over them and making sure none of them escape. All grahlu encountered have suffered 30 points of damage.

BARRACKS

Summary: This is a large building that houses most of the grahlu that dwell in the fort.

Sights and Sounds: The barracks is very dimly lit by a single torch. Anyone listening at the door can hear low ape-voices growling in their own language and snoring (Listen check DC 15), assuming there are any grahlu here.



The interior of this single-story structure reeks of animal musk and rancid meat. Thirty large beds filled with straw and leaves furnish the room. Weapons and shields hang on the wall or just lay about the floor or on top of a table here or there.

The barracks has two entrances, on the west and south sides.

Inhabitants: There are likely nine grahlu here, unless the DM places a few out in the bailey relaxing. (If the grahlu are currently on a raid, the barracks is empty.)

The grahlu here are not armed or armored. They are resting or sleeping. Their weapons armor, and gear are in a rack by the door. Without swords or shields, the grahlu make two claw attacks (+13 melee, 1d4+6 damage) in addition to their bite. They can still pounce and rend. They have AC 13.

Grahlu: hp 76 each

Tactics: Grahlu attacked here will be surprised. Six of the nine are asleep, and will take 1d3 rounds to rouse themselves and get into the action. Unless directly threatened by an adjacent foe, a grahlu will take a full round to pick up a sword and shield, and a move action to ready the shield in the following round.

Treasure: Under each bed is a sack, bag, or box containing each grahlu's personal gear. This includes a miscellany including combs, knives, tools for maintaining weapons and armor, a miscellaneous salve or two, some baubles, feathers, bones, or shiny rocks, some food, and 50 gp worth of coins, gems, or jewelry. (Which makes 1,000 gp worth total.) Also, in one bag a PC will find a potion of cure moderate wounds, and in another a *potion of cat's grace* and *oil of magic weapon*. Lastly, one grahlu has a dirty and blood-stained *vest of escape* crumpled up and shoved into the bottom of his bag.

Development (EL 0): If the PCs convinced Tekuni to use his power to attack the fort, the barracks stands empty, as the grahlu are all on duty dealing with the situation. The grahlu are all out in the bailey, armed and armored. All grahlu encountered have suffered 30 points of damage.

STOREHOUSE (EL 9)

Summary: Within the Grahlus Fort, there stands a storehouse for keeping food and supplies. It's also haunted, and the PCs might be able to make allies of the spirits therein.

Sights and Sounds: This windowless building is always dark and quiet.



This storehouse holds wooden crates, sealed barrels, sacks, trunks, tables covered with miscellaneous items, bales of cloth, stacks of fresh fruit, piles of wood, and more.

The storehouse has two entrances, on the west and east sides.

The Supplies: The large storehouse holds many crates, barrels, chests, and other containers. These come from all different sources, as they are the results of grahlus looting and pillaging. The only exception are the fresh foods gained from the island itself: big slabs of dinosaur meat, coconuts, bananas, and so on.

Interested PCs can find any manner of tools, equipment, or goods here. Even things that the grahlus wouldn't normally use (things taken by mistake).

Included among the supplies is a special chest full of vials and metal jars. These are the alchemical concoctions the grahlus use to modify the trees of Khorant into magical gateways. The PCs have no way of using this, but it would be worth 2,500 gp to an alchemist looking to study them. Some of the ingredients aren't even available on this world.

Inhabitants: Lately, the grahlus have stopped going in the storehouse, forcing slaves to go in and get what they need or carrying in new loot. This is because they sense a hostile presence here. The storehouse is haunted by spirits of some of the slaves that died in the care of the ape-warriors. These spirits are two spectres. Most of the time these spirits remain hidden. They are waiting for the right moment to enact terrible revenge upon the grahlus. Despite their evil alignment they will never attack slaves, and will not immediately attack any non-grahlus. They may, however, make their presence known to PCs entering the storehouse and demand to know who they are and what their intentions may be. If the PCs speak with them and tell them that they are enemies of the grahlus, the spirits may offer to help them (a Diplomacy check DC 15 might be in order). Remember, however, that the spectres can go outside only at night.

If the PCs attack them, the spectres of course fight back.

Spectres (2): hp 49 and 41

Outside the Storehouse: Since the grahlus don't like going inside anymore, and the place is quite full, stacks of crates and barrels are now piled all around the storehouse as well. To the west of the storehouse is a large, open area where most of the food preparation is done. Grahlus only eat cooked food rarely, so preparation usually just consists of breaking open coconuts and so on, and putting food on trays. Occasionally, however, Lord Darrulm demands bread, cakes, pies, or some other cooked dish.

Development (EL 0): If the PCs convinced Tekuni to use his power to attack the fort, the specters are eager to use this to their advantage. If it is night, they are already attacking grahlus and causing even more confusion and terror.

SKULL COVE OVERVIEW

Summary: In the southwest corner of Khorant lies a hidden, difficult-to-reach cove used by pirates as a base.

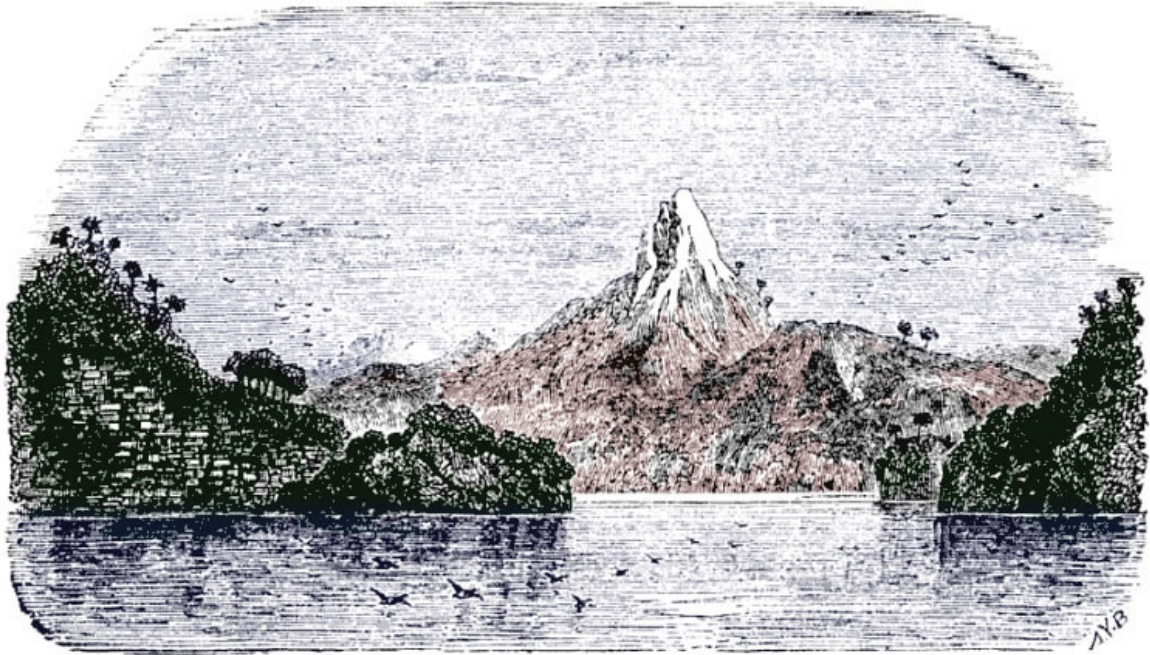
Sights and Sounds: From the sea, Skull Cove might as well be invisible. The entrance, a cleft between two sheer cliffs, is easy to miss (Spot DC 20), and even then, most would never think to try to navigate a ship through the narrow breach.

Those that do try and are successful (requiring a Profession [sailor] check with a DC of 20) find themselves immediately greeted by a stout stone bastion rising out of the water and manned by guards with bows. Only those that can bypass this fort can reach the hidden pier and village, the strange temple, or the seemingly out-of-place manor house beyond.

Reaching the Cove Overland: It is possible to get to Skull Cove on foot from the north, but the jungle is particularly thick and treacherous with rocky inclines and hidden gullies in addition to dense foliage. No one's ever really done it, so the pirates don't even consider that it's a possibility.

The Cliffs: The gray cliffs, streaked with white, rise 200 feet above the water. Climbing the sheer rock requires a





Climb check (DC 20). The tops are covered in thick jungle and are the domain of all manner of birds, but little else.

The Cove: The sparkling, remarkably clear water in the cove is very deep. It's very much like a basin, so from the beach (where there is a beach), the drop off is dramatic. The water holds its own dangers in the form of stingrays, poisonous jellyfish, and the occasional giant crab (see *The Beach* for more information on those dangers). The pirates eat well here, thanks to the bounties of the cove, however: crabs, oysters, and fish of all kinds.

The Ships: At any given time, there's usually two pirate ships in the cove, although Captain Darkblood actually has four craft in his fleet. Darkblood's personal ship is *The Reaver*, and if this black-sailed modified galley is here it is docked near his manor. The other ships are all sailing ships, and bear the names *The Morningside*, *The Star's Breath*, and *The Ghost*.

The Reaver is a modified galley in that it can be used for long sea voyages as well as plying coastal waters. It has a crew of mostly slaves to serve as oarsmen.

The pirates also have a number of smaller craft, basically rowboats, that they use to get around in the cove, to the fort, and to the manor.

Inhabitants: More than 300 pirates, guards, and others live in Skull Cove, not counting the 150 slaves kept by Darkblood in the pens beneath his manor.

SKULL COVE ENCOUNTERS

The following are all individual Skull Cove encounter areas:

- Stone Fort
- Pier
- Village
- The Cutlass
- Vangell
- Temple of the Shark Vestibule
- Temple of the Shark Sanctuary
- Captain Darkblood's Manor
- Captain Darkblood's Manor Dungeon.

Background: More than 100 years ago, a pirate named Judius Darkblood escaped the ships hunting him by sailing into the Sea of Storms. His ship greatly damaged passing through a terrible hurricane, he limped to the island of Khorant and prepared himself and his crew for the fact that they would live their the rest of their lives, for he knew that they would never survive another trip across the deadly sea. Darkblood and some of his elite crewmembers explored the island and discovered a Khorantian ruin. There they uncovered many secrets, not the least of which is how to sail safely through the Sea of Storms. Darkblood returned to his ship in triumph, but also tainted in the evil of the ancient Khorantians. Although no saint before that, he managed to repair his ship, sail back across the sea, and begin anew his attacks on ships and coastal communities. And this time, the luck of the gods (or something else) seemed to be with him

as he amassed a fleet, hundreds of followers, and the fortune of kings. He credited his success to “The Shark God,” a deity unknown to any who heard the name, but Darkblood’s crew soon became followers and they converted many others. Darkblood decided to use his knowledge to make Khorant his new base of operations. Eventually, the hidden community of Skull Cove grew to what it is today.

No one outside of Skull Cove believes that Darkblood is still the original pirate captain that began his career lifetimes ago, but he is. Because Judius Darkblood actually died in those ruins 100 years ago, and what passes for the pirate captain—or “Pirate King” as he calls himself—is a foul undead abomination.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, he sends a river of lava rolling down the mountain right into the cove. This destroys the village and damages the temple, burns the pier, and drives off many of the pirates getting into their ships. More details can be found in each specific encounter area.

STONE FORT (EL 8)

Summary: A sturdy fortress protects the entrance of Skull Cove. Inside it is a dangerous storm creature that aids the pirates. You will need the Thunderkin Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: If anyone gets close enough without alerting them, it’s not hard (Listen check DC 15) to hear the pirates inside gambling, laughing, and having a grand old time.

A stone tower rises above the waves nearly 100 feet across and 60 feet high. Around the top, you see dozens of arrow slits. Behind the battlements at the very top, there appear to be ballistas.

The Fort: The walls of the fort are stone, 12 feet thick at the base and 8 feet thick near the top. The entrance, near a small jetty on the north side, is a barred steel door (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28).

There are three interior levels, with the bottom level being a common area and storage, the next level quarters for up to 50 guards, and the level above that the “war chamber” with 20 arrow loops on each side. The war chamber contains 50 longbows, 1,000 arrows, oil for flaming arrows, 50 harnesses of leather armor, 100 bucklers, and 50 longswords.

The top has a crenelated wall surrounding it and has four ballistas and enough ammunition for them each to be fired 100 times.

The Inhabitants: There are typically only 10 men and women guards in the fort. If the pirates expect trouble, at least 20 more will row out from the village to help man the defenses.



Passing through the Sea of Storms once years ago, the pirates captured and domesticated a creature called a thunderkin. If attacked, they loose the creature to attack any unwanted incoming ships. Show the players the Thunderkin Illustration handout.

Pirate Guard

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)

Warrior 1 CR 1/2

HD 1d10+2 **hp** 12

Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

BAB/Grapple +1/+2

Attack +3 melee (1d8+1, longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8, longbow)

Fort +4 **Ref** +2 **Will** +0

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Crucial Feats Dodge, Point Blank Shot

Other Feats N/A

Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3

Other Skills N/A

Possessions: leather armor, buckler, masterwork cutlass, masterwork longbow, 20 arrows, 8 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp

Thunderkin: hp 45

Background: It's worth noting that the fort has never been attacked, and all discussion of tactics and so forth are purely academic. Any fighter or experienced combatant can look at the place, inside or out, and see that there has never been a battle here. The guards are extremely lax, never really considering that they might have to do anything on duty beyond toss dice, get drunk, and sleep.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava doesn't affect the fort. In fact, the fort becomes a safe refuge for many of the pirates.

PIER (EL 6)

Summary: The pier in Skull Cove holds an opportunity for the PCs to ingratiate themselves among the pirates.

Sights and Sounds: The pier is noisy with the sounds of people working, sometimes even at night.

A large stone jetty with wooden docks offers mooring for a pair of sailing ships. Beyond lies a small grouping of wooden buildings at the edge of the jungle. Scruffy and tattooed sailors crowd around one ship, busy loading or unloading supplies, but there seems to be some kind of surprising commotion among them.

The Docks:

Each dock is made of wood, about 15 feet wide and 70 to 80 feet long.

The Ships:

There are two ships moored here. Each is a 75-foot-long sailing ship with a pair of masts. When at sea, these ships typically have a crew of 35, which is more than is needed, but the extra pirates are for boarding (and perhaps commandeering) other craft.

Inhabitants: It's not uncommon to find 30 or 40 pirates on the pier, loading supplies onto a ship, or unloading booty. At the moment, there are 32. At this very moment, however, they are being attacked by a chuul that has just crawled up out of the water, looking for a meal.

While working, the pirates do not wear armor, and most are armed only with a knife (and some not at all).

Pirates Working (30)

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)

Warrior 1 CR 1/4

HD 1d10+2 **hp** 7

Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

BAB/Grapple +1/+2

Attack +2 melee (1d4+1, knife) or +2 ranged (1d4+1, thrown knife)

Fort +4 **Ref** +1 **Will** +0

Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Crucial Feats Dodge, Precise Shot

Other Feats N/A

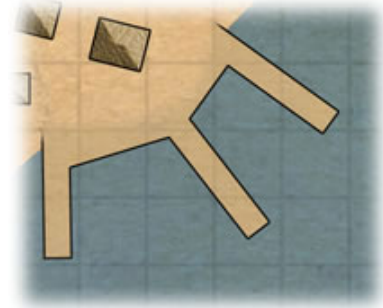
Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3

Other Skills N/A

Possessions: Knife, 4 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp

Chuul: hp 80

Tactics: The pirates are in a panicked disarray. Unless the PCs intervene, the monster will easily carry off a couple of them and escape virtually unscathed. If the PCs do come into the fray, the only help the pirates can provide is by drawing some of the monster's attacks. By the time the PCs arrive, three pirates already lie at its feet, either unconscious or paralyzed.



If the chuul suffers the loss of more than half its hit points, it attempts to escape into the water.

If the PCs try to attack the pirates while the chuul attacks them, the pirates attempt to flee to seek help from their fellows in the village and/or to get weapons to better defend themselves. If need be, they could also go aboard the ships to get weapons.

Treasure: The pirates are loading food, water, and other supplies onto a ship that's going to leave tomorrow. It's not worth much, and neither ship has anything of value other than a plethora of normal weapons (mostly longswords, nets, halberds, longbows, and arrows).

Development: If the PCs help the pirates against the chuul, they will make some quick friends. If they slay or drive off the monster, the pirates laud them as heroes and attempt to carry them to The Cutlass to buy them drinks. It won't even occur to them to ask the PCs who they are or where they come from until they're already in the tavern, singing their praises. They will be very favorably inclined toward the PCs, and word of the aid they provided will spread throughout all the pirates in the cove.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava destroys the village and the pier and forces the ships away from shore. There are only about 20 pirates on the shore racing around in a panic, attempting to salvage valuables from the fire without much luck.

Revisit: The next time the PCs come to the pier, the sailors are not being menaced by some beast. Instead, they are unloading booty from a ship that has just recently come into the cove. There are 30 pirates as described above. They carry a chest with 3,870 cp, another two crates with a total of 3,750 sp, and a small box with 550 gp, along with another 450 gp worth of jewelry. They also have a lot of trade goods (spices and silk) as well as eight slaves.

VILLAGE (EL VARIES)

Summary: A rough and tumble village full of pirates may offer the PCs valuable information about Dragon's Delve.

Sights and Sounds: The pirates' village is a noisy, raucous place, particularly at night. Only the mornings are quiet. At night it is well lit by torches and lamps.

Although there are only nine actual buildings mostly gathered around a large well, the population of this community is clearly larger than one might expect. It appears that none of the buildings, in fact, are traditional houses, but instead storehouses and dormitory-style living quarters. Still, it appears that many of the residents of this "village" sleep outside, or rather pass out outside. The entire place seems to be one big drunken party. Men and women sing bawdy drinking songs. Others dance. Still others lay on the ground, some copulating noisily and others unconscious or asleep. Even from far off, the place smells of rum, sweat, and urine.

The Buildings: The buildings are very simple construction, and show signs of age and lack of proper upkeep. The pirates basically get all the food, gear, and other goods they need, so there are no shops, *per se*. There is a blacksmiths shop and a general craft workshop (for woodworking, leatherworking, rope-making, sail-mending, and so forth). Those who found the Pirate's Letter handout can confirm that yes, the blacksmith is indeed working on a large suit of masterwork plate armor for the leader of the grahlus. There are two storehouses for supplies and stolen booty. In these, PCs can find virtually any nonmagical items they need, including even spell components, alchemical items, and other rarities that the pirates have stolen but don't necessarily have a use for.

There is also a tavern/opium den called The Cutlass. The other four buildings are housing for the pirates.

Inhabitants: At any given time, more than 200 pirates, guards, and others can be found in the village. Of these 200, 60 are noncombatants (prostitutes, craftsmen, children, and the old). Most of the pirates don't wear armor or carry weapons beyond knives while in the village. Of the remaining 140, probably only 10 are armed and wear armor. (Some of these are guards from the Stone Fort.)

A great many of the pirates will be drunk. Of the 140 combatants, about 30 are unconscious and can't be roused. Another 30 are too drunk to be any real threat. That, however, still leaves 80 pirates, 10 of which are well armed, all ready for a fight. Attacking the village outright would likely not be smart for characters below 10th level. Fortunately,





there is little organization here, and PCs can nonchalantly make their way around the village without too much trouble, assuming they don't draw attention to themselves. See *Infiltrating the Pirates* for more information.

Almost all of the pirates are human. Among them, there is but a single dwarf, a half-elf, two half-orcs, and an orc.

Unarmed Pirates

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)

Warrior 1 CR 1/4

HD 1d10+2 hp 7

Init +1 Speed 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

BAB/Grapple +1/+2

Attack +2 melee (1d4+1, knife) or +2 ranged (1d4+1, thrown knife)

Fort +4 Ref +1 Will +0

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9

Crucial Feats Dodge, Point Blank Shot

Other Feats N/A

Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3

Other Skills N/A

Possessions: knife, 4 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp

Armed Pirates and Pirate Guards

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)

Warrior 1 CR 1/2

HD 1d10+2 hp 12

Init +1 Speed 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

BAB/Grapple +1/+2

Attack +3 melee (1d8+1, longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8, longbow)

Fort +4 Ref +2 Will +0

Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9

Crucial Feats Dodge, Point Blank Shot

Other Feats N/A

Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3

Other Skills N/A

Possessions: leather armor, buckler, masterwork cutlass, masterwork longbow, 20 arrows, 8 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp

Development: If the pirates at the Stone Fort, on the Pier, in The Cutlass, or at the Temple of the Shark are attacked, those able and sober in the village go to help. They can get to the pier or The Cutlass within 3 rounds, the temple in a minute, and the Stone Fort (using some of the small craft at the pier) in about eight minutes.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava destroys the village and the pier and forces the ships away from shore. There are only about 20 pirates

on the shore racing around in a panic, attempting to salvage valuables from the fire without much luck.

Thirty of the residents of the village are dead.



THE CUTLASS (EL 2)

Summary: A tavern and opium den run for pirates, by pirates, is a dangerous, dismal place.

Sights and Sounds: The interior of this building is very dimly lit by oil lamps. It is very quiet, at least for a tavern.

If the village outside is a raucous party, the inside of the tavern, strangely, is a refuge. This is clearly where the pirates who want to truly lose themselves in alcohol or opium come. It is dark and dank in this simple wooden building, with people laying on the floor as well as seated at small tables or at the long bar. Through a haze of smoke you see the bartender, who appears to be a gaunt, bald woman.

The Tavern: The Cutlass consists of a front room which appears to be a tap-room, and a maze of small back rooms where addicts and drunkards spend hours on benches or on the floor in a drug-induced haze.

Tavern Owner: Owner and bartender Nasha Breen (female human Commoner₁, noncombatant) is herself an opium addict, and doesn't care who comes in as long as they pay. She sells rum and whiskey for an exorbitant 2 gp a glass. Anyone buying a drink can also ask about anyone in the back. She won't hesitate to lead people back to Vangell.

She has a locked cashbox under the bar (DC 28 to open) containing 122 gp and another behind a secret panel in a shelf full of bottles (Search DC 25 to find) containing 750 more. Attacking or stealing from her, however, will bring the wrath of every pirate in the tavern, as well as every pirate in the village.



Tattoo Artist: Many of the pirates in Skull Cove sport amazing tattoos. This is because of Brorick Fannal who spends most of his time—and does most of his work—here. Brorick is tall and muscular and is covered from head to toe in tattoos. He charges 10–20 gp for a tattoo, based on complexity.

Brorick is very smart, and watches the PCs closely (even following them around if he deems it necessary), reporting directly to Captain Darkblood if he sees anything suspicious. He's surprisingly capable in a fight. On the other hand, he's a good source of information about the pirates and the island if the PCs befriend him.

Brorick Fannal

Male Human (Lawful Evil)

Expert 5 **CR 4**

HD 5D6+5 **hp 31**

Init +1 **Speed 30 feet**

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11

BAB/Grapple +2/+4

Attack/Full Attack +5 melee (1d8+3, scimitar)

Fort +3 Ref +3 Will +3



Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 17, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12
Crucial Feats N/A
Other Feats Run, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scimitar), Toughness
Crucial Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +9, Listen +6, Spot +9.
Other Skills Appraise +7, Craft (tattoos) +10, Knowledge (Local) +6, Knowledge (History) +9
Possessions +1 scimitar, +1 ring of protection, +1 cloak of resistance, 137 gp, 17 sp.

Customers: Most of those in The Cutlass are utterly drunk or stoned. About seven of them, however, are coherent enough to fight, and are in fact eager to draw some blood, if given half a reason.

Pirates

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)
Warrior 1 CR 1/4
HD 1d10+2 **hp** 7
Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet
Languages Common
AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10
BAB/Grapple +1/+2
Attack/Full Attack +2 melee (1d4+1, knife) or +2 ranged (1d4+1, thrown knife)
Fort +4 **Ref** +1 **Will** +0
Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9
Crucial Feats Dodge, Point Blank Shot
Other Feats N/A
Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3
Other Skills N/A
Possessions: Knife, 4 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava destroys the village, including The Cutlass. Thirty residents of the village are dead.

VANGELL (EL 8)

Summary: A drugged-out sorcerer in the back of The Cutlass may offer the PCs valuable information.

Sights and Sounds: The back rooms of *The Cutlass* are very dimly lit. The only sounds are the occasional whispered ramblings of an addict in a drug-induced haze.

In the deepest recesses of the filthy, dank, and dark back rooms of the Cutlass, you see a man reclining in a chair, staring off into space. He sports a black beard and wears dark, unkempt robes. An owl perches on a chair next to him.



The Sorcerer: Within the disgusting back rooms of The Cutlass the PCs can find the sorcerer Vangell. He is the only arcane spellcaster in the cove. Vangell came here a few years ago through the Gateway from Dragon's Delve, ingratiated himself among the pirates (thanks to many, many charm person spells), and decided to stay.

Vangell is an opium addict and a thoroughly evil man, but he's not a devotee of the Shark God. He knows that the "Shark God" is actually a false face for the far more alien Dagon, one of the gods that the Khorantians worshipped at the Unknown Temple. He also knows that anyone who goes to the Unknown Temple should visit the Jungle Ruins first to find the crystal skull there. He even knows about Tekuni, and that those seeking his help can beseech him at the top of the Angry Mountain.

Regarding Dragon's Delve, he knows pretty much everything about Levels 1 through 5, including how to get to Level 6 and 7 through area 142. He knew (and hated) Serrestique, and spent a fair bit of time in Brindenford as well. He knows that the Venom Cult controls much of Level 6, and that servants of the demon lord Rivenyk control Level 7.

When the PCs find Vangell, he is high on opium in the back of The Cutlass. He uses his illusion spells to make his opium-induced visions appear to others as well, so most people steer clear of him.

PCs will find it challenging to get clear answers from Vangell in his drug-induced state. It's not that he won't talk to them, it's that he doesn't give them straightforward statements. For example, if the PCs ask how to get to level 6, he will tell them, "Look east of the Dragon's Shrine, around the corner, and up." This is a clue as to how to find the secret door to area 142. It's accurate, but not entirely clear.

For more information see Using Vangell.

Vangell

Male Human (Chaotic Evil)

Sorcerer8 CR8

Init +1 Speed 30 feet

HD 8d4+16 hp 37

Languages Common, Infernal, Orc

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

BAB/Grapple +4/+4

Attack/Full Attack +5 melee (1d4, dagger)

Fort +4 Ref +3 Will +7

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 17

Crucial Skills Bluff +13, Concentration +14, Listen +6, Spot +6.

Other Skills Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (Dungeoneering) +6, Spellcraft +4

Crucial Feats Combat Casting, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration

Other Feats Alertness, Skill Focus (Concentration)

Spells CL 8, +4 melee touch, +5 ranged touch

4th (3/day)—*stoneskin*

3rd (6/day)—*lightning bolt* (DC 16/R), *major image* (DC 16/W)

2nd (7/day)—*arcane lock*, *detect thoughts* (DC 15/W), *invisibility*

1st (7/day)—*cause fear* (DC 14/W), *charm person* (DC 14/W), *endure elements*, *mage armor*, *silent image* (DC 14/W)

0 (6/day)—*arcane mark*, *daze* (DC 13/W), *ghost sound* (DC 13/W), *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*

Possessions *robe of bones*, *wand of charm person* (21 charges), *wand of acid arrow* (33 charges), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of confusion*, *scroll of dimension door*, gold ring (150 gp), 19 gp, 9 sp, 17 cp.

Hurre, Vangell's owl familiar: hp 18

Tactics: If the PCs attempt to use force against Vangell, he will fight them. Even in his state, he can still cast spells. The stats above assume he has already cast *mage armor*. In a fight, he first uses *stoneskin* and then either a few *lightning*

bolts (which will cause real havoc in the tavern), or his scroll of *confusion*. His owl familiar defends him as best as she can in melee. He won't hesitate to use his scroll of *dimension door* to try to escape outside as well.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava destroys the village, including The Cutlass. Thirty residents of the village are dead. Vangell wanders near the destruction, unsure what to do.

TEMPLE OF THE SHARK: OUTSIDE AND VESTIBULE (EL 7)

Summary: The secret of the pirate's success may involve their devotion to the strange Shark God.

Sights and Sounds: The exterior of the temple is very quiet—unnaturally so. The interior of the temple is lit by a faint, magical blue-green light. It is also very quiet.

This stone building is topped with a high dome. The stone is jagged and rough, with strange twisted shapes that catch your eye in disturbing ways—is that a face in the stone? Is that an eye? Is that a toothy maw tearing into flesh?

Unhallow: The interior of this entire temple is affected with an *unhallow* spell. Thanks to this spell, all worshippers of the Shark God gain the effects of an *aid* spell as well.

The Vestibule: The temple has three chambers. Player characters come first into the vestibule, where they likely meet Ybakor.

This chamber has four tall pedestals each topped with a painted stone image of a large shark glaring at you as you enter. Each pedestal also has a small shelf built into it, which hold books.

The Books: The four books are all strange texts bound in human skin with pages of iron. They all seem much, much older than the church. Three detail the bloody grandeur of the Shark God and provide peculiar and specific details of life in the murky depths.

One, however, contains very specific rituals, involving blood sacrifices dedicated to the Shark God, that can be performed on a ship that will allow that ship to pass through the Sea of Storms. The rituals take



about four hours to perform. These books were what Captain Darkblood found in an ancient Khorantian ruin. Each of the books is worth 200 gp, except for the one that contains the rituals. This would be worth 2,000 gp to some sea captain of a non-good alignment, or 750 gp to anyone else.

Priest: The priest of the temple is a strange little man named Ybakor. Only 5 feet tall, this dark-eyed, gray-skinned human (?) cleric simply showed up after the temple was built, wielding the powers granted him by the Shark God. Captain Darkblood made him the priest, and Ybakor has never left the temple since.

When Ybakor inflicts damage with his morningstar, it leaves wounds that look more like shark bites. If he is slain, his body turns into that of a (dead) shark.

Ybakor

Male Human (?) (Chaotic Evil)
Cleric 6 CR6
HD 6d8+24 **hp** 62
Init +5 **Speed** 30 feet
AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18
Languages Common, Aquan
BAB/Grapple +4/+6

Attack/Full Attack +7 melee (1d8+3, morningstar)

SA rebuke undead 5/day

Fort +9 **Ref** +5 **Will** +8

Str 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 18, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 15

Crucial Skills Concentration +6, Heal +10, Listen +5, Spellcraft +8, Spot +5.

Other Skills Decipher Script +3, Knowledge (religion) +6, Search +3.

Crucial Feats Combat Reflexes

Other Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll

Spells 5/4+1/4+1/3+1 CL 6, +6 melee touch, +5 ranged touch

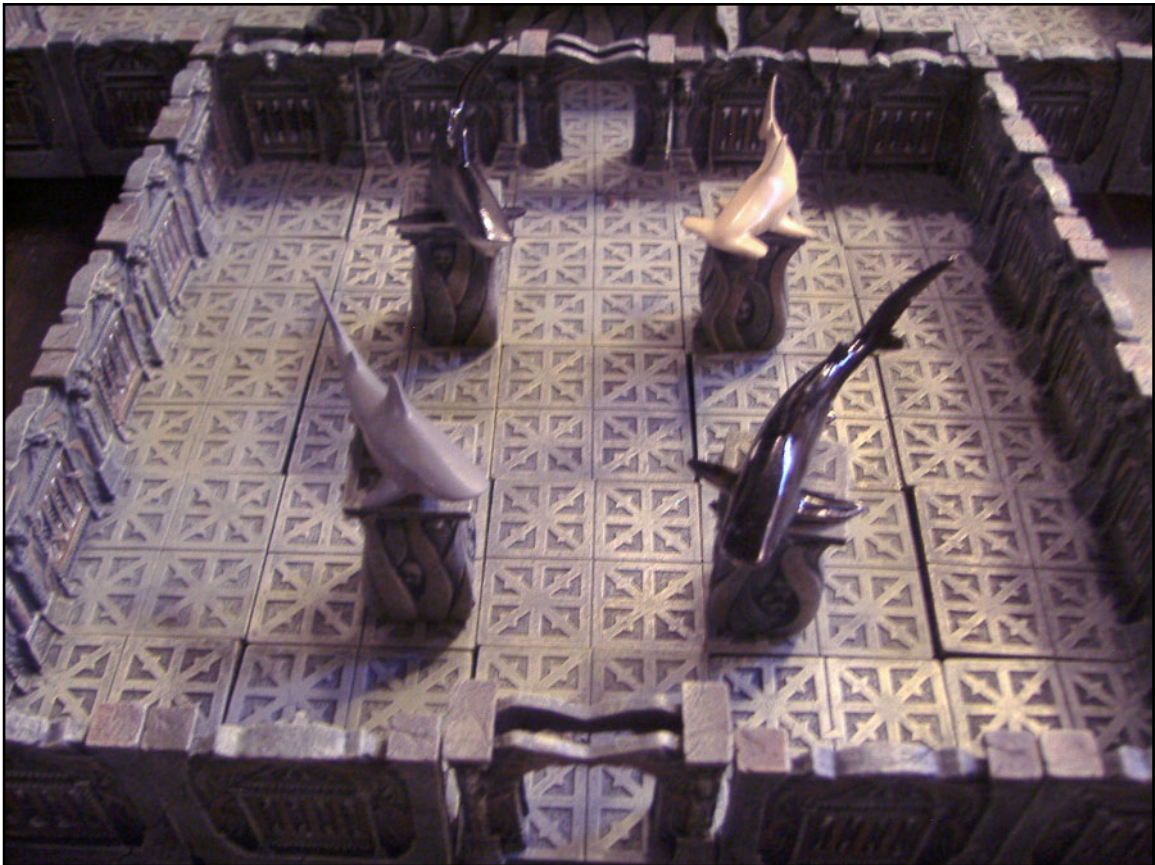
3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16/F), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *water breathing*

2nd—*bull's strength*, *hold person* (DC 15/W) (3), *shatter* (DC 15)

1st—*detect law*, *entropic shield*, *obscuring mist*, *sanctuary* (DC 14/W), *summon monster I*

0—*detect poison*, *guidance* (DC 13/W), *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13/W), *purify food and drink* (DC 13/W), *resistance* (DC 13/W)

Domains: Water, Chaos



Possessions +2 studded leather, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 morningstar, potion of see invisibility, potion of barkskin +2, scroll of cure serious wounds, silver holy symbol, six silver rings (50 gp each).

Tactics: If the PCs attack Ybakor, he retreats to the Sanctuary.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava destroys the vestibule of the temple.

Ybakor is not present, having retreated to the Sanctuary, and then to the Unknown Temple.

TEMPLE OF THE SHARK: SANCTUARY (EL 7)

Summary: The main room of the Temple of the Shark offers dangers and secrets, and a link with the Unknown Temple.

Sights and Sounds: The temple is lit by a faint, magical blue-green light. It is very quiet.

A massive shark glares down at you as you enter this chamber. This statue is nearly 60 feet long and rests atop a 6-foot-tall platform reached by staircases to your left and right. Dark and disturbing, the lighting here makes it seem like you are deep underwater. It's surprisingly humid here, and the smell of brine is strong.

Platform: The platform hides an actual shark tank in which two sharks live. With a single command word (a free action) from Ybakor, the huge shark statue slides to one side and reveals the open top of the shark tank.

Surprisingly, these sharks are able to swim out of the tank and around in the air of the sanctuary as if it were filled with water. (This is a quality of the temple, not the sharks, as a Knowledge [arcana] check [DC 20] suggests.) They obey all of Ybakor's commands.



Large Sharks (2): hp 40, 37

Ybakor: See previous encounter

Tactics: Ybakor isn't immediately hostile if the PCs are not. He speaks with a sinister quality, however, and is loathe to actually provide any real information. Instead, he tries to get the PCs to reveal more about themselves and why they are here (both at the temple, and on Khorant).

Ybakor doesn't hesitate to get into combat, however, but only in the main sanctuary. He looses the sharks and then casts *hold person* on the foes that appear to be melee combatants. Then he attacks. If hard-pressed, he retreats to the secret room, closing the door behind him before teleporting to the Unknown Temple.

Treasure: The eyes of the shark in the sanctuary are very large black pearls, worth 1,800 gp each.

Secret Room: This chamber can be found only by searching the back Sanctuary wall (Search DC 25). The door opens slowly for anyone else (taking a full round), but quickly at the touch of Ybakor (a free action for him).

This back room reeks of blood and brine. A horrific, 10-foot-high stone statue of a squatting... thing looms in front of you. It seems equal part man, shark, and cuttlefish.

The statue has an overwhelming magical aura of conjuration and a single magical power. Anyone touching the statue and sincerely devoting their soul to Dagon is immediately teleported to the Unknown Temple Sanctum. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25) reveals this power.

Secret Room Treasure: In a bag next to the idol are three doses of Aka'ili powder and a special green tourmaline. (Both are described in "The Mystical Nature of Khorant.")

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava destroys the vestibule of the temple. Ybakor is not present, having retreated to the Unknown Temple.

CAPTAIN DARKBLOOD'S MANOR (EL 8)

Summary: The so-called Pirate King, now an evil undead abomination, lives in a large manor in Skull Cove.

Sights and Sounds: At night, the manor house is well lit by oil lamps.

Seemingly out of place on the island, a beautiful, two-story manor house of brick and wood stands vigil on the eastern part of the cove, nestled between the beach and a high cliff wall of gray and brown stone. It does not appear possible to reach the house other than by boat, and thus the manor has its own wooden pier jutting out into the water.

Interior: No one is allowed in the manor house. The front (and only) door is locked (Open Lock DC 25).

The interior of the house is strange, mostly because it appears utterly unused. Empty room after empty room filled only with dust and cobwebs, with oil lamps in the window sills. You can barely make out the sound of distant moans and the rattling of chains.

Door to the Dungeons: There is a secret door in the floor of the central entry room of the manor house (Search DC 24 to find). Opening it reveals a set of narrow stone steps leading to a subterranean level: Captain Darkblood's Manor Dungeon. There is also a hidden wooden trap door (Search DC 20 to find) leading down into the dungeons.

Guards: Regardless of how or where they come in, about one minute after anyone enters the manor, two undead spirits materialize to corporeal form and attack. The guards appear to be pirates with gaunt, skeletal forms and rusty swords, and attack as wights (with the swords inflicting 1d8+1 damage plus the wight's normal energy drain).



However, if a guard is destroyed, it disappears and is replaced by a wraith with the same appearance, which continues the attack. Only after both wight and wraith form are destroyed are the guards completely defeated. Further, if the intruders leave and come back, the guards reappear just as before.

Wights (2): hp 30 and 25

Wraiths (2): hp 35 and 30

Treasure: When the guards are destroyed, their rusty swords remain, but they seem oddly light and not fully solid. If they are touched together, however, they fuse together to become a single *+1 ghost touch longsword* henceforth. If taken, and the guards reappear on a subsequent visit, they do not have their swords and attack as wights, focusing all their fury on the sword-wielder, if present.

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava does not reach the manor.

Revisit (EL12): The next time the PCs come to the manor, Darkblood's ship, *The Reaver*, is at the manor's pier. There are 10 elite pirates on board, along with 80 galley slaves.

Darkblood is in his manor house. When the Pirate King is in his house, it appears to be filled with elegant furnishings and décor, and free of dust and cobwebs. This is all an illusion, however (Will save DC 17 to disbelieve).

Darkblood himself appears to be a handsome, dark-haired man in his forties when he wishes it, but as soon as he is angered or enters combat, his appearance changes to that of a hideous undead creature with pale green, maggot-ridden, peeling flesh stretched over bare bones. He is a unique undead creature, similar in many ways to a vampire, but without a vampire's special weaknesses or need for blood. He cannot turn gaseous or become a bat or wolf. He does, however, exude an aura of fear.



Elite Pirates

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)

Fighter 1 **CR 1**

HD 1d10+2 **hp** 12

Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

BAB/Grapple +1/+2

Attack +4 melee (1d8+1, longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8, longbow)

Fort +4 **Ref** +2 **Will** +0

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Crucial Feats Dodge, Precise Shot

Other Feats Weapon Focus (longsword)

Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3

Other Skills N/A

Possessions: studded leather armor, buckler, masterwork longsword, masterwork longbow, 20 arrows, 8 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp

Captain Judius Darkblood

Male Unique Undead (Lawful Evil)

Fighter 8 **CR10**

HD 8d12 **hp** 58

Init +7 **Speed** 30 feet

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22

Languages Aquan, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal

BAB/Grapple +8/+14

Attack slam +14 melee (1d4+6 plus energy drain, slam) or +15 melee (1d8+10 plus 2d6 unholy, plus energy drain, longsword)

Full Attack slam +14 melee (1d4+6 plus energy drain, slam) or +15/+10 melee (1d8+10 plus 2d6 unholy, plus energy drain, longsword)

SA aura of fear (all within 20 feet must succeed at a Will save DC 17 each round or be shaken for 1 round), energy drain (2 negative levels, Darkblood gains 5 hp for each level) works with slam or with melee weapon

SQ darkvision 60 feet, resistance cold 10 and electricity 10, damage reduction 10/bludgeoning and magic, fast healing 5, undead traits, and turn resistance +4

Fort +6 **Ref** +7 **Will** +6

Str 22, **Dex** 16, **Con** -, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 17

Crucial Skills Bluff +14, Climb +14, Hide +16, Jump +16, Listen +17, Move Silently +16, Sense Motive +15, Spot +16.

Other Skills Knowledge (Geography) +6, Profession (sailor) +13, Search +15,

Crucial Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Trip, Power Attack

Other Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon specialization (longsword)

Possessions +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, +1 unholy longsword, *potion of invisibility*, key to his vault in the Dungeons, 18 pp, 15 gp.

CAPTAIN DARKBLOOD'S MANOR DUNGEON

(EL 9)

Summary: Beneath the manor house lies a pair of dank chambers where Darkblood keeps his slaves, and another where he stores his vast treasure.

Sights and Sounds: The dungeon is lit by torches in sconces. The sounds of groaning slaves and rattling chains are loud.

The dungeon is a crude, cramped, rough-hewn place. The ceilings are only 6 feet high and the air stinks of smoke from the guttering torches in wall sconces as well as sweat and offal.

Entering the Dungeons: PCs may find the secret door in the floor of the manor's central room (Search DC 24 to find).

Pirates, even the elite pirates on *The Reaver*, don't get to enter Darkblood's manor. They can, however, come down to the dungeons using the hidden entrance behind the manor (DC 20 to find the trap door hidden amid the brush).

Layout: A 5-foot-wide passage connects the entrances to the two different slave pens, each closed off by an iron cage door (hardness 10, 20 hp, break DC 25, Open Lock DC 20). Another 5-foot-wide passage leads to the vault.

Inhabitants: Captain Darkblood keeps 150 slaves, although 80 of them are usually on *The Reaver*. Most are

human, but there are a few dwarves, elves, and even orcs. When the PCs come down into the dungeons, six elite pirates are here guarding the slaves.

Elite Pirates

Male or Female Human (Neutral Evil)

Fighter 1 **CR 1**

HD 1d10+2 **hp** 12

Init +1 **Speed** 30 feet

Languages Common

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

BAB/Grapple +1/+2

Attack +4 melee (1d8+1, longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8, longbow)

Fort +4 **Ref** +2 **Will** +0

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Crucial Feats Dodge, Precise Shot

Other Feats Weapon Focus (longsword)

Crucial Skills Balance +4, Climb +5, Swim +3

Other Skills N/A

Possessions: studded leather armor, buckler, masterwork longsword, masterwork longbow, 20 arrows, 8 gp, 10 sp, 30 cp, keys to the slave cells

Slaves (70 or 150): hp 1, noncombatants

Tactics: If attacked, the pirates attempt to call for help if Captain Darkblood is in the manor above. Otherwise, they fight on their own. Either way, they fight to the death.

Vault: The iron door (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28, Open Lock DC 30) leading into Captain Darkblood's vault is trapped. Anyone other than he passes through the door, the two 5-foot squares in the passage in front of the door and a 5-foot square on the other side of the door fill with black tentacles.

Further, anyone in the area with the tentacles has a poisoned arrow shot at them from another trap inside the vault each round they are in the area. (The arrow trap has a total of 50 arrows to shoot.) Remember that those grappled by the tentacles lose their Dexterity bonus. The arrows never hit the tentacles.

The vault is a 50-foot-square room.

Black Tentacles Trap: CR 7; location trigger; no reset; spell effect (black tentacles, 7th-level wizard, 1d4+7 tentacles, Attack +7 melee [1d6+4, tentacle]); multiple targets (up to six tentacles per target in area); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Poisoned Arrows Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Attack +15 ranged (1d8+4 plus poison, arrow); multiple targets (1 arrow per target in area each round); poison (DC 16 Fortitude save resists, 1d2 Str/1d2 Str); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 22.

Treasure: The interior of the vault holds some of the best treasure the pirates have taken over the years. Its total value is around 20,000 gp. It includes:

- A locked trunk (Open Lock DC 28) containing 2,850 gp
- An unlocked chest containing 274 pp
- 95 gold ingots (worth 50 gp each, weigh 1 lb. each)
- 140 silver ingots (worth 5 gp each, weigh 1 lb. each)
- 6 bottles of rare wine (worth 150 gp each)
- 3 rolled tapestries (50 gp each)
- A silver ewer and cup set (150 gp)
- A silver mask with feathers and a single moonstone (300 gp)
- An intricate wood and gold model ship (500 gp)
- A gem-encrusted book with gold bindings (300 gp; would be worth 500 gp if someone cast a *mending* spell upon it to repair the damage it has suffered being stored in the damp place)
- A gold statue of a dog (750 gp, weighs 10 lbs.)
- A bejeweled silver flagon (275 gp)
- Vest made of cloth of gold (100 gp)
- Lute of exotic wood with inlaid gold and gems (250 gp)
- A solid gold longsword (600 gp, weighs 10 lbs.)
- A box of wood and ivory (180 gp) containing 10 pieces of gold jewelry (200 gp each)
- A silver box (80 gp) containing 12 gold rings (worth 50 gp each)
- A small carved wooden box (10 gp) containing 64 miscellaneous small gems (2 gp each)
- A box made from a gem- and gold-encrusted egg (160 gp) containing a huge black pearl (1,000 gp).

Development: If the PCs convince Tekuni to help them attack the pirates, the river of lava does not reach the manor.

UNKNOWN TEMPLE OVERVIEW

Summary: An ancient temple of mysterious gods lies on a tiny island just off the coast of Khorant. You will need the Unknown Temple Illustration handout.

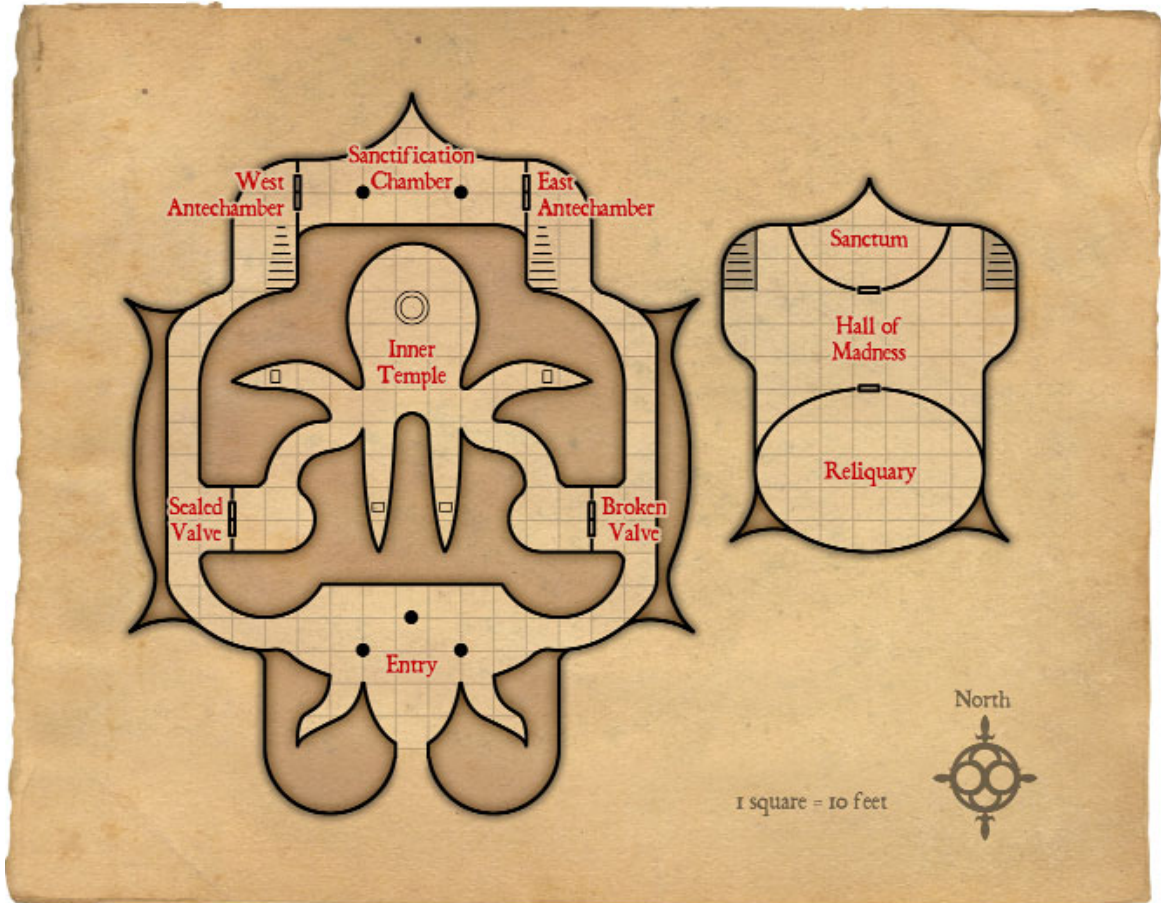
Sights and Sounds: From the outside, the temple is always dark and very quiet. Nothing seems to live around it—not insects, birds, or other animals. Only the sound of crashing surf breaks the silence.

The temple seems like a terrible white tumor growing up out of the sea. Vaguely a windowless dome, the misshapen, twisted, and rounded walls are punctuated by what seem like massive stone tendrils thrust down into its foundations. The white stone used to build the structure is stained with black slime streaks across its surface. An open doorway waits at the front of the temple like an obscene maw.

Show the players the Unknown Temple Illustration handout.

Getting to the Temple (EL 6): The tiny island the temple is built upon is about 1,000 yards across the water from the northeast tip of Khorant. A rowboat, such as those possessed by the pirates of Skull Cove, or the canoes used by the native in Coral Village could reach the temple easily. Otherwise, the PCs will have to build a raft or swim (or use magic like *water walking*, *fly*, or others).





Although they likely cannot harm PCs in a boat or canoe, sharks will attack those attempting the crossing by swimming, walking, or in a crude (and easily destroyed) raft. No matter how the PCs cross, the sharks will make their presence known.

Sharks, large (4): hp 44, 40, 38, 35

The Island: The island thrusting up out of the waves is only slightly larger than the temple built atop it. It is bare stone devoid of plants or animals.

The Temple: The temple is made of stone. The walls are rounded and slick with slime, and thus very hard to climb (DC 28). All doors are made of thick, hardened bronze (hardness 10, 100 hp, break DC 30).

Prohibition Against Flames: Nonmagical flames in the temple give no light or warmth, including torches and lanterns. If the PCs do not have the ability to create magical light or possess darkvision, they may be out of luck.

This prohibition against flame is true throughout the temple, and extends even to alchemist's fire.

UNKNOWN TEMPLE ENCOUNTERS

The following areas are all individual Unknown Temple encounters:

- Entry
- Sealed Valve
- Broken Valve
- Inner Temple
- West Antechamber
- East Antechamber
- Sanctification Chamber
- Hall of Madness
- Sanctum
- Reliquary

Background: The temple was built by the ancient Khorantians at their civilization's decadent, despicably evil height. It is dedicated to a number of foul gods collectively called the Old Ones. Of these, the PCs are likely only to have found prior reference to Dagon, in the Temple of the Shark. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 27) is needed to

identify any of the symbols or images in the temple as belonging to the "Old Ones." If characters make checks that high or higher, they may know the names of some of the other Old Ones, such as Cthulhu, Glaaki, and Tsathoggua. For the most part, the terrible gods of this temple are likely to remain a mystery to the PCs. And perhaps that's for the best.

ENTRY (EL 6)

Summary: The doors to this evil temple of ancient design stand open-but in fact hide a nasty barrier of a different sort. You will need the Seven Fingers of Doom Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: This chamber is dark and silent.

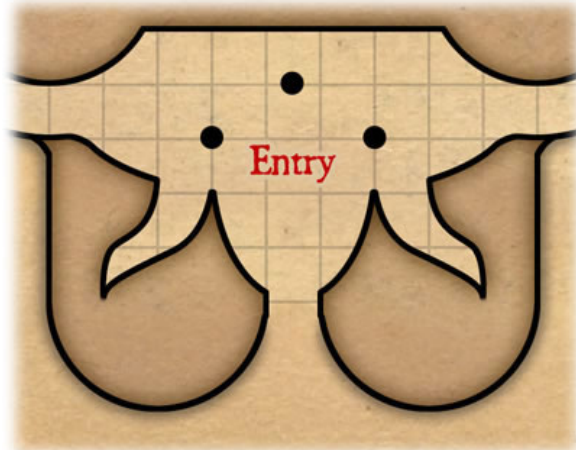
No doors bar your way inside the strange temple of stained white stones. The walls are curved and twisting, their surfaces covered with rounded protrusions and strange, almost organic shapes. The entry chamber has three thick pillars of asymmetrical design. Each has a hollow spot near the center where an unlit oil lamp rests.

Unsettling, twisted alcoves stretch off to the southeast and southwest, and orifice-like doorways in the east and west lead to curved corridors that both bend gently northward. The north wall is graced with ancient runes and hideous reliefs of creatures part shark, part serpent, and part squid engaging in unspeakable orgies of violence and carnality.

The Lamps and Other Flames: If a PC lights one of the lamps, it does take a flame, but the characters will perhaps find it strange that it gives no light or warmth, and nothing they do can produce either. This is true of other nonmagical flames, such as torches and lanterns the PCs might use for light. If they do not have the ability to create magical light or possess darkvision, they may be out of luck. This prohibition against flame is true throughout the temple, and extends even to alchemist's fire.

The Symbols: If the PCs use Decipher Script or magic to examine the symbols, they learn that they are invocations and horrific prayers to unnamed gods with particularly vile and alien natures.

The Summoning Ward: A powerful defensive ward permeates the entire temple, activated whenever non-worshippers enter the structure. When this happens, a special creature called the seven fingers of doom is conjured to attack the interlopers. This weird beast has a central mass of swirling, writhing tentacles, with seven large tentacles that look almost like gigantic human fingers. Each of these main tentacles ends in a terrible sphincter-like mouth filled with teeth. The creature doesn't appear to have any other discern-



able features. Use the stats for a seven headed hydra. It disappears when slain. Show the players the Seven Fingers of Doom Illustration handout.

Seven Fingers of Doom: hp 77

The summoning ward works once per 15 minutes. This means that even if the seven fingers of doom is defeated, if there are still non-worshippers in the temple 15 minutes later, it appears again, fully healed and ready for battle again.



If the *crystal skull*, found in the Jungle Ruins, is within the temple, the summoning ward does not function. If the PCs went to the trouble of finding the *crystal skull*, reward them as though they overcame this encounter by force.

Treasure: The eyes of the leering faces are emeralds, each worth 100 gp (there are six of them). Prying them out, however, requires a Strength or Disable Device check (DC 20) and forces the character doing the work to make a Will save (DC 18) or fall victim to a *bestow curse* spell that lasts until removed. The victim suffers a –4 penalty on attack rolls, saves, ability checks, and skill checks.

SEALED VALVE

Summary: A stone door, sealed with ancient magic, keeps intruders out of the Inner Temple.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet.

The curving passage brings you to a set of doors leading east. The heavy stone portals are each a semicircle, so that together they form a perfectly round doorway. Pictographs of strange design cover the door and surrounding wall. They seem to depict creatures both piscine and elven in appearance holding and pouring large vessels of water or perhaps some other liquid.

The Door: The magically sealed and reinforced door has a hardness of 15, 300 hit points, and a break DC of 40. A *knock* spell will not open the door, but the magic upon it can be *dispelled* (caster level 18). If spells are used to attempt to harm the door, it has Spell Resistance 30. Three strikes of *Rivenyk's bone mattock* found in the East Antechamber would crack the doors and cause them to open, but there are only two uses of that item left.

Anyone attempting to open (or harm) the door, either by force or by magic, must make a Will saving throw (DC 18). Failure means that the character is shaken until they move at least 30 feet from the door. They do not know that moving that far away will alleviate the condition until they do so, however. If a shaken character attempts to open or harm the door, they immediately fall unconscious for 1d10 minutes from which they *cannot* be awakened by any force short of a deity. During this time, the unconscious characters experience a terrible nightmare/vision of a ceremony within a strange room (the Inner Temple, although they probably haven't seen it yet) conducted by beings that appear to be tall, lithe humanoids with sharklike features (these are ancient Khorantians). As they chant, the viewpoint of the



vision changes so that now the dreamers can see the temple from the outside. They bear witness to a massive entity of tentacles, squamous flesh and eyes like all-consuming black holes rising up out of the sea and looming over the temple.

When the character finally awakens, the terrors of the nightmare have inflicted 1d8 points of Wisdom damage.

Connections: Entry, Inner Temple, West Antechamber.

BROKEN VALVE (EL 7)

Summary: A cracked stone door has its magic seals weakened, allowing possible access to the Inner Temple. You will need the Enraged Spirit Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here. Those making successful Listen checks (DC 14) can hear a faint, muffled cry of anguish or anger.

To the western side of the curved passage, you see a pair of white stone doors filling a circular doorway. The doors and doorway around them sport strange pictographs and symbols of humanoid creatures with fish or perhaps even sharklike features.

The right door has a massive crack running from the center of where it meets its mate and then splits up to the top and down to the bottom.

Bits of stone, a thick layer of white dust, and strangely enough, bits of bone cover the floor in front of the door.

The Door: Similar to the Sealed Valve on the other side of the temple, this magically sealed and reinforced door has a hardness of 15, 300 hit points, and a break DC of 40. A *knock* spell will not open the door, but the magic upon it can be *dispelled* (caster level 18). If spells are used to attempt to harm the door, it has Spell Resistance 30.

Unlike the Sealed Valve, this door does not induce fear or nightmares upon those attempting to open it. That magical protection has been dispelled.

To open the door now, one must strike it once with *Rivenyk's bone mattock* found in the East Antechamber. If one does so, the doors crack a bit more, and then open. They remain open until closed, at which point their magic reseals them.

Inhabitant: If the doors are battered open (such as with the mattock), a spirit trapped within them exits and attacks with insane fury. Show the players the Enraged Spirit Illustration handout.

The spirit is basically a spectre, but rather than possessing a touch with energy drain, its touch has three effects: it





inflicts 2d8 points of damage as it disrupts flesh, it inflicts 1 point of Wisdom damage as it scrambles one's mind, and it forces the target touched to make a Will save (DC 15). Failure means that the character is affected by a *confusion* spell for 6 rounds. Multiple touches can result in a foe being confused more than once, but the duration does not stack. In other words, a confused victim with 3 rounds of confusion left is touched by the spirit again and fails his save. He is now confused for the next 6 rounds, not 3.

Guardian Spirit of Madness: hp 60 (use spectre stats except where noted above)

Tactics: The spirit attacks the PCs for 1 or 2 rounds, but if during that time suffers damage, pulls back into the passage leading into the Inner Temple so that the PCs will also be attacked by the tentacles in the walls. If the PCs continue to press their attack, it draws them toward the evil font in the temple. If it has not suffered any damage during the first round or two, it stays its ground and fights until destroyed.

Background: Within the last few years, Rivenyk the demon lord came through the gate to Khorant and broke through this doorway to get at the Inner Temple. He used *Rivenyk's bone mattock* and then discarded the item in the Easter Antechamber when he was done with it.

Connections: Entry, Inner Temple, East Antechamber.

INNER TEMPLE (EL 6)

Summary: The heart of the Unknown Temple, this strange chamber holds three magic items storing the souls of living beings.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet.

This strange, bulbous room of rounded, almost organic walls, floors, and ceilings seems to squirm and undulate in a hideous fashion even as you stare into its darkened confines. Corridors stretch off like tentacles in various directions and within the oval, cyst-like portion of what may be the very center of the temple stands a 10-foot-wide font of black stone veined with red streaks like blood. Three objects, a gauntlet, a headband, and a shield lay on the edge of this font. The place smells of brine and decay.

Unhallow: The interior of this entire temple is affected with an *unhallow* spell. Thanks to this spell, all non-worshippers of the Old Ones suffer a *bane* effect.

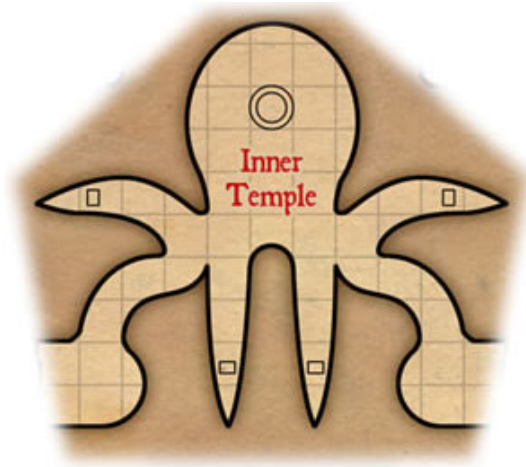
The Tentacle Passages: Two passages lead into the temple. Four passages taper off into dead-ends leading away from the central portion of the temple. The length of each of these has been carved to appear to be made of tentacles and pseudopods. These glisten with some kind of wet secretion and writhe and squirm as living creatures approach. Each time a living creature passes down one of the corridors, a tentacle attempts to grab it. It makes a +8 touch attack. If successful, it immediately makes a grapple check (+8 bonus, treat as if size Medium). Once it grapples a victim, the tentacle constricts for 1d8+2 points of damage each round. A single tentacle can be destroyed if it suffers 4 points of damage, although it has hardness 6. Otherwise, a victim can make a grapple check or Escape Artist check to get free.

Characters lingering in the corridor (perhaps to help a grappled ally) are attacked once each round. There are basically a limitless number of tentacles that can attack.

The Four Tentacle Altars: Four of the tentacle passages ends in an odd altar of basalt carved to look as though it is covered in seaweed, barnacles, and tentacled... things. The altars are 2 feet across and deep, but 4 feet high, so they might seem more like pedestals.

Anyone touching one of the altars without first paying homage to Dagon, Cthulhu, or one of the other Old Ones must make a Will save (DC 18) or become cursed. Cursed victims begin to suffer 1 point of Strength drain each day until the curse is removed. As they lose strength, they grow pale and gaunt. Observers may describe their sunken, sallow features and bulging eyes as "fishlike."

The Unholy Font: The black font was the center of rituals once held here. It is filled with ancient, briny sea water. It connects via an ancient passage through the stone to the outside of the temple deep underwater where a shark of tremendous size and age waits for weighted sacrifices to be thrown into font so that they will sink down and be carried to it via a magically created current. (Unless a creature



attempts to go down into this passage, they will never encounter the shark.)

Huge Shark: hp 100

Even approaching within 10 feet of it requires a Will saving throw (DC 16) from non-evil aligned beings. Those who fail gain one negative level that remains until they leave the entire Unknown Temple.

Treasure: The three items upon the lip of the unholy font are all magical items, each with the soul of a good-aligned person inside. These are the items the holy sword in area 138 spoke of, and asked the PCs to rescue.

The gauntlet is a *glove of storing*. It currently holds a large yellow agate worth 150 gp. In addition to its normal abilities, it holds the soul of a female halfling rogue named Narla Tenderfeet. When one looks at the polished, almost mirror-like armored plates of the gauntlet, Narla can be seen holding whatever the glove is holding. She has no way of communicating with anyone in the outside world, with one exception. If someone stores a piece of paper with writing on it, she can read it. She also has the ability to write on it. So a written back-and-forth communication is possible. Narla is NG, and has a score of 10 in all her mental stats. She has little knowledge of real value the wearer can take advantage of, but she does have some interesting stories and a fun, bubbly personality. She doesn't mind being in the gauntlet, but if communicated with, asks that the wearer send her one of her favorite spice cakes at least once a week. The cake, a common halfling delicacy, is consumed and does not occupy the gauntlet once stored. She doesn't need this, and can't do anything if the wearer refuses, but she does like it.

The headband is a leather band with a large red jewel. Anyone looking into the jewel can see the image of a tiny elven male trapped inside. The headband is a *headband of intellect +2*, but once each day worn a mental voice asks in elven "Will you help free me?" The soul trapped in the gem is Ilthian Taslinia. He offers to use his own intellect to increase the power of the headband (to +4) for a year and a day if the wearer agrees to destroy the gem at the end of that period. He does not communicate in any other way. Ilthian will keep his end

of the bargain, but woe to the wearer that does not. At the end of the year and a day if the character doesn't destroy the gem right away—even if he's not wearing the headband any longer—he immediately suffers 3d6 points of Intelligence drain and continues to suffer 1d6 points of Intelligence drain each day until the gem is destroyed or he is rendered permanently catatonic at Intelligence 0. Ilthian is CG and has an 18 Intelligence, a 10 Wisdom and a 10 Charisma.

The shield is a lion's shield. Within it dwells the soul of the human warrior Ulster Faarmor, often called "the lion." Ulster is very happy to reside within the shield as long as he is used frequently in battle. Using the lion's face, Ulster can speak, and will often do so to regale all within hearing of the glorious battles he took part in, either as a warrior or after he died in battle, as a shield. Ulster is quite ancient, and many of his stories are fanciful or incorrect (due to faulty memory), so while he is entertaining, he is not a good source of knowledge of any kind. Ulster's spirit powers the shield, and if he is released it becomes nonmagical. However, his intelligence doesn't really give the shield additional abilities. His awareness fades in and out, so he can't reliably keep watch. DMs should use his personality as fun flavor, not an advantage. Ulster is CG, and has a score of 10 in all his mental stats.

Background: Rivenyk the demon lord came through the gate to Khorant, broke through the now Broken Valve, and placed these items here. He hopes to conduct a terrible ritual that will draw the innocent souls trapped within them into himself, destroying them utterly and granting him great power.

Development: If the PCs take the items, they draw the attention of Rivenyk, who will eventually send demonic servants after them to retrieve the stolen items and punish the transgression. The PCs will have earned a major enemy of great power. (The DM should, over time, use this as a part of the campaign.)

If the PCs leave the items here, and leave the holy sword where it is, eventually Rivenyk obtains the sword and brings it here to destroy all four soul items in a vile ritual.

Connections: Sealed Valve and Broken Valve.

WEST ANTECHAMBER (EL 5)

Summary: A side room with a set of stairs going up to the upper level of the temple holds a greater danger than it may seem at first. You will need the Grasping Mist Illustration handout.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet.



A thin veil of gray mist clings to the floor. The walls of this chamber bear graven glyphs and images of coiling snakes or grasping tendrils. Even the glyphs appear to be made of writhing appendages of some kind. On the eastern wall, a pair of heavy bronze doors is sealed with a glistening chain. Uneven, shallow steps, seemingly not made for human feet, lead up to some higher level of the temple.

Grasping Mist: As soon as anyone enters this chamber, the mist in the room rises up and becomes thicker and more substantive. Visibility in the room is reduced to 5 feet. Further it forms hands that attack and menace living creatures. Show the players the Grasping Mist Illustration handout.

Every round in the chamber, each character is attacked in some way. Roll 1d6.

1d6 Result

- 1–2 Character is attacked with a +8 slam attack that inflicts 1d6+2 points of damage.
- 3 Character is attacked with a +8 touch attack that, if successful, requires an opposed grapple check (the mist is a large creature with a +12 Grapple check). Once it grapples a victim, the mist attempts a pin the next round and just holds him or her there.
- 4 The mist attempts to use a +10 sleight of hand bonus to steal one random item on the character's person (but not something held). The character opposes with a Spot check. If the mist is successful, the item is gone forever, shifted to another plane.
- 5–6 The mist attempts to disarm the character of something held. The mist uses a +8 bonus to oppose the character's attack roll (the mist is treated as size



Large). If the mist succeeds, the item is gone forever, shifted to another plane.

Attacks against the mist accomplish nothing, but a *gust of wind* spell or similar effect banishes it for 1d10 minutes.

The Glyphs: If the player characters use Decipher Script or magic to examine the symbols, they say something along the lines of, “beyond the doors lies the purification of change.”

The Doors: The chain doesn't seal the doors from this side. It is easily removed and the doors opened. But woe to those who open doors that clearly keep something else out.

The Steps: When any non-worshippers of the Old Ones use the steps, the stone at their feet becomes soft and sticky, allowing creatures to move only at a speed of 5 feet per round. This effect is somewhat similar to the effect of the gibbering moulder that dwells in the chamber immediately above and may tip off some knowledgeable players to its presence.

Connections: Sealed Valve, Sanctification Chamber and Hall of Madness.

New Artifact: Rivenyk's Bone Mattock

This massive pickaxe-like digging tool is nine feet long. It is made of hundreds of fused bones, most of which appear to be human in origin. Its creator, the demon lord Rivenyk, designed it to open doors—even those sealed with extraordinarily powerful spells and wards.

The mattock has been used many times over the years, and it is beginning to fall apart. Even when picked up, bone dust falls from it, and when it is used, bits of bone and dust fly in all directions. A wielder can use the mattock two more times before it crumbles into thousands of bone fragments and a lot of dust.

It can be used as a two-handed weapon, with a +1 enhancement bonus, inflicting 4d6+1 points of damage. However, unless a character is size Large or larger, he suffers a –4 penalty to attack rolls due to its size. Its real power comes into play when it is used to batter down doors. Three strikes from the mattock will force open any door, no matter how sturdy or magically reinforced it might be. (Unfortunately, as stated above, the mattock has only two strikes left before it crumbles.) Two strikes will open any door except the most powerfully warded. For example, two strikes will open even a bluesteel door. One strike will open any arcane locked or mundane locked or sealed door, but nothing well beyond the ordinary. Any trap on a door opened with the mattock is destroyed.

In the case of the doors into the Inner Temple of the Unknown Temple on Khorant, since the Broken Valve has already been battered open once, only one strike is needed to open it again. Three strikes are needed to open the Sealed Valve. Using it to do so leaves one strike before the mattock crumbles, giving the owner the ability to bash open one more non-bluesteel door or similar door he comes upon.

Overwhelming Evocation; Caster Level 20th.

EAST ANTECHAMBER

Summary: This side chamber holds clues to events of the past and the means to get into the Inner Temple.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet.

The walls of this chamber bear graven glyphs and images of coiling snakes or grasping tendrils. Even the glyphs appear to be made of writhing appendages of some kind. On the eastern wall, a pair of heavy bronze doors is sealed with a glistening chain. Uneven, shallow steps, seemingly not made for human feet, lead up to some higher level of the temple.

Massive bones and multieyed skulls lie strewn and smashed on the floor, as though a violent battle waged here within just the last few years. Amid the odd bones lies a massive mattock, nine feet long and made from hundreds of fused bones.

The Bones: The bones that lie scattered here are those of a pair of grey renders that the ancient Khorantians had magically forced into eternal servitude. When he came to the temple, Rivenyk (easily) slew them.

The Mattock: This minor artifact is *Rivenyk's bone mattock*. It's basically the only way the PCs are likely to get into the Inner Temple.



The Glyphs: If the PCs use decipher script or magic to examine the symbols, they say something along the lines of, "Beyond the doors lies the purification of change."

The Doors: The chain doesn't seal the doors from this

side. It is easily removed and the doors opened. But woe to those who open doors that clearly keep something else out.

The Steps: When any non-worshippers of the Old Ones use the steps, the stone at their feet becomes soft and sticky, only allowing creatures to move at a speed of 5 feet per round. This effect is somewhat similar to the effect of the gibbering moulder that dwells in the chamber immediately above and may tip off some knowledgeable players to its presence.

Connections: Broken Valve, Sanctification Chamber and Hall of Madness.



SANCTIFICATION CHAMBER (EL 7)

Summary: This chamber holds a chaos beast here to reshape the flesh of those that enter.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here. Those listening at the door can hear a faint gurgling sound fills the room with a successful Listen check (DC 20).

The walls of this roughly triangular room appear scarred, as if slashed with a burning brand. Throughout the chamber, pools of slime congeal on the floor. Two thick copper columns, streaked with verdigris and studded with green gemstones, rise from floor to ceiling. A strange scraping sound comes from the middle of the room.

Pools of Slime: The slippery, caustic slime is the residue of the chaos beast that dwells in this chamber. Stepping in them burns flesh for 1d6 points of acid damage. Characters must make a Balance check each round in the room to avoid suffering this damage. While in a stressful situation (as when the chaos beast is active), the check for all characters is DC 12. Otherwise, the DC is 5. The chaos beast is immune to the slime.

Columns: On the first round after the PCs open one of the doors leading into this room, the columns rise up 5 feet off the floor and into the ceiling, exposing their hollow interiors. On the second round, a spew of viscous gray matter, filled with eyes, half-formed limbs, and fluttering pseudopods comes out of the hollow tubes. On the third round, the two masses of living, seething sludge come together. On the fourth, the mass is a chaos beast that attacks all living beings it can reach.

Inhabitant: A chaos beast exists in a divided state in this chamber. When the beast is exposed but still divided (on rounds two and three) it can be damaged but cannot take any actions other than those described above. After that point, however, it acts as a normal chaos beast.

Chaos Beast: hp 45

Tactics: Creatures reduced to 0 Wisdom due to transformation by the chaos beast do not become chaos beasts, but instead regain their original form with fishlike features: scaly skin, a sharklike mouth of teeth, large, fishlike eyes, and so on. They are thoroughly corrupt worshippers of the Old Ones, permanently Chaotic Evil, and no longer under player control. This is the sanctification of the chaos beast.

When there are no more targets to sanctify, the beast divides and goes back up into the copper tubes, which then lower to the floor.

Treasure: There are a total of six green tourmalines on each copper column. These have the properties described in “The Mystical Nature of Khorant” and are also worth 250 gp each.

Connections: East Antechamber and West Antechamber.

HALL OF MADNESS (EL 5)

Summary: The personification of the insanity brought by the Old Ones dwells here in the form of a gibbering moulder.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet until the gibbering moulder awakens.

The glistening walls, floor, and ceiling here appear to have been fashioned in the form of rippling flesh covered in leering eyes, tooth-filled mouths, and squirming pseudopods. The room itself seethes, breathes, and shivers. Amid this chaos, there are two bronze doors each set into a curving wall: one north, one south. Both have large locking mechanisms set in their centers. Two staircases lead down into darkness in the east and west crooks of the room.

Doors: Both doors are locked and require Open Lock checks (DC 26) to open.

Inhabitant: A chaotic evil gibbering moulder dwells here, a lesser spawn of the Old Ones. Since the room looks like it does, the creature is hard to spot (Spot check DC 20). It has lain dormant for years and continues to sleep if the PCs do not rouse it.

If PCs sneak through the room (Move Silently checks DC 12) they do not wake it. Once awakened, however, it immediately seeks to feed. It can use its ground manipulation on the floor in this chamber, but no changes it makes are ever permanent.

Gibbering Moulder: hp 45

Tactics: The room affords the creature a 25% miss chance, as it is difficult to tell where the room stops and the beast starts. It begins with ground manipulation, gibbering, and

spittle all in one round. Then it moves into melee the next round, hoping to fight as few foes at once as possible.

Connections: East Antechamber, West Antechamber, Sanctum, Reliquary.

SANCTUM (EL 5)

Summary: A massive relief carving of Dagon here breaks free of the wall and attacks PCs. You will need the Dagon's Retribution handout.

Door: The door is locked and requires an Open Lock (DC 26) check to open.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet, until the door is opened, at which time ghostly chanting in an unknown language fills the room.



Accosted by the unnerving chorus of ritualistic, reverberant chanting echoing throughout the chamber, you see long, low benches of dark wood along the walls. Other furnishings, including an armariolum, a shuttered ambry, and a credence, are also made of twisted black wood polished to a sheen. A similar wood and paper screen partially conceals your view of a lectern upon which rests a single book, lying open. The walls are decorated in high relief, showing hideous creatures of impossible shapes and design, with glaring eyes, squirming tentacles, hungry maws, and rippling, asymmetrical flesh.

The Chanting: Produced by a series of programmed auditory illusions, this chanting continues as long as there are people in the room. If somehow translated, these are prayers and exultations for dark gods with strange names: Dagon, Cthulhu, Hastur, and more. After listening to the chanting for more than one round, listeners must make a Will saving throw (DC 15) or fall into a deep sleep for 1d6 rounds from which they cannot be awakened. During this time, they see themselves being transformed into hideous creatures with squamous flesh and tentacles, forced to serve at the whim of unimaginably alien creatures for all eternity. When they awaken, they have suffered 1d6 points of Wisdom damage and are affected by a *confusion* spell for 1d6 rounds.

New Item: The Book of Pale Winds

This leatherbound book is the color of bleached bone and is tied with a single yellow strap. Its loose pages contain a series of confusing and sometimes incomplete treatises on various esoteric topics involving creatures from other planes, spirits of the air, and life force, written in a mishmash of Draconic, Abyssal, and Auran.

Amid these monographs are certain spells. A person who studies this book for two weeks and takes the time to learn all of the spells contained in its pages (or who already knew them) gains a special ability. Whenever he or she casts a spell that summons or conjures a creature with either the air or evil descriptor, that creature has a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution. If the creature has both descriptors, the bonus becomes +4. However, the reader suffers 1 point of Wisdom drain. If this drained point is restored, the reader loses this ability.

After one person studies it in this way, the book crumbles to dust.

The Book of Pale Winds contains the following spells:

5th: dream, lesser planar binding

4th: dimension door, solid fog

3rd: gaseous form, vampiric touch

2nd: detect thoughts, false life, ghoul touch, gust of wind

1st: chill touch

A caster who studies both this book and its sister tome The Book of Black Seas completely also gains a +2 inherent bonus to Knowledge (the planes).

Strong Conjuration and Necromancy; Caster Level 15th.

Armariolum: This wardrobe holds a dozen long hooded robes, gray and green in color.

Ambry: This sacred cabinet holds six crystal vials, each worth 15 gp. Two are empty. One holds a *potion of owl's wisdom*, one an *oil of magic vestment* +3. The other two hold a powerful ingested poison (save DC 15, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con).

Credence: This shelf holds a golden circlet (75 gp), a golden bowl (100 gp), a knife with a pearl handle and a golden blade (300 gp), and a small bag made of human skin containing three doses of aka'ili powder (see "The Mystical Nature of Khorant"). None of these are magical, but all are important to the inner cabal of the cult that used this room for its reflections upon the Old Ones.

Lectern: The book on the stand is *The Book of the Pale Winds*.

Reliefs: If anything in this room is disturbed, the relief of Dagon, a sharklike humanoid with squirming tendrils, tears away from the wall and attacks. Show the players the Dagon's Retribution handout. It is a large animated object with the additional ability that each slam attack it delivers forces the victim to make a Will save (DC 15) or fall victim to a *bestow curse* spell with a random effect. It attacks until it is destroyed or until all the transgressors lie dead or have left the room.

Dagon Relief (Large Animated Object): hp 70



Development: If Ybakor fled from the Temple of the Shark Sanctuary, he can be found here, worshipping his dark gods. He fights to the death.

Connections: Hall of Madness.

RELIQUARY (EL 6)

Summary: This room holds the sacred relics of the temple, although many are now missing, and the mummified remains of one of its greatest priests. You will need the Scaly Sarcophagus Illustration handout.

Door: The door is locked and requires an Open Lock (DC 26) check to open.

Sights and Sounds: It is dark here, and extremely quiet. In fact, the entire room is filled with a *silence* spell, making sound in the reliquary impossible.

Eerie silence grips this egg-shaped chamber. Unlike the rest of the temple, the walls are smooth and unadorned. Within its large confines are many wooden shelves, bookstands, armariolums, vessels, and cabinets. At the center of them all, however, is an upright wooden sarcophagus covered in glistening green scales.

New Item: The Book of Black Seas

This black, ironbound book is heavy and cold. Its pages hold a rambling set of dissertations on various esoteric topics involving creatures from other planes, fell creatures of the deep, putrefaction, and the art of misdirection, written in a mishmash of Draconic, Abyssal, and Aquan. Amid these writings are certain spells.

A person who studies this book for two weeks and takes the time to learn all of the spells contained in its pages (or who already knew them) gains a special ability. Whenever he or she casts a spell that summons or conjures a creature with either the water or evil descriptor, that creature has a +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution. If the creature has both descriptors, the bonus is +4. However, the reader suffers 1 point of Wisdom drain. If this drained point is restored, the reader loses this ability.

After one person studies it in this way, the book crumbles to dust.

The book contains the following spells:

5th: blight, lesser planar binding

4th: contagion, enervation

3rd: nondetection, water breathing

2nd: darkness, mirror image

1st: cause fear

A caster who studies both this book and its sister tome The Book of Pale Winds completely also gains a +2 inherent bonus to Knowledge (the planes).

Strong Conjuration and Necromancy; Caster Level 15th.

Shelves, cabinets, etc: These are all empty. Careful searchers (Search DC 18) will note that it does not appear that the room has been looted, but rather the contents of the room were carefully removed, with nothing spilled, cabinets closed, and so on. When the Angry Mountain destroyed most of the ancient Khorantian civilization, the priests here took their most precious relics and fled into the sea.

The Sarcophagus: Show the players the Scaly Sarcophagus Illustration handout. It is seven feet tall and upright. The lid is sealed with an arcane lock. Opening it by force is not difficult, however. The old wood has a hardness of 3, 15 hit points, and a break DC of 20. If opened, the characters see a mummified figure with an odd greenish cast wearing a necklace of gold and jewels, clutching a black iron book (*The Book of the Black Seas*.)

The Inhabitant: The mummy in the tomb awakens and attacks the determined PCs, probably with surprise unless

the PCs make DC 20 Spot checks. It may appear to be the remains of a dead elf, but gaps in the wrappings reveal desiccated, scaly flesh. It is in fact an ancient Khorantian priest of the Old Ones.

Mummy: hp 50

Tactics: The mummy attacks in a straightforward manner, clutching his book and slamming with his fist. Once roused, he will follow his foes wherever they may go (including out of this silenced room, where potentially the PC spellcasters will be more effective).

Treasure: The mummy's necklace, while sporting disturbing glyphs of veneration to the Old Ones, is nevertheless worth 800 gp.

Connections: Hall of Madness.

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VERSION 1.0A

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