

GHOUL ISLAND

Act 1: Voyage to Farzeen

SANDY PETERSEN'S
CTHULHU MYTHOS





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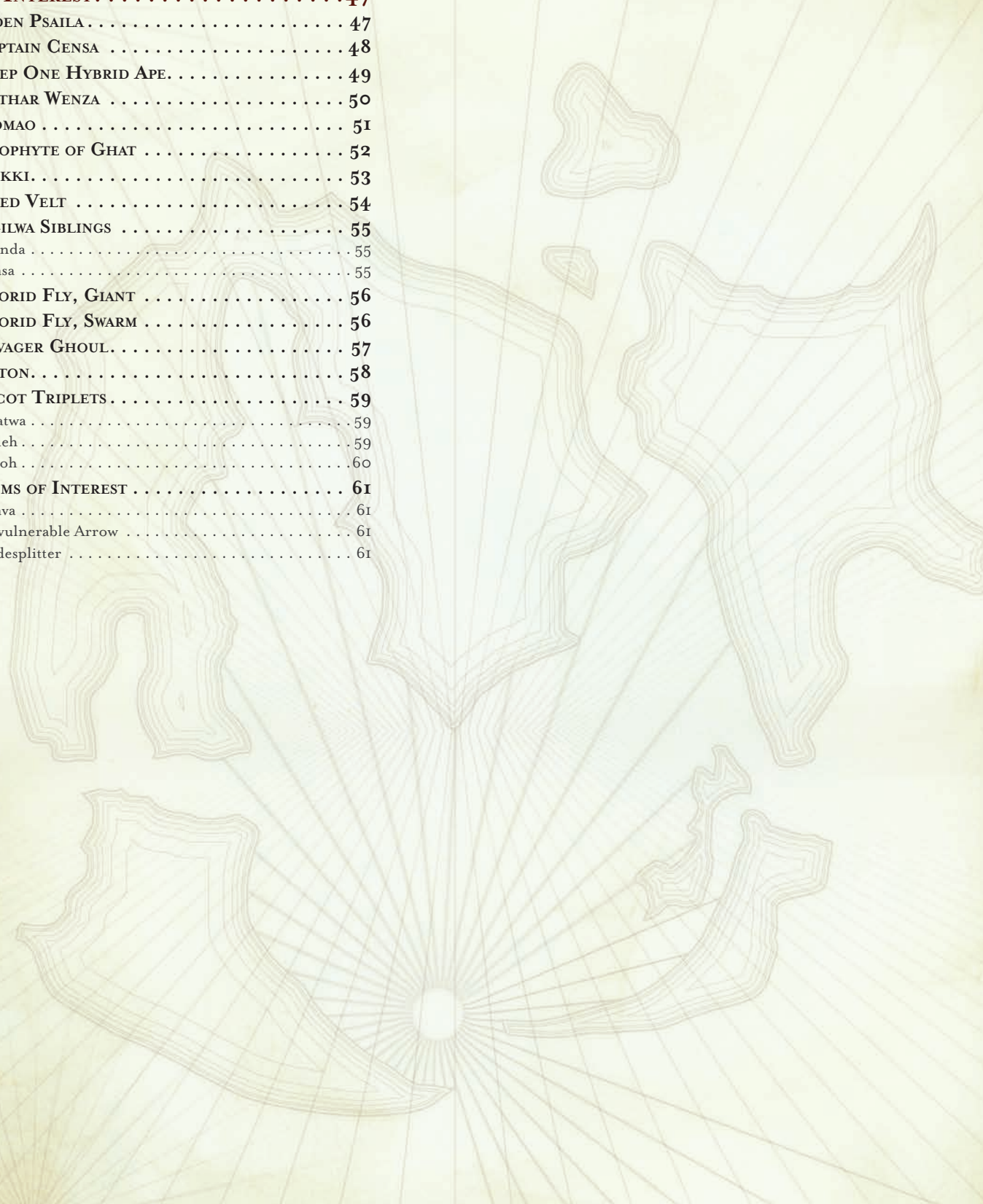
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INTRODUCTION TO GHOUL ISLAND



INTRO FROM SANDY

For years I have been thinking about the nature of Lovecraft's ghouls and the fact that they are basically atheistic mockers. But there ARE god-level entities in Lovecraft's tales, so how can any creature be a disbeliever?

It's simple. Lovecraft's "religions" are all crassly materialistic. The worshipers either receive direct benefits or promised ones. You can be as cynical about religion as you please, but an organization that gives you precious metals, good fishing, and promises your children eternal life, as does the Esoteric Order of Dagon, is still mighty attractive. At least if you're not going to balk at the faith's requirements, such as wedding a scaled monster or making blood sacrifices.

This adventure is based on a speculation I've had for ghouls: namely, even if they don't care about a faith, could they nonetheless serve it? My answer of course is "yes!" And so in this adventure you'll find the ghouls resurrecting an ancient wrong for their own purposes while a cult of evil leans on them for support.

The best part for me is working outside my own familiar sandbox. This is an adventure plotline which would be hard to portray in my *Call of Cthulhu* game, which takes place in the modern world, but it fits perfectly into a medieval fantasy realm.

Matt has collaborated with me perfectly in bringing my concepts to reality. I think you will enjoy exploring the twists and turns of the adventure that is *Ghoul Island!*

USING THIS BOOK

Ghoul Island is a complete Mythos-inspired campaign for you to take your players' characters from their very first adventure to the upper echelons of heroic fantasy. The four acts of the campaign are subdivided into episodes for you and your players to enjoy. Each chapter builds upon the last to tell an immersive story of escalating difficulty, complexity, and scope. Each episode is intended to be completed in the course of an evening's play and culminates in the characters leveling up.

In the early stages of the campaign, low-level PCs will face challenges appropriate for their stature, such as environmental obstacles, mutinous sailors, and a lone deep one. As they progress in power, so too do their foes: Mythos ghouls, servants of the Great Old Ones, ancient sorcerers, Mythos ghosts, shoggoths, and more will test the mettle of the characters and the ingenuity of your players. The campaign culminates in an epic showdown with the Great Old One Ghatanothoa in an active volcano!

Prior to running each adventure, you as the GM should familiarize yourself with the entire chapter. Sidebars, developer's notes, Sandy's Notes, and appendices at the end of the book all provide additional context, cues, and information to aid you in running *Ghoul Island*.

Ghoul Island highlights and makes extensive use of *Sandy Petersen's Cthulhu Mythos (SPCM)* for 5e, and having a copy of that book will help you make the most of the adventure. The player options presented in *SPCM* are well-suited to *Ghoul Island* and will provide additional roleplaying opportunities and evocative details. To aid the GM and the players, select creatures, NPCs, items, spells, and the Dread/Insanity rules found in *SPCM* will be provided in this book.

WHAT IS THE MYTHOS?

At the break of the twentieth century, an unknown American writer named H. P. Lovecraft began writing stories unlike anything ever written before, which would one day be considered some of the most influential horror tales ever told. They were groundbreaking, poignant, and contained a plethora of unspeakable horrors, alien intelligences, and innovative creatures.

The framework he invented and shared with other authors is commonly referred to as the Cthulhu Cycle, a term coined by August Derleth as a reference to Lovecraft's seminal work, *The Call of Cthulhu*. Lovecraft himself referred to the shared mythology as Yog-Sothothery. More than a century after his initial story, the creations of Lovecraft are more popular and widely known than ever before, thanks in no small part to tabletop roleplaying games.

Lovecraft's writing is based primarily on the principle that the cosmos is full of unknowable forces, unthinkable creatures, and alien intelligences to whom humanity is no more important than a gnat. These powers outside our understanding are nearly omnipotent and omniscient, akin to humanity's conception of a god. The servitors of the Great Old Ones, Elder Things, and their ilk have mind-wrenching powers, the support of insane cultists, and their own unfathomable agendas. These are the beings the PCs will battle in *Ghoul Island*.

Sandy's Notes

GHATANOTHOA

Images of this horrendous deity retain its terrible power when properly enchanted. They are typically made of greenish or brownish soapstone, and when infused with Ghatanothoa's awful essence, the "eyes" glisten like polished silver.

Even an illusion of Ghatanothoa has the same paralyzing effect as the real thing, provided it is a perfect likeness as defined in the influence. Destroying or obscuring the icon is the characters' only hope to save themselves from the mummification. Disbelieving an illusion of Ghatanothoa doesn't help because it is simply the image's appearance creating the effect; it doesn't have to be "real" to inflict the dread curse.

“This entity’s unspeakable biology and form mocks any natural creation. Its underbelly bristles with ocular globes, each a swirling, hypnotic portal to another plane of existence.”

GHATANOTHOA

Ghatanothoa is the god of ancient Mu. All who know of it *fear* it, because any in its presence, or even those who encounter a true likeness of the god, become desiccated mummies in a most horrible fashion. As their bodies dry up and transform to withered, shriveled things, their minds are magically preserved. Such a victim remains fully aware, their intellect intact, even while forever trapped in the immobile husk of their physical body.

Ghatanothoa’s huge form is dozens of feet wide; the god manifests by thrusting up “rootlings” of itself. Plant-like pseudopods, rootlings are partial representations of Ghatanothoa’s presence and can emerge from the ground near its volcanic home or through magical portals.

Ghatanothoa lives in the active volcano looming above Farzeen, though the inhabitants are blissfully unaware of the alien intelligence that lurks hidden nearby. The Cult of Ghatanothoa works in secret with the ghouls of the island to create icons of the Great Old One in order to call it forth from its molten home.

GHATANOTHOA’S MUMMIFICATION

Ghatanothoa’s form is dotted with silvery spheres; these “eyes” are portals or seerstones into other, terrible, planes of existence. Their eldritch energies produce the god’s infamous mummification effect. The god’s front is completely covered with these globes, but at least a few globes are visible from any angle, so it is impossible to be completely safe when Ghatanothoa is in view.

Ghatanothoa’s mummification is a gaze attack that relies on line-of-sight, not actual perception. A victim can close their eyes, turn their back, or fail to see due to a lack of proper light, but the effect still occurs. Anything opaque, such as a thin cloth, can block Ghatanothoa’s gaze attack. In ancient times, the people of Mu hid inside their houses (none of which had windows facing the crater) to avoid the Great Old One’s curse. Ghatanothoa’s temple icons and statues, which may manifest their dread god’s gaze, are always shielded by a wall or curtain to protect the priests.

Ghatanothoa’s magic works on the mind as well as the body. Mindless creatures are immune to Ghatanothoa’s mummification. The paralysis caused by Ghatanothoa is not instantaneous: when the sequence begins, victims stiffen, but if the image is hidden or the victim can somehow get “out of sight,” the effect ends and the victim recovers. If the transformation is not stopped, the unfortunate casualty transforms into a withered, leathery mummy incapable of movement. The victim’s mind remains alive and functioning, however, and is magically preserved.

Mummified victims cannot die except by destruction of their brains, which remain active, aware of their circumstances, and always conscious. Most go mad after a few days, months, or years.

MYTHOS GHOULS

The ghouls of Farzeen are much different from the ravaging undead beasts most players have likely encountered before. First and most obviously, they are living creatures, and in fact often feed upon animated corpses; a Mythos ghoul sees a zombie as little more than portable meal!

Mythos ghouls’ relationships with other sentients are complex. Similar to their undead namesakes, Mythos ghouls rely on the consumption of other intelligent species to maintain sentience. The living ghouls prefer their victuals to take the form of long-dead corpses—the older the better. Ghouls don’t just eat corpses for nourishment but also to absorb knowledge. In general, the older and more withered the corpse, the better and more complete a base of knowledge the ghoul gains. Fresh corpses are really only good for filling the belly, while a millennia-old pharaoh’s mummy is a precious delicacy. Ghouls hoard and covet the bodies of the exceptional and share their prized flesh among their leaders. As a result, there are ghouls with access to the wisdom of the ages and knowledge far beyond their years.

Less well-known is the Mythos ghouls’ propensity for hiding away their children among more civilized races to be reared alongside other humanoids. Most commonly, humans are the target of this aberrant parenting technique, but the necrophage children can blend with virtually any sort of humanoid, from elves to dwarves to many others. They often live their lives without revealing themselves until their true nature manifests upon reaching adulthood. Some sages speculate that a transformative process spurred by despicable, unnamable acts may also lead to the transformation of a sentient being into a Mythos ghoul.





While Mythos ghouls are clearly cunning, carnivorous entities, they are not necessarily evil, any more than a hyena is evil. They may eat the dead, but not all are interested in killing to make a fresh corpse; older bodies are more delicious anyway, and there's rarely a shortage of corpses to feast upon. Ghouls communicate with and interact with surface dwellers, forging treaties and pacts of mutual benefit. So long as the ghouls stay out of sight, they also remain out of mind of their neighbors.

DEEP ONES

The undersea creatures known as the deep ones are a race steeped in mystery, suspicion, and peculiarity. These beings reside in vast cities hidden in the depths of the sea, and while they are amphibious, their oddly created bodies are not well-suited to activity on the surface. Despite their this limitation, they frequently interact with towns, villages, and ports near the sea, due primarily to their drive to perpetuate their species.

The deep ones are able to create viable progeny with virtually any vertebrate species, and their innate fecundity ensures that all manner of hybrid offspring inhabit the seas and shores near their dwellings. Their peculiar traits are not readily apparent upon birth, and hybrid children always appear initially as a member of their non-deep one parent's species. In time and due to environmental stressors, the alien physiology asserts itself, and the creature's status as a hybrid becomes apparent. Eventually, the being fully transforms into a deep one and rejoins its kin beneath the waves.

The society under the waves is an enigma to most scholars on the surface: much is suspected but little has been confirmed. For instance, some believe that the deep ones, rather than elves or even dragons, are the longest-lived species in the land. Late at night, as the fire burns low, superstitious fishermen and coast-dwellers frequently tell tales of antediluvian monstrosities that spend their eons consuming, learning, and growing.

RUNNING GHOUL ISLAND

Mechanically, the most substantive difference between *Ghoul Island* and any other adventure for the world's oldest roleplaying game is the addition of Dread mechanics (see *SPCM* 71-74). The adventure will periodically call for Dread checks, and the GM is encouraged to use their own judgement to insert additional checks when appropriate.

Thematically, the adventure path combines elements of heroic fantasy, swords and sorcery, and horror. The chapter "Bringing Horror to Heroic Fantasy" (*SPCM* 3-7) is recommended reading for GMs running this adventure path and for players playing it. The PCs will be placed in dread-inducing situations and must make difficult decisions that place them, their allies, or even Farzeen in jeopardy. It's not always all about winning but more about making tough choices and mitigating the fallout.

CAMPAIGN SYNOPSIS

ACT 1: VOYAGE TO FARZEEN (LEVELS 1 THROUGH 4)

The PCs' journey begins in the decrepit port town of Resante. Few call the place home, and most of its inhabitants are looking to leave as quickly as possible. As fate would have it, Censa, Captain of the *Hazel's Folly*, has need of a crew to deliver a cargo to far-off Farzeen. The ragtag crew, to whom the word "motley" is perfectly applied, battle the elements, unnatural storms, and the denizens of the depths before limping to the beaches of their destination.

The dreadful journey damages the crew's minds, prompting them in a flash of insane insight to abscond with the cargo in the middle of the night while nightmares assail the PCs. The PCs stop the theft with the aid of the local constabulary, but in doing so, they relinquish the haul they just secured. Censa leads the PCs to the city proper the following morning to reclaim her cargo, deliver it as planned, and check on the crew.

Business transacted, it's time to deal with the mutineers. Returning to the jail, the PCs learn that someone (or something) has taken the traitors from their cells. After a conversation with Lothar Wenza, Captain of the Watch, the PCs learn this is far from an isolated occurrence. The clues lead to a peaceful community living in the warrens beneath the city, and the PCs are tasked with investigating. All is not as it seems in the underground tunnels, however, and they find an ancient temple dedicated to a horror thought to have been vanquished long ago.

ACT 2: GHOULOCRACY (LEVELS 5 THROUGH 7)

The PCs uncover a temple to a Great Old One, Ghatanothoa, and learn the island's sordid history with that dread entity. Through their exploration of the temple, they learn of the ghoul's pact with Farzeen, the horrors that lurk beneath the surface of the island, and that an aspect of Ghatanothoa has been called forth once again by the Great Old One's cultists. After narrowly escaping the searching tentacles of a rootling, they discover that the terrors below pale in comparison to what's transpired above.

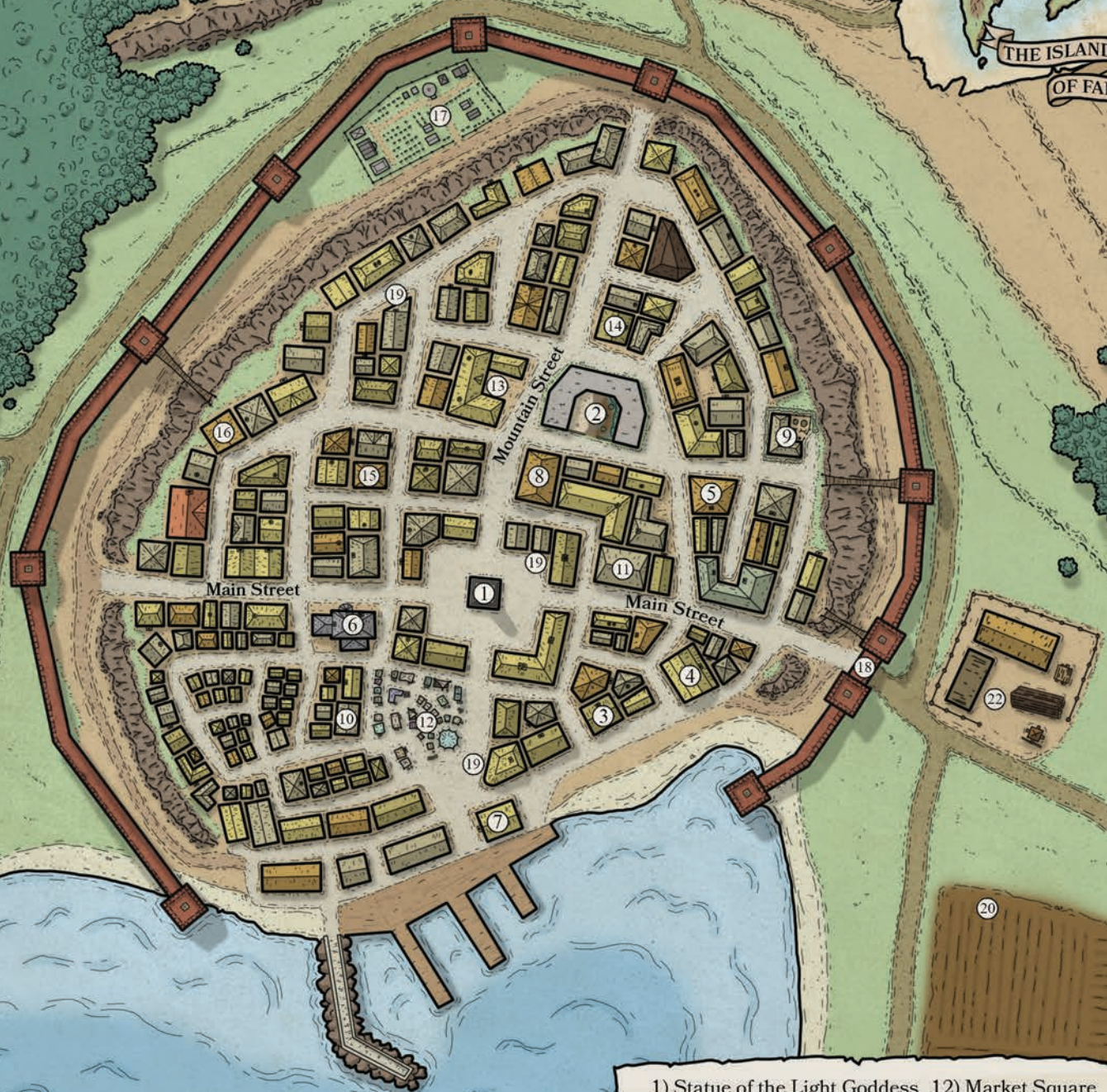
Back in Farzeen, the PCs find themselves wanted by the authorities, and it is only with aid from their allies in the Watch that they escape to the jungles. The jungle soon reveals its dangers, and the PCs lead a group of evacuees to a makeshift refugee camp. Obed the Shipwright answers the PCs' many questions and urges them to return to the city so that they can gather the supplies, weapons, armor, and equipment the displaced islanders will need to reclaim their homes. They venture through a recently discovered jungle cavern replete with its own set of unique challenges, fight deep one hybrids, and ultimately face a rampaging, necrophage barbarian wielding Lothar's treasured axe. The PCs' subsequent sojourn into the city brings with it additional revelations and a glimmer of hope.

The PCs must rely on the tunnels again for their infiltration into the city. A deadly surprise from Upton, a polymorphed horror, awaits them, and after defeating the foe, they meet a posse of concerned citizens whose loyalties they can sway.

THE CITY OF FARZEEN

The Jungle

The Slopes of Kaza



- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Statue of the Light Goddess | 12) Market Square |
| 2) The Stockade | 13) Magistrate's Manor |
| 3) Kava's Respite | 14) Captain Lothar's Home |
| 4) The Port of Call | 15) Momao's Home |
| 5) The Laughing Hammer | 16) The Scerri Household |
| 6) The Albatross | 17) The Cemetary |
| 7) Obed's Shipwright | 18) Main Gate |
| 8) Beatrice's Smithing Shop | 19) Shrines to Ghat |
| 9) Fuengalo's Tannery | 20) Farmland |
| 10) Peren's Pawn Shop | 21) Lighthouse |
| 11) Farzeen General Store | 22) Lumber Mill |



A battle for the ages ensues. The newly trained islanders comport themselves with lethal efficiency, compensating for their dearth of experience with passionate fervor. Despite a nearly fatal surprise from Upton, and the rebirth of Censa as a traitorous deep one prophetess, the PCs overcome their attackers and when the smoke clears, Farzeen is free once more!

ACT 3: CLEAN UP CREW (LEVELS 8 THROUGH 10)

Covered in blood, sweat, and tears, the PCs have survived the battle of Farzeen and emerged victorious. Their next step is to pursue the cultists into their newly risen citadel and vanquish them once and for all. Some things are easier said than done, however, as a frontal assault will not breach the fortification, which requires an indirect approach. Back to the lava tubes of Farzeen they go, where they face a new host of challenges and eldritch horrors. Despite their victories, when the PCs stumble upon Ghatanothoa's Elder Influence, they face the horrific realization that they are not prepared for its awesome power. The captured PCs are rescued, in a fashion, by an alien ally they did not know they had in the form of a zoog mercenary, Ylenia. Once freed, they narrowly escape through a series of harrowing encounters and return to their waiting allies in Farzeen for a brief respite before continuing their battle against the cult of the Great Old One.

ACT 4: GHATANOTHOA AWAKENS (LEVEL 11 THROUGH 14)

The final leg of the PCs' journey to defeat the forces of Ghatanothoa begins when they are drawn into the Dreamlands by the most powerful Dreamer on the island, Pompea, high priestess of Light. In the Dreamlands, they find the Book of Kaza, recover it from the clutches of a fiery being of immense eldritch power, and return with its esoteric knowledge to Farzeen, only to find the island in the throes of a deep one invasion.

Traitorous Censa brings her most powerful allies to bear on the island, and the PCs must face them one by one. The PCs learn that Alwigi has been coordinating the attack from Kaza's core.

The champions of Farzeen journey to the center of the volcano to face foul Alwigi, destroy Ghatanothoa's Elder Influence, and erase that being's foul stain on Farzeen. Celebration of their victory proves premature, however, as a mind-shattering vision afflicts the populace, drawing the PCs into a final battle on the nascent Isle of Ghatanothoa. Will they be able to unleash Kaza's elemental might on the Great Old One before its rebirth? And will their efforts be enough to save Farzeen?

**FURTHER ADVENTURES:
AFTER THE ERUPTION**

RECLAMATION

The Tcho-Tcho of Farzeen were wiped out by their ghoulish enemies generations ago—or so the islanders thought. Throughout the adventure, the PCs find evidence that the extinction of the original inhabitants of Farzeen was overstated. In fact, the Tcho-Tcho have consolidated, and what

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

Anyone who has played a Sandy Petersen game knows to expect challenges, and *Ghoul Island* is no different. Players must rely upon their wits, experience, and a healthy dash of luck to save Farzeen from Ghatanothoa's tentacled clutches. The more challenging and deadly encounters presented herein also list specific adjustments to aid the GM in scaling them to fit any specific party.

The simplest method to adjust the challenge of an encounter, up or down, is the application of the optional dread mechanics from (*SPCM* 71-79). The result of a single dread check can drastically affect an encounter, especially at higher levels, and may need to be adjusted to suit an individual GM's play style and their players' actions.

they lack in number they make up for in ruthless ferocity, personal power, and patience.

The current leader of the Tcho-Tcho, Wei Bao, is a devotee of Nyarlathotep in the Outer God's aspect of the Bloat-ed Woman (*SPCM* 228-230). Bao views the recent events as an auspicious omen indicating the time is nigh for the aboriginal peoples of the island to retake the lands they lost. The Tcho-Tcho, having learned from the cultists' failed schemes, plan to retake Farzeen not through force of arms but through political maneuvering, subtle alliances, and the carefully considered assassination of key leaders.

With the ghouls' numbers depleted, the Tcho-Tchos' first order of business is to kill two birds with one stone: eradicate the hated necrophages while simultaneously ingratiating themselves with the islanders. To this end, an emissary, Liu Yung, presents herself at the city gates with an offer to help rid the islanders of the ghouls once and for all. She asks for little, only that her people be given the tunnels beneath and the opportunity to advise Farzeen's new Magistrate, Alwigi.

MILESTONE LEVELING

Ghoul Island is an adventure path meant to take your player's characters from 1st to 14th level. It is designed with the intent that each chapter can be completed within a single session, and that the entirety of the campaign can be completed in 14 sessions. At the end of each chapter, the PCs gain enough experience to progress to the following level. GMs wishing to award XP may need to add additional encounters; use the encounter tables from (*SPCM* 408-417) and/or explore any number of the story seeds presented within the adventures.

AN OVERLOOKED FOE

The adventurers have faced challenges that have crushed the minds and bodies of lesser beings, and they enjoy their retirement in idyllic Farzeen. They want for nothing and live in symbiosis with the islanders, providing enough magical and martial support that the island recovers from the fight with Ghatanothoa in short order. Life is good—until it isn't.



A mob of islanders petition the PCs for aid: last week, the abandoned home of Alwigi was swallowed by a sinkhole in the dead of night. The former magistrate's manor had long since been abandoned, fallen into disrepair, and the islanders just assumed that one of the countless tunnels riddling the town had collapsed. Indeed, it came as a relief when the eyesore disappeared. Then last night, another building disappeared: the Albatross's stables and everything within it. Fearing the island is no longer structurally sound and their homes will be next, the islanders turn to their former saviors, who know the caverns below Farzeen better than anyone alive, to find and rectify the cause of the cave-ins.

The PCs enter the caverns and quickly realize that there are dozens and even hundreds of new tunnels. Unlike the lava tubes they explored before, these passageways have been bored out, as if by beasts of unimaginable size. The PCs eventually track down the source of Farzeen's new troubles: the bhole hatchling from their fight on the Isle of Ghatanothoa has grown to adulthood (*SPCM* 282) and its ravenous, unending hunger threatens to destroy the island from below.

MAGIC ITEMS

Virtually all of *Ghoul Island* occurs on the small island of Farzeen, and due to the island's remote location and limited population, magic items are rare. The items that exist in the adventure tend toward functional utility and thematic consistency. That said, there are a number of reasons to adjust the level of magic in an adventure, such as rewarding players who crave loot.

Before using the strategies below, be cognizant that the adventure as written does not take into account items of significant power. Potions, scrolls, and other consumables tend to work best.

Periodically restocking the locker in the Stockade and giving the PCs time to check it, is a seamless method of introducing new items into the adventure.

Peren's Pawnshop represents another location for the PCs to purchase or find any items they may need in their quest. GMs using the pawnshop may need to adjust the gold available so the PCs can afford Peren's prices, or else have Peren, unaware of an item's true nature, price it unusually low.

The NPCs (particularly named NPCs) might have items, spells, weapons, and armor the PCs could benefit from. If the NPC is an adversary, it makes the most sense for them to carry an item that might be useful for their skill-set; don't forget to have them use the item against the PCs! NPC allies can be persuaded to loan out items of power for the sake of Farzeen; this doesn't necessarily have to require a skill check but instead an opportunity for additional roleplaying.



ACT 1: VOYAGE TO FARZEEN

A Cthulhu Mythos Adventure for 4 to 5 Characters of Levels 1–4

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Through fate or happenstance, the PCs have made the acquaintance of Censa, Captain of the *Hazel's Folly*, and her first mate, Aiden Psaila. After joining the crew of the merchant caravel, their sojourn to distant Farzeen begins in earnest. Days on the open seas turns to weeks, and the crew falls into the easy rhythm of a cohesive team. Without warning, an evil storm assails the Folly. With a bit of skill and a healthy dose of luck, the crew survives; unfortunately, the Folly, mast-broken and adrift, is much worse for the experience even when the storm abates. With no other options, the crew weighs anchor and boards a skiff to take their cargo to nearby Farzeen, leaving the captain's construct to guard the ship itself. The exhausted crew battles denizens of the deep, and at long last, they reach the safety of the beach.

The eldritch storm and battle with the deep ones have left the crew of the *Folly* scarred, physically and mentally. Captain Censa and the crew explore the beach, set camp, and prepare to disembark in the morning to deliver their cargo of wicklamite to the priests. The PCs are plagued with nightmare visions of the End of All Things, and awaken to find that their crewmates have lost their minds: they've stolen the cargo and fled. A chase ensues, where through a series of fortuitous events the traitorous sailors are captured by a Watch patrol from nearby Farzeen, who take the mutinous crew into custody and confiscate the pilfered cargo. They give the PCs instructions to visit the Stockade the following day to recover the cargo and speak their case for or against their gibbering friends.

Within the walls of Farzeen at last, the PCs must visit the Stockade to gather their confiscated cargo from the patrol and learn the fate of their former comrades. The jewels are easily obtained, but the PCs must bide their time and wait for the magistrate to review the case of the crew. Once the jewels are delivered to the priests of Ghat, lodging is secured, and repairs are commissioned for the *Folly*. Captain Censa urges the PCs to return to the jailhouse to visit the crew, who are discovered to have disappeared from their cells. There are signs of large burrowing creatures, which are soon revealed to be Mythos ghouls. As the creatures have peacefully coexisted for generations with the islanders, the dumbfounded captain of the watch, Lothar Wenza, requests the PCs' assistance investigating the matter further.

The PCs learn that a family and priest have gone missing. With few leads to follow, the PCs visit Farzeen's only cemetery and the home of the missing family. The desolate graveyard has few clues for the investigators, but they do catch sight of a ghoul brazenly walking the streets of Farzeen! From the expressions of the townsfolk, this is clearly not an everyday occurrence. The carnage within the home leads the party to the tunnels. The PCs uncover the fate of the missing islanders and encounter ghouls, ghaunts, and

other horrors of the depths. After thorough explorations, the adventurers come upon a great temple, ancient beyond belief, hewn from the island's bedrock.

RESANTE

The town is a dense and crumbling monument to the port city it once was. The pervasive odor of fish is only partially effective at covering up the stench of decay from the deteriorating structures, open sewage lines, and general filth. For every habitable building, you see several that are little more than rubble and fallen timbers. The homes and inns are simply constructed with tiled gambrel roofs. The individual tiles are indistinguishable from one another, each covered with a thick layer of green moss, seagull droppings, and small sproutlings. Anemic streams of smoke issue forth from the handful of functional chimneys.

The port town of Resante was founded centuries ago by Aldez Fenn as a safe harbor and shipmaking hub in the Bay of Lido. For generations, the town prospered. The deep waters, clean shores, and generally favorable weather served Resante well for many years, allowing it to grow into a port of renown and a frequent stop for many merchants. A series of unfortunate events over the last century has taken a toll on Resante, and it has lost much of its splendor. Regional city-states fought, trade routes changed, and political boundaries shifted, but Resante, in the midst of all of it, failed to keep pace. As sea-faring traffic ebbed, the folk became more insular and distrustful of outsiders.

Worst of all, two generations ago the town was struck by an unearthly plague. Those afflicted by the plague, referred to in hushed whispers as "touched by the Brine," wrought death, destruction, and chaos upon Resante. In the space of a few months, the entire city was infected, its population decimated. Every single person in the city was marked, either directly by the plague or indirectly through the actions of those infected.

The Fenn family and their offshoots have survived mostly intact and to this day, the bulk of Resante's population can trace their ancestry back to Aldez Fenn. They are easily identified by the vestigial marks of the Brine-touched: scaly skin, bulbous eyes, wide, thin-lipped mouths, and lumbering, hulking bodies. In the young, the marks are not as noticeable, but they become more prevalent with age until the afflicted person shuns contact with outsiders.

THE HARBOR

In stark contrast to the rest of the city, the docks and wharves that extrude from the shoreline into the black waters of the bay remain mostly intact and functional.



The folk of Resante have an unsettling love of the sea, and while the town around them crumbles into decay, the docks have been kept in a state of relative repair. There are three working docks, all piercing the bay to allow even the largest ships an easy port. A structure, little more than a cobbled together shack of driftwood, stands at the entry point of the docks and serves as the harbormaster's quarters.

The current harbormaster, Mundo Fenn (Deep One Hybrid Cultist, *SPCM 298*), has served Resante in this capacity for as long as anyone can remember. A contrary fellow, Mundo has not retreated into seclusion like so many other Fenns his age; instead, he revels in the changes wrought upon him. Sailors and captains often see Mundo's grotesque form swimming in the bay in the hours before dawn.

OTHER LOCATIONS OF NOTE

THE ESOTERIC ORDER OF DAGON. This featureless, monolithic, two-story stone edifice serves as the premier place of worship in Resante. The dark stone used in its construction does not match that used in any other building. There are no chips in the stone, markings on the walls, or any other signs of the decay that mar the other buildings in town. The only marking on the temple is on its door: an eldritch symbol of strange, alien geometries.

GM's Note: A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Yog-Sothothery) check reveals that the symbol is associated with the deep one entity Father Dagon.

THE REPOSITORY. The families of Resante have been keeping personal journals, ledgers, and tomes of arcane knowledge for as long as any of them can remember. When a family line dies out, their books are brought to the repository for storage. With enough time and patience all manner of Mythos tomes and related writings could be uncovered from within the bowels of this rickety building.

THE CAULDRON. This crumbling hovel, only a stone's throw from the dock, is known for two things: the impressively large pocked and rusted kettle at its center from which it takes its colloquial name and the intermingled stench of cabbage, fish, and decay extruded by its contents. The first bowl at the Cauldron is always gratis.

THE POPULATION OF RESANTE

The town of Resante is populated by less than a thousand permanent inhabitants. Virtually all of them belong to one of a handful of families, the Fenn family being the most prolific. Inbreeding is a common occurrence, as is the intermingling of deep one blood (1 in 3 natives have at least some deep one ancestry). A spattering of transients, sailors, and vagabonds flow through the town as well.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- ◇ As childhood friends, you and your compatriots dreamed of taking to the sea to live a life of adventure, intrigue, and fortune. After years of fishing, mucking decks, cleaning galleys, and whatever other jobs you were able to find, your time has come! The lot of you have enough coin to purchase a stake in the *Hazel's Folly*, which includes passage on the ship's next voyage to Alaras to deliver a small cargo of jewels.
- ◇ You have been approached by Censa, the young captain of the ship, *Hazel's Folly*, looking for help on board. This is Censa's first berth as a captain, and while she cannot pay in gold, she has offered each of you a stake in the profits from the voyage to Farzeen. The cargo of jewels must be protected and delivered to the buyers in Farzeen for you to earn your pay.
- ◇ Life in Resante is a hard one. The alleys and docks of the port town have been your home for as long as you can remember. By the time you could walk, you'd joined a group of feral street urchins and have lived on the fringes ever since. Your survival has required a combination of wits, luck, and sheer aggression. All that is about to fall apart: a deal has gone horribly sideways, your gang has disavowed you, and your only chance at seeing another sunrise is to get on the next ship leaving port.



ACT 1.1: THE STORM

A Cthulhu Mythos adventure for four to five 1st-level characters

EPISODE SYNOPSIS

Whether running from trouble or toward fame and fortune, the characters have boarded *Hazel's Folly* and begun their journey to exotic Farzeen. With the rising sun, the *Folly* disembarks from the docks of Resante. Captain Censa's first mate, Aiden Psaila, puts the characters to work immediately, teaching them the ropes, quite literally in some cases. Aiden also introduces them to the rest of the crew.

The first day of the journey ends quietly with sore muscles, aching hands, and dreamless sleep. The next day and the following days are much the same. They learn the rhythm of the sea and the ship, and their journey remains blissfully uneventful. The PCs and the crew are left to their devices, after their work has been completed, to pass the time and get to know each other.

On the final evening of the voyage, a freak storm wakes the crew from their slumber as they close in on Farzeen. Waves as tall as houses crash into the ship, green-yellow lightning streaks through the heavens, and winds threaten to tear the sails from the masts. After a pitched battle, in which the sailors of *Hazel's Folly* struggle against the preternatural storm, the ship's mast is broken and her sails lost. With no means of propulsion, the *Folly* is adrift at sea.

The storm breaks at dusk, and exotic Farzeen can be seen on the horizon. The remaining crew board a skiff and head toward land. In a flash of foresight, Censa grabs the precious cargo from the hold. Peculiar swirls and eddies in the waters hide unnatural dangers that lurk beneath the waves. The crew's relief at seeing land is short-lived as they are attacked from below by a pair of opportunistic deep ones.

Battered by the storm, the PCs have just enough strength left to drive off the denizens of the depths and finish the final leg of their journey to shore. Weary, wounded, and exhausted, they dimly realize many of their fellow sailors seem deeply disturbed by what has come to pass. The episode leaves off on a portent of doom.

SCENE I. LEAVING RESANTE

The rickety dock creaks and strains with each step toward the ship. The sun breaks over the distant sea and for just a moment, the decay of the city burns away as the orange-red streaks of the early morning sun bathe everything in its cleansing light. You're brought quickly back to your senses as the first mate ushers you forward.

“Get a move on! The sooner we’re out of this gods-for-saken port the better.”

The characters are rushed onto the ship by Aiden Psaila, the first mate of *Hazel’s Folly*. Captain Censa pays them little attention, as she is overseeing the rest of the ship and preparing to disembark.

“Welcome to *Hazel’s Folly*. She’s not much, but she’s ours. Stow your gear quickly. Everyone, and I mean everyone, pulls their weight on this ship.”

The *Folly*, as she’s referred to by her crew, is clearly not a newly-built vessel. She bears the scars and markings of a well-used ship that has seen her share of obstacles and overcome them all. A character with a background related to sailing can tell the ship is in excellent sailing shape and prepared for a voyage of considerable distance. Characters without relevant experience can gain much the same information with a DC 12 Intelligence check.

Hazel’s Folly is a fore-and-aft rigged sailing vessel with a single, high, raked mast with three sails. The sails and mast are in excellent repair, as is the complex web of rigging used to control them. The long-boomed, single-masted design allows for swift passage across the open sea, reaching a top speed in excess of 16 knots. The *Folly* is a ship designed for speed, maneuverability, and acceleration, ideal for expeditious travel but not sturdy enough for direct confrontation with privateers and the like. There are no cannons aboard the *Folly* and no apparent way to repel attackers.

The crew of the *Folly* all begin the voyage indifferent to the PCs, excepting PCs who invested in the ship, i.e. partial owners, in which case Censa, Psaila, and Nebi are friendly to those PCs. Improving the attitude of the individual sailors can be accomplished through role playing, social skills such as Persuasion, and/or by proving one’s worth as an able-bodied sailor. Roleplaying details for each of the crew can be found in their entries on pgs. 47-60.

THE FOLLY AND HER CREW

HAZEL’S FOLLY. The *Folly*, as she is often called by the crew, is 48 ft. in length and nearly 18 ft. wide at its center. She can sail in as little as 8 ft. of water with an empty

hold. She has three sails: the course sail is large and roughly square, the top-gallant sail is smaller and shaped like a horizontal rectangle, and the triangular jib sail is at the fore of the craft. A skiff is lashed to the side for disembarking in shallow waters. There is only one lower level divided into the captain’s quarters, galley, cargo hold, and general quarters. The *Folly* can sail with as few as four skilled sailors. Many of the sailors choose to sleep on the deck when weather permits.

CAPTAIN CENSA (deep one hybrid warlock, page 48). Captain Censa is the leader of the expedition and not a woman to be trifled with. She has a no-nonsense attitude, especially with regard to her past, the *Folly*, and her crew. She treats everyone fairly and does her share of the work. No one seems to know much about her past other than that she isn’t interested in discussing it.

AIDEN PSAILA, FIRST MATE AND NAVIGATOR (human, page 47). Aiden Psaila has lived his entire life at sea, or at least that’s what he says. Lacking a family, Aidan took to a wandering life, spending far more time on ship than off it. He has the loping gait of a sailor, a stern countenance, and a sharp tongue. Psaila can usually be found at the ship’s wheel overseeing the crew.

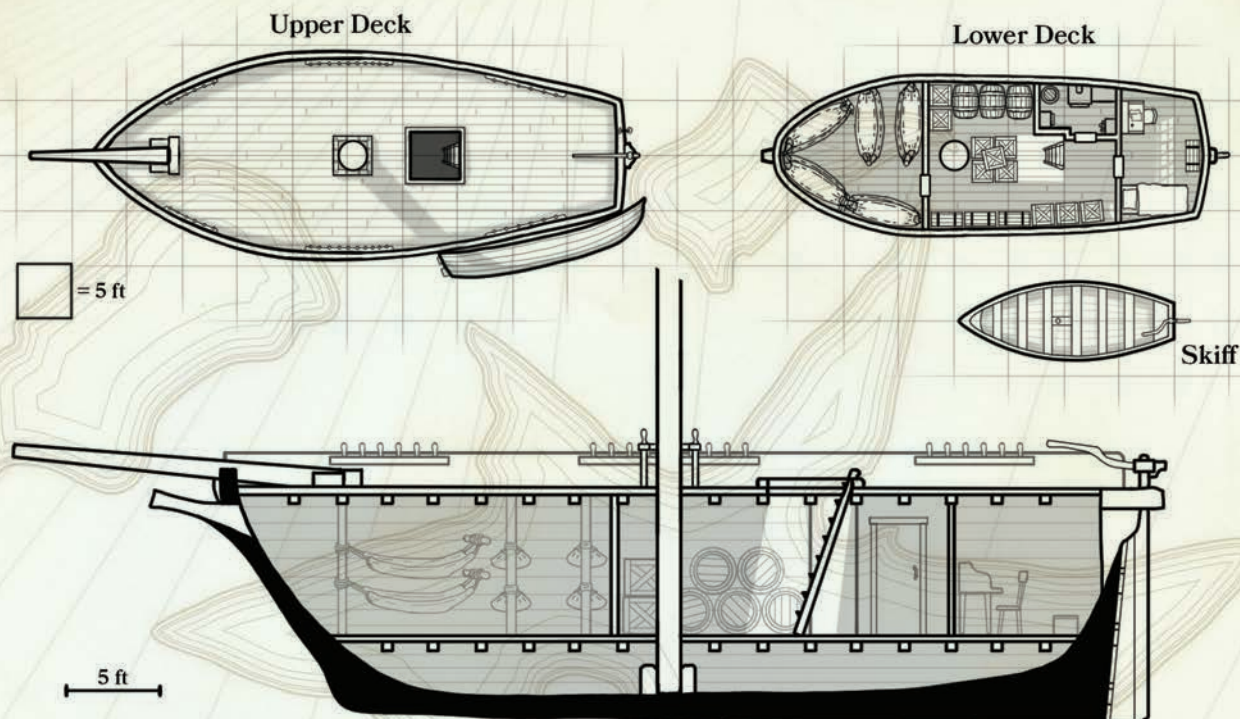
NEBI KOPSHUI, COOK (half-elf, **commoner**).

Tall, thin, and perpetually hunched over from spending too much time in the galley, Nebi makes certain that everyone on the ship has a full stomach. The sea has taken much of her natural beauty while honing her sharp tongue and quick wit to a razor’s edge. Nebi enjoys the camaraderie of the crew and loves nothing more than to tell tales while preparing the daily repast.

MOSETA (re-animated laborer, *SPCM* 359). The lumbering form of Moseta can be seen swabbing the decks and performing other menial tasks at all hours of the day and night. The powerfully-built creature is taller than the average man and has a grapple in place of its left hand. It spends its time on the deck, never venturing below, and when its tasks are complete, it stands stock-still near the mast, awaiting instructions from Captain Censa. It does not interact with anyone else. If asked about Moseta, Censa simply states that the re-animated sailor “came with the ship.”



HAZEL'S FOLLY



THE OGILWA SIBLINGS (half-elves, page 55). This brother and sister pair are never seen far from one another. Banda is quick with an uplifting word and encouragement while his sister prefers sullen silence while she goes about her tasks. Banda's endless supply of songs and tales of the sea make the long days on the open water bearable, as well as mostly making up for Kasa's unpleasant demeanor.

THE WICOT TRIPLETS (dwarves, pgs. 59-60). The triplets work diligently and quietly at whatever jobs Aiden assigns them. Their mannerisms, demeanor, and appearance are identical, and the only discerning feature between them is that they defer to Oloh in all things.

NUKKI (dreamlands cat, sorcerer, page 53). The cat answering to the name Nukki is Captain Censa's constant companion. Its intelligent eyes and wary gaze survey the ship and crew as they go about their business. Suspecting that there is more to Nukki than meets the eye, the crew gives the feline a considerate nod and a wide berth when they cross paths.

SCENE 2. LEARNING THE ROPES

The length of the voyage to Farzeen is left to the GM's discretion. It should be long enough that the characters are able to form bonds and relationships with the crew and perform tasks around the ship to prove their worth. On each day of the voyage, the PCs are directed by Captain Censa and/or First Mate Psaila to pitch in around the ship. They are offered the following duties; if none suit their character or skills, they may suggest their own. Characters with a nautical background have advantage on skill checks related to working aboard the ship.

RIGGER. The sailors assigned to the sails must know how to run the rigging and furl/unfurl the sails to take full advantage of the winds. A character working as a rigger must make three DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks, one each at morning, midday, and dusk. If they succeed on at least two of these checks, a crew member of the player's choice notices their skill and that crew member's attitude improves by one step. If the player fails all three of the checks, the attitude of a crew member of the GM's choice becomes one level lower.

NAVIGATOR. A sailor needs to know how to read the skies, weather, winds, and sea. Only one character may choose to assist Aiden Psaila in his role as navigator, and that character must not have a hostile or worse relationship with him. A character assisting Aiden must make three DC 10 ability checks using Navigator's Tools or Wisdom (Survival), one each at morning, midday, and dusk. If they are able to succeed on at least two of these checks, a crew member of their choice notices their skill and that crew member's attitude improves by one step. If the player fails all three of the checks, the attitude of Aiden becomes one level lower.

SWAB THE DECKS. Swabbing the decks isn't glamorous but someone has to remove the seaweed, debris, and salty residue. Characters working as a swabby must make three DC 10 checks using either Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics), one each at morning, midday, and dusk. If they are able to succeed on at least two of these checks, a crew member of their choice notices their efforts and that crew member's attitude improves by one step. If the player fails all three of the checks, the attitude of a crew member of the GM's choice becomes one level lower.



COOK. Someone has to prepare tasty and nutritious meals for the entire crew. They must organize the galley, prep the ingredients, and see to it that all of the crew is fed. In order to work as a cook, the character must not have a hostile or worse relationship with Nebi Kopsui, or she will refuse their aid. Characters working as cooks must make three DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) checks, or Wisdom checks using either cook's utensils or an herbalism kit, one each at morning, midday, and dusk. If they are able to succeed on at least two of these checks, a crew member of their choice notices their skill and that crew member's attitude improves by one step. If the player fails all three of the checks, the attitude of a crew member of the GMs choice becomes one level lower.

DO NOTHING. Should a character refuse to help out, they must make a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check or every member of the crew's attitude will become one level lower toward that character.

DEVELOPMENT. This is an ideal opportunity for the players to roleplay their characters and to learn more about the crew. While working side-by-side, the characters may instigate conversations and gentle inquiries about the history and background of the ship, the crew, and the cargo. There aren't many secrets on a ship as small as the *Folly*, and any member of the crew can provide the following pieces of information.

THE CARGO. The crew knows that they are transporting something small and valuable to Farzeen. Depending on who the characters ask, they will hear that the cargo consists of gems, precious metals, religious artifacts, or even the skeletal remains of a long dead priest.

- ◇ Captain Censa does not share details about the cargo unless the characters have a stake in the ship (see adventure hooks, page 8), or they succeed on a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Then she will explain that she is carrying precious stones to a group of priests in Farzeen. The green soapstones aren't much to look at but they're highly prized by these priests for their religious rites. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Charisma-based skill check are able to get permission to look at the stones themselves.

The crate is full of unimpressive green soapstone gems. There is nothing remarkable about the stones and they do not seem to be worth the fee that Censa is charging to transport them to Farzeen. What Censa does not know is that the gems will be used by the priests of Ghatanothoa in their construction of a likeness of the Great Old One. If a character has skill in Yog-Sothothery, they may make a Wisdom (Yog-Sothothery) check to reveal the following:

- ◇ **DC 15** – The stones make you uncomfortable but you don't know why.
- ◇ **DC 22** – The stones are of a substance called wiklamite and can be used as a conduit of eldritch energy.
- ◇ **THE CREW.** Everyone is ill at-ease near Moseta, who spends its day swabbing the deck in silence. No one other than Captain Censa realizes that Nukki is more than just a cat, an assumption she has no interest in correcting. (For additional details on the individual crew, see page 47.) The crew are friendly to those they know well (if they have a pre-existing connection) and initially indifferent to everyone else.



◇ **FARZEEN.** A paradise! Protected by the Goddess of Light! The sheltered harbor is on the south face of an island and watched over by her statue, which soars high into the sky. Legend has it she protects the island and its inhabitants. The Goddess is a blazing beacon for all sailors and can be seen for miles in the darkest night, bleakest storm, and densest fog. The city itself is walled and the Watch's headquarters rests near the harbor at the base of the volcano. This is all hearsay: none of the current crew has ever actually been to Farzeen.

◇ **HAZEL'S FOLLY.** The *Folly* sat in port at Resante for months before Captain Censa claimed her. It's widely believed by the crew that she is cursed, and the hulking form of Moseta does little to assuage their fears. But times are tough and the Captain pays a fair wage. And even if she didn't, well, you'd risk much to get out of Resante, and the stories about Farzeen are like something out of a dream. Just going there must be worth it.



their footing and fall prone. A character that was working on the rigging takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall; a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw reduces the damage by half. Members of the crew must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, at disadvantage, to avoid falling prone.

Once gathered on the deck, the PCs can take in the awesome strength and horror of the storm. The churning clouds overhead blot out the sun completely and precipitation falls heavily. The torrential downpour cuts visibility to 30 feet. Rain pummels the characters and the ship from all directions. Gale force wind blows with such power that folk aboard the ship must struggle to maintain their footing.

While aboard the ship, the PCs can take any of the following actions. At the GM's discretion, a spell might automatically accomplish one of these tasks.

- ◇ **REMOVE HAZARDS.** Rigging, barrels, or loose debris might all present hazards. The PC must succeed on a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to remove one of these hazards. Unless one PC succeeds at this action in a round, at least one NPC suffers a wound or is trapped under loose debris.
- ◇ **BAIL THE SHIP** (only during rounds 6-8). Tossing water overboard to try to keep the ship afloat is straightforward but tiring, requiring a DC 8 Constitution check; failure on this check causes the PC to suffer one level of exhaustion (the PC cannot gain more than one level of exhaustion in this way, despite subsequent bailing attempts). If no one successfully bails the ship in rounds 6-8, then all aboard gain disadvantage on checks to resist the effects of the storm.
- ◇ **AID CREWMATE.** The PC acts to protect, rescue, or otherwise aid a fellow crewmember. This can involve a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to lift a hazard off a victim or drag someone to (relative) safety or a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check to treat wounds sustained during the storm. If the PC is pulling someone out of the sea (see below), this requires a DC 10 or higher Strength check, depending on the relative weight of the victim; for instance, it is much easier to pull the cat out of the sea (DC 10) than the bulky first mate (DC 14). Using a rope or similar means to rescue someone fallen overboard grants advantage on this check. Rescuing a crewmate improves the PC's relationship by one category with that NPC.
- ◇ **SELF-PRESERVATION.** A PC attempting only to hang on gains advantage on all saving throws against the effects of the storm for that round. Characters who lash themselves to the deck gain advantage on all saving throws to resist the effects of the storms but are immobilized

SCENE 3. THE STORM

The journey thus far has been remarkable for its smooth seas, gentle breezes, and warm sunshine. There have been a few scattered showers and gentle swells, but nothing that hasn't been easily handled by *Hazel's Folly*. The crew have used the quiet to their advantage, falling into the efficient routine of a well-organized team and getting to know one another better.

This morning, as every morning, you and the crew awaken to find Captain Censa and Psaila already on the deck waiting for you. Nukki's unnerving stare tracks you as you go about the duties laid before you. The others shake the morning stiffness from their limbs.

Captain Censa and her cat, Nukki, are constant companions and can be found on the deck during all hours. The characters begin their day the same as any other (see **Scene 2**). When they are called upon for their third skill check, inform them that it will be made at disadvantage, then read or paraphrase the following.

In the blink of an eye, the sea turns treacherous. Black clouds issue forth green-yellow lightning and the gentle ocean waves swell, threatening to overtake the *Folly*. Captain Censa barks orders to the crew and you find yourself in a fight with the preternaturally strong storm.

DEVELOPMENT. Characters that succeed on their final check can make their way to the deck safely prior to the storm hitting. Any character that fails their check loses

and might not be able to assist in further actions (GM's discretion) while lashed.

- ◇ **SOMETHING ELSE.** In a dynamic, catastrophic situation like this, the players will almost certainly come up with something else to attempt. In that case, assign an appropriate skill check and set the DC at 12, 15, or 18 depending on difficulty (GM's discretion).

The storm gains strength at a dizzying rate. Characters that succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check understand that the storm will soon be powerful enough to tear *Hazel's Folly* to timbers.

Each round the storm gathers strength, putting the crew, the ship, and the characters at greater danger. The crew will be focused on containing the damage from the storm and keeping the *Folly* afloat.

- ◇ **ROUND 1:** The rolling waves and rain-drenched deck are difficult to stand on. Characters not moving must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to maintain their footing at the end of their turn. On a failure, the character falls prone. Characters moving at more than half their movement make this check at disadvantage.
- ◇ **ROUNDS 2 – 3:** Lightning crashes from the skies, striking the highest point around the mast. Despite the downpour, the sails catch fire and begin to burn. The DC for the Dexterity saving throw to move about the ship increases to 11.
- ◇ **ROUNDS 4 – 5:** The crew work, with minimal success, at controlling the fire. The PCs can attempt to help, requiring a DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check; failure on this check inflicts 1d6 fire damage to each contributing PC. Each of these rounds no PCs successfully help, one or more crew members are badly burned. At the end of the 5th round, the rigging and the sails suffer another lightning strike and are almost destroyed. The remnants of the rigging and canvas sails fall to the deck and the characters must contend with the possibility of the ship itself catching fire. The DC for the Dexterity saving throw increases to 12.
- ◇ **ROUNDS 6 – 7:** Against all expectations, the storm's power continues to grow. The buffeting winds push the last remnants of the sail so forcefully that the mast bends and creaks from the strain. The deck pitches precipitously and the ship begins to take on water.

Fortunately, the ocean water raging across the deck has doused any remaining flames. The DC for the Dexterity saving throw increases to 13. Characters who fail this check by 4 or more tumble off the deck into the frothy ocean below.

- ◇ **ROUND 8:** A final gust of wind breaks the mast off *Hazel's Folly*. The sails and rigging catch in the squall and rapidly soar from the ship, disappearing into the inky darkness in moments. With the sail removed, the ship's movements are less chaotic, as it is no longer buffeted by the wind and only has to contend with the swells of the sea. The DC for the Dexterity saving throw remains 13 for this final check. Characters who fail this check by 4 or more tumble off the deck into the frothy ocean below.

- ◇ **ROUNDS 9+:** The storm begins to abate and characters taking reasonable precautions, such as lashing themselves to the deck, find themselves out of immediate danger. If the players do not think of this themselves, a crew member suggests that they do it.

WHAT IF SOMEONE FALLS IN THE WATER

A character who falls in the water ends up 1d4 x 5 feet from the *Folly* in a random direction. Climbing back aboard the *Folly* requires the character be adjacent to the ship and make a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check, consuming their action. (Once the storm has abated, any surviving characters in the water are hauled back aboard without trouble.)

The violence of the storm and chaos on the surface have drawn creatures from the depths of the ocean. For any character beginning their turn in the sea, roll a d12. On a roll of 11 or higher, the character has attracted the attention of a wandering sea creature. If the character has taken damage for any reason, roll twice and use the higher result to determine if an encounter occurs. (see *Water Adventures Sidebar*). The attitude of the crew toward the PC determines their reaction to someone falling in the sea. If a crew member falls into the sea and is aided by a PC, that crew member's attitude becomes friendly.





- ◇ **FRIENDLY** crew members will actively assist in a manner that does not place them directly in harm's way. This may consist of casting spells or making ranged attacks against any assailants.
- ◇ **INDIFFERENT** crew members limit their aid to throwing a rope to a character fallen overboard so they're able to more easily climb back onto the ship; doing so grants advantage on checks made to climb aboard.
- ◇ **HOSTILE** crew members' behavior is left to the GM's discretion. Most likely, they will completely ignore the character and any cries for help.

d8	Creature
1-2	Giant Crab (CR 1/8)
3	Giant Octopus (CR 1)
4-5	Giant Sea Horse (CR 1/2)
6	Hunter Shark (CR 2)
7-8	Reef Shark (CR 1/2)

AFTER THE STORM: ADRIFT AT SEA. The storm's wrath dissipates, leaving the *Folly* inoperable and the crew in bad shape. One or more crewmates may have died in the incident or been lost at sea, and those who survive are profoundly rattled and exhausted. None of them seem to have lost their reason (yet), but they are obviously upset and hardly in the mood to talk.

With no sail and no mast, *Hazel's Folly* is drifting helplessly in the ocean. The ship is in no immediate danger of sinking but, without a miracle, the crew is fated to a slow death by starvation and dehydration. The captain calms the crew as best she can and sends them below deck to rest. Realizing they are lost at sea, the crew and PCs must

all make DC 10 Wisdom saving throws or gain a level of dread (SPCM 72). Any member of the crew who does not have a friendly relationship with at least one PC fails this saving throw automatically.

Allow the PCs to take actions to comfort the survivors, seek to repair the ship (though it's ultimately hopeless), or gain insight into the nature of the event. A DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) or DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check determines that the storm could not be entirely natural, though more information is beyond the PCs' immediate grasp. It is obvious the ship will need to be repaired or rebuilt at dock.

Ultimately, the PCs have no choice but to settle in for a long, cold, unhappy night. Those who manage to catch a few hours of sleep experience vague, unsettling dreams, while those who remain awake hear foul whispers, but they can never quite figure out who among the crew is uttering them.

SCENE 4. ATTACK FROM THE DEPTHS

At the end of a long, cold night, the storm all but vanishes with the rising sun, and in the distance and the beaches of Farzeen appear in the distance. Psaila drops anchor on the reefs to keep the ship from drifting further out to sea and sets the crew to task to prepare for an excursion to shore. Moseta will not leave the ship and is left onboard to protect the *Folly*, much to everyone's relief.

Captain Censa gathers the remaining crew and directs them to the skiff, which she assigns the two strongest peo-

WATER ADVENTURES

SWIMMING. While swimming, each foot of movement costs 2 feet, unless a character has a swimming speed. Swimming against a current, in stormy waters, or in other adverse conditions may require a Strength (Athletics) check, at the GM's discretion.

After each hour of swimming, a character without a swimming speed must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion. A character that has a swimming speed can swim all day without penalty using the normal rules for a forced march found in the *Player's Handbook*.

DROWNING. A character can hold their breath underwater for a number of minutes equal to 1 + their Constitution modifier (minimum 30 seconds).

When a character runs out of breath, they begin drowning. They can survive for a number of rounds equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum 1). At the start of their next turn after the last round of drowning, the character drops to 0 hit points and is dying. The character cannot recover hit points until they can breathe again.

UNDERWATER COMBAT. When making a melee attack underwater, a character that doesn't have a swimming speed (either natural or granted by magic) has disadvantage on the attack roll unless the weapon is a dagger, javelin, shortsword, spear, or trident.

A ranged weapon attack underwater can only hit

targets within the weapon's normal range. Ranged weapon attacks have disadvantage unless the weapon is a crossbow, a net, or a weapon that is thrown like a javelin (including a spear, trident, or dart). Characters or objects that are fully immersed in water have resistance to fire damage.

OPTIONAL RULES

Characters wearing armor have disadvantage on Strength (Athletics) checks while swimming.

At the GM's discretion, characters who do not have the opportunity to take a deep breath before being submerged may only have 30 seconds of breath remaining. A drowning character may not cast spells.

Visibility is reduced by depth. At a depth greater than 10 ft., visibility is reduced to 30 ft., the surface is lightly obscured and characters have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception checks). At a depth greater than 60 ft., the surface is heavily obscured, and characters from the surface without another source of light gain the blinded condition.

UNDERWATER SPELLCASTING. Characters that do not have a swimming speed must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw to cast a spell or maintain concentration underwater or while swimming. Casting a spell with a verbal component while underwater expends all held breath, unless the caster can breathe water, and immediately after casting, the character begins to drown.



ple available to row while she navigates. As the rest of the crew prepares to disembark, Censa quietly excuses herself and returns a few minutes later with Nukki tagging along behind her. Characters with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notice that Censa is now wearing the explorer's pack (loaded with the "gems" from the hold).

When the characters have boarded the skiff, read or paraphrase the following:

The vestiges of last night's hurricane can still be seen in the choppy waters and poor visibility. The skiff makes slow but steady progress toward the shore of Farzeen. The rising and falling of waves alternately hide and reveal the *Folly* behind you and the beach ahead. Descending into the trough of a particularly large wave the skiff strikes something below the surface.

DEVELOPMENT. Everyone in the boat must make a DC 12 Dexterity save or fall out of the skiff into the ocean. The sight of two deep ones attacking from the depths instills a level of dread upon the PCs and the crew; a successful DC 10 Wisdom saving throw negates this effect.

CREATURES. Characters and crew that fall into the water are immediately set upon by a pair of deep ones (*SPCM* 296).

CONCLUSION

Exhaustion sets in as the adrenaline from your travails and the battle wears off. Finally, as the sun reaches its zenith, you all manage to pull the skiff up the beach and away from the surging waves. The white-sand beach is pristine, and there are no signs of the islanders.

Captain Censa orders the crew to rest on the beach before heading farther inland to find the city proper. The surviving crew members agree wholeheartedly and immediately set about making a fire and preparing for the coming evening. Players with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notice that the remaining sailors are behaving strangely, moving furtively, and whispering in the shadows. Captain Censa and Psaila do not notice this strange behavior, or if they do, they do not share the observation with others. If the PCs bring it up to them, the captain and first mate dismiss their suspicions as the writhing of an exhausted mind and suggest the PCs rest.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the end of this episode, the PCs gain sufficient experience to reach 2nd level.



ACT 1.2: MUTINY

A Cthulhu Mythos adventure for four to five 2nd-level characters

EPISODE SYNOPSIS

The toll of losing their ship, fighting the terrible hurricane, and battling deep ones weighs heavily on the psyche of the crew. Finally ashore on a remote beach, the captain bids everyone make camp before finishing the last leg of their journey to Farzeen. The crew gather provisions, build shelter, and light a warming fire before turning in for the evening. The characters are sent into the nearby jungle for food and water.

With a few hours left before sunset, the PCs are free to explore the remote beach, where they discover the remnants of several ships' cargo as well as the remains of a local islander. The sundried and withered corpse offers more questions than answers.

After dark, nightmares plague the characters, and in the dead of the night, the crew mutinies, steals the cargo of wiklamite, and attempts to escape into the darkness. After a tense chase across the obstacle-strewn beach, the PCs catch up to the mutinous sailors. A battle ensues and, just as it begins to turn deadly, a patrol from nearby Farzeen arrives to take the mutineers into custody. (If the PCs prove unable to run down their former compatriots, they have a spot of luck as the patrol of Farzeen makes quick work of the renegades.)

Regardless of the circumstances, the Farzeen Watch makes it clear the sailors should be tried in their courts, rather than killed in the sand like animals. They further confiscate the wiklamite, explaining to Captain Censa that, according to island law, as soon as the gems came to the island, they became the property of the priests. The priests and the magistrate are responsible for determining the mutinous crew's fate, not Captain Censa. This, coupled with the crimes of mutiny and violence against their captain, has placed the rebellious crew in a precarious position with the local authorities.

Throughout the chase, the mutineers have babbled and gibbered incoherently. Now that they are in manacles and being led to Farzeen, they begin to come to their senses. Claiming to have gone temporarily mad from the strain and the nightmares, they plead for forgiveness and reinstatement as part of the crew. Captain Censa and Psaila know that the best chance they have at repairing *Hazel's Folly* and getting off the island is to straighten this mess out with the local authorities.

The patrol marches the mutineers off to Farzeen, leaving the PCs, Captain Censa, and First Mate Psaila on the beach with instructions to come to Farzeen the following day to discuss matters further. The rest of their evening is uneventful.



Leaving camp at dawn, the PCs begin their trek through the jungles and have an encounter with a pair of vicious deep one hybrid apes. The unusual and violent apes are unlike anything the PCs have ever seen, and they achieve a harrowing victory. With their endurance strained to the breaking point, the PCs are finally able to see the great volcano, Kaza, and the walls surrounding the idyllic city of Farzeen.

SCENE I. THE BEACH

Captain Censa assures you all that the remote beach in front of you is, in fact, on the same island as Farzeen.

“We’ll head to Farzeen first thing in the morning. I think we could all use a good night’s sleep. Psaila, see to it that camp is set and we’re ready at first light.”

Psaila efficiently divides a number of tasks among the crew before motioning Censa to the side for a private conversation. Nebi, the Wicot triplets, and the Ogilwas divide their efforts between constructing a primitive lean-to for protection from the elements and gathering wood for a fire. The crew’s movements are quick and furtive as they go about their tasks. The siblings and Nebi stay together, while the triplets complete their chores as a group.

A hero who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check identifies the telltale signs of significant stress and nervous exhaustion among the members of the crew. They want nothing more than for this day to be over and to forget the horrors of the voyage. If asked about their concerns, they admit to being nervous about the profane terrors that attacked them from the sea, and they appreciate Captain Censa’s foresight to bring the cargo with her from the *Folly*.

Psaila may ask the PCs to forage for food and water in the nearby jungles (see **Hunt for Your Dinner**). They also might decide to go exploring the abandoned beach (see **Salvage Run**). Either way, they accomplish their task as it grows dark and make it back in time for dinner. If the PCs do not go hunting, the crew manages to catch enough game to feed themselves.

HUNT FOR YOUR DINNER

Before sending them on their way, the first mate pulls the characters aside.

“Don’t wander too far. We’ve rations but are running short on water. What this crew really needs is a hearty, fresh meal. If you’ve time, you may want to check the shoreline for flotsam and salvage. There’s no telling what’s washed up after that unholy storm.”

DEVELOPMENT. With night approaching, the party has 3 hours to find potable water and enough food for the crew to sleep with full bellies. Luckily, the island has plentiful game and fresh water, and finding these resources is not particularly challenging. The party may make one group skill check per hour while the sun is up. With a successful group DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check, the PCs find either water or a fresh game trail (the players’ choice). If there is a ranger or PC with a wilderness background among the party, there is no need to make skill checks; they find water and food automatically. The game trail leads the characters to a **giant boar**, which is more than large enough to feed the entire crew.

SALVAGE RUN

The ebb and flow of the tide, strengthened by the furious storm, has washed all manner of debris onto the shore: mostly broken crates, rotted wood, and scraps of rigging. Strewn among the jetsam are a trio of bodies. Two of the bodies lie in tide pools, while the third slumps in the sand well away from the edge of the water.

The shoreline is littered with detritus, scraps, junk, and waste from ships that fared worse than *Hazel’s Folly*. Crates, barrels, and even a few drowned sailors litter the beach. The GM is encouraged to use this opportunity to replace adventurers’ lost equipment and/or make incremental upgrades as needed to their gear. In the pocket of one of the sailor’s corpses, PCs can find a *potion of healing* along with 2 sp. If the PCs announce their intention to search, they find these items automatically; otherwise, any PC with a Passive Perception of 12 or higher notices the gleam of the potion vial.

DEVELOPMENT. The characters find the dead body of a humanoid lying face down a few dozen feet from the ocean’s edge (the third body they initially saw). While it is clear this person must have survived long enough to crawl up onto the beach, the storm has destroyed whatever tracks the unfortunate being made prior to its passing. The body is clothed in a simple robe and lacks weapons, equipment, or armor. Tucked into its belt is a pouch containing a pamphlet, *The Zanthu Tablets* (SPCM 137). A character examining the body





further should make a Wisdom (Medicine) check, deducting the following based on the roll (all the information is cumulative):

- ◇ **DC 12** – The body is male and either human or half-elf. Its skin is heavily wrinkled, dried out, and leathery due to decades of life in the sun and salty air.
- ◇ **DC 15** – You cannot find any obvious wounds or anything to indicate how the humanoid died, and if he drowned, how did he crawl so far from the ocean?
- ◇ **DC 19** – The body is oddly stiff for a corpse so fresh.

SCENE 2. MUTINY IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT

After dinner, everyone makes ready for bed. Captain Censa has her own spot staked out, as does Psaila. Nebi, the Wicots, and the Ogilwas share the large lean-to. The PCs are given their own shelter. The crew divides up watch duty per Psaila's instructions, with the PCs assigned the final watch of the evening.

As everyone beds down, characters who succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check see Nukki padding off into the jungle. Characters without darkvision make this check with disadvantage. Nukki's tracks abruptly disappear at the jungle's edge; no further traces of her passage can be found.

The crew are suffering from a bout of temporary madness due to their trials at sea and their encounters with the deep ones. In their madness, they have seen the End of All Things and they fervently believe that delivering the stones to the priests will lead to their salvation. Driven by fevered dreams, whispering voices, and incomprehensible urges, they plan to steal the cargo and flee into the night. They wait until the PCs have gone to sleep, not anticipating that nightmares will stir them awake at the planned hour.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The fire has gone out, leaving not so much as a single ember to remind you of its warmth and light. With no images to distract your mind, every sound is amplified. A snap of a dry twig has you turn toward the sound, but of course you see nothing. That's when you realize that the moon and the stars overhead have disappeared, too.

You gaze up in horror as not only do the clouds part, but the sky itself seems torn asunder. Nameless, shapeless horrors you can barely comprehend, let alone describe, come boiling out of the impossible void and descend toward you, tentacles writhing and bulbous eyes gleaming.

The PCs wake up from their nightmare and must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or gain one level of dread. They are just in time to catch the crew in the act (see **Development**, below). Oloh Wicot has been chosen to steal the satchel containing the stones, while the others



are to aid her in whatever way they can. The crazed sailors still respect the captain and their mates: all they want is to sneak off into the night with the stones and will use non-lethal attacks against their former friends. (If the PCs respond with lethal force, see the sidebar.)

DEVELOPMENT. All PCs should make DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) checks with disadvantage to see if they awaken from the rustling of Oloh Wicot stealing the captain's pack. Any PCs that succeed on this check perceive the traitors in time to see them run off into the darkness with the captain's pack.

Characters who failed their Wisdom (Perception) checks are surprised at the start of this encounter, while those who succeeded can act normally in their initiative order. All members of the mutinous crew have advantage on their Initiative checks. Characters that are not surprised can act on the first round but have disadvantage on their initiative check, as they are caught off-guard by the sudden betrayal.

WHAT IF THE PLAYERS KILL THE CREW?

In the event that a member of the treasonous crew dies, consider the following options.

- 1) At the first fatality, the survivors fly into a mindless rage and attack with abandon. The sailors fight to the death, ask for no quarter, and expect none in return.
- 2) Except for Oloh, the survivors fall to their knees and prostrate themselves before the PCs. The lethal violence to their companion has snapped their minds completely and they are insensate. Checks to interrogate them are made with disadvantage due to their diminished mental state.

Should there be a fatality, the GM is encouraged to improvise and adjust the encounter to best fit the theme and temperament of the game and the players. Regardless of the crew's actions, Oloh will continue to run as far and as fast as she can.

CHASE SEQUENCE

- **GETTING STARTED.** A chase requires at least one pursuer and their quarry. During the first round of the chase, all participants act in initiative order. The chase ends when the quarry is caught or escapes.
- **CHASING DOWN THE QUARRY.** Keep track of the distance of the participants relative to each other. On each turn after the first, the participant who is in the lead (almost always the quarry) acts first, followed by the participant who is the next farthest ahead, then the next, and so on (ties go to the participant with the highest initiative).
 - Participants are free to use their actions as they like, along with any applicable reactions or bonus actions, just as in combat. Some complications (see below) may call for the use of an action.
 - Each time a participant uses the Dash action, they must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC equal to the number of rounds the chase has gone on. On a failure, they suffer one level of exhaustion.
- **COMPLICATIONS.** At the beginning of each round of the chase after the first, the creature acting first may face a complication. They either roll on an appropriate complications table (such as the one below), or the GM may determine what complication, if any, comes up. Complications can vary greatly in nature, and may range from an obstacle that must be overcome, an opportunity to hinder another participant, a choice of multiple paths, or nearly anything else. Unless specifically stated in the description, the complication is something that each participant in the chase must deal with that turn.
- **ENDING THE CHASE.** If the quarry is grappled, incapacitated, or immobilized by some other means, the pursuers have won the chase. If the quarry escapes by outrunning, outsmarting, or successfully hiding from the pursuers, the quarry has won the chase.

The beach of Farzeen offers several complicating factors to overcome.

1d12	Complication	Type
1	Tidal pool	Your path takes you right into a tidal pool. The pool counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain. Participants with a Strength score of at least 10 can bypass this obstacle with a running long jump.
2	Detritus	The storm has washed up the remains of a sail, boards from a ship, and/or a drowned sailor. The debris counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain unless the participant succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. By taking an action to move some of the debris, a participant can expand or reduce the difficult terrain by 5 feet.

3	Elevated Sand Bar	You are caught in an expanse of loose sand and an elevated sand bar. This sand bar counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
4	Driftwood	The remains of an enormous, uprooted tree block your path. The tree counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain. Participants succeeding on a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check can navigate the obstacle without slowing.
5	Swarm of Seagulls	You run directly through a swarm of seagulls, which take flight as you pass through. The first three creatures to run through the seagulls must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d4 slashing damage.
6	Seaweed	Your path takes you through a patch of slick seaweed. Creatures taking a Dash action on this round must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone at the start of their movement.
7	Choice	The quarry can choose to move in one of two directions. Roll twice on this table. The quarry chooses which result to take.
8-12	No Complication	

If the PCs capture Oloh, proceed to **Captured**. If they are unsuccessful and she escapes, proceed to **Escaped**.

SCENE 3A. CAPTURED!

With ragged breath and pounding hearts, you are able to overtake Oloh despite the best efforts of her associates. With escape no longer an option, she turns to you, sets her feet in the sand, and displays her shaking hook menacingly. Her eyes, normally calm, have the unsettling gleam of the unhinged.

PCs who make a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight or Yog-Sothothery) check realize that Oloh is caught in the grips of madness. Play up the fact that she appears to be seeing, hearing, and reacting to things the PCs cannot perceive. The remaining members of the crew realize they're caught and ready themselves for one last stand. If the players seek to parlay, the crew will speak to them, revealing the details as outlined in the following section. After the information has been gathered, the Farzeen Watch intervenes.

With crazed eyes and shaking limbs, the maddened crew fights defensively (i.e. taking the Dodge action when appropriate and casting spells that are meant to hinder, rather than harm). Even in the grips of madness, they



do not want to harm their friends, unless attacked with lethal force (see the sidebar, **What if the Players Kill the Crew?**).

DEVELOPMENT. If it comes to blows, the players and the mutinous crew are able to complete one round of combat before the local Watch steps in to stop the fight. The patrol consists of 8 toa (**guards**) and their leader, Momao (page 51).

The crescendo of the battle is broken by a bellow from the jungle's edge, "HOLD YOUR WEAPONS!" A tall, lean woman steps forward, flanked by four warriors on each side. She scans the chaos of the beach, taking it in with the wary gaze of an experienced sentry.

The Watch orders everyone to cease fighting immediately and to put away their weapons. The estranged crew comply without hesitation and fall to their knees in exhaustion. They continue to babble incessantly, pleading to no one in particular to get the stones to the priests.

SCENE 3B. ESCAPED!

DESIGNER'S NOTE: There will be situations in which the PCs seemingly fail or must make the best of a bad situation. If Oloh and her allies are played to their fullest, they probably shouldn't be able to be caught. Let your players stew over perceived lost chances and missed opportunities. The inevitable recovery and triumph will be all the sweeter for it.

Should the PCs fail to capture Oloh, read or paraphrase the following:

The crazed mutineers are able to distract you long enough for Oloh to escape with the stones. Her trail is mangled and obfuscated by the surf, her associates, and the night.

Through luck, skill, guile, and magic, the moon-touched crew of the *Folly* have been able to distract and detain the PCs sufficiently to allow Oloh to escape from her pursuers. Should this occur, the PCs may have the opportunity to question any crew members that have been subdued. The traitorous sailors are addled from their experiences and readily succumb to interrogation. Characters can learn the following through appropriate Charisma-based skill checks:

- ◇ **DC 8** – Oloh plans to deliver the stones to the priests to save the world! In their confused state, the sailors did not want to wait even the few hours until morning to deliver the wikkamite. They describe dreams eerily similar to the ones the PCs experienced.
- ◇ **DC 16** – In their dreams, they heard a whispering, sibilant voice calling for the stones to be used to create an icon of an all-powerful god that will protect them.

DEVELOPMENT. The PCs hear the sounds of a fight somewhat further down the beach. The battle is sudden, violent, and ends as quickly as it begins. When they investigate, they see all of the previously escaped mutinous sailors being restrained, manacled and taken away by the Watch.



Read or paraphrase the following:

A squad of figures, the local watch by their demeanor and appearance, stand over your former friends. Each sailor is restrained and being placed in manacles. The Watch seems a little worse for the encounter: a large man bleeds from his temple, while a woman limps slightly as she inspects the prisoners. There are no apparent injuries among the remaining figures.

THE PATROL

The folk of Farzeen know the dangers that lurk below the waves and that the churning swell of a major storm brings not just the flotsam and jetsam of ships torn asunder but also the threat of monstrosities from the depths. The magistrate of Farzeen has ordered the beaches, pathways, and its environs be patrolled regularly, both to combat these incursions and take advantage of salvage opportunities.



The captain of the city Watch, Lothar, awoke to an ill-wind from the storm and has dispatched a patrol to the beaches. Fearing the worst, all patrols have been augmented with additional warriors and ordered to bring castaways and foundlings to the calaboose for questioning.

In this case, the vigilant patrol heard the commotion from the chase and investigated.

SCENE 4.

THE MAGISTRATE WILL SORT IT

The exact disposition of the patrol, the captive crew, and the PCs relies heavily on the PCs' previous interactions with the crew and the patrol's perception of what is happening on the beach. The patrol may attempt to arrest the PCs (see below), based on their orders to escort castaways back to Farzeen by whatever means necessary. The patrol will use lethal force, confident in their ability to stabilize any downed adversaries, and will hold nothing back should a fight break out.

How the characters responded to their shipmates' mutinous actions factors into Momao's perception of them and her initial attitude. Any attempts to intimidate Momao fail and her attitude toward the PCs degrades one level.



- ◇ **If the PCs killed any of the crew.** Momao begins hostile to the players and Charisma-based skill checks are made at disadvantage.
- ◇ **If there were no fatalities and the PCs captured Oloh.** Momao still begins as hostile toward the PCs but Charisma-based skill checks are made as normal.
- ◇ **If there were no fatalities and Oloh escaped.** The patrol begins as indifferent and Charisma-based skill checks are made as normal.

Momao, the leader of the patrol, steps forward to address the PCs, and asks simply, "Who are you, why are you in Farzeen, and what has happened here?"

If the players are forthright and honest about the activities of the evening and why they have come to Farzeen, they can avoid imprisonment at the hands of the local constabulary. At the GM's discretion, players who roleplay this encounter well and answer honestly and respectfully can improve Momao's attitude toward them without rolling their skill checks, or they may make their checks with advantage. Attempts to deceive Momao require that the PCs succeed on an opposed skill check, and being lied to reduces her attitude toward the PCs.

If the characters fail a check while Momao's attitude is already hostile toward them, she will order her guards to secure them with manacles, punishing resistance with force. The patrol will fight the characters and drag their unconscious forms to the jail if needed.

If, at the end of this scene, Momao's attitude toward the PCs is indifferent, the patrol's decision to leave the PCs on the beach or take them into custody is left to the GM's discretion.

If Momao's attitude is improved to friendly, the PCs, Captain Censa, and Psaila are remanded to their own custody.

When the facts are laid out and next steps have been determined, Momao and her patrol round up the prisoners and begin their journey back to Farzeen. Momao tells Captain Censa and the PCs that she will be taking the crew in for processing by the magistrate. They are also informed that, according to island law, the stolen cargo is the rightful property of whomever was slated to purchase it (in this case, the island priests).

"The charges before these men and women are serious. Mutiny, theft of cargo, and violence against your captain are capital crimes in Farzeen. The priests and the magistrate will convene to decide their fate. I recommend you come by to say your piece, or to say goodbye, as you please on the morrow."

She provides directions to Farzeen and the location where the crew will be held before taking her leave.



SCENE 5. COMING TO THEIR SENSES

As the mutinous sailors are led away, a perceptible change overtakes their countenance. They shake their heads, as if clearing cobwebs of confusion, and their faces bear the signs of bewilderment, followed quickly by terror, when they realize their predicament. As the crew stumbles away, the PCs have time to ask a few questions.

The sailors beg for forgiveness for stealing the stones and any harm they caused; they claim that they were not in control of their actions. They remember the events that took place but were aware of them as if they watched from outside of their bodies. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check verifies that the crew is telling the truth on all counts. If asked what instigated their treachery, they respond the same as in the **Escape** scenario (though they offer this information freely now).

DEVELOPMENT. Captain Censa insists on resting for the rest of the night and preparing for her hearing with the magistrate and the priests. If asked, Censa will admit to having seen behavior such as that exhibited by their shipmates, and she does not believe that it reflects a permanent condition. Also, she points out that their former friends never used lethal force and that they were just trying to complete the mission that they initially signed up for. If possible, she would like to free them, deliver the cargo, and move on the next port of call.

The PCs are free to take a short or long rest as they please or explore the jungle further (see *SPCM* 414 for Sea Encounter tables). As night falls, Nukki pads back into camp, disappearing into Captain Censa's lean-to. The following morning everyone packs up, enters the jungle proper, and begins their journey to Farzeen.

SIDETREK. RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

The jungles surrounding Farzeen are home to all manner of creature, mundane and Mythos. Apes, predatory cats, saltwater crocodiles, and gargantuan snakes are some of the menaces that call this island their home. The deep ones of the surrounding sea often interbreed with the apex predators of the jungle, creating a menagerie of unnatural and horrific monsters. These creatures roam the area, leaving a wake of destruction in their path, until their inevitable return to the depths.

At an appropriate point in their trek, read or paraphrase the following:

The chatter of the jungle abruptly ceases. The ubiquitous sounds of insects, birds, and gibbering monkeys is gone. Without warning a pair of rocks, each larger than your head, soar toward you, immediately drawing your attention to two ape-like creatures barreling your way. The hunched creatures stand fully 8 feet tall, have the bearing of great apes, and are covered in the variegated, ichthyoid plating of an armored, deep-sea fish.

The PCs have stumbled upon a pair of deep one hybrid apes (page 49). At the appearance of the horrific creatures, the PCs must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or gain two levels of dread.

The apes begin their attack by hurling rocks at range from behind 3/4 cover. As soon as they have launched their initial ranged assault, they rush closer to engage the party in melee. The apes fight to the death and cannot be driven off.

FARZEEN, AT LAST

The jungle trail from the beach to Farzeen is only a few miles long, but the combination of heat, humidity, difficult terrain, and the feeling of danger behind every shadow makes it slow-going. Every exposed inch of skin draws voracious, blood-sucking insects, leaving the PCs covered in itchy welts and bumps. Each hour takes them deeper into the stifling heat of the jungle. Finally, with heavy feet and ragged breath, the PCs look up and see a walled city no more than a hundred paces away: Farzeen.

From outside the city, the PCs can make out Kaza, the volcanic centerpiece of the island, a billowy plume of steam and sulfurous smoke issuing from its summit. The city itself is constructed on raised bluffs and is elevated dozens of feet from the jungle floor. Momao's directions lead them to a well-worn path at the base of the wall and they begin the final leg of their journey to the entrance of the city.

Farzeen is surrounded by a 30-ft. wall, and the structures within are constructed on the top of a bluff roughly twice the height of the wall. Between the protective wall and the bluffs is a roadway large enough for a cart. Farzeen is, in effect, a tiered city designed to be easily defended. Climbing the walls requires two successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) checks. Two more successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) checks are required to scale the bluff to get into the city proper.

CONCLUSION

The remaining crew of the *Hazel's Folly* have made their way to exotic Farzeen and have their work cut out for them. Their first order of business will be sorting out what happened to their compatriots, then they will have to figure out how to get their cargo to the priests who have agreed to purchase it and collect their payment. Captain Censa and First Mate Psaila both wish to have the crew released, but the PCs may have other ideas. Once the wicklamite has been delivered and paid for, Captain Censa can repair the *Folly*, restock her with supplies, find new cargo, and begin the next leg of her voyage.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the end of this episode, the PCs gain sufficient experience to reach 3rd level.



*Fines of headdress represent
the rays of the sun.*

*Traditional
Tarzeen
necklace*

*Hands outstretched to catch
the sun during Dawn and
Dusk.*

*Towering to a
height of over
30 meters high.*

*The sculptor Znestal sketched
this in preparation for the
statue of the goddess*

Znestal



ACT 1.3: THE MUTINEER'S DILEMMA

A Cthulhu Mythos adventure for four to five 3rd-level characters

EPISODE SYNOPSIS

The PCs have survived a powerful storm, an attack from deep ones, a crazed and mutinous crew, and encounters with unnatural beasts. Their cargo has been confiscated and their former crewmates taken into Farzeen by the Watch. They had to overcome dangers on the last leg of the journey and the trek through the jungles of the island. At long last, the walls of Farzeen stand before them.

The PCs enter into the city (whether through the main gate, over the wall, or as prisoners of Momao) and proceed to the city jail to check on their former mates and recover the confiscated cargo. In stark context to their last port of call, Resante, Farzeen is a remarkably clean and prosperous city. Assuming they are not prisoners, the PCs can explore Farzeen, where they find lodging options to fit their needs and Obed Velt, a shipwright, who can repair *Hazel's Folly*.

The Stockade is sturdy, in good repair, and shaped like a horseshoe with a garden for a courtyard. A weary and wary Momao greets the PCs. She answers questions about the town, allows the PCs to see the prisoners, and directs them to return the following day after the magistrate has reviewed the case. She gives the PCs the cargo and directions to find the priests at the mountainside shrine to Ghat.

A meandering pathway up Kaza leads to a shrine of Ghat, where the PCs have their first interactions with the supplicants of Ghat, Censu and Cikka, neophytes of the order, thank the PCs for their troubles, recompense them for the cargo, and educate the adventurers on their order.

Cargo sold, repairs scheduled, and a place to stay secured, it's time to head back to the Stockade and check on the mutinous crew. Captain Wenza of the Watch greets the PCs, then proceeds to interrogate them regarding the sudden disappearance of their mates. The cells are empty, showing signs that someone or something burrowed up from below. While Lothar continues to question the group, another attack occurs in the cells. Rushing in to investigate, the PCs see two ghouls feasting on the freshly killed remains of a prisoner and guard.

The battle is short, violent, and gruesome. With clear evidence that ghouls are behind the attacks, Captain Wenza suggests a stomach-churning route to track the ghouls and learn the fate of the crew. Descending into the lava tubes below the jail, the PCs encounter a pair of ghouls nesting in the remains of their friends.

Lothar's mind reels with the implications of a ghoul insurrection. The ghouls and the islanders have coexisted in peace for countless generations. The magistrate must be informed immediately. Magistrate Alwigi's reaction to



the carnage in and beneath the Stockade is surprising, as he dismisses the activity as the work of crazed and starved renegades. The ghouls would never risk their pact for a meal of a few living criminals. After the magistrate leaves, Captain Censa and Aiden Psaila retire to see to the ship. Captain Wenza enlists the PCs to investigate further and gather proof of any plots by the ghouls of Farzeen. A clandestine meeting is scheduled at the Laughing Hammer.

GHOULS AND GHOSTS

Throughout *Ghoul Island*, you will see references to ghouls and ghosts. Unless otherwise stated, these entries always refer to the Mythos version of these creatures as outlined in *SPCM*.

SCENE 1. ENTER FARZEEN

After their harrowing travels, numerous battles, and the treachery of their mates, the PCs have, at long last, reached idyllic Farzeen, whose majesty stands in stark contrast to the decrepit squalor of Resante. The city is walled, for protection from the beasts of the jungle and sea, and built upon bluffs. Thus, the city appears to be on display for one and all to see. And what an amazing sight it is.

Looking around, you are stuck by how clean the folk are, as well as the newness of everything. Where Resante was falling to pieces, Farzeen stands in perfect repair. The filth and stench you'd come to associate with city life is absent, replaced by a fresh ocean breeze. The people lack the vaguely ranine features of the natives of Resante and instead present the picture of health, with sun-kissed skin and a light step.

For all its charm, however, the manner by which you enter Farzeen colors your initial impression of this otherwise idyllic city.

For further details on the history, current events, and points of interest with Farzeen, see *Farzeen: Gazetteer*. It should be apparent to the players that Farzeen is the polar opposite of Resante, and it is the most prosperous city they have had the good fortune to visit recently.

Read or paraphrase the following, based on the circumstances in which the PCs enter Farzeen. Note that they may be split into multiple groups, requiring multiple introductions to the city.

- ◇ **PRISONERS OF MOMAO.** Manacled and chained to each other, the crew of the *Folly* are led to Farzeen and deposited directly into the Stockade. The experience does not create a fond impression of the city.

Throughout the jungle trek to Farzeen, Momao and her guards have kept a wary eye out for predators lurking in the dark recesses beyond your sight. You finally arrive in the city as the red-orange fingers of dawn reach over the great volcano of Kaza. The men and women

at the gate nod to Momao as she continues onward to the Stockade.

- ◇ **OVER THE WALL.** PCs who have successfully climbed the wall and the bluffs can enter the city subtly. Standing upon the wall, they see Farzeen in all its splendor, especially the tall statue of a robed woman, one that rises easily 100 feet in the air

A towering marble statue of a robed woman pierces the heavens. The monolith is easily the tallest structure in the city, though it is dwarfed by the rising mound of Kaza itself. In one upraised hand, the woman holds an orb that glows like the morning sun. She seems remarkably life-like, but for her immense size.

- ◇ **Through the Gate.** There are half a dozen men and women at the gate (**guards**). They nod at the characters with an expression of feigned disinterest, as they approach Farzeen; disheveled adventurers and sailors are a common sight these days, but something has the guards on edge. If asked, the guards are able to give the PCs directions to the following locations. At the GM's discretion the guards are aware of other locations around the island (*Farzeen: Gazetteer*):

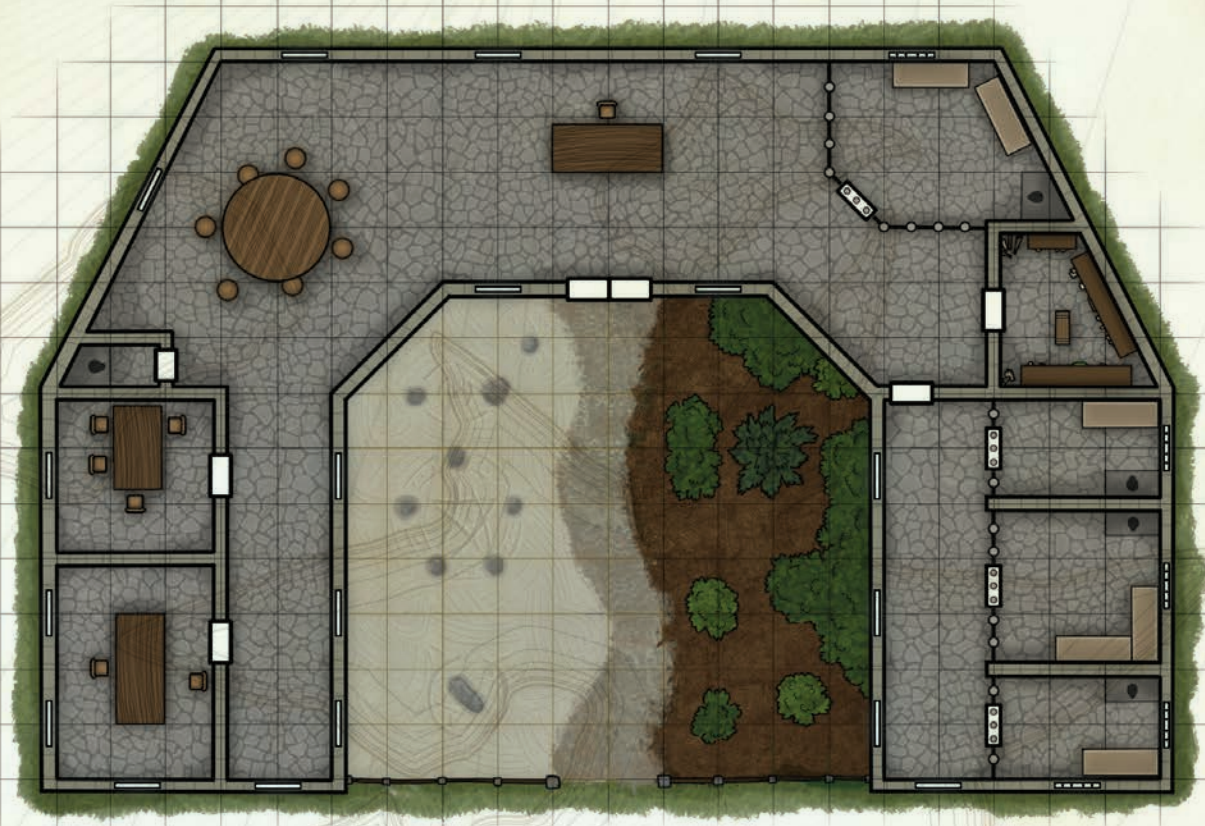
- ◇ **Obed's.** A shipwright and honest man. A bit of a curmudgeon but he gets his work done.
- ◇ **The Port of Call.** An inn with clean, affordable rooms available for rent. They have excellent kava (*Farzeen: Gazetteer*).
- ◇ **Kava's Respite.** A bar, with a few rooms in the back.
- ◇ **The Albatross.** A very nice inn.
- ◇ **The Stockade.** Where prisoners await justice.

SCENE 2. THE STOCKADE

The Stockade, like every other building within Farzeen, is well-made and shows no signs of wear or decay. The horseshoe-shaped building has a single entrance, plentiful windows to provide lighting, and a tropical courtyard. Upon quick inspection, the PCs note that the windows in the cells, in addition to being smaller than the rest, are barred and do not open.

IF THE PCs ARE PRISONERS. The PCs (as well as Captain Censa and Aiden Psaila, if they are also prisoners) have been placed in cell #2 (see **G**) and left to their own devices. The remaining crew members have been placed in cell #1 (see **F**) and cell #3 (see **H**). Their nonsensical muttering abated during the journey through the jungle, and they have been silent for quite some time. The PCs remain in the cells long enough to complete a short rest should they choose. After a few hours, they hear a door open and Momao enters the room.

With a weary sigh, Momao leans against the wall and says, "Let's try this one more time. Why are you here and what the hell was going on last night on the beach?"



1 square = 10 feet

The PCs can tell their side of the story one more time and Momao is more receptive now than she was on the beach. The spokesperson for the group must make a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check to earn their freedom. If the party roleplays the interaction well, this check should be made with advantage or skipped altogether. If they do not succeed on this check, Captain Censa interjects with a heartfelt plea for herself and her crew. Regardless of the circumstance, Momao grants the PCs and Captain Censa their freedom, as they are clearly not the ones who committed any crime. If the PCs inflicted any casualties upon the Watch, then Aiden Psaila is kept in custody as a sign of good faith. Regardless, the sailors are still to be tried for their crimes.

Once the PCs are released, the sailors are transferred to holding cell #2, where they just were, and Aiden moved to holding cell #1, to consolidate cells. Freed from the cells, the PCs are given the cargo to deliver to the priests of Ghat and told to inform the priests that they are no longer needed at the jail.

“Magistrate Alwigi is expected to review the case tomorrow. You can return on the morrow to discuss the fate of the others and to get your First Mate.” She dismisses you with a wave.

IF THE PCs AREN'T PRISONERS. Momao is working at the front and greets the PCs as they enter with a tired look and an exasperated sigh. She's at the end of a very long

shift and ready for her relief to come in. A DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check is all that's needed to convince Momao to release the confiscated wiklamite into their possession. She also directs the PCs to return the following day, after their former mates have been processed by the magistrate. Their cargo secured, Captain Censa urges the group to go the Temple of Ghat to get paid. Momao had originally asked the priests to come to the Stockade to fetch the wiklamite, but since the PCs are delivering the stones to them, Momao further asks the PCs to inform the priests that their presence is no longer needed at the jail.

If the PCs have treated her with respect, she will answer a few questions before getting tired of them and ushering them out the door.

THE GARDEN COURTYARD. “Peaceful, isn't it? It's been there as I long as I can remember. It changes, but I've never seen anyone working on it. Just one of those things.”

THE PRIESTS OF GHAT. “There's two main faiths in Farzeen. The priests of Ghat and the priests of the Goddess of Light. The priests of Ghat, that means ‘mountain pass’ in our tongue, venerate Kaza, the volcano. The priest of the Goddess of Light, well, they venerate her.” She is not aware of any animosity between the groups, other than the typical competition for worshippers that occurs between all religions.

THE CARGO. “I haven't looked. None of my business.” If shown the stones, she has no idea what they are or why the priests of Ghat would want them. She's just doing her job.

ACT 1.3: THE MUTINEER'S DILEMMA



FARZEEN. “Born here, raised here, and I’ll probably die here. It’s my home and I’d do anything to protect it.” Momao can answer most questions put forth to her about Farzeen, its history, and current events (*Farzeen: Gazetteer*).

A. COURTYARD

A curving path leads to the front of the jail. To the right of the path is a large sand garden with swirling shapes, strategically placed rocks, and two miniature, perfectly trimmed trees. Left of the path is a manicured lawn and assortment of palms, grasses, and brightly colored flowers.

A pair of heavily constructed double doors marks the entrance to the Stockade. The doors are unlocked whenever the building is occupied, but they can be locked (DC 14 Dexterity [Thieves’ Tools]) and barred from the inside. When barred, the doors can only be broken down with a successful DC 22 Strength check.

Characters examining the sand garden should make an Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Yog-Sothothery) check; information gleaned is cumulative. Any character who looks at the garden sees that there are no leaves, weeds, or so much as a grain of sand out of place.

ARCANA

◇ **DC 15** – The symbols are similar to those commonly used in protection circles.

◇ **DC 20** – The symbols are intended specifically to ward against extraplanar entities.

YOG-SOTHOTHERY

◇ **DC 12** – As DC 20 Arcana.

◇ **DC 17** – The symbols are derived from an ancient language, Aklo, and are for protection from the minions of the Great Old Ones. Upon learning this, the character must make a DC 12 Wisdom save or gain one level of dread. Characters that learn this knowledge secondhand are not required to make this check.

B. LOBBY

The double doors open inward to an expansive room. Immediately in front of the doors is a desk of dark wood. To the right is a jail cell, and to the left sits a large circular desk surrounded by chairs. The room is clean, simple, and sparsely furnished, with no decorations to speak of.

The guard on duty is stationed at the desk to greet visitors, keep an eye on any prisoners in the holding cell,

and coordinate the activities of the other members of the Watch (see **D**).

LAVA TUBES

Lava tubes thread throughout the ground beneath Farzeen. The enterprising islanders have put these natural tubes to a variety of uses, including as a sewer system. The Stockade is one of numerous establishments that has built privies directly over access holes to the tunnels below.

C. ALL PURPOSE ROOM

The all-purpose room is an expansive space with a large circular table, two desks, and chairs enough for everyone arranged throughout.

There is a privy, for use by the Watch and their guests, in the corner of this room behind a privacy wall.

D. PRIMARY HOLDING CELL

The primary holding cell sees more use than all the others combined. Since the majority of misdeeds on the island are considered petty misdemeanors, this holding cell mostly serves to keep detainees from getting into any more trouble while they cool down from whatever prompted their crimes.

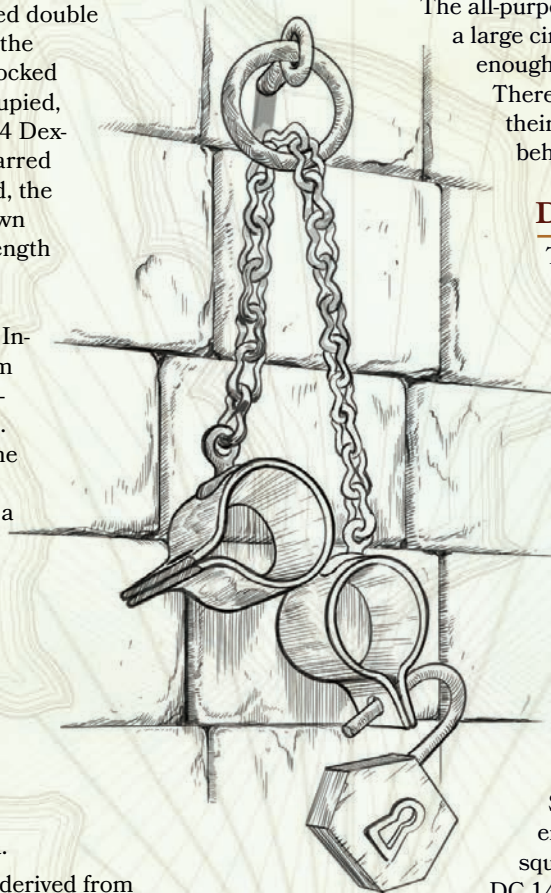
The northeast corner of the jail has been blocked off with bars to form a cell. There is a nook in the corner with a hole that serves as privy. The cell is clean and empty.

The lock to the cell is of moderate quality (DC 17 Dexterity [Thieves’ Tools]), the bars are strong (DC 20 Strength), and they are spaced wide enough that a small creature could squeeze between them with a successful DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. The privy leads to section of lava tubes running directly below the Stockade.

E. SUPPLY CLOSET

The supply closet is used to store the extra weapons, equipment, and any evidence collected by the guards during their rounds. The door has a high-quality lock (DC 20 Dexterity [Thieves’ Tools]), but it is rarely locked during the day.

TREASURE. The contents of the supply closet change periodically; mundane weapons, ammunition, and armor can be found in limited quantities inside. There is a 1 in 6 chance that a common magic item has been confiscated and found its way into storage. The most likely magic items to be found are:





d8	Item
1	<i>Potion of healing</i>
2	<i>Ammunition +1</i>
3	<i>Potion of water breathing</i>
4	<i>Scroll of comprehend languages</i>
5	<i>Tcho-Tcho oculus (fish eye)*</i>
6	<i>Potion of climbing</i>
7	Scroll of a 1st level spell of the GM's choice
8	<i>Invulnerable arrow</i> (page 61)

* See *SPCM* for details.

F. CELL #1

This small, rectangular cell is 10-feet by 15-feet and very similar to the one described in **D**. The floor is hard-packed earth and flagstones, the bars noticeably closer together and latticed to prevent any creature of Small size or larger from escaping. There is a small window, barred and unopenable, near the ceiling of the exterior wall.

The private cells are used for offenders that have broken more serious laws, or in some cases for someone who has annoyed the guards so much that they can't stand the sight (or smell) of the criminal any longer.

G. CELL #2

This 15-foot square room is identical to **F** in every way except its larger size. This room is used when the Watch needs to house several prisoners as a group.

H. CELL #3

Identical to **F**.

I. DEBRIEFING ROOM

When privacy is called for, the Watch uses this debriefing room. In reality, the room is rarely used for more than an occasional nap by a guard between patrols. There is a desk, chairs, and a large window that opens to the street outside.

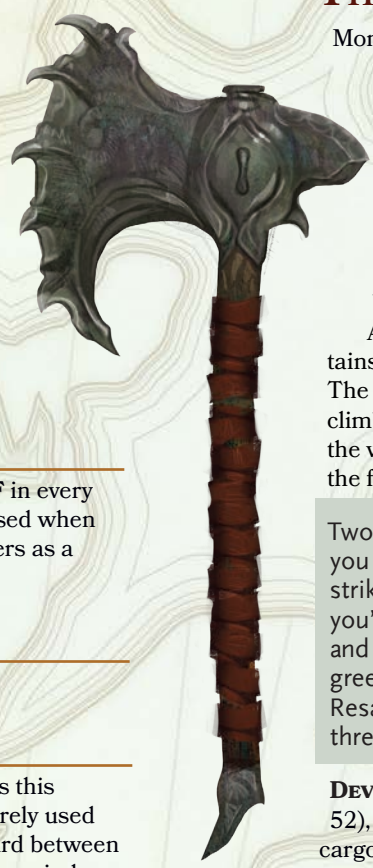
J. LOTHAR'S OFFICE

The captain's office is what you'd expect of a man more comfortable patrolling the streets than sitting in a chair. A clutter of papers, trinkets, and knickknacks litter the desk.

Mounted behind the desk is a worn and nicked great axe, the leather of its handle dark from heavy use. The marks and notches of countless battles show clearly on its blade.

Lothar's office is at the far end of the hallway. The door remains open while the office is occupied; otherwise, the door is always kept locked (DC 15 Dexterity [Thieves' Tools]), and Lothar is the only one with a key. (Lothar keeps the axe with him, so it's not present if he's not here.)

TREASURE. Lothar's greataxe, Sidesplitter (page 61), is hung on the wall behind Lothar's desk. In his tenure as captain of the Watch, Lothar has learned that in some situations, having a large axe prominently displayed in his office can be a great benefit. The axe is Lothar's constant companion and only in the office when he occupies it.



SCENE 3. THE PRIESTS OF GHAT

Momao and any locals on the street can direct the PCs to the mountainside shrine of Ghat. The directions lead them up the streets, through the town, and toward the volcano. The grade of the incline steadily increases as the PCs close in on the volcano. The PCs pass countless homes, inns, and shops until they are left standing at the base of Kaza.

A narrow path meanders up the mountainside, disappearing around the other side. The trail folds back into the mountain, steadily climbing upward. After ascending a quarter of the way up the mountain, read or paraphrase the following:

Two priests, a man and a woman, flank what you assume to be the shrine to Ghat. It is a strikingly accurate replica of the mountain you've just walked up, including the trails and the shrine. The icon is made of the same greenish stones you've brought with you from Resante. The only shelter the priests have is a three-sided stone shelter with a thatch roof.

DEVELOPMENT. The neophytes of Ghat (page 52), Censu and Cikka, have been expecting the cargo since hearing of the ruckus on the beach. They are friendly and to the point. After purchasing the cargo, they will answer questions the PCs ask about Farzeen, the volcano, the cargo, and the priests or religion of Ghat. They are well-informed regarding the history and current events of Farzeen (*Farzeen: Gazeteer*).

SELLING THE WIKLAMITE. The priests offer Captain Censa 1,000 gp for the cargo. Captain Censa is satisfied with this, but the priests are open to negotiations in light of the recent troubles the PCs have had to overcome. The priests offer an additional 100 gp if the spokesperson for the group succeeds on an opposed Charisma (Persuasion check). Captain Censa will not negotiate on the characters' behalf—she just wants to be done with this business, and 1,000 gp is plenty for her.



THE PRIESTS OF GHAT

The priests of Ghat are the public face of the Cult of Ghatanothoa. While they are not as numerous as the priesthood of the Goddess of Light, their numbers are greater than anyone in Farzeen suspects. Their secretive nature and low profile have kept them hidden from the notice of the locals. The neophytes of Ghat believe their god to be the fiery and capricious volcano and are not privy to the inner workings of the order. The inner circle, the true followers of Ghatanothoa, are the true power behind the cult.

A Wisdom (Insight) check on the priests reveals the following:

- ◇ **DC 12** – They fervently believe everything that they tell you.
- ◇ **DC 17** – When the priests mention the volcano, you detect a twinge of fear in their voices.

THE PRIESTS OF GHAT. The priesthood honors the volcano that gave birth to Farzeen. Without the volcano, there would be no life, and they believe that Farzeen exists at the whim of the volcano. To honor the mountain, they have adopted the term, “ghat,” as their moniker: ghats are the trails that lead to the mountain summit. If asked directly about their leader, they offer up the name of their high priestess, Lunzjata.

KAZA, THE VOLCANO. “It is the source of life, of existence, and we venerate it. The volcano is the holiest of places for our order.”

WIKLAMITE. “A sacred stone and the base material for

our icons. Our public shrines are all constructed in part of wiklamite to harness, focus, and concentrate the divine energies of Kaza.” If asked how this batch is to be used, they state, honestly, that they do not know.

SHRINES TO GHAT. This shrine is the largest and most sacred, but it is not the only one. There are small shrines throughout Farzeen for the adherents to visit and pay homage at.

SIDETREK. OBED’S SHIPWRIGHT

The sign above the door declares the store to be “Obed’s Shipwright”: a small shop, no more than a single room. Behind the counter sits a man with a heavily scarred countenance. He looks up, nods in greeting, and goes back to carving a small ivory figure.

Obed Velt (page 54) is the preeminent shipwright in Farzeen. The walls and every surface of his shop are covered with bric-a-brac and mementos of his younger life as a sailor. Harpoons, nets, hooks, flags, anchors, and buoys are everywhere. Obed’s age is hard to discern, as his face is a jumble of old scars and deep wrinkles from a hard life at sea. He walks with the easy loping gait of a sailor and carries an obvious strength built from a life of physical labor. He and Censa like each other immediately.

Captain Censa introduces herself and the PCs and explains the extent of damage to the *Folly*. She also tells Obed where the *Folly* is anchored and that it is being guarded by Moseta, whose nature she explains in general terms. At each detail, Obed nods in acknowledgement, and when the tale is told, he quotes them a price.

She’s a right mess, ain’t she? Broken mast, missing sails, and beat to ‘ell by the wind and waves. I can fix ‘er, right enough, but are you sure you’d not rather ‘ave a new ship? A storm like that can leave a mark that no shipwright can remove.

DEVELOPMENT. Obed’s price for fixing *Hazel’s Folly* is 1,000 gp, which includes replacing the main mast by means of magic. Any character with a background in sailing knows that this is a fair price; if none of the PCs can confirm this, Censa herself does so. The price for a new ship, the equivalent of the *Folly*, is 3,000 gp.

If the spokesperson for the group succeeds on an opposed Charisma (Persuasion) check against Obed, he is willing to decrease the charge by 10%. Censa will not negotiate, as she considers 1,000 gp a fair price already. The deal struck, the PCs are told that repairs will begin as soon as Moseta is off the ship (“I’ll not be working around that unnatural creature”) and will take about two weeks. He is adamant about not working around Moseta, even if the PCs and/or Censa tell him the command word to keep the creature from attacking him.

Censa seems very distracted during this scene. If a PC asks her about it, she (honestly) brushes off her behavior as exhaustion and stress.



SIDETREK. FIND A PLACE TO STAY

THE PORT OF CALL

The Port of Call is the inn of choice for ship's captains, merchants, and adventurers more interested in a good night's sleep and a clean bed than a raucous night in the tavern. The inn is run by Guza and Kekkin (**commoners**), a pair of women known for their exquisite cooking, excellent kava, and no-nonsense attitude for the shenanigans of visitors.

The Port is constructed of wood, stands two stories tall, and has a thatched roof. The front door is left open during the day to take advantage of the cool ocean breezes. The first floor consists mainly of an open great room with plenty of tables, chairs, and a hearth. At the back of the great room, a swinging door leads to the kitchen. A set of stairs leads to the second floor, where the Port has rooms for boarders.

The stairs open to a hallway that travels the length of the floor. There are two doors on each side of the hallway, and at its end stands a fifth door. The room at the end of the hallway is much larger than the others and suitable for a group to rent. The other rooms, two on each side, are intended for a single occupant each or perhaps a couple. The smaller rooms have a window, bed, and little else. The rooms, the beds, and, most importantly, the linens are clean.

KAVA'S RESPITE

Kava's Respite is the first stop for sailors and adventurers looking for a strong drink, a simple meal, and furniture sturdy enough to be used in the occasional barroom brawl. The barkeep and tavern owner, Zakkarija (CN, Leng Folk, an *obsessed artist*, SPCM 406), has a ready smile and is quick with free drinks to defuse any rowdy patrons.



Walking through the entryway, you are assaulted by the energy of Kava's Respite. The occupants are laughing, singing, arguing, and enjoying their time to the fullest. The clientele is a mixture of islanders and sailors visiting from afar.

Kava's Respite is a single-story, wooden structure with a thatched roof, and there is no door on the entryway. The Respite consists of a single large room with a bar, a hearth for cooking, and a door in the far corner leading to three rooms at the rear that are rented out to boarders. The rooms are converted stock rooms, filthy, and have lice-infested bed rolls on the floors.

Zakkarija, the owner and bartender of Kava's Respite, is friendly to all visitors, and as long as the fights do not turn lethal, he lets them play out as a spectator behind the bar.

OPTIONAL RULE: INEBRIATION

Characters who overindulge in drink may become impaired, fall unconscious, or even ingest lethal quantities of alcohol.

GETTING DRUNK. One drink is a mug of ale, a bowl of kava, a glass of wine, or a swig of liquor. A character can have a number of drinks equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum 1) without suffering ill effects. This number resets after a short rest. For every drink past this limit, the character must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw against poison or gain one level of exhaustion. Failure by 5 or more means the character also falls unconscious.

HANGOVERS. After finishing a long rest, an inebriated character loses all but one level of exhaustion they gained from drinking; the character retains any levels of exhaustion they acquired from other sources. The lingering level of exhaustion can be removed by a subsequent long rest, provided the character does not gain any further exhaustion from drinking.

Despite his unusual appearance, Zakkarija has a good reputation around town and with the Watch, who know that his establishment serves a useful purpose in the grand scheme of things.

THE ALBATROSS


The three-story home before you seems to be something of an oddity in Farzeen. The walls are painted white, there are shutters on the windows, and unlike virtually every other structure in Farzeen, the roof is tiled. There are unoccupied chairs on the front porch.

The Albatross is owned and operated by an elderly man, Kristofru Theuma (**commoner**), and his grandson, Marju (**commoner**). Unlike most of the establishments catering to the guests of Farzeen, the Albatross is a boarding house, but not one open to the general public. Kristofru has a strict set of rules his tenants must abide by, and guests unable or unwilling to follow the rules of Mr. Theuma are expelled from his home with no refunds and, if needed, with an escort by the Watch.

THE RULES OF THE ALBATROSS

- ◇ No fighting.
- ◇ No intoxicated guests.
- ◇ Leave your shoes at the door.

The first floor of the building is dominated by a large dining hall off the central hallway, which leads to a kitchen, washroom, and parlor. The second floor is entirely occupied by guest rooms, of which there are three. The third floor houses the private living spaces of Kristofru and Marju. Detailed descriptions of the rooms at the Albatross can be found in **Act 2.3: Rebellion**.



WHAT IF THE PCs DON'T WANT TO GO BACK?

If the players are not interested in returning to the Stockade, Captain Censa reminds them that after the repair costs, they lack sufficient coin to hire a new crew for the *Folly*, and it would be much more efficient to rescue the existing crew, who are still technically her employees. That, and the crew is clearly remorseful for their actions—perhaps they can even be persuaded to forego their share of the profits to atone?

If the players ultimately refuse to return to the Stockade, the events of Scene 5 occur anyway. Lothar is able to drive the ghouls off. He then seeks out the PCs to question them about their former friends, as well as enlist their services in dealing with the ghouls.

SIDETREK. EXPLORING FARZEEN

This is the PCs' first opportunity to explore Farzeen, as well as their chance to learn more about the island and the city. Through roleplaying and skill checks with town members, the PCs may learn the below key pieces of information, which either relate to what they're doing now or will come up in the near future. The GM may wish to include the lore and information from the sidebars previously discussed to aid the adventurers in forming a complete picture of Farzeen.

For a full description of Farzeen and additional rumors, see *Farzeen: Gazetteer*.

- ◇ "There are two main religious factions: those that follow the Goddess of Light and the Priests of Ghat. Most folks venerate the Goddess of Light, what with that monument reminding them of her protection every day." (True.)
- ◇ "Farzeen is so clean because of the lava tubes. They're everywhere. Folks use them for just about everything from storage to privies. Not at the same time, mind you!" (True.)
- ◇ "The tubes beneath the town can take you anywhere, so long you don't get lost." (Mostly true.)

SCENE 4.

BACK TO THE STOCKADE

When the PCs return to the Stockade (see Scene 2), they find that the garden is unchanged from their first visit and that a new guard is behind the desk. He looks up immediately upon their entry, greets them, and politely asks their business.

As soon as Captain Censa or the PCs mention who they are and their purpose, read or paraphrase the following:

Abruptly, the bored guard straightens up and interrupts you: "The captain wants to talk to you. Wait here." With that, he excuses himself and heads toward the western hallway.

Moments later, Captain Lothar Wenza, a hulking man with stern features, greets the PCs and asks them to come back to his office (**Scene 2, room J**). He doesn't wait for their response before turning and heading to his office. Once everyone has entered, he closes the door behind them, walks

behind his desk, and sits framed by his great axe. Read or paraphrase the following:

"Care to explain how it is that your mates have escaped from their locked cells?"

DEVELOPMENT. Captain Wenza's attitude toward the characters begins as hostile during this encounter. Through roleplaying and/or skill checks, they must first convince him that they had nothing to do with the disappearance of their friends. Lothar doesn't truly believe that the PCs had anything to do with their mates' disappearance, and his suspicions can be allayed with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Attempts to intimidate him or convince him via deception are opposed skill checks made with disadvantage, and failing these checks could land the PCs in jail.

THE PCs ARE LED TO THE CELLS. Captain Wenza leads the PCs to the cells that previously contained their crazed, former shipmates. True to his words, cell #2 is empty. Captain Wenza allows the characters to enter and examine the cell.

The flagstone floor of the cell has been broken up. Whoever or whatever dug it up created an area of upturned earth roughly 3 feet in diameter.

CLUE #1. A successful Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the following:

- ◇ **DC 10** – The upturned ground is soft, as if recently tilled. There is no tunnel below.
- ◇ **DC 12** – There is blood splatter on the back wall and the floor of the cell.

CLUE #2. A character who examines the tunnel and succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check determines that the upturned earth could be the result of a Medium-sized creature burrowing up from below. It would have to be incredibly strong to break through the flagstone floors.

WHAT IF THE PCs ARE JAILED?

If the PCs are jailed by Captain Wenza due to their belligerence or unwillingness to answer his questions, the scene progresses differently. They are placed in the cell that their compatriots previously occupied. Shortly after their incarceration, the hallway door opens and the guard leads a drunk into the cell next to theirs. The PCs will have a front-row seat when the ghouls burrow up and consume Zeb.



If one of the PCs is a ghoul or is very familiar with ghouls (GM's discretion), the hole looks startlingly familiar. The player should be informed, privately, that this looks remarkably like the collapsed burrow of a Mythos ghoul.

DEVELOPMENT. When the PCs have completed their investigation, Lothar leads them back to his office to discuss the situation further. As they are walking through the lobby, they hear the drunken cries of a man (Zeb) in the holding cell. The man is odoriferous, belligerent, and berating the watchperson on duty. Unable and unwilling to ignore him further, she unlocks the holding cell and leads him to the more private cells the PCs just came from.

SCENE 5. QUESTIONS FOR LOTHAR

Back in his office, Lothar makes himself available to answer any questions the players have. He is familiar with the inner workings of the Farzeen and can answer most questions regarding the city.

- ◇ **WHAT COULD MAKE THAT KIND OF HOLE?** “Locally? Not much.” A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Lothar has more to say. With a little prodding, he admits that there is one creature he knows of that could make a trail like that: a ghoul.
- ◇ **DID ANYONE HEAR ANYTHING?** “The Watch is responsible for peace in Farzeen, and with the recent storm, the patrols have ramped up. Last night, the guard on duty was called away in the middle of the night to do a quick patrol. The prisoners have been quiet all day and night. He was gone no more than 10 minutes.”
- ◇ **WHO FOUND THE EMPTY CELLS?** “I did. I wanted to talk to them before the magistrate and the priests showed up. I walked in and saw what you saw.”
- ◇ **WHO'S THE DRUNK?** “Zeb. He's harmless. Smelly and obnoxious, but harmless. He'll sleep it off in a private cell and be released in the morning.”
- ◇ **SHOULD WE TELL THE MAGISTRATE?** “He'll not want to be bothered by this without more details. So far, we have a handful of missing sailors, not islanders. And honestly, I'd like to keep this quiet until its dealt with to save my job.”
- ◇ **WHAT ABOUT THE GARDEN?** “The garden has always been there. Once, when I'd just become Captain, I thought I saw a figure cleaning, adjusting, and moving the rocks and sand. Just a glimpse, mind you. And never since.”



When the GM deems it appropriate or after the PCs ask about the drunk, read or paraphrase the following:

Your questioning is broken by muffled screams coming from outside the office. Lothar turns to you and says, “If you want to clear your names, now's a good time to earn the goodwill of the Watch!”

The sounds of battle are coming from the cells that the PCs have just left. The door is still open, revealing a scene out of an abattoir. Unlike the last attack, the creatures have viciously mauled Zeb and the guard who subsequently came into the cell to save him.

The cell door is open and inside you see a pair of grotesque humanoids, their canine jaws busy worrying at the thighs of the guard. You walk in just in time to see one of them tear a slab of muscle from its prey, raise its head, arch its back, and swallow the morsel whole.

CREATURES. The PCs must make a DC 12 Wisdom save or gain two levels of dread from the grisly scene before them. A ghoul and crypt lurker (SPCM 324-25) have tunneled into the cell with Zeb, killed him, and, unable to contain their unearthly hunger, they have begun to consume him and the guard who came to his aid.


After the PCs have defeated the monstrosities, they realize that, as before, the ghouls have not left a tunnel in their wake. If the players are at a loss as to what to do next, Captain Wenza, now convinced that the attacks are from ghouls, mentions the lava tubes that riddle Farzeen. He also points out that the privy in the holding cell lets out directly into the lava tube under the Stockade.

SCENE 6. DOWN THE PRIVY

Lothar leads the party to the holding cell, opens the door, and gestures to the privy. He doesn't envy them the impending foray through the bowels of the jail and shrugs sympathetically.

“Chances are your mates are down there.” The phrase ‘or what's left of them’ remains unsaid, but hangs in the air, nonetheless.

DEVELOPMENT. Lothar is much too big to explore the privy, not that he offers to do so, and there are no other guards on duty. The opening in the privy is large enough to allow Medium creatures to squeeze through as long as they are not wearing heavy armor. Small creatures do not have this limitation. The floor of the lava tube is 30 feet below, and, as expected, is covered in a slippery, noisome slurry of



excrement. The chamber below is roughly ovoid, 25 feet long and 15 feet wide.

CREATURES. A pair of ghosts (*SPCM 323*) is hiding (DC 11 Wisdom [Perception] to spot) in a makeshift nest of their recent meal.

TREASURE. The ghosts' nest contains the remains of the crew and their equipment. There is a smattering of coins: 5 gold, 8 silver, and 12 copper for PCs willing to investigate the gory mess.

SCENE 7. INVESTIGATION

The PCs have first-hand evidence that ghouls were directly responsible for the deaths of several prisoners and a member of the Watch. They may make a Wisdom (Yog-Sothoery) check for additional information regarding Mythos ghouls. Alternatively, if there is a ghoul among the party, that character knows this without a skill check.

◇ **DC 10** – Mythos ghouls prefer to feast on the dead rather than the living, especially the long dead. It's unusual to see them attack a living creature.

◇ **DC 15** – Mythos ghouls absorb knowledge from the corpses they eat. The older the corpse, the more powerful the transference; hence, they rarely eat fresh meat.

While the PCs and Captain Wenza are discussing the ghoul attacks, Magistrate Alwigi (LE, human, *cult master-mind*, *SPCM 405*) enters the Stockade to discuss the disposition of the mutinous crew. He instantly recognizes that the PCs have been in a fight and demands to know what is going on. After listening to the PCs and to Captain Wenza, Alwigi dismisses their concerns with a wave of his hand.

“The pact with the ghouls has been honored for countless generations. They would never jeopardize that. This is clearly the work of starved renegades.” With a pointed look at Lothar, the magistrate leaves the Stockade.

A Wisdom (Insight) check regarding Alwigi reveals the following:

◇ **DC 19** – The magistrate is more upset about the news of the ghoul attack than he let on and recognizes it as a significant event.

A Wisdom (Insight) check regarding Lothar while Alwigi is discussing the events reveals the following:

◇ **DC 10** – Lothar is incredulous of the magistrate's response.

◇ **DC 14** – You notice the set of Lothar's jaw and realize it is taking every ounce of his willpower to control his anger at the magistrate's dismissal of the attack.

Lothar leads the PCs to his office to discuss the matter further. Despite the magistrate's lack of concern, there is something on his mind. Sitting heavily into his chair, Lothar inhales and exhales a deep breath before continuing on.

“I need your help. You've got a reason to look into what's going on, and as outsiders, I can be reasonably sure that you're not involved in whatever it is. If it goes sideways, I can always deny knowing what you were up to. If you want to find out what happened and make some coin in the process, meet me at the Laughing Hammer tonight.”

THE GHOULS OF FARZEEN

Centuries ago, the islanders reached an agreement with a tribe of Mythos ghouls and a pact was signed by the ghoul leader and the first magistrate of Farzeen. The violence between the two groups ceased, and the ghouls were allotted a remote strip of land on the outskirts of the city. They were also given free rein to use the lava tubes and granted salvage rights to anything found in those tunnels. To maintain the pact, the islanders must bury all of their dead on the ghoul's land. Islanders choosing to use the tubes for storage must pay a tithe to the ghouls for the use of the tunnels.

The ghouls of Farzeen have coexisted with the islanders for centuries. They fill an important ecological, practical, and economic niche in the island's ecosystem. As necrophages, ghouls feed on all manner of dead organics, preventing the accumulation of rotting corpses and curbing the spread of disease. The ghouls inhabit the island's only cemetery, which seems to be sufficient for the entirety of the ghoul population.

The pact has held for generations, to the mutual benefit of both species. The ghouls keep to the tunnels and their boneyard. The folk of Farzeen cultivate a willful ignorance of the activities in the graveyard.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of prior events and offers of employment from Lothar, Captain Censa and First Mate Psaila (if he has survived) excuse themselves to oversee the ship repairs, gather a new cargo, and look for a new crew. The PCs are left to explore Farzeen, secure lodging if they haven't already, and meet Captain Wenza at the Laughing Hammer. The ship won't be ready to sail for a few weeks, and now's the perfect time to earn a little extra coin and get payback on the monstrosities that devoured their friends.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

After Lothar invites the PCs to meet him at the Laughing Hammer, the episode concludes, and all PCs gain sufficient experience to reach 4th level.



ACT 1.4: INVESTIGATION

A Cthulhu Mythos adventure for four to five 4th-level characters

EPISODE SYNOPSIS

The PCs begin the final chapter of Act 1 at the Laughing Hammer meeting with their newest ally, Captain Lothar Wenza of the Farzeen watch. No longer able to ignore the facts around him and without the support of the magistrate, Lothar turns to the PCs as his last, best hope of uncovering who or what is behind a recent spate of disappearances. Lothar explains that the Scerri family and a local priest were reported as missing earlier today. Lothar makes a surprising offer to the PCs, touching off their investigation.

The PCs' search leads them to the town cemetery and the home of the Scerri. The ghouls of the graveyard rebuff any questions asked and offer no assistance. Their gallows humor, knowing smiles, and unnerving observations indicate they know more than they admit, they enjoy tormenting their surface-dwelling neighbors, or possibly both.

An investigation of the Scerri's home proves more fruitful. There are obvious signs of a break-in and struggle in the couple's bedroom. With a little snooping and luck, the PCs make their way to a cavern below the home. Unlike their previous excursions to the lava tubes, this tunnel continues into the darkness and vast network of caves, grottoes, and tubes. The PCs have entered the cavern

system they heard so much about, which is the territory of Farzeen's ghouls.

While navigating the network of caves, the PCs encounter all manner of obstacles. The beasts and monstrosities of the underworld made short work of the Scerri, and the couple's remains are quickly found. There are signs that others have been lost to tunnels, but despite the search, no survivors are found. Deeper in, the adventurers discover an enormous cavern, its floor completely obscured by the discarded skeletal remains of thousands of ghoulish meals. The vile creatures inhabiting the area do not take kindly to interruptions of their tenebrous feedings.

Further explorations unearth a noxious room with rivers of superheated mud. Another room, encased in the white dust of powdered bones is inhabited by a ghoulish matron and her skeletal companion. Despite the constant pressure of tons of rock and earth above coupled with the omnipresent threat of death or worse, the eagle-eyed adventurers find a hidden cave in which to gather their strength, wits, and courage.

The final sight the PCs uncover in their explorations is an ancient temple, older than any other structure they have seen on Farzeen. A pitched battle with a squad of ghouls ensues. Bleeding, bedraggled, but victorious, the PCs gaze upon the Temple of Ghatanothoa in all its terrible magnificence.



SCENE I. THE LAUGHING HAMMER

The Laughing Hammer is a single-room tavern with a scarred and battered bar running the length of the rear wall. Though the PCs have only just arrived in Farzeen, they recognize several familiar faces at the Hammer, including a number of the men and women from the beach patrol. Captain Wenza sits at a table in the rear corner, his back to the wall and a drink in his hand.

As you enter the Hammer, all eyes turn to you and there is a noticeable lull in the quiet conversations of the patrons. Lothar nods in greeting, then gestures toward the bar, then to the empty seats around his table. The conversations resume as you walk forward.

Lothar wastes no time getting to the business at hand. As soon as the PCs have settled into their seats, read or the paraphrase the following:

“Folks ‘ave gone missing on my island and I want to get to the bottom of it. You seem like the mercenary type, and I can make it worth your while,” he says with more amusement than derision. “I’m sure you’ve questions, so have at it.”

Pleasantries aside, Lothar answers any questions put forth to him to the best of his ability. The players should be encouraged to gather any information they may think of as relevant. If, at the end of the questioning, they have missed anything pertinent to the investigation, Lothar offers it up freely to ensure they understand the situation fully.

- ◇ **MISSING ISLANDERS.** Sailors and visitors come up missing from time to time. Missing islanders, however, are a completely different story. There were three missing persons reported to the Watch in the last week: Carmelo and Grezzja Scerri and a priest named Matteo. The Scerris, reported missing this morning, were last seen at their home four nights ago, while the priest was last seen walking the streets of Farzeen late the night before last. Lothar does not know what became of them. After the magistrate’s admonishments, Lothar is

THE LAVA TUBES BENEATH FARZEEN

The island of Farzeen was created millennia ago from the volcanic discharge of Kaza. The burbling Kaza still continues to grow and shape the island, albeit at a much-reduced rate, and tubes have been known to shift and crumble in response.

A fortuitous aftereffect of Kaza’s tumultuous past is the maze of lava tubes that riddle the island and its eponymous city. Rumor has it that the tunnels can take you to any place on the island without ever setting foot on the land above, and there is some truth to this legend. The ingenious islanders of Farzeen have taken full advantage of the natural tunnel system below them. They use the tunnels as an intricate sewer system, for storage and preservation of goods, and (prior to the pact with the ghouls) as a means to crisscross the island in secret whilst avoiding the dangers of the jungle.

Now that the network of lava tubes has become the exclusive domain of the ghouls, the folk of Farzeen have all but forgotten their intricacies and secrets. Since the pact, the system of caves has evolved dramatically, and only the ghouls now know its ways. The ghouls have alternately expanded caverns and collapsed others to forward their internecine agendas, as has (more recently) the Cult of Ghatanothoa. All the while, the unknowing folk of Farzeen continue their lives aboveground.

hesitant to send a member of the Watch and suggests the PCs begin their search at the Scerri’s home.

- ◇ **CARMELO AND GREZZJA SCERRI.** The Scerris were the victims of a ghoulish attack. The creature burrowed up into their home in the night, dispatched them in their bed, and dragged them to the tunnels beneath Farzeen.
- ◇ **BROTHER MATTEO.** The priests of Light are a welcome and frequent sight to the folk of Farzeen. They habitually walk the streets of the town, offering help, advice, and council as needed. Brother Matteo’s wanderings took him to the ghoulish cemetery, and an overzealous ghoulish seized the opportunity for an easy meal.
- ◇ **THE CEMETERY.** There is only one cemetery in Farzeen, home to the Yogash ghoulish clan. They have been part of Farzeen for centuries, have never caused any problems, and their value to the community is widely acknowledged, if not openly discussed. Lothar was loath to suggest that the ghouls could be involved, owing to their long-standing history of peaceful co-existence. Now, with proof before his very eyes, he can no longer ignore the ghouls’ involvement.
- ◇ **THE TUNNELS.** The tunnels are technically the property of the Yogash clan, per the pact from generations ago. There are too many access points to count: most large buildings have at least one privy that opens to the caverns below, and it’s common practice for businesses to use the caverns for storage. Lothar doesn’t believe the popular rumor that all the caverns are connected, “Some probably are, but not all of ‘em.”



THE STORAGE ROOM

The contents of the storage room are left at the discretion of the GM and should change regularly as the PCs become more powerful and face more challenging adversaries.

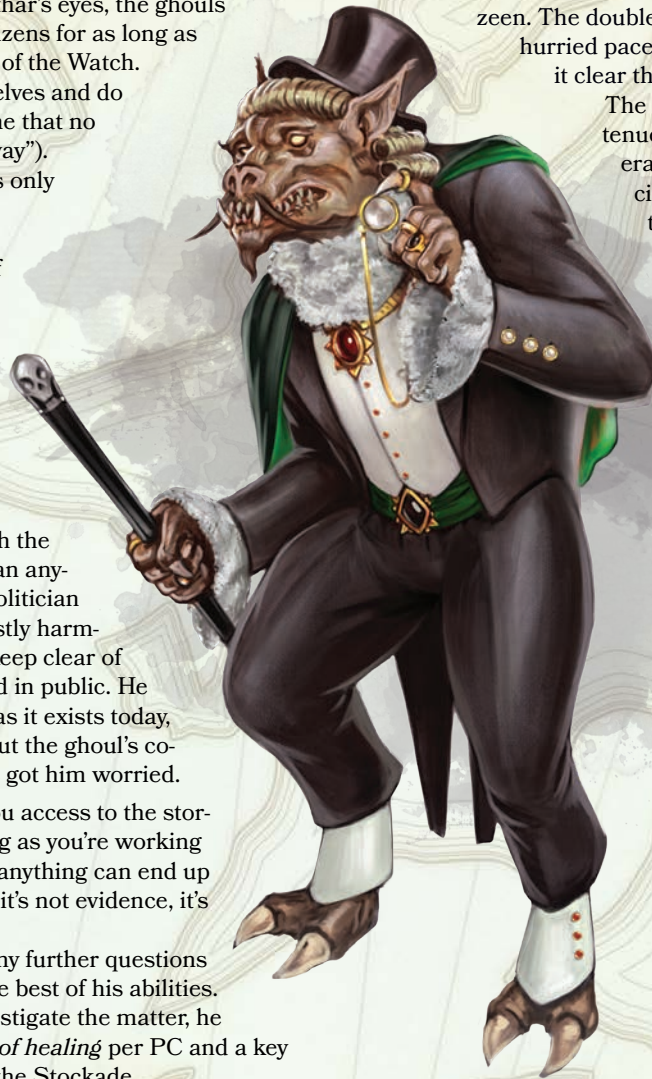
◇ **THE GHOULS.** In Lothar's eyes, the ghouls have been model citizens for as long as he's been a member of the Watch. They keep to themselves and do their job ("a nasty one that no one else wants anyway").

Lothar thinks there's only a dozen or so on the island. "They're odd folk to be sure, but if I hadn't seen it myself I'd have never believed it." (See the *Farzeen: Gaze-teeer* for more on the ghouls of Farzeen).

◇ **THE MAGISTRATE.** Magistrate Alwigi is more concerned with the coffers of the city than anything else and is a politician to the core. He's mostly harmless as long as you keep clear of making him look bad in public. He knows that the city, as it exists today, can't continue without the ghoul's cooperation, and that's got him worried.

◇ **THE PAY.** "I'll give you access to the storage locker for as long as you're working the case. Just about anything can end up in there and as long it's not evidence, it's yours."

Lothar will answer any further questions the PCs may have to the best of his abilities. If the PCs agree to investigate the matter, he offers them one *potion of healing* per PC and a key to the storage room in the Stockade.



SIDETREK. UPTON, GHOUL ABOUT TOWN

The journey to the Scerri family home is a quick walk and unremarkable except for one thing: the PCs note the presence of a ghoul brazenly walking the streets of Farzeen. The double takes, hushed conversations, and hurried pace of the islanders as they pass make it clear this is an event of note.

The islanders of Farzeen have lived in tenuous peace with the ghouls for generations, but the sight of a ghoul, especially one walking the streets during the day, is notable. No one can remember the last time a ghoul left the cemetery for a stroll!

The ghoul commits no crimes, makes no threatening gestures, and generally minds his own business. Characters who succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check note that the creature enjoys the attention and stares of the pedestrians. If the PCs approach and strike up a conversation, the ghoul happily responds in kind.

The ghoul's name is Upton (page 58), he's a recent emigre to Farzeen, and he has decided to explore the surface of the island. Upton knows that he and other ghouls have been brought to Farzeen by the Cult of Ghatanothoa, and they have been promised a life on the surface and an eternal supply of food. He does not name the cult under any circumstances.

WHAT IF THE PCs DON'T CARE?

If the PCs are uninterested in investigating the disappearance of their mates, and the reward offered by Lothar doesn't rouse them to action, the GM can continue with the adventure in several ways.

• **OPTION 1.** Allow the PCs to explore Farzeen and the surroundings for another day, or at most two, and proceed to Act 2.2. The events outlined in this chapter and the next will happen with or without the interference of the PCs. In this scenario, Lothar has a much different opinion of the characters, and his forces have been heavily depleted due to their investigation of the tubes. At the GM's discretion, they also miss the opportunity to gain the levels in the chapters skipped.

- **OPTION 2.** Captain Censa and Psaila (if he's still alive) disappear and the PCs find the telltale signs of a ghoul tunnel near where they disappeared. This encounter replaces Scene 2 and Psaila's body is found with the Scerris. There's no sign of Censa's body.
- **OPTION 3.** For a heavy-handed approach, a band of ghouls attack the PCs in the night, subdue one of the PCs, and drag them back to the tunnels to feast on later. The ghoul force should be overwhelming and they retreat with the first PC they capture, leaving their companions behind if necessary.



READING UPTON'S MIND

PCs able to read Upton's mind learn that he knows the fate of both Matteo and the Scerris. He was not personally involved in either attack. Additionally, as soon as he senses his mind being read, he immediately flees down a lava tube, where he disappears into the warren of tunnels and as he does so, he screams that he's going to report them to the Watch.

- ◇ **MATTEO.** "Who's that? Your pet? Was it corpulent? Have you lost it? Best be careful wandering the streets at night." Upton has no idea where Matteo is, but he can guess what happened to him. A successful opposed skill check, Wisdom (Insight) vs. Charisma (Deception), reveals that Upton knows more than he's letting on. He will not reveal more than this under any circumstances.
- ◇ **THE SCERRIS.** "Bless you, darling. Are your allergies acting up? Maybe it's a cold. You should be careful that doesn't turn into something nasty. Oh, that was a name?" As with Matteo, Upton might be able to guess what happened to the Scerris, but he has no firsthand knowledge of them.
- ◇ **THE CEMETERY.** "Home sweet home." A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Upton is being a bit sarcastic, as he's not very excited about living in the cemetery.
- ◇ **FARZEEN.** "I love it here! Don't you? All the delicious morsels baking in the sun and ripening to perfection." This is 100 percent true.
- ◇ **THE GHOULS.** "Lovely people. Very welcoming." A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Upton hadn't intended to let on that he's not a local. If asked additional questions about where he's from originally, instead of answering he excuses himself and walks away.
- ◇ **PRIESTS OF GHAT.** "Sounds like something on your boot." A successful opposed skill check, Wisdom (Insight) vs. Charisma (Deception), reveals that Upton knows more about this name than he's letting on, but he will not reveal anything else.
- ◇ **PRIESTS OF LIGHT.** "Are they the ones who built that high and mighty statue?" With a snort of derision, he says, "Not to my liking. It's a bit gauche, isn't it? A bit larger than life?"

If, at any time, the PCs threaten Upton, he responds with even more sarcasm and acerbic remarks. He does not retaliate physically to threats or even physical violence. If the PCs attack him, he immediately screams for the Watch and retreats as quickly as possible. While he is not a citizen of Farzeen, he is not a monster either and has done nothing wrong. The characters could find themselves in hot water with the local authorities and the magistrate in particular, if they insist on attacking every ghoul they meet.

DIGGING

EXCAVATING. It takes two hours for one character equipped with a shovel, mattock, or similar digging tool to excavate a 5-foot cube of earth. Digging with improvised tools (such as a shield, a blade, or bare hands) doubles the time required. For each hour of digging after the first without a short or long rest, a character must make a Constitution saving throw (DC = 10 + 1 for each hour beyond the first they have been digging). On a failed saving throw, a character suffers one level of exhaustion. Creatures with a burrow speed find their time to excavate cut to one quarter the time listed above.

DIGGING AS A GROUP. Up to four characters can work on a single 5-foot cube of earth. Each one reduces the total time required by 25%. For example, two characters can excavate a 5-foot cube in one and a half hours, while four characters can dig the same amount in half an hour.

TUNNELING. When digging horizontally through soil, characters must shore up the walls and ceilings of the tunnel with stout planks or beams to prevent collapse; this process doubles the time it takes to excavate a 5-foot cube of earth. Without such support, there is a 50% chance each hour that any 5-foot section of tunnel will collapse.

SOIL TYPES. Very soft soil, such as that left by a collapsing tunnel or dirt that has recently been burrowed through by a creature, takes half the time to excavate. Hard-packed soil, clay, or extremely rocky soil takes twice as long to excavate.

SCENE 2. THE SCERRI HOME

The home of Carmelo and Grezzja Scerri has little to set it apart from its neighbors. It's a single-story affair, with the ubiquitous thatched roof the PCs have come to expect of all buildings on the island. The front door is not locked and swings open at a mere touch.

The door to the Scerri home opens to a large room. There is a hearth in one corner, a door opposite it, and a circular mass of upturned dirt in the center of the floor. The earthen mound is reminiscent of inhumations within a potter's field.

Last week, a ghoul burrowed up into the home of Carmelo and Grezzja while they slept in the room next door. The ghoul entered their bedroom, killed them, and dragged them to its lair for later consumption.

DEVELOPMENT. A successful Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the following:

- ◇ **DC 13** – Faint drag marks can be found leading from the bedroom to the circle of upturned dirt.
- ◇ **DC 17** – There is a grate, partially obscured by ashes and incompletely burnt logs, within the hearth.

NOTE. If the PCs specifically search the hearth, they automatically find the grate below it without a skill check.

There are two options if the PCs wish to pursue the ghoul. They may remove the grate or they may try to dig



out the collapsed tunnel that the ghoul left in its wake. The grate can be removed without too much difficulty, revealing a lava tube that opens to a cavern (**Scene 4, Room A**), the floor of which is 60 feet below. Digging out the hole is a longer process: PCs with a burrow speed can reach the top of the cavern after traveling 15 feet. Characters working together can dig it out by whatever means they have available.

THE BEDROOM

As you step into the room, the telltale coppery smell of blood assails your nostrils. The room hangs in tatters, its contents strewn about, shredded, and splattered in dried gore. The bedchamber itself is small and has no features of note, not even a window. All that remains of its former occupants are large bloodstains on the walls, floor, and even the ceiling.

When the PCs open the door to the bedroom, they find a room that has been ransacked. There are obvious signs of a violent struggle and sufficient bloodstains to leave little question of the fate of the room's occupants. Whatever perpetrated the attack in the bedroom was violent, lethal, and no longer present.

TREASURE. If the characters search the room, they find a small coin bag under an overturned chair that contains 2 gold pieces, 18 silver pieces, and a large pearl worth 50 gp.

SCENE 3. THE CEMETERY

Farzeen, unlike most cities its size, has only a single cemetery. To the islanders it is simply known as “the Cemetery.”

WHAT IF A PC IS A GHOUL?

If one of your players is playing a Mythos ghoul, it presents an interesting set of complications and challenges for the player and the GM. As a ghoul, the PC will have better insight into the nature and culture of ghouls. This does not automatically make them an ally of the ghouls of Farzeen or vice versa, but it does open options not available to other characters.

RECRUITED. The PC is approached surreptitiously by a ghoul during Act 1.4, prior to descending into the depths of the system of lava tubes beneath Farzeen. The ghoul offers the PC a place in the society of ghouls in exchange for abandoning her friends in the lava tube warrens. The emissary of the ghouls does not ask the PC to betray her friends in an active way, just to leave them in the dark: to walk away and not turn back when the screaming begins. Should this occur, the PC becomes an NPC in the hands of the GM, who may come back in subsequent acts, perhaps allied with Censa, or else fade away into the depths, never to be seen again.

DOUBLE AGENT. As above, but the PC attempts to deceive the ghouls by seeming to accept the deal while

The Yogashes, however, refer to it as “Sepulcrum Goules,” or the Ghoul’s Grave, and claim it as their own.

The cemetery is separated from its surroundings by a simply constructed, tall iron fence with sharpened pickets. There is a single entrance to the necropolis.

The perpetually sunny skies of Farzeen fade and the boneyard is cast in gloomy shadows. From the gate, you can see dozens of family crypts, but oddly no grave markers. You see no flowers, mementos, or even paths among the crypts.

The dead in Farzeen are given to the ghouls and promptly forgotten. Generations of sacrificing their deceased loved ones to the ghouls have hardened the islanders, and they have, to a small extent, adopted the ghoul’s viewpoint that the dead are no longer representative of the living individuals who once occupied those bodies. As such, the cemetery is rarely, if ever visited by the natives of Farzeen. When the PCs come to the graveyard, they find it quiet and abandoned. The gate stands unlocked, and the PCs may enter if they choose. For further details on the cemetery, see *Farzeen: Gazetteer*.

DEVELOPMENT. Characters searching the graveyard automatically notice the following (no skill checks required):

- ◇ There are dozens of raised family ossuaries. Each crypt has the family name prominently engraved and dozens or even hundreds of names written on the exterior walls.
- ◇ There are no signs of recently dug graves or upturned earth.
- ◇ If a PC breaks into an ossuary (DC 17 Strength [Athletics]), they find only skulls from the dead and no other remains.

actually feeding information to the rest of the party. The ghouls are highly intelligent and will be on the lookout for deception, but they might be susceptible to being tricked by a fellow ghoul. The PC must succeed an opposed skill check, Deception versus Insight, whenever their actions are not clearly in the best interests of the ghouls and the Cult of Ghatanothoa. As the PC earns their trust, details of why the ghouls came to be part of the cult’s plot are revealed, as well as how they plan to profit from the rising of Ghatanothoa. As the PC becomes more and more entrenched in the machinations of the ghouls and the cult, so increases the likelihood that this duplicity will be discovered.

ADVERSARY. If rebuffed, the ghouls of Farzeen recognize that the PC is in a position to offer insight and firsthand knowledge to their enemies. The leaders of the ghouls and the Cult of Ghatanothoa name the PC as their primary adversary and most hated enemy. All of Farzeen’s ghouls have a hostile attitude toward the PC, and given the opportunity, they will direct attacks on that PC even if there are more strategically sound opportunities.



□ = 5 feet

SCENE 4. THE LAVA TUBES

The tubes of Farzeen have the following characteristics unless specifically stated otherwise.

CLIMATE. The air in the tunnels is damp, fetid, and still. There is a briny quality to the atmosphere from the nearby sea, and the tunnels are slightly chilly when compared to the surface.

TUNNELS. The tunnel system has been created by lava tubes from Kaza. The tunnels are ovoid in shape and wide enough for a Medium creature to traverse. The surfaces of the tunnels are uniform, porous, and extremely rough due to the nature of their creation. The tunnels are between 7 and 10 feet high; the caverns are three to four times that size.

LIGHT. There are no natural light sources in the tunnels and characters using a light source to explore are easily identified regardless of their Stealth checks. It is common for the ghouls and other denizens of the tunnels to attack from beyond the reach of torches, using the darkness to their benefit for surprise and stealth.

A. DOWN THE SHAFT

The floor of this circular cavern is covered in soot, ash, and the charred remains of countless fires. Tracks and drag marks through the debris lead up a natural slide to a tunnel in the northeast corner.

DEVELOPMENT. Following the tracks does not require a skill check. The tracks can be recognized as belonging to ghouls with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check.

B. THE NEST

The cracks and crevices of the small cavern form a natural alcove that is partially hidden from view. With each step closer, you can see a little more of what is obscured by the rocky surroundings, and by the time you enter the grotto, you see the legs of two humanoids, partially concealed by a chaotic knot of debris, and the remains of long-dead animals.

The ghoul responsible for the deaths of the Scerris has brought them to its nest for storage until they are in a more palatable state. The nest contains the remnants of its previous victims, mostly large animals and remains salvaged from the graveyard.

DEVELOPMENT. The grisly sight of the Scerris' remains prompts a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the PC(s) gains 1 level of dread.

CREATURE. A ravager ghoul (Appendix 57) lies in wait for the PCs. If they are using any light sources, it will be prepared for them, hiding in the shadows, and attacks with surprise.

TREASURE. Characters searching the nest and surroundings find a diamond earring worth 35 gp and a *potion of climbing*.







C. FAILED FORTIFICATION

The steadily rising tunnel lets out into an intersection of three paths. The north passageway quickly becomes impassable due to a cave in. The southern switchback leads to a larger opening, partially blocked by a crumbling wall, and the passage west is narrow and winding.

The demolished wall at the southern portion of the room is what remains of a failed attempt by a group of lost sailors to defend themselves from the horrors of the tubes. They were unsuccessful, and littered among the rubble are their crumbling, gnawed-upon bones.

D. COLLAPSED CAVERN

The caverns are collapsed and not passable unless the PCs figure out a way to move tons of earth without triggering a cave-in.

CREATURE. An un-man (*SPCM* 387) patrols the cracks and crevices of this passageway. At the GM's discretion, it investigates loud noises, lights, and any signs of battle.

E. CATACOMBS

The mazelike network of tunnels is confusing. The tunnels are narrow, with numerous elevation changes and switchbacks to further befuddle the PCs.

DEVELOPMENT. The lead PC should make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check prior to leaving the catacombs. If the PC does not have darkvision, the check is made at disadvantage. If the PC fails the check, the party remains in the catacombs for another 1d4 rounds.

CREATURE. The unman from **D** ranges into this area regularly in search of prey. If the characters have a light source, it is sure to investigate.

F. THE SQUEEZE

Dozens of columns of volcanic rock rise from the ground, heavily obscuring your vision. The cave is noticeably warmer than its surroundings and a wisp of heavy air carries the smell of excrement, musk, and rotting meat.

There are three entrances to this cavern, all of them so narrow that a Medium creature must squeeze to pass through.

CREATURES. A pair of ghosts (*SPCM* 323) occupy this cavern and lie in wait for any creatures entering their territory. Their favorite technique is to wait for one PC to squeeze through, giving the sense that it's safe, then

one ghost will attack a second PC during the squeeze, while the other ghost attacks the PC who already made it through. Otherwise, they use the natural chokepoints for ambushes and to provide cover.

G. THE BOOT

The weight of countless tons of earth and rock bears down upon you. The uneven, rubble-strewn ground makes trespass difficult and slow-going. Water dripping into unseen pools creates unnerving echoes. The still air hangs heavily and a faint smell of offal grows stronger with each step.

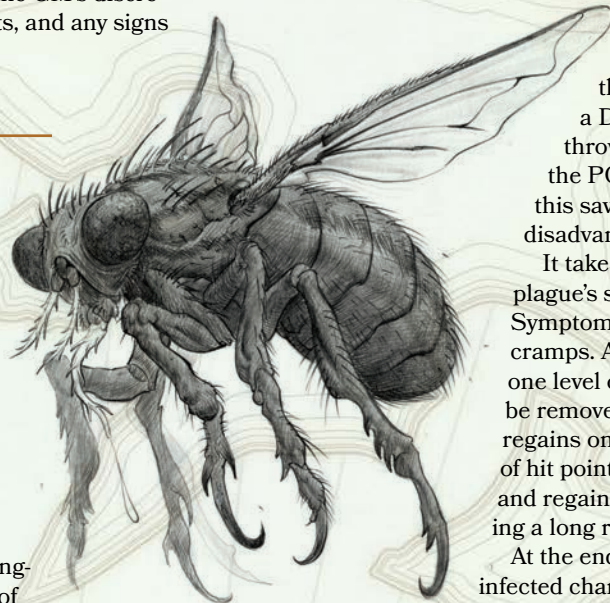
The ground of this cavern is difficult terrain for PCs traveling over it. The high ceiling (120 feet above the ground) is pocked with small holes, the largest of them no more than 6 inches across. On the ground far below the openings are pools of water, trash, excrement, and other refuse.

DEVELOPMENT. PCs searching the piles of excrement and trash expose themselves to sewer plague.

Each PC rooting through the piles must succeed on a DC 9 Constitution saving throw or become infected. If the PC has untreated wounds, this saving throw is made at disadvantage.

It takes 1d4 days for sewer plague's symptoms to manifest. Symptoms include fatigue and cramps. An infected character gains one level of exhaustion that cannot be removed normally with rest, regains only half the normal number of hit points from spending Hit Dice, and regains no hit points from finishing a long rest.

At the end of each long rest, an infected character must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the character gains one level of exhaustion. On a successful save, the character's exhaustion level decreases by one level. If a successful saving throw reduces the infected character's level of exhaustion below 1, the character recovers from the disease.



H. THE BONE ROOM

The sloping floor of this expansive room is littered with tens of thousands of bones from animals, humans, and other less obvious creatures. The skeletal remains cover the bed of the cavern so densely that you're unable to see the stone beneath. The mass of bones thins to the far south and north. As you look around, you notice undulations in certain sections of the floor.

The ghouls of Farzeen have deposited the remains of their meals in this grotto for centuries. What started as an expeditious method of disposal became a habit, and with each new body, the site gained significance until at last it was venerated. The site also serves as a nursery for the maggot offspring of phorid flies, which gather here in swarms.

Phorid flies, present throughout the caverns, have claimed the bone room as their lair. The adult phorid flies deposit their eggs, which gestate briefly before regurgitating larval maggots to feed off the scraps left on the discarded bones. The ghouls harvest the maggots to feed themselves in lean times, and the surviving flies serve as watch dogs of a sort.

DEVELOPMENT. The realization that the ghouls of Farzeen have consumed thousands upon thousands of creatures, many of them human, rattles the strongest of minds. The sight of the boneyard and movements below it requires each PC to make a DC 12 saving throw. On a failure, the target(s) gains 2 levels of dread.

CREATURES. The phorid flies and their offspring permeate the bone room and do not respond peacefully to disruptions to their home.

- ◇ Each PC walking through the bones has a 1 in 4 chance of stirring up a phorid fly (page 56).
- ◇ PCs engaging in battle, searching for treasure, and/or killing the harmless maggots have a 1 in 4 chance of inciting a phorid swarm (page 56).
- ◇ Area of effect spells, spells that cause thunder damage, and/or spells that produce booming noises automatically instigate an attack by a phorid swarm and may summon additional swarms to the fray (GM's discretion).

TREASURE. Due to the enormity of the cavern, searches for treasure are difficult and time consuming. If the PCs have the ability to *detect magic* and spend at least 10 minutes scouring the bone room, they have a 1 in 4 chance of uncovering the faint glow of abjuration magic emanating from a gold tooth within a humanoid skull. The tooth, if in-

serted in place of a missing tooth and attuned, functions as a *ring of protection*. If the players cannot reliably *detect magic*, they do not discover this treasure.

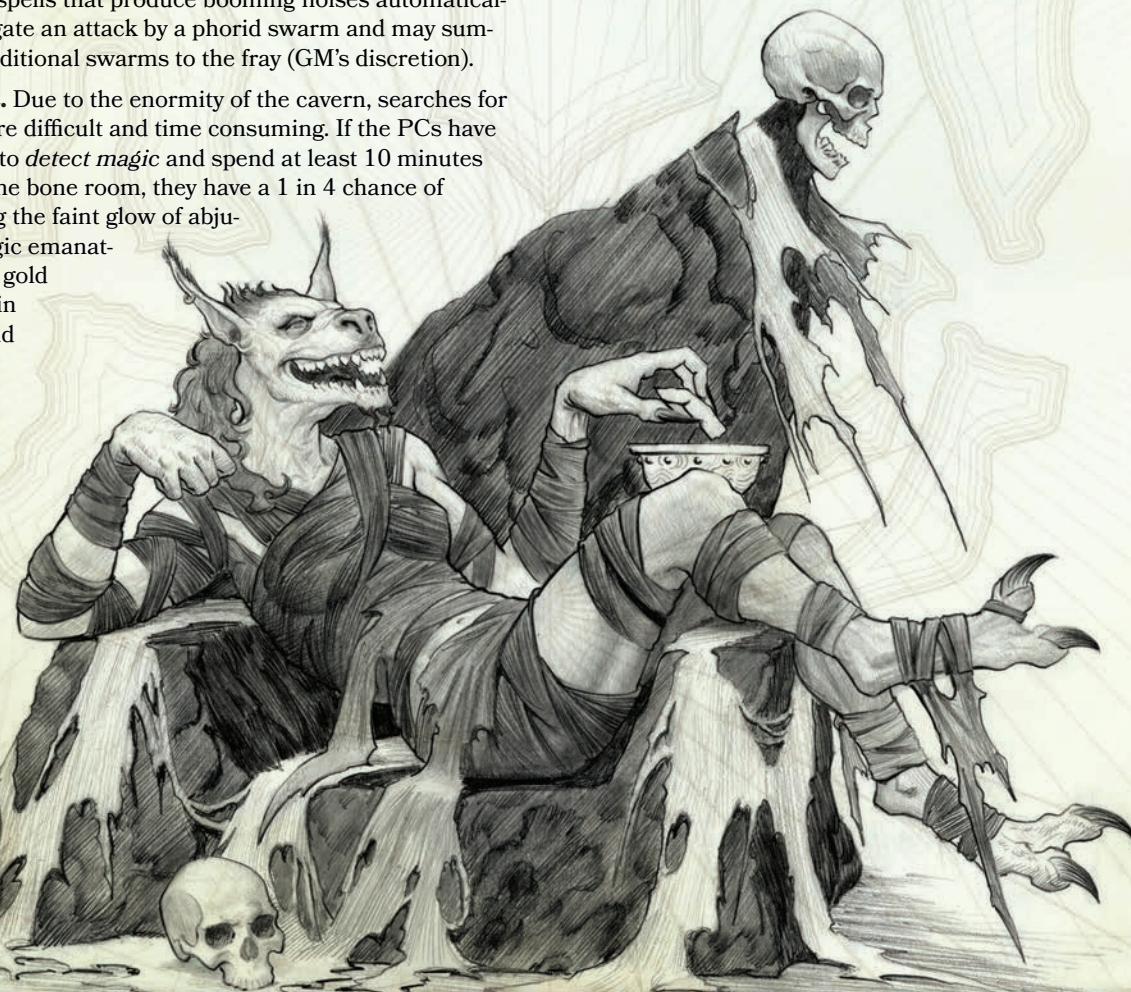
I. THE WHITE ROOM

Every surface of this room is covered in a fine white powder. A roughly-hewn chair has been carved from the far wall of the cavern, and a grotesque statue of a skeletal, horned, and humanoid figure stands within easy reach. A creature sits lazily on the chair, regarding you with shrewd eyes as you enter the room.

The white room is home to Porphos Yogash, a charnel whisperer, and one of the oldest ghouls in Farzeen. She is not immediately hostile to the PCs, merely amused that they thought it a reasonable course of action to descend into the tunnels, and is willing to talk if they approach her with respect and deference.

The statue, a horrific creation of mismatched bones cobbled together from the ready supply in the room next door, is Porphos's creation, and she is very proud of it. She often refers to it by name, Koska, as if it is a sentient creature.

DEVELOPMENT. Attempts to intimidate Porphos fail automatically and incite an immediate violent response, possibly with surprise, considering how peaceable she is at first. PCs asking questions respectfully can gather the following information with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check (roll for each topic).





◇ **GHOULS.** “The Yogash have been here since the beginning. These new ghouls, *pah*—no respect for tradition.” Porphos knows that new ghouls have been brought to Farzeen, but doesn’t know who is doing it, why, or how many there are.

◇ **MURDERS.** “Doesn’t sound like a ghoul. Tasteless—the bodies, not the killing—and uninteresting. They must ripen, and cure.” She is unimpressed by the murders and doesn’t think a ghoul is behind them.

◇ **THE PRIESTS OF GHAT/LIGHT.** Porphos gives the same response regardless of the faith in question. “All the same. Wasting lives to impress something that couldn’t care less about them.” She clearly finds it funny that sentient beings would worship other beings.

If Porphos decides the conversation is going poorly, or she becomes bored, she answers a PC’s question with, “I think we should ask Koska what he thinks!” and reveals that Koska is animated. This is the PCs’ cue to leave or else prepare for a fight.

CREATURE. If Porphos (*SPCM* 326) becomes hostile, her first spell is likely to be *fear* or *blight*, whichever she feels will be more effective. Koska (as **minotaur skeleton**) lumbers forward immediately, attacking the closest enemy within reach. Porphos and Koska will not pursue fleeing PCs; the ghoul instead cackles in glee while watching them run away.

TREASURE. Behind Porphos’ throne is a scroll of human skin. Written upon the scroll is the spell formula *call servitor of the outer gods* (*SPCM* 96).

J. THE COLUMN ROOM

Strange echoes, dripping stalactites, and the faint buzzing of the nearby phorid flies cause your hackles to rise and your pulse to quicken. The smell of rotten eggs pervades the room.

This large cavern slopes upward to the north. The floor is remarkably smooth and free of the rubble the PCs have come to expect. The farther north the PCs travel, the warmer the room becomes, and it eventually leads to the temple of Ghatanothoa.

This cavern is actually empty of threats, but it should not feel that way to the PCs. By this stage, they should be on edge, jumping at shadows and peering for danger in every corner.

K. A RESPITE

PCs with exceptional senses (DC 15 Wisdom [Perception] check) notice the telltale signs of a burrow within the wall of the tunnel. The area of loose earth is smaller than what they saw at the Scerris’ and the jail, but large enough that with a little digging, it could be investigated by Medium-sized or smaller creatures. The tunnel leads to a forgotten cavern large enough for the PCs to rest.

Your digging leads you to an ovoid cavern. A pool of crystal-clear water fills an impression in the center of

the room. The pool has dozens of sightless fish and crustaceans swimming within.

The tunnels of Farzeen are riddled with holes, crevices, and cracks, some of which have been used by the ghouls as makeshift warrens and nests. This particular tunnel has not been visited by ghouls for generations and offers the PCs a respite from the dangers of the lava tubes.

L. MUD FLATS

The tunnel opens to a mud-filled cavern of oppressive heat and noxious gases. A cascade of boiling mud rushes from the eastern wall, fills the cavern, and sluices through a hole in the southeastern wall. Two islands of volcanic stone jut from the molten mud.

The volcanic mud of Kaza circulates through the cavern, making it incredibly hot, noxious, and dangerous. The river of mud travels into the grotto, pools in the depressions of the room, then drains out through an opening. The lava-warmed mud is superheated; creatures that enter the mudflow take 4d6 fire damage for each round of exposure. The current is also very powerful; any creature standing in or moving through the mud must make a DC 5 Strength check once on their turn to maintain their footing or be knocked prone and swept 15 feet downstream toward area **M**.

DEVELOPMENT. After a number of rounds equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum 1 round) of exposure to the sulfurous gases of the volcano, a character that starts their turn in this chamber must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw against poison. On a failed save, the character begins retching, cramping, and is poisoned until they can breathe fresh air again. Characters that do not breathe or are immune to poison are unaffected and do not need to make this saving throw.

Creatures. The ghouls avoid this room due to its heat and the poisonous gases within. At the GM’s discretion, a pair of ghaunts (*SPCM* 323) make their nest in the room, their immunity to poison making the mudflats an excellent hunting ground and resting spot.

M. THE TEMPLE OF GHATANOTHOA

The cavern is dominated by the temple hewn from the volcanic rock. The air hangs thick, cloying, and difficult to breathe. Pools of superheated mud emit noxious fumes, making the cavern uncomfortably warm. From this distance, you can see countless small, round protrusions bulging from every surface of the temple, which look like nothing so much as a forest of bizarre eyes.

Upon closer examination of the temple walls, the PCs see carvings of waves crashing against jagged stone that somehow appears to be rising from the depths. The walls are dotted with thousands of wikkamite stones, each set into the wall and carved to look like an unblinking eye. The PCs have stumbled upon the temple of Ghatanothoa.

A Wisdom (Yog-Sothothery) skill check reveals the following:

- ◇ **DC 10** – The imagery of the walls is consistent with the Great Old Ones; with additional research and time you may be able to determine which one.
- ◇ **DC 13** – The Great Old One is Ghatanothoa of ancient Mu. Ghatanothoa lives in volcanoes, and its cult sacrifices living victims to placate its terrible wrath.
- ◇ **DC 17** – The mere sight of a perfect likeness of Ghatanothoa is enough to invoke its dread power of mummification.
- ◇ **DC 20** – Ghouls and their kin are said to have an innate resistance to Ghatanothoa's mummification ability.

DEVELOPMENT. Stealthy PCs and those that successfully navigate the volcanic mud slides are able to approach the temple without alerting the ghost patrols that guard its entrance. PCs who step from the shadows and seek to gain admittance to the temple openly have no recourse but to engage the ghosts.

CREATURES. A squad of four wary ghosts (SPCM 323) patrols the exterior of the temple. If the sounds of battle or the warning cries of the phorid flies have reached them, they are on high alert and have advantage on all Perception checks to detect intruders. The ghosts attack the PCs on sight.

CONCLUSION – FINDING THE TEMPLE

After a surreptitious meeting with Captain Wenza, the PCs have been drawn into the tunnels beneath Farzeen to find out who or what is behind the recent spate of disappearances on the surface. In their explorations of the tunnels, they battle all manner of horrors, particularly ghosts and insects of unusual size, as well as discover the remains of thousands of islanders. Finally, with their last steps, they uncover an ancient temple to a forgotten evil. They defeat the feral guardians of the temple and stand at the steps of the temple of Ghatanothoa.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Once the PCs have defeated the ghost guards or otherwise gain access to the temple of Ghatanothoa, the episode is complete and all PCs gain sufficient experience to reach 5th level.





APPENDIX: NPCs, SPELLS, AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

AIDEN PSAILA

Aiden Psaila boarded his first ship as a young lad, and now that his hair is starting to thin, he proudly asserts that he hasn't spent more than a few months ashore since. His travels have taken him across the world, and the chance to finally have a spot of shore leave in Farzeen has him greatly excited. He takes great pride in his abilities as a sailor and his duties as first mate. When he is in his cups, he enjoys telling stories of his travels, the oddities that he has encountered, and the hearts that he has broken in ports across the land.

PLAYING AIDEN: Aiden is only comfortable with the deck of a good ship under his feet. A lifelong sailor, he is capable of performing any task set before him on the *Folly*. He is loyal to the captain, the ship, and the sailors in that order.



AIDEN PSAILA

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 19 (3d8+6)

Speed 30 ft.,

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Str +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Athletics +3, Perception +2, Survival +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Born of the Sea. Aiden Psaila has advantage on all skill and ability checks related to sailing, swimming, and the like.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Aiden Psaila makes two melee or ranged attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +3 to hit, ranged 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage

REACTION

Belay That (2/day). As a reaction, Aiden may force a creature taking the Attack action against an ally to make a DC 12 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, the targeted creature cannot attack the original target but may instead attack a different target or take a different action.



CAPTAIN CENSA

As a young girl, Censa spent her days on the docks, listening to stories of sailors and fishermen and watching the ebb and flow of the tides. When night fell, her dreams were of life on the sea as the captain of a ship: traveling from port to port, across the horizon, and to the ends of the world. In sleep, Censa explored the surface world and, in her most special dreams, the cities beneath the waves. It was in one of these dreams that she made a bargain with an unseen intelligence from beneath the waves; in exchange for its patronage, Censa would have the power and freedom to explore the seas. Without a moment's hesitation, the deal was struck. The following morning, she cut her hair short, snuck aboard a vessel, and used her new abilities to prove her worth.

Years passed and she became the first mate of the *Vigilance*, a pirating ship. Censa and her mates preyed upon the kind and unwary with a strategy that was simple, ingenious, and brutal. When a storm would pass, Censa and a few hand-selected crew would be set adrift in a boat made to look as if it had been ravaged by the rough seas. The beautiful Censa pled for aid from passing ships. Once rescued, Censa would promptly take over and rob their rescuers, killing them if they resisted.

One such crew, which included a group of experienced adventurers, proved to be more than a match for the cutthroats of the *Vigilance*. Censa, canny and wily, convinced them that she had been an unwilling participant and begged for mercy. Two months later, Censa was deposited at Resante. The following morning, Censa and her new-found cat, Nukki, began the process of getting back out to sea. Over the last few months, she has gathered investors, a crew, and a ship for the voyage to Farzeen, hoping to live a more honest sailing life from this point on.

PLAYING CENSA: Whether she cares to admit it or not, Censa's brush with capture and execution affected her deeply. She is fiercely loyal to her new crew and ship, and will never break a promise. Censa's deep one heritage is only just now beginning to surface, turning her features handsome rather than pretty, and her wide-set, overly large eyes doe-like. Her jaws, canines, and the surrounding musculature are overdeveloped, allowing her a bite attack. Censa is not aware of her deep one lineage; she believes herself to be the tiefling offspring of a seafaring entity, though she doesn't spread that suspicion around.

CAPTAIN CENSA

Medium humanoid (deep one hybrid), neutral

Armor Class 12, (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d8+24)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Cha +6, Wis +2

Skills Acrobatics +3, Nature +3, Perception +2, Persuasion +6, Survival +2, Yog-Sothothery +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Aklo

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Born of the Sea. Captain Censa has advantage on all skill and ability checks related to sailing, swimming, and the like.

Unearthly Mutation. Captain Censa can breathe air or water.

Sea Longing. Censa has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks made to swim. However, every week that she spends more than 10 miles from the sea, she must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or her Wisdom score is reduced by 1 until she travels to the sea.

Innate Spellcasting. Censa can cast the following spells:

At will: *false life*, *mage armor*

Spellcasting. Censa is a 5th-level spellcaster and Charisma is her spellcasting ability (spell DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She knows the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

1st to 3rd (two 3rd-level slots): *comprehend languages*, *counterspell*, *cure wounds*, *hypnotic pattern*, *kiss of Dagon* (SPCM 106), *shatter*, *unseen servant*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Captain Censa makes three melee attacks: two with her shortsword and one with her bite.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

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



DEEP ONE HYBRID APE

Interbreeding between deep ones and the beasts of Far-zeen’s coastal jungle has produced some horrific monstrosities, but few more terrible than the deep one hybrid apes. These shaggy, man-sized apes have begun to show signs of their abyssal transformations: their eyes are milky and bulging, their skin slimy, and their hands and feet webbed.

Primordial Armor. Thick chitinous plates and hard scales have erupted from the apes’ matted fur, giving them the appearance of primordial seamonsters or squamous horrors of the deep.

Shrewd Predators. Hybridization with the deep ones has uplifted these apes to a level of sapience unseen among the baser beasts of the jungle. They study their opponents with an unnerving alien intelligence and even seem to understand humanoid speech.



DEEP ONE HYBRID APE

Medium beast (deep one), chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d8+12)

Speed 20 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Common but can’t speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Hold Breath. The deep one hybrid ape can hold its breath for 1 hour.

Sea Longing. The deep one hybrid ape has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks made to swim. However, every week that it spends more than 10 miles from the sea, it must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or its Wisdom score is reduced by 1 until it travels to the sea.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The deep one hybrid ape makes two fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, ranged 25/50 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning damage.

LOTHAR WENZA

A battered and bloodied Lothar Wenza appeared on the docks of Farzeen more than a decade ago. The big man has not seen fit to share his story with the folk of the city, but what is known is that he was the only survivor of a band of adventurers searching for unspeakable knowledge in the abandoned cities beneath the waves.

Lothar's skills, durability, and dogged persistence served him well in the Watch, and within a short time he was named Captain. Behind the desk more than he'd like, Lothar is always ready to feel the streets of Farzeen beneath his boots.

PLAYING LOTHAR: Lothar prefers to approach things head on, leaving subterfuge and politics to those with more time and patience. He is a good and honest man, occasionally torn by the decisions that he sees being made "for the greater good."



LOTHAR WENZA

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 18 (breastplate and shield)

Hit Points 120 (16d8+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Cha +4, Con +6, Str +7

Skills Athletics +7, Insight +4, Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Burly. Lothar can wield a two-handed melee weapon in one hand.

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

Inspire Ferocity (4/day). Lothar may use a bonus action to grant an ally that can hear him a bonus d6 to be used on any attack or damage roll made within the next 1 minute. The target can roll the die after rolling the attack or damage but before the GM declares success or failure. The result is added to the total.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lothar makes three melee or ranged attacks.

Sidesplitter (greataxe). *Melee Weapon Attack.* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12+4) slashing damage. Sidesplitter does an additional 3 (1d6) necrotic damage to monstrosities.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +7 to hit, ranged 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

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



MOMAO

Momao is a lifelong resident of Farzeen and an islander to the core of her being. She is fiercely loyal to the people of Farzeen, exercises limited self-control, and has a tendency to react impetuously and vociferously to perceived slights to those she cares about. These traits have brought her to the attention of the magistrate more than a few times since she joined the Watch upon reaching adulthood.

Momao is beloved by her neighbors and serves the dual purpose of surrogate daughter and second-in-command for Captain Wenza. Momao will not hesitate to sacrifice her wellbeing to protect an innocent or a cause that she believes in.

Momao is statuesque, taller than most of the men in the Watch, and has the powerful build of a lifelong swimmer. She proudly bears the scars of her previous fights on her dark skin. Dark brown dreadlocks ring her face when they are not held back by a leather cord.



MOMAO

Medium humanoid (human), neutral good

Armor Class 18 (breastplate and shield)

Hit Points 52 (8d8+16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Insight +6, Investigation +4, Perception +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Momao makes two melee or ranged attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, ranged 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

NEOPHYTE OF GHAT

The young neophyte priests of Ghat wear simple brown robes adorned only with their holy symbol: the familiar outline of Kaza itself. They are friendly and eager to discuss the tenets of their faith with the curious. Their rites revolve around propitiating the fiery mountain and giving thanks for its fertile volcanic soils.

Unwitting Pawns. None but the highest ranks of their order know that the priesthood of Ghat is a front for the sinister Cult of Ghathanoia, the Great Old One of natural disasters and living sacrifices. If any of the neophytes suspect that things are not entirely as they seem, they bury their unease beneath a façade of normalcy—a behavior almost second nature to the inhabitants of Farzeen.



NEOPHYTE OF GHAT

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 16 (3d8+3)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4, Religion +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Single Minded. The neophyte has advantage on saving throws against fear effects.

Spellcasting. The neophyte is a 1st-level spellcaster and Wisdom is their spellcasting ability (spell DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). They know the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *mending*, *sacred flame*

1st level (two slots): *command*, *lethargy of Tsathoggua* (SPCM 106)

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.



NUKKI

Captain Censa's cat, Nukki, can be found topside on the *Folly* at virtually any time of the day or night. She keeps her distance from Moseta but can otherwise be found observing and interacting with any of the crew. In typical cat fashion, Nukki spends much of her time napping, hunting mice in the hold, and, when no one is paying attention, watching everyone to report back to her mistress. The crew aren't quite sure what to make of Nukki, other than that she is clearly quite intelligent and has a bond with the captain.

Nukki will not reveal her real intelligence or abilities under any circumstances, with the sole exception being if Captain Censa is in mortal danger. In those situations, Nukki will use subtle casting to protect Censa.



NUKKI

Tiny beast (Dreamlands cat), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 21 (6d4+6)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Cha +5, Con +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Arcana +2, Deception +5, Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Cat, understands but can't speak Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Smell. Nukki has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Nimble. Nukki always uses Acrobatics instead of Athletics when climbing, jumping, or swimming.

Nine Lives. When killed, Nukki's mind and consciousness shift reflexively back into a dream form, creating a new dream body if necessary. She must then rest for 1d3 days in the Dreamlands, at which point she can return to the waking world. Nukki can revive herself in this manner up to eight times, giving her nine lives in total. Resurrections from other methods (such as a *raise dead* spell or other powerful magic) do not count against this limit. Nukki has 7 lives remaining.

Subtle Caster (2/day). Nukki may choose to cast a spell without any verbal and/or somatic components.

Spellcasting. Nukki is a 3rd-level spellcaster and Charisma is her spellcasting ability (spell DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She knows the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *message*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *lethargy of Tsathoggua* (SPCM 106)

2nd level (2 slots): *gust of wind*, *shatter*

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 slashing damage.

Moon Jump (2/Day). If Nukki is in the Dreamlands, she can jump from a planet to her moon or other satellites (or vice versa). This movement provokes opportunity attacks normally, but the flight is supernaturally fast. En route, Nukki is protected within a small demiplane. A group of four Dreamlands cats can bring a single Small creature with them on a moon jump, while a group of eight Dreamlands cats can bring a single Medium creature. When Nukki uses moon jump to return to a planet or moon she left via moon jump, she returns to within 1 mile of where she departed that planet or moon.

REACTIONS

Land on Your Feet. When Nukki falls, she can use her reaction to right herself before landing. If she fell less than 60 feet, she treats the fall as 10 feet shorter for purposes of damage (reducing damage by 1d6). If she fell at least 60 feet, she has time to better maneuver and relax, instead negating all fall damage beyond the first 10 feet (for a total of 1d6 bludgeoning damage). If she takes damage from a fall, she nevertheless lands on her feet if she succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw.

OBED VELT

Obed Velt has been a staple of life in Farzeen since he arrived in port decades ago, as the only survivor from the disastrous final voyage of the *Dark Maiden*. Quickly getting his bearings in the port city, Obed opened for business as a shipwright. He was initially one of many, but due to his skill, efficiency, and cutthroat prices, he quickly became the only shipwright in town.

Islanders know what to expect in their dealings with Obed: he will be gruff, fair, impatient, and true to his word. He never makes a promise he cannot keep and expects the same of others. He has little time for dishonesty and no interest in taking advantage of those unable to fend for themselves.

The islanders are unclear on Obed's age. His heavily-wrinkled, perpetually-sunburned face and his wild, snow-white hair and beard seem like those of a man with decades on the sea, and yet his spry step and obvious physical strength resemble those of a man in his prime. Obed's preternatural affinity for the ocean is no secret, but the true scope of his druidic powers is not widely known by the folk of Farzeen.



OBED VELT

Medium humanoid (human), neutral good

Armor Class 13 (studded leather) or 16 (with *barkskin*)

Hit Points 33 (6d8+6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Int +2, Wis +5

Skills Athletics +3, Nature +2, Perception +5, Survival +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Druidic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. Obed is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft*, *mending*, *shillelagh*

1st level (4 slots): *animal friendship*, *create or destroy water*, *cure wounds*, *speak with animals*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *barkskin*, *enhance ability*, *gust of wind*, *spike growth*

3rd level (2 slots): *water breathing*, *wind wall*

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +3 to hit (+5 to hit with *shillelagh*), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage, 5 (1d8+1) bludgeoning damage if wielded with two hands or 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh*.

Aquatic Wild Shape. Obed assumes the shape of any beast with a swimming speed that has a challenge rating of 1 or lower. He can remain in this shape for up to 2 hours. This is otherwise identical to the druid's wild shape ability.



OGILWA SIBLINGS: BANDA AND KASA

The Ogilwa siblings, Banda and Kasa, joined the crew of *Hazel's Folly* to provide healing, entertainment, and muscle. The pair are nigh inseparable, often bickering and fighting over something trivial. It isn't clear if they are running from some terrible crime in their past or running toward a future of adventure and excitement.

Banda, the older brother, is a born entertainer, often holding court at the taverns and inns they've called home since striking out on their own. His sonorous baritone has kept a roof over their heads and food in their bellies for years. He found Resante an unusually challenging crowd and relished the opportunity to embark on a trip to exotic Farzeen.

Kasa, the younger sister, is ruled by her mercurial temperament and propensity to act before thinking (when she thinks at all). Where Banda is charming and friendly, Kasa is rude and rancorous. Her proclivity for bar fights is such that Banda is known almost as much for his ability to heal as for his voice. Despite her gruff demeanor, Kasa is devoted to her brother and would do anything to protect him from harm, even sacrificing herself.



OGILWA, BANDA

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)

Skills Performance +4, Persuasion +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

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

Spellcasting. Banda is a 1st-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He knows the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, *mage hand*

1st level (2 slots): *healing word*, *heroism*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Brotherly Encouragement (1/day). Banda grants Kasa advantage on a single ability check, attack roll, or saving throw she makes.

OGILWA, KASA

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (studded leather and shield)

Hit Points 16 (3d8+3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +5, Survival +3

Senses darkvision, passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Sisterly Protection. When Kasa is within 5 feet of Banda and Banda is attacked, she can impose disadvantage on one attack against him.



PHORID FLY, GIANT

The giant phorid flies of Farzeen are hump-backed, grow to the size of cats, and have a habit of rapidly fleeing from predators. The ghouls of Farzeen have succeeded in breeding the flies to an enormous size and to serve the dual purpose of watchdog and emergency food supply.

Emergency Rations. In times of extreme hunger, the tunnel-dwelling ghouls harvest the larval maggots of the phorid flies for sustenance. Most ghouls find the maggots extremely distasteful.

Watchdogs for Ghouls. When riled up by predators, adult phorid flies vibrate their wings to produce a loud, echoing buzz that the ghouls have learned to associate with intruders.

PHORID FLY, GIANT

Tiny beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 7 (2d4 + 2)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +0

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages none

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell. The giant phorid fly has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Vibrating Echo. Each round during which the giant phorid fly takes a Move or Attack action, its buzzing wings produce a sound that echoes loudly in caverns. All creatures within 120 feet of the fly can hear this sound.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage. The target must also succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be afflicted with sewer plague.

PHORID FLY, SWARM

Large swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 52 (7d10+14)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

Skills Perception +0

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages none

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Smell. The phorid fly swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Vibrating Echo. At the end of phorid fly swarm's turn, its buzzing wings produce a sound that echoes loudly in caverns. All creatures within 120 feet of the fly can hear this sound.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. The target must also succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be afflicted with sewer plague.





RAVAGER GHOUL

The pallid grey skin of this muscular brute barely contains its lumpy bulk. Grown strong and powerful after subterranean feasts, this ghoul has become bold and aggressive. It advances menacingly with bared teeth and extended claws, ready and eager to kill again.

RAVAGER GHOUL

Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 85 (10d8+40)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Ghoul

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Psychic Feast. The ghoul can feed for 1 minute on the corpse of a humanoid or monstrosity with flesh at least 24 hours dead to absorb some of the lingering traces of memory and knowledge that the creature possessed in life. This adds a +1 bonus on a skill of the ghoul's choice that the creature was proficient in. The ghoul gains only one bonus from any given corpse. At the GM's discretion, a particularly ancient corpse might grant a larger bonus or a bonus to more than one skill. The ghoul can maintain three separate bonuses. If it uses this trait when it already has the maximum number of bonuses, it must forget one of the current bonuses in order to replace it with one from the new corpse.

Grave Nose. The ghoul has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell to notice or recognize corpses, decaying things, meat, and undead creatures.

Inured to Disease. The ghoul is immune to nonmagical diseases and has advantage on saving throws against magical diseases.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the ravager ghoul can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Scrounger. The ghoul has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks to find objects in rubble or undergrowth, buried, or otherwise hidden from view.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ravager ghoul makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws or two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the ravager ghoul hits with both claw attacks, it may use a bonus action to make a bite attack on the target.



UPTON

Two months before the PCs washed ashore onto fair Farzeen, the ghoul known only as Upton debarked the cargo ship *Fowl Misgivings* and disappeared into the tunnels below the island. Upton's history beforehand is not known, but his skills with deception, thievery, and obfuscation cannot be denied.

Upton is a narcissist of the highest order. He has never met his equal, and he sees everyone as objects to be ridiculed, manipulated, and discarded when their usefulness is at an end.

Despite his bestial countenance, Upton's clothing, bearing, and grooming are always impeccable. The dichotomy of his mannerisms and physicality can be disconcerting to less worldly travelers, and he is quick to take advantage of their discomfort and confusion.



UPTON

Medium monstrosity (ghoul), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +9, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7, Yog-Sothothery +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Ghoul, thieves' cant

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Cunning Action. Upton can use a bonus action to Dash, Disengage, or Hide.

Grave Nose. Upton has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell to notice or recognize corpses, decaying things, meat, and undead creatures.

Inured to Disease. Upton is immune to nonmagical diseases and has advantage on saving throws against magical diseases.

Psychic Feast. Upton can feed for 1 minute on the corpse of a humanoid or monstrosity with flesh at least 24 hours dead to absorb some of the lingering traces of memory and knowledge that the creature possessed in life. This adds a +1 bonus on a skill of Upton's choice that the creature was proficient in. Upton gains only one bonus from any given corpse. At the GM's discretion, a particularly ancient corpse

might grant a larger bonus or a bonus to more than one skill. Upton can maintain three separate bonuses. If he uses this trait when he already has the maximum number of bonuses, he must forget one of the current bonuses in order to replace it with one from the new corpse.

Scrounger. Upton has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks to find objects in rubble or undergrowth, buried, or otherwise hidden from view.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Upton deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally that isn't incapacitated and Upton doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Upton makes three attacks: one with his bite and two with his claws or three attacks with his shortsword.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage.

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

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. Upton halves the damage that he takes from an attack that hits him. He must be able to see the attacker.



WICOT TRIPLETS: ADEH, OLOH, AND MATWA

All births are celebrated in the dwarven strongholds beneath the mountains, and the delivery of twins is considered among the holiest of gifts from the gods of the mountain. Triplets, however, are unheard of in the vast records of the folk beneath the mountains. Adeh, Oloh, and Matwa grew up with the auspices of their birth thrust upon them. They were considered alternately touched by the gods or the product of a vile pact.

On their 100th birthday, the triplets had had enough of the whispers, stares, and expectations of the leaders. They set out to explore the world and to get as far from the mountain as they could. Oloh, the youngest by just a few minutes, is the dominant sibling. They are all bearded and look so similar most people mix them up.

PLAYING THE WICOTS: Oloh is the dominant sibling. Her brothers immediately accept her judgements and opinions on all things. The Wicots spend all of their time together, bickering and fighting as family sometimes does.



WICOT, MATWA

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral

Armor Class 14 (scale mail)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Animal Handling +4, Medicine +4

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Matwa has advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

Triple Threat. Matwa has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his siblings is within 5 feet of the creature and the sibling isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Pike. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10+1) piercing damage.

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

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

WICOT, ADEH

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt and shield)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills History +2, Religion +4

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Adeh has advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

Spellcasting. Adeh is a 1st-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

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

1st level (3 slots): *bane, cure wounds, thunderwave*

Triple Threat. Adeh has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his siblings is within 5 feet of the creature and the sibling isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

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

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +2 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

WICOT, OLOH

Medium humanoid (dwarf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Deception +3, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Oloh has advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

Scurry (5/Day). Oloh may use her bonus action to Dash.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Oloh deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Oloh's that isn't incapacitated and Oloh doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Triple Threat. Oloh has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of her siblings is within 5 feet of the creature and the sibling isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack.* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage.

Hook. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d3+1) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 11 Strength saving throw or drop one item they are holding.

REACTIONS

Parry. Oloh adds 2 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, Oloh must see the attacker.



ITEMS OF INTEREST

KAVA

(2-6 cp [bowl], 1-3 sp [gallon pitcher]).

The alcoholic beverage of choice for the islanders of Farzeen is Kava. The concoction is made from the powdered root of a locally grown tree and flavored with spices, herbs, and fruit. Every inn and tavern boasts its own particular recipe. Kava is always served in a wooden bowl.

INVULNERABLE ARROW

Weapon (any ammunition, uncommon)

This magic arrow is impervious to all harm and cannot be broken through normal use. The arrow retains its magical properties after firing and may be retrieved to be used again.

SIDESPLITTER

Weapon (greataxe), legendary (requires attunement by a humanoid)

Physical Description. The leather grip wrapping of the greataxe shows the discoloration of heavy, frequent use. The exposed portions of the haft bear the unmistakable appearance of Farzeen's ebon-hued hardwood, the M'bya tree. The weapon's heft speaks to use by wielders of immense, ogre-like size and immense strength.

The most distinct feature of the weapon is its blade. The meteoric alloy used to fabricate the head defies all attempts at identification. Its surface reflects images with an oily distortion, and yet, it is always dry and cool to the touch. A lidless, hircine eye is inscribed on the face of the blade, which bears a remarkable resemblance to the serrations of a selachian predator from the depths.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magical weapon. Additionally, *Sidesplitter* inflicts an additional 1d6 necrotic damage to monstrosities. *Sidesplitter* has the following additional properties.

Soul Strike. *Sidesplitter*'s most feared power is its ability to channel its wielder's inner strength, in the form of hit dice, into strikes of magnificent destructive capability. When successfully striking a creature, you may expend a number of hit dice up to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1); roll the dice expended, and the attack inflicts that much additional necrotic damage to the target.

The die for the additional damage is the same as the wielder's hit die. For example, a barbarian using this feature would roll a d12, while a rogue would roll a d8. Multiclassed characters roll whichever hit dice they choose to expend. The wielder cannot be taken to negative hit dice in this manner; if they have no more hit dice to spend, the ability cannot be used.

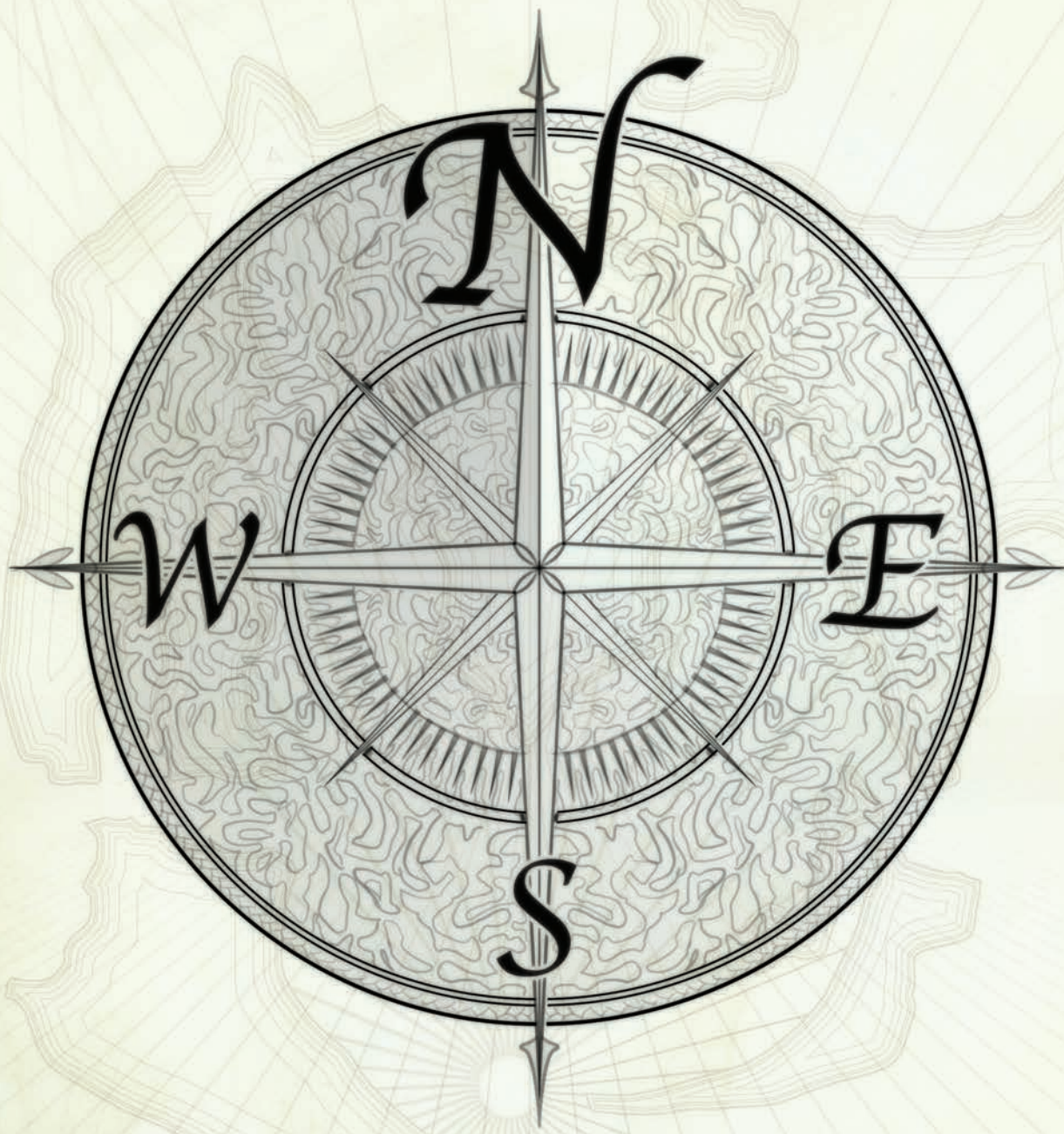
Bloody Thirst. If the wielder of *Sidesplitter* inflicts a critical hit on a monstrosity, the wielder must use the greataxe's *soul strike* feature or initiate a conflict. If the conflict is failed, *Sidesplitter* forces the wielder to expend 1d4 hit dice with a *soul strike*. If the axe forces a wielder

to expend hit dice in this way, the number of hit dice expended can exceed the wielder's Charisma modifier.

Sentience. *Sidesplitter* is a sentient lawful neutral weapon with an Intelligence of 11, a Wisdom of 8, and a Charisma of 15. It has hearing and normal vision out to 30 feet. The weapon can understand Common and communicates with its wielder by transmitting emotions empathically.

Personality. *Sidesplitter*'s purpose is to destroy monstrosities, and it pursues that goal with the single-minded determination of a construct. In any encounter with a monstrosity—social, combat, or otherwise—it transmits its desire for the destruction of the foul creature(s) above all things. If the wielder does not satisfy the weapon, a conflict may arise.





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