



THE BREATH OF THE GODDESS

SHATTERED HEART ADVENTURE PATH



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The Breath of the Goddess

The third 5th Edition compatible adventure in the *Shattered Heart* Adventure Path, designed for four to five PCs of 8th level.

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Adventure Background

The Great Schism devastated the idyllic island archipelago of halfling Picollo, but no single group lost more than the religious brothers and sisters known as the Devotees of the Four Hearts. These halfling clerics once delved deeply into the elemental mysteries of creation bound in the blessings of the Great Mother, but have become almost unknown in the lands shattered by the twin disasters of cataclysm and war. Their temples destroyed or abandoned during the upheavals, her priests perished one by one until none remained to pass on the ancient knowledge. Five hundred years after the destruction of the holy sites, a devout cleric attempts to re-establish the order and dispatches a band of heroes to the southern seas to restore the Temple of Air.

Four great stone arches rising up out of the sea once served as the foundation for the Temple of Air, focusing the elemental zephyrs into a central convergence. A blending of divine magic and the raw winds gave form to a great oak, almost a mile high, composed entirely of clouds. The magic of the goddess granted solidity to portions of these clouds, allowing worshipers and priests to climb a central staircase through the trunk and perform rituals high in the canopy of the ephemeral oak. When the Dracoprime fell, a portion of its tail smashed one of the four arches; its great spikes still pierce the surface of the sea nearby, affecting both wind and wave. Known as the Spine of the Dragon, sailors avoid this stretch of the ocean, shrouded in superstition and plagued as it is by treacherous currents and worse.

In the heart of the temple, the vertebrae of the great dragon visible above the surface ironically bears a shape similar to the stone arch that went before. Following the conclusion of the Hoyrall Wars, the mage-engineer Midya Merocheck mounted an effort to repair the temple. A halfling expatriate from the Klavek Kingdom, Midya made a preliminary magical and engineering survey of the area but before completing her work, she was called away on urgent business—the mage left her apprentice behind to continue the survey, but she herself never returned. Shortly thereafter, the apprentice shared the fate of the original inhabitants; the winds that once brought the blessings of the goddess now bring only madness.

The arched vertebra of the Dracoprime corrupts the wind currents passing through the site, transforming them into a subtle moaning audible to all those nearby. By the time the survivors of the fall realized no help would arrive from the mainland, thoughts of self-rescue were overpowered the maddening dirge of the gales. Those affected became lethargic, with barely enough will to subsist from day to day. As supplies ran out, the inhabitants of the temple began to starve.

More affected than most by the madness, the high priest spirited away the bodies of his dead brothers and sisters to the mausoleum and (rather than performing entombment rites) feasted on their remains. When the last corpse was devoured, the priest finally succumbed to starvation and was reborn as a ghost.

The undead starved for centuries, feasting when wind and current cast tribal islanders or unlucky sailors onto the rocks. When Midya Merocheck left her apprentice and servants behind, that expedition became food for the foul undead as well. Like many before them, all but one of the expedition succumbed to madness, caring not when the undead priest ultimately took them. The last survivor,

the bard Hannifer Longfingers, managed to fight the ghoul to a standstill. For forty-five years the bard, confused by madness, has supplemented his supplies with those captured from ships trapped in the bay. The insane minstrel attempts to drive off visitors before they are eaten by the ghoul; those he cannot ward way are slain, as Hannifer does everything he can to deny their essence to the powerful undead who lurks high in the arches of the temple.

Adventure Summary

Once again taking to the seas, the PCs travel to the Spine of the Dragon to restore the Air Temple and uncover the horrifying fate of the priests trapped during the Great Schism. An advanced tripurasura continues to deceive the adventurers' patron, the cleric Carlyetta Wesleigh, advocating for the installation of cyclopean magic into the temples. This magic is nothing more than spell foci for enchantments intended to suborn the newly resurgent Devotees of the Four Hearts.

Weather magic allows the *Autumn Leaves* to avoid being drawn into the winds of madness that lurk within the temple precinct, but these gusts are not the only threat—a territorial dragon turtle glides beneath the waves and a ghost ship tied up at the primary temple arch contains a haunt fueled by the sad fate of its crew. Once safely docked at the main temple structure a swift exploration may penetrate the interior before the dirge of madness takes hold.





The lower level is the domain of the mad bard and holds clues to the ultimate repair of the temple site. Exploring the upper levels pits the PCs against an advanced gibbering moulder, a nest of daemons, and the ghoulish cleric. Discovery of an ancient model of the temple in the mausoleum, in conjunction with the engineering schematics found amongst the bard's effects, provides the means to effect a full (rather than partial) restoration of the temple.

Once the temple has been restored a great oak formed from clouds and winds (reaching a mile high) appears in the center of the site, ephemeral roots curling out to the bases of each of the four arches. Safe to walk on, these lead to a spiral staircase terminating in a great chamber in the canopy. Here in the bosom of the air aspect of the Great Mother, worship may once again take place. The appearance of the cloud temple draws the interest of a nearby tribe of *dødelig* who dwell in a hollowed-out section of the Dracoprime's tail. A tunnel running through the spine provides access to a submerged cyclopean site where the heroes learn that all of the information about the cyclopean magic has been fabricated. On their return to the temple, they unmask and confront the tripurasura, who has arrived with the priests Carlyetta has sent to take up residence in the Air Temple.

Adventure Hooks

The Breath of the Goddess is part three of a four-part adventure arc that begins with *The Ties that Bind* and continues with *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*. The action of the adventure takes place just following the restoration of the earth temple near the city of Stoneroot. If your group is starting with this book, halfling PCs could be native to Picollo though adventurers of other races may have come to work for Carlyetta for the following reasons:

- A PC might be a worshiper of the Great Mother and has heard of Carlyetta's work to rediscover the ancient traditions.
- Picollo is mostly closed to immigration by other races; working with Carlyetta grants access to that hidden land. Officials in the capital city of Picollo allow entry onto the island on the condition that Carlyetta assess the would-be immigrant's "qualities".
- A PC may be a freedman, having served an indentured term in Picollo. She might even have been recently freed from service to a halfling in Pembroke, which is quickly becoming a center of tolerance in southern Picollo due to the activities of Carlyetta's previous team of mixed-race heroes.
- Rumors that the hidden mysteries of the Underworld can be accessed through the fallen body of the Dracoprime, a continent-sized dragon brought down by a cataclysmic event ages ago. Sailors speak of strange creatures seen near a navigational hazard known as The Spine of the Dragon and the ancient Air Temple provide a base of operation for would-be explorers.

Community Points

As in the first two modules of the *Shattered Heart* Adventure Path, the PCs' actions have repercussions that shape the course of Picollan society. Mercenary protagonists will see Picollo continue along its darker course while heroes with hearts of

gold may help the halflings recapture their ancient traditions of fellowship and joy. The adventurers begin with their community point total from the previous module, *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*. If your group is beginning with this adventure (or if you skipped the aforementioned title) the PCs start with 15 community points.

Getting Started

The adventure opens with the party already at sea and approaching the Spine of the Dragon; an alternate starting point is presented following the readaloud text and background Intelligence checks (if you begin the adventure there, return here upon its resolution.)

Wind and spray once again refresh the spirit as the caravel Autumn Leaves speeds towards its destination. At the behest of your patron Carlyetta Wesleigh, you're prepared to restore the Air Temple, a holy site to the air incarnation of the Mother Spirit. Magical tools rest safely in the hold but the exact methods of repair have yet to be determined—the priest Carlyetta hopes that discovering the fate of an aborted mission some fifty years ago might hold some clues.

Like the other Temples of the Four Hearts the Air Temple has been abandoned since its destruction during the Great Schism. The holy site lay in a dangerous part of the sea known as the Spine of the Dragon, so named because pieces of the Dracoprime's spine and tail thrust up from the seabed and form navigational hazards in the guise of bony spikes, hidden coral-encrusted reefs, and dangerous currents.

PCs that make successful Intelligence checks reveal some of the lore and history around the Air Temple.

DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) At its prime, the Air Temple attracted a spectacular cloud formation in the shape of an enormous oak. It is said that the most devout could walk amongst the very clouds themselves.

DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) Sailors speak of encountering primitive islanders who refer to the Spine of the Dragon as the *Stones of the Man-eaters*. The primitives also speak of the strange music heard near the spine. Most sailors believe the songs are the work of evil sirens or other fey, as many ships have been lost in the area.

Intelligence (History) DC 15 The mage-engineer Midya Merocheck once led an expedition to restore the temple, but shortly after beginning her work she left to aid relatives living in exile in the Klavek Kingdom. The mage never returned from the cold lands of the north, but some adventurers recently discovered the location where Midya met her doom. Arcane historians posit that the mage fell in battle during the Cyclopes' Raids of the Vladen Peninsula because she lacked the aid of her companion and cohort, the bard Hannifer Longfingers (whose body was not discovered with that of the mage).

Intelligence (History) DC 18 In the cataclysm that was the fall of the Dracoprime, none of the original priests or lay servants of the temple were reported to have escaped and their fates remain

unknown.

Intelligence (Religion) DC 19 The cataclysm of the Great Schism and the near extinction of the halfling peoples in the Hoyrall wars saw many of the wee folk pass into death unshriven. Some speculate that the secularization of Picollan society is due to the loss of the traditional comforts of ritual burial, which brought communities closer together even in times of loss and grief. Loss of entire communities like the priests and layman of the Air Temple would have been particularly mourned during the times when these traditional values were upheld.

Sandbox option - Last Things First

If your group is continuing from the previous module in the *Shattered Hearts* Adventure Path, *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*, they may have come to suspect Carlyetta's clerk, Gratipp Dullhenna. Gratipp is in fact an advanced tripurasura denied the normal path of rebirth by one of the asura rana. Only by instituting a great enough mockery of the gods will Gratipp ascend directly to the mantle of asurendra, but this unusual trial allows him to achieve ascendancy in centuries rather than millennia. Gratipp has pulled not only Carlyetta into his web of deceit, but a disaffected enchanter as well. He hopes to *dominate* the entire order of the Devotees of the Four Hearts with the enchanter's magic and turn it toward a policy of racial purification in Picollo—a policy completely at odds with the Mother Spirit's sense of community.

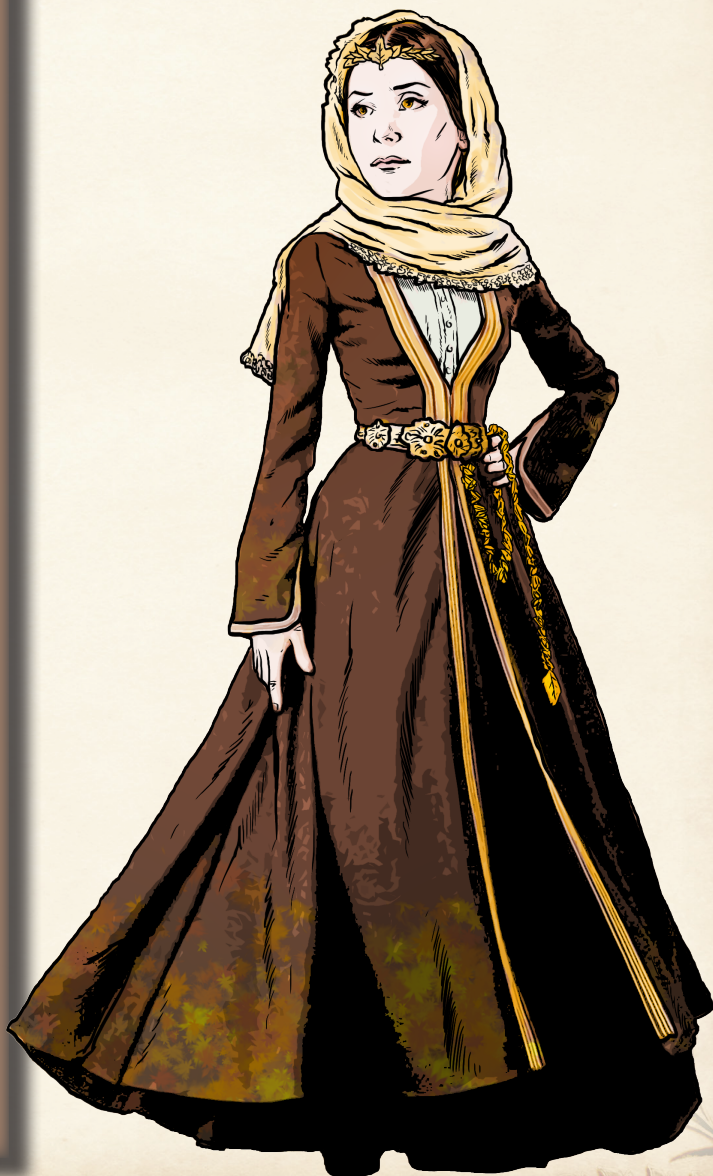
The enchanter and asura have forged documents proving the safe use of cyclopean runes to enhance the temple sites. Carlyetta may have inscribed some of these runes at the Temple of Earth; if the PCs discovered the forgeries and the "clerk's" involvement at the end of *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*, your players may wish to follow up this lead before heading to the Air Temple. If they choose this path they travel back to Stoneroot with Carlyetta's blessing, although she demands that any action taken against her clerk be substantiated with ironclad proof; the evidence of wrongdoing at this point is inconclusive. The priest remains at the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors, establishing the order there.

Gratipp's spies warn him of the heroes' arrival if the party dickers around in Stoneroot to follow up on their suspicions. At the *Autumn Leaves*, still docked in port, they learn Gratipp works in a nearby warehouse, preparing supplies for the expedition to the Air Temple. An examination of his quarters (**DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check**) discovers a large scroll tube containing drafts of the forgeries. The tube is protected by an *alarm* spell (*detect magic* needed to detect the spell, and then it can be removed with a *dispel magic*) that silently alerts the tripurasura. A set of forging tools accompanies the documents—a **DC 18 Intelligence check** reveals the clerk's hand in the forgeries (exceeding the check by **5 or more** reveals a second hand at work in the documents as well).

When the PCs confront Gratipp directly, run the encounter from the Conclusion in the dockside warehouse; notes are included in that encounter on unmasking Gratipp's true form. If the PCs dawdle in Stoneroot before pursuing Gratipp he escapes with the evidence before they bring him to bear—he

is still suspect, but wrongdoing is unconfirmed. Setting off the *alarm* results in his abrupt exit from the warehouse (reported later by rather startled sailors) and he remains proven culpable, but at large. If the PCs confront Gratipp directly before seeking any additional proof he attempts to talk his way out of it, as detailed in the Conclusion, excusing himself at the first opportunity to make his escape. In this case his quarters are untidy when examined, the draft forgeries and tools nowhere to be found.

Carlyetta returns a few days later to Stoneroot to hear the results of the PCs investigations before *Autumn Leaves* sets sail. Proving the clerk's deception conclusively earns the PCs **one community point**. Even if Gratipp's true form or the forgeries are revealed, unless the PCs' community point total is 16 or more, Carlyetta is willing to risk adding the additional magic to the temple sites. She is aware of the dangers, but has had no reports of misfortune at the earth temple and intends to install the runes in the water temple while the PCs are at sea—the boons granted by the magical enhancement seem too good to pass up. Although she cannot command for them to do so, if the PCs continue to refuse her this service a **DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) check** is required or they lose **two community points**.



Chapter One

The Air Temple

Weather magic allows *Autumn Leaves* to avoid being drawn into the winds and madness that lurks within the temple precinct. Once safely docked at the main temple structure a swift exploration of the arch's interior is in order before the dirge of madness begins to take hold. The lower level is the domain of the mad bard and holds clues to the temple's ultimate restoration. Exploring the upper levels pits the PCs against an advanced gibbering moulder, a nest of vulnudaemons and the ghoul cleric. An ancient model in the peak serves as a tuning fork for the winds; in conjunction with the engineering schematics discovered below, it provides the means for the PCs to effect a full (rather than partial) restoration of the Air Temple.

A. The Approach

The captain of the *Autumn Leaves* grows nervous as you approach the Air Temple. Nestled here in the Spine of the Dragon are three great stone arches over a tenth of a mile wide and curving out of the sea towards the sky above, towering high above you. The easternmost arch is absent save for a shattered stump of stone just visible above the waves—in its place, a bit out of kilter, rests a huge bone segment, a great spike growing upwards from an inverted crescent of bony mass driving into the sea. Running off into the distance to the southeast are a row of similar skeletal structures, the sea boiling around the bases as the currents and winds smash into them.

Nearing the temple, the ship fights against the currents and gusts of air as the PCs hear a mournful dirge on the wind. The crew keeps the vessel from smashing into the stone arches, but cannot prevent it from being drawn into the central bay. Only magical aid can provide the surge needed to avoid being drawn into the seas bounded by the arches—allow creative application of magic to help the crew (spells like *control winds*, *gust of wind*, *animate rope*, as well as *feather tokens* (*fan* and *anchor*) are all possible solutions). Success permits the ship to tie up at any of the arches, including the bony vertebra of the Dracoprime's tail in the eastern quadrant.

Without aid the *Autumn Leaves* is drawn into the central bay where the winds and currents calm enough for the vessel to dock safely, but all creatures must make an immediate **Wisdom saving throw** (DC 8 + 1 per previous check) or succumb to the mania caused by the mournful dirge of the winds. Skillful sailing merely delays the effect; any creature exposed to the dirge risks contracting insanity every 24 hours spent within 500 yards of the site, including those docked at the Northern Arch.

Dirge of Hopelessness

A mania is an irrational obsession with a (usually inappropriate) particular object or situation. In this case this ennui prevents the target from taking action to remove himself from the area around the Air Temple, although he can still act normally within its confines. A character forced to leave the area must make a **Wisdom saving throw** against the insanity every 24 hours or become confused for 1d6 rounds and catatonic thereafter until he can once again hear the dirge, return to the restored temple, feels the true Breath of the Goddess, or is cured (*restoration*, *remove curse*, or *wish/miracle*). A bard's *countercharm* feature can be used to grant advantage on the saving throws.

Development: Aiding the sailors successfully earns one community point. Once the PCs navigate the waters on the approach to the Air Temple, they may glean more information on the various structures.

B. Southern and Western Arches

The original stone arches of the temple contain natural and manmade caves converted to living quarters, workshops, and storerooms. A small stone wharf at the base of each arch allows small boats to dock and grant access to the storerooms at the base. Staircases rise to a chamber at the peak of each arch with access to the roof. Each peak has a stone horn resting on a rotating gimbal built into the structure. These horns harmonize with the winds passing through the great arches below, calling the magic that forms the great oak of clouds in the central bay. At the moment the loss of the eastern arch and the harmonics of its supporting horn itself cause the winds in the area to form the **dirge of hopelessness** that permeates the area.

The three surviving horn and cradle assemblies sport large stone set-screws. A DC 15 **Intelligence check** recognizes that these set-screws serve to tune the horns as the winds pass through them.



Hazard

Traveling by small boat or flight through the central bay exposes creatures to the **Dirge of Hopelessness** and its immediate Wisdom saving throw if it is their first encounter with the dirge for the day. (**Encounter A**).



described above, but a small park bounded by stone rails. Cisterns scattered about the peaks on both arches are situated to collect rainwater.

C. Eastern Arch (Vertebra of the Dracoprime)

A great bony arch rises up out of the sea near the stump of the former stone structure that once matched the three formations to the north, south, and west. A great mass of timber and rope resembling ship's rigging rots in the surf, smashed to bits on the rocky shoal.

Huge Shark (2)

See official entry for full statistics



A **DC 10 Intelligence check** identifies the wooden pilings, ropes, and other detritus as scaffolding rather than the masts of shipwrecks once the PC come within 200 feet of the arch. Exceeding the check by 5 or more informs the party that the scaffolding was designed to execute a major engineering project. Four stone blocks six feet on a side are carved out of the rocky base; the bottoms of these blocks remain firmly attached to the stump.

TACTICS

During Combat The sharks attempt to capsize small boats to feed on the helpless prey in the water.

Morale: The sharks are driven mad by the dirge and fight to the death, sometimes leaping out of the water up to their movement to attack those on a boat. Sharks can survive and attack out of the water for up to 3 minutes, although their movement is lowered to 10 ft.

Midya Merocheck not only correctly identified the purpose of the horns set into the peaks above, but had intuited that the arches themselves contributed to the mystical power of the site. Before being called away the mage prepared a stone gimbal to house a reproduction of the horn to be mounted at the peak of the vertebra. She also identified one further correction required to fully restore the temple—halfway up the southeastern leg of the eastern arch she bore a great hole twenty feet high by ten feet wide, creating a tunnel passing east to west through the leg. From below this tunnel looks like part of the bone, but as the PCs ascend the arch they can easily see that this negative space is manmade.

Combat: (2) Huge Shark; Encounter XP: 3,600 XP; Adjusted XP: 5,400; Medium;

The **southern arch** contains a large cavern on its western leg, where the staircase to the peak originates here. Balconies riddle the lower structure, and dirt and debris blown in from these terraces indicate they once served as vegetable gardens or small farms. The caves and rooms carved out of the western leg of the arch are primarily storerooms and food preparation areas. Living quarters, a large kitchen, and dining hall for the lay workers round out the complement of chambers. The eastern leg contains a small dock and a much smaller cave at the base, with no access to the structure above. The tools and implements in the lower cave betray it as a fishery—a longboat rests in the cave, although long absence from the water has caused the seams on the vessel to dry, split, and crack.

The empty gimbal for the horn can be accessed by ascending to the peak of the vertebra with a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check** (a 500-ft. climb until the curvature of the arch makes it possible to negotiate the final rise on foot). The device is clearly designed to fit the replica stone horn in the hold of *Autumn Leaves*.

Development: Restoring the temple, either in part or in full, is detailed in **Scene E**.

The **western arch** is similar to the southern arch, although only the southern leg contains interior spaces. Workshops and living quarters fill the western arch. The peak contains not only the horn



THE NORTHERN ARCH



D. Northern Arch - The Temple Proper

The *Autumn Leaves* first encounters the northern arch as it makes its approach. Clearly the most developed of the four structures, the wharf is significantly larger than its fellows. A two-masted vessel is tied up at the stone quay.

The northern arch housed the priests and the acolytes. Most of its development centers around serving the temporal needs of its holy servants. It is now the domain of the mad bard Hannifer Longfingers (who “rules” the lower level) and the ghost Kaleb Maeliger (who haunts the peak). The levels in between are inhabited by creatures spawned from the demise of the original priests, forming a buffer between the high and the low.

1. The Thundercloud

Ten years ago a merchant vessel, the *Thundercloud*, suffered damage in a storm and was blown far off course to the Spine of the Dragon and the Air Temple. Unable to avoid the contrary currents, the ship was drawn into the central bay where the dirge of hopelessness affected most of its crew.

Hannifer Longfingers attempted to drive off the sailors, utilizing the *glyph of warding (confusion)* spell [DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect, DC 15 Wisdom saving throw] to keep them from penetrating into the interior. Though he wished them no harm, he did not want them falling prey to the ghoul who sometimes hunts the lower level. In the end, madness overcame the sailors’ willingness to leave the temple and Longfingers grew weary of setting traps—out of options, he slew the lethargic survivors. Reasoning that the ghoul would not be interested in preserved meat, he gutted and salted the bodies, hanging the corpses in a cabin off the main hold. In the back his mind, as his manic scribbling throughout the lower level indicates, the salt meat serves as a last reserve of supplies for the bard. So far he has resisted the temptation to cannibalize it—but the struggle has consumed him for decades.

1a. Upper Deck

A DC 15 Intelligence check or Wisdom (Insight) reveals that from the state of the rigging, the waterlogged timbers, and barnacle growth at the waterline, the ship must have been docked and abandoned for many years.

1b. Captain’s Cabin

Under the stern castle, the captain’s chambers include a great room, chart room, sleeping cabin, and pantry. Other than the pantry (which is devoid of any foodstuffs whatsoever), the fittings and fixtures of the rooms are untouched. A coffer containing 600 gp lies hidden in a locked sea chest (DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves’ tools) in the sleeping cabin. Amongst the navigating instruments in the great cabin, the ship’s log (Player Handout A) grants insight into the last days of the *Thundercloud*. The final entry is written in a different hand than the rest of the log (DC 15 Intelligence check), penned by Longfingers. PCs who fail the check might think the captain responsible for the fate of the crew below.

Player Handout A

...the upper braces on the main yard being re-rigged, we stand more easily into the wind following the great storm. I fear for our current position however; the Spine of the Dragon being in sight...

...tales of the currents around the spine are not exaggerated, but once inside the spine itself, the currents and winds calmed. The northern quay being the largest, I resolved to anchor there to repair the rest of the storm damage...

...the crew are terrified. One of our number has been petrified, scant feet from the gangway. The rest of the crew will not disembark, no matter how much the petty officers use their starters. They fear the medusa or basilisk who dwells within.

...our fears grow worse. The night watch reports that a foul monster dragged our stricken shipmate into the depths.

...I can barely muster the enthusiasm to push the crew to complete our repairs. For why should we leave here in any event? Like the rest of my companions, I feel the peace of wind and wave permeating my soul, in spite of the horrors we have witnessed thus far...

...I have made safe the crew. Foolish, foolish crew. Though they will never leave this place, they will not be defiled. The monster on high will not feast nor, I hope, will I. Such a feast awaits disaster...

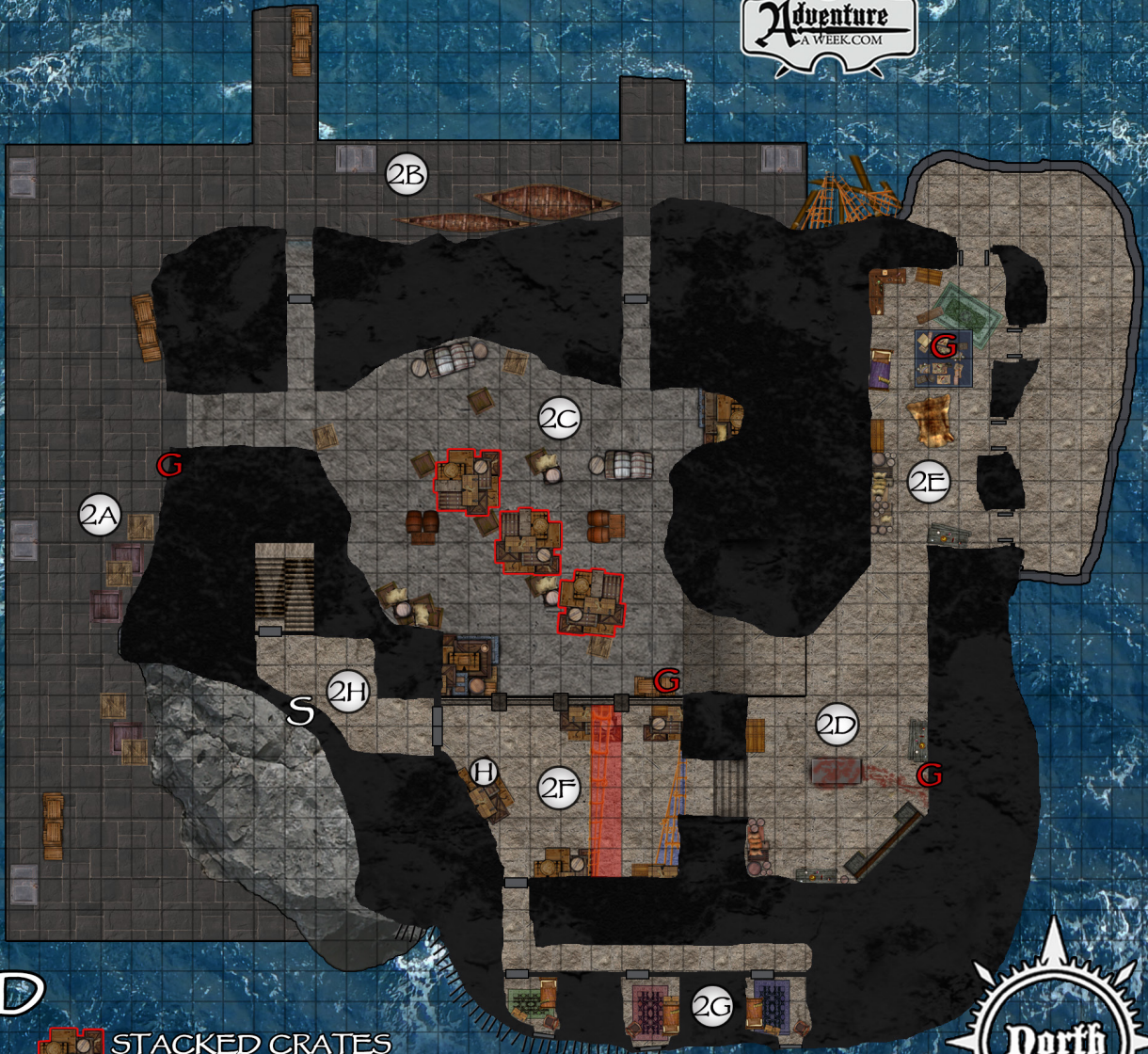
1c. Main Hold

A heavy chain and a good padlock (DC 22 Dexterity check with thieves’ tools to unlock) batten down the main hold. The hold contains cargo and supplies of extra sailcloth, yards, and rigging, but even a cursory search reveals that every bit of food and drink has been removed.






1d. After Hold

A bulkhead at the rear of the main hold sports a door with a ring and hasp secured by a good padlock (DC 18 Dexterity check

AREA D THE NORTHERN ARCH



LEGEND

-  ANCHOR TRAP
-  STACKED CRATES WITH TUNNELS
-  ILLUSORY ROPE TRAP
-  S SECRET DOOR
-  G GLYPH OF WARDING
-  H HANNIFER



SCALE IN FEET

with thieves' tools to unlock). Jammed into the lock is a silver holy symbol of the Great Mother; the twisted ornament must be removed before the lock can be picked. Behind the door hangs fifteen corpses on meat hooks. Although a small amount of mold graces the preserved bodies, it's evident that these corpses have been masterfully gutted and well salted—preserved for future use.

PCs who have read the ship's log note that the bodies hanging in the after hold represent the entire ship's complement (including the captain), taking into account the one sailor lost to the monster that struck in the night.



A hurricane quarterstaff (See Appendix B) leans against the far bulkhead.

2. The Temple - Lower Level

Throughout the lower level Hannifer has hidden *Glyph of Warding* traps (*detect magic* will spot, or **Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 15** if one carefully chooses to examine the graffiti) amongst a variety of madness-inspired graffiti to entrap or warn off intruders. Some of these glyphs have already been sprung and only the graffiti remains.

2a. A Faded Warning

In the center of the western wharf, a 10 ft. wide tunnel leads into the storeroom (**Area 2c**). On the stone wall near the opening a nonsensical message is scribed in faded paint. The message reads, “*Abandon hope, all who enter, turn back or forgo the sun and pleasures of wind and wave...*” and it rambles on with many similar phrases.

A **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** discovers a series of seventeen tick marks on the flagstones nearby, almost completely washed away over time. Further investigation reveals a piece of debris just inside the tunnel. On the unexposed side of this small plank, more writing is evident, “*When you awaken, spend not even a moment to finish reading this. Flee, I tell you flee. Stop! Flee! Go I tell you! You must fly, or death surely awaits you, a death born of hopelessness...*” Two holes bored on either side of the board and a leather thong identify the plank as a placard fitting around a Medium-sized creature’s neck.

If the PCs have read the ship’s log, they may surmise (with a **DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check**) that this was the location where the first crewman was frozen in place and subsequently spirited away by the monster in the night.

One of *Thundercloud’s* first crewman was trapped by a *glyph of warding (confusion)* [**DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect, DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**] in the original warning and the remaining sailors were too terrified to recover their mate. Hannifer waited them out, ticking off the days, and placed a second glyph in the placard, reasoning (quite madly) that if the sailor did not flee they would at least be stopped once more by the second *glyph*. What Hannifer did not count on was the ghoul dragging the sailor off while he was helpless. Once this occurred, the bard realized that for the sake of their souls, the mariners must die and be preserved rather than become food for the undead.



2b. The Northern Quay

The northern quay boasts two 5 ft. wide corridors leading to the storeroom, but stone doors barred from the inside halfway through prevent entry. A primitive outrigger canoe is pulled up on the wharf and a boom for hoisting cargo stands nearby. A **DC 15 Intelligence check** reveals the canoe to be far older than the merchant ship on the western wharf and that the outrigger is 400 years old. Its crew was consumed by the ghoul and their bones deposited in the garbage chute in the kitchen (**2d**). The boom is mounted on an iron pivot set into the stone and seems in good repair. A partially submerged mast leans against the stone wall between the quay and the balcony to the refectory (**2e**), though the rotting mast and rigging disguise more sturdy ropes tied to iron rings in the rock face (**DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**). Hannifer uses the boom and ropes to swing from balcony to quay.

2c. Storeroom

Boxes, crates, and barrels fill this large chamber. Many of the stacks are marked with tick marks and text bemoaning the dwindling supplies. One stack opposite the eastern-most entry corridor from the northern quay still has an active *glyph of warding (confusion)* [**DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect,**

DC 15 Wisdom saving throw] buried within. Arches pierce the wall 8 feet above the floor on the southern wall—railings fill the space between the supporting columns.

A **DC 15 Intelligence check** reveals that the crates are placed to provide clear fields of fire for a Small-sized creature while blocking the charge lanes of Medium-sized or larger creatures. Most stacks take up a 5-foot square, but the shaded stacks (see map) running diagonally NW to SE are comprised of crates stacked on other crates and permit a Small-sized creature to move through without penalty (larger creatures must squeeze through these tunnels, ducking under the stacked crates). These tunnels provide cover against attacks from Medium-sized or larger creatures.

In an alcove to the east are eight wooden forms, each 20 ft. high by 4 ft. wide and resembling shallow draft barges or boats lean upright against the wall. A **DC 15 Intelligence check** identifies them as wooden forms or templates used in masonry work. The forms aid in the full restoration of the temple.

2d. Kitchen

A 10 ft. wide ramp leads to a large chamber with a walk-in fireplace in the southeastern corner. A worktable in the center of the kitchen is covered in ancient blood, brown with age; wicked blood-encrusted knives hang from hooks on one end and a small barrel of salt is stored underneath. The rest of the kitchen is spotless, save for a graffiti-covered hatch on the southern wall next to the huge walk-in fireplace. The graffiti on the iron door (which leads to the garbage chute below) reads, “*Here is where I put the bits that make them whole and cure the rot. Don’t eat the bits. Don’t eat the whole. The priest on high awaits.*” The text contains a *glyph of warding (confusion)* [**DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect, DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**].

Hannifer gutted and salted the crew of the *Thundercloud* on the center table and dumped the viscera into the garbage chute—he could not bring himself to clean the table for any use after that.

2e. Refectory

Midya and her team used the refectory as their base of operations. The mage intended to explore the upper levels of the northern arch, but became so intrigued by her surveys and calculations that she kept putting it off and was recalled before her team made more than a cursory examination of the living quarters on the second level. The bard Longfingers still dwells here, keeping the area clean and organized, and he’s transformed the rest of the level into quick avenues of escape. When *Autumn Leaves* docks he absents himself from this room and retreats into **Area 2f**, where he awaits any who penetrate the perimeter of *glyphs of warding*.

The refectory opens onto a grand balcony by means of huge louvered stone doors. Normally barred from the inside, Longfingers opens them to allow swift entry and egress.

Chests and camp cots are pushed up against the western wall of the refectory, one of the cots sports soiled bedding. The chests contain the supplies and tools of an archaeological or construction team.

Four tables are pushed together in the center of the room. Stacks of papers with engineering schematics, musical notes, and survey maps are held down by stone paperweights, drafting tools, and a scale model of the entire site.

The model and papers provide insights into Midya Merocheck's research to restore the temple. A

DC 16 Intelligence check and one hour of study partially deciphers the engineering schematics and notes, although a *glyph of warding (confusion)* [DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect, DC 15 Wisdom saving throw] is buried in one of the pages. Deciphering the documents grants advantage to any checks relating to the reconstruction of the site.



The model consists of the three original stone arches and the vertebra of the Dracoprime, standing over 2 ft. high and 2 ft. wide and is precisely placed on a resin ocean surface (the whole model has a faint aura of universal magic). The vertebra sculpture contains a tunnel carved through the southern leg matching the cavity in its larger counterpart, and a breeze blows through the arches to the center of the model (due to a *prestidigitation* spell worked into its fabrication). The entire 10 ft. by 10 ft. model breaks into four parts for travel.

The peaks of all four arches contain a rotating gimbal (recognizable as the life-size stone gimbals if the PCs previously ascended the heights). Four horns, each 4 inches in length with multiple reeds set in a removable ring at one end, can be inserted into these cradles; a horn almost 5 times the size of its smaller cousins rests nearby. Four removable rings accompany this larger horn, although one appears to be broken—the reeds within pivot, having come unglued.

The horns are recognizable as small scale versions of the horn the PCs carry in the hold of the *Autumn Leaves*, though blowing the small horns of the model can generate a pleasing chord. The small gimbals allow the horns to be rotated and “tuned” to generate the chord.

The replica horn in the hold is obviously intended for the vertebral arch.

Mounting the replica horn is only one of three steps that are required to fully restore the temple, detailed in **Scene E**. The PCs must also discover the wind pattern map in the peak of the Northern Arch (**Area 6c**) to tune the archway horns to the current season. To fully restore the temple, they must correct the harmonics of the winds passing through the lower arches to account for displacement of the Dracoprime's vertebra in relation to the original stone arch.



Midya and her apprentice made some headway on recalibrating the harmonics through the bony vertebra. Reading the notes and schematics, PCs follow their progress with the following **Intelligence or Wisdom (Insight) checks**. Interpreting the model takes 30 minutes (in addition to any time spent deciphering the schematics and notes).

- **DC 12 - Examining the musical notations in the journals and papers**

The pleasing chord created by the model does not take into account differing wind or seasonal conditions. Perhaps the horns need to be adjusted at the peak of the arches to account for this.

Failure: The PCs think that horns at the peaks of the

arches must simply be tuned to a pleasing chord for them to work.

- **DC 15 - The magically created breeze at the base of the model**

Winds passing through the great lower arches of the temple may have some impact on the music generated by the winds blowing through the horns in the cradles at the peak. The bony arch is out of alignment compared to the other arches. The breeze in the model simulates this wind activity.

Failure: The breeze was created to keep the model dust free.

- **DC 18 - The large horn**

This horn is not a larger scale model of the smaller horns, but a device to study the sub-harmonics of the lower arches. The removable rings in the large horn change the nature of the sound passing through the horn and also fit the cavity bored in the southern leg of the eastern bony arch. These assemblies were designed to be interchangeable, making it easier to tune them for test notes.

Failure: PCs think the large horn and its reed assemblies are larger scale models of the small horns.

- **DC 22 - Ring and reed assemblies for the large horn**

The broken reed and ring assembly is not actually broken—the four reeds within are mounted on cunning pivots. A passage in the mage's document indicates they are intentionally adjustable, to simulate the adjustability of full scale versions designed for the hole bored through the bony arch. More notes contain schematics for the wooden forms in **Area 2c**, which are intended to be



used to aid in the fabrication of the full scale stone reeds.
Failure: The PCs think that the ring currently inserted in the horn is the final version of the reeds, and that the others in the set were broken or preliminary versions.

The following circumstance bonuses apply to the skill checks above:

- Advantage on the check for correctly deciphering Midya's body of notes and calculations
- Advantage on the check for discovering the set-screws in the full-size gimbals
- Advantage on the check for correctly translating the seasonal wind map at the peak of the Northern Arch
- Advantage on the check for correctly identifying the wooden templates in **Area 2c**.

Failure on a check causes the party to draw incorrect assumptions. A PC may make one skill check to interpret the model and notes overall or may examine specific parts to gain multiple attempts. Each piece examined independently requires 30 minutes of additional study and consideration.

Each time the PCs encounter a new set of clues for the first time (set-screws, templates, wind map, or deciphering the notes) they may retry any of the checks.

Treasure: In a false bottom of one of the large chests (**DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check**) is a scroll tube containing a *wand of magic detection* and the following scrolls: *heat metal*, *lesser restoration*, and *stone shape*.

2f. Dry Storage

A flight of steps leads from the kitchen into a 30-foot by 40-foot chamber with one corner cut by a natural stone wall. A mesh of rope and rigging across the entry to the room hampers movement, and a similar wall of rope stretches from floor to ceiling 15 feet further into the room.

This rooms contains fewer crates and barrels than the main storeroom to the north, visible through the arches at the balcony level.

Creature: Hannifer Longfingers sits on a crate at the far end of the room, his knees pulled up to his chest, rocking back and forth on the balls of his feet while muttering in a sing-song voice, "go away, flee, too hungry, too hungry, too horrified..."

The mad bard makes an attempt to drive off the PCs before resorting to lethal force.

Illusion: The first set of ropes is a *major image*; a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** as an action with physical interaction reveals it as an illusion. The trap hidden behind the illusion is a huge anchor ready to smash down on those who cross the threshold. The illusion lasts for three rounds after the PCs reach the threshold (the bard ends his concentration at that point). The second set of ropes are real.

Trap: The second set of ropes contains a trap and a hazard rolled into one.

Anchor Trap

Mechanical trap

The second set of ropes occupies a 10-foot-deep stretch crossing the entire room. Navigating these cross-hatched ropes is difficult. A DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check is needed to avoid getting stuck within. If more than two people try to navigate the ropes at one time, they have disadvantage on this check from each pulling and tugging on other ropes. It takes one action to navigate the ropes successfully. If anyone tries to destroy the ropes, either by slicing through them, or burning them, the anchor tethered to the ceiling and hidden by netting (**DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check**) crashes down. A successful **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** by anyone in the ropes avoids the 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage. Once the ropes are on the ground, treat the area as difficult terrain.

Hannifer Longfingers

Medium humanoid (halfling), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 67 (15d8)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	13 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Charisma +7

Senses passive Perception 15

Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +5, Persuasion +7

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Brave. Hannifer has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Lucky. Whenever Hannifer rolls a 1 on an attack roll, ability check, skill check, or saving throw he can reroll the die and must use the new result.

Spellcasting. Hannifer is a 15th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *mending*, *minor illusion*, *vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *silent image*, *tasha's hideous laughter*, *unseen servant*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *silence*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance*, *glyph of warding*, *major image*

4th level (3 slots): *compulsion*, *confusion*, *dimension door*

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

6th level (1 slot): *programmed illusion*

7th level (1 slot): *project image*

8th level (1 slot): *mind blank*

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.
Hit: 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/40., one creature.
Hit: 4 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage.

Dirge of Madness. Driven into cycles of madness by his isolation, Hannifer can summon forth chaotic chords and dissonant tones that affect the minds of all creatures within 60ft. who can hear him. They must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw DC 15 or be so wracked with discord that they suffer disadvantage on all attack rolls, ability checks, skill

checks, and saving throws. Creatures affected get a new saving throw at the start of Hannifer's turn. A creature who successfully saves does not have to save again unless 24 hours have passed.

REACTIONS

Bardic Luck. Whenever Hannifer would be hit with an attack add 4 to his AC against this attack. If the attack still hits, and deals damage, it deals half damage instead.

gains some insight into his madness and grants the adventurers advantage during negotiations. Removing his madness through spells is also a possibility. The bard has knowledge of the ghoul above but not the daemons or the gibbering moulder; he can explain the research into the restoration of the temple, but considers this an important secret.

Development: Defeating the bard without killing him and shifting his attitude to friendly earns the PCs one community point.

2g. Cells

A 5 ft. wide hallway through an open archway leads to three 10 ft. by 10 ft. rooms, former living quarters. Outside the windows of the two westernmost chambers are steel spikes driven into the stone that serve as a stairway to a rocky landing overlooking the western quay (Area 2a). A DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check allows travel at half speed; failure ends movement, and failure by 5

Combat: Hannifer Longfingers; Encounter XP: 3,900 XP; Medium;

Development: If the PCs restrain or revive the bard, they may attempt Charisma (Persuasion) checks (DC 20) to calm him. Hannifer starts as hostile but a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check

AREA D3

THE LIVING QUARTERS



or more results in a fall to the sea below.

2h. Hallway

One of the closed double doors from **Area 2f** into this hall contains a pivoting panel in the bottom, allowing Small-sized creatures to pass through by squeezing. The double doors are barred from the far side (**DC 25 Strength check to force**), although a secret door (**DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**) opposite the stairwell leads to the landing above the western quay. There are also stairs leading to the upper levels.

3. The Living Quarters

Three flights of stairs deposit the PCs in a 10 ft. by 10 ft. antechamber while additional flights continue to higher levels. Double stone doors to the east open up on to a 10 ft. by 75 ft. hallway with a matching set of doors at the far end. Wooden doors evenly spaced run along the north and south wall. The single doors open on to living quarters, store rooms, a dispensary, and a small sick ward. A large room at the end of the hall is a commons area complete with tables, chairs, writing desks, a small reading library, and a fireplace. Louvered stone doors open onto a balcony overlooking the sea, though as it is set back into the curve of the arch the balcony is not easily visible from below.

A journal (**Player Handout B**) hidden in a mattress in the sick ward (**DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check**) details the last months of the priests of the temple at the time of the Great Schism and fall of the Dracoprime.

Development: Recovering Fenya's skeleton from the garbage chute in the kitchen and interring it with the priests in the mausoleum earns one community point.

Players Handout B

...so many of us were killed in the cataclysm, and those that remain are starving. The destruction of the temple has severed contact with the goddess—we cannot channel divine power or restore our spells through prayer...

...it is clear that no rescue is coming, although like my brothers, any desire to depart runs away like rainwater on the rocks. What good does it do to leave this place? Will the Mother Spirit answer our prayers elsewhere? I do not know and, alas, I do not care...

...we are starving! The farms are played out; the fishing is ruined. Only the high priest retains enough strength to carry the departed to the mausoleum at the summit. I myself lack the strength to make such a climb...

...I suspect the high priest is consuming the bodies of the dead. It is the only explanation as to how he maintains his strength. It was all I could do to drag Fenya's body to the garbage chute to deny such desecration. I am the last of my brothers and sisters; there will be no one to perform the same service for me...

4. The Shattered Hall

Another 30 ft. stairway ascends to the next level, though the main hallway here is only 60 ft. in length; the original layout is similar to the one below, with cells off the main hall and a commons at one end. Major damage from partial collapses riddle this level.

The double stone doors in the antechamber leading to the main

hall are stuck and require a **DC 24 Strength check to force** open. The doors to the common room at the end of the hall are open.

Terrain: The entire hallway is difficult terrain. The collapse at the eastern end of the hallway is particularly tricky; a ranged attacker must be within 10 ft. of the collapse and can only target creatures within 10 ft. of the far side. Medium-sized creatures must squeeze through the collapse.

Creature: An ancient gibbering moulder hibernates on this level, formed from the bodies and bits of the slain dumped down the garbage chute over the years. For centuries the monster existed in the watery debris at the bottom of the chute, feeding on sea creatures and vermin wriggling through small cracks in the foundation. Its metabolism slowed between feedings and long years of isolated existence enhanced its madness—when the bard Longfingers tossed more viscera (from the crew of the *Thundercloud*) into the chute, the mass of flesh and eyes awoke. After such tasty treats, the creature made its way through a crack connecting the garbage chute to a chimney running through the arch. All of the fireplace flues were closed save for the flue on this level. Rats migrating from the *Thundercloud* satisfied the gibbering moulder for a time and its hibernation is not as deep as in previous years—it hears the PCs in the antechamber.

Falling Ceiling Trap

Mechanical trap

Halfway down the hall a pillar of crumbling stone is barely holding back the weight of the floor above. If any combat breaks out that includes area damage, thunder damage, or a lot of commotion, the pillar gives way and drops the floor onto a 10 ft. by 10 ft. area of the hallway. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** or **Intelligence (Investigation) check** as an action can determine the danger. Reinforcing the pillar with other debris takes an action but prevents the collapse. Creatures within that area during the collapse must succeed on a **DC 14 Dexterity** saving throw or take 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. Those who save take half damage and are not knocked prone.

Madness Moulder (Advanced Gibbering Moulder)

Large aberration, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 189 (18d10 + 90)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	13 (+2)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6(-2)

Saving Throws Constitution +8

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

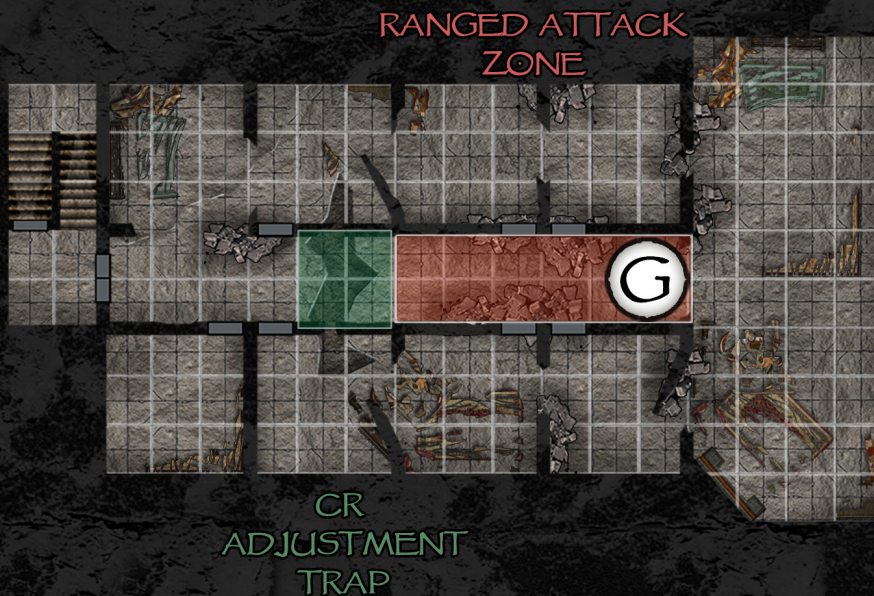
Aberrant Aura. The moulder's maddening gibbering affects the very fabric of space around it. A 10 ft. space surrounding the moulder twists and pulsates with chaotic energy. Each creature that starts its turn within this zone must succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom** saving throw or be stunned.

Amorphous. The moulder can move through a space as small as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Gibbering. The moulder babbles incoherently while it can see

AREA D4 THE SHATTERED HALL

G GIBBERING MOUTHER



any creature and isn't incapacitated. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 ft. of the moulder and can hear the gibbering must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw DC 13. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all of its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8 the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. *The madness moulder makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its spittle.*

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

Hit: 30 (8d6+2) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is killed in this manner, it is absorbed into the moulder.

Blinding Spittle. The moulder spits a chemical glob at a point it can see within 15 ft. of it. The glob explodes in a blinding flash of light on impact. Each creature within 5 feet of the flash must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the moulder's next turn.

4a. Blocked Stairs

Halfway up the next stairwell, a blockage of fallen rubble takes 1d6 rounds to clear before the PCs can continue on. The entire stairway climbs 60 ft. up to the next level.



5. The Library

The doors of the stairwell antechamber are missing on this level, a 60-foot climb from below. Again an east-west hallway terminates in a set of closed stone doors with paired double doors spaced on the north and south walls. The floor surface is irregular, as if the stones underneath have collapsed or settled.

This was once the library of the temple. A double row of columns runs the length of the stacks and opens onto a scriptorium at the eastern end, where yet another louvered balcony exists but is blocked, preventing light from entering the chamber.

Terrain: Unstable sections of floor (where the damage from the level below has caused it to buckle) count as difficult terrain and the bookshelves provide cover for stealth. The shadow demons have arranged the books on the shelves to provide openings for stabbing attacks from their claws and attack through the bookshelves at no penalty (since they can attack and move through objects). Ranged and piercing attacks may target a creature through the bookshelves with cover. Bookshelves block the light from entering the balcony. If these shelves are moved as an action, requiring a **Strength check DC 15**, daylight (if it is daytime) streams through into the chamber.

Creatures: The starving high priest hastened the death some of his brethren. The crime called into being two shadow demons. The demons have been affected by the dirge of hopelessness (which fortunately has kept them from unleashing their evil on greater Picollo) but they are more than happy to challenge any who disturb their ennui and long contemplation into the nature of destruction.

Collapsing Floor Trap

Mechanical trap

A section 15' x 15' is so crumbled and decayed that any creature entering this space triggers its collapse. The demons know this structure is unsound and using their incorporeal movement will lure creatures into this space. A **Wisdom (Perception) check DC 17** spots the crumbling supports. As soon as a creature enters this space it collapses 20 feet to the section below. Any creature in the area at the time must succeed on a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** or fall 20 feet taking 7 (2d6) damage and be knocked prone.

Shadow Demon (2)

See official entry for full statistics

Combat: (2) Shadow Demon; **Encounter XP:** 2,200 XP; **Adjusted XP:** 3,300; **Easy;**

Treasure: Hidden behind a bookcase on the outside of the room (**DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** only if the pcs move the bookcases), where the demons feared to tread into the sunlight, is a small rectangular wooden box that seems immune to the ravages of the sea wind. If examined, it is found to be a *folding boat* (see official entry for full details). Also contained in this room is a cassock that belonged to the head cleric. The vestments stand out in the room and are easily spotted.

AREA D5

THE LIBRARY



Development: Taking the cassock within 200 ft. of the Kaleb in Area 6 activates the cleric's old bond with the item, granting time to prepare additional defenses.

6. The Mausoleum

The uppermost level of the northern arch contains a mausoleum in which the holy brethren of the Air Temple were interred. In the divinely enhanced air of the crypt the bodies of the dead remained uncorrupted on biers and niches spaced along the walls of the chamber—when the magic of the temple failed the corpses began to decay normally. The wight used the skeletons of his brothers to celebrate his undead madness.

Access to the map room and the peak of the arch lay through the mausoleum. The entire level is now the haunt of the corrupted former high priest of the temple, the wight Kaleb Maeliger.

6a. Stairwell and sealed doors

The vertical stairwell continues for another 400 feet and then slopes on a gentler curve to the east. You are nearing the peak of the arch and the rise corresponds to the change in the curve. At the end of the climb, great stone double doors bar the way and while it may have once intimated what lay within, the detail in the carved paneling around it appears melted.

Maeliger long ago sealed the doors shut with *stone shape*, using the spell again when he wants to create a passable arch. A **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that the doors are nonfunctional; the cracks between jamb and threshold are solid beyond a slight indentation. Its seal is beyond the simple strength of any of the PCs to break through without the use of magically-sourced physical force. A **DC 23 Wisdom (Perception) check**

discovers speaking trumpets buried where the handles were once mounted and it is these devices that allow Maeliger to hear what transpires on the other side of the doors and prepare adequately.

6b. Mausoleum

This 90 ft. by 40 ft. wide chamber is oblong in shape and stone biers line the walls at regular intervals. A wrought iron spiral staircase rising to an access hatch in the ceiling 50 feet above leads to the rooftop (Area 7). The biers stand empty—halfling skeletons mill at the base of the stairs while more dangle from the stair treads.

Terrain: The staircase provides cover from ranged attacks.

Hazard

A *hallow* (**desecration**) effect has been cast on the staircase (which serves as an altar to the wight's new divine inspiration); the tomb must be re-consecrated to the Great Mother to destroy this effect by either dispelling the *unhallow*, or casting of a *hallow* effect. The effects of the *hallow* (**desecration**) spell have been included in the stat blocks for this combat and are listed below.

The *hallow* (**desecration**) in effect bars celestials, elementals, fey, and fiends from entering the zone. The secondary effect of desecration bolsters any currently within the zone, granting them advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and saving throws while within the zone.

Creatures: Originally a fledgling cleric of the Four Hearts, Maeliger was beginning to master the elemental domain of earth to complement his study of the air when the Dracoprime fell. As he slipped into madness, cannibalism, and undeath, he turned away from the elemental call of air. Long entombment has focused his thoughts more to earth and he now worships the "ideals" of lifelong entombment and darkness, crafting a new unholy symbol from

stone and bone long ago. A mob of animated halfling skeletons in the burial chamber block those who would approach Maeliger's perch on the iron stairs, and a second batch of reserve skeletons (prepared for re-animation with black onyx gems imbedded within their bodies) surround the base of the staircase.

Kaleb Maeliger

Small undead (halfling), *neutral evil*

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 75 (15d8+30)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15(+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wisdom +7, Charisma +6

Skills Religion +5, Perception +7, Persuasion +6

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered.

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Sunlight sensitivity. While in sunlight, the wight has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Spellcasting. Maeliger is a 9th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance*, *resistance*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*
 1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *detect magic*, *inflict wounds*, *protection from evil and good*

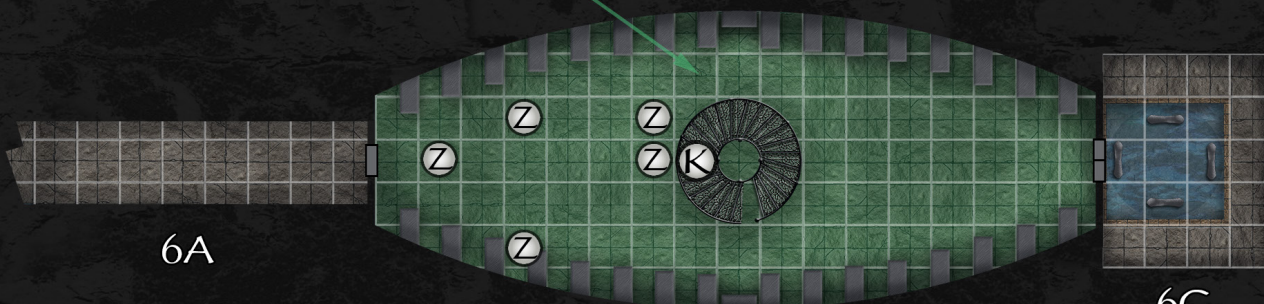
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *glyph of warding*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *divination*, *stone shape*

AREA D6 THE MAUSOLEUM

HALLOW ZONE



K KALEB
Z ZOMBIE



5th level (1 slot): contagion

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is decreased by the amount of damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target completes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this manner rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control unless the body is destroyed or it is returned to life. The wight can have no more than 12 zombies under its control at one time.

TACTICS

Before Combat Once warned by the speaking trumpets or the party breaking through the door, he casts *silence* on a front-line skeleton in the halfling skeletal rabble to place the adventurers in its radius when the door opens.

During Combat If Kalebs old clergy cassock is presented to him he initially cowers for one round and thereafter as long as it is presented and he can see it, treat him as being under the effects of sunlight.

Morale The mad cleric fights until oblivion releases him from his madness. He does not enter the map room for any reason (the memories there are too painful, even for a vicious undead).

Halfling Zombies (5)

See official entry for full zombie statistics.

Zombies within the *hallow* (*desecration*) zone have advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and saving throws while within the zone.

Combat: (5) zombie plus Kaleb Maeliger; **Encounter XP:** 5,250 **XP; Adjusted XP:** 10,500; **Deadly;**

Development: When the wight and its minions are defeated, read the following:

The remains of the once holy brothers and sisters of the Great Mother lie blasted and scattered along the length and breadth of the chamber; there is no peace in such a display of bodies and relics lying akimbo.

Although Kaleb's sins have taken him beyond redemption, returning the bodies of the other halfling priests to their burial biers and niches earns one community point. A single casting of *hallow* in the area cuts the connection to Kaleb's warped ideals, earning one community point (an additional community point can be earned if a cleric of the Great Mother *hallows* the area.) This last point may also be earned if more half the party converts to the worship of the Great Mother, in which case the *hallow* spell may come from any source. In the absence of a cleric, anyone skilled in **Intelligence (Religion)** may make a DC 18 check to prepare and



ritualize the cleansing of the cleric's cassock. The ritual takes 2 hours and functions the same as dispelling the *hallow* (*deseccration*).

Treasure: One of the bodies dangling from the staircase (which does not animate during the combat) wears *bracers of the winds* (a new magic item; see **Appendix B**) that aids in tuning the great horns on the arch peaks.



6c. Map Room

In contrast to the stale air of the mausoleum, the air of this room is sweet and pure. PCs crossing the threshold of this chamber feel the presence of benign divine magic caressing their minds. Those who wish receive the benefits of the *wind walk* spell that lasts for 1 hour. This magic allows creatures to avoid the call lightning trap below but not the whirlwind trap.

The resemblance of this chamber to Midya Merocheck's scale model is striking. Four perfect versions of the original arches stand a shade over 4 ft. tall in a pool of water, tiny waves lapping back and forth. A breeze blows through the room. The walls of the chamber are covered in divine writings, mathematical theorizations, astrological and seasonal calculations, and charts.

A **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check** interprets the symbols, imparting knowledge of how to align the model to the current weather and seasonal conditions. Seasonality is a simple mathematical calculation; wind conditions can be determined by making a **DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check** from one of the arch roof tops. A high skill check may also reveal the trap below.



Development: A casting of *thaumaturgy*, *druidcraft*, or *prestidigitation* to alter the winds in the room aligns the model to the current seasonal conditions. The entire model (including the pool basin) rotates to the correct configuration and the caster-controlled winds generate the correct harmonies required to call the cloud temple. The model horns in the map room model magically rotate to the required positions, allowing the correct orientations to be set in the full-scale versions on each of the four arches by reading the measurements on the model horns.

Traps: A false move is possible when using the map room to calculate the tuning settings. In addition to a regular **Wisdom (Perception) check** to find the trap, exceeding the DC with the original **Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check** above also reveals the trap.

Call Lightning Trap

Magical trap

Adjusting the model in an incorrect way triggers the trap. A call lightning trap that summons an angry cloudburst directly above the pool in the map room was placed as a deterrent to those unfamiliar with the harmonic tuning process. Precisely 1 round later lightning streaks out and strikes a small metal rod barely above the surface of the water, which spreads the lightning damage to any creature standing within the water area dealing **15 (3d10) lightning damage** or half that much on a successful **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**. The lightning continues to strike for the next five rounds until its stored energy is depleted and will need 24 hours to recharge.



7. Rooftop

Maeliger used *stone shape* to seal the access hatch to the exterior of the northern arch. The access hatch leading to the spiral stairs in the mausoleum (F2) is 40 ft. from the stone horn and gimbal assembly. Like the door below, the job is less than perfect—PCs actively seeking the hatch may find it with a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**.

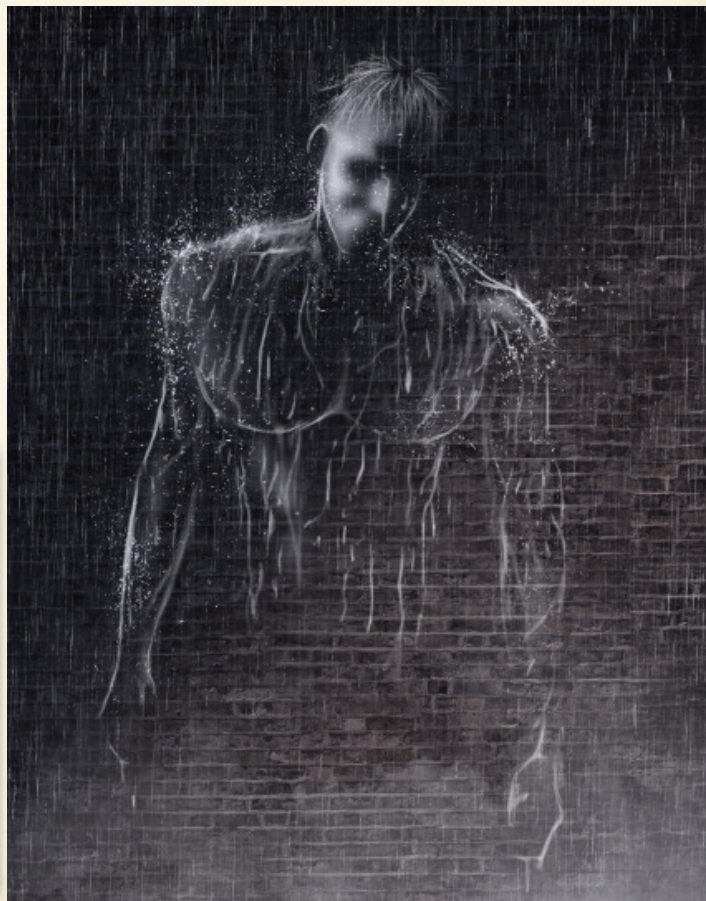
The wight placed a *glyph of warding (hold person)* [**DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to detect, DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**] on the first step leading down from the rooftop into the mausoleum.

E. Restoring the Winds

The stone horn provided by Carlyetta and nestled in the hold of *Autumn Leaves* was built from Midya Merocheck's designs unearthed in the archives of Stoneroot. The trunnions on the horn fit into the gimbal already mounted at the peak of the Dracoprime's vertebra on the eastern side of the temple. The PCs may choose to add the cyclopean runes into the mounting carriage when they install it.

Mounting the replica horn is only one of three steps required to fully restore the temple. The PCs must also discover the wind pattern map in the peak of the Northern Arch (**Area 6c**) and tune the large archway horns at the peaks to the current season and wind conditions.

To fully restore the temple, the harmonics of the winds passing through the lower arches must be modified to account for displacement of the Dracoprime's vertebra in relation to the original stone arch. Failure to do so results in inadvertently summoning two invisible stalkers; enraged and maddened by the subharmonics of the winds below, the creatures attack.





Invisible Stalker (2)

See official entry for full statistics.



TACTICS

Before Combat If the PCs have tuned the three remaining horns to the correct seasonal and wind conditions, the stalkers scream in agony during the surprise round then take a round to materialize. If the three horns are not tuned, the stalkers appear instantly, screaming as they enter to act in a surprise round. A PC who makes a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** may act in the surprise round, recognizing the screams as coming from a threat rather than a tuning error in the horn.

Combat: (2) Invisible Stalker; **Encounter XP:** 4,600 XP; **Adjusted XP:** 6,900; **Hard;**

Correcting the subharmonics of the Dracoprime vertebra is accomplished by installing four great louvers in the tunnel in the vertebra's southern leg. Studying the large horn and reed assembly found with Midya's site model (**Area 2e**) can reveal the correct shape and placement of the louvers.

Fabricating the louvers requires materials—Midya intended to raise the great stone blocks at the base of the eastern arch. Each block contains enough material to craft one louver, although some means must be used to complete the quarrying process prior to raising them 200 ft. to the tunnel in the bony leg.

The louvers can be crafted using *stone shape*. Use of the wooden forms from **Area B3** ensures success.

The louvers can also be crafted using *stone shape*, although there is a 30% chance that the pivots required to adjust them do not function. The spell may be recast to correct his malfunction. Use of the wooden forms from **Area B3** reduces the chance of failure to 10%.

Development: Once the replacement horn is mounted and all four horns tuned to the seasons (even if the stalkers are summoned) a white fog swirls in the center of the arches—over the course of thirty minutes, a great oak a mile-high forms from mist and clouds, its ephemeral roots reaching out to the bases of each of the four arches. After being fully formed the roots are safe to walk on, although doing so kicks up wafts of vapor. The roots lead to a spiral staircase running up the trunk of the tree and terminate in a great chamber in the canopy, formed from solid clouds. Here in the bosom of the Air Aspect of the Great Mother, worship may once again be conducted before the diaphanous structure dissipates after 12 hours. Any caught in the temple when it dissolves floats to the sea on wisps of cloud (as if subject to a *feather fall* spell).

If the subharmonics have not been corrected, invisible stalkers continue to plague the site in the coming weeks and months until

Treasure: PCs who have not discovered the deception surrounding the cyclopean runes may choose to inscribe them into the replacement horn's mounting



brackets during the installation. If they began the quest with less than 16 community points, Carlyetta encouraged them to do so prior to their setting sail; all of the tools and supplies needed to do so are provided and no skill check is required. The installation of the runes provides the promised additional boon and every PC within 60 ft. of the horn when the runes are inscribed gain the *bloom of life* (new magic item; see **Appendix B**).

the engineering project is successfully completed.

Development: Forgoing the potential of the boon and declining to use the runes (either through caution or intent) earns one community point.

Chapter Two The Spine of the Dragon

Following the restoration of the Air Temple, magical communication with Carlyetta informs the PCs that a second vessel bearing the new chapter of priests for the Air Temple is en route. The ship also carries supplies to relieve the newly formed colony on the Burning Isle, where Carlyetta's cousin Faerilon Hayweather (from the first module in the *Shattered Hearts* Adventure Path, *The Ties That Bind*) works to restore the Fire Temple. Once *Autumn Leaves* is resupplied Carlyetta requests that the PCs take passage to aid Faerilon—the wait allows time for rest and recuperation, and even the crafting of magical items in the workshops of the western arch.

A few days into the wait (or more if the party wish to spend more time recovering and crafting), representatives of a *dødelig* tribe living in the Spine of the Dragon approach the temple, drawn by the appearance of the cloud oak. Their advent is foreshadowed by a feeling of unease and fear in the night watches, caused by the proximity of a trio of psychopomps tasked with the destruction of the undead halfling tribe. Sailors report seeing strange visions in the night skies and suffering the grip of fear deep within their hearts. These episodes, originally written off as an aftereffect of the dirge of hopelessness, intensify as the days and nights progress.

An encounter with the *dødelig* and the outsiders set the PCs on a journey into the Spine where, deep underwater, an ancient cyclopean site reveals the lies of the tripurasura. This first contact with the benign undead also grants an opportunity to enrich the growing sense of community the hero's' actions have fostered throughout greater Picollo.

Adventure Location: The Spine of the Dragon

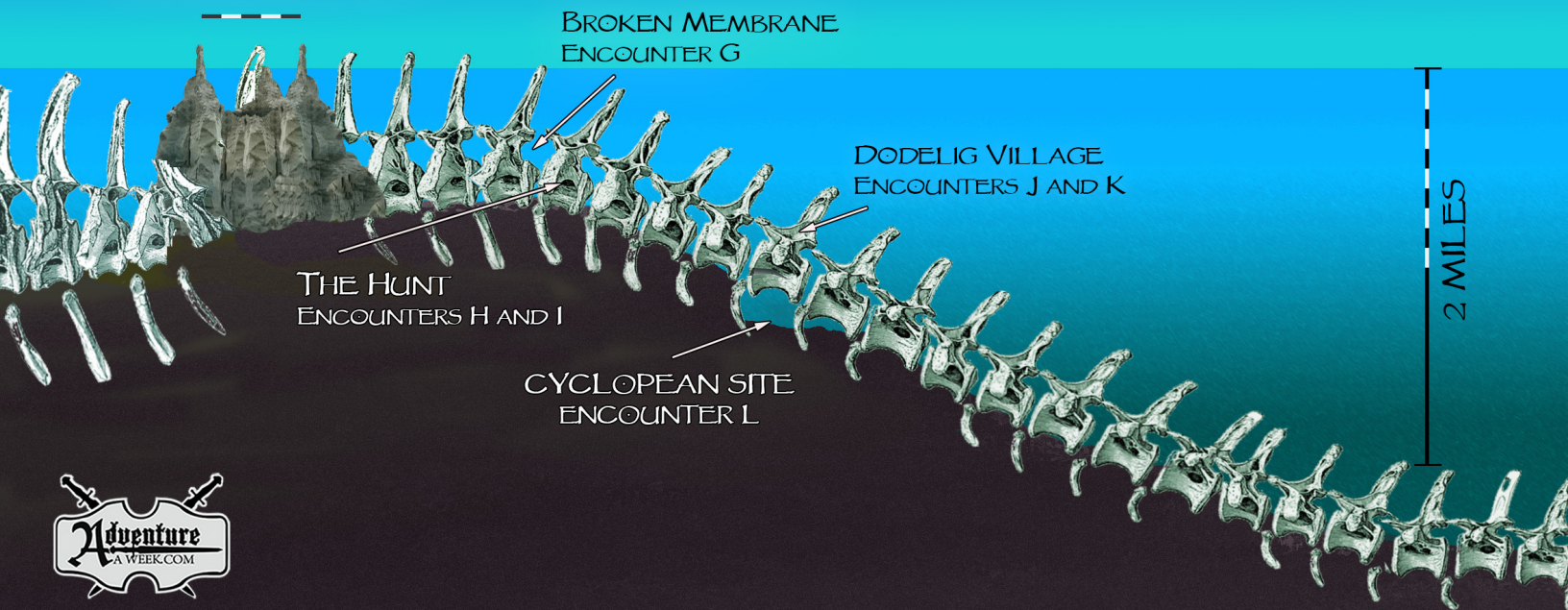
Location The southern seas of the Picollan archipelago contain the fallen remains of the tail of the continent-sized Dracoprime. Vertebrae reaching a mile-high pierce the surface, while tunnels and channels through the bone provide access to the depths of the ocean and deeper into the Underworld.

History This section of the Dracoprime, brought down 500 years ago in the event known as the Great Schism, smashed not only the Air Temple but a nearby island containing a small halfling settlement and an ancient cyclopean monument.



THE TEMPLE OF AIR
1/2 MILE

THE SPINE OF THE DRAGON



Tunnels and cavities run through the surviving vertebrae; entire aquatic and Underworld tribes dwell within. The bulk of the great dragon's tail has disintegrated over time, but the magic coursing through the spinal cord transformed muscle and nerve into a membrane that keeps out the ocean's depths. This material protects a 500-foot-tall by 350-foot-wide tunnel running through the spinal cavity, and in some locations embraces the caudal ribs to create vast underwater caverns with translucent roofs (allowing creatures to pass through it safely, generating prime underwater real estate).

Dangers Beasts, Underworld races and monsters, aquatic races and creatures

Lighting Dim (filtered sunlight through the ocean depths, fluorescent corals and fungus) or darkness.

Walls Bone and rock, or magical translucent membrane.

Doors Membranous dividers between vertebra sections.

Mood/Theme The Spine of the Dragon blends cavern spelunking and underwater mystery: a fantastical glass-roofed journey into the ocean depths.

F. From above and below: Death or Life?

The great cloud oak of the Air Temple is never more beautiful than in its last hour, as the blaze of color from the setting sun transforms it into a jeweled sculpture of light and vivid hues. This day, the effect is magnified by an overcast sky; streaks of color blaze overhead while the ocean below dwells in shadow.

The Spine of the Dragon stands out to sea and from the spine nearest the temple site, a small boat approaches the eastern arch making for the original stone stump at its base. Flickering lights reflect off the water in the shadow of the colorful heavens above.

The boat, a modified *swan token* (usable once per week) contains five *dødelig*, four of whom bear harpoons while the fifth, somewhat shorter than the rest, is garbed in a garment of sea lilies and other colorful blooms. The *swan boat* (modified by the same magic that created the *dødelig*) is skeletal and eerie in appearance, although

completely seaworthy.

These creatures are the “survivors” of a nearby whaling colony. The halflings on the small island perished when the Dracoprime fell, but achieved rebirth as *dødelig* when the lich Udødelig created the race by sacrificing his essence in a desperate bid to fight the Colloid long after his death. For the past century they have lived in the bones of the Dracoprime's tail, but the reappearance of the cloud oak reminds them of their ancient heritage and they investigate with the curiosity ingrained in halfling and *dødelig* alike.

The *dødelig* are stalked by a trio of psychopomps charged with ending their existence (and the true source of the feelings of unease around the temple site). These outsiders appear part way through any diplomatic encounter with the *dødelig*, demanding that the PCs assist them in destroying the abominated halfling undead.

This encounter assumes that the PCs ultimately recognize the *dødelig* differ from the average undead, and that the intolerant psychopomps represent the obstacle to be defeated. It can go either way however—adventurers may shoot first and ask questions later, or simply choose to do the outsiders' bidding and attempt to destroy the *dødelig*. In these cases, use the warrior cultist statistics in **Encounter J** for the four harpoonists as Lim (the flower garbed *dødelig* and a non-combatant) dives into the sea and escapes. She can be slain if chased, or the GM can offer a second chance to establish better relations with the undead by reintroducing Lim as a refugee in the Spine—any discussion with her at that point begins with a heartbreaking appeal to understand why the PCs slew her friends.

Unless the PCs take action to intercept the skeletal *swan boat*, the five *dødelig* reach the stump of the original arch and climb out of the vessel and wait, staring in wonder at the great cloud oak. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check** hears the *dødelig* singing a traditional Picollan sea shanty as the boat approaches.

Recognizing the dødelig as intelligent undead requires a **DC 13 Intelligence (Religion)** check; exceeding this check by 5 reveals that they are not evil by default. Exceeding the check by 7 recalls rumors that the lich Udødelig grasped immortality by sharing his essence with untold numbers of halfling skeletons, whose corporeal forms lay calcified in the remains of the Dracoprime. Though the rituals Udødelig once performed to achieve his lichdom were certainly evil, the tales of the end of his existence reflect a change of personality and outlook. If there can be such a thing as a selfless lich, Udødelig may have earned the distinction (embracing undeath for the joy of discovery and exploration rather than power). Finally, no Intelligence check is required to recognize the dødelig as halfling skeletons, especially following the encounter in the mausoleum.



check DC 13 prompts her to continue (if the PCs fail, this information comes out during the confrontation with the psychopomp; see **Creatures** below). *“Cam is wrong, Cam is wrong. There is something near our village, our priest Cam says it is our god. Some of my kin believe him, but I have noticed they are angry and cruel now. They never sing with the rest of us or visit my garden so see its beauty. I have never seen the ‘thing’ but some say it’s many of us smashed together. Portions of it are as we once were: living halflings. But it must be false, for I remember now the Great Mother and she would never appear as such a terror.”*

Lim is the wanderer of the tribe. She maintains a magnificent garden in one of the cavities of the Spine, nurturing both underwater and terrestrial plants in its greenhouse-like embrace. Though garbed in beautiful blooms from her garden, there are markings remarkably similar to the cyclopean runes Carlyetta has been incorporating into the temple sites clearly visible on the dødelig’s shoulder blades and one side of her skull.

*Though dødelig once may have been man and woman halflings, only the vestigial trappings of gender identity remain and they rarely embrace any concepts of gender very strongly.

Lim starts as friendly (**Charisma modifier +3**) and shares the history and information regarding her tribe, all the while asking about the great cloud oak. The PCs may learn the following:

- **Who are you?** *“I was once Lim—I suppose I still am. The sky blackened over our village and then I knew no more. Just as suddenly, as if awakening from a deep sleep, I found myself and my kin in this form, under the sea. For many turnings of the seasons we have lived beneath the waves in vast caverns. Tell me of the cloud oak; it seems familiar, but I cannot recall why.”*
- **You live under the sea?** *“Yes, it seems strange, but our village is in the skeleton of a great beast. You can see pieces of it piercing the surface there, and there, and even here, although I do not like to come to this spike. The winds and sounds were disturbing; why are they now pleasant?”*
- **The runes on your body, what are they?** *“When I awoke, my form as you see now was trapped in stone. These markings came away with me when I arose. I did not tarry in the place for long, however, for a great stone giant with one eye attacked me and my cousins who awoke nearby. We fled upwards into the skeleton of the beast that is now our home.”*
- **What do you know of halflings and Picollo?** *“Yes, yes of course! We were once of Picollo. I suppose they are our kin. What a merry discovery! There used to be more halflings here—will more come to see the cloud tree?”*
- **This is a temple to the Great Mother, the goddess of Picollo.** *“The Great Mother, I remember. We once prayed here.”* Lim grows quiet and a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight)** check reveals deep concern. A **Charisma (Persuasion)**



Creatures While engaging in conversation with Lim a sudden chill permeates the air (from the fear aura of the vanth). The catrina becomes visible within 30 ft. of the PCs; her appearance and festive garb is eerily similar to Lim’s, although she is a Medium-sized creature. The catrina commands the PCs, *“These creatures are abominations and must be destroyed. Do the bidding of death and receive her blessing.”* Lim protests, but to no avail—the catrina knows of the cult below worshiping the drakhalfryda (**Encounter J**) and uses it as an example of the evils of those who would defy death. Lim tries her best to defend her tribe, calling out the cultists as misguided and led astray, but to no avail; once more demanding aid, the psychopomp leader warns the party that they will be considered allies of the abominations if they do not heed death’s command.



Psychopomp, Catrina

See *succubus* official entry for statistics

With lengthy curling hair, a dancer's dress, and a bouquet of flowers, this woman remains beautiful, despite having no flesh.

Psychopomp, Vanth

See *cambion* official entry for statistics

Combat: Psychopomp, Catrina, plus Psychopomp, Vanth; Encounter XP: 2,900 XP; Adjusted XP: 4,350; Medium;

Development: Following the fight with the psychopomps, Lim beseeches the PCs to journey under the waves and bring the knowledge of the Great Mother to the mistaken priest Cam and rid the dødelig of the monster leading them astray. She further entices the party with tales of additional cyclopean runes (matching the ones on her skeleton) scribed on monuments deep below; Lim recalls that the monuments contained three languages (the rune language, an archaic form of the language she now recalls as Halfling, and one other she does not know).

Development: Making peaceful contact with the dødelig earns the PCs 1 community point.

Death's Allies? After slaying the dødelig, the psychopomp encourage the PCs to descend into the spine to destroy the cult; the catrina also has knowledge of the "Rosetta Stone" that promises to translate the cyclopean runes.

Treasure: If the PCs ally with the psychopomps, the catrina offers each adventurer a *Death's Blessing* (new cursed item; see **Appendix B**) which she promises has the power restore them from one death. The PCs are free to accept or deny the gift.

G. Broken Membrane

A mile or two distant from the Air Temple, the bony spike piercing the surface contains entrances to a tunnel driving ever downward. Some of these passages open into chambers granting views of the depths, with seemingly nothing holding back the crush of the water. Approaching one such window, you discover a translucent membrane that yields to your touch. Should you have a mind to, you feel confident you could pass from the dry cavern into the ocean's embrace.

Continuing downward you reach a vast tunnel: the spinal cavity. This great tunnel—over 350 feet wide by 500 feet tall—slopes down into the depths, a membranous sleeve of the same scale bridging the gaps between the individual vertebrae. Before moving into the translucent tunnels you pass through great sheets of the membrane which, you soon discover, protects the individual cells from flooding. Soon you come upon a collapsed portion of membrane; the passage to next section has failed.

If Lim guides the way, she shows the heroes a passage that doesn't require swimming. The dødelig tells them there are pretty stones in the passage below, but they are hard, not like the blooms in her garden. Otherwise the PCs spot the bypass tunnel after a few moments search. From the can't of the adjacent vertebra it appears likely this shaft through the bony mass provides safe passage to the next section.

Swimming across the divide is possible with **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) checks**. One thousand feet separate the vertebra and parties that negotiate the waves penetrate the membrane on the far side of the crysmal nest. In this case, the entire colony does not engage—only the giant crysmal and three of the standard crysmal attack (though the GM should award experience as if the others had been defeated).

Creatures: A colony of crysmal gorge themselves on a gem-rich vein of stone thrusting into the spine. They are difficult to discover amongst the glittering facets (**DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** to act in the surprise round).

Tiny elemental, unaligned

Crysmal

Small elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 55 (10d6+20)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15(+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+2)	6 (-2)	13 (+2)	14 (+2)

Damage Vulnerability thunder

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapon.

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

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

Languages Terran

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Crystal Sense. Crysmals can detect the presence of gems or crystals within 30 feet. They often focus attacks on creatures made of, or carrying quantities of gems.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The crysmal makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its sting.

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

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (4d4+2) piercing damage.

Shard Spike (recharge 5-6). The crysmal launches a crystal shard up to 30 feet away. All creatures in a 10-foot radius burst from a point the crysmal can see must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) points of piercing damage, or half as much on a successful save.



Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6+4) piercing damage.

Shard Spike (recharge 4-6). The crysmal launches a crystal shard up to 30 feet away. All creatures in a 10-foot radius burst from a point the crysmal can see must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 21 (6d6) points of piercing damage, or half as much on a successful save.

Death Burst. When the giant crysmal reaches 0 hp it explodes in a hail of crystal shards. Any creature within 10 feet of the giant crysmal must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 28 (8d6) points of piercing damage, or half as much on a successful save. There is also a 50% chance that this death burst creates a crysmal shardling.

Crysmal Shardling

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 20 (8d4)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11(+1)	18(+4)	10(+0)	6(-2)	13(+2)	14(+2)

Damage Vulnerability thunder

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapon.

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

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

Languages Terran

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Crystal Sense. Crysmals can detect the presence of gems or crystals within 30 feet. They often focus attacks on creatures made of, or carrying quantities of gems.

ACTIONS

Crystal Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage and the shardling attaches to the creature. During the creature's turn it may use an action to remove the shardling. While the shardling is attached to the creature, other crysmals have advantage on melee attacks against it. At the start of the shardlings turn, if it is attached to a creature it deals 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage as it continues to gnaw on its victim. Sharlings may drop from a creature if it wishes.

Reform. If two shardlings are below ¼ health, and within 5 ft of each other, they may, as an action reform into a full crysmal. This new crysmal operates on a new initiative and is created at full health.

Combat: (5) Crysmal, plus Giant Crysmal, plus (2) Crysmal Shardlings; **Encounter XP:** 3,050 XP; **Adjusted XP:** 7,625; **Hard;**

Giant Crysmal

Medium elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8+30)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19(+4)	10(+0)	17(+3)	6(-2)	13(+2)	14(+2)

Damage Vulnerability thunder

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapon.

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

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

Languages Terran

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Crystal Sense. Crysmals can detect the presence of gems or crystals within 30 feet. They often focus attacks on creatures made of, or carrying quantities of gems.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant crysmal makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its sting.

ENCOUNTER G

BROKEN MEMBRANE



- G** GIANT CRYSMAL
- C** CRYSMAL
- S** SHARDLING



SCALE IN FEET

Treasure: The shattered carcasses of the crysmal yield 1,200 gp in assorted precious gems, and 1d4 *elemental gems*, rolled randomly (see official entry for details) which are created as a byproduct of the crysmal's digestion of minerals.



Resting in the Spine: The PCs can find a place to hole up at any point before they reach the dødelig village, and Lim warns them that Cam does not usually countenance visitors—he may be a threat. GMs should gauge the party's current strength following **Encounter J**; if they are still relatively fresh and try to rest, the drakhalfryda can seek them out, or another band of krakinoi. If the Tiberolith in **Encounter L** is the first combat of the day, encourage the PCs to return immediately to the Air Temple (where the confrontation with the tripurasura awaits) with a reminder of the pending arrival of the supply ship.



Adamantine Urchin Bed



Creatures moving through the adamantine urchin bed must move at $\frac{1}{4}$ speed or be pricked by the urchin barbs. The whole area is considered difficult terrain. A PC can choose to move through the beds at full speed but must succeed at a DC 14 Dexterity check to do so or take 3 (1d6) points of piercing damage plus 9 (3d6) *poison damage*. Failure by 5 or more on the Reflex save increases the DC the sea urchin poison by +2 (and +2 more for each additional 5 points of failure). Any attempts to cultivate or salvage some of the adamantine urchin bed automatically fail.

Creature: Like the drakhalfryda further below, the stalker of this cavern (a yaoguai) was created when the Dracoprime smashed the nearby island. A curious mix of gorilla, sea turtle, and octopus, shards of shell protect it from the adamantine urchin bed. The yaoguai waits in a clearing surrounded by jungle—it knows it is being hunted by others in the area.

H. The Hunted

The main tunnel of this section of the Spine is filled with a curious mix of plant life originating from under the seas; some resemble terrestrial flora and others are underground fungi or lichen. The jungle-like terrain is made all the more treacherous by pools of water collecting in every depression of the bony substrate.

The pools are not deep enough to impede movement, but in conjunction with the difficult terrain of the overgrowth, hide a multitude of dangers.

Hazard



A DC 14 **Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals that most of the floor is covered with sharp nettled urchins; the spines shine like well-sharpened needles.

Yaoguai



Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 115 (10d12 + 50)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23(+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10 **Languages** - **Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action the Yaoguai can move up to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.

Multiattack. The yaoguai makes three attacks: one with its bite

and two with its tentacles.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) piercing damage.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and restrained until the grapple ends. The Yaoguai has two tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

Tentacle Slam. The Yaoguai slams creatures grappled by it into each other or a solid surface. Each creature must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or take 15 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be stunned until the end of the yaoguai's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't stunned.

This creature is a mix of different animals fused together, with a bear's torso and head, clawed ape legs, and a furred tentacle arm.

Combat: Yaoguai; **Encounter XP:** 2,900 XP; **Easy;**

Development: A DC 17 **Wisdom (Perception)** check discovers a huge crab-like claw in the brush as the PCS continue on the downward slope. The claw, ripped from its socket, can be identified as that of a krakinoi with a DC 16 **Intelligence (Nature)** check.

I. The Hunters

Creatures A trio of karkinoi hunt the yaoguai. One of their number has already been slain, but the remaining two wait in ambush after hearing the sounds of battle between the PCs and their former prey. They hope the survivors are weakened enough to defeat easily, waiting for that combat to end before engaging.

Karkinoi

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d10 + 54)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22(+6)	10(+0)	16(+3)	6(-2)	10(+0)	7(-2)

Damage Vulnerability lightning

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Amphibious. Karkinoi can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The karkinoi makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and restrained until the grapple ends. The karkinoi has two claws, each of which can grapple one target.

Slam. The karkinoi slams creatures grappled by it into each other or a solid surface. Each creature must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or take 15 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be stunned until the end of the karkinoi's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't stunned.

REACTIONS

Scuttle. When the Karkinoi would be hit by a melee attack from a target it can see, it can scuttle sideways 10 feet. This movement increases its AC by 4 against that attack.

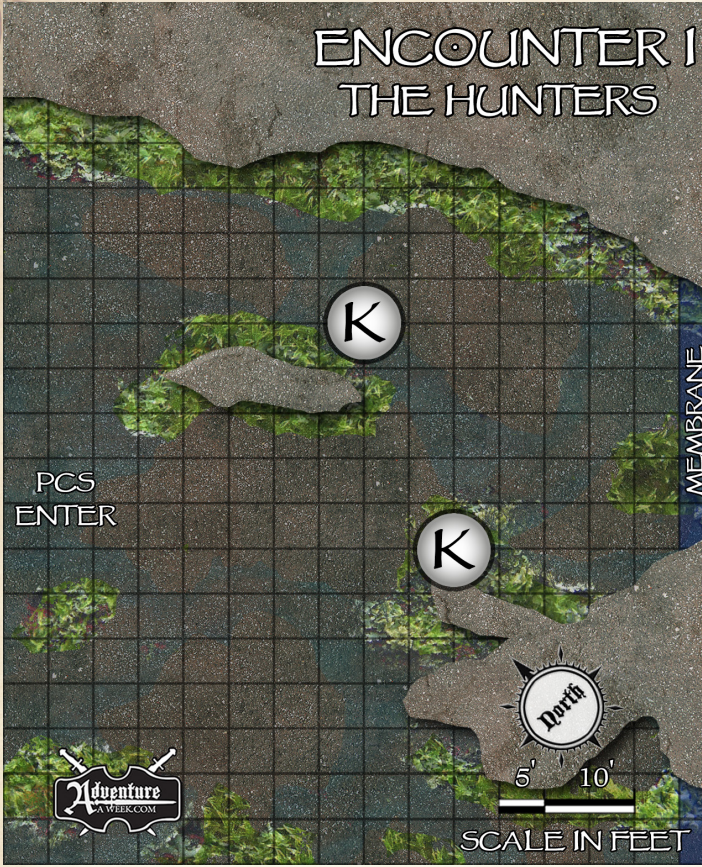
Combat: (2) Karkinoi; **Encounter XP:** 4,600 XP; **Adjusted XP:** 6,900; **Hard;**

J. The Cult of Death

This may be the strangest village you have ever seen. The skeletal halflings known as dodelig kick up a melodious blend of ancient Picollan folk music and other-worldly phrases, most of which is primarily lighthearted, occasionally evoking a dash of longing.

The musicians scatter as you enter the village square, retreating





ENCOUNTER I THE HUNTERS

PCS
ENTER

MEMBRANE

SCALE IN FEET

into homes made from all manner of materials—huts fabricated from giant fish bones and seaweed thatch are as likely as half-timbered dwellings fashioned from reclaimed brick and petrified wood. A fissure to the east of the village stands fenced off; the drop into the cave below is a quarter-mile deep, lit by phosphorescent fungus. An easier way down into the depths snakes off to the southwest.

If Lim escorts the party she warns them that Cam will quickly hear of their arrival—he and his band dwell in a cavern below the village, overlooking the great drop. She asks the heroes to be careful, hoping her friends will give up worship of “the bad god” and learn of the Great Mother they once knew (she certainly does not want them to die for their mistakes).

Creatures: Cam Wesprick alone amongst the dødelig tribe retains some memory of who he once was, hence the affectation of his surname. Once the headman of the whaling station, Cam in rebirth manifested magic released from the Dracoprime’s nervous system and discovered the “god” below, another spawn of the dragon’s plummet. The multi-headed monstrosity that is the drakhalfryda shows remarkable similarities to Cam’s signature spell, *dødeligaton*.

Cam is quite mad and there is no parley with him that bears fruit. Forewarned by spies in the village, the sorcerer is ready to destroy the infidels who approach, although given a few moments, he entertains the group with inane statements about godhood, conjoined and multi-joined blessings. and the freedom of immortal un-life. Cam and two cultists sing to the creature below as the adventurers arrive, at which point the arcanist turns to regard the intruders. Two more cultists stand ready on the flanks of the approach.

Cam Wesprick
Use official *mage* statistics except where noted below:
Small undead, chaotic evil
Replace 3rd level counterspell slot with custom spell *dødeligaton* (See Appendix B);

Dødelig Cultist (4)
Use official *cult fanatic* statistics except where noted below:
Small undead, chaotic evil

Combat: (4) Dødelig Cultists plus Cam Wesprick; Encounter XP: 4,100 XP; Adjusted XP: 8,200; Hard;

Development: When Cam is dealt the killing blow (or restrained in such a way that he is effectively defeated) read the following:

The skeletal halfling staggers back, breaking free from any impediments or threat of immediate attack. From his enlarged ribs, the two undead subsumed into his body are expelled, one to either side. Cam takes a step back, and says, “No! No! No! You will not have me, the god will restore me!” His prophecy voiced, the undead leaps into the abyss and floats gently downward. The faint plea “Take me now my master!” is drowned out by gibbering, slathering, gnashing of teeth, cries of pain (or joy?), and



ENCOUNTER J CULT OF DEATH

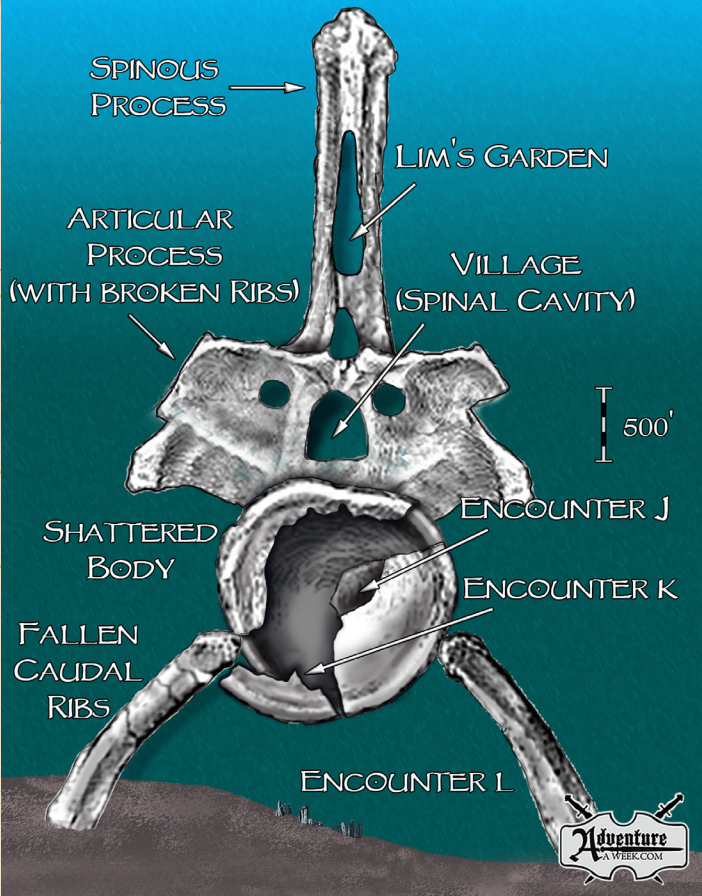
CHASM

TO
VILLAGE

W CAM
WESPRICK
C CULTIST

SCALE IN FEET

HOME OF THE DODELIG



insane chanting which echoes the themes the cultists sang as you approached.

It is difficult to read the emotions of the remaining cultists, but after a pause their bony knuckles close on their harpoon shafts and they advance once more, somewhat distracted by the cacophony below.

Each round thereafter, one cultist realizes that the “god” below is eating Cam and gives up the fight. The PCs earn one community point for each of the cultists remaining alive when the combat ends (maximum 4).

Treasure: Cam wears a pair of *vanishing sandals* (See Appendix B);



K. False God

The body of the vertebra housing the dodelig is broken into three large parts, the separation between them creating a vast cave. Even lower, caudal ribs broken from higher points on the bone segment have settled into the sand and rock of the ocean’s bed, shielding the ancient cyclopean site that once stood on the submerged island. The membranous protection keeps everything watertight.

A **DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check** determines how well the climber fares during the 700-foot climb down; success yields a perfect descent. Players can take any decent method they choose, but any who jump into the great chasm find themselves falling slowly, and gently towards the bottom (characters can infer the drop might be safe from watching Cam’s body fall and/or by making a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check**).

Creature: A creature formed from smashed up bits of halfling

ENCOUNTER K FALSE GOD

PCS
ENTER



SCALE IN FEET



corpses and the interior anatomy of the Dracoprime lurks under the many overhangs generated by the shattered bone. The monster attacks all who enter its domain, seeking the PCs as soon as the entire party completes its descent—Cam's fragmented skeletal body indicates the fate of those trapped by the beast.

Drakhalfryda

See Appendix A for full statistics.



TACTICS

Before Combat The echoes, overhangs, alcoves, and flickering dim lighting of the fluorescent fungi in the spine combine to hide the aberration until it appears around a pillar of bone 40 ft. from the party to initiate combat.

Combat: Drakhalfryda; Encounter XP: 3,900 XP; Medium;

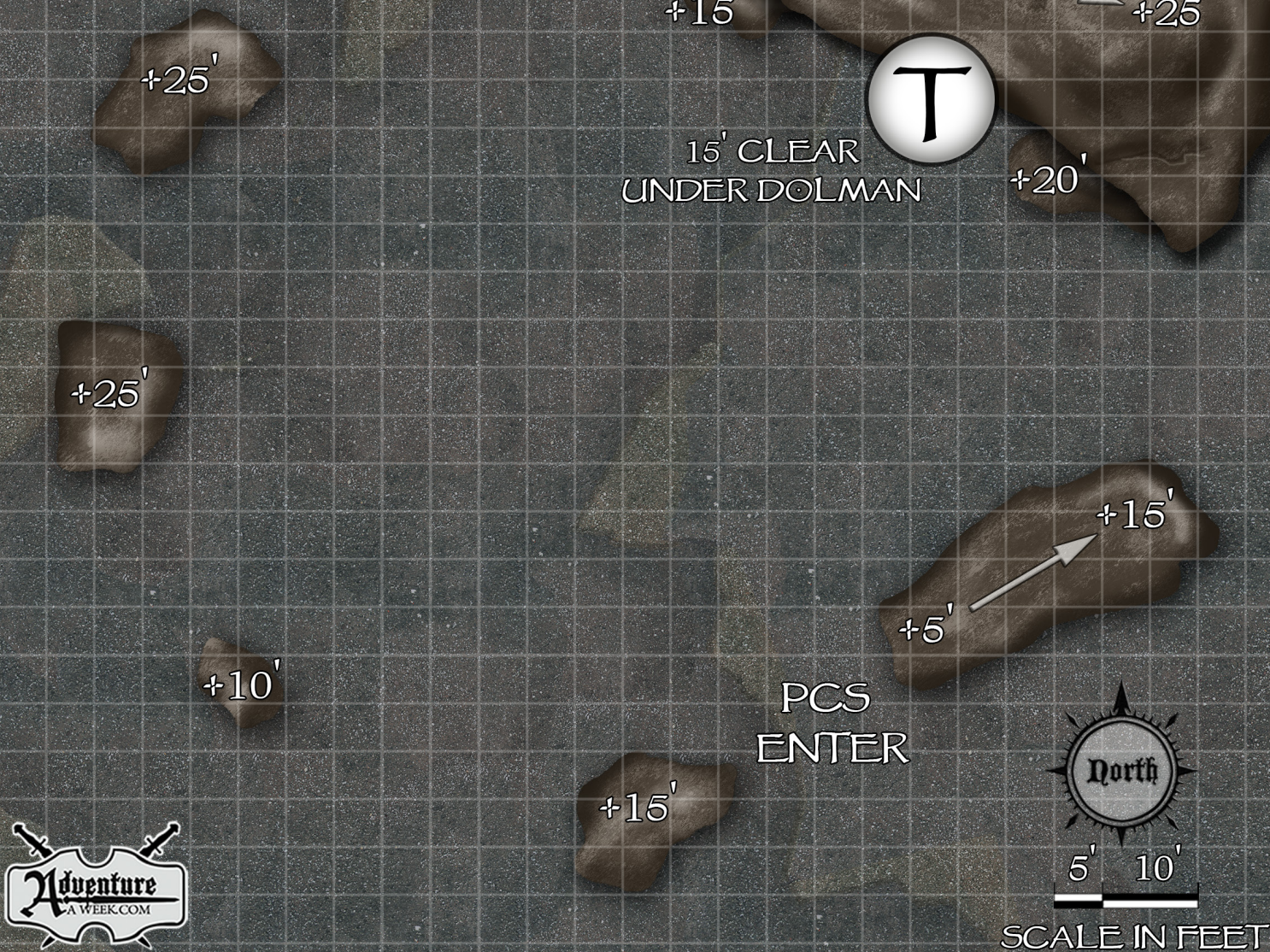
L. Legacy of the One Eye

The island that once bore the fishing village of the halfling-turned-dødelig stands on the seabed, nestled in the embrace of the bones and membranous shelter of the Dracoprime. Though much of the archipelago was fractured and shattered when driven into the ocean floor, an ancient cyclopean site survived. This site contains numerous standing stones and dolmans; the antediluvian giants attempted to recreate the wind effects from the nearby arches for their own studies.

The bed of the underwater cavern lies another 600 ft. below the lair of the drakhalfryda. Flight or other magic provides access through a rift in the ceiling from above, and a tunnel through one of the caudal ribs allows the adventurers to foot it.

Creature: The cataclysm released an ancient guardian of the long abandoned monuments. The stone construct destroys all who enter the area and even the most courageous amphibian deep sea hunters

ENCOUNTER L
LEGACY OF THE ONE EYE



or Underworld denizens avoid it, though it would make an ideal site for an underwater city. The monuments stand sentinel in the center of the chamber, which is itself a half a mile in width and length. The stone guardian, fashioned in the primitive likeness of a cyclops and originally perceived as one of the monuments, rises to greet the heroes as they enter the mystical location's perimeter. Success on a **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check** allows a character to act in the surprise round.

Stone Golem

See official entry for full statistics.

Combat: Stone golem; **Encounter XP:** 5,900 XP; **Hard;**

Development: One of the stone monoliths, as Lim or the psychopomp promised, contains a significant body of carved runes on its three sides. The first of the three surfaces is an ancient form of Picollan (halfling), requiring a **DC 17 Intelligence check** to translate (magical translation also yield the secrets of the archaic Picollan). The glyphs and runes on the second side are ancient Elvish, requiring a more difficult translation (**DC 19 Intelligence check**). The cyclopean runes on the third side are completely immune to magical transcription and require a **DC 22 Intelligence check** to decipher. Knowledge of any of the modern version of each of the languages grants advantage to any translation (modern Giant in the case of Ancient Cyclopes).

The monolith has these additional protections against ill-conceived magical attempts to unravel its mysteries.

Erase Knowledge Trap

Magical trap

If an examiner touches the cyclopedian runes, while under the effects of any kind of *comprehend languages* spell, a magical trap is triggered. The trap can be detected with a **DC 25 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Perception) check**. If triggered a blue flame erupts from the runes and the knowledge of one language (chosen randomly) is completely stripped from the target's mind. The language may be relearned by spending five days in study. A **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** resists this magic. Once triggered, the trap does not reset.

Translating all three panels reveals the deception surrounding the cyclopean runes. Ancient cyclopes studied local religion and gods to develop and focus their insight abilities—the more in tune they were with the predominant divine currents in a region, the more effective their insight ability became. Scholarly interaction fostered community between the giants and non-giants until the cyclopes of ancient times regressed into the more savage beasts they are in modern times.

The claim that divine power was somehow leached or granted by these runes is patently false. An examination of the rune templates used to enhance the temple sites reveals additional magic woven into them. The boons spring from traditional arcane and divine magic, in the same manner as magical items. A **DC 12 Wisdom check** reveals the likely reason behind this largesse was to backup the original false premise of the runic

power and throw suspicion off of one section of the runes that contains a powerful enchantment foci. It seems clear that the runes were introduced to work the enchantment foci into the temples site, likely to allow the priests to be *charmed* or *dominated* through the runes.

Treasure: Translating the cyclopean rune language counts as a major archaeological coup—rubbings or transcriptions from the stones are eagerly snapped up by scholars and libraries. One can craft documents worth 2,000 gp. Nearby on a broken off section of a similar monolith, a set of runes (in ancient Picollish) emit a moderate aura of conjuration and can be identified as a *heal* spell. Though heavy (15 lbs.) this chunk of debris acts as a scroll of the same name.

Conclusion

The Meddler Unmasked

The journey back to the surface is uneventful, as is the small boat ride back to the temple arches. The northern arch now sports a third vessel tied up to the quays—the relief ship has arrived.

Following the journey into the Spine, a return to the temple precinct reunites Carlyetta's band of heroes with her clerk, the prime mover in the deception. Sailors from the relief vessel enjoy a break from their labors, taking a smoke with the crew of the *Autumn Leaves* and informing PCs whom as that the clerk is in the main storeroom. Gratipp has advance warning from previous encounters (or through the use of *commune*) that conflict with the adventurers is likely and has prepared accordingly. If at all possible he hopes to Bluff it out and maintain his cover, but moves to eliminate his adversaries when he realizes the game is up. The entrances from the northern quay are completely blocked by crates—the only access is from the western quay.

A wide swing of story points influences the set-up of the confrontation with the tripurasura. Some likely scenarios are presented here to provide guidance in setting the stage for this climax. The section entitled **The Meddler's Mask** provides useful information on the tripurasura's illusory disguises. If your players are actively plotting violence against the clerk, remind them of the Picollan taboo against one halfling slaying another. While this does not technically apply to non-halflings in the group, the PCs are well aware that their actions are scrutinized by the powers that be in Picollo. If the PCs enter the storeroom intending immediate harm regardless of what proof they have, a **DC 18 Charisma (Deception) check** is required by each member of the group perceived by the asura or the forewarned clerk anticipates combat (roll standard initiative and start the fight).

1. The PCs have conclusive proof that Gratipp is

CONCLUSION

THE MEDDLER UNMASKED

G GRATIPP

C COBRA

TYPICAL
SAIL
ZONE
10' WIDE

G

← SIDE VIEW →

TO
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WHARF



SCALE IN FEET



TO
KITCHEN

the author of the forged documents from the alternate starting point but Gratipp escaped. The tripurasura (having bluffed his way onto the relief ship for the outbound journey and intending to attempt to enchant this chapter of priests immediately) hides (DC 26 Wisdom (Perception) check and initiates combat in the surprise round by flinging his *javelin of lightning*.

2. **Gratipp bluffed his way out of the warehouse during an alternate start and recovered the forgeries.** Run the encounter as written—the clerk continues his lies.
3. **The group has discovered the runes are a deception, but have not discovered where to place the blame.** If communicated with magically, Carlyetta informs the PCs that her clerk originally presented the research on the runes to her, and that he shown interest and excitement about their powers all along. She advises having ironclad proof before taking action.
4. **The forged documents described in the alternate start are in Gratipp's quarters in the relief ship.** When the PCs set off the alarm Gratipp proceeds as if in 1 above, but otherwise hostile PCs must make the Charisma (Deception) check when they enter the storeroom to avoid telegraphing their intentions. If the adventurers intend diplomacy, run the encounter as written.

Read the following when the heroes enter the storeroom (if running this encounter as the alternate starting point start with the third sentence):

The storeroom is transformed. Gone are the carefully devised tunnels and passages of the mad bard. Old crates and barrels are stacked to the sides of the warehouse to be restocked or repaired. A mound of fresh supplies stands in the middle of the chamber. From the ceiling great sails hang to dry, repair work evident in the patching and stitching on the canvas.

Gratipp stands on top of the pile of crates, poking around with his walking stick, his bespectacled eyes searching for a specific piece of equipment. At the PCs entrance, he stops and greets them.

If the PCs inscribed the runes on the horn gimbal, the clerk says, “Well met, your patron will be well pleased that you have empowered the divine channel with the Mother Spirit.”

If the PCs have not inscribed the runes, Gratipp says, “Good, you are here. Carlyetta sends instructions to inscribe the runes of power on the replacement horn to enhance our connection with the goddess. The tools to do so were dispatched with Autumn Leaves and should still provide the means.” So saying he tosses down a leather script containing a missive backing up his statement. This forgery is poor; it immediately looks suspicious and a **DC 10 Intelligence** check recognizes it as fake.

The tripurasura attempts to maintain his cover as long as possible, prevaricating and shifting the blame to Carlyetta (saying he always suspected that her faith was corrupt), or that it must be zwerc at work (didn't the zwerc sage translate the runes?) or that he is a dupe (That letter? Carlyetta's new bosun gave it to me before

I set sail. I've never even opened it.). Opposed checks against the Tripurasura's Deception are in order during the conversation.

The Meddler's Mask

Gratipp's elusive nature is well shrouded and magical means to detect his alignment fail. *Detect magic* reveals multiple auras, not only from the transmutation magic granting his halfling form, but from the magic items he carries. Gratipp collects souvenirs from the casters he has suborned over the centuries and the tools at his disposal are many—his walking stick is in fact a *javelin of lightning*!

Gratipp has refined his change shape ability over the centuries, enabling him to make sting attacks with his tongue while using the ability, but any who discover the transmutation aura gain an immediate **DC 19 Wisdom saving throw** to penetrate the illusion masking his stinger (which looks like no tongue ever seen in a halfling).

Terrain: The central stack of crates and supplies provides cover from attacks made from the ground level by Medium-sized or smaller creatures. Climbing the mound of boxes and crates requires a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. Failure by 5 or more on the skill check causes a shift in the stack and brings down a portion of the supplies on top of the climber, dealing 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage (**DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** halves).

The hanging sails provide varying degrees of cover from creatures on the ground. The space between the sails are 10 ft. wide zones and as seen in side view (see illustration) a creature has cover from creatures in adjacent zones and total cover from creatures more than one zone away. The bottom 5-foot square hidden by the sails provides cover from creatures one zone away, or total cover from creatures more than one zone away.

When the sails catch on fire from Gratipp's *fireball* spell (see his Tactics section) creatures between the sails take 7 (2d6) points of fire damage at the end of their turn. Starting from the bottom, one 5 ft. section of sailcloth burns away each round, filling the entire area from the lowest point of the sails to the ceiling with smoke (treat as *heavily obscured* to determine visibility, plus heavy smoke). Starting on the second round of the conflagration, creatures below the burning canvas must make a **DC 11 Dexterity saving throw** or become entangled in flaming debris. A creature who does not free herself in one round takes 3 (1d6) points of fire damage at the end of her turn until freed.

Gratipp, Fiendish Tripurasara

See official *Arcanaloth* entry for full statistics.

TACTICS

During Combat Gratipp holds a *javelin of lightning* and stands atop the crates. He is confident that his damage resistances, magic resistance, and ability to go invisible will see him through the fight. He uses hit and run tactics, dealing damage and then going invisible to set up more attacks. He does not flee and fights to the death focusing his attacks on weakened foes as he gets more desperate.

Combat: Fiendish Tripurasara; Encounter XP: 8,400 XP; Deadly;

Development: At the conclusion of the combat Gratipp reverts to his normal form, clothing, gear, and magical accouterments falling to the ground. His ruby eyes glow intensely for a brief moment and the sound of laughter emanates from his throat, then his entire well-muscled body transforms into a whirlwind of smoke and ruby flashes before disappearing on the echoes of his maniacal shrieking.

Treasure: In addition to Gratipp's javelin of lightning, two of the smuggler's panniers (worth 5,000 gp each) survive the battle.



Epilogue

The Burning Isle

Additional magical communication with Carlyetta informing her of recent events yields a plea to make haste to the Burning Isle to relieve the expedition there. Contact has been lost and she is concerned that installation of the cyclopean runes may have put Faerilon and his companions at risk. As *Autumn Leaves* speeds toward its destination, the heroes reflect on their adventures (as defined by their community points total at the conclusion of this quest).

[22 or more community points]

The great volcano of the Burning Isle comes into view over the horizon. Also known as the Isle of Pestilence, you yearn to drive forth the sickness there as you have the seeds of mistrust, back room dealings, and hidden agendas from all you have touched in Picollo during your adventures thus far. Carlyetta has returned to the true worship of the goddess and even those of you who pray to other gods can see that your actions have helped countless other Fallen Leaves to once again feel the Great Mother's blessed tears of joy. The fate of the final temple stands as a symbol of renewed hope and revived traditions in the homeland of the halflings; you greet the challenge with the eagerness and purpose of true heroes, shaping the course of Aventyr itself.

[16-21 community points]

The great volcano of the Burning Isle comes into view over the horizon. Also known as the Isle of Pestilence, you wonder if the sickness there will prove as resilient as the mistrust, back room dealings, and hidden agendas all you have discovered in Picollo during your adventures thus far. Carlyetta has returned to the true worship of the goddess but too few have joined her on this journey—the tears of the Great Mother must surely be ones of sadness as she weeps for her Fallen Leaves, praying that they do not scatter too far from the path. The fate of the final temple presents one last chance of renewed hope and revived traditions in the homeland of the halflings. Will you greet the challenge with the eagerness and purpose of true heroes, or will the weight of such responsibility grind you into the bedrock, as did the fall of the Dracoprime to Picollo so many centuries ago?

[Less than 16 community points]

Breath of the goddess indeed! These halflings are a people with little hope of redemption, perfect for those who revel in the uncertainty and chaos of an unpredictable land. Opportunity certainly exists for those who would seize it—the wee folk are easily manipulated, lacking in tradition and weak in ties of kinship. A strong Picollan, halfling, or even an immigrant might easily rise to prominence in such a setting and bend the islanders to his will. The final temple nears; you anticipate that the treasure and fame that await you there far outweigh any benefits granted by the weak-willed priest Carlyetta, for you foresee the time when you are the patron, the cleric and her order among your many vassals.

Experience Point Awards

PCs earn experience based on the encounters and challenges faced. The adventure path is designed to advance the PCs one level per adventure. Feel free to increase the party's level or award bonus experience if they are having a tough time with the encounters.

Advance the PCs to 9th level (via XP granted as story rewards) in preparation for the fourth module in the *Shattered Hearts* Adventure Path: *Crucible of Faith*.



Appendix A New Monsters

Drakhalfryda

Huge monstrosity, chaotic evil
Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 172 (15d12 + 75)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20(+5)	12(+1)	20(+5)	2(-4)	10(+0)	7(-2)

Skills Perception +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages -
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Amphibious. The Drakhalfryda can breathe air and water.

Multiple Torsos. The Drakhalfryda has five torsos made up of consumed halflings. While it has more than one torso, it has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

Whenever the drakhalfryda takes 25 or more damage in a single turn, one of its torsos dies. If all its torsos die, the drakhalfryda dies.

At the end of its turn, it regrows two torsos for each of its torsos that were destroyed this turn, unless it has taken cold or lightning damage since its last turn. The drakhalfryda

regains 10 hit points for each torso regrown in this way.
Reactive Body. For each torso the drakhalfryda has beyond one, it gets an extra reaction that can be used only for opportunity attacks.

Too Many Arms. As long as the drakhalfryda has more than one torso, it may give up one slam attack to grant advantage on the next slam attack, if that attack hits it deals an extra 7 (2d6) points of piercing damage as one of the arms stabs you with a bone shiv.

Wakeful. While the drakhalfryda sleeps, at least one of its torsos is awake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drakhalfryda makes as many slam attacks as it has torsos.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.
Hit: 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

A sticky membrane binds a pile of stone, turf, and debris together. The rumbling mass sprouts skeletal and preserved halfling body parts, including five complete torsos and heads on neck-like stalks of detritus. The heads speak to each other while slamming themselves into their prey.

Drakhalfrydas consist of a mash-up of halfling corpses suspended in the magical membrane of the Dracoprime's inner anatomy, given strength and support by the rocky debris forming its armor. A drakhalfryda incorporates the newly slain bodies of its prey into its existence, and some even sport torsos from other races.



Appendix B

New Items and Spells

Bloom of Life

Wondrous item, very rare

This ephemeral rose is crafted from wisps of cloud and wind, comfortably nestling into the user's hair or behind the ear. A creature slain while wearing a *bloom of life* receives the benefits of a *revivify* spell. The bloom may be removed at will, but may not be worn again by any creature for 24 hours. The bloom dissipates when used.



Smuggler's Panniers

Wondrous item, uncommon

This 4 ft. high wicker basket (fitted with straps for attaching to a donkey's pack or wearing as a backpack) can hold one animal up to Large size, shrinking the creature to fit within its confines. The user must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Handle Animal) check to use the device and when loaded, *smuggler's panniers* weigh 50 pounds. No sound of the creature penetrate the exterior, and magical detection rarely works. These are often used to smuggle exotic creatures through borders and city gates, and the basket contains a false panel at the top (usually filled with grain or dry goods) that is difficult to detect (DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check).



Bracers of the Winds

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

These silver bracers are inscribed with divine symbols to the air aspect of the Great Mother. Once per short rest the wearer may call forth a *gust of wind* as per the spell. Once per long rest the wearer may clang together the bracers and create an effect that allows them to control the wind within a 300-foot burst, centered on the wearer, for one minute. The wearer may summon forth light or strong winds, or decrease the current wind conditions by any amount. The *bracers of the winds* also act exactly like a *feather fall* spell and activate immediately if the wearer falls more than 10 feet.



Taster's Spectacles

Wondrous item, uncommon

These wire-frame lenses allow the wearer to detect the presence of poison in food, on objects. In addition, the wearer can catalog tastes they've experienced, able to make any edible food seem to taste like whatever they desire once per day (this does not change the actual food in any way, merely the cosmetic perception of it that the wearer experiences and any saves or effects associated with the food remain unchanged).



Breathing Fangs

Wondrous item, common

These false teeth slip easily into the mouth and allow the wearer to breathe water for 1 hour. After an hour the magic fades and the item loses all magic potency.



Vanishing Sandals

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

The straps on this footwear are woven from seaweed and dried jellyfish tentacles. A creature wearing *vanishing sandals* is able to become invisible for up to 1 minute. This ability refreshes daily at midnight.



Hurricane Quarterstaff

Weapon(quarterstaff), rare (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage with this magic weapon.

This magical quarterstaff had holes bored through the strengthened oak wood that whistle and scream when the staff slices through the air. Once per long rest the wielder can spin the staff with great speed creating a whirlwind. Treat this effect as though casting *gust of wind* (save DC 14) and lasting for up to 3 rounds as long as the wielder uses an action to keep spinning the weapon. If a monk wields this weapon, the magical bonus to attack and damage increases to +2 and the monk may use 1 ki point to use the *gust of wind* effect.



Death's Blessing

Wondrous item, very rare

The edges of this red rose are black with decay. A creature slain while wearing *death's blessing* receives the benefits of a *revivify* spell. The target must make an immediate DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. If the save fails and the wearer is slain again in the next day, she may not be brought back to life again without direct deific intervention (*wish/miracle*). Removing the bloom once worn requires a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. *Death's blessing* takes precedence over other similar items (such as the *bloom of life*) and activates its magic first. The rose petals blacken and fall off the stem when the item is used or removed.



New Spell

Dødeligaton

3rd-level transmutation



Casting Time: 1 action

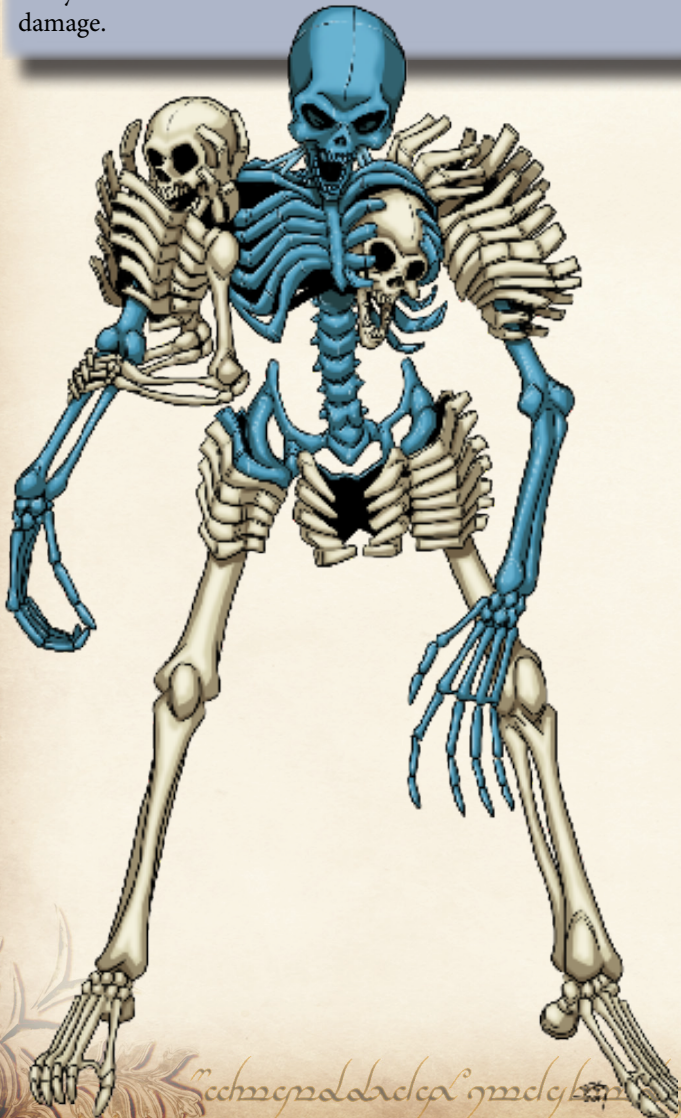
Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (boots sized for a Medium creature)

Duration: 1 hour or until dispelled

As part of the casting of this spell, you join the bodies of yourself and two other undead creatures (either dødelig, Small skeletons or Medium skeletons). Your size increases to Large, granting you advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, 3d10 temporary hit points, and your melee attacks deal an extra 1d8 damage. The other two creatures formed into your body have heads that poke out on either side from you and if capable of speech, may do so freely, but can take no other actions. If you are dropped to 0 hit points or less, the spell immediately ends and the two other creatures appear beside you, completely unharmed.

At higher levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, you may join with six other creatures to increase your size to Huge. You gain advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, 6d10 temporary hit points, and your melee attacks have 10-foot reach and deal an extra 2d8 damage.



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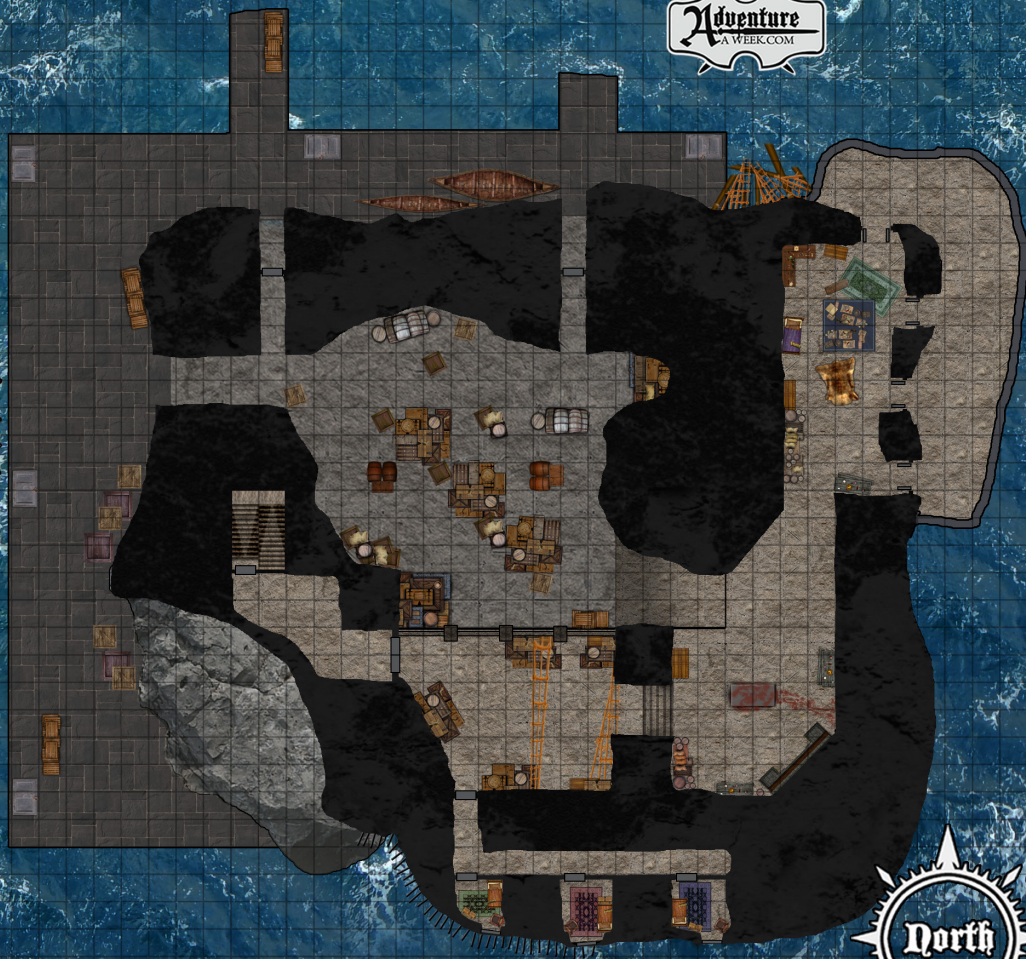
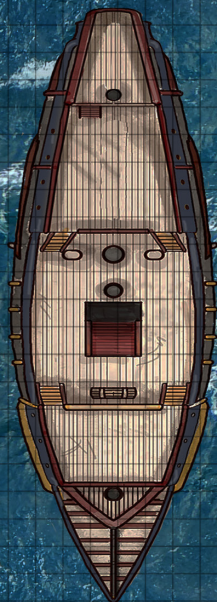
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Հայկական լեզուով գրված տեքստ, որը գտնվում է ծախսի վերին շերտի վրա:

THE NORTHERN ARCH



AREA D THE NORTHERN ARCH



10' 20'

SCALE IN FEET

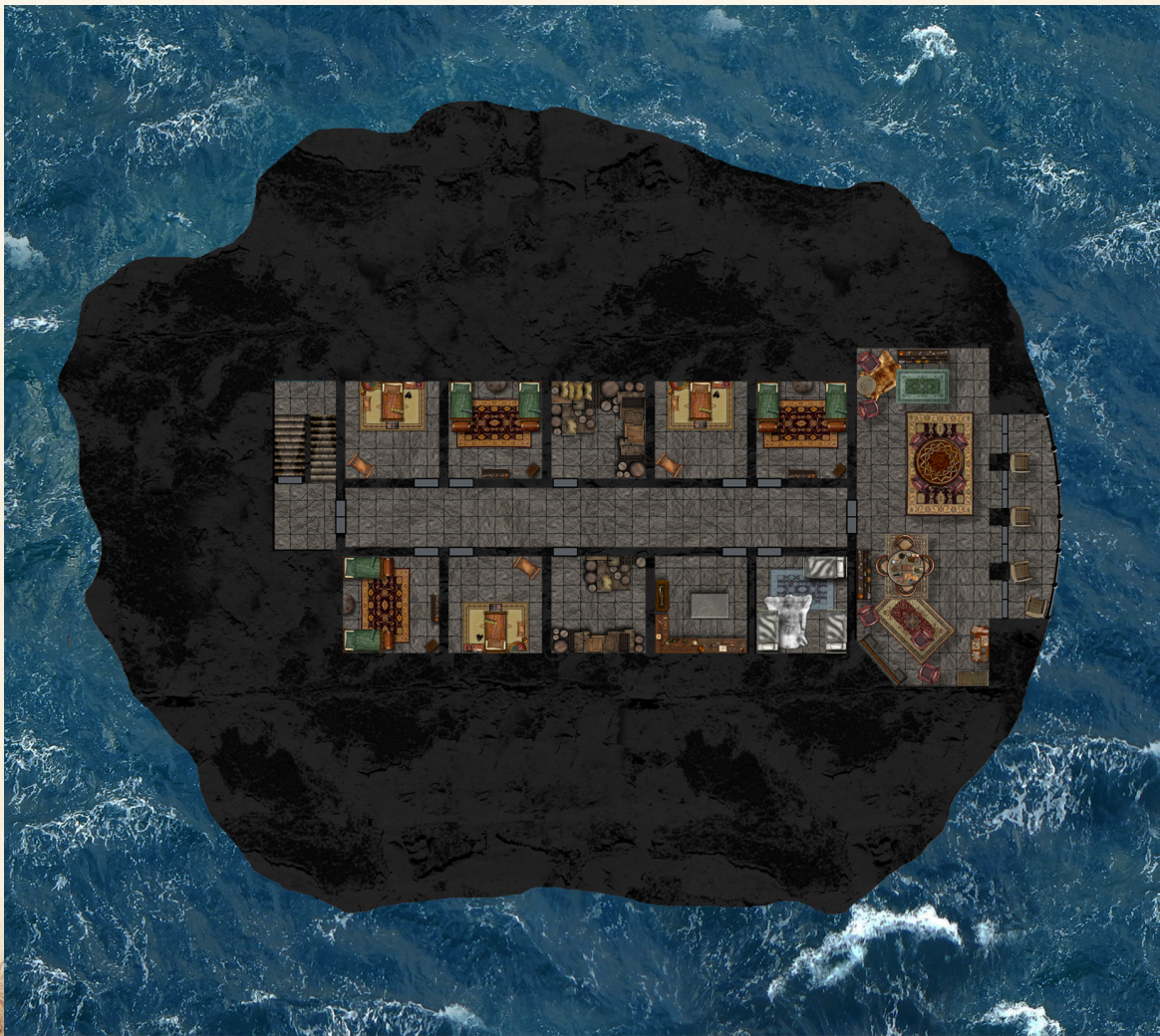
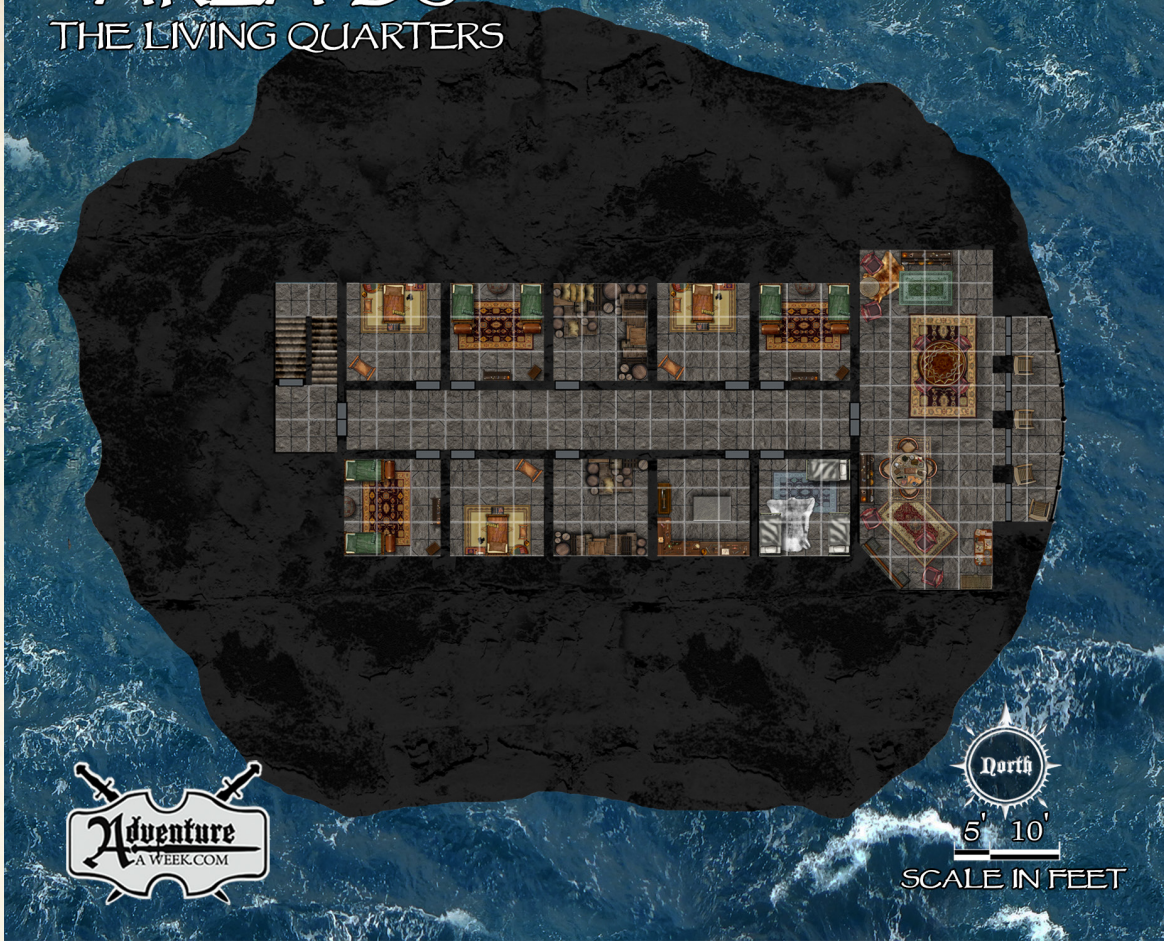
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Հայկական լեզուով գրված տեքստ, որը գտնվում է ծախսի աջակողմյան շերտի վրա:



AREA D3

THE LIVING QUARTERS



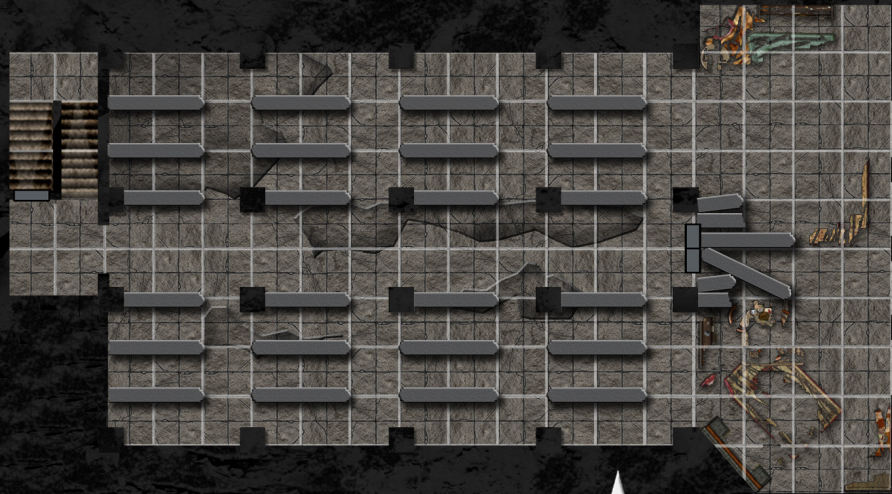
AREA D4

THE SHATTERED HALL

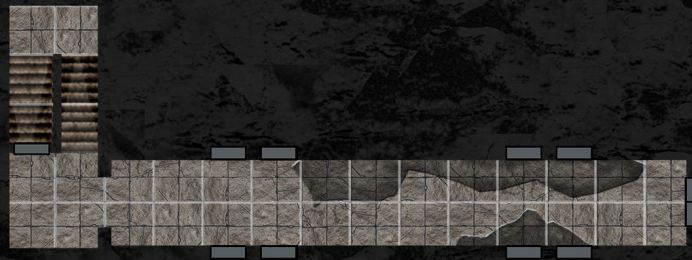


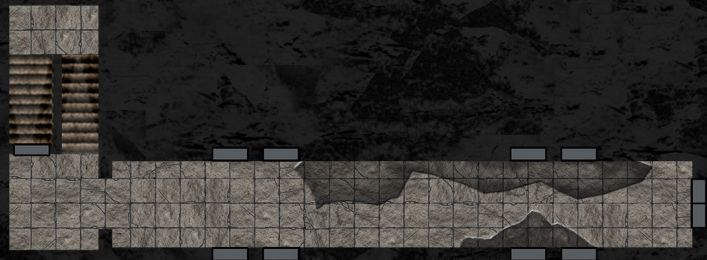
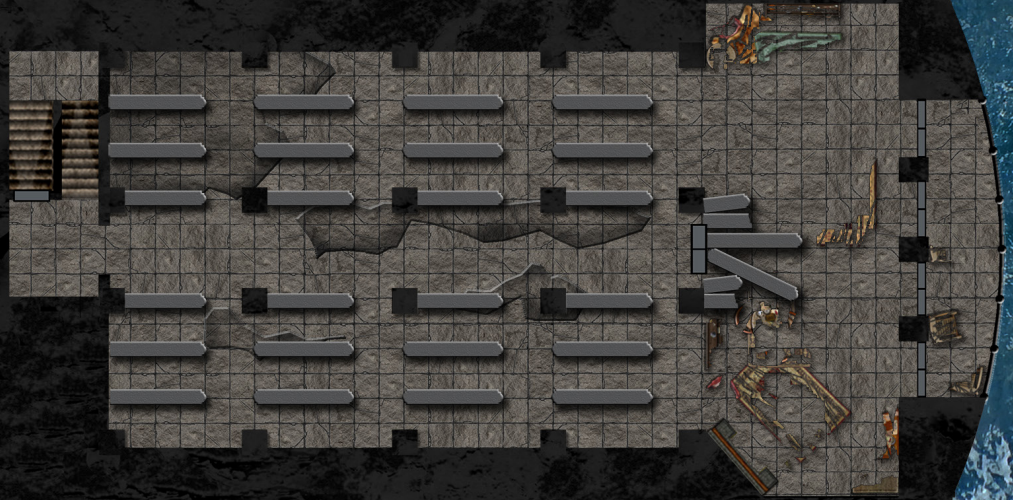
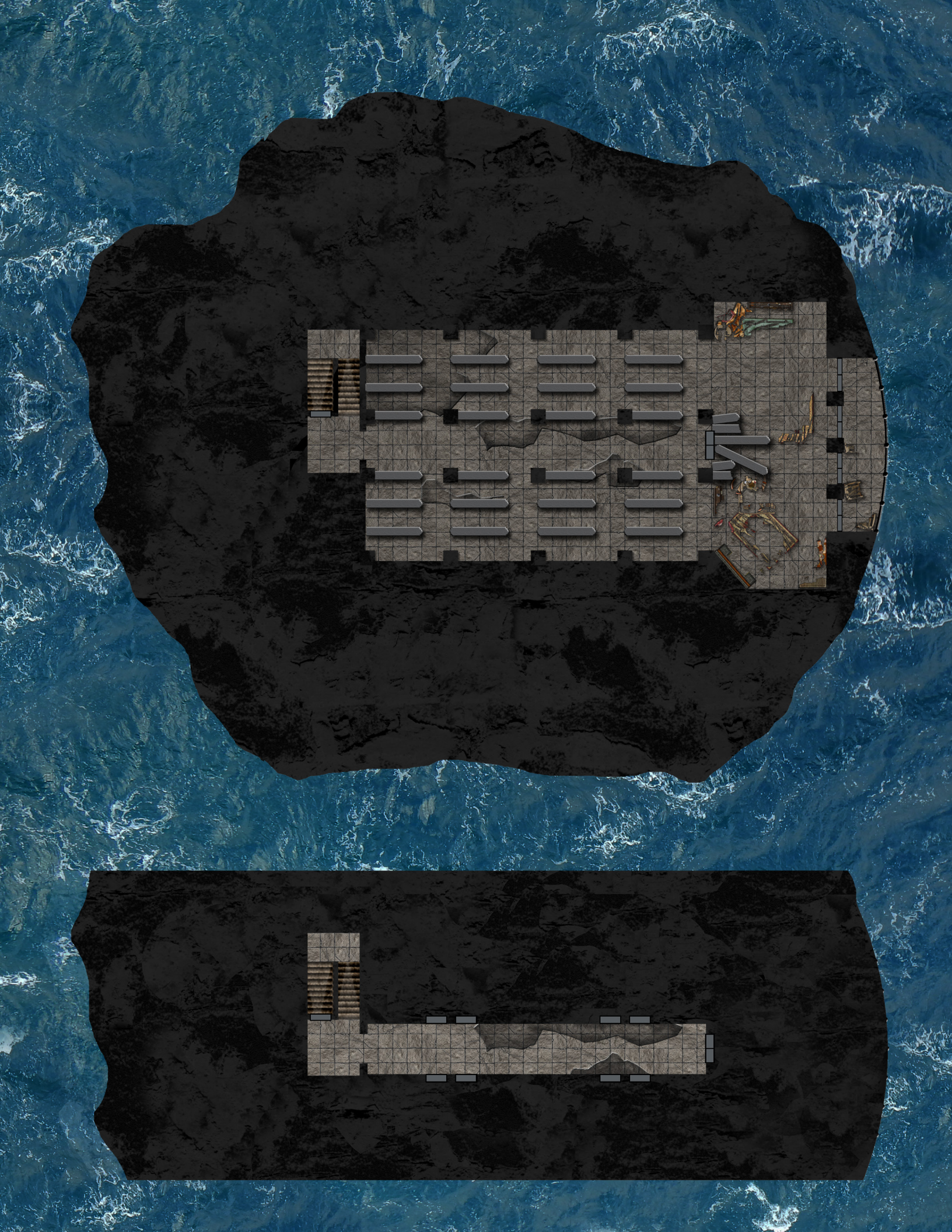
AREA D5

THE LIBRARY

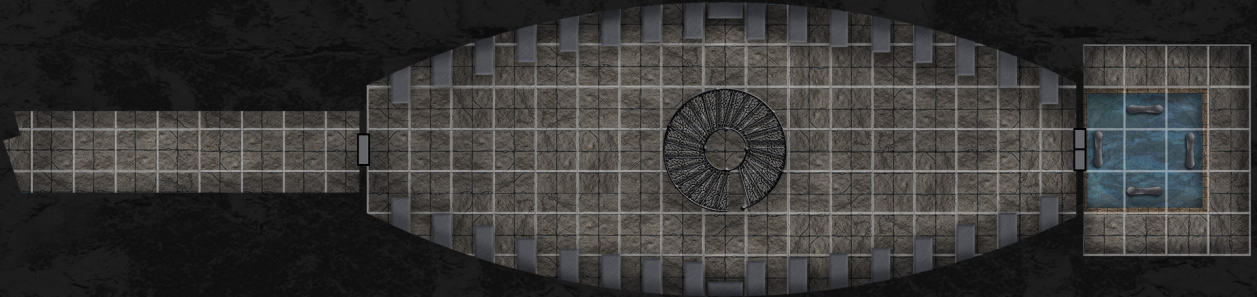


SCALE IN FEET

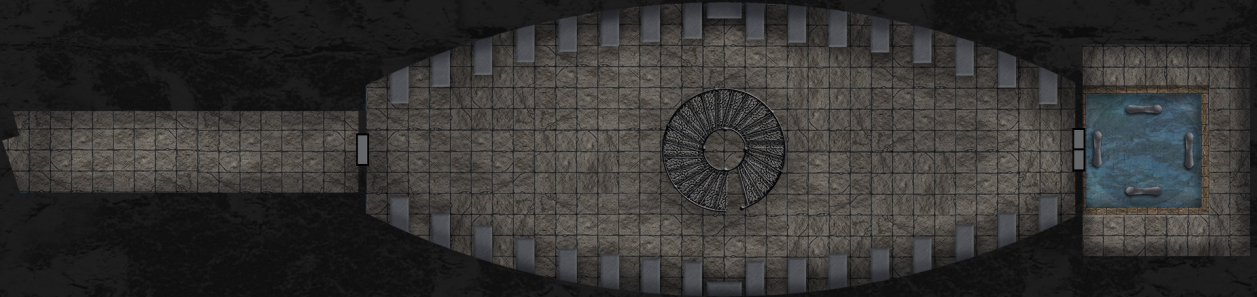




AREA D6 THE MAUSOLEUM



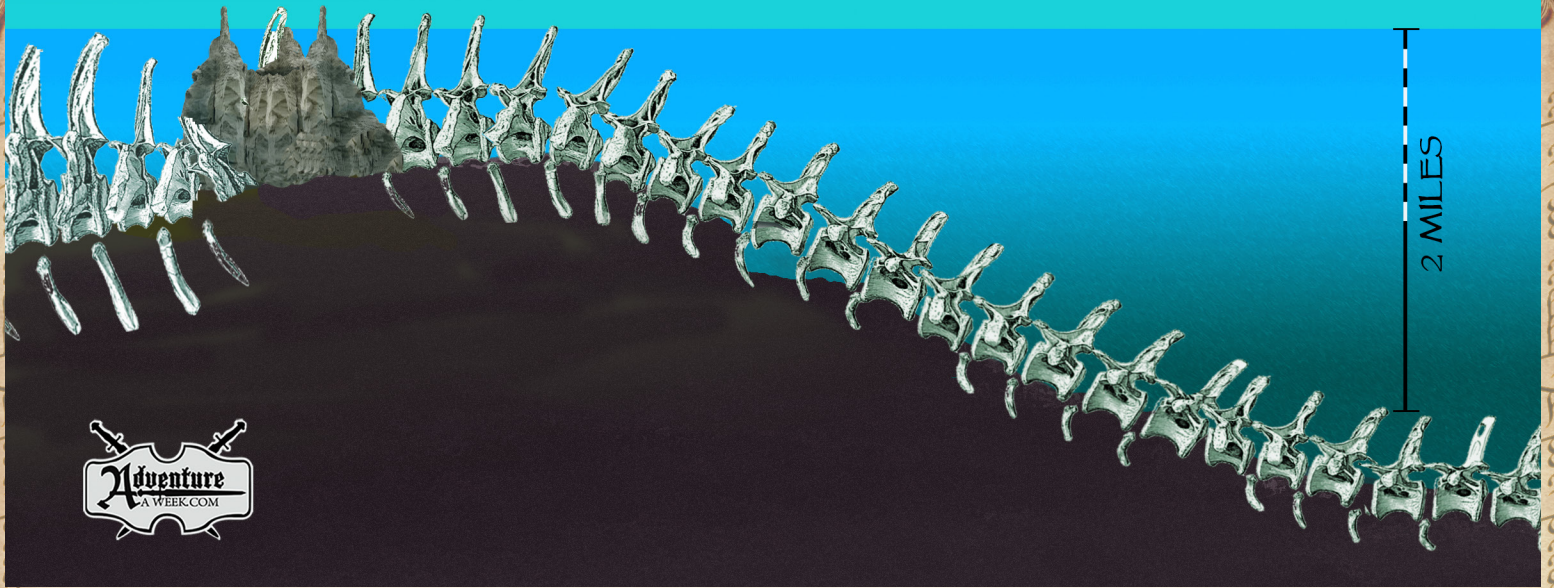
5' 10'
SCALE IN FEET



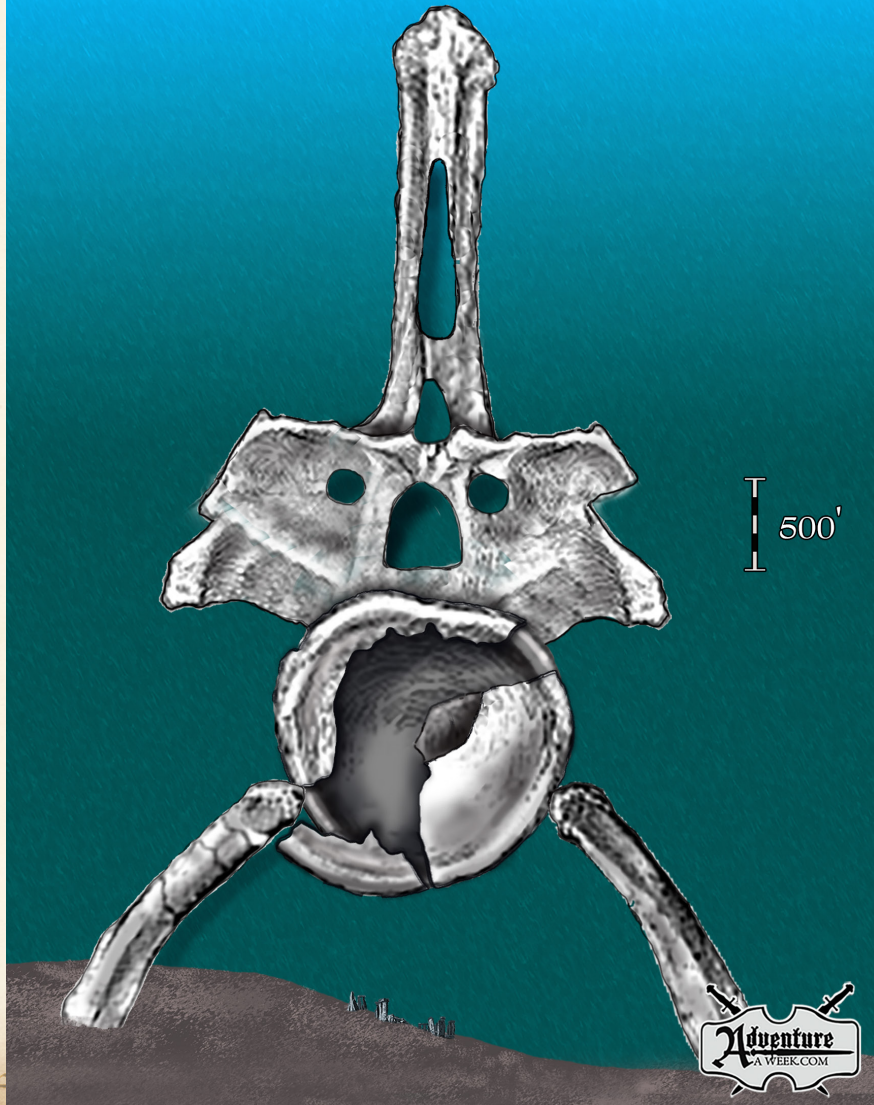
համբարձարձար համբարձար համբարձար ձար համբար յարձար

THE TEMPLE OF AIR
1/2 MILE

THE SPINE OF THE DRAGON



HOME OF THE DODELIG



ENCOUNTER G

BROKEN MEMBRANE

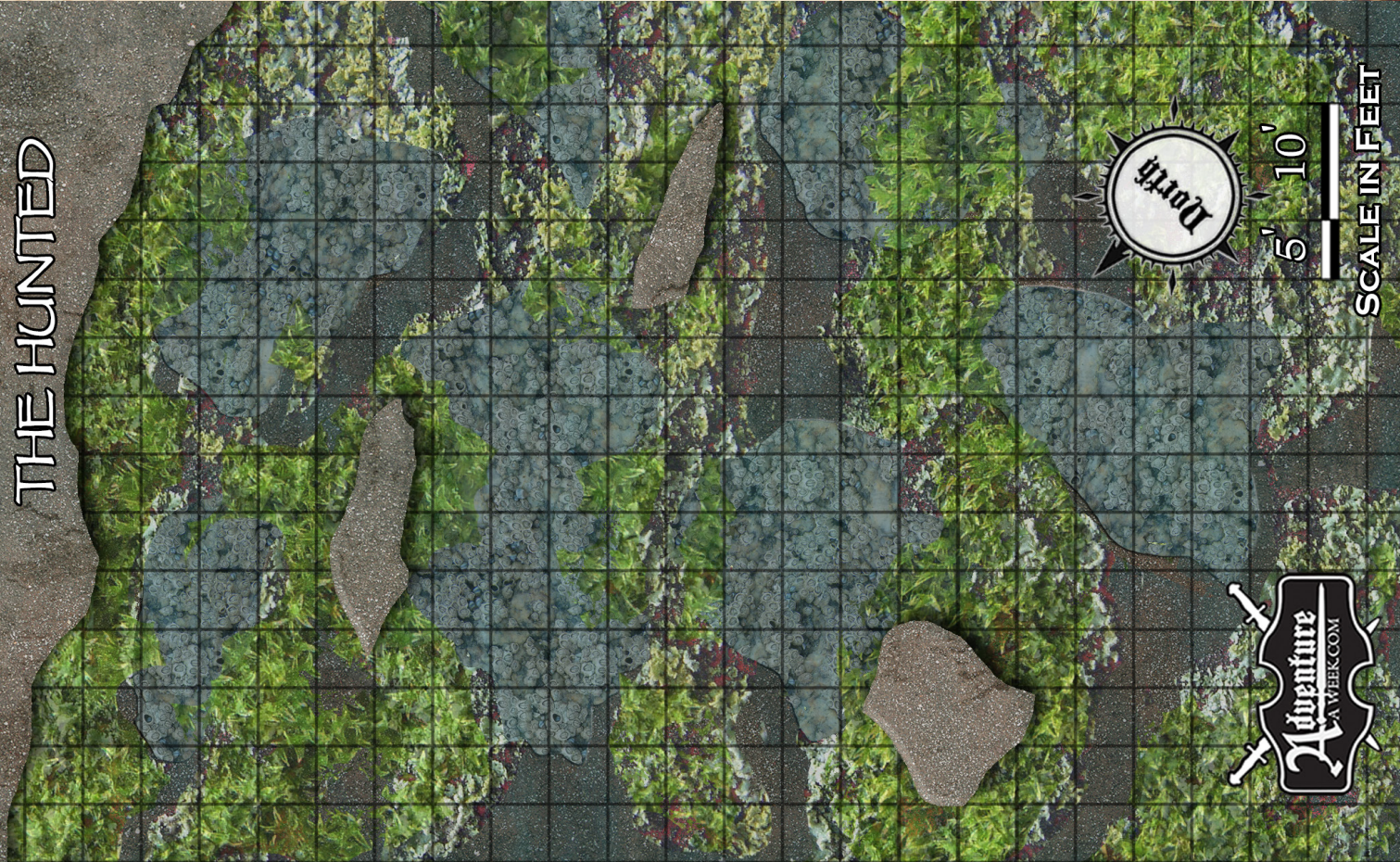


SCALE IN FEET

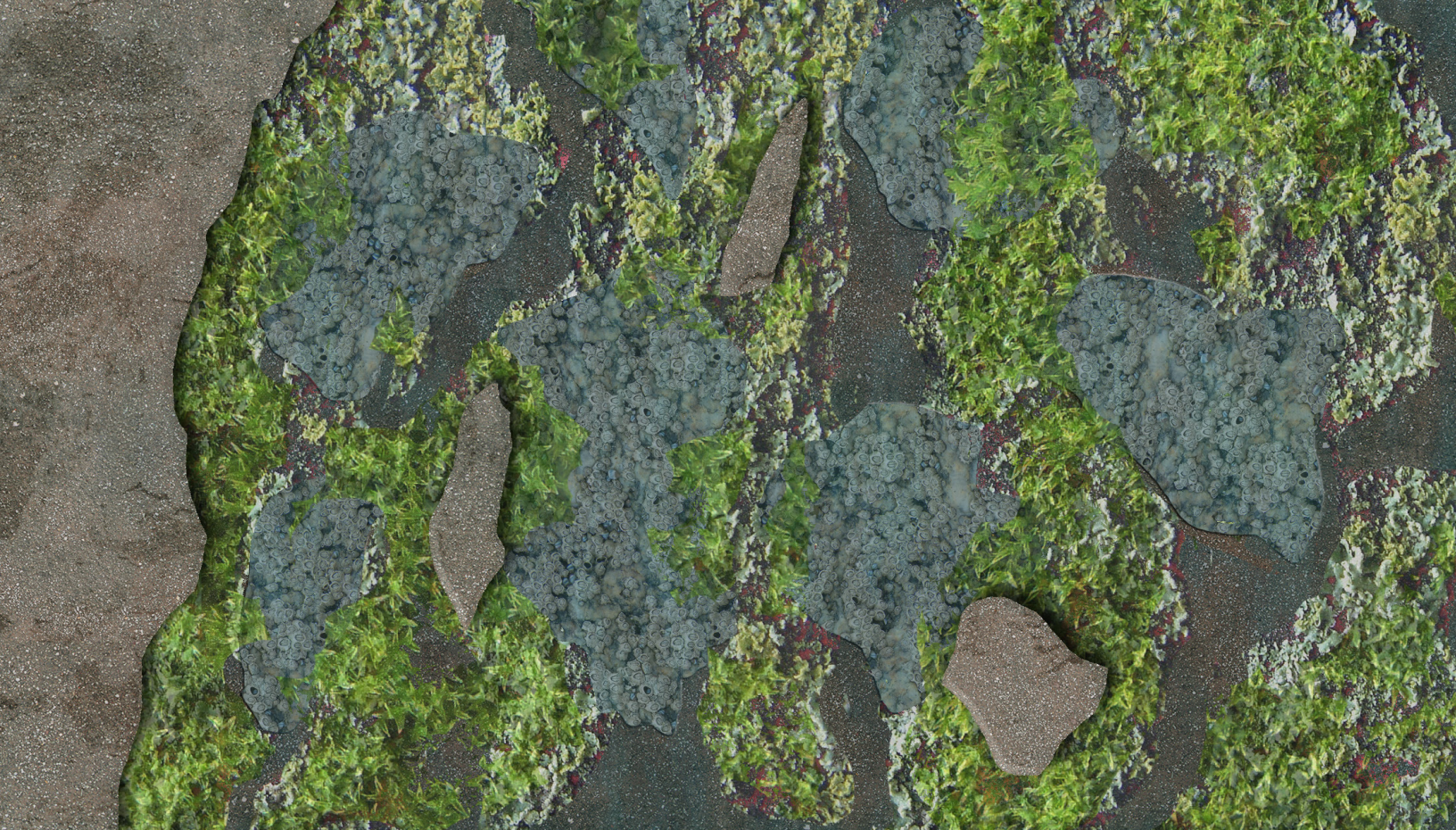


ENCOUNTER H

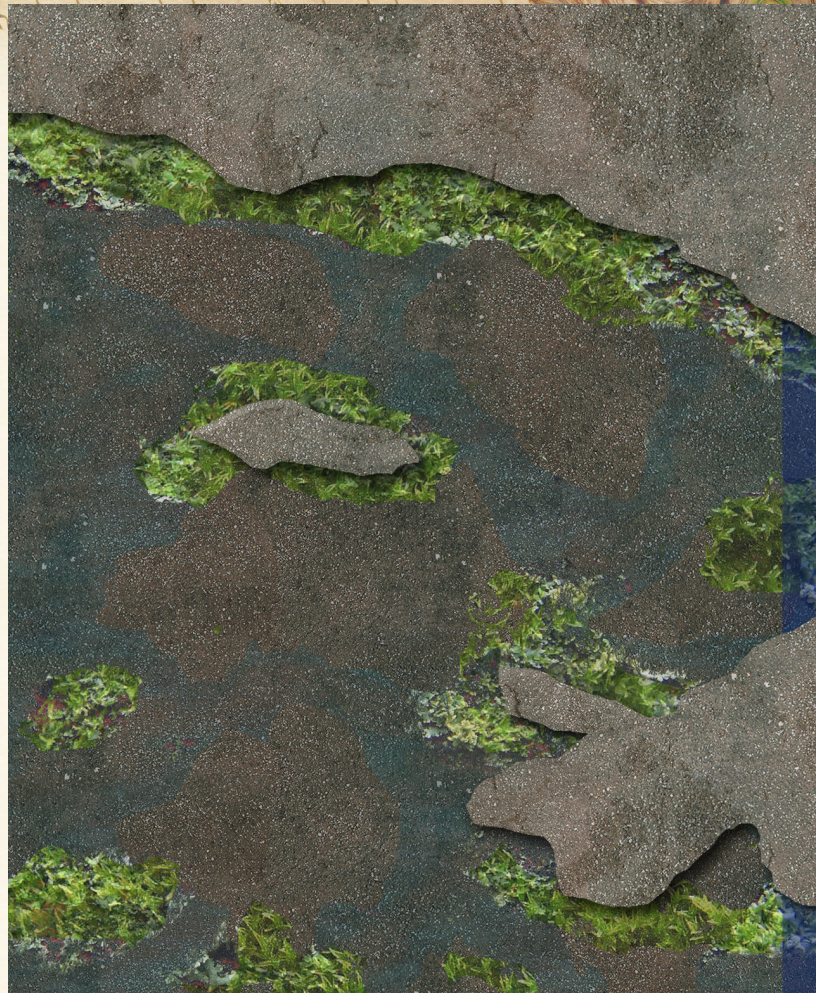
THE HUNTED



SCALE IN FEET



ENCOUNTER I THE HUNTERS



ENCOUNTER J CULT OF DEATH



ENCOUNTER K

FALSE GOD



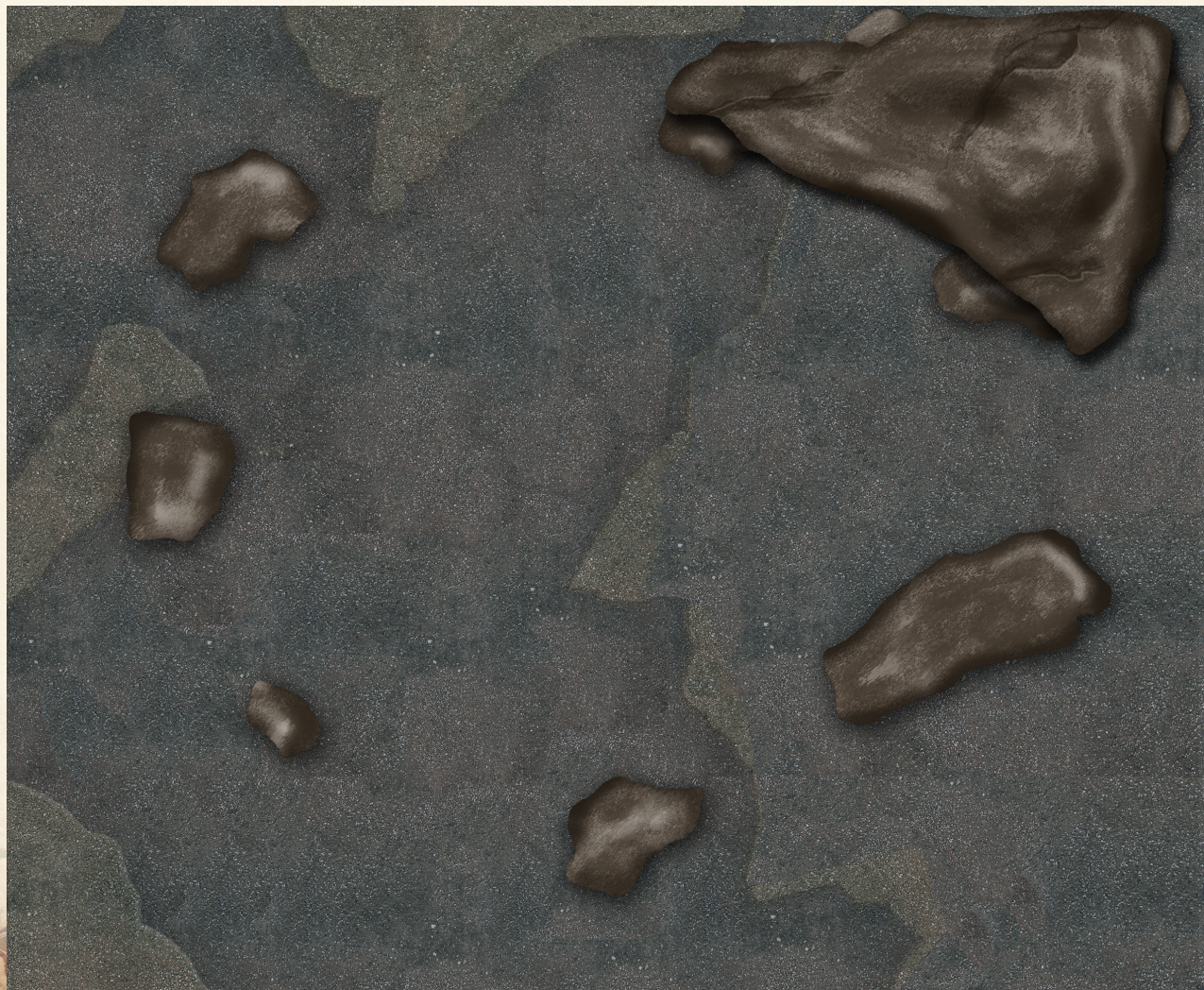
ENCOUNTER 1

LEGACY OF THE ONE EYE



5' 10'

SCALE IN FEET



CONCLUSION

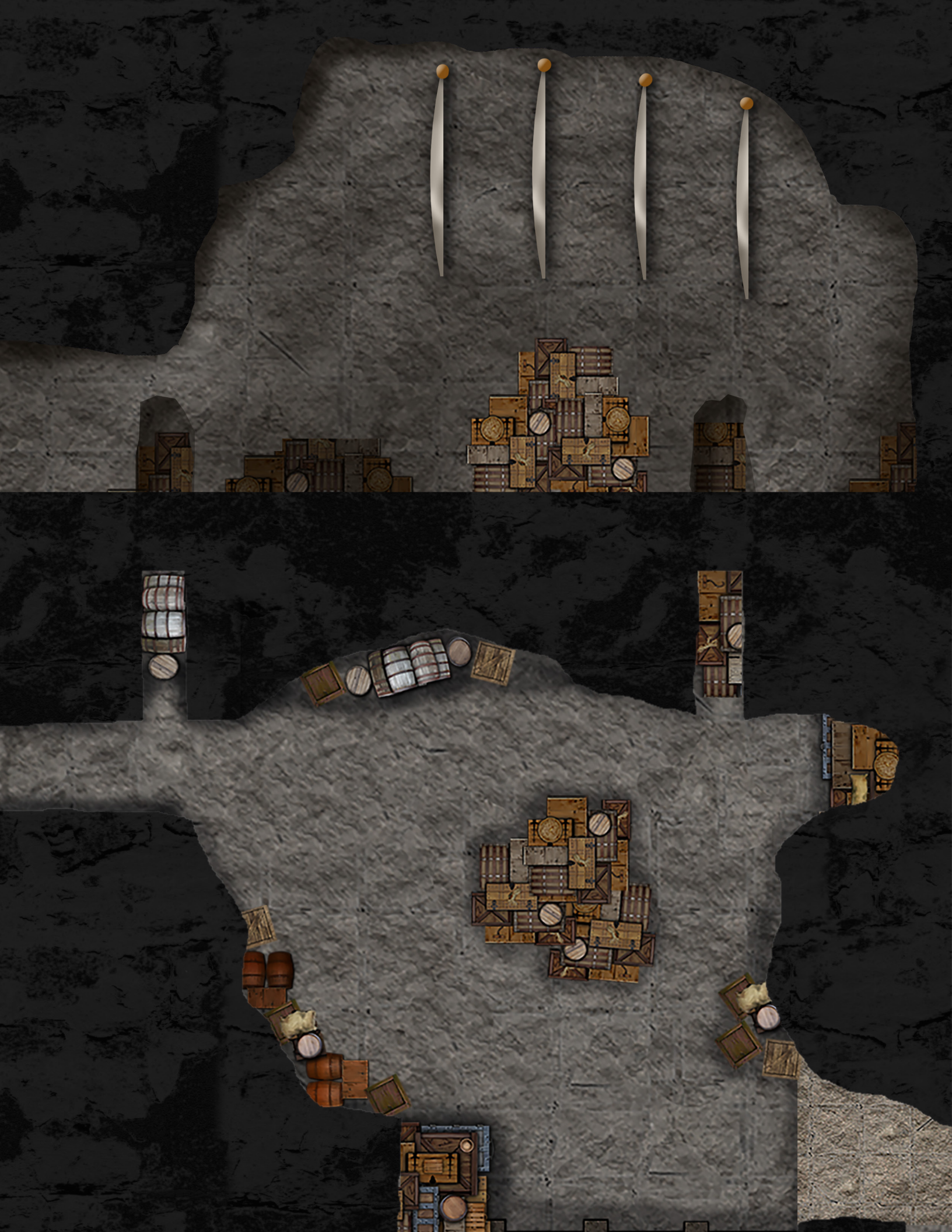
THE MEDDLER UNMASKED



5' 10'

SCALE IN FEET





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THE BREATH OF THE GODDESS

BY MICHAEL ALLEN

A tale of madness, death, life, and revelation for 4-5 8th level player characters.

The ancient worship of the Great Mother continues its renaissance on the broken island of halfling Picollo. Will the engineers of its rebirth fall prey to heresy and false promise, or with they stand true to the tenets of community and joy?

The lost archipelago of Picollo now lies under the waves deep in the southern seas, buried under the body of the Dracoprime. In the area known as The Spine of the Dragon, the ancient temple to the air aspect of the Great Mother still stands, shrouded in mystery and superstition. A mission to reclaim the site shortly after the end of the Hoyrall Wars was aborted prematurely without discovering the fate of the priests once serving the goddess at this mystical site. The madness of the past seeks to trap the heroes as they venture forth to uncover the mysteries therein, and the madness of the present seeks to hide the truths lurking under the breath of the goddess.

Also included in this adventure:

- Engineering puzzles and challenges to test the monument building skills of your players.
- A new monster, the Drakhalfryda: a terrible byproduct of the Dracoprime's plummet into southern Aventyr.
- Five new magic items and two magical boons (for those willing to pay the price).
- A method to track the PCs' influence on the future development of Picollan society.

