

Death on the Water

A Tomb of Annihilation Adventure

A priestess of Umberlee plans to sacrifice the characters, the crew, and the innocent passengers aboard the *Wave Reaver*. They must survive her and the storm that follows. *Death on the Water* makes an adventure out of any trip over water, from Port Nyanzaru to the Snout of Omgar, or anywhere in between.

A Two-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters

by SD Gibson



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

©2016 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

Wave Reaver

It amazes me. They say Chult's jungle is bad. They haven't been on the water! Lots of creatures will eat you in the jungle, yes. But you won't be drowning at the same time!

—Krusk, *A Half-Orc's Adventures in Chult*

Part 1. All Aboard

The adventure can begin at any time in Port Nyanzaru. Some guides, for example, might recommend sailing along the coast rather than traveling directly through the jungle or by canoe.

On the Dock

When the adventurers arrive at the *Wave Reaver*, read:

The crew of the *Wave Reaver* busily moves over the ship, directed by the shouts of a sunburned human named Ander Helder, the first mate. Dinosaurs lift cargo, turn, and set it down deep within the hold, through wide openings on the deck. Once the ship has all its freight, heavy grating, lacquered and shined, will cover the openings. Ropes are coiled neatly, the deck has been scrubbed clean, sails are tightly bound to yardarms. Bolts for the ballistae at each corner of the stern are neatly stacked. The woman you know as Captain Azul Jaharwon stands near the helm joking with the harbor master.

Roleplaying Jaharwon

Captain Azul Jaharwon (CG female Chultan human **swashbuckler**) is quiet, observant, and deadly. A retired adventurer, Jaharwon has the Death Curse. Having heard the same rumors as the characters, she arrived in Chult hoping to find a cure, but she has become too ill

to search effectively herself. An excellent source of rumors, Jaharwon will share information with any band of adventurers she thinks have a chance to end the curse. She wears a yellow handkerchief to hide a scar that rings her neck. Having paid for cures that have failed, *Wave Reaver* is her only home, though she has another source of income.

Jaharwon's peg leg contains the tightly curled deed to Warehouse #13 in Port Nyanzaru. To claim the property, and the income it generates, characters present the deed to any of the merchant princes at Goldenthrones. Depending on their dispositions toward the party, different (or no) "ownership transfer fees" may apply. **Quote:** "Stay calm. I know how to kill our enemies."

A deck plan for boats like the *Wave Reaver* can be found in appendix C of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Roleplaying Helder

First Mate Ander Helder's (CG Uthgardt human **berserker**). Ander Helder's sunburned face and hands are alarmingly red. He constantly forgets a wide-brimmed hat which would protect his skin. The hat can be seen randomly around the ship. Usually, Helder can be found at the greatest possible distance from the hat aboard. Jaharwon constantly reminds him to wear it. Helder and Jaharwon are friendly and patient with any questions party members might have, but will interrupt them at least once to yell directions to the crew. When she dies, he will take her body to their cabin, enter, and lock the door.

Quote: "Yes, wind does fill the sails— Hey! Take that to the galley! The galley!"

The rest of the crew consists of seven **bandits**, and two **thugs** of various ethnicities. Appropriate names for crew members include Amnon, Sutha, Jasmal Rein, Wellby Underbough, Caelynn Iphelkiir, Amber Frostbeard, Osaw Dawa, Fipyra Oboko, Razira Agolo.

Perceptive party member may notice a **tressym** watching them from the riggings high above the deck. Named Sky, it was the familiar of a companion of Helder and Jaharwon who has died. Each night, Sky swoops down on four **giant rats** that search the deck for scraps of food.

The party also notices three other travelers preparing to walk up the plank onto the ship.

Fellow Travelers

Read the following as the adventures board:

Three travelers join you on the plank leading to the ship. Two travel together. Of those two, one is a middle-aged human female with waist-length tangled black hair. She does not like you. With her is a much younger human female, who is clearly her daughter. They both wear long black robes. The older woman doesn't acknowledge the younger girl's existence, except to push her to the ship. The third traveler is a Turtle, apparently traveling alone. She has a quarterstaff. Nets hang from her neck, almost forming a shawl.

Roleplaying Shandri and Rowan Shamblecrown

Shandri Shamblecrown is a polite young girl. She is absolutely fascinated by the **tressym**. If the adventurers talk to her, it is all she will talk about, watching for it

constantly. Every conversation with her slowly turns back towards the **tressym**. Around her mother Rowan, she will not speak.

Quote: "Have you ever seen a cat like it! So beautiful. And it flies!"

Rowan Shamblecrown is dismissive and slightly antagonistic whenever an adventurer speaks to her. She is a priestess of Umberlee. A high passive perception or successful perception check above DC 15 reveals a tattoo of Umberlee's symbol on the nape of her neck.

Quote: "Do not talk to me. I did not talk to you. Do not talk to me."

If Aremag rises out of the bay, Rowan silently pulls a gem from her robes. Bright green and the size of her head, she throws it to the dragon turtle, satisfying him.

How involved the Turtle is depends on the needs of the adventurers.

Roleplaying Gar

Gar was raised by Lathanderan clerics and acolytes. All she knows of her origin is that she was left at the Rose Portal of Lathander in Baldur's Gate. She is a far traveler returning home in an effort to understand her history. Specifically, she is making her way to the Snout of Omgar. Gar's disposition will lead her to take the oath of redemption as paladin. As a result, the only creatures she will initiate combat with are undead, demonic, or devilish. In other combat situations, her first attack is always with one of her nets. Gar always tries to persuade until she has been hit.

Quote: "How can I help?"

Part 2. Developments

The Death Curse

On the first day the coast is no longer visible, Jaharwon dies quietly, her body draped over the helm or wheel of her ship. One of the adventurers should be the first to notice. Helder takes her to their cabin and locks the door behind him.

The Crew

Almost immediately after Jaharwon has died and Helder has locked himself in their cabin, the rest of the crew begins bickering. While the bickering never becomes truly violent, it is loud and frightening. Crew members will shove each other and swear like sailors. By no more than the next day, their arguments have obviously stalled the ship's progress.

The crew can be divided into at least three loosely structured groups, none with enough members to successfully run the ship. Group membership is extremely fluid. Crew members argue about, for example, past romantic relationships, at least one game of chance, the future of Chult, Death Curse rumors, their respective workloads, and who last did which chore. Characters with especially high passive perception scores might hear whispers about searching for “the deed.” They might notice crew members examining the helm or wheel especially carefully for it. The neatness that characterized the *Wave Reaver* quickly disappears.

Encourage players to roleplay and discover their own creative ways of solving the problem of a stalled journey. Adventurers might try the following:

- Use a Charisma (Performance) check to bluff a crew member into action. By appearing to know how to sail, the

character may shame the crew into action.

- Use a Charisma (Intimidate) check to shock a crew member into action.
- Use a Charisma (Persuade) check to convince a crew member they need to work together so they will be paid or reach a port before everyone runs out of food, for example.
- Use an Intelligence (History) check to remind them of the dangers of being adrift in these waters.
- Use a Charisma (Persuade) at disadvantage due to his grief to bring Helder out of his cabin and take control of his crew. Roll checks that mention the fate of the *Wave Reaver* specifically normally. Checks that mention the *Wave Reaver* and Jaharwon or just Jaharwon remain at disadvantage.
- Use *charm person* or *command* or *friendship* to influence the crew. If crew members know a spell has been cast on them and failed, they inform other members of the crew. Efforts to influence the crew after are rolled at disadvantage.

Three successes (using a DC 13 when required) using any of the methods above—or similar approaches—will unite the crew enough for it to function. Characters with backgrounds related to sailing or similar activities gain advantage in their attempts to move the crew to effective action. Gar will help adventurers in their efforts, unless those efforts involve violence or threats.

Rowan refuses to help and briefly smiles at the arguments instead. She quickly and quietly disappears to the remotest part of the ship as the crew quarrels with each other.

Umberlee

Immediately after the adventurers try three ways of solving the problem of divisions among the crew—whether those attempts succeed or fail—Shandri Shamblecrown will attempt to speak to one of the adventurers. She will tug on the sleeve of the adventurer with the highest Intelligence first. If she can't get that character's attention, she'll turn to the character with the next highest Intelligence and so on. Once she has an adventurer's attention, she will whisper, "My mother is trying to kill us all." She explains that her mother plans to sacrifice the ship and everyone aboard to Umberlee. "There will be a storm," she says. Shandri doesn't want this to happen, but she won't fight against her mother.

When one of or the entire party finds her, Rowan Shamblecrown will just have finished a ritual. On the floor surround her are a shallow bowl of sea water mixed with several types of humanoid blood, long strands of dozens of types of seaweed wrapped around bones, ten **crawling claws**, and empty vials. Laughing, she will immediately attack the characters.

On the second round of combat with Rowan, the deck begins churning as the storm she summoned begins tossing the *Wave Reaver*.

The Storm

Within the boat, perhaps fighting Rowan Shamblecrown, characters feel the influence of the storm.

The floor shifts underneath your feet. From one steep angle, it twists to another, then seems to drop. The *Wave Reaver* creaks loudly around you.

Any characters who may have remained on the deck turn to discover a massive storm has appeared.

From the surface of the water to as high as you can see and from the horizon on your left to the horizon on your right, is a colossal wall of dark clouds. You see distant lightning. The waves are steeper around the boat, capped with white foam. Wind shoves you like a threatening thug. It begins to scream at you. The sails snap loudly, wood cries, and the crew curses.

At the **end** of their turns, characters will need to roll saving throws to not to be knocked prone. They choose between Athletics and Acrobatics.

- The difficulty of standing increases each turn as the storm continues. For example, during the first turn once the storm begins, staying standing is very easy, so characters need only roll a 5 or better to remain standing. The second character's turn requires a ten, and so on.

Footing in the Storm

Turn	Task Difficulty	DC
1	Very Easy	5
2	Easy	10
3	Medium	15
4	Hard	20
5	Very Hard	25
6	Nearly Impossible	30

- If characters are on the deck, a critical fail sweeps them into the ocean.
- In addition to being prone, with each failed roll there is a 50% chance characters will take one or two points of damage (1d4 -2) from being thrown around on or inside the ship.

Rather than being excessively bound by saving throws, reward players for ingenious

ways of avoiding this damage (casting *web* on themselves or on others, for example). Whether they are on the deck or inside the *Wave Reaver*, characters can tie themselves to the ship's mast or to struts within the ship.

Prone characters attack with disadvantage, and are attacked with advantage.

Having either united the crew enough that they will function together or having persuaded Helder out of his cabin gives characters +5 on these saving throws as the crew works to control the ship.

Rowan Shamblecrown, as a result of her devotion, cannot be knocked prone by the storm. She always attacks prone characters first and fights to her death.

The Aftermath

The aftermath of the storm begins soon after Rowan Shamblecrown's death. The nature of the aftermath depends on either a die roll or larger campaign plans. Uniting the crew or persuading Helder out before the storm gives + 2 to rolls made on this table.

1-5 The *Wave Reaver* capsizes.

As the boat flips over, characters are thrown prone to the ceiling if inside the ship or into the storm if they are on deck.

If they are inside the ship, characters can attempt to swim down through the capsized ship and then turn toward the surface. They might also hack through the hull. If they swim, they need to make a DC 10 Survival saving throw to avoid getting lost in the interior of the *Wave Reaver*. *Light*, or a similar spell, will give advantage on this saving throw. If they hack through the hull, they need to do 40 hit points of slashing damage to cut a hole large enough to escape the remains of the ship. Water is draining into the room, so characters

begin to drown in approximately ten rounds. Once characters escape, they can see a distant shoreline.

The floor becomes a wall and then a ceiling. For a second you are weightless, flying, no wonder aarakocras love this, then you crack against the inside of the ship. There is no light. Eventually you can stand and feel the hull of the ship above you. In the distance, you hear sloshing water. Soon your feet are wet, and not long after, so are your knees. The water is rising.

6-10 The *Wave Reaver* shatters.

No matter what their location within or on the ship characters are thrown into the water. Characters who have bound themselves to large pieces of the ship will need to escape their bonds or sink with the ship. A DC 10 Survival saving throw indicates characters find or are hit by floating wreckage that might help keep them from drowning.

With a deafening groan, the ship shatters around you. The floor, walls, ceilings and deck are torn into splinters and planks. Your fight is with the ocean now and you struggle to keep air in your lungs and your face above water. Remains of the broken vessel might help you stay afloat. But, is that a mountain on the horizon or a fin in the water?

11-15 *Wave Reaver* is floating but waterlogged.

Survivors among the crew and characters can begin to try rowing the boat toward the distant shore. They may be able to rig makeshift sails, but travel to the shore will be very slow. Consider rolling random encounters as either

the *Dungeon Masters Guide* or the Beach column of the *Tomb of Annihilation* tables indicate. Characters might also be “rescued” by one of the pirate ships out of Jahaka Bay.

Somehow you seem to have lived. You and the *Wave Reaver* are both full of water. Soon the weather will calm. The mast is nowhere to be seen. The boat floats, but is so damaged that finding a plank and rowing seems to be the only way to shore. Perhaps you will be rescued soon?

16-20 *Wave Reaver* is intact and the damage is minor.

By luck or skill, damage to the ship will not dramatically slow the voyage.

Two of the crew seem to be missing after the storm, but no one talks about it. Instead, they begin making repairs. The ship is sailing again in a day or two. As the sun sets late the next day, members of the crew raise a solemn toast of gratitude to you and their fallen colleagues.

Drowning and/or Swimming

These summaries of drowning and swimming rules may not be necessary, but they are provided in case. A variety of hungry sea creatures can be found in the *Monster Manual*, among other resources.

Under “Suffocating” the *Player’s Handbook* states that breath can be held for a minimum of 30 seconds. Most characters will be able to hold their breath for their Constitution modifier +1 in minutes. Once they can no

longer hold their breath they can “survive for a number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 round).” At that point, characters have 0 hit points. They can neither become stable nor regain hit points again until they can breathe.

The *Player’s Handbook* also states that when underwater any creature with no swimming speed has disadvantage in their melee attacks unless that attack is made with a “dagger, javelin, short sword, spear, or trident.” Similarly, ranged attacks automatically miss targets more than their normal range away. See the handbook if greater detail is required.

Unless they are magically assisted (by a *ring of swimming*, for example), characters can’t swim for long. In fact, according to the *Player’s Handbook*, “After each hour of swimming, a character must succeed on a DC 10 Constitutional saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.” It seems reasonable to adjust this DC if characters are holding on to floating debris which might aid them.

A **stat block** for **reef sharks** is included below.

Treasure

Rowan Shamblecrown’s robes hold a *decanter of endless water*. See the *Dungeon Master’s Guide* for a description of this item.

Under her robes, she wears Turtle shell armor. Any Turtle (including Gar) becomes hostile at the sight of a character wearing it.

Azul Jaharwon’s peg leg contains a deed. See “Roleplaying Jaharwon” above and the “Work” section of “Downtime Revisited” in *Xanathar’s Guide to Everything* for ways this might influence characters.

APPENDIX MONSTERS/NPC STATISTICS

Rowan Shamblecrown

Medium humanoid (variant human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (Turtle shell armor)

Hit Points 32 (**Hit Dice** 6d8)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	10 (0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +3

Skills Athletics +5, Insight +5, Medicine +5, Perception +5.

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Primordial

Challenge 1 (200 xp)

Spellcasting. Rowan is a 4th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Rowan has the following cleric (Tempest domain) spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *fog cloud, thunderwave, inflict wounds, cure wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, hold person, silence*

ACTIONS

Wrath of the Storm (Reaction). Rowan inflicts 2d8 lightning or thunder damage on an adjacent creature who hits her. A successful Dexterity saving throw reduces damage by half. Rowan can use this feature three times.

Channel Divinity: Destructive Wrath. When she rolls lightning or thunder damage, she can use her Channel Divinity once to deal maximum damage, instead of rolling.

Heavy Armor Master (Feat). While she wears her Turtle shell armor (usually under her robes), bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical damage is reduced by 3.

Trident. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 +3, versatile 1d8, thrown 20/60) piercing damage.

Shandri Shamblecrown

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 8 (**Hit Dice** 2d8)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Cha +5, Dex +4

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4.

Senses Passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Primordial

Challenge 1/2 (100 xp)

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

ACTIONS

Shandri has learned to run, escape, and sneak away from her mom. She will happily join the party if allowed to do so, assuming she can keep Sky, the tressym.

Gar

Medium humanoid (Turtle), lawful good

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 11 (Hit Dice 1d10)

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Cha +4, Wis +4

Skills Athletics +5, Insight +5, Perception +5.

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Aquan

Challenge 1 (200 xp)

Divine Sense (3; Recharges after a Long Rest). As an action, Gar can open her awareness to sense strong evil and powerful good. Until the end of her next turn, she knows the location of any celestial, fiend, or undead within 60 feet of her that is not behind total cover.

Lay on Hands. Gar has a pool of healing power, with which she can restore up to 5 hit points. This pool replenishes after she finishes a long rest. As an action, she can touch a creature and draw power from the pool to restore a number of hit points to that creature, up to the maximum amount remaining in your pool.

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 +3) bludgeoning damage. Versatile: (1d8 +3).

Net. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, one attack, thrown. Hit: up to a large creature is restrained. A creature hit with a net can use its action to free itself with a Str check (DC 10) or with a slashing damage attack (AC 10, HP 5). See the *Player's Handbook* for more details. Gar has five nets.

Crawling Claw

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common, but can't speak
Challenge 0 (10 xp)

Turn Immunity. The claw is immune to effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 +1) bludgeoning or slashing damage (claw's choice).

Reef Shark

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 +4)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception+2

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages –

Challenge 1/2 (100 xp)

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

Water Breathing. The shark can breathe only underwater.

ACTIONS

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

Smaller than giant sharks and hunter sharks, reef sharks inhabit shallow waters and coral reefs, gathering in small packs to hunt. A full-grown specimen measures 6 to 10 feet long.