

TMR1

**A campaign for 4-6 characters
starting Levels 1-3**

On Ouisconsin!

A 5E Dungeons and Dragons Campaign

Tim Krause



Dungeon Module TMR1

On Ouisconsin!

by Tim Krause

A 5E INTRODUCTORY MODULE FOR 4-6 PLAYERS, LEVEL 1-2



The design of this module blends the look of old-school modules of the 1980s with 5E rules. Explore the mythical lands of Ouisconsin, its haunted locations and mythical creatures.

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Preface

On Ouisconsin! owes many thanks. For a credits page, Christina Streiff would have to be listed first and alone on this one. We traveled the backroads of Wisconsin with our three-legged St. Bernard, Mollie. We visited every place written about here, and we speculated about every creature here. It was a five-year adventure of love, and sometimes frustration. But there's an obvious reason I asked her to work with me on this project and to edit it: the passion for adventure and detail.

Wisconsin mythology generally doesn't seem to be well known, and not always easy to find (save for a few stories here and there). I skipped some of the obvious in the mythos to focus on the more obscure.

However, I also want to point out that I started playing Basic D&D in 1980. Then, very briefly Expert. And then Advanced. I stopped playing for a very long time, as much as I loved the game, and loved being GM even more. My favorite adventures are spontaneous where the GM sits down with an idea, and everyone is transported to a realm where no one is sure what the outcome might be.

This is my third, and most intense effort at a module: it's more of a campaign than anything, and it also relies on not only my imagination but the imagination and creativity of the GMs that decide they want to run it.

It's a little rough in places, but its goal is to provide sketches of a plot, of monsters, and of dungeons. A great GM doesn't just follow a script; they know how best to adapt to the number of players, to their personalities, and to other proclivities that an author can't anticipate.

There was one other goal in creating this adventure: as a busy adult, yearlong campaigns feel too long. Likewise, although the classic AD&D modules (especially those in series) are still personally appealing to me, it seems that 5E should be an evolution, it should evolve with us as players who lead very different and sometimes intensely busy and complicated lives.

Although I don't have a problem with characters who magically appear and disappear from a campaign, I did want something that was more intentional in solving the problem without just glossing over it as magical, meta-gaming hand waving.

I'm sure there are flaws here, but I suspect great GMs will fill in the blank spots, the interstitial spaces with the depth and richness their players deserve.

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On Ouisconsin!

Dedication

To Gilbert and Frances Krause for inspiring me to read and to imagine by giving me what I consider my first adult book: *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.

To Raymond and Lois Rapienski for poetic inspiration and the knowledge that squirrel does not taste like chicken.

To Mr. Bradley Dale, Gorgo's original cleric protector and Mr. James Bailie, the first among the finest Dungeon Masters (ca. 1981-1982).

Background

GM Note: This is designed to be a challenging series of adventures that are also modular in nature. If you're looking for a campaign where it's easy for party members to come and go based on availability, the portals that connect everything make that relatively easy to work into the story line.

It is worth noting, however, that depending on the scenario you might need to adjust the number and strength of the monster(s) in any given encounter. Strength could mean adjusting armor class or hit points, for example. Early encounters are particularly flexible in that regard. Use your experience to adjust later encounters accordingly.

It's also worth noting that many of these creatures are extremely deadly if they hit characters, especially at early levels of play. **However**, 5E favors more weaker characters or creatures over one more powerful character or creature. As mentioned above, if the party is having too easy a time of it, you can compensate by adding a small number of weaker monsters as supporting cast. The appendix offers some suggestions for alternatives to challenge your party but refer to your favorite monster compendia. Be creative!

For your players: this isn't a dungeon crawl. Players will also need to be creative and strategic in their encounters. If they approach things as a head-on hack-and-slash, the adventure could easily end in a total party kill.

For you as GM: this isn't an easy campaign to GM. You'll be encouraged to improvise and adjust on the fly. Our play-testing, however, suggested that it was the lack of structure that makes this such a fun and compelling adventure to play (besides being set in a mythical Ouisconsin).

For any new session with new players: there is always a teleport between each scenario. Although there are a couple of exceptions noted in some sections, whenever the party teleports, the

world should briefly go black, and the players should teleport.

With new players, the teleport functions differently and is more dream-like. As GM, you should very briefly recount the previous encounters. Focus on the most terrifying aspects of the adventure: the violence, the urgency of the quest. Use your imagination to set a gruesome scene. The end of this module includes a space to keep notes to help facilitate this part of the storytelling. Among other features, this is what will make the adventure unique every time you play it.

Leveling Up: It's at the GM's discretion to allow players to level up between portals and/or dungeons.

NPCs: There are two NPCs available at the end of the module, one 3rd level and one 6th level. Both are written to fit the feel of On Ouisconsin! You should take liberty to introduce one or both NPCs at a point where your party is struggling more than might be reasonably expected.

The party finds themselves at the Tavern on the Tomorrow River, enjoying tankards of ale. A middle-aged human male approaches the party and asks that they lend an ear. He is shrouded in a cloak that (perception check, 12) seems below his station. The individual carries himself very well, and there is an air about his personality that suggests he feels a bit out of place at the Tavern on the Tomorrow River.

He asks for a moment of the party's time. If granted, he fears that the gods are conspiring against him, though (even if pressed) he won't say why, or he'll say that he doesn't know.

Whoever is talking to Vathris will notice that he seems uneasy: he glances over his shoulder frequently, his eyes shift around the room, and he has an occasional stutter.

If pressed, he'll tell you his name is Vathris. If the party is short on adventurers, the acoustics in the

Tavern are good, and NPCs can over-hear the conversation and decide to join the party.

Any member of the party might notice (perception check, 14) that when Vathris is sharing his story, the stuttering isn't just an affliction, but appears to be an attempt to cover something up about his story. A check (perception, 16 or higher) will indicate that Vathris is trying to hide that his station in life is much higher than he's willing to allow.

Vathris tells the party that he can save himself from the gods if they can collect seven gems protected by seven mystical monsters in seven days. The locations of the monsters are connected by identical portals, although Vathris doesn't have any additional information to share about either the portals or the monsters.

Ideally, a member of the party will have a quarterstaff. Vathris will tell them the quarterstaff activates the portal. However, any weapon will do, as this isn't quite the truth: the party will not be aware that Vathris is trying to create an air of intrigue and adventure to persuade the party to help him on this quest.

Vathris will also tell the party, that he will be waiting at the last portal on the last day.

The party needs to collect the following gems:

1. Ruby
2. Emerald
3. Diamond
4. Amethyst
5. Pearl
6. Coral
7. Xanthanite

(the party doesn't recognize this "gem")

Vathris does not know if they will find them in this order, or not. He also doesn't know precisely where they will be, other than the fact that each will be guarded by a ferocious monster that the party will have to defeat.

If the party questions Vathris further about the quest, he assures them that a well-respected priest has

guided him to this decision. He will refuse to reveal any more information than this.

The longer the conversation takes place, the more uneasy Vathris becomes. At some point, Vathris will tell the party that time is of the essence and they need to get to the first portal very soon, or he risks losing his life.

As Vathris leads the party to the first portal, he reminds them that each encounter will hopefully produce one of the necessary gems.

The portal is a smooth stone arch, though obviously chiseled by hand. The portal (as with all of the rest of the portals) are otherwise featureless and unadorned. Vathris touches it with his quarterstaff, reminds the party to do the same on future portals, tells them to step through and wishes them a successful journey.

As the party steps through the portal, their vision goes momentarily black and they lose any sense of both time and place.

Note that the party will not know the exact locations they find themselves at as they travel between portals. As GM, you also have some freedom with time: the party will have a sense of how they think time is progressing, but as they move from portal to portal, you might give them hints that time is moving differently than it appears. (**Recommendation:** speed up the timeframe if the party is having too easy a time accomplishing their goals.)

A1. Portal One – Muskego

The party finds themselves in the dark, in the middle of the woods. They are on a lightly worn path.

After a few uneventful hours of walking, the party comes across the Muskego Inn, located on the shores of the beautiful Bass Lake (oddly known for its fresh perch). The party can enjoy a meal of wood-grilled perch, encrusted with salt, and a pint of ale for **2 cp** each.

The waitress and bartender will question the party and ask where they are from. The party is warned not to travel the roads at night or the **Haunchies (M1)** will surely ambush and kill them. The Haunchies have been ravaging Muskego for over a year, and only one adventurer has survived an encounter with them. The bartender described the encounter with them as happening lightning fast and mentioned the Haunchies have an uncanny ability to shift positions when they are attacked. Combined with even faster attacks, they seem invulnerable to the villagers.

Suspecting this may be the first of the mythical creatures, the party will set off for a clearing at the end of Mystic Way, a road just off Woods Road, according to the innkeeper.

Encounter: 3-5 Haunchies (**M1**), depending on the size and strength of the party.

The Haunchies are lurking at the edge of the field at the end of Mystic Way. Wielding scimitars, they strike fast.

When the party inspects the Haunchies (perception, 12), they notice a faint red glow emanating from one of their mouths. One of their stomachs contains a **ruby**, the first stone of the quest. Haunchies stomachs are foul, so the party within 5' should roll a constitution save of 14 or higher or lose 1d4 HP due to stomach distress.

Most likely, the party continues the path to Muskego. They will be questioned about not appearing to be from the area. If they have evidence of killing the Haunchies, or can produce it, they will be given free room, board, and breakfast. Breakfast consists of

fresh perch. Party members who failed DC 14 need to save on DC 12 or lose another 1D4 due to sickness.

If asked, they will be directed to **Portal Two**, about a mile or so farther north. Along the way, they will be waylaid by highway thieves, Benito and Tomas (**M8**). Their initial offer will be to collect what they consider a “toll” for using their road. They will insist the party pay up to **10 gp** or they will have no choice but to kill everyone in the party.

The adventurers will quickly note that Benito and Tomas are not terribly bright, and probably don't have much experience as highway robbers. If attacked, Benito and Tomas will vigorously defend themselves. However, if they sense the fight is going poorly they will flee before surrendering.

Should the party decide to pursue the highway robbers and capture them, they can return them to Muskego. If they do the innkeeper will direct the party to Gil, the local constable. Gil will be appreciative and reward the party with **1 gp** each for bringing Benito and Tomas to justice.

Party Adjustment

This is a good first encounter to gauge the size and strength of the party relative to any adjustments, as GM, you may decide to make.

Depending on the size and strength of the party, adjust the number of Haunchies up or down, as appropriate.

Also, consider the following for a party that is struggling more than they should:

AC: 13 (Leather instead of chain)

HP: 9 HP (instead of 21 HP)

Challenge: 100 XP (instead of 200 XP)

Treasure

The Haunchies aren't equipped well, and they don't have anything that the party is going to want to use or be able to sell. If the Haunchies aren't adjusted, total treasure is **10 gp** per adventurer. If they're adjusted down, **5 gp** per adventurer.

A2. Portal Two – The Beast of Bray Road

The party finds themselves in daylight, surrounded by grassland and scrub brush. They see an extremely large humanoid tracking toward them through the underbrush.

The **werewolf-like (M2) creature** will attack using partial cover.

Note on the player sheet that the creature makes two great club attacks.

When the beast gets to 20 HP, it will try to escape. The party will be slowed because of the terrain; the Beast of Bray Road will not and moves at 40'/turn. It will try to escape to its lair (see Treasure, below).

The werewolf-like creature will use a well-worn path that leads directly to its lair. The party won't have any trouble with tracking it, but the beast will be hidden well enough to attack first and with advantage.

The lair is a small, limestone cave. Although small, it has some twists and turns that will allow the beast to be hiding when the party approaches. Avoiding the beast gaining advantage (see above), would require a perception check of DC 17.

If the party looks (Perception check of 12), they'll notice a green glow, and collect an **emerald** from the stomach of the beast, assuming they succeed in killing it.

If the party manages to defeat the beast before it can return to its lair, they will still easily find the trail that leads directly to the lair, which contains the treasure noted at the end of this encounter.

Portal Three is a solid one-hour march to the south. The next portal is eerily like the others.

Party Adjustment

Depending on the size and strength of the party, adjust the strength of the beast down if need be:

AC: 14

HP: 60 HP instead of 105 HP

Challenge: 900 XP instead of 1,800 XP

Alternatively, if the encounter appears to be too easy, The Beast of Bray Road will have a small pack of wolves in the underbrush with it:

Wolves (2-4): AC: 13; **HP:** 11 (2d8+2); **Spd:** 40'; **Bite:** +4 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 7 (2d4+2), piercing; succeed on DC11str or knocked prone; **Str** +1, **Dex** +2, **Con** +1, **Int** -4, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -2; Pack Tactics; **AL:** unaligned; **CR** 1/4, **XP:** 50.

Treasure

The beast apparently was attracted to shiny objects. The party finds a total of:

- **200 sp**
- **110 gp**
- **10 gems (100 gp each)**

A3. Portal Three – Dartford Cemetery

The party emerges in the dark (odd, given that it was light out when they left the Werewolf's lair). They find themselves in front of a gated cemetery with a fast running river behind them. The gates will creak loudly when the party opens them, regardless of their attempts to be stealthy (you can let them roll, but they should fail the roll, regardless).

It is the dead of night.

If the party casts **Detect Undead**, they will see faint glowing that suggests there are three undead. They will not, however, be detected until the party has walked at least 15' into the cemetery.

At 15', they notice a boulder that is serving as a tombstone. There is a portrait of a man chiseled into the stone, and it notes that it is the final resting place of Chief Xanus. On a faded wood placard, it notes that Chief Xanus died late one night swimming the river after spending time at the Tavern. The party might rightly assume it's the river behind them.

As the party steps farther back, a human shape rises from one of the farthest tombstones, and as it does, it quickly attempts to change into the shape of a wolf (**M4**). It never seems to fully accomplish the change, shimmering between partial wolf and human attributes. The change is intended purely to disturb the party and has no outcome on the exchange.

Almost in concert, two **zombies** leap out from behind the farthest tombstones in the back of the cemetery. They were clearly human but are nearly ogre-ish in size.

As the battle ensues, the party will cut off rotting flesh from the zombies, sending spiders and other insects scurrying out from under the dead skin.

While the party might inspect all three creatures, it is the werewolf's stomach that is protecting an **amethyst**. They might conclude, incorrectly, that they are about 3/7 of the way through the goal that Vathris has set for them. As GM, you might

accelerate time, depending on how your party is performing.

On the way out, the party members should roll a perception check (DC 12), and are likely to note that there's an odd, smaller stone embedded in the back of the boulder. The boulder is trapped, and whoever opens it should do a constitution save (DC 14) or take 1D4 poison damage. Upon pulling out the smaller stone, the party will find the treasure noted below.

The small cavity also includes a note threatening the party to cease their quest or face death as they cross the next portal. It also identifies Vathris as "Lord Vathris" and is signed "Lord and Lady X". The party does not have any prior knowledge of Lord and Lady X.

Beneath the signature is a roughly sketched beast, which the party may believe is likely their next challenge. It is a squat, lizard/dragon-like creature, with large ivory horns and spikes running the length of its body.

Party Adjustment

AC: Increase to 16 or 17 (M4)

Increase or decrease the number of zombies

Treasure

19 cp per party member

3 Gems (10 gp, each), total

2 Potions of Healing

Zombies (2): **AC:** 8; **HP:** 85 (9d10+36); **Spd:** 30'; **Melee:** +6 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 13 (2d8+4), bludgeoning; **Immune:** poison; **Str** +4, **Dex** -2, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -3; **Senses:** darkvision 60'; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 2, **XP:** 450.

If damage reduces zombie to 0 HP, constitution save of +5 the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On success, zombie drops to 1 HP instead.

A4. Portal Four – Rhinelandia

Part One

The party must leave Dartford Cemetery to find the next portal; it's adjacent to the cemetery and relatively easy to find. The area around the cemetery is lightly wooded, so the stone portal (which looks like the others) will be apparent to the party.

The party will, however, be met with strange resistance when they try to step through this portal

Momentarily, an old man steps out of the portal, introducing himself as Everard. He says that he was sent by Vathris. He tells the party that Vathris's challenge is a bit more complicated than he first let on.

The party will also need to find a necklace that will bind the seven gemstones together. As good fortune has it for the party, the necklace is in one of the mausoleums in the cemetery. He offers his help in the shape of a crystal that will automatically bind to two characters in the party. Held by both, they may summon Everard for help at any time. If anything happens to the two selected characters, he warns, the crystal will not work.

Apologetic and claiming other obligations, Everard warns the party that time is elapsing faster than they perceive: instead of two days, they have expended more than four days (**GM Note:** adjust as necessary). He quickly slips back through the portal.

The party will have to return to Dartford cemetery to find the necklace. **If the party does not return and find the necklace, the adventure ends.**

The party will quickly identify two mausoleums in the Dartford Cemetery, as there are only two. The closest is smaller than the second. If the party starts with the closest, they'll note that it belonged to a family named "Vance." Inside, the party will see three coffins inside the crypt. Protected from the ravages of time and weather they are in remarkably good condition, though covered with centuries of dust and dirt. The party will need to defeat two

Zombies and a **Wight**. Each creature will reveal itself from separate coffins.

Zombies (2): AC: 8; HP: 22 (3d8+9); Spd: 20'; **Melee:** +3 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 4 1d6+1), bludgeoning; **Immune:** poison; **Str** +1, **Dex** -2, **Con** +3, **Int** -4, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -3; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 8; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 1/4, **XP:** 50.

If damage reduces zombie to 0 HP, constitution save of +5 the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On success, zombie drops to 1 HP instead.

Wight (1): AC: 14; HP: 45 (6d8+18); Spd: 30'; **Melee:** +4 to hit (Longsword 6 (1d8+2)) or +4 to hit (Longbow 6 (1d8+2)), reach 5', **Hit:** 13 (2d8+4), bludgeoning; **Immune:** necrotic, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons; **Str** +4, **Dex** -2, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -3; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 13; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 3, **XP:** 700.

If damage reduces zombie to 0 HP, constitution save of +5 the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On success, zombie drops to 1 HP instead.

Multiattack: may make two longsword or two longbow attacks; may use Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain: +4 to hit, reach 5' Hit: 5 (1d6+2) necrotic damage. Target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution.

The family's treasure resides in a chest and includes a **large diamond (500 gp**, and helpful if a character dies later), a **robe of useful things**, and a **scroll**. The scroll is not magical, but it bears a message that says there was a rift between the Vance family and the Vathris family. There is, however, no necklace.

If the party assumes, incorrectly, that the diamond is one of the gems they are searching for, make a note that if they later attempt to put it into the necklace that magically the necklace resists any attempts to

place it into any of the slots. The party may make the attempt once but will note that the diamond quickly becomes extremely hot. For all future attempts, the character making the attempt will take 1d4 heat damage.

The second crypt, under the name “Vathris,” felt wrong from the minute the party entered it. Oddly, there is only one aboveground coffin though there is more than enough space for six or more of them. The lid is open; however, the coffin is empty.

In a far corner of the crypt the party will notice a spiral staircase leading down below the floor of the crypt.

The party finds themselves in a small dungeon (play this Theatre of the Mind, or create a small, random dungeon with a handful of rooms, approximately 4-6). The first experience of significance is when the party finds themselves in a small room with two levers located horizontally across from each other. Above them is the word “simul.” It’s chiseled into the dungeon wall.

If the party pulls the levers together, a section of wall will open to reveal a small crate. The crate contains a necklace with seven small slots for gems. The party will note that the three gems they’ve collected appear to fit into slots of corresponding shape.

Whether the party inserts the gemstones at this point or not will have no impact on gameplay. However, the party will also note that there is a gem slot in the middle of the necklace that is approximately four times larger than the other slots. It is unclear if Vathris has misled them, and that they need an eighth gemstone.

If the party fails to pull the levers at the same time, the ceiling will quietly and swiftly descend. As GM, you’ll need to decide if this results in the death of the party or if another outcome is appropriate. However, the necklace is essential to the completion of the adventure and the party will not be successful without it.

If the party does not find the necklace, it is at the discretion of the GM to determine if it might appear

in another location later in the adventure (one option might be for the necklace to be in the Hodag’s cave, for example).

When the party approaches the portal to leave the cemetery, they are surprised to see that Everard is back, leaning against the side of the portal.

Everard insists that he take the necklace for safekeeping on behalf of Vathris. The party may continue with the adventure if they agree, but the only way to complete the campaign will be to confront Vathris later in the adventure to regain possession of the necklace.

However, if the party is suspicious and refuses, Everard is incensed and increasingly aggressive with the party. When he finally leaves through the portal, he threatens that the party is making a huge mistake (a deception role of DC 12 or better indicates that Everard is clearly lying, and that he is a bad liar at that).

After the brief encounter with Everard, the party will enter the portal with no resistance.

Part Two

The party has the same experience with the portal this time as they have in the past. Things go temporarily dark, and the party then find themselves on a road that takes them along a large, swiftly running river. Before long, they come upon the Dirty Oar Inn.

The party arrives at the Dirty Oar Inn at, judging by the setting sun, is the end of the day. The Inn itself is made of wood, that has weathered poorly as the nearby river has contributed to layers of moss growing on slowly rotting wood siding and roof. There is a long porch that is empty save for a couple of small wooden tables and chairs. During the warmer months, it looks like an inviting place to sit, sip an ale and watch the river go slowly by.

The lights in the window glow a soft yellow and give the Inn an inviting feel to the (probably) weary adventurers.

Should the party decide to drop into the Inn, they will be greeted by the proprietress, a middle-aged woman named Della. Della will certainly note that the party is not from the area and will enquire into their travels.

She offers cold mugs of ale and a tasty squirrel stew, prepared in an ale, peppercorn, and garlic gravy. Crusty bread, baked that morning in Della's wood-fired oven, ensures the party has a hearty meal.

As the group relaxes with the last of their ale, Della warns the party about a large, lizard-like beast (**M5**) that attacks and kills travelers that are on the road between the inn and the nearest village of Rhinelandia. She warns them that the creature is particularly active after the sun goes down.

If pressed, Della will tell the party that the locals have named the creature the Hodag, and that it is rumored to not just be any lizard, but to have large spear-like horns, and a ridge of razor sharp spikes running the length of its back. She will note, however, that very few have gotten quick glimpses of the Hodag, but none have ever survived a direct attack from the monster.

Della will strongly urge the party to spend the night at the Inn. This may be an interesting decision for the party to make as Della has intended they are more likely to encounter it after dark. If the party waits until daylight, they start out well-rested but with reduced odds of spotting the Hodag, unless they elect to wait another full day at the Inn.

As GM, this is a decision-point where you have some influence over the difficulty of the encounter. If the party is doing well, even if they're not fully rested, you might use the conversation with Della to hint that the party pursue the Hodag quickly. Reminding the party that time continues to slip away from them might encourage that course of action.

On the other hand, if the party is struggling a combination of Della's persuasive skills (and perhaps free rooms for the night) and giving the players the sense that they have been progressing quickly enough that they can afford to spend the night at the Inn,

ensuring that when they encounter the Hodag, they do so at full strength.

When the party is ready to set out, they should travel south toward Rhinelandia. They will note a cedar bog on the east side of the road (the road is barely more than a trail; the party should be aware they need to travel single-file) and a shallow, gloomy lake on the west side.

The group is reminded that at some point while at the Inn, Della told the group that this shallow, gloomy lake is a very wide, shallow bend in the Ouisconsin River. Because the Hodag is primarily seen in and around the river, the locals largely avoid it: they tend to fish, trap and hunt miles to both the north and south instead. Not only would eliminating the Hodag make it safe to travel the road to Rhinelandia again, but the villagers could resume their hunting and fishing activities closer to home.

Depending upon the amount of time the party takes to explore the river (and before the Hodag makes an appearance), the party may notice small schools of fish that briefly swarm together into larger schools, before dissipating back into smaller schools. It appears that they are hunting for smaller prey.

The Hodag (**M5**) will burst from the lake and have advantage on its first attack. This is a fast and furious creature that should be played aggressively. If it kills a party member, its preference will be to drag that party member into the lake, to store the body in an underwater cave.

The Hodag can fly at 80' per round. After it drags a victim to its cave (two turns), it will come flying back out of the water very quickly at the party.

If the party succeeds in dropping the Hodag's hit points to 30 or lower, it will attempt to flee to its underwater cave.

If the party defeats the Hodag, they will find a **pearl** that also appears to fit in the necklace. They may place it if they choose. Like the other gems, it will be found in the stomach of the Hodag.

If the party searches for the Hodag's cave, the submerged cave is relatively easy to find. They will need water breathing to enter the cave, as it extends far beneath the shallow lake, and is completely submerged with water.

There is no natural light entering the cave so members of the party will also need the ability to see in the dark. The cave is rather large, and those entering will note that the floor of the cave is littered with the remains of dozens of humanoids—presumably travelers the Hodag attacked and dragged to its lair. Upon closer examination, the party will note that the Hodag was eating its victims, leaving behind nothing more than bones.

If any members of the party were dragged to the cave, the remaining party members will recognize that they need to be returned to the surface quickly or they will drown and be increasingly difficult to resurrect.

The treasure found in the cave is described at the end of this section.

If the party chooses to continue to Rhinelandia, there is a church with a cleric, Daron Torren, who can raise the dead. The cleric will require the diamond (or an equivalent gem worth 500 gp) from earlier in the adventure to perform this task. He will also ask for an additional donation to help with church repairs. The GM should use his or her discretion, but amounts might reasonably range from 50-250 gp.

Rhinelandia includes a small bar and a separate inn where they might choose to take a short or a long rest. Prices in Rhinelandia are on par with the **Player's Handbook**.

With presumably three more gems to acquire, the GM might encourage the party to take time over dinner in the Inn where you might encourage them to talk about their experiences in the adventure to date:

- What is the mysterious large slot in the middle of the necklace?
- Who exactly is Everard and why is he so obsessed with holding onto the necklace?

- Is Vathris who he says he is?
- If the party did decide to surrender their gems, how and to whom would they surrender them?
- Does squirrel really taste like rabbit, or do they both just taste like chicken?

While dining at the Inn, the party will overhear a couple of locals talking about a strange house at the end of town. They report that sometime in the last couple of weeks that the door of the house seemed to magically get transformed into a stone archway. Their description of the archway makes it sound like it is the next portal. It is evident from their discussion that the local villagers are suspicious of the portal and have largely kept their distance from it.

As suspected, the next portal is the front door of the house in Rhinelandia that everyone avoids.

Party Adjustment

Possible options, if the party isn't strong enough to fight a fair battle with the Hodag:

- Reduce **AC** to 16
- Reduce **HP** to 100

On the other hand, if the party finds the battle too easy, the GM might introduce a small swarm of **Quippers**.

Quippers (6-8): AC: 13; **HP:** 1 (1d4-1); **Spd:** 40'; **Melee:** +5 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 1, piercing; **Str** -4, **Dex** +3, **Con** -1, **Int** -5, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -4; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 8; **AL:** unaligned; **CR** 0, **XP:** 10. Blood frenzy: advantage on any creature that doesn't have all of its hit points.

Treasure

Scattered about the submerged cave are:

- **300 cp**
- **30 pp**
- **4 gems (25 gp each)**

There is also a waterproof scroll canister. It contains another note from Lord and Lady X:

Our beloved pet, Pepie, awaits you in the deep, murky waters of Lake Pepin. Abandon this folly, surrender your gems, and you will live. Lord Vathris is not as he seems. - Lord and Lady X

A5. Portal Five – The Ridgeway Ghost Heist

GM Note: This is a bit of a side adventure. The Ridgeway Ghost is a prankster and should be played as such more than anything else.

The ghost's goal is to steal something of value from the party. It doesn't know about the party's quest.

One of the engaging aspects of this campaign is to keep the party second-guessing about motivations, how time is elapsing, the actual motivation and drive behind the campaign.

In this adventure, however, the party may gain a combination of healing potions and/or weapons that may be of significant use at the end of the campaign.

It's of little surprise that the portal the party exits from is eerily like the others. However, unlike some of the other places the party has encountered, there is a rotting wooden sign that identifies a road leading north as "Main Street". Typically, the party has had to do their best to infer their location.

There is no town nor lights immediately in sight—that might reasonably strike the party as being unusual. The best the party can tell, it is the absolute dead-of-night, somewhere after midnight, but well before sunrise. The sky is pitch-black; there's not a hint of moon nor stars. It isn't, however, cloudy: this is an un-natural darkness.

If the party chooses to delay and/or take any kind of rest, they will awaken feeling less well-rested, with each member of the party temporarily losing 1 HP.

There is little else for the party to encounter or do, other than to proceed north on Main Street.

After about an hour of walking, the party will encounter a sign to a road that leads south after a dogleg. The sign reads "South Street." There is nothing on South Street, as it leads back, in a u-shape, to Main Street, alongside a church.

The church's doors are open, and the party will encounter a small vestibule leading into an equally small area of worship. There are a handful of pews to

seat, at most, a few dozen worshipers, an altar, and a lectern.

The party will easily hear snoring coming from a front pew. The snoring is coming from Father Raphael Nihilis. The priest is easily awoken, but cranky, given the hour. The party can do a charisma check (DC 12 +0) to persuade him to help them.

GM Note: If any of the NPCs or monsters are asked about Lake Pepin, they will merely shrug their shoulders and tell the characters that they know nothing about a Lake Pepin. If characters check to see if they are being told the truth, they can be confident that the individuals they are interrogating at least believe they are telling the truth.

This is another opportunity to sow confusion with the party: they will reach Lake Pepin in the next adventure, **A6**.

The adventurers will easily recognize that Father Nihilis's slurred speech and (probably) blurred vision is the result of a combination of both lack of sleep and sacramental wine.

Father Nihilis will offer help in two forms: potions and weapons. He can provide the following (he is extremely unapologetic for his prices, claiming he has a church to maintain and very few funds with which to do so). Father Nihilis seems to be put-off by the party's rude awakening of him. If pressed too hard, he will rescind even this exorbitant offer:

- **Nihilis Potion of Healing** **100 gp***
- **Nihilis Potion of Greater Healing** **500 gp***

* What the adventurers won't realize is that both potions are in fact double-strength. Father Nihilis remembered to charge for them appropriately, but not to share their strength with the party. The party should record these potions with the prefix of "Nihilis" so that the GM can properly account for their healing power (the GM might elect to roll the healing amount, and then tell the player that the potions seemed to have far greater effect than which they are accustomed).

If treated with reasonable respect, Father Nihilis will ask if you are adventurers. If you confirm, he will offer the party a sword. If the party declines to answer, he will sigh heavily and talk of a sword that he has, that would free Ridgeway of a ghost: one that has been haunting the little hamlet for the last couple of months.

The sword is a **Sword of Life Stealing**. He will offer it to the party and ask them to rid Ridgeway of the ghost; however, what Father Nihilis does not know is that the sword will not work against the Ridgeway Ghost, because it is undead.

The GM should be careful to only describe the sword as a magic relic that Father Nihilis has been preparing. There should be no hints or indications that the sword is not going to work in this case. Case in point: it may serve very well in the final fight at the end of the campaign with Lord Vathris.

Father Nihilis will tell the party, that there have been confusing reports of encounters with dogs, sheep, pigs, and in some cases, headless horsemen, and horsewomen wandering the Main Street of Ridgeway late at night. These encounters often end up with the victim reporting that in some odd fashion they have had a valuable item stolen or been tricked into seeing things that couldn't possible have happened.

More ominously: some members of Ridgeway have been reported to have left the local Inn after a night out, never to have been seen or heard from again.

He is absolutely convinced that the **Sword of Life Stealing**, in the right hands, will rid Ridgeway of this ghost. If the party even remotely questions Father Nihilis' faith in the sword, they will have no doubt that he has absolute confidence in his work, and in the ability of the party to rid the Village of the ghost.

The **General Store** will open in the morning. It will have any item considered common at a 10% premium. The party may sell anything at a 10% deduction.

If the party proceeds to **Jarvis's Bar**, the lights will be on. Upon entering, Jarvis is at the bar, and there is another lone figure sitting at the corner of the bar.

Jarvis will engage in conversation and sell just about any item for 1 or 2 cp. Jarvis will tell the party that his specialty is a spiced duck egg wrapped in breaded elk sausage, served with hard cider.

If the party chooses to engage with the figure at the end of the bar, one character may make a charisma save (DC 15+2) to determine if the character should be trusted or not.

If the figure is not trusted, he will attack in the bar, and it will be apparent he is the Ridgeway Ghost.

Otherwise, the figure will introduce himself as Gunter Eghan. He will tell the party that he has been quietly observing the Ridgeway Ghost but is concerned that he does not have the power to defeat the Ghost singlehandedly. Likely, Father Nihilis' sword will be visible, and Gunter will comment on the sword, observing "So you managed to persuade Father Nihilis "that you can defeat the ghost?" The Ghost will be well-aware that the sword will hold no sway over it.

Gunter, however, will persuade the group that the sword is powerfully magic and that he can lead them to the Ghost which was last seen wandering an open field on South Street.

Gunter's primary goal, however, is just to steal an item from the group and quickly disappear. It is likely that Gunter realizes that he is outgunned and outnumbered. South Street provides a secluded place for it to carry out its theft without any onlookers.

Stolen Items

01-03	Ruby, Quest Item
03-05	Emerald, Quest Item
06-10	Diamond, Quest Item
11-14	Up to 100 gp Gem
15-20	Up to 500 gp Gem
21-40	Magic Item (GM Choice)
41-50	Failed
51-60	Up to 100 sp in Value
61-75	Up to 200 sp in Value
76-100	Failed

The Ridgeway Ghost will escape, but the party can easily follow the Ghost to South Street. Especially if a gem for the quest has been stolen, the party should be given an opportunity to destroy the Ghost to regain the item. For other items: GM's discretion if the ghost just disappears.

If the party does directly attack and defeat the Ghost, they will find a **Necklace of Prayer Beads**. It is contained in a leather sack that somehow allowed the Ghost to carry the Necklace without any ill-effect.

There is nothing else for the party to do, other than to move north to the next portal.

Party Adjustment

If the Ghost of Ridgeway encounter prevents the party from completing the rest of the campaign, the GM may, at her or his discretion, make the Ghost more vulnerable (in terms of AC and HP) and easier to catch.

Remind the party that they may attempt summoning Everard for assistance.

Treasure

Necklace of Prayer Beads

If the encounter with the Ghost of Ridgeway must be adjusted to make it easier, the Ghost should not have any treasure.

A6. Portal Six – Lake Pepin

Part One: Lake Wazee

The presumption is that the party chooses to continue their quest (if they don't, they can summon Everard, surrender their gems, and the adventure ends unceremoniously). This is worth mentioning only in that the adventurers just passed through a series of portals where they discovered no additional gems. As GM, you may choose to emphasize this lack of success. The goal is to continue to undermine morale and cause the group to question their efforts.

However, as the party continues, the portal to the Lake Pepin area is identical to the others, and the party transports to the edge of a lake without incident.

Upon transport, they find themselves at the edge of what appears to be a remarkably clear and deep lake. There is something odd about the lake: it looks like humanoids may have created it. However, the raw power required to create such an amazing body of water would suggest that magic had to be involved.

Do not prompt the party any further; however, observant players should recognize that the description of this lake does not match the description provided to them by Lord and Lady X.

GM Note: This is an opportunity, as a GM, where saying less is more: allow the party to debate the situation in which they find themselves.

Was the description offered to them just inaccurate?

Are they in the wrong place?

What might the party do to try and come up with an appropriate next course of action?

There is a path leading to the south.

This location is a diversion, as this is Lake Wazee, and not Lake Pepin. The lake is dangerously deep at well over 300'. If the party decides to explore it, they will find adventure. The GM can allow a DC 15 perception roll if anyone in the party perceives that

something seems wrong about this setting: the letter referenced deep and murky water. This is deep but certainly not murky. Lord and Lady X could have lied (DC 17), but this particular lake doesn't have the right feel to it.

The water is extremely cold, and it will limit the party to 15' per turn of movement. Exhaustion will set in after six turns (90' if they drop straight down) and increase by 1 every additional six turns.

At 60', the party will be attacked by a swarm of Cave Fishers, spider-like creatures that were surprised as they were out hunting. The party looks like tasty prey to them. Initially, there is one Cave Fisher for every member of the party.

Cave Fishers (1 per party member): AC: 16; HP: 58 (9d8+18); Spd: 20'; Melee: +5 to hit, reach 5', Hit: 10 (2d6+3), slashing; Str +3, Dex +1, Con +2, Int -4, Wis, +0, Cha -4; Senses: blindsight 60', passive perception 12; AL: unaligned; CR 3, XP: 700.

Adhesive Filament: can extend a sticky filament up to 60' to grapple (escape DC 13) or grappled.

At the end of round one, a DC 12 perception roll will allow characters to see that an enormous sturgeon, (weighing more than 140 pounds) has cruised in (see Appendix). With the fish are more Cave Fishers, 1 for every member of the party: for a grand total of 2 Cave Fishers for every member of the party.

Although the party won't notice, the presence of the sturgeon means that the Cave Fishers are much more strategic about their attacks than might be expected and can grant them **pack attack**.

Party Adjustment

None: The party needs to quickly recognize that this is an unwinnable situation, and that they need to flee. If the party doesn't, Cave Fishers should just continue to arrive.

Treasure

None

Part Two: Lake Pepin

If the party continues along the path to the south, they will notice a branch of the path headed east. If they head in that direction for a short distance, they will find what they fully expect is the portal to leave this area. If the party leaves before finding the gem in this area, as GM you will need to decide if the adventure ends, or if there is a way that you might direct them back to Lake Pepin.

If, however, the party continues along, they will come to Pepin, a very small village. There are no inns, taverns, or other businesses, other than those centered on the water. The dock mostly allows villagers to moor their fishing boats. However, there is a small boat rental business that is run by an old grizzled man named Desilav.

Desilav is a quiet, elderly man, and the party will quickly recognize that he has spent many years on the water, as evidenced by his dried, cracked hands, weathered face, and wispy hair. They will note that two of his fingers on his left hand are missing joints—perhaps the result of a fishing mishap. If asked Desilav will merely look away and wait for the topic of conversation to change.

If they engage in small talk with him, he will eventually tell the party that the local villages along the river (Pepin, Lake Port, and Lake City) are all concerned about a lake monster. The “lake” reference is to a dark, murky yet fast-moving body of water. By local parlance, the party learns that the wide, deep part of the river is referred to as “Lake Pepin.”

Lately, the monster has been taking more lives than the river, the fish are largely gone and the villagers fear for their livelihood—even if they might be limited in their ability to pay.

It should be obvious to the party that Desilav is talking about Lord and Lady X’s Pepie. If, however, the party asks Desilav about his knowledge of Lord and Lady X, he will tell them that he knows nothing of them. If anyone in the party checks to see if Desilav is telling the truth, the GM may have them roll; however, he is telling the truth.

Regardless, if someone were to free the villages of the monster, Pepin would be forever grateful.

Desilav offers the party a couple of options if they agree to eliminate the threat of Pepie, the second with some hesitation:

1. He’ll offer the free use of a small skiff:
The equivalent of a keel boat (1 mph, 6 people, AC 15, HP 100);
2. or for a deposit of **500 gp** (refundable, if the boat is returned undamaged) a slightly weathered sailboat:
Similar to a sailing ship (2 mph, 20 people, AC 15, HP 250)

GM Note: Likely, one of the challenges for the party in this part of the adventure will be lack of player experience with water-born adventures. Pepie will furiously go after the skiff and attempt to toss the players in the water. If the party chooses the sailboat, Pepie is more likely to try to pull characters off the sailboat (either a DC STR or DEX save of 18). If he succeeds, Pepie will attack every player in the water with advantage for the remainder of the encounter.

If the party negotiates, they are told (with some disdain) that there are other boat rental options in Lake Port and Lake City. They are less expensive, but not as “river-worthy”. Based on the statistics above, the GM should adjust both price and cost accordingly. The party could fairly easily travel to Lake Port without incident.

Lake City proves to be a more significant challenge considering they would have to somehow cross the river. It’s reasonable that Pepie would not attack; however, expect a sturgeon attack (see appendix for statistics) to the tune of ½ sturgeon for every member of the party (round down).

If the party continues to talk with Desilav, he will tell you that Pepie roams the river and could be as far north as Lake Pepin or SSW of Pepin. Lately, most of

the activity associated with Pepie has been to the south (a trip to the north will be uneventful and will only waste the party's time: assume half a day, depending on the 7-day clock that continues to tick).

Once the party proceeds on the river to the south, they have a 30% chance of an encounter every hour, again depending on the play clock. The party recognizes that the river is made up of various channels created by islands, making it appear relatively easy to lose one's way. See below for how the party might take advantage of those islands.

Once encountered, Pepie will strike fast (40' per turn) with a combination of swimming and flying, as it erupts from the river. Pepie will take his initial two attacks by slamming into the party's boat. The party will then roll initiative. If, however, Pepie hits the boat once, everyone needs to make a DC STR or DEX save of 12, or they will be tossed overboard. A second hit will require a DC STR or DEX save of 16, or they will be tossed overboard.

For every party member that has been tossed overboard, they will need to make a DEX or ACROBATICS save before every turn, or attack at disadvantage. After 6 rounds in the water, every attack will be at disadvantage.

If the party defeats Pepie, the monster will wash up on a nearby island (NOTE: you can also allow the party to make it to the island if you choose. If so, Pepie will continue to attack, but the party is no longer at disadvantage).

Assuming the party returns the boat to Desilav, he expresses his village's eternal gratitude to you. "You'll always have a place to stay in Pepin, and all the fish and ale you want" he will tell the party.

Suddenly, Desilav's eyes glaze over, and he mysteriously sounds more like Everard, telling you:

"Your adventure ends now, my friends. Give me the necklace and the gems. While you have defeated Pepie, you cannot defeat your final foe, lurking in the depths of Lake Winnebago. If you think Pepie was a challenge, he is merely a toy. Give up now, because you know not what you fight. Lord and Lady X will

see that you surely end in death and the necklace will be theirs. Lord Vathris cannot allow this to pass.

If they haven't found the portal on the southern shores of Lake Wazee, Desilav can tell the party about it. Otherwise, they may lose half a day or more looking for it. (Note: As GM, you can continue to press the party to urgent action if you choose).

Party Adjustment

If the party appears to dispatch with Pepie too quickly, add an additional 2-4 sturgeon to the battle (see Appendix).

On the other hand, if the encounter seems too aggressive, adjust Pepie's attributes to some combination of:

16 AC and/or 125 HP

Treasure

Pepie's stomach contains:

- Multiple pieces of **coral**, most of which are worthless, but **one** that fits the necklace
- Dozens of small hooks
- A human thumb
- A **rope of entanglement** (Command Word: Pepie)

A7. Portal Seven – Lake Winnebago

As with the prior handful of portals, both the entry and exit portals are eerily like the others. This time, the party teleports without incident, other than for a brief flash of darkness.

Daylight has not changed, but the season has turned from summer to winter. The party faces a large lake that they can't see across. They're on the outskirts of a town that they'll quickly learn is called "Harbor Town." The lake appears to be frozen solid, an interesting challenge if there's a creature in the deep holding the last of the gems.

Harbor Town is a quiet, sleepy place, but an establishment called the Golden Tankard looks like a good place for a meal and a short rest. The proprietor and proprietress, Andus and Lizbeth, suggest clam chowder and smoked sturgeon, along with a pint of stout mead that is spiced with cloves, perhaps fortified with a shot of rum (5 cp each). If the party shares that they're looking for a monster in the lake, Andus will quietly and quickly excuse himself to the kitchen. The party will immediately sense that he is uncomfortable with that kind of conversation.

With fortitude, however, Lizbeth will tell the adventurers, that there is legend of a beast that lurks in the deepest part of the lake (which isn't that deep: no more than 20' she will tell the party, if pressed).

The party should express concern that the lake is frozen, as well as uncertainty over how they'll capture and kill the creature. Lizbeth will tell the party, that the lake is fed by underground springs, and the center of the lake doesn't freeze over, regardless of the weather. There is significant danger, however, in that many local fishermen have lost their lives in getting closer to open water in the hopes of catching more and larger fish.

She'll let the party use a skiff with skis to travel to the center of the lake. It uses a combination of sails and skis to traverse the ice before hitting open water. The skiff is equipped with two harpoons that are designed, with a complicated series of winches, pulleys and levers that only a dwarven engineer could

have designed, to pull the skiff safely back out of the frigid water.

Lizbeth will ask for a refundable deposit of 500 gp. She'll also warn the party, that they're not to try to engage the beast from the skiff, or it will surely be destroyed. She feels, though, that with the right "bait," the monster might rise from the open water.

If pressed, there are rental places in Stockbridge, Pipe, and Van Dyne, but the party would likely have to travel across treacherous ice to rent from other places. Each little town will rent a skiff for 150 GP, but the chance that they'll fail is 30%/round (requiring approximately 6 rounds to get to open water). Although the party will not be aware of the specifics, they should sense that Lizbeth is expressing extreme caution about the party exercising those other options.

If asked, or if they figure it out, there's not much for bait in Harbor Town that would attract a creature this size. They could buy fresh bait or chum for a couple of gold pieces. Its odds of working: 10%/round, which might be challenging, especially if the group is short on time.

If pressed, Lizbeth will tell the party, that the monster likes larger bait. She knows of an unclaimed cadaver, that they might be able to sneak out (party's alignment might be checked here) from a local church. She thinks it's a little more likely to work: 20%/round, again challenging, depending on the group's sense of time.

She tells them that something alive, larger, and bleeding and thrashing would work best. She tells them that there's a mongrel dog they might capture to do the trick: 30%/round. The party has a 50%/total chance of capturing the dog, before using it as bait.

If pressed any further, Lizbeth goes a bit pale, and whispers to the party, "One of you brave, brave souls could cut yourself, jump into the lake, and flail about." If the party attempts this kind of trick, it's up to the GM to decide on a range of 40%/50% per round.

The party might also take the risk of creating an illusion to accomplish similar goals. This is risky but gets the party on the water much more quickly. Odds of success are roughly 30% per round.

The **Lake Winnebago Monster (M7)** is enormous, even compared to Pepie. The monster is further terrifying given its evident intelligence. The GM will need to adapt the battle based upon how the party decided to attract the monster to their skiff. However, the single-minded target of attack will be the skiff as the monster desires to get the entire party into the water.

If the Lake Monster hits the boat once, everyone needs to make a DC STR or DEX save of 16, or they will be tossed overboard. A second hit will require a DC STR or DEX save of 18, or they will be tossed overboard.

Once in the water, the Lake Monster will attack advantage for the remainder of the battle; the party will attack at disadvantage. Unless any party has magical protection, they will lose 2 HP every turn, with no save, due to hypothermia.

Provided the party succeeds, and the skiff remains intact, make sure the party returns the skiff, or they forfeit their deposit. Lizbeth will inspect the skiff carefully and deduct 5% of the deposit for every HP of damage the skiff may incur.

Skiff:

Like a sailing ship (2 MPH, 20 people, AC 15, HP 250)

Party Adjustment

None: this is an incredibly difficult encounter. If the party fails at this point, the GM may allow through some miracle that one or two party members (perhaps a reward for excellent play throughout) manage to escape.

Surviving party members will sing the praises of the brave party and their final encounter with the Monster of Lake Winnebago.

Treasure

Diamond for necklace.

As with other gems, the diamond will be found in the stomach of the monster.

Transition

If the party chooses to enter the gems as they go, or if they wait to complete it at the end, they will notice the necklace does nothing. Regardless of their choice, they recognize they're still missing the center, which is apparently the mysterious gem called "Xanthanite."

There is no new exit portal after the party completes Lake Winnebago. The party shouldn't be expected to spend much time looking for it, but with hints from NPCs, should be subtly directed back to the portal that brought them here, primarily because they are left with no other choices.

Much like **A4 (Rhinelandia)**, they'll encounter the same resistance in trying to enter the portal, and Everard will step out once again. Everard will tell the party, that he is impressed with them, but also has grave concerns in their ability to complete the quest for Vathris.

He hadn't wanted to say anything, given the serious nature of this quest, but there is more for the party to do. The next step is fraught with significant danger. Additionally, Vathris originally wanted to make sure that he could trust the party with such an important task.

Regardless of whether the party has turned over the necklace to Everard, the party may notice that he makes no mention of it. In fact, he will outright ignore the party if they make mention of any of those previous discussions.

Everard will tell the party that Xanthanite is not a corporeal gem, but requires a series of ingredients, that they will discover as they complete a quest fraught with danger. The portals will be subtler, he tells the party. As the adventurers gather the ingredients, they'll be magically transported to the next location. Everard warns the party to be cautious: once they have teleported away from a specific location, there will be no way for them to return.

Similar to the fashion in which Vathris started the quest, Everard tells you he knows nothing about the locations of the ingredients except the first location:

some place called "The Devil's Playground." There the party needs to collect something referred to as the Devil's Tears. Beyond that, Everard isn't sure precisely what that means.

Everard will volunteer a list of the ingredients that the party needs to collect to create the final **Xanthanite** gem for the necklace:

- The Devil's Tears.
- The blueprint of a windmill.
- The horseshoe from a magical horse.
- The painting of a culture more ancient than the wind, quiet like a lake, and unmoving like stone
- The ancient remains of a warrior princess.
- The ice-cold teeth from a sturgeon's breath.

Everard cannot be attacked and will leave in advance of the party. If necessary, Everard will direct them to transport through the portal from which they came, to move on to the Devil's Playground.

The party might make note that Lord and Lady X have been ominously missing lately.

GM Note: Much like the first half of the adventure, this section is designed to allow characters a realistic mechanism for joining and leaving the adventure as they must.

As GM, you can play these situations one of two ways: the preferred way is to assume that everyone's characters know each other, and that at seemingly random times (when a player is unavailable), a character just doesn't show up upon teleportation—suggesting that the portals may not also function exactly as they appear to be designed.

Alternatively, the GM could assume something more sinister, and provide a random chance (e.g. 10%) that even if a player is present, that her or his character may not successfully teleport. If played this way, I would recommend only having a player sit out for one location. In those situations, the GM might elect to have the player assist by role-playing one or more NPCs that are a part of the campaign.

Optional Side Adventures

Most, but not all, of this part of the campaign includes optional side adventures. They're designed to give you, as the GM, ways of extending game play. One reason for doing so might be if you run a session where several players are absent, and you don't want the game play to get too far ahead of the rest of the party.

Depending upon your style as GM, you might also choose to introduce rationale for the side adventures. It might be that a portion of the party gets lost, or that there's a side encounter that splits up the party. Or it may be that the portals continue to function in unpredictable ways—almost as though someone or something is trying to thwart the party's efforts.

Think of these adventures as being run a couple of different ways: if the players are enjoying the campaign, this section provides many opportunities for extending game play. However, given the way that they're written: if the party is eager to conclude the campaign, the GM has a fair amount of flexibility for expediting play as well.

D1. The Devil's Playground

GM Note: The party will teleport to location #1, **Prospect Point**. From the vantage point at the top of a sheer cliff, about 1,000' above a lake and the surrounding landscape, the party can see a deep, dark blue lake, suggesting considerable depth. Directly across the lake, there are also steep cliffs, equally as high as the ones upon which the party stands.

The party has arrived at what is likely the middle of summer. The forest is vibrantly green, and the area is densely forested. The temperature is almost oppressively warm, though the elevation at Prospect Point likely gives the party some reprieve.

On a Folklore save of DC 16, a party member might recall that this is **Tawacunchukdah**, "Spirit" or "Holy" Lake – also known as Devil's Lake. While it lingers in the mind, the spelling is elusive. The party member may choose to share that among his or her people Devil's Lake is a place of great reverence and that during tribal celebrations voices of the dead may be heard echoing from the depths of the lake. It is also noted for many sacred places, though their names are more elusive.

On the same save, the party member recognizes that the goal is to collect a vial full of water from Devil's Lake, but that there's a bit involved in making sure that the water stays volatile and active. Whoever scored highest on the above DC Save will hear voices for the duration of The Devil's Playground that are intended to help the party navigate a complicated and dangerous area.

There is a path that leads to both the north and south. The character hearing the voices suspects the northern most route as the most direct route for them to take if their goal is to descend the cliff to the banks of Devil's Lake.

Prospect Point (1)

Other than the GM note above, there is nothing more of significance about **Prospect Point**.

Elephant Rock (2)

Hiding in the rocks are two **Devil Marauders (M9)**. When searched, one of them has a crystal vial. The bottom is etched with a “666.” The party should roll for surprise.

The character hearing voices has a strong sense that the purpose of the vial is to hold water from Devil’s Lake—the first ingredient required to create the Xanthanite gem and activate Vathris’s necklace.

Devil Marauders (2): AC: 13; **HP:** 93 (22f8+44); **Spd:** 30’; **Melee:** +7 to hit, reach 5’, **Hit:** 7 (1d6+4), slashing*; **Str** +4, **Dex** +1, **Con** +4, **Int** +1, **Wis**, +2, **Cha** +2; **Senses:** 120’ darkvision (magic cannot impede), passive perception 15; **AL:** lawful evil; **CR** 6, **XP:** 2,300.

* Will also take 5 (1d10) necrotic damage or 1/2 with a DC 15 CON save.

Have an advantage on save versus spells

Can cast: darkness, harm, teleport (1x/day)

If either devil marauder is kept alive and pressed for information, they will tell you that they know of Lord Vathris as well as Lord and Lady X. That’s all they’re willing, and able, to share.

They also know that there is something of significance about the vial they possess. They were asked by Lord Vathris to keep it safe, though they don’t know why that might be the case. They were told to take it to **Devil’s Cemetery**, a local cemetery only accessible by traveling through **The Devil’s Doorway**. The GM should note that this is an optional side adventure, not necessary for the completion of this portion of the campaign.

They indicate that you and your party should press on

to the south, to a location called **Balanced Rock**.

Balanced Rock (3)

Assuming the party travels directly to the south to Balanced Rock, they’ll notice a distinctly sharp rise in the trail. The trail requires the party to travel single file. Party members with a **strength below 12** will suffer 1 level of exhaustion (no saving throw).

The canopy is incredibly thick, as this is an old growth forest, primarily elm and oak. It is dark enough that there is little to no underbrush.

At a fork in the path, the party will arrive at Balanced Rock. Balanced Rock is two granite rocks: the first provides a platform for the second, which is balanced on top of it. The rocks are enormous, and immovable. The base of the balanced rock is thick enough that the party suspects it would allow one of them to scale the rock.

Upon closer inspection, the party observes piton marks suggesting that they wouldn’t be the first to climb it these rocks.

As GM, it’s reasonable to hint to the party that they’ve had difficulty orienting themselves in the woods. The party member hearing voices might even share that the voices are concerned they might be getting lost and straying from their task at hand. A view from Balanced Rock (should the party attempt to climb it), which appears to extend at least another 20-30’ above the tree line, will provide a strong hint that they are straying from their goal.

Any character climbing the rock should make three strength or dexterity saving throws (character or GM’s choice). A fail results in a fall, 1d10 times the number of the save (i.e. the higher up, the more damage).

The only task the party may accomplish here is scaling Balanced Rock. If they are successful, the GM should reward them with a picture of the area. In general, describe the area as expansive and incredibly

dense with trees that look nearly as ancient as the rock formations themselves.

If there are trails, the party can't see them. However, you should share the faintly visible general location of the Devil's Doorway (a towering obsidian archway), an open field (Steinke's Basin), and what appears to be a dark swath in the forest, that suggests a vale or glen (Parfrey's Glen).

Because the party caught a glimpse of Devil's Lake at the onset of their arrival at the Devil's Playground, confirm that they can see the same expansive, deep blue lake off to the left. The character hearing voices will try to compel the party to proceed to the lake to capture the Devil's Tears that are the primary point of this portion of the adventure.

Devil's Lake

When the party arrives on the shores of the lake, a storm sweeps in over the hills to the west at an astonishingly fast pace. The rain is torrential, the winds punishing: there is no time to take cover.

If anyone in the party is hearing voices, the voices will further confirm that this is Devil's Lake. The lake is pristinely clear; it is therefore surprising how quickly the water darkens, due to its extreme depths.

The banks of the lake are pristine white sand, devoid of shrubs, grasses, or other vegetation, almost eerily so. The ensuing storm obscures anything more than about 20' out from the shore and in any direction.

If the party chooses to use a separate vessel to collect the Devil's Tears, they can do so, and transfer it to the vial with nothing eventful happening.

However, if they use the vial that they took from the devil marauders, it will serve as a summoning beacon for a **dragon eel**. The voices are not capable of warning the adventurers.

Dragon Eel (1): AC: 18; **HP:** 230 (20d12+100); **Spd:** 60' swim; **Melee:** +12 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 26 (4d8+8), piercing; **Str** +8, **Dex** +1, **Con** +5, **Int** +2,

Wis, +1, **Cha** +2; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 16; **AL:** neutral; **CR** 12, **XP:** 8,400.

The eel can both strike with its tail and bite in the same round (multiattack). Assume same damage.

The storm is significant, because it allows the dragon eel to **storm glide**, effectively being able to fly at swim speed (60').

Even though they have collected the Devil's Tears, the party will not be teleported away from the area until after they have defeated the dragon eel, or it has fled in defeat. Either event will trigger immediate teleportation of the entire party to **Taliesin**.

Optional Side Adventures

Devil's Doorway (4)

The **Devil's Doorway** only serves one purpose, and that is to serve as a portal to the **Devil's Cemetery** (see below). The GM should note that it is not possible to enter the **Devil's Cemetery** by any other means.

Upon entering, this portal appears to the party to be different than the portals they have experienced earlier in the adventure: the intermediate darkness is blacker, the air much colder, and there's a lingering sense for the adventurers that something is not right. The teleport lasts longer, and although there are no lingering effects, the party exits the other side out of breath and relieved to have passed on to the other side.

Steinke Basin (5)

This natural depression is as oppressive as it is desolate: it's extremely hot and humid, and the air is still. For every ten rounds, the players will lose 1 on **to hit** and **saving throws** until they take at least a short rest.

The basin vegetation is primarily dried grasses that are extremely flammable. The grasslands eventually give way to sinkholes and marshy ground that looks difficult to pass through. Any fire-based attacks in

Steinke's Basin have a 50% chance per attack of igniting the dried grasses. Unless protected by magic, any creature in the area will take 1d4 fire damage per turn as long as they remain in the area.

If the party continues through Steinke's Basin (minimum of ten turns), they'll find themselves in a sparsely forested wooded area with a creek that has a sandy bottom. The creek doesn't exceed more than about 2' or 2 ½' of water in depth, and is only wide enough for two players to wade it side-by-side.

If the party searches the bottom, they will see gold flecks in the sand, and in about two hours, they can prospect roughly 50 gp of unrefined gold. While in the wooded area, the party does not suffer the exhaustion experienced that they would in the rest of Steinke Basin. They may also recognize that they can take a short rest here to regain some of the exhaustion caused earlier.

While the party is in the basin, there is a 20% chance per round that they will encounter a pack of up to 8 **wolves**.

Wolves (8): AC: 13; **HP:** 11 (2d8+2); **Spd:** 40'; **Melee:** +4 to hit (2d4+2) reach 5', **Str** +1, **Dex** +2, **Con** +1, **Int** -4, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -2; **Senses:** passive perception 13; **AL:** unaligned; **CR** 1/4, **XP:** 50. Pact tactics.

Alternatively, the wolves may also be led by a worg:

Worg (1): AC: 13; **HP:** 26 (4d10+4); **Spd:** 50'; **Melee:** +5 to hit (2d6+3) reach 5', **Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +1, **Int** -2, **Wis**, +0, **Cha** -1; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 14; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 1/2, **XP:** 100. Pact tactics.

Parfrey's Glen (6)

The party finds themselves at a trailhead surrounded by sheer cliffs that are heavily forested. The trail will require that the party proceed single file, and it will take roughly 45 minutes to traverse to the end of it. As the party travels, they will notice that the normal sounds of the forest, birds chirping, squirrels in the

branches, become increasingly quiet until even the insects are silent.

At the end of the trail, the party will notice that it is perceptibly cooler, by at least 20 degrees Fahrenheit. They will recover any exhaustion they feel from **Steinke's Basin** even if they don't stop to take a rest.

If the party searches behind the small waterfall, they will notice a small tunnel that may only be entered by crawling, single file. At the end of the tunnel, there is a small cave with room for no more than 3 adventurers. Because of significant twists and turns in the tunnel, there is no light in the cave.

The only feature in the room is a sarcophagus. Although the party will make quick note of silver filigreed decorations and sumptuously dark wood, they will be just as quickly distracted by a pale, female figure lying prone on top of the sarcophagus.

The figure will rise immediately to attack the party. The GM may decide if the party may enter first or may limit them to entering 1 per turn.

Vampire Spawn (1): AC: 15; **HP:** 82 (11d8+33); **Spd:** 30'; **Melee:** +6 to hit (2d4+3) reach 5', **Str** +3, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis**, +0, **Cha** +1; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 13; Immune to: necrotic, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks. **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 5, **XP:** 1,800. Regenerates 10 hp at beginning of each of its turn; multiattack.

If the party opens the sarcophagus and makes a perception check, they may notice that the sarcophagus seems shallower on the inside than they expected. It is not trapped, but a second perception check will be necessary to find a small switch that reveals a false bottom. The sarcophagus contains the following:

- A blood-red ruby inscribed with a pentagram (500 gp, to the right buyer. The party might reasonably realize that there is an aura of evil about the ruby, and they will

need to approach any possible buyers with extreme caution.)

- A skull-shaped ring. The ring is evil, and will bind to the wearer, and reduce their best attribute by -3 until the wearer has remove curse cast upon them at the 4th level.

The Devil's Cemetery (7)

The map betrays the fact that this cemetery is an extra-dimensional space. It can only be reached if the characters find and decide to walk through the **Devil's Doorway**.

The party knows they are in the woods. There is a light rain, and the party suspects it's still roughly the middle of an overcast gloomy day. Vision is limited.

There are no sounds of birds or small creatures.
There is no wind.

The party is not on a trail: they are in the middle of the woods.

The character who was hearing helpful voices reports that the voices haven't gone quiet: it's like they have completely vanished.

The party is close enough, that if they do a nature check (DC 13), they will notice approximately half a dozen tombstones about twenty yards distant. They are in disarray, leaning against trees, toppled over, and some are broken in half. Among the tombstones, there appears to be a child-sized crypt: perhaps a place to store the vial the party has taken from the **Demon Marauders** earlier.

The vegetation in this part of the forest is at least sparse that the party notes that the cemetery is located on the crest of a hill. They will notice that the trees are not as thick here as other places in the **Devil's Playground**. It seems likely that this had been a farm or homestead many years ago, though it's obvious that it has been long abandoned.

In fact, off to the east, the party notices a cottage and thatch-roofed barn that faintly shimmer in and out of

existence, before finally disappearing.

Lurking in the small cemetery are two **Empty Cloaks**. Because the Empty Cloaks serve to watch for intruders, they gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

They are a decoy for a pair of Forest Hunters. The Forest Hunters will wait 1 turn before attacking. They will roll initiative like all other players, but the GM should not disclose them unless there are any party members who cannot be surprised. Otherwise, their first attacks will reveal their locations to the party.

The Forest Hunters are protecting a **Tome of Leadership and Influence**, though they haven't used it, nor are they aware of its powers.

Once the **Tome** has been discovered, or within no more than 6 rounds after the Forest Hunters have been eliminated, the party will either a) teleport to the next segment of the quest (**Taliesin**) or b) teleport to the next side-quest, at the GM's prerogative.

Empty Cloak (2): AC: 13; **HP:** 45 (10d8); **Spd:** 40'; **Melee:** +6 to hit (1d8+4), slashing, reach 5', **Str** +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis**, +0, **Cha** -5; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 10; Immune to: bludgeoning, poison, charm, exhaustion, fright, paralysis, petrification. **AL:** unaligned; **CR** 1/2, **XP:** 100.

Forest Hunter (2): AC: 15; **HP:** 104 (19d8+19); **Spd:** 30'; **Melee:** +7 to hit, 8 hp (1d8+4), piercing reach 5', **Str** +1, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** +3; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 14; Advantage on: sleep, charm, magic. **AL:** lawful evil; **CR** 5, **XP:** 1,800. Can cast misty step.

D2. Taliesin

GM Note: The party arrives at sunrise, facing east. Wrapped around the brow of the hill is what looks like an amazing, shimmering structure that captures the golden sunrise and makes it shine in a fashion that is radiant and otherworldly.

If the party looks around the area, they will see the remains of a windmill, a tower and a handful of small outbuildings. There is nothing in the buildings and do not otherwise factor into the encounters the adventurers will have at Taliesin (otherwise known as “Radiant Brow”).

As the party approaches the main building, they will suspect it is a home and workshop. The windows have glass in them—the cause for the shimmering look.

The party is only a few short steps away from the structure, and they can approach uneventfully.

The primary objective of **Taliesin** is about figuring out the location of the blueprint of the windmill.

However, in this section the party will learn that Taliesin has been taken prisoner by Lord Vathris. This section will also offer hints about the true intentions of Lord Vathris as well as Lord and Lady X.

Entry (1)

Although it’s possible to enter Taliesin through room 4, it works best for the party to enter through the main entrance. If the party knocks, there is no answer. The door is unlocked, and they can enter without event.

Upon entering, however, they note a visage on the entry wall: it’s made of stone, and it represents an elderly man with wild grey hair and weathered skin. Although it does not animate, an elderly human voice clearly emanates from it:

“A second time I was formed
I have been a blue salmon.
I have been a dog;
I have been a stag;
I have been a roebuck on the mountain...
I have been a grain discovered...
A hen received me...
I rested nine nights
In her womb a child...
I have been dead, I have been alive...
I am Taliesin.”

The party may not recognize it, but the poem is a hint for how they will unlock the blueprint of the windmill. Within Taliesin they will need to find four figurines including a:

- 1) Blue salmon,
- 2) Dog,
- 3) Stag and
- 4) Roebuck.

As GM, you might hint to the adventurers that the items they are finding were mentioned in the poem in the entryway to Taliesin, or not. Although the party might passively look for other items mentioned in the poem, they will not find them, nor will they need them. For the figurines the party does need: their use will be obvious before the adventurers spend much additional time searching Taliesin.

Formal Sitting Area (2)

This appears to be a formal greeting area, and it appears seldom-used. There is a sofa and a pair of inviting looking, over-stuffed chairs. The furniture is made of dark mahogany wood. Although there are sconces adorning the walls, they are not lit, adding to the feeling that this space often sits empty.

Although unlikely, if the party chooses to sit on any piece of furniture, they will encounter:

Mimic (1): AC: 12; **HP:** 58 (9d8+18); **Spd:** 15'; **Melee:** +5 to hit (1d8+3) reach 5', **Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +2, **Int** -3, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -1; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 11; **AL:** neutral; **CR** 2 **XP:** 450.

Adhesive to grapple (save: DC 13) or escape at disadvantage.

Main Kitchen (3)

The kitchen is elegant. There are two wood-fired ovens, both adorned with cast iron cook tops. As the party looks around the room, they will observe dark cherry cabinets that likely (upon further inspection) contain cooking utensils, spices and other ingredients. There is nothing, however, of value that they might take.

The ceiling is adorned with cast iron hooks from which hang a variety of copper cooking pots and pans.

The party will notice that there is a small doorway made of a different, unknown type of wood, and set with cast iron hinges. They might presume that it leads to a cold cellar. Other than containing meats, vegetables and other foodstuffs requiring that it be kept cold, there is nothing else of note in the cold cellar.

On the top of one stove is a solitary cast iron pot. If the GM determines that anyone in the party approaches with 5' of the pot, a black pudding will likely surprise them.

Black Pudding (1): AC: 7; **HP:** 85 (10d10+30); **Spd:** 20', climb 30'; **Melee:** +5 to hit (1d6+3) reach 5', **Str** +3, **Dex** -3, **Con** +3, **Int** -5, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -5; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 8; **AL:** unaligned; **CR** 4 **XP:** 1,100.

Corrosive form: 1d8 acid damage; lightening or slashing damage will split into two new puddings with HP equal to half the original HP, rounded down.

Rose Room (4)

Much of the room is adorned in rose hues: the drapes, the bedding, and an area rug. There is also a fireplace with an inlay of a rose adorning it.

There are hints of an inlay-rose around the area rug (DC PERCEPTION 10). If the inlay pieces, eight of them, are all pressed, the rose above the fireplace will slowly inset to reveal a small holding space. The space contains a **silver roebuck**.

There is also a scroll that, if checked, appears to be magic. It is not (minor illusion).

There is nothing else of value in the Rose Room.

Storage (5)

There are basic supplies in this room, if the party is so interested. Otherwise, there is nothing of interest or value in this room. At the GMs discretion each party member should be able to re-provision a couple of days' worth of rations and a bottle of wine.

Cellar Stairs (6)

Provides entry to the cellar. There is nothing of value in the cellar stairs. The stairs are wide and constructed of sturdy wood. As the party descends into the cellar they will need a source of light.

Large Bedroom (7)

The room is dominated by large, heavy-looking mahogany furniture. There is a formal sitting area, a canopy bed, and two dressers. While the party

recognizes and may appreciate the ornate style of this room, there is otherwise nothing of note or value.

Silver Room (8)

This is one of the more ornate rooms of Taliesin. The drapery is silver, with silver inlaid dragons. The chairs, dresser, and bed are mahogany with silver inlay.

The left bedpost has a silver inlay of a **small dog**. This is the second figurine (in design, it matches any other figurines the party has collected), and the party can remove the dog without anything eventful happening.

There is nothing else of value in the Silver Room.

Master Drafting Room (9)

This room is the central focal point of Taliesin; however, it should be described first and foremost as a workspace, though perhaps one of a possessed lunatic.

There are multiple, immense drafting tables, and the walls are lined with bookshelves. However, these are not bookshelves that are meant for pure adornment: these bookshelves are crammed with books, manuscripts, scrolls, notebooks, and drafts of blueprints.

Should the party choose to explore the area in any detail (they will need to expend at least an hour—not a point of significance, unless your goal as GM is to try and move the party along in this part of the campaign), they may find a variety of items that may be useful to them. Using the table below, each item should be rolled for independently of the others, meaning that the party, if they are fortunate, may find multiple useful items. The following describes those items as the tools of an architect, with their powers noted parenthetically for later reference.

- 1) 10% **Case (Bag) of Holding**
- 2) 10% **Inkwell (Potion) of Longevity***
- 3) 25% **Amulet of the Architect (Brooch of Shielding)**
- 4) 30% **Beret (Hat) of Wizardry**
- 5) 40% **Incense (Pot) of Awakening**

* To use: the spell will have to be written using the ink, rather than spoken by the “spell caster”.

There are otherwise no items of value in this room.

Secondary Drafting Room (10)

This drafting room is much smaller than the **Master Drafting Room**; however, the party will observe many of the same drafting tables, bookshelves, and architectural tools.

There is, however, nothing of note in the secondary drafting room.

Storage (11)

There are basic supplies in this room, if the party is interested. They might find items like: a handful of torches, a lamp, oil, a piton, a 50' coil of rope. Otherwise, there is nothing of interest or value in this room.

Journeyman's Quarters (12)

Something is amiss in the journeyman's quarters. Taliesin's assistant will attack with surprise (no save).

Taliesin's Assistant (1): AC: 12; **HP:** 78 (12d8+24); **Spd:** 30'; **Melee:** +3 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 3 (1d6), bludgeoning; **Str** +0, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** +4; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 11; **AL:** Any; **CR** 7, **XP:** 2,900.

Resistant to nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons.

17th level spellcaster (spell save DC15 +7)

Taliesin's assistant is possessed and has been charged with defending the house and workshops with his life. He will not surrender; however, the party may choose to interrogate him, which they may do once the assistant drops below 10 hp.

The assistant is aware that he has been possessed by Vathris and charged with keeping the house and workshops safe. Although not certain, he believes that Vathris's true target was Taliesin himself, and that he may be even be held hostage in his own home.

The assistant is not certain, but he believes that Taliesin was somehow interfering with Vathris's attempts at finding items of value in the workshops. Taliesin's assistant does not know what that item or items might be. The party might reasonably suspect that Vathris was also looking for the four figurines, but they will not get confirmation if that it true or if Vathris was seeking something else at Taliesin.

Storage (13)

This small storage area is cramped, but a thoroughly provisioned room. The party can re-provision with any 2 items from the **Player's Handbook** valued under 2 gp per item. There is otherwise nothing of worth in this storage space.

Gold Room (14)

This is an ornate sitting room containing two regal oak chairs with gold cushions and a table between them. The windows are partly covered by gold drapery with golden stitching that depicts a royal hunt on horseback. The hunters are following hounds, who are pursuing a wounded stag.

Upon closer inspection, the table has a small drawer in it. There is a small, **golden stag** hidden among a variety of wax seals, quills, and scraps of paper. Other than being golden, rather than silver, it matches the other figurines collected by the party so far.

There is nothing else of interest in this room.

Small Bedroom (15)

The small bedroom appears non-descript. There is a twin bed, a small table, and a lantern. The floor is barren and there is a small window with thread-worn curtains.

If the party looks, there is a floorboard under the bed that is ajar (DC perception 14). If it is revealed, it slides easily open and reveals the following:

- **Ring of water breathing**
- **Ring of protection +1**
- **50 gp**

Blue Room (16)

This room contains the **blue salmon**. This is a relatively easy figurine to find, as it's resting on a small table by a bed. There is little else of note in this room.

Note: There is not a map for the basement; it is a relatively open series of three inter-connected rooms.

Pantry (17)

Whether or not the party is short on rations, there is enough food here for the party to restore 1 weeks' worth of rations for each party member.

There is otherwise nothing of interest in the Pantry.

Wine Cellar (18)

The wine cellar consists of four distinctly separate racks for wine. The racks are relatively full. Each wine rack respectively has a top with the impression of (one each, in order) a salmon, dog, stag, and roebuck. They match the figurines that the party has presumably collected at this point.

The figurines need to be put in their recesses in order, from left to right: salmon, dog, stag, and roebuck. This is the only way to find the secret door that will allow the party access to the **Library of Architectural Wonders**.

Library of Architectural Wonders (19)

The Library of Architectural Wonders is overflowing with racks and racks of blueprints, seemingly stuffed in to find room for all of them. Whoever this architect was, they were either prolific in their design, collection, or both. Even without searching, the adventurers suspect the blueprints span decades of work, and that there is little to no method to their organization.

If the party searches, they will discover sheets of vellum (dozens), a book of local history, an account ledger, parchment, ink bottles, candles, quills and other materials one might expect an architect to employ in his work. The party may choose to keep any of those items, though they are of little worth.

Squarely in the center of the room is a large drafting table. **There is one blueprint that dominates: that of a windmill.** The table and blueprint are trapped, but in the traditional sense of the word. If the party searches for traps they will find none.

However, upon picking up the blueprint, the party will feel the air change and go chill. They will notice a figure start to shimmer at the far side of the library, fade, then shimmer again before finally taking shape.

The figure will identify himself as Taliesin, poet and architect. He will tell the party that Lord Vathris has imprisoned him in his own house, and it was the party's ability to figure out the clues associated with the blueprint of the windmill that released him from his prison. He tells you he suspects he has been imprisoned for at least decades.

If pressed (CON save of 12), Taliesin will tell the party that Lord and Lady X are Lord and Lady Vance, and that they have been fighting with Lord Vathris for centuries, hinting that they may be more than mere mortals. He will also tell the party that Lord Vathris had unusually strong interest in the blueprint of the windmill, though he does not know why that might be. Now that Taliesin's ward has been broken, he urges the party to take the blueprint

and, as he suspects, use it to bring Lord Vathris to justice.

If the adventurers press Taliesin on how to use the blueprint, he merely shrugs his shoulders and tells them that it must have incredible powers given Vathris's strong interest in it.

Taliesin will refuse to disclose any further information but urges the party onward in their quest.

D3. House on the Rock

GM Note

When the party arrives, they are about two hundred yards away from the **House on the Rock**.

The adventurers will see a pillar of stone rising from the forest floor, hundreds of feet above the treetops. As they look around, they see other similar features in the landscape. One of them stands out, however because there appears to be a house on top of it. Although the party sees no trails, and the forest is dense and dark, they have little choice but to set out for the mysterious House on the Rock.

It is mid-day and the party arrives without incident.

When the party arrives at the base of the rock, they will see that there is a non-descript wooden door set into the side. Abutting the side of the rock is a small stable. There are no other buildings in the area.

Stables (1)

At the base of the rock there is a stable that abuts the rock. If the party enters, they'll notice that there are in fact stables for horses: eight of them. There is also a stairway leading up to what appears to be a hayloft, and two doors. There are no horses in the stables, and the party is under the impression that there haven't been for some time.

What is noticeable, however, besides the fact that there are no horses, is that there is a large, round wooden platform in the middle of the stable. It has a canopy that is held up by a series of poles that completely encircle the platform. Each pole has a life-sized horse attached to it. Each horse appears to be in various states of galloping.

The party will feel compelled to step onto the platform and each mount a horse (DC Wisdom, 18). Whether they succeed or fail their save, party members will feel that the magic is more powerful here than anywhere they have encountered so far.

For those that fail the search, they will be surprised in round one, and defend themselves at disadvantage for the duration (though they can repeat their save every turn).

The horses are **Jackalwere**. The jackalwere are close enough to each other to have pack tactics.

Jackalwere (1 per party member): AC: 12; **HP:** 18 (4d8); **Spd:** 40'; **Melee:** +4 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 4 (1d4+2), slashing; **Str** +0, **Dex** +2, **Con** +0, **Int** +1, **Wis**, +0, **Cha** +0; **Senses:** passive perception 12; **AL:** chaotic evil; **CR** 1/2, **XP:** 100.

Can shape change into a specific medium human.
Pack Tactics

Sleep Gaze: DC 10 Wisdom or fall asleep for 10 minutes

The Jackalwere will attempt to capture as many players as possible and make them **Supernatural Servants** to **Lord Vathris** (the party won't realize this yet, but Lord Vathris is, in fact, an almost god-like **Lamia Master**, with Lich-like qualities).

This will be a vicious and bloody fight. At the completion of the attack, the party strongly suspects they are closing in on solving the mystery of Lord Vathris and Lord and Lady Vance.

For those members of the party that survive this encounter, they will notice that of the eight horses they all have different gemstones for eyes. They have a 40% chance of prying them free. If they fail, they will shatter and are worthless. The eight pairs include (total value for the pair):

1. Black Pearl (1,000 GP)
2. Black Sapphire (10,000 GP)
3. Bloodstone (100 GP)
4. Blue Quartz (20 GP)
5. Jade (200 GP)
6. Fire Opal (2,000 GP)
7. Moonstone (100 GP)
8. Peridot (1,000 GP)

The more expensive the gems the party can save, the larger the city required to sell them. In addition, the party will also have to be more careful when selling them to not attract the attention of pickpockets, thieves or charlatans.

At the GM's discretion, you might limit by a percentage the actual value that the party might be able to sell these gems for. **Note:** Being waylaid by bandits who find out about the gems might also be a side-adventure to consider.

Tack Room (2)

There is a variety of tack for eight horses. The party should realize, however, that given their travels it will not be practical to take any tack (unless they have a bag of holding or other means of transporting it).

Elevator (3)

This is the first floor of the elevator, which is a platform made of plain wood that moves under the control of a **spell of teleportation**. The elevator only works for parties that it considers to be friendly to the owner of the house. Everyone on the elevator needs to successfully make a DC 10 Wisdom save or the elevator won't work for the entire party in the elevator.

Players who fail the save will sense that they are preventing the elevator from working—they even feel as though they are being pushed off the platform. The elevator will work if players failing their save step off the platform; however, they will also be stuck in the stable for the rest of this portion of the adventure. Once the party completes the adventure at the **House on the Rock**, they will magically rejoin the rest of the party when they teleport away from the area.

Elevator (4)

If party members make it to the next floor, there is nothing immediately eventful or useful here.

Bedroom (5)

This is the house of a lunatic. At first glance this bedroom is uneventful, but unusual in its furnishings. The owner has over-filled it with a seemingly random set of furniture that is poorly (if at all) arranged and eclectic. It's a dark, ill-lit room. The furnishings are dark, and don't seem to match. There's a table with a drawer, a dresser with three drawers, and a locked chest. Nothing is trapped, everything is empty, and the party is uncertain if the room is intended to be used or might be some kind of haphazard storage space.

Feel free to allow the party to explore if they choose, for as long as they choose. They should leave feeling frustrated, perhaps disoriented and the GM should affirm that so far there seem to be no clues what mystery this house on the rock is going to reveal to them.

Study (6)

The study looks just as out of the ordinary as the rest of this place. There's a desk and chair, two sets of bookcases that are packed with dusty looking books. If the party chooses to search here, however, they will discover:

1. **Candle of Invocation**
2. **Deck of Many Things**
3. **Scroll of Protection**

Bedroom (7)

This bedroom almost looks ordinary compared to the rest of the house. There's a bed, a small table, candles. On the bed, there is a straw-stuffed animal that looks like a **badger**. If inspected, he is magical. On both short- and long-rests he will impart 1 additional HP of recovery so long as he is snuggled.

Bedroom (8)

This bedroom is pretty much identical to the previous one. The only difference is that there is a cursed straw-stuffed animal that resembles a Jackalwere (or a thylacine). Snuggling him causes the party member

to lose 1 HP due to the horrific, sweat-inducing nightmares that he causes.

Master Suite (9)

The first party member to enter the Master Suite will have the door closed and locked behind them. The party can attempt to break down the door (AC 16, HP 30), but it's a very stout, reinforced door.

The room appears as though it has a bath. The **Rusalka** is in the bath and invisible to the party member. The Rusalka will try to surprise the party member, kissing him or her and then dragging him or her into the bath.

The party member in the Master Suite will encounter an extremely gorgeous woman. She will have automatic first move and will cast suggestion (DC 15 Charisma Save),

Rusalka (1): AC: 14; **HP:** 88 (16d8+16); **Spd:** 30'; **Melee:** +6 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** +6, breathless kiss; **Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis**, +2, **Cha** +4; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 12; **Immunities:** necrotic, poison, piercing, slashing from nonmagical weapons; cannot be charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
AL: chaotic evil; **CR** 6, **XP:** 2,300.

Breathless kiss: Grappled (DC 13) or kissed and grappled into deep water to suffocate.

Observation Deck (10)

If the party makes it to the top level, they'll notice that two intersecting hallways provide access to an observation deck. The deck provides a 360-degree view of the area. The views are astonishing, and there are limestone pillars of rock staggered about the landscape in every direction the eye looks.

It is also apparent that this is a desolate area, wherever "this" happens to be.

The party will note that at each cardinal point of the compass, of the outer wall of the observation deck there is a **horseshoe**. When the party takes the

eastern horseshoe, they will be transported to the next encounter (**D4**). This is the horseshoe that they have been instructed to collect. The other horseshoes are of no value or interest.

D4. Roche-a-Cri

GM Note

This section may appear to start out easy, as the party is teleported in front of a limestone formation and the **Wall of Glyphs**.

Upon transporting to the next location, the party still finds themselves in a wooded area. Again, they face a natural pillar of limestone. Unlike the **House on the Rock**, however, there are no doors carved into the side of this cliff.

Behind the party, there is a noisy little creek. If they inspect it, the water is crystal clear, the bottom sandy. Although they may explore further, the creek does not factor into the party's tasks at **Roche-a-Cri**.

Wall of Glyphs (1)

If the party chooses to more closely examine the side of the cliff, they will notice that there are pale red glyphs that have been drawn on its face. Given how worn the glyphs are, they expect that they have been in existence for thousands of years. Likely, the glyphs were originally blood red, but now worn thin and pale by wind and rain.

There are glyphs depicting hunters on horses, great bison, and large bird-like creatures.

There is one glyph in the middle of the rest that somehow seems untarnished by time: it is blood-red and looks as though it could have been painted there a mere day or two ago.

The party will feel a mystical attraction to the painting to the point where it will evoke the thought of:

*a painting of a culture more ancient than the wind,
quiet like a lake, and unmoving like stone, painted in
red, a horse, regal in stature.*

The challenge for the party is to figure out how to capture a copy of it. This is also largely theatre of the mind: allow your party to be creative. If the party

took vellum from Taliesin, a spellcaster could use one of the following spells to create an etching of the blood-red horse:

- Acid splash
- Comprehend language
- Creation
- Illusory script
- Legend lore
- Wish

Whether the party chooses one of the approaches, or devises another, the end result should be described as roughly the same: the figure of the horse will magically appear on whatever surface the party has selected. They will not know with certainty that they have succeeded; however, they remember (or be reminded) that success is usually a requirement to move on in the adventure. If they can find any clues to how and where to leave Roche-a-Cri they will know they have succeeded.

Unfortunately, being successful doesn't allow the party to leave Roche-a-Cri.

Trailhead (2)

In addition to the creek and the wall of glyphs, the party will also notice that there is a path that appears to wind itself up and around the stone cliff. If the party gazes straight upward, they will be able to make out the faint outline of a platform or structure at the top of the limestone pillar.

The party will need to decide how they want to circumnavigate the pillar of limestone, but the **Trailhead** is the only approach that will successfully lead them to the top.

If the party tries any alternative they can attempt Dexterity saves (Minimum 20 turns) and will almost certainly fall (DC 2 for every turn they climb). The trailhead, on the other hand, will otherwise be largely uneventful.

Tomorrow's Platform (3)

When the party arrives at the top of the platform, assuming they have successfully copied the glyph, they'll have a few moments to look around. In every direction, for as far as the eye can see, the party is surrounded by lush, summer forest. The canopy is heavy preventing them from discerning anything else about their surroundings.

As the party is looking around, they will notice that everything is starting to shimmer in and out of existence.

It feels as though they've been in the same world this entire time? The trees and general surrounds at least feel familiar, but the shimmering quality intensifies.

Although it isn't directly relevant to their quest, the party does make note that this teleport was very different from the others that they have experienced so far.

If the party doesn't have a copy of the glyph, they may enjoy the scenery for as long as they choose. They will have to return to the ground to secure a copy of the glyph. As GM, you may need to strongly hint that they return to the platform after completing that step.

D5. Aztalan

GM Note

The party appears in an expansive field (hundreds and hundreds of yards). There are mounds in the center that look as though they might have been part of a civilization, many thousands of years ago.

Off to the west, appears to be a very small village. To the south, something that might be a mill along a fast running river.

To the east, effigy (burial) mounds.

Directly in front of the party is a small stone bridge that crosses the Crawfish River and joins a dirt path that will take the adventurers into Aztalan Town.

The Crawfish River flows through Aztalan, though it is a misnomer. The River is an extremely dangerous place, infested with large sturgeon (see Appendix). If the party persists and stays in Crawfish River, an additional large sturgeon will appear every turn, with no limit to their number. The party will need to recognize that they will not survive if they remain in the river.

Aztalan Town

Aztalan Town is very small, and only a small number of modest buildings comprise the town.

In Aztalan, the party will be discouraged from going into the ruins, being told that they are haunted, and that they will not return. They are also told that the party should treat the effigy (burial) mounds with great respect as the prior inhabitants sleep fitfully and have been known to strike down anyone who dares disturb their eternal rest.

They will be able to sell anything of value below 100 gp (300 gp total) and purchase anything of value below 100 gp (300 gp total)

The party is free to explore the rest of Aztalan but won't learn anything beyond the warnings that any villager will share with them.

High Priest's Quarters (2)

The High Priest's Quarters are small and pristinely kept. The priest can perform basic healing, remove curse, and raise the dead. All of these will cost 25% more than normal.

The priest will also ask for a donation on top of the cost of potions for cure wounds.

Saw Mill (No Number)

The sawmill has long since been abandoned. There are planers, lathes, saws and other machines and tools that have been left behind. But what little lumber remains, shows evidence of rot and decay.

Open Field (No Number)

The open field is deceptive as it almost looks to be checkered with light and dark vegetation. With a perception check (DC 16), any member of the party might notice that the field is less checked with light than there are wispy balls of light flickering in the undergrowth.

Will-O'-Wisp (3): AC: 19; HP: 22 (9d4); Spd: 50' flying, 0'; **Melee:** +4 to hit (2d8) reach 5', **Str** -5, **Dex** +9, **Con** +0, **Int** +1, **Wis**, +2, **Cha** +0; **Senses:** passive perception 12, darkvision 120'; **AL:** chaotic evil; **CR** 2, **XP:** 450. Consume Life: as a bonus action, attack target (DC 10 save) or die; regains 10 HP if target dies.

Mound of the Princess (4)

If the party is keeping track of its hints, this seems like the obvious place to find the remains of an ancient warrior princess.

There is nothing obvious at the **Mound of the Princess**. If they continue to inspect (let alone dig), they will desecrate this effigy mound. The Princess will manifest herself in the shape of a **Wight**. The Wight will focus on Life Drain.

Wight (1): AC: 14; HP: 45 (6d8+18); Spd: 30'; **Melee:** +4 to hit (Longsword 6 (1d8+2)) or +4 to hit

(Longbow 6 (1d8+2)), reach 5', **Hit:** 13 (2d8+4), bludgeoning; **Immune:** necrotic, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons; **Str** +4, **Dex** -2, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -3; **Senses:** darkvision 60', passive perception 13; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 3, **XP:** 700.

If damage reduces zombie to 0 HP, constitution save of 5+ the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On success, zombie drops to 1 HP instead.

Multiattack: may make two longsword or two longbow attacks; may use Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain: +4 to hit, reach 5' Hit: 5 (1d6+2) necrotic damage. Target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution.

The Princess will disappear if she is defeated, in a cloud of wispy smoke.

The effigy mound itself is sparse at best: there are a few shards of pottery, a quill, scraps that appear to have once been scrolls.

The party will, however, readily discover that there is a small figurine made of bronze that is incredibly tarnished and worn with cracks—as though it had been in the earth for thousands of years. On a history check (DC 12), the party will rightly conclude that this is the ancient remains of the **warrior princess**.

There is otherwise nothing of value here.

Once the party has the bronze princess, they are teleported to **D6, Lake Bon Secours**.

Mound of the Howling Wolf (1)

If the party chooses to leave the mound alone, nothing will happen. However, if they investigate, they will release a pack of wolves.

Wolves (6-8): AC: 13; HP: 11 (2d8+2); Spd: 40';
Bite: +4 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 7 (2d4+2), piercing;
succeed on DC11str or knocked prone; **Str** +1, **Dex**
+2, **Con** +1, **Int** -4, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -2; Pack Tactics;
AL: unaligned; **CR** 1/4, **XP:** 50.

Effigy Mounds (6)

There are many effigy mounds that depict deer, bear, badger, and eagle. Most of them are slowly settling into the ground. The party should not disturb them.

If they disturb them, the corresponding spirit animals will attack. In each instance, the spirit animals will always have first attack. The party will also quickly note that these spiritual beings possess powers far beyond that of their earthly counterparts.

Deer (2-4): AC: 15; HP: 85 (10d10+30); Spd: 40';
Bite: +6 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 6 (1d6+3), piercing and
14 (4d6) poison damage, DC 14 CON save or
poisoned for 1 minute; Darkvision 60', Passive
perception: 13; **Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +3, **Int** -1, **Wis**,
+1, **Cha** -1; Pack Tactics; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 5,
XP: 1,800.

Bear (2-4): AC: 12; HP: 33 (6d8+6); Spd: 40'; **Bite:**
+5 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 10 (2d6+3), piercing; succeed
on DC 13 STR or knocked prone; Passive perception:
13; **Str** +3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +1, **Int** -3 **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -3;
Pack Tactics; Darkvision 60'; **AL:** unaligned; **CR** 2,
XP: 450.

Badger (6-8): AC: 13; HP: 11 (2d8+2); Spd: 40';
Bite: +4 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 7 (2d4+2), piercing;
succeed on DC11str or knocked prone; **Str** +1, **Dex**
+2, **Con** +1, **Int** -4, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -2; Pack Tactics;
AL: unaligned; **CR** 1/4, **XP:** 50.

Eagle (6-8): AC: 12; HP: 13 (3d4+6); Spd: 40';
Bite: +4 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 5 (1d6+2), piercing;
additional 10 (3d6) poison; **Str** -2, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2,
Int -3, **Wis**, -2, **Cha** -4; **AL:** chaotic evil;
CR 1, **XP:** 200.

There are also a handful of side adventures:

Nursery (No number)

The nursery is overseen by a benevolent deity based on the Ki-Rin, a lawful good, celestial being. She appears to be trying to take care of lesser, child-like beings who look much like her. They are defenseless.

Confirm the alignment of party members. Any party member who is any combination of lawful and/or good may make a WIS save of 10. Any neutral player, a WIS save of 12 or better. Successful roles will confirm that the Ki-Rin is a creature of the best intentions.

If the party attacks Ki-Rin, or any of the child-like beings, they immediately and permanently (no saving throw) lose 8,400 experience points. There is otherwise nothing of interest here.

Ki-Rin (1) AC: 20; HP: 152 (16d12+48); Spd: 60/120'; **Bite (Multiattack):** +9 to hit, reach 5', **Hit:** 10 (dd4+5), bludgeoning; Darkvision 120', Passive perception: 19; **Str** +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +3, **Int** -1, **Wis**, +1, **Cha** -1; Pack Tactics; **AL:** neutral evil; **CR** 12, **XP:** 8,400.

Legendary Actions (can take three):

- Detect: WIS check
- Smite: casts sacred flame
- Move: move at half speed without provoking AO

Stone Quarry (No number)

The stone quarry is a natural pit that is surrounded by cliffs at least 200' in height. There is a single-track path that leads from the top of the pit to the bottom.

At the bottom of the quarry, is a lake. There is no evidence of mining that remains.

The lake is home to what appears to be giant crawfish. Use the stats for sturgeon in the appendix.

Crawfish River (No number)

The Crawfish River is teeming with what appear to be enormous crawfish (use Sturgeon stats from Appendix). In the first round in the water, assume 1x Crawfish for each party member. By the second round, assume 2x Crawfish for each party member.

If the party chooses to inspect the bottom of the river they will find 1d100 pearls worth 1d20 gp apiece. Given the number of crawfish in the river, the party will find this an extremely risk effort unless aided by magic.

There is otherwise nothing else of interest in the river.

D6. Bon Secours (Lake of Good Help)

GM Note

The party will initially find themselves on North Beach overlooking a large lake. There is nothing eventful about this location. The challenge of this part of the campaign is that the party must find its way to the **Mysterious Monument**.

While the adventurers might reasonably start by exploring the island, they will not be able to explore Lake Bon Secours unless they possess the ability to breath under water. The lake is deep enough that they cannot hold their breath, descend and rise fast enough without developing cases of the bends and sinking to the bottom of the lake.

Note that the party will have to remove their armor for this encounter, which will significantly increase the level of challenge in completing this leg of their adventure.

North Beach (1)

North Beach is gorgeous: white sands, glistening blue waters. There is little here for the party to do, however, then to search the island in the hopes of finding **Mysterious Monument**.

Mysterious Monument (2)

Located roughly in the center of this sparsely wooded island, is an odd monument—because of the sparseness of vegetation it should not be difficult for the party to find.

The monument is fairly large, at least 20' tall, and 10' around. Shaped like a monolith, it has two stylized arrows on it, one pointing to the east (to the lake) and one pointing south (also to the water).

North Village (3)

North village is a small inhabited area, of about a dozen or so homes. There is nothing remaining of value. However, this is home to **Bon Secour (M10)**; it's primary goal will be to charm party members and turn them against each other.

Given time to explore, the party will find one home that holds Bon Secour treasure:

Gold ring inscribed with: Linley

Black veil: bone and pearl headpiece; wearer is able to jump between shadows

South Village (4)

Depending on the size of the party, there are 1d6 (or choose) sturgeon prowling the village, comprised of about a dozen homes. One of them will appear to have platinum like scales (AC +1), setting it apart from the other sturgeon that the party encounters. This is the sturgeon, who upon dying, will exhale a cloud of venom. The party should remove at least **one tooth** to use in the final encounter.

Submerged Cemetery (5)

Submerged Cemetery represents the last significant encounter before finally revealing all of Lord Vathris's secrets. It's purely an underwater encounter, and so depending on the party will provide significant challenge.

The party will struggle because the water is deep (60'), dark and murky. Vision, unless modified by magic, is limited to 10'.

The cemetery itself consists of about two dozen stones, worn by time and water, and covered with algae, small snails, and other crustaceans. Their faces are entirely unreadable.

The cemetery is protected by a Kraken Priest named **Wis-akwawa**, the "Spear of the Lake," who can summon the skeletal remains of up to 3 sturgeon (appendix).

Wis-akwawa (The Spear of the Lake): AC: 18; HP: 472 (27d20+189); Spd: 60'; Melee: +17 to hit, reach 5', Hit: 23 (3d8+10), piercing (multiattack); Str +10, Dex +0, Con +7, Int +6, Wis, +4, Cha +5; Senses: passive perception 14; AL: chaotic evil alignment; CR 23, XP: 50,000.

Spellcasting: DC 13 + 5 to hit

Lightning Storm: three bolts of lightning; DC 23 DEX save or 22 (4d10) damage; half on save.

D7. Final Encounter

GM Note

When the party returns from the depths of Bon Secour, Lord and Lady Vance will be waiting on the island for them.

As with most of this adventure, adjust Lord Vathris as you see appropriate for your party.

Vathris will appear in human form and will start by asking the party for the necklace (if he doesn't have it yet). He will then thank the party for the additional work, and the ability to create the final, central gem, the **Xanthanite**, based on the ingredients they have collected.

If the party complies, Vathris will assemble the necklace and place it around his neck. His statistics will increase by double.

At the same time, however Lord and Lady Vance will appear, screaming that they must have their revenge. They will assist the party in the final combat, forgiving them for their mistake in giving Vathris the necklace. Their stats can be found in the Appendix.

If the party does not comply, Vathris will attack (normal statistics), and Lord and Lady Vance will not appear until after the attack has ended.

During the attack, it will not be possible for the party to assemble the items they collected in the mythical locations:

- The Devil's tears.
- The blueprint of a windmill.
- The horseshoe from a magical horse.
- The painting of a culture more ancient than the wind, quiet like a lake, and unmoving like stone.
- The ancient remains of a warrior princess.
- The ice-cold teeth from a sturgeon's breath.

After the attack, however, the party may choose to easily assemble the items from the dungeons to create, and then place, the **Xanthanite** in the center of the necklace.

When Lord and Lady Vance appear, they will thank the adventurers profusely for rescuing them from imprisonment in another plan. As a reward, they tell the party that they may keep the necklace. They tell the party that, when worn, each party member may make one minor wish that will be permanent. Once the necklace has granted each party member their wish, the stones will go dark. The necklace will have no remaining power, and it has no sale value.

They tell the party to phrase their wishes carefully; however, they also tell them that it wouldn't be unreasonable to choose from some of the following options, which will be permanent. They also warn there is a small chance of failure if they choose to make their wishes (5%). A failure is permanent and may not be recovered:

- A stronger attribute (+1/-1)
- Increased stamina (+2/-2 HP)
- An additional spell (+1/-1; level of choice)
- A keener ability to attack (+1/-1 to hit)
- A defter sense of defending oneself (+1/-1 AC)

Assuming success, Lord and Lady Vance tell you that Vathris is their son, and that he turned against them, because they didn't trust him with the Xanthanite necklace. Vathris had assumed the necklace would grant him immortality and unlimited power. Given that the necklace had the chance of failure, Lord and Lady Vance were even more concerned that the excessive nature of such wishes would surely doom Vathris for the rest of his life. (This may, perhaps, be the source of Vathris's comments about being cursed by the gods. The party, however, will never completely know for sure.)

Lord and Lady Vance seem absolutely genuine in their description of the necklace, and their efforts at hiding the gems, as an attempt to save Vathris from himself.

As a result, they broke the necklace and hid the pieces from him, across many dimensions.

When Vathris found the portals and realized the party could help to assemble the necklace, Lord and Lady Vance actively tried to discourage them from doing so. However, they also recognized that nothing was more

important than preventing their estranged son from assembling the necklace.

Lord and Lady Vance thank you graciously for placing your lives in peril. They cryptically add that perhaps another time, in other lands, they may ask for your help once more. They bid you well until you meet

again someday. As GM, return the party to the starting point of this adventure.

Finis.

M1. Haunchies of Muskego

Small humanoid, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30'



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

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60', passive Perception: 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Nimble Escape. The Haunchies can take the disengage or hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Haunchies make two attacks with its scimitar. The second attack has disadvantage.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack +4 to hit, reach 5', one target. Hit: (1d6+2) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Redirect Attack. When a creature the Haunchies can see targets it with an attack, the Haunchie chooses another Haunchie within 5' of it. The two swap places, and the chosen Haunchie becomes the target instead.

M2. Beast of Bray Road

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 in humanoid form, 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8+ 18)

Speed 30' (40' in wolf form)



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

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Condition Immunities Poison

Senses passive Perception: 14

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. The Beast of Bray Road can use its action to morph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The Beast of Bray Road has advantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Best of Bray Road makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws or spear.

Bite (wolf or hybrid form only). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5', one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

Claws (Hybrid form only). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5', one creature. Hit: 7 (2d4+2) slashing damage.

Spear (Humanoid form only). Melee or Ranged Weapon: +4 to hit, reach 5' or range 20/60', one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 +2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 +2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

M3. Ridgeway Ghost

Medium Undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 45 (10d8)
Speed 0', fly 40' (hover)



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances	acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities	cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities	charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses	darkvision 60', passive Perception: 11
Languages	Common
Challenge	4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. See 60' into the ethereal plane when it is on the Material Plane and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. Can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Withering Touch. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5', one target. Hit: 17 (4d6+3) necrotic damage.

Etherealness. Move between planes of existence.

Horrifying Visage. Creatures within 60' save on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be scared for 1 minute. If save is by 5 or more, age 1d4x10 years.

Possession. One humanoid within 5' makes a DC 13 Charisma throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost disappears and controls the body.

M4. Dartford Demon

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (10d12 +40)
Speed 40'



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	6 (-2)

Skills	Perception +2
Senses	Passive Perception: 12
Languages	Giant
Challenge	5 (1,800 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Dartford Demon makes two great club attacks.

Great club. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 10', one target. Hit: 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage

Rock. Ranged Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, range 60/240', one target. Hit: 22 (3d10+5) bludgeoning damage

M5. Hodag

Large monstrosity, Evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)
Speed 30', fly 80', swim 40'



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws	Dex +4, Con +6, Wis +4, Cha +5
Skills	Deception +5, Perception +7, Stealth +4
Damage Immunities	Poison
Condition Immunities	Poison
Senses	blindsight 30', darkvision 120', passive Perception: 17
Languages	Common, Draconic
Challenge	8 (3,900 XP)

Amphibious The Hodag can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Hodag makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10', one target. Hit: 15 (2d10+4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5', one target. Hit: 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

M6. Pepie the Lake Monster

Large monstrosity, Evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 189 (18d12+73)
Speed 30', fly 50', swim 30'



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CH
22 (+6)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws	Con +9, Wis +8, Cha +6
Skills	Perception +8
Damage Resistance	cold, fire
Condition Immunities	Paralyzed, unconscious
Senses	blindsight 60', darkvision 90', passive Perception: 18
Languages	Common, Draconic, Elvish, Sylvan
Challenge	14 (11,500 XP)

Amphibious Pepie can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Lake Leap. When submerged in a pool of water, can transfer to a similar body of water as a bonus action up to 5,000'.

Legendary resistance. Can change one failed savings throw to a success (1/day).

Regeneration. Regains 15 hit points at the start of every round. Stops functioning if its head has been severed.

Multiattack. One bite and one claw attack.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10', one target. Hit: 19 (2d12 +6) piercing damage.

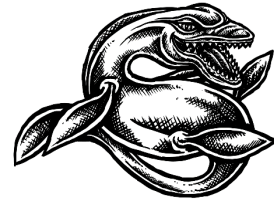
Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5', one target. Hit: 19 (2d12 +6) slashing damage.

Tail. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 20', one target. Hit: 15 (2d8 +6) bludgeoning damage.

M7. Lake Winnebago Monster

Large monstrosity, Evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 472 (27d20 + 189)
Speed 20', swim 60'



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	11 (+0)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws	Str +17, Dex +7, Con +14, Int +13, Wis +11
Damage Immunities	Lightning; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Condition Immunities	Frightened, paralyzed
Senses	truesight 120', passive Perception: 14
Languages	Understands Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal and Primordial; telepathy: 120'
Challenge	23 (50,000 XP)

Amphibious The Lake Winnebago Monster can breathe air and water.

Freedom of Movement. Ignores difficult terrain, and magical effects can't reduce its speed or cause it to be restrained. It can spend 5' of movement to escape from nonmagical restraints or being grappled.

Siege Monster. Deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Three tentacle attacks, each of which it can replace with one use of Fling.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10', one target. Hit: 15 (2d10+4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5', one target. Hit: 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

M8. Highway Robbers

Human Fighters, Evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 15

Speed 30

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+1)	9 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills	Perception +2
Senses	Passive Perception: 12
Languages	Common
Challenge	2 (400 XP)

ACTIONS

+3, shortsword attack; 1d6, slashing

+3 dagger attack; 1d4, piercing

POSSESSIONS

- Shortsword (1 each)
- Daggers (2 each)
- Studded leather, worn

The party may choose to take and use the bandits' weapons and armor and they will function just fine. They should know that they are worn to the point that it is unlikely they will have any resale value.

M9. Devil Marauders

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10 +48)

Speed 40'

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +6

Condition Immunities Darkvision 120', passive perception: 10

Languages Giant, Orc, Sylvan

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

While in sunlight the devil marauder has disadvantage on attack rolls and on wisdom checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Two boar spear attacks. (+7 to hit), reach 10' Hit: 16 (2d10+5) Can choose to push away 10' if fails a DC 16 saving throw.

Rock: Ranged weapon attack. (+5 to hit), 19 (3d8+5). Bludgeoning damage.

M10. Bon Secour (Monster of Bon Secour)

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 130 (20d8+40)
Speed 25', swim 50'



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws	Dex +6, Int +9, Wis +6
Skills	Arcana +9, History +9, Perception +10, Stealth +6
Condition Immunities	Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks
Senses	blindsight (30'), darkvision (120'), passive perception: 20
Languages	Telepathy (120')
Challenge	11 (7,200 XP)

Spellcasting (save DC 17 +9 to hit with spell attacks)

ACTIONS

Spells:

Cantrips: acid splash, mage hand, mending, ray of frost, shocking grasp

1st level (4 slots): detect magic, identify, shield, witch bolt

2nd level (3 slots): darkness, detect thoughts, shatter

3rd level (3 slots): dispel magic, lightning bolt, sending

4th level (3 slots): dimension door, Everard's black tentacles

5th level (3 slots): geas, scrying

6th level (1 slot): chain lightening

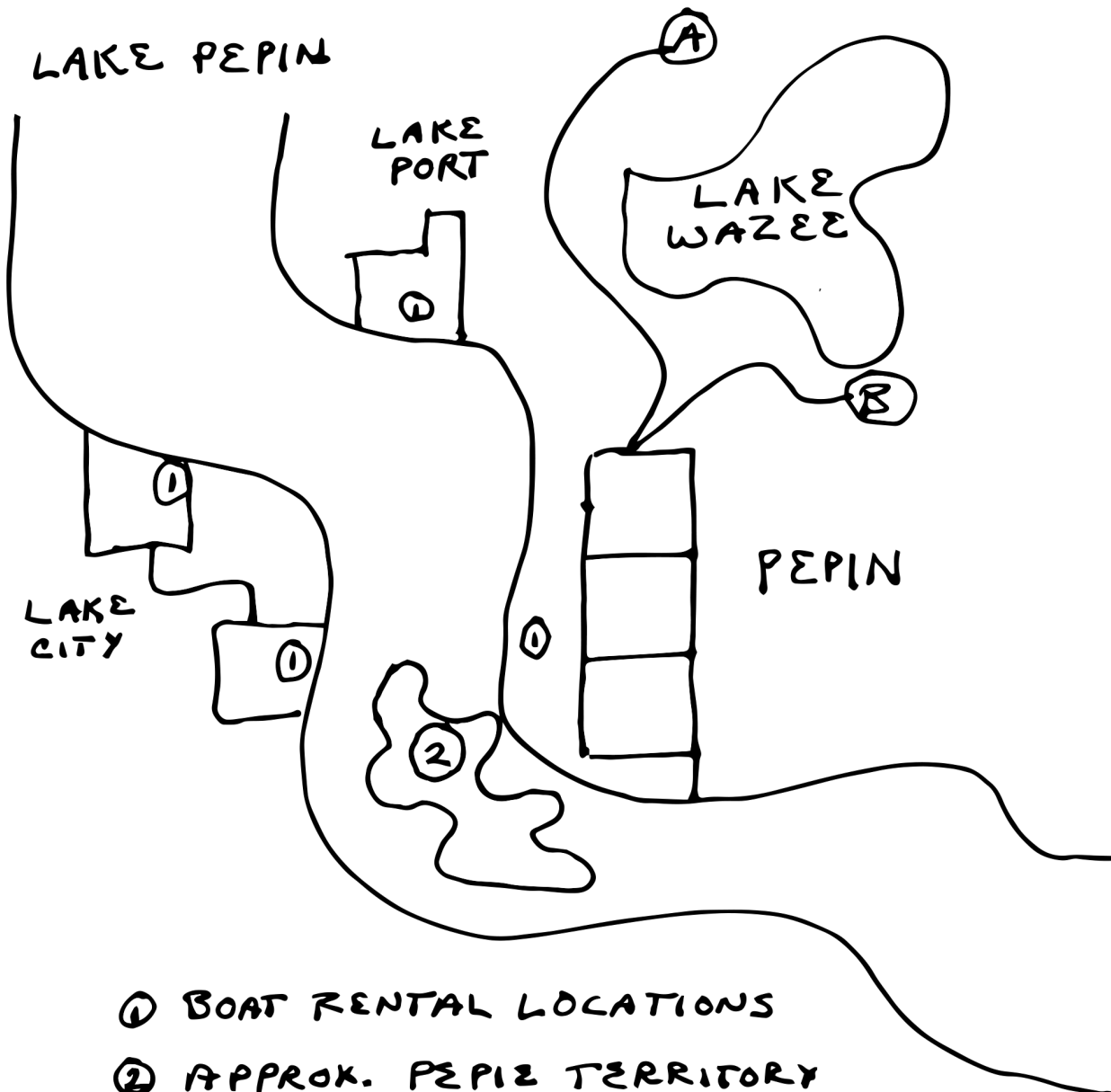
Multiattack: 3 attacks, 2 bites and one grapple (tentacles)

Bite: +6 to hit, reach 5'; 9 (2d6+2 slashing damage)

Tentacles: +6 to hit, 15' reach, 15 (3d8+2), grapple (escape DC 14) 15 (3d8+2) while grappled

Hypnosis: 30' cone, DC 17 Wisdom save; failed: charmed for 1 minute (target will try to get as close to the sturgeon as possible).

Spell Reflection: On save against spell/miss, can redirect to another creature with 120'

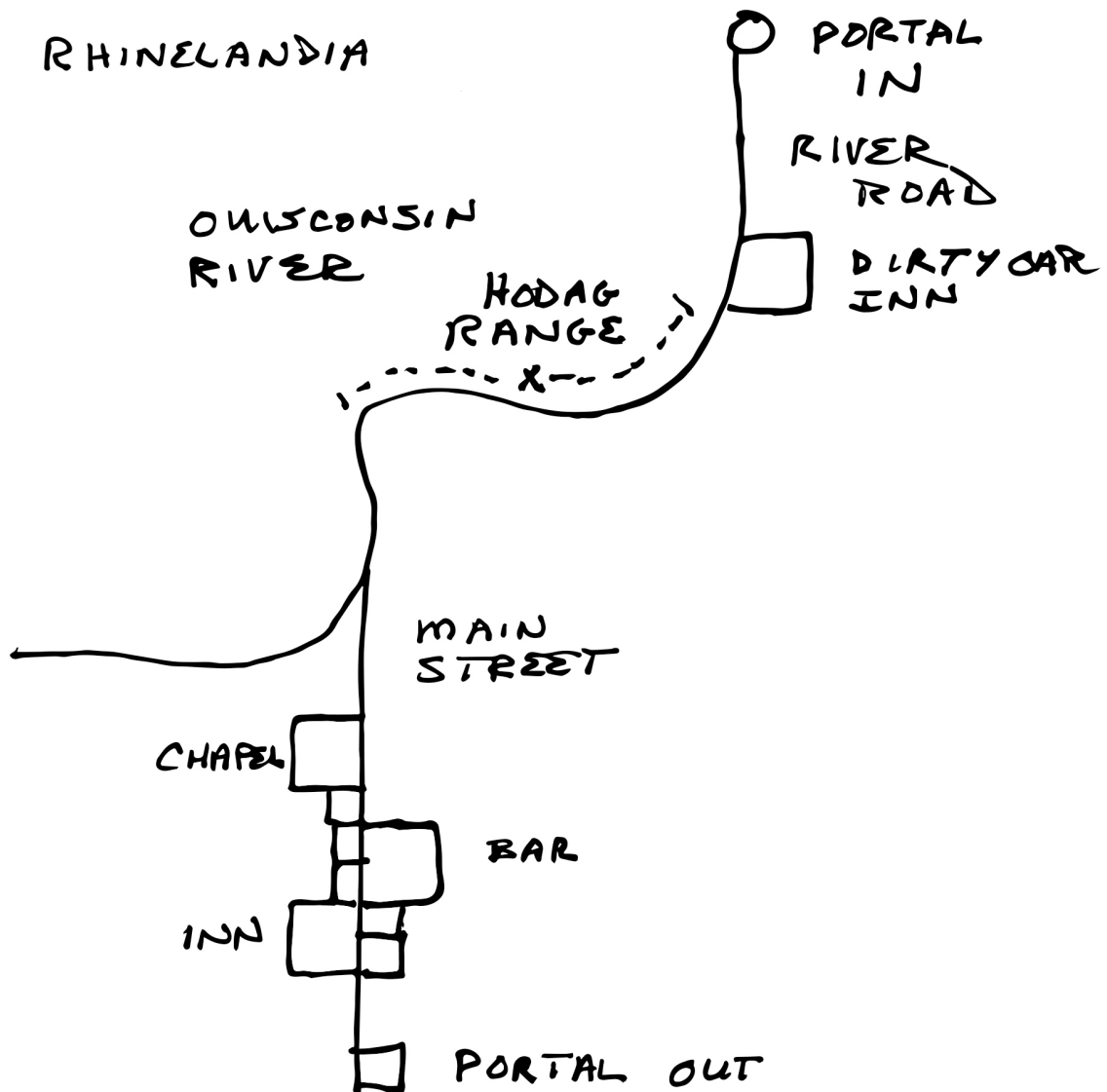


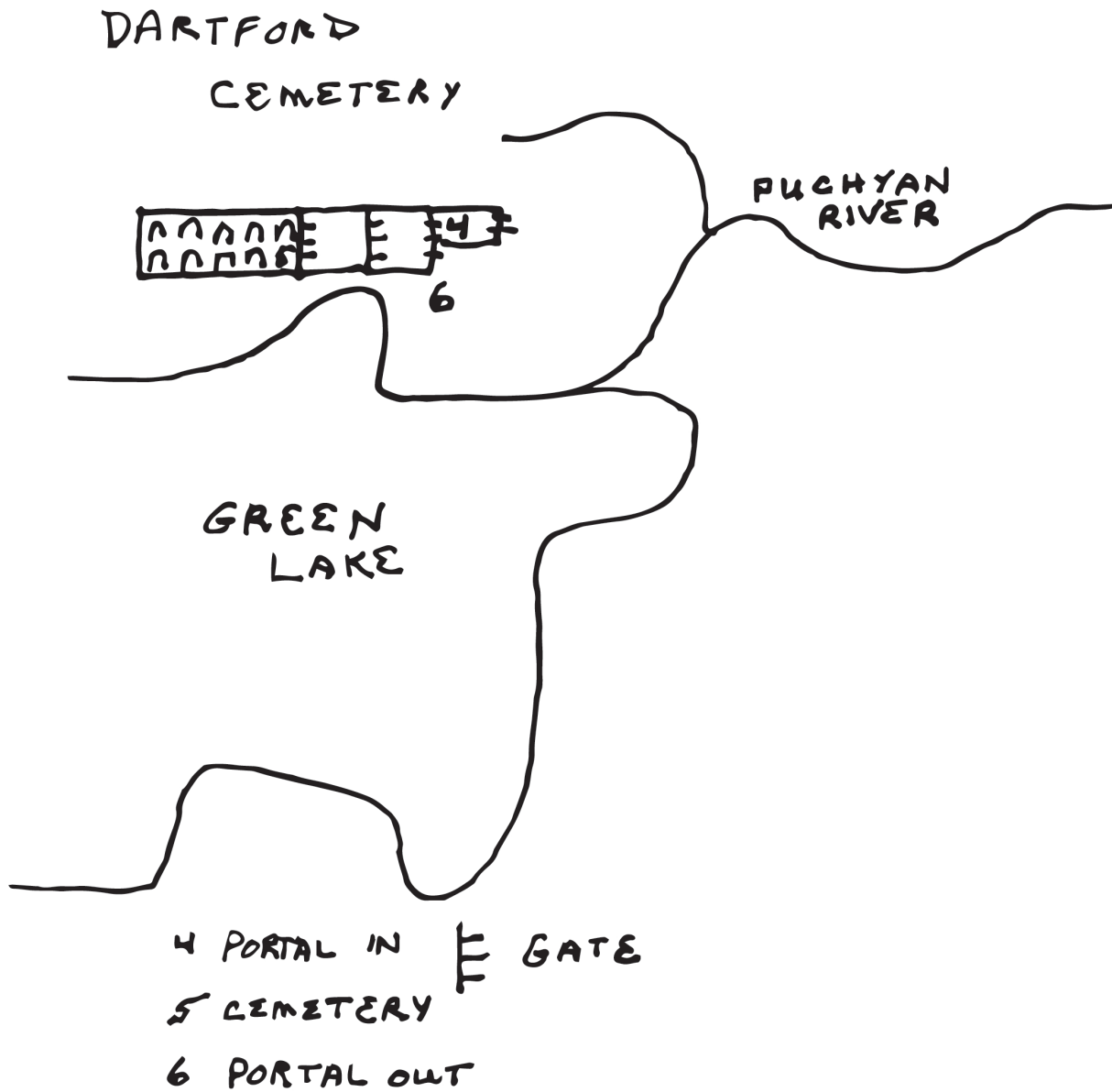
① BOAT RENTAL LOCATIONS

② APPROX. PEZ TERRITORY

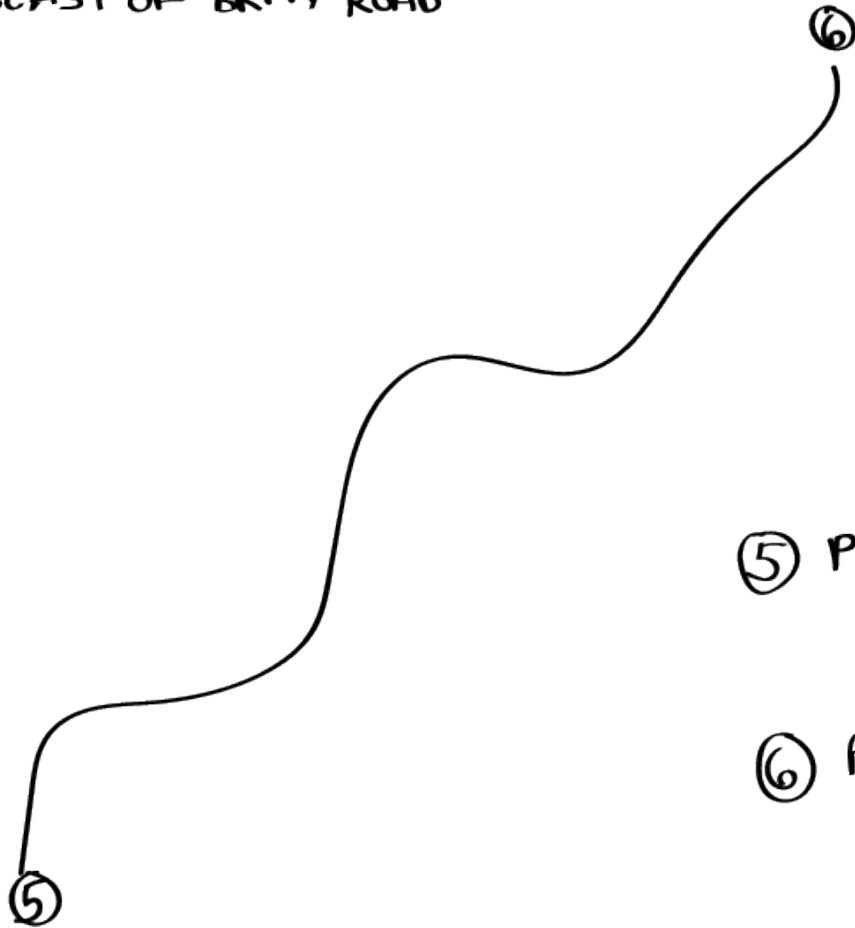
Ⓐ PORTAL IN

Ⓑ PORTAL OUT





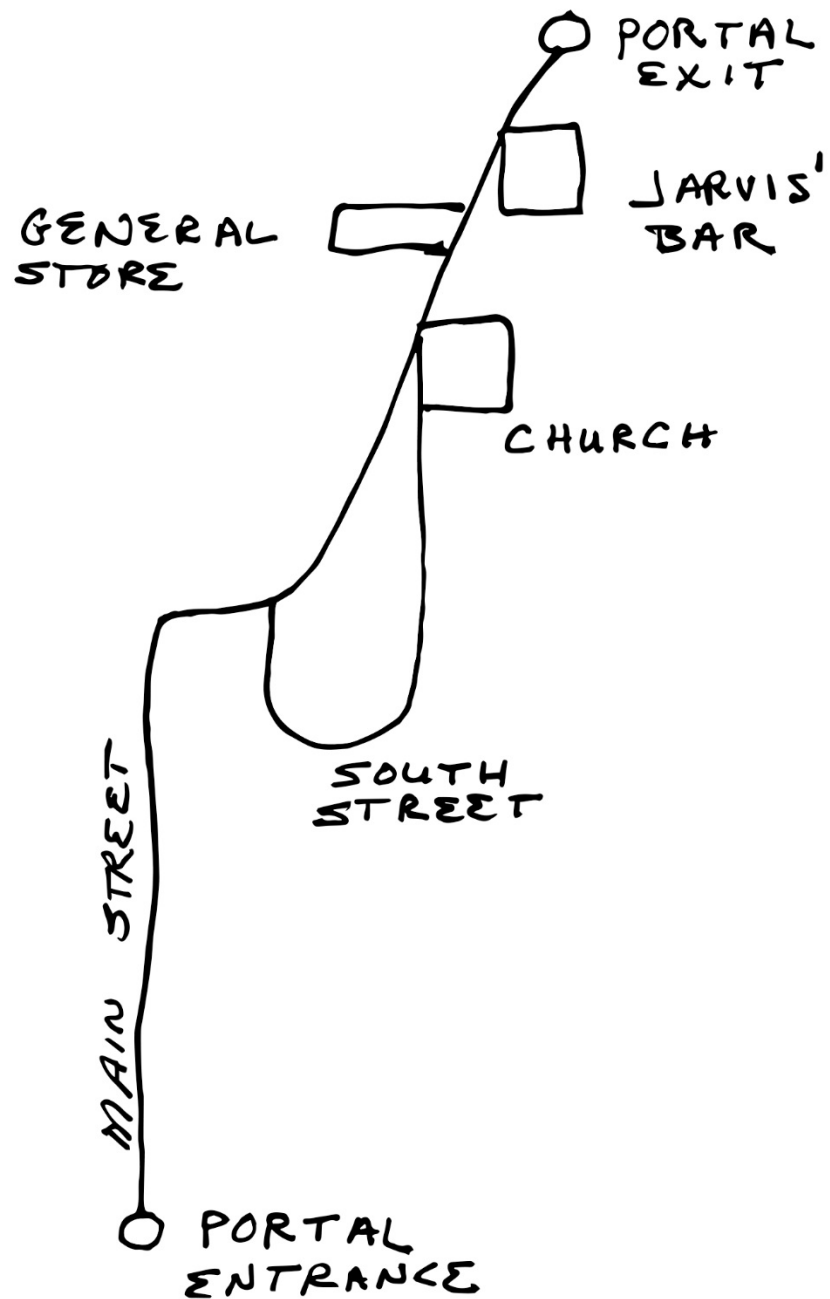
BEAST OF BRAY ROAD



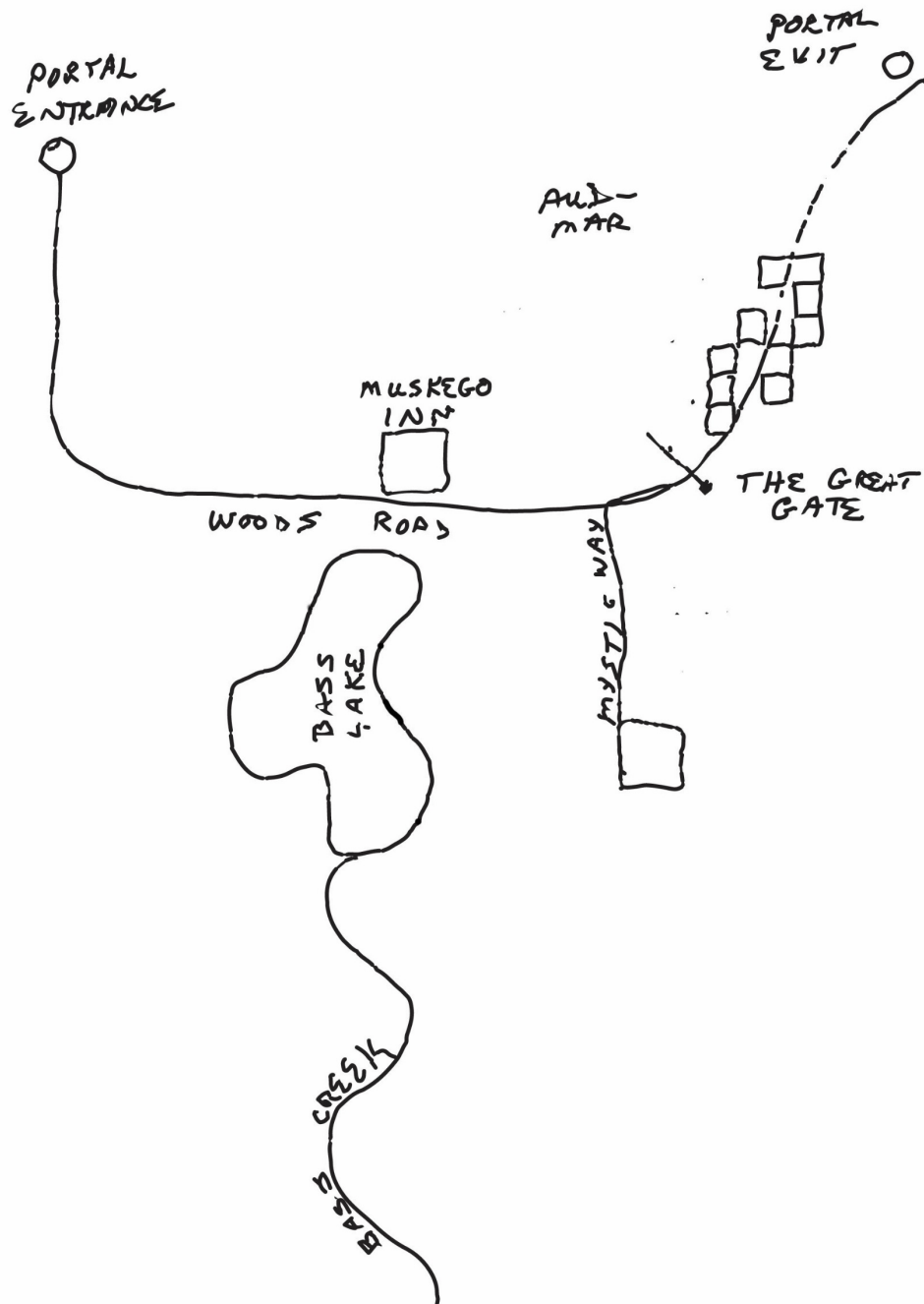
⑤ PORTAL IN

⑥ PORTAL OUT

RIDGEWAY GHOST HEIST

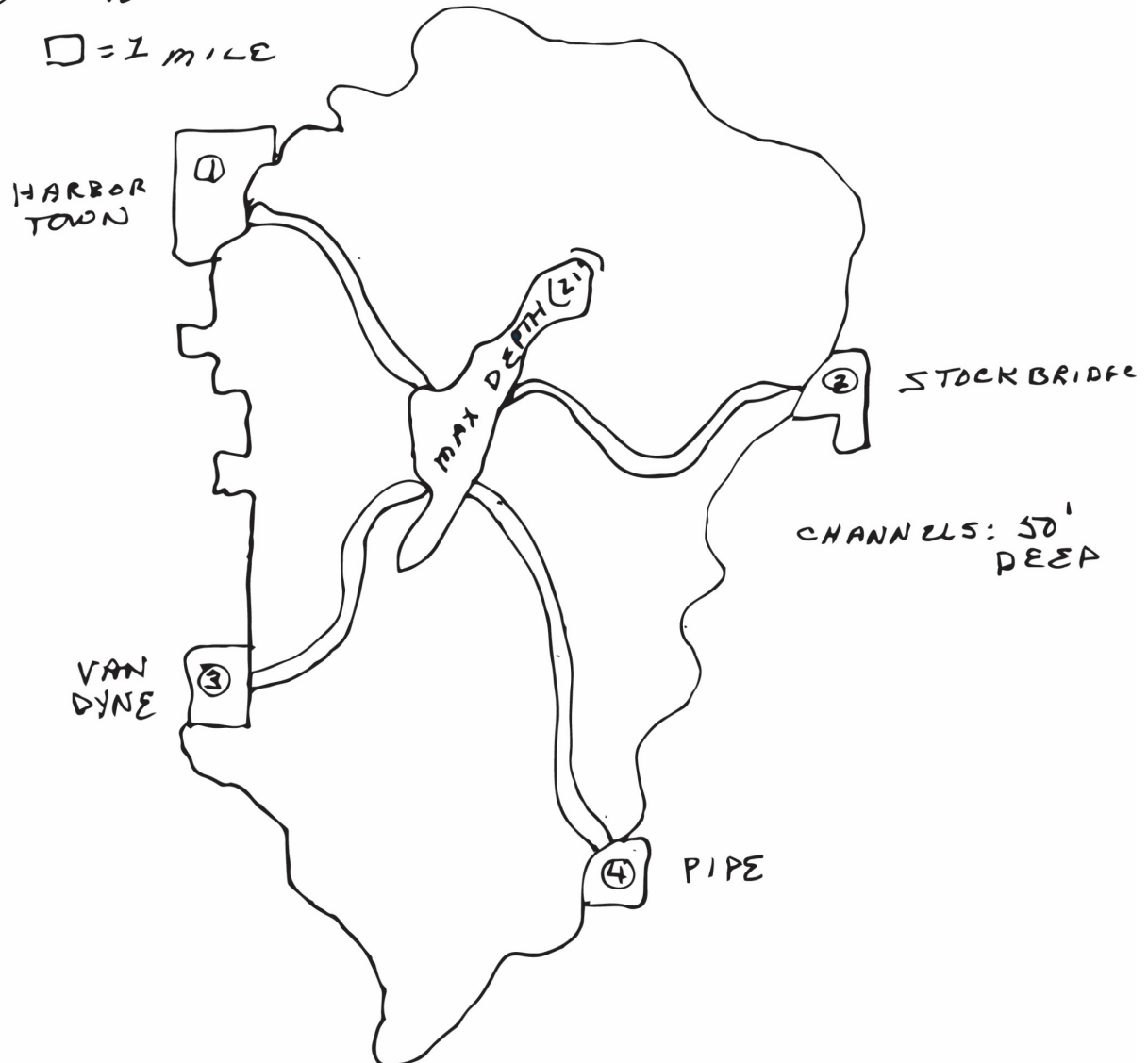


HAUNCHIES OF MUSKEGO

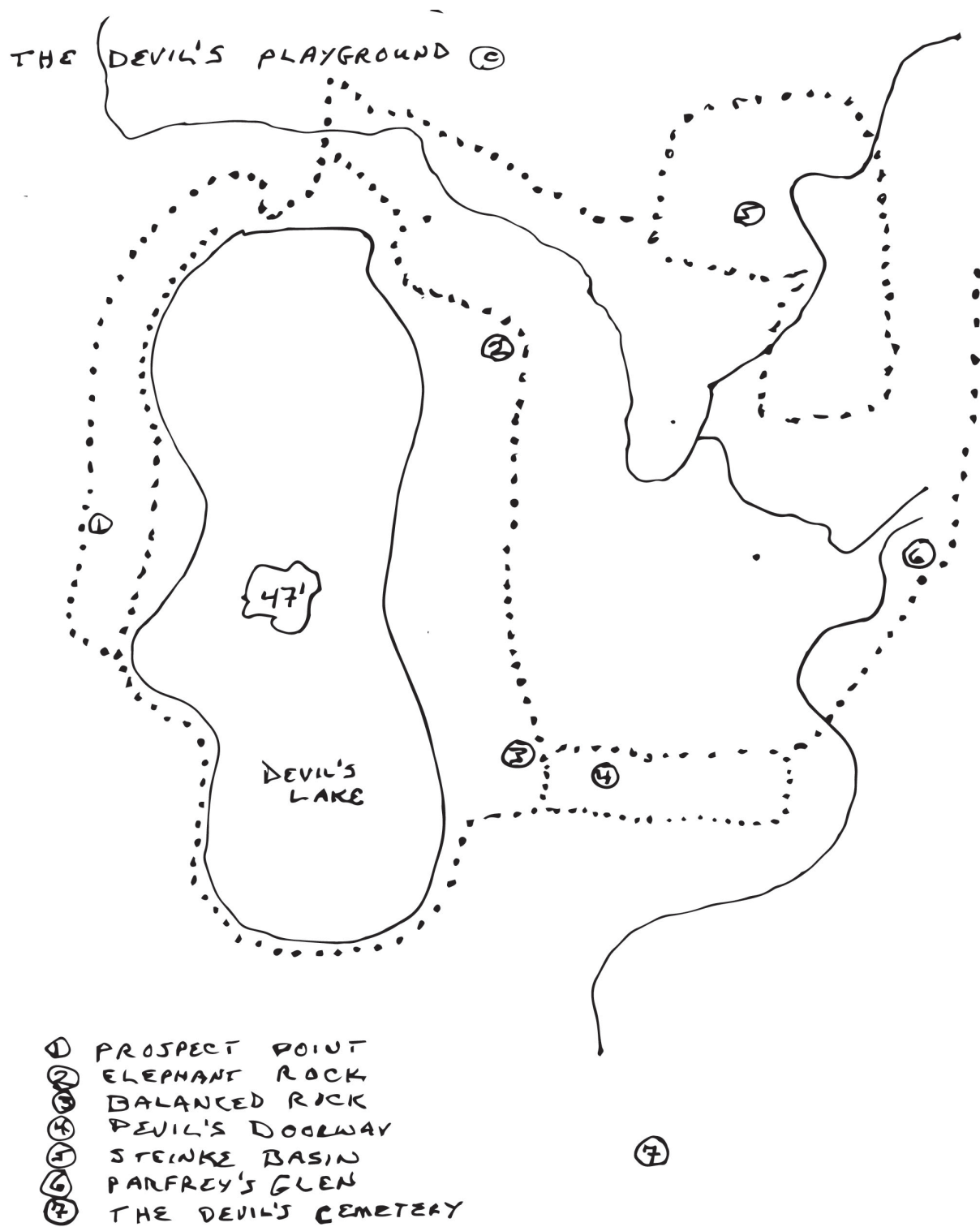


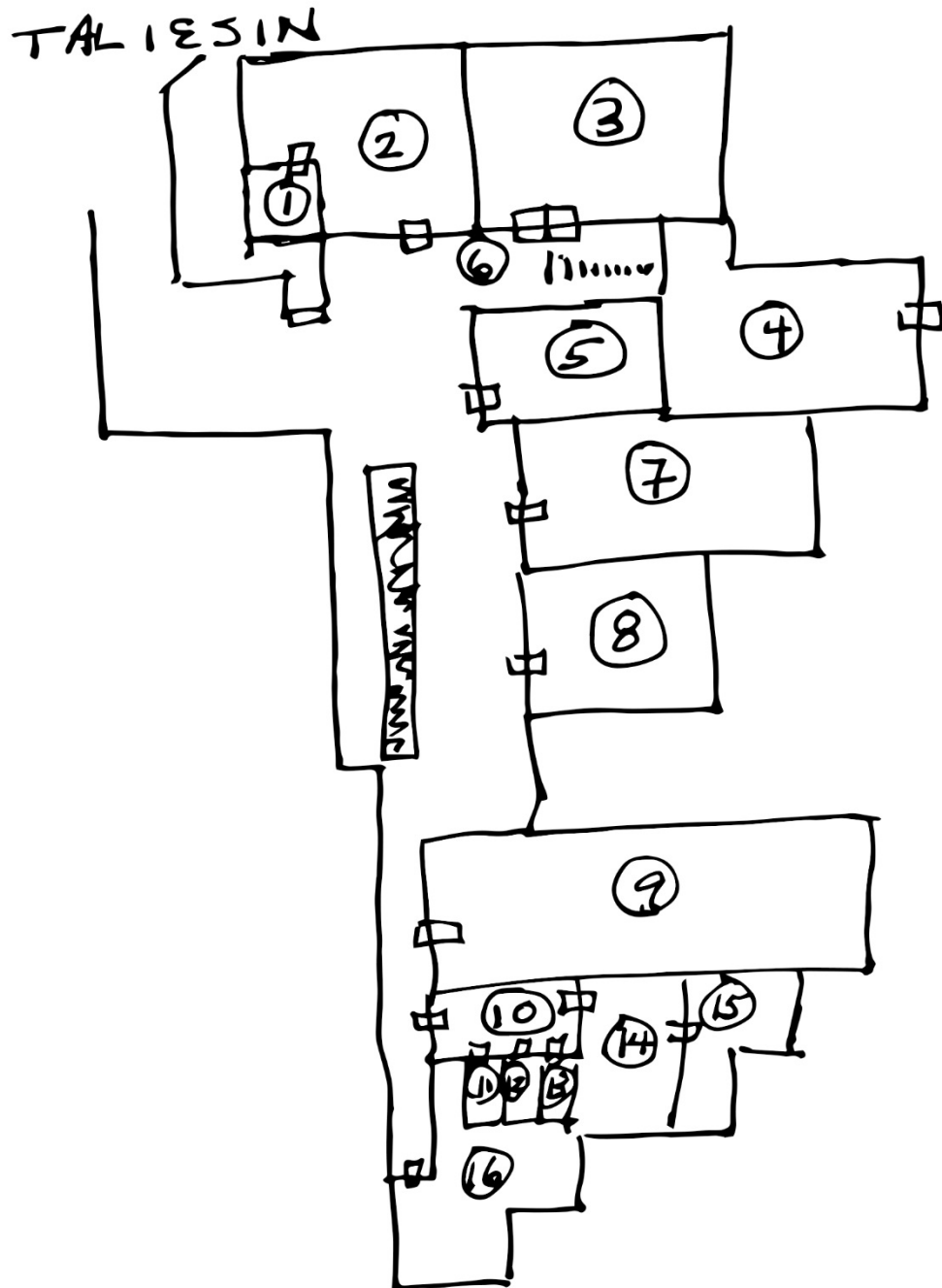
(B) LAKE WINNEBAGO MONSTER

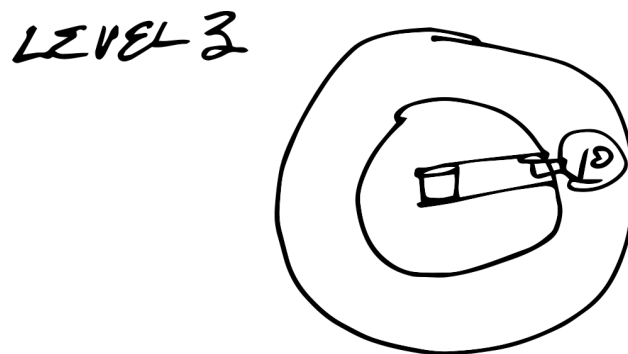
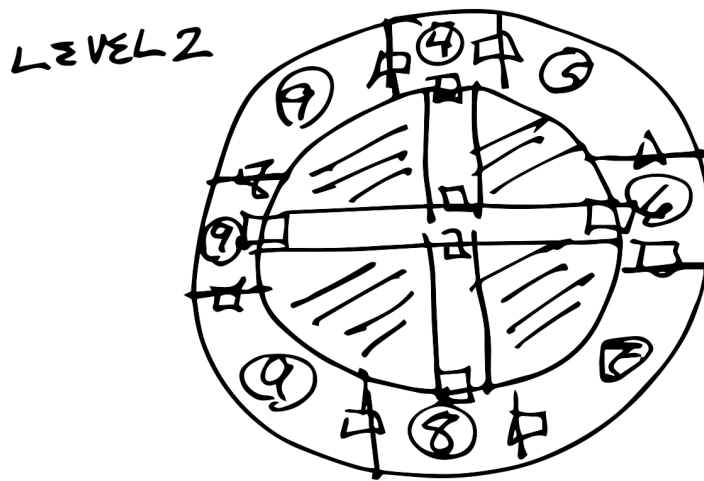
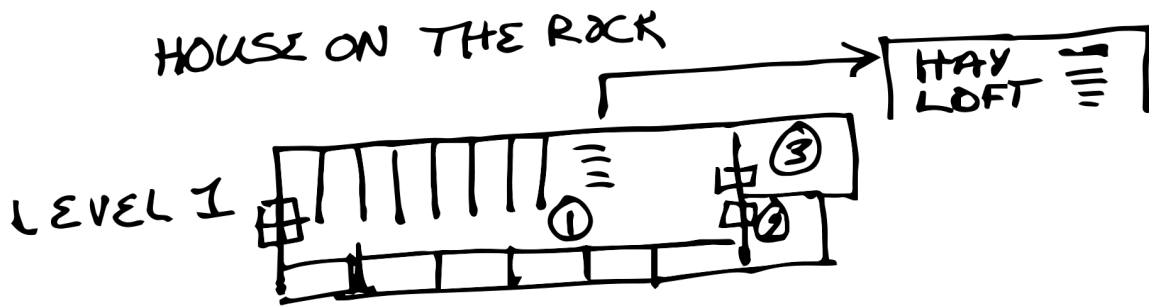
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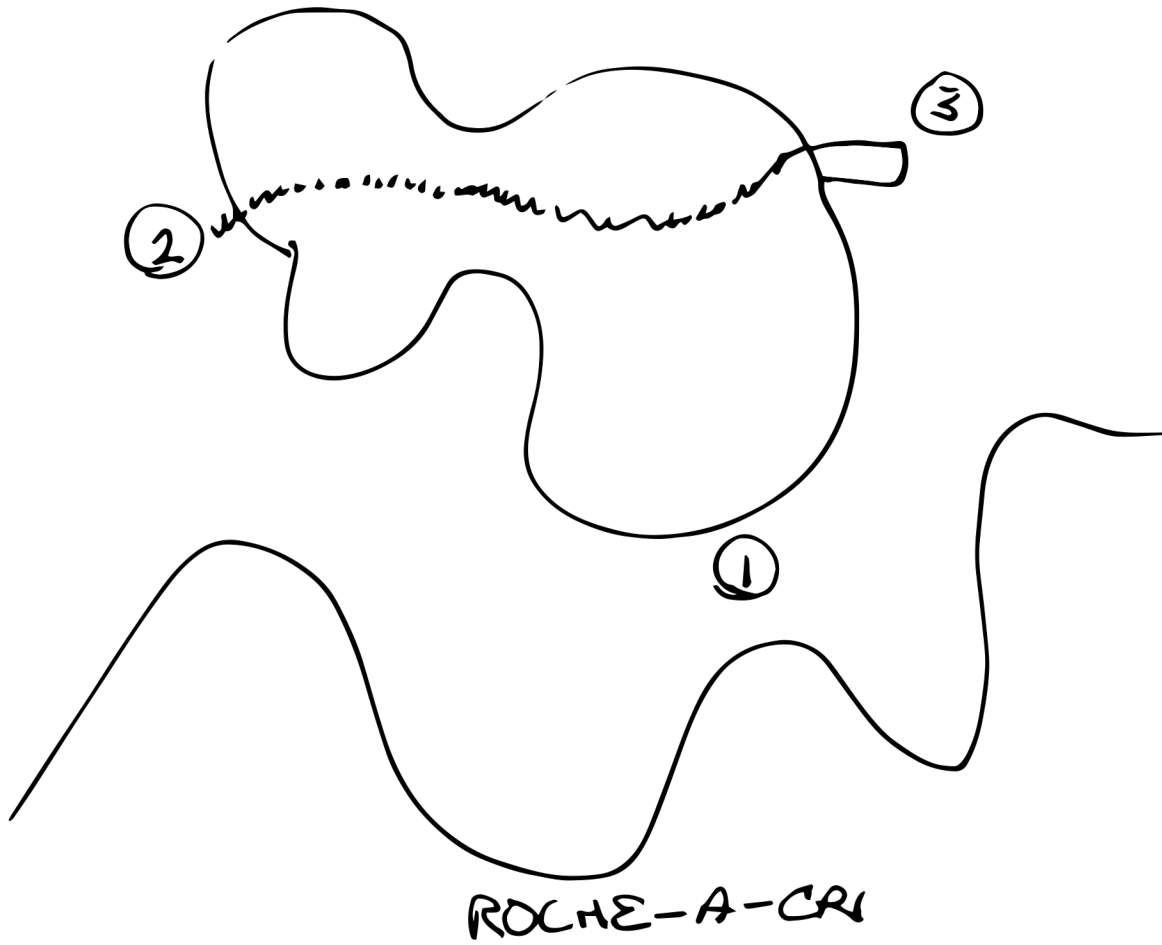
- ① PORTAL IN/OUT
BOAT RENTAL 500 GP
- ② BOAT RENTAL 150 GP
- ③ BOAT RENTAL 150 GP
- ④ BOAT RENTAL 100 GP





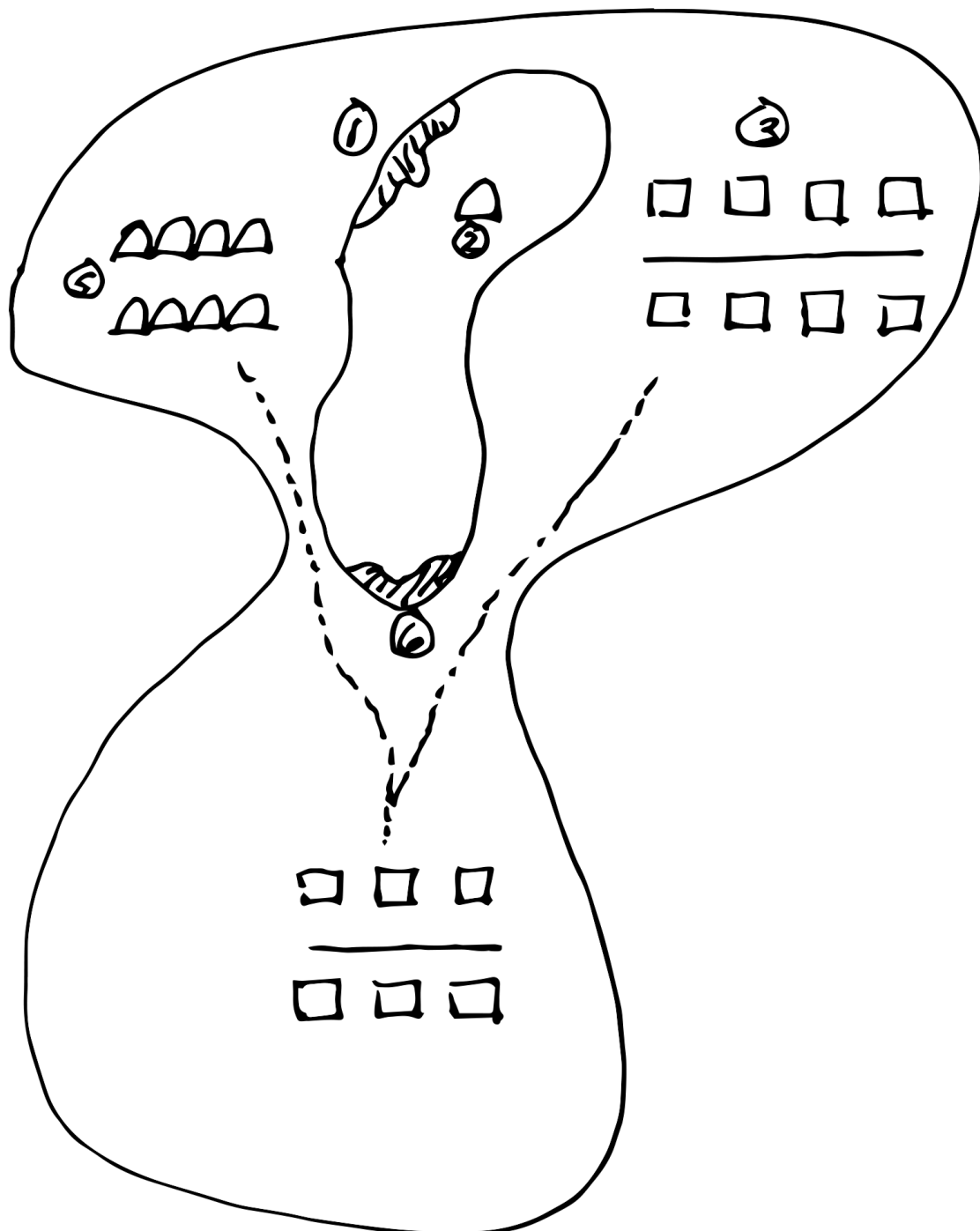


ROCHE-A-CRI





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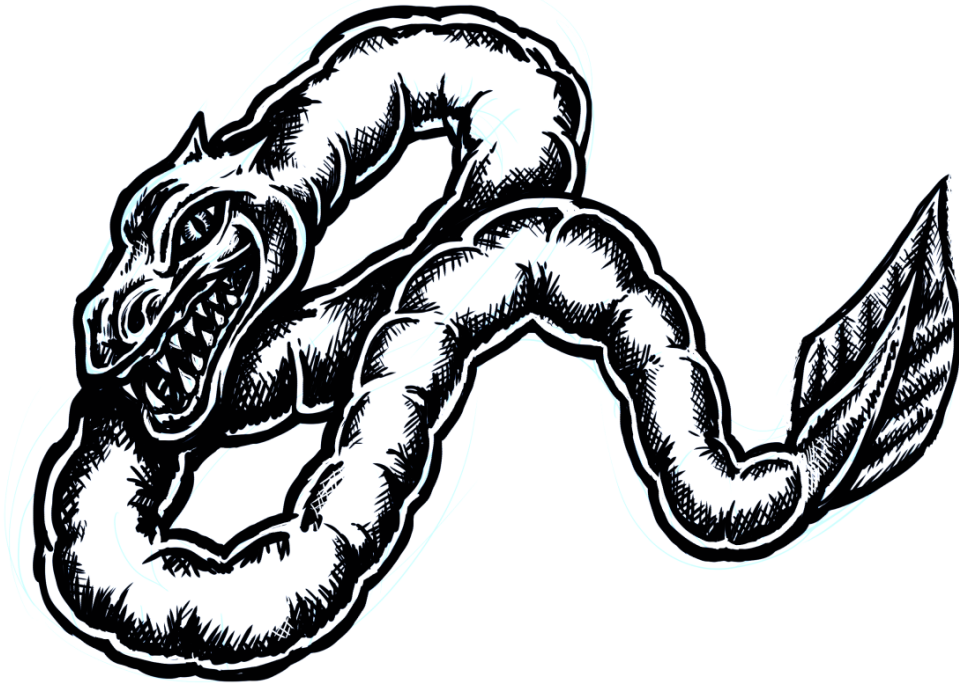


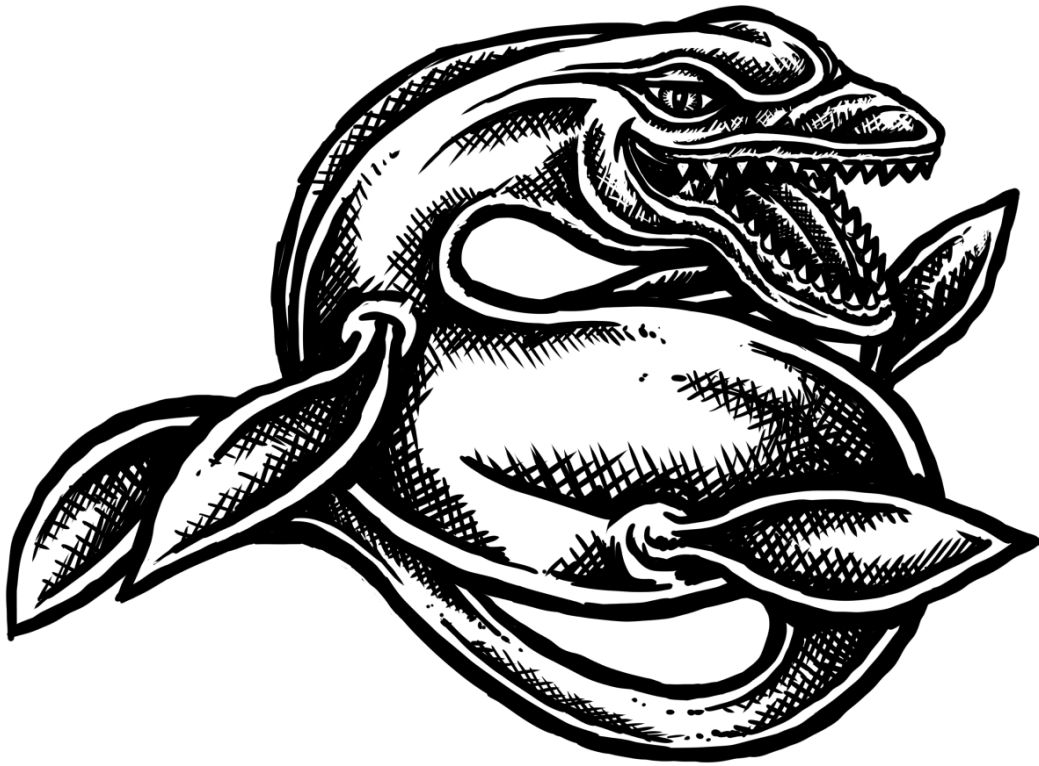


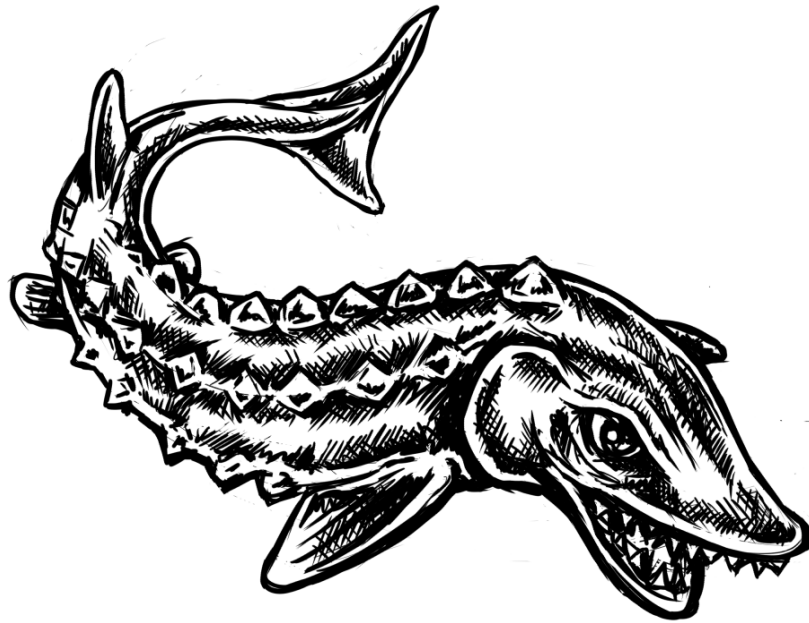












Appendix B: Characters, NPCs and New (Non-Mythical) Monsters

Lord and Lady Vance

Humanoid, Chaotic

Armor Class	12 (natural armor)
Hit Points	230 (20d12+100)
Speed	50'; 50' flying; 50' swimming

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
29 (+9)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	19 (+4)

Skills	Perception +10
Senses	True sight: 60', Passive Perception: 20
Challenge	16 (15,000 XP)
Resistance	cold; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical weapons
Immunities	lightning, thunder

ACTIONS

Multiattack	Two lightning sword attacks; +14; Hit: 40 (9d6+9) lightning damage Two wind javelin attacks; automatic hit; Hit: 19 (3d6+9), piercing
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Father René Menard

Father René will introduce himself as a missionary who has gotten lost from the rest of his party many weeks ago. He is tired (and will require a long rest). He has his weapons, magic items, and little else. The party will need to share basic staples, like rations, with him. Father René fears that his party assumes he is dead and likely has given up looking for him. He will be quite eager to join the party.

Human, Missionary (Treat as Cleric); 6th Level

Armor Class	20 (studded leather)	Initiative	+10
Hit Points	55 (7 d10 hit dice)	Proficiency	+3
Speed	30'		

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (0)	20 (+5)	14 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws	Str +3, Dexterity +8
Skills	Animal Handling +5, Nature +5, Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8, Survival +5
Senses	passive wisdom: 12
Languages	common, elvish, goblin, orc
Favored Terrain	Forest
Favored Enemies	Humanoids, +2

Weapon	ATK Bonus	Damage
Crossbow	+10	d8+7
Longsword	+9	d8+5 (or d10 if 2-handed)
Shortsword	+9	d6+5

Fighting Style	Archery
Hunter's Prey:	Horde Breaker (make 2 nd attack on another creature within 5' of prev. target)

Boots of Elvenkind	Silence, advantage on stealth saves
Ring of Protection +1	+1 on all saving throws

Spellcasting (save DC 12; +4 to hit with spell attacks)

ACTIONS

Spells:

Cantrips: Minor Illusion

1st level (4 slots): Hail of thorns, goodberry, cure wounds, hunter's mark

2nd level (3 slots): Silence, find traps

Chief Wapuka

Chief Wapuka will be found in the forest by himself. He will tell the party that he is gathering herbs and plants for healing ceremonies. He will also share that he is fearful of whatever monster is haunting the part of the adventure where you would like Chief Wapuka to first appear, and he will gladly join the party if asked. As the adventure continues, Chief Wapuka will occasionally express frustration and wanting to find a way back to his village. However, the system of portals will offer him no opportunity but to try and conclude the quest in the hopes of finally finding his way back home.

Human, Scout/Shaman (Treat as Druid); 3rd Level

Armor Class	15 (leather)	Initiative	+2
Hit Points	30 (3 d8 hit dice)	Proficiency	+2
Speed	30'		

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws	Int +4, Wis +6
Skills	Insight +6, Medicine +6, Religion +4, Survival +6
Senses	passive wisdom: 18
Languages	common, druidic, goblin, gnomish

Weapon	ATK Bonus	Damage
Quarterstaff	+4	1d6+2
Dart	+4	1d4+2

Leather armor (11)
 Shield (+2)
 Darts (10)

Can use **wild shape** as a bonus action

Spellcasting (save DC 14; +6 to hit with spell attacks)

ACTIONS

Spells:

Cantrips:	Thorn whip (1d6), resistance
1 st :	Goodberry, speak with animals, animal friendship, charm person
2 nd :	Darkvision, find traps

Giant Sturgeon

Large Fish, Unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10D8+30)

Speed 40' swimming

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +5

Senses Blindsight: 60', Passive Perception: 15

Languages

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

ACTIONS

At will: command, create, or destroy water; control species native to fresh water.

Voice of the Sturgeon: The sturgeon can roar through the water with a thunderous voice heard within 300'. Creatures must succeed on a DC 14 CHA saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. As frightened roll 1 D4 and the character will flee:

- UP
- DOWN
- AWAY
- AWAY

Frightened characters can repeat their saving throw every turn.

Non-Player Character and Random Monster Table

This adventure is premised on a very small number of creatures that can be lethal if not contained. However, as the party progresses, the module assumes that the GM might decrease the vital scores of creatures; it does not account for parties that require additional challenges.

While intended to be guidelines, the following can be used to add additional “nuisance” creatures and NPCs to provide additional challenges, as a party might require for an engaging and thrilling adventure.

Dungeon

Type	Number	AC	HP	Damage	XP	Treasure	Other
Bats, Swarm	1	12	22	+4, 2d4	50	None	n/a
Cloak, Empty	2-3	13	45	+6, 1d8+4	100	Cloak +1	n/a
Rats, Swarm	1	10	24	+2, 2d6	50	None	n/a
Spider	4-6	12	1	+4, 1d4	10	None	n/a

Grassland and Forest

Type	Number	AC	HP	Damage	XP	Treasure	Other
Bandit	1-3	12	11	+3 1d6+1	25	Leather, sword	Flees easily
Snake, Poisonous	1	13	2	+5, 2d4	25	None	DC 10 save; half if save
Thug	1-3	11	32	+4, 1d6+2	100	Leather, clubs	Will attempt intimidation; flees easily
Tree, Awakened	1-2	13	59	+6, 3d6+4	450	None	n/a
Weasel	3-6	13	1	+5, 1 HP	10	None	n/a
Wolf	2-4	13	11	+4, 2d4+2	50	None	Pact Tactics

Graveyard and Crypt

Type	Number	AC	HP	Damage	XP	Treasure	Other
Bat, Giant	3-4	13	22	+4, 1d6+2	50	None	n/a
Moss Lurker	1-2	15	45	+4, 1d6+2	200	10gp each	n/a
Spider, Giant	1-2	14	26	+5, 1d8+3	200	None	n/a
Wick, Living	1-2	13	28	+2, 1d6	50	None	n/a

Water

Type	Number	AC	HP	Damage	XP	Treasure	Other
Crab, Giant	2-3	15	13	+3, 1d6+1	25	None	n/a
Fish, Large	2-4	12	22	+4, 1d8+2	100	Teeth (1gp)	Per tooth, up to 10 per shark
Octopus	2-3	12	3	+4, 1 HP	10	None	n/a
Shark, Hunter	1-2	12	45	+6, 2d8+4	450	None	n/a

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