



Voices from the Deep

“Give us what we want or more ships will be sunk and crews taken,” say monsters from the deep.

The authorities might give in. Somebody needs to stop them.

Part 2 of the Terror from the Deep trilogy.

A 4-Hour Adventure for 11th-16th Level Characters



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Introduction

Welcome to *Voices from the Deep*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system.

This adventure starts in the town of Hulburg, then moves out into the Moonsea. Kraken-worshipping monsters from the depths have taken prisoners, whom the characters must rescue from a magical, watery prison at the bottom of the sea.

This adventure is designed for three to seven 11th to 16th level characters and is optimized for five characters with an average party level (APL) of 14th. Characters outside this level range can't participate in this adventure.

Adjusting the Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions for adjusting for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise more powerful than the adventure is optimized for (14th level). You're not bound to these adjustments; they're for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the levels of all the characters and divide by the number of characters, rounding .5 or greater up. This number is the group's APL. To gauge party strength, consult the Party Strength table.

Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

Encounters offer adjustments for party strength. If a recommendation isn't appropriate for your group, you don't have to adjust.

Before Play

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes on what you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.

- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure such as note cards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battle maps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure, such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, and so on.

Dungeon Mastering

You have an important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. To play your role, keep the following in mind:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure. Adjusting or improvising is encouraged, provided you maintain the adventure's spirit. This empowerment doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however. Rules should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your players, not the characters. Try to feel out or ask what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues so players can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting frustrated over a lack of information. Give players little victories for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling. Play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

One way to move the action ahead is to give the players an easy time mopping up minions. The sea spawn and merrow in this adventure fit into that category. It's better for a monster that's not a feature creature in an encounter to die a little early than it is to account for every hit point.

Adventure Primer

Hulburg

Hulburg is built on ruins. Like other settlements in the perilous Moonsea region, Hulburg has been sacked, abandoned, and resettled several times. Lord Eorl Hulmaster, a greedy noble from Mulmaster, established the new town and owns much of it.

Amid the ruins, Hulmaster, his followers, and other settlers have established a manor, a residential area, and a harbor. The manor is a wooden fortress on the edge of the ruins. Hulmaster and his retainers live within the manor, but the lord's family still lives in Mulmaster.

Tent City, as the locals call the residential area, is a 2-mile trek through ruins from the manor. A sprawl of ramshackle structures, many made of cloth, Tent City rests on a flat bluff overlooking the Moonsea. Most citizens live and work in this area, which has a deep well and is built on the ruins of a stone fortress.

On the shore below and south of Tent City is the Harbor District. A trail leads down to the harbor from Tent City, through a wooden palisade. Most buildings in the harbor are of a permanent sort, including guard posts, a tariff office, and warehouses owned and run by Lord Hulmaster.

Hulburg life is frontier life. Most people struggle day to day, working as miners in Hulmaster's gem mine in the northeastern hills, or as porters or other sorts of laborers. Crime is common, as is vigilante justice. The lord's soldiers are inadequate to keep the peace. Organized gangs fill the void, keeping a semblance of order, each gang looking out for its own.

Background

Previously in Hulburg (see *HULB3-1*, *HULB3-2* and *HULB3-3*), an alhoon named Berach meddled with tar stones, a strange mineral found in Hulmaster's gem mines. The mind-flayer lich's actions inadvertently weakened the barrier erected around an ancient rift to the Far Realm. This weakening, in turn, awakened the rift's guardians and their master, a mighty aboleth named Zuilp'ithuh. The guardian wants the rift closed once again.

The albino aboleth Zuilp'ithuh is an odd guardian. Somehow its fate is tied to the rift, and it is obsessed with keeping it sealed (as its destruction has proved impossible). Its motivation is unclear. If asked, depending on its mood, it might explain that it likes Faerûn, as it is without the chaotic taint of the Far Realm, or else that long ago somebody placed an unbreakable *geas* on it. The true origin might even be hidden from the perfect memory of the aboleth.

Regardless, by now it has become a matter of pride, and Zuilp'ithuh will not allow the seals to crack and the rift to open, no matter what. It is still a monster though, using whatever means necessary to achieve its goal, including mass murder and dark rituals.

The aboleth sensed that an artifact within the ruins of Hulburg, the *Orb of Creation*, was the cause. Zuilp'ithuh sent minions into Hulburg to acquire the orb, as well as sacrifices needed for a ritual to reseal the rift.

This adventure follows the events of *HULB04-1 Whispers from the Deep*. In that scenario, adventurers investigated the disappearance of the aboleth's minions in the ruins around new Hulburg. A cult of the demon prince Dagon had the orb. Zuilp'ithuh's forces sought to reclaim the orb from the cult. Events in this adventure assume the investigators retrieved the orb, which ended up in the hands of Hulburg authorities.

Zuilp'ithuh wants the orb. The aboleth sought out descendants of its ancient servants among worshipers of Varklothan, a kraken asleep in the Moonsea's depths. Zuilp'ithuh played on the instinctive impulse buried in those descendants to serve it and convinced the cult leader, Kwalos, that the aboleth and the kraken cult want the same thing.

Six ships have disappeared near Hulmaster in the past month. Only two ships headed for the port made it through. Surrounded by dangerous wilderness, Hulmaster can't rely on overland shipping. Supplies run low. Worse in Lord Hulmaster's mind, cargo sits on the docks or in warehouses, making him no coin.

The last ship to come in rescued a lone sailor, Vel Gahnto, from the deep, who delivered an ultimatum: no ship will make port in Hulmaster until the *Orb of Creation* is delivered to the monsters who have taken the passengers of the lost ships as prisoners.

Series

HULB4-2 Voices from the Deep is the second part in the **Terror from the Deep** trilogy, in which the characters deal with the minion of the aboleth Zuilp'ithuh in its attempt to reseal an ancient rift into the Far Realm.

The first part is *HULB4-1 Whispers from the Deep* in which the characters learn something fishy is going on, involving monsters of the deep. In the third part, *HULB4-3 Call of the Deep*, the adventurers deal directly with the aboleth, although whether they make an alliance and help reseal the rift or choose another path is up to the characters.

It is assumed the characters play the trilogy in order. If the players have not yet played *HULB4-1*, the authorities have no idea what the *Orb of Creation* is. They are trying to find the object while the characters free the victims before it is too late. Playing *HULB4-2*

after the third part makes sense only as a string of flashbacks or a task undertaken by another group.

HULB4 at Winter Fantasy 2018

When HULB4 is run at Winter Fantasy 2018 as part of the DDXP track a fourth adventure is part of the series: *HULB4-S Shouts from the Deep*. The adventures run in the following order:

- *HULB4-S Shouts from the Deep*
- *HULB4-1 Whispers from the Deep*
- *HULB4-2 Voices from the Deep*
- *HULB4-3 Call of the Deep*

Overview

This adventure runs in a linear fashion at the start, getting the characters to the site quickly. After that, the path of exploration is up to them.

Part 1. Meeting. The characters have a meeting with their patrons. Mara introduces Vel, whom they might realize is more than he seems. A *folding boat* is offered as a tool and potential reward.

Part 2. Ambush. The group makes it to the site. Creatures from the deep emerge to attack.

Part 3. Deep Gaol. Walls of rock, coral, and magical bubbles make up the prison, and magic gates seal in the prisoners along with interloping would-be rescuers. A massive magical effect covers the whole area in airy water, making it a lot easier to survive for surface dwellers (see part 3 for details).

One or more characters must absorb the gaol's keys (the *jewel keys*, see the section of that title in part 3) from the guardians in order to open the central shrine, destroy the dungeon, and gain freedom.

Part 4. Shrine of Varklothan. In the Deep Gaol's main shrine, the kraken priest Kwalos uses the power of his sleeping "god" to maintain the dungeon and hold its prisoners for use in Zuilp'ithuh's ritual.

Conclusion. When the dungeon collapses, airy water dissipates upward, carrying air breathers with it. The characters can then make their way back to Hulburg. Goreth Toothless meets the returning rescuers and warns of unnatural developments in the ruins of Old Hulburg, setting up the next adventure.

Hooks

Danatar Ahrendsen sends for characters who helped Hulburg in the past (especially those who played *HULB4-1*), asking them to meet on an upcoming evening in the Ships Guildhall. Those who've been in town for a while already know the rumors about the missing ships and Vel Gahnto. Danatar says the meeting concerned a plan to, once again, help solve the problems facing Hulburg.

If the characters have disparate ties or little past with Hulburg, they can still be drawn into the adventure with ease. Danatar seeks out reputable heroes, and such powerful adventurers fit the bill.

Alternatively, the characters could be approached by faction contacts, such as Mara Betry (Zhentarim), Janus Grainger (Order of the Gauntlet), or Goreth Toothless (Emerald Enclave). Janus also reaches out to members of the Lords' Alliance. Lord Hulmaster is considering giving in to the monsters' demands, so he needs to be kept out of the loop on this plan.

In addition, any of the NPCs might contact Harpers, or a mysterious note might appear in a Harper character's room or belongings. Such a note encourages the Harper to join the mission to save the prisoners and discover what Hulburg's antagonists are up to.

If you need to introduce any important NPCs as part of the hooks, the "Meeting" section used to start the adventure describes each one.

Locations and NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature in this adventure.

Danatar Ahrendsen (DAH-n uh-tahr AH-rend-sehn). Danatar is an archmage. He had a mental breakdown in HULB3, where his mind was fractured through a mind flayer's magic only to be restored through the hard work of the adventurers. Danatar hasn't fully recovered from this ordeal.

Zuilp'ithuh (ZU-ilp-IT-huh). The powerful and ancient aboleth, Zuilp'ithuh is the guardian of a sealed rift into the Far Realm in Hulburg's ruins. Zuilp'ithuh wants to keep the rift sealed and needs the *Orb of Creation* to do so. The aboleth is a monster, though, caring little about how it achieves its goals.

Zuilp'ithuh doesn't appear in this adventure, but some of the creatures in the shrine of Varklothan have seen it or know its name, and they know they have kidnapped the sailors for it.

Shrine of Varklothan (VAHRK-loe-thahn). Most of the adventure is set in a temple dedicated to the sleeping kraken Varklothan. The underwater site is covered in a magical effect that makes it possible for people to breathe there. Within, cultists work for Zuilp'ithuh, convinced they have a shared purpose. They're correct, in a way, since the kraken wouldn't want an open rift to the Far Realm.

Kwalos (KWAH-loss). Kwalos is a tall, spiny, and tentacled sea spawn who despises air-breathers. Arrogant and domineering, he leads the cult within the Shrine of Varklothan. Feared and respected by his fellow cultists, he is convinced helping Zuilp'ithuh serves his lord's purpose.

Part 1 – Meeting

When the players are ready, their characters gather at the Ships Guildhall to meet with their patrons.

You arrive at the Ships Guildhall overlooking the docks in the Harbor District to meet your potential patrons: Mara Betry, leader of the Ships Guild; Danatar Ahrendsen, a civic-minded mage; and Janus Granger, a priest of Tyr and representative of the Order of the Gauntlet. Past the front entrance, which leads to a rowdy bar and a boarding house, is a stairway on the outside of the building. The building and stairs switch from stone to wood on the upper story. A wooden door on the upper landing rings a ship's bell as it opens. Beyond is a large room that's a combination office and meeting hall.

Conspirators

Use the following sections to describe and portray the NPCs. These people know about the lost ships and the demand from the deep, and each has a different personal take on the situation. Mara, Danatar, and Janus agree that Lord Hulmaster must be preempted in appeasing the extortionists. They've circumvented his authority in organizing this meeting and mission.

Mara Betry

MAH-rah Bet-REE

Mara Betry sits at a rough desk. A human with tawny skin, she's tall, robust, and fit. She dresses in colorful, loose clothing and tasteful jewelry befitting a merchant of comfortable means. Silver streaks her bushy, raven hair. Her blue eyes are sharp and wise, crow's feet forming around them when she smiles as you enter. She stands.

Mara quickly introduces the others in the room.

A Damaran, Mara is clear-spoken, gregarious, and discerning. As leader of the strongest gang in the Harbor District (the Ships Guild), and a former merchant captain, she has a reputation for fairness, efficiency, and smarts. Danatar came to Mara to set up this mission. Mara sees it as an opportunity to protect the city, gain respect and power, and teach Hulburg's enemies to leave the town alone.

Danatar Ahrendsen

DAH-uh-tahr AH-rend-sehn

If the players know Danatar, you can describe him in less detail.

Danatar, a middle-aged human with tan skin, leans on a gnarled walking stick in front of Mara's desk. He wears disheveled, faded robes over his tall, thin frame and a turban on his head. Numerous pouches hang from his shoulders and belt. His salt-and-pepper beard and eyebrows are wild, but his brown eyes are cheerful.

Danatar, a Chondathan archmage, is amiable but frail. He's willing to share his knowledge without getting lost in minor details, although he usually knows those details. Danatar wants to prevent Lord Hulmaster from giving the *Orb of Creation* to the kidnappers by any means necessary.

Janus Grainger

JAH-nus GRAIN-ger

An elderly human standing at the desk corner opposite Danatar, Janus is bald, clean shaven, wizened, and pale, but his bearing is that of a warrior. He wears a fine arming coat and trousers, as well as a knightly cloak, and has a longsword with an ornate scabbard and grip at his belt.

Janus is kind and generous, but he stubbornly holds that Hulburg cannot give in to terror. Therefore, he supports Danatar's plan to rescue the abductees and bring justice to their abductors. He cares less about the *Orb* itself than the principle of resisting evil.

Vel Gahnto

VEL GAHN-toe

Vel is the sailor who delivered the ultimatum.

Vel is a young human with tan skin and uncombed brown hair and beard. His dark eyes are wide and haunted. Wearing loose sailor's garb, he sits awkwardly in a wooden chair to Mara's right. The scarf around his head allows his spiky hair to poke through the top.

Vel is awkward and emotionally flat, like he's still in shock. Make sure the players notice he's weird—see the "Development" section. Truthfully, he claims to hail from Mulmaster. He lies about sailing on the *Slippery Quipper*, a merchant cog out of that city lost on the way to Hulburg. In truth, Vel is a **deep scion** in league with the villains. He came to Hulburg as a spy, and with an inside position on this mission, he plans to make sure it fails.

Discussion

Mara tries to move ahead with the meeting.

After introductions, Mara says, “Now that everyone knows everyone, let’s get down to business.”

Just as she finishes, the door opens with another tolling of the ship’s bell. A bent figure shrouded in hides and fur decorated with feathers and bones, carrying more pouches than Danatar, shuffles in backward, closing the door. The smell of earth and herbs wafts through the room. Mumbling, the figure slowly turns, revealing a grey face surrounded on all sides by bushy white hair. A half-orc.

“Yes, yes, I’m late. I know,” he says, waving a wrinkled hand while looking upward.

Everyone stares, except Janus, who looks at Mara and Danatar apologetically. “This is Goreth Toothless,” Janus says. “I told you about him. He’s . . . a friend.”

Goreth notices everyone else for the first time. He smiles a toothless grin and says, “Oh, yes . . . that’s me . . . uh . . . greetings. Don’t let me interrupt.”

Goreth is a half-orc druid who came to the ruins of Hulburg because he sensed something otherworldly stirring. He is wise and perceptive, but he hears spirits and reacts to them, making him seem to talk and giggle to himself. He usually camps in the ruins, keeping watch for anything unnatural that might fit his premonitions.

Details

Mara gives the group a list of the ships lost (use Handout 1), then focuses on Vel, prompting him to tell his story. He describes the Deep Gaol, which is a few hours southeast of Hulburg in good sailing conditions. The area is hard to miss once viewed: a wide stretch of sea that bubbles and froths in an unnatural way. The prisoners are 120 feet down on the seafloor in a structure of rock, coral, and “airy water” (Vel’s words). Having been inside part of the prison, Vel knows people can breathe and move easily within, but he says he doesn’t remember many details. The monsters referred to a person named Kwalos as their leader, but Vel claims to know only that Kwalos is revered as if he is a religious leader. If he’s questioned further, see the “Development” section.

Mara lays out the plan for the group to rescue the prisoners with Vel as a guide. Danatar offers a *folding boat* (use Handout 2) from one of his pouches, saying the party can keep the device if the mission succeeds. The three patrons agree to provide any mundane gear the group needs. They offer no other payment, though

Mara gives the party salvage rights, so the characters can keep whatever they find.

Mara also suggests teaching the kidnappers a lesson. Janus takes a similar view, although his angle is one of bringing justice to victims and wrongdoers alike. Danatar emphasizes the need to avoid giving monsters the *Orb of Creation*, an artifact that has capabilities no one is quite sure of yet.

Development

Anyone who asks and makes a DC 21 Wisdom (Insight) check against Vel gets the feeling something is off about him. His nervousness is infectious. Further, if something that should elicit an emotional response happens, he reacts a moment after everyone else, as if watching to see how he should react.

Vel can give details about the dungeon. However, he gives only enough information to satisfy the letter of the question and tells half-truths to hide what he really knows. He’s quick with a reason why he doesn’t know more, such as not seeing much, being held long, or being afraid. If Vel is questioned and less than forthcoming about details, a character who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check gets the feeling he’s hiding something.

For example, he can’t describe what he thinks of his ship’s captain because he just signed on. He doesn’t know why the monsters chose him to deliver the ultimatum—they just did. He doesn’t know what the *Slippery Quipper* was carrying and doesn’t care. He’s not a merchant or a quartermaster, after all.

Magic can be used on Vel, but he objects, becoming increasingly combative (and still emotionally off) if pressed, saying that he’s not comfortable guiding folk who don’t trust him. Janus sides with him out of kindness, while Danatar and Goreth observe. Mara sides with those who want to use magic if their request is reasonable.

A couple spells are important. If someone can use *detect thoughts* on Vel, his surface thoughts eventually reveal his true nature. *Detect magic* can detect the *jewel key* Vel’s forehead skin absorbed when he changed into human form (an effect of the inability to remove an attuned *jewel key*). No one can see the key directly unless he resumes his true form.

If Vel thinks his ruse is about to be exposed, he flees to the docks, so he can escape into the sea. He takes on his true form if he must, using Psychic Screech to put other NPCs out of commission for a round. Don’t roll saving throws for the NPCs; instead, put them out of commission so the players can be the focus.

Vel is willing to die rather than be captured and interrogated. If he is caught alive, Vel is unwilling to reveal much. He believes the would-be rescuers will

die if they go to the Deep Gaol. Vel also knows who Kwalos is, where the shrine is, and how the *jewel key* works, but he knows few other details. He doesn't know about the *jewel key's* curse.

When the characters notice the *jewel key*, you can read or paraphrase the following text:

A blue-black crystal the size of a plum pulses in the center of the creature's forehead, parts of it squirming like tiny tentacles.

Those who defeat Vel can claim his *jewel key*. See the next section for details on the item.

Jewel Keys

Guardians in the dungeon have *jewel keys* implanted in their bodies. These dark crystals of coherent, inky water pulse and swirl, changing shape slightly as they do. The keys are obviously magical; *detect magic* reveals an aura of transmutation magic.

Someone who holds a jewel key and focuses attention on it senses it must be attuned to a specific creature to be used. Attuning takes 1 minute of concentration and causes the key to implant in the attuned being's forehead, moving like a tentacled creature and flowing like water around worn objects to do so. An attuned being is a key-bearer until the attunement ends.

A key-bearer can end the attunement by repeating the attunement process with the desire to end attunement. Death also ends the attunement. However, see the "Curse" section.

When the attunement ends, the *jewel key* can be removed from the former bearer easily, as if the key were a quartz crystal.

The effects of attuning to the *jewel key* do not stack with other magical items, it does not take up an item slot, and attuning a *key* does not count against a character's attuned item limit.

Benefits

Being attuned to a *jewel key* has benefits that magic such as the *identify* spell can reveal. A key-bearer learns these benefits once attuned. An air-breathing key-bearer can breathe water, and vice versa. If the key-bearer lacks a swim speed, the bearer gains one equal to its walking speed. The *jewel key* can't be removed from a key-bearer while it's attuned.

Each key also allows its key-bearer to open sealed gates in the dungeon. Without attunement, *jewel keys* can't perform this function. Three attuned *jewel keys*

are required to open the gate to the shrine, although one creature could choose to attune to all three keys.

Curse

A key-bearer who doesn't serve and worship in Kwalos' cult is subjected to a curse. This curse becomes apparent only when its effect occurs. A cursed bearer can't regain hit points unless mostly underwater. While not so immersed, a bearer takes 1 acid damage every 10 minutes. In the airy water, neither effect is apparent. The bearer is also vulnerable to psychic damage and has disadvantage on saving throws against effects created by creatures loyal to Kwalos' cult that can render the bearer frightened. In key-bearers, such powers invoke vague visions of massive tentacles writhing in muck and dark water, glimpses of sleeping Varklothan.

Removing the curse from a key-bearer breaks the attunement to the *jewel key*, ending the benefits and curse. If the group defeats Kwalos in the shrine, they destroy the Deep Gaol's focus, which collapses the structure and destroys the *jewel keys*. However, in this case, or if attunement ends without the curse being removed, the submersion-based effects of the curse linger while the erstwhile bearer remains inside the Deep Gaol and for 24 hours thereafter.

Kwalos's defeat removes a key's magic. It runs from an attuned creature's head like ink and water.

Part 2. Ambush

The characters depart whenever they want. Mara suggests starting early in the morning.

If the characters might unmask Vel during the trip, he leaps into the water if threatened, using *psychic screech* there to warn his master, Kwalos.

If Vel is with the group, he points out when they near the destination, going to the ship's bow.

To introduce this encounter, read or paraphrase the following text:

The sailing is easy, with wind out of the east and the weather clear. The vessel makes good time to the southeast. Four hours after setting out from Hulburg, you arrive. Amid the gentle swells, the sea bubbles and froths.

Establish a few facts. Ask the players what their characters do as they arrive, and establish where each character is on the boat. The group should also decide whether they allow the ship to sail into the bubbling water.

Shortly thereafter, characters who have a passive Perception of 15 or higher and are at the side of the ship's deck notice the water near their vessel churns with activity: shapes move below the surface just before the upcoming attack. A character who doesn't notice is surprised when . . .

Pale orange tentacles erupt from the water. Something big slams the boat, rocking it violently. Fishlike humanoids, some with patches of translucent skin, start to board your vessel.

Characters must make DC 10 Dexterity saving throws; those who fail fall prone, and, anyone who fails by 5 or more is thrown into the water. Vel tumbles soundlessly over the bow intentionally.

A sea-spawned **froghemoth** with coloration like that of an octopus attacks from under the *folding boat*. Six **sea spawn** board the vessel as well. Vel changes into his true **deep scion** form and surfaces to call for help near the side of the vessel where it's hard to see him without leaning over the gunwale. He attacks anyone trying to help him, dragging an opponent overboard (DC 13 Strength saving throw). Otherwise, he climbs back into the boat to join the fray.

If necessary, use boxed text from the "Meeting" section to reveal and describe Vel's *jewel key*.

Odd Appearances

Astute characters who know about deep spawn and scions should realize the monsters' translucent skin is

odd. If a player asks about the skin, a character who has proficiency in Arcana or Nature can identify this sign of an aboleth's touch with a successful DC 15 Intelligence check using the associated skill.

Tactics

The froghemoth and Vel are the feature creatures. So, for simplicity's sake, all the sea spawn bite.

Monsters aim to force the characters into the sea and capture the group for later sacrifice. A running battle might ensue in which some characters are dragged toward the dungeon while others give chase. A pursuit likely occurs eventually regardless: if the froghemoth is reduced to fewer than half hit points, it withdraws to the dungeon gate. Other monsters follow.

Use the rules for underwater combat from chapter 9 of the *Player's Handbook* if needed. Don't let those rules slow play for too long, though. Even if fighting starts in regular water, the battle should move to airy water as soon as possible. See the "Airy Water" section for details on this water.

Adjustments

This encounter is intended to be on the easy side of medium, so few adjustments should be made for strong groups. Weaker parties need more help. In any case, you can start with fewer sea spawn and add more if the fight seems too easy.

Very Weak. *Multiattack* allows the froghemoth to make one tentacle attack and one tongue or bite attack. It has 120 hit points. If the characters have a hard time damaging it, have its retreat occur sometime in the fourth round no matter what its hit points. The fight starts with three sea spawn.

Weak. Limit the froghemoth as above, except it has 150 hit points. On its second turn, and every other turn thereafter, its *Multiattack* functions normally. The fight starts with four sea spawn.

Strong. Replace four sea spawn with merrow.

Very Strong. Add a scrag to the assault. However, monitor the battle so the scrag doesn't add too much difficulty.

Development

This encounter ends once the monsters flee. If all the monsters die before fleeing, a localized vortex draws Vel's corpse down toward the dungeon gate below (area 1 on the map). Characters can follow to the dungeon entrance 120 feet below the surface. When they do, go to **Part 3**.

If no one takes an opportunity to retrieve the *folding boat*, the vessel sinks, unharmed, just behind the characters and can be easily claimed. The players shouldn't be allowed to lose it.

Airy Water

The dungeon and waters surrounding it have peculiar properties referred to as *airy water*. This magically altered water allows creatures, whether terrestrial or aquatic, to operate as if in their native environment. Kwalos channels this mighty magic from the dreams of the kraken Varklothan, focusing it in the dungeon's central shrine. The magic can be undone only there.

The following features apply to *airy water*:

Breathing

A creature that can breathe air or water can breathe in *airy water*. If a creature needs to be immersed in water, it is immersed while in the *airy water*. A creature that would be adversely affected by immersion in water is not so affected in *airy water*.

Vision

Airy water doesn't distort or impact vision. Sunlight penetrates to the seafloor at the dungeon site.

Movement

In *airy water*, movement depends on what types of speed a creature has. In any case, creatures can move in three dimensions. A creature that has a swim speed or fly speed can use that speed in the *airy water* as if swimming or flying, respectively. Without a swim speed, a creature can swim at full speed if it succeeds on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. This check is unnecessary if the creature can pull itself along a surface—such creatures can climb at full speed. On the seafloor, a creature can move at its walking speed.

A creature in *airy water* takes no damage from falling. *Airy water* supports a falling creature like water normally does.

Combat

Despite being underwater, combat in *airy water* uses no special rules. The intent is that the characters can move and fight normally, and if they wish, they can move in three dimensions. Some terrain that would normally be difficult or otherwise problematic to access can be used more easily. This feature is intended to make the adventure fun and should not prove frustrating for players.

Details

Mundane fire doesn't burn in *airy water*, but alchemical and magical fire does. Other aspects of reality function more like they occur in air than in water in *airy water*. Dry objects become wet very gradually. Substances not already suspended in the *airy water* mingle with the *airy water* very slowly and poorly. For instance, a person could pour a cup of ale in the *airy water*, and have a cup of ale rather than ale dispersed in or mixed with the surrounding water.

Part 3. Deep Gaol

The party arrives, chasing monsters or their sinking corpses. As the group descends, you can read the following, which the characters can see clearly due to the airy water:

A bizarre structure becomes visible through the bubbles: a labyrinth of coral and rock around a circular area of deeper water. Sunken ships and wreckage rest on the seafloor near this structure.

When the would-be rescuers reach the entrance, give them **Handout 3**. They arrive at the gate into area 1 (see the DM map in **Appendix 3**). Read the following text:

A 12-foot arch carved to resemble spiny tentacles reaching up from the seafloor forms a doorway here. Violet light pulses in the crevices of the carving, and inky liquid squirms in the archway like a living and tentacled thing.

If the characters are pursuing monsters, the creatures turn to make a last stand. A voice booms out of the dungeon in Aquan. Those who don't speak Aquan comprehend the commands on a telepathic level.

Booming from beyond the door, a thunderous voice says, "Subdue them in the name of Varklothan! Return as conquerors or not at all."

Characters who arrive victorious, not in pursuit of any monsters, receive a different greeting. Paraphrase if this greeting comes after the first.

Booming from beyond the door, a thunderous voice says, "Take up the *jewel key* and enter. I know your purpose. You've doomed yourselves by coming here."

Characters who hear one of these greetings for the first time have visions, invoking *deep dread*. Each listener must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. While frightened in this way, a creature won't willingly open or enter the gate. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If no combat is in progress, have frightened characters recover quickly and proceed.

When the characters enter the gate, go to area 1.

Features

The Deep Gaol is full of *airy water*, and it has other common features as described in this section.

Forbiddance

The central shrine is the focus of a *forbiddance* spell, which censures **celestials** and prevents teleportation and planar travel into, but not within or out of, the Deep Gaol. The spell lasts until dispelled, and it can be dispelled only in area 6.

Gates

Sealed gates (G) carved to look like the front gate compartmentalize the Deep Gaol. Inky water in each such archway is hard as iron. *Detect magic* can reveal such a door is potent a combination of abjuration and conjuration magic. The magic of the door is connected to the magic of the whole structure.

A creature can force itself through a gate (other than the one at area 6) with a successful DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check, taking 10 (3d6) force damage whether the check succeeds or fails. However, while moving through the door, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained in the doorway. Any creature that ends its turn restrained in this way takes 10 (3d6) force damage. A restrained target can use an action to make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the creature's choice), escaping on a success.

The *knock* spell can suppress a gate's magic (except for the gate into area 6) for 1 minute, causing a visible change of water cohesion in the door. The tentacled ink remains, however. Moving through the door has effects like successfully forcing through the door with a Strength (Athletics) check.

One *jewel key* can open any of the gates except for the one leading to the shrine (area 6). When a key-bearer uses an action to will a gate open, the ink within the doorway disappears and the gate becomes as pliable as water by the start of the opener's next turn. Concentrating to open a gate is like concentrating on a spell, but doing so also draws opportunity attacks. If the key-bearer takes any action other than moving, the gate closes instantly. A gate remains open while the key-bearer wills it to, as if concentrating on a spell.

Structure

Parts of the Deep Gaol's structure are coral, rock, or ship wreckage. Some of the structures are natural caves, and anyone who has proficiency in Nature knows such caves don't form underwater, so these caves were not always under the Moonsea. Most of the rock is carved with scenes depicting a kraken or other sea monsters attacking ships, settlements, and other monsters. The remains of floor tiles indicate some areas were once leveled and paved.

Many other structures, such as the ceilings (25 feet high unless otherwise noted), are made of magic water 15 feet thick, translucent due to bubbles and hard as stone. Breaking through these barriers without magic is impossible. A *disintegrate* spell can destroy a portion of the wall as if it were any object. A disintegrated wall returns to normal in 1 minute.

The characters can get an impression of the structure from above, hence the **Player Map**. In fact, the group could reconnoiter the dungeon by walking on its roof and looking through, although the view is clear enough to provide only a vague idea of each area's contents. If the characters spend too much time outside the dungeon, Lantor and its followers come to hunt the intruders down (see area 4).

Resting

Kwalos has psychic dominion over the Deep Gaol, and can telepathically "see" into open areas through his followers. His minions rest in area 3, so their minds are unconscious or dimmed. Kwalos usually ignores the area, so he might allow a short rest to pass without pestering the characters. However, resting longer in the dungeon is impossible. Disturbing psychic visions or dreams prevent a fruitful long rest.

Further, when Kwalos notices the characters have holed up for longer than a short rest, he sends hunters after them. If Lantor lives, the scrag and its entourage are those hunters. Otherwise, after a few hours, a group of creatures like the group in part 1 arrives in the dungeon to capture or slay any intruders.

If you prefer, this new hunter group can be made up of three scrag along with a few merrow and several sea spawn.

These encounters don't have to be difficult, but they do prevent resting. Such a group can arrive in the Gaol intermittently until the characters give up trying to rest or succumb to the repeated assaults.

Creatures

Here are details on the creatures in the dungeon.

Prisoners

People who survived the sinking ships are prisoners in the dungeon. Most of these passengers, tradesfolk, sailors, and merchants are commoners. Although they aren't caged or bound, neither are they useful allies in a fight against the Deep Gaol's denizens. When combat starts, prisoners run for cover.

However, feel free to spice up the story with a plucky NPC or two who aid the characters in combat. You can also use some of the NPCs to help weaker groups make it through the dungeon or challenge stronger groups by forcing them to protect the NPCs. Named NPCs have statistics in appendix 2. These statistics are intended to help you improvise rather than to restrict storytelling with the NPCs. Tour narrative comes first, before the listed mechanics.

The prisoners are more help when it comes to information. Here's what the prisoners know:

- Sailors who've passed through this region regularly know the airy water is very recent, no older than a couple months or so.
- All the creatures here worship a god they call Varklothan. A character who has proficiency in Arcana (DC 20), History (DC 15), or Religion (DC 20) might know the name with a successful Intelligence check using the associated skill and DC. Varklothan is an ancient kraken that supposedly sleeps somewhere in the Moonsea. The creature is thought to be a legend rather than a real being. Whether the myth is true is immaterial here.
- All the prisoners know of Lantor, the scrag warlord.
- Only those kept by the sea hags know the true nature of those monsters.
- The high priest, a sea spawn named Kwalos, is preparing for a ritual.
- Monsters have mocked the prisoners with the fact that they'll be sacrificed for the ritual.
- A large, tentacled creature (describe an albino aboleth, since the prisoners wouldn't know it as an aboleth) came to the Deep Gaol recently. No one knows if the creature is still here.
- The prisoners aren't caged or bound because the "doors" in the dungeon are sealed. Only those with *jewel keys* can open them. None of the prisoners know of the doors' magical weaknesses.

Monsters

Because Kwalos can sense creatures in and near the dungeon, and he used his booming voice to greet the characters, the monsters here are prepared for intruders. The monsters would rather capture the characters for sacrifice than kill them. A character who drops to 0 hit points falls unconscious and is stable. If angered or otherwise motivated, a monster might decide to deliver killing blows unless the other characters surrender. Play up the reasons for this deviation.

The monsters in this adventure are distorted and mutated in keeping with the sea, and all of them (particularly sea spawn) should be described with features that suggest undersea fauna. For example, the frogemoth in the “Ambush” encounter had octopus coloration. Other sea spawn might have fish scales, chitin, tentacles, barnacles, or a mix of these features.

Some monsters have translucent skin or patches of it. Add this skin feature to some of your descriptions. This detail hints at the ultimate villain, the aboleth Zuilp'ithuh. If a player asks about the skin, a character who has proficiency in Arcana or Nature can identify this sign of an aboleth's touch with a successful DC 15 Intelligence check using the associated skill.

In keeping with the idea of moving the adventure along, minion monsters (sea spawn and merrow) might retreat to area 3 once tougher creatures with them are defeated. Monsters can move through the two gates nearest area 3 at will.

The monsters in the dungeon know a little more than the prisoners. For example, they know the ritual is on behalf of Zuilp'ithuh, but none of them, including even Kwalos, know the entire reason for the ritual. All the monsters fear the aboleth.

Kwalos, the Kraken Priest

KWAH-los

The kraken priest Kwalos rules this site. He is a tall, spiny, and tentacled sea spawn dressed in robes of sea plants, gold, and jewels. He believes he serves the will of his deity, the kraken Varkloth, by helping the aboleth Zuilp'ithuh. Kwalos is a fanatic. He won't release anyone while his lair remains whole, and his lair can't be destroyed while he lives.

During play, Kwalos can sense what's happening in the Deep Gaol. He can interject commentary, mockery, and other communication using his power to project his voice throughout the dungeon. Use this ability as you see fit.

1. Entry

When the characters enter the gate, Kwalos seals it.

The gate creaks and crackles, the inky patch in it disappearing. “Fools,” says the booming voice. “Now you'll never escape! I'll enjoy watching my devoted test themselves against you!”

The gate out of the dungeon has become a wall. The only reliable way out is forward.

A rough chamber opens here, with passages leading out sides besides the one you entered. The cave-like room has a hole in its ceiling, 15 feet up. Ancient stone tiles can be seen through the sand on the floor, and carvings of a kraken and other monsters adorn the walls, which are overgrown here and there with sea life.

“Aye, yer in it now,” says a one-legged half-orc woman standing near the wall opposite the gate. “Like the rest of us. Yer leaving in spirit, or old Kwalos is. Lady Luck permitting,” she says, then kisses a coin medallion she wears, “it'll be him instead of us, seeing how you thrashed the gate guards.”

The speaker is wrinkled and scarred, dressed in the garb of a sailor from Mulmaster. She stands effortlessly, her walking stick, or perhaps a cudgel, tucked into her sash. “Pola's my name . . .”

Pola is a middle-aged Tharan half-orc, first mate of a ship named *Confounder*, and a priest of Tymora. She watched the gate guards leave for the ambush and has witnessed all that has passed. Seeing the characters defeat the monsters has given Pola renewed hope. She normally stays in area 3, but she came out for a look when she heard all the commotion.

An old salt, Pola is a trove of regional knowledge. You can use Pola to impart any information you want the players to know, but they should have to ask her for it. She knows the legend of Varkloth, and she has seen all the monsters here, including Zuilp'ithuh. Pola knows where the *jewel keys* are. She suspects the hags are more than they seem, but she thinks they're sea-spawn cultists with magic powers. Pola heard Ulemay say the aboleth's name when talking about the coming ritual as something “Zuilp'ithuh wants.” The ritual has to do with a magic orb. (“Unusual those sea-spawn cultists can speak,” Pola mentions.)

The priest can recommend area 3 as a shelter once it's cleared of guards. Pola also knows where the passages from this chamber and area 3 go. She can warn the characters about what to expect, but she doesn't know hidden details, such as the presence or working of a *blood font* (see area 2).

Pola also volunteers to gather the prisoners for escape when the characters rescue them from their various holding areas.

2. Hag Coven

Three **sea hags**—Ulemay (OO-leh-MAY), Lucida (LOO-sid-AH), and Dalilah (duh-LIE-lah)—work here to help prepare for Kwalos’s ritual. They’re disguised when intruders arrive.

Among patches of seaweed, this chamber contains weird structures of coral or stone, such as pedestals, tables, and other furnishings. A few are normal, probably from the broken half of a sunken ship on the far side of the room. Shelves have been carved into the southern wall.

Merrow keep watch while sea spawn make concoctions, pick seaweed, pluck tiny fish from a swirling shoal, or perform other tasks. Most prisoners huddle in the broken ship’s open hold.

A particularly ugly and bent sea spawn with translucent patches of skin holds a bowl while peeling some tattooed flesh from a half-elf sailor’s bald head. He shivers with pain, but he grits his teeth and doesn’t cry out.

Three **merrow** and five **sea spawn** attack directly. Ulemay, Lucida, and Dalila split up to have multiple attack vectors. As combat begins, they speak:

Ulemay stops peeling skin and says, “They’ve come to stop us, poor dears. Or is it to join us?”

Lucida says, “They’ll join us, oh yes. What a hideous party we’ll have with such fresh morsels.”

Dalila points to an attractive character, saying, “Oh, what we’ll do with them! Scrape the pretty right off.”

Tactics

The hags continue to mock and comment during the battle. Until one of them falls, they use their actions to cast spells. They use a variety, starting with *eye bite*, then *phantasmal killer* on one target or *lightning bolt* on a cluster. A hag might follow up with *polymorph* to turn a character into a harmless animal. For their reactions, they use *counterspell*, especially to counter damaging area spells. A hag that counters a spell is particularly gleeful about it.

The hags reveal their true appearance one at a time. It’s best for when a hag must deal with a melee threat or fall back on her powers when shared spellcasting is no longer available.

Merrow and sea spawn run interference for the hags. Priority one is keeping the hags out of melee and free to cast spells. After repeated exposure, the sea spawn are immune to the hags’ Horrific Appearance.

The hags aren’t interested in perishing here. If it looks like they’ll be killed, they surrender.

Shared Spellcasting

While all three hags are within the chamber, or within 30 feet of one another if the *blood font* is disabled (see that section), they can each cast the following spells from the wizard spell list (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit). They share the spell slots among themselves. Spells listed here are the ones they might use during this battle. See “Hag Covens” in the *Monster Manual* for a broader list of story related spells, such as *scrying*. Because of this trait, each hag has a challenge rating of 4 (1,100).

1st level (4 slots): *witch bolt*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse*, *counterspell*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *phantasmal killer*, *polymorph*

5th level (2 slots): no spells

6th level (1 slot): *eyebite*

A character who has proficiency in Arcana discerns how Shared Spellcasting works with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check (no action required). The character knows that taking out one hag renders the others unable to cast spells.

Blood Font

One of the pedestals here holds a font in which the blood of the hags and merrow intermingles. In the blood is a perfect diamond the size of a human eye.

Effects. While this font remains intact, several effects apply to the hags. The hags need only to be within this room to use their Shared Spellcasting. They have advantage on saving throws against magic that affects only one of them, such as *banishment* or the dismissal option for *dispel evil and good*. In addition, whenever any hag takes damage, the damage (but no other effect) is divided equally among all the hags, rounded down. A hag can use her action to deal 22 (4d10) necrotic damage to a merrow in the room, regaining hit points equal to the damage the merrow takes, up until the merrow has 0 hit points remaining. A hag that steals hit points from a merrow can’t maintain concentration on a spell.

Revelations. Blue-black tentacles of energy connect creatures sharing or trading damage with the font, revealing its magic. To *detect magic*, the font has an aura of necromancy, and *detect magic* reveals the diamond and blood as focuses. Someone who uses *detect magic* and has proficiency in Arcana knows what the font is doing and that the focuses must be disabled. Otherwise, discerning the font’s function

requires scrutinizing it (a Search action) and succeeding on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Countermeasures. If the diamond is removed from the font, the hags can steal hit points from the diamond's holder, but the font otherwise continues to function. The font ceases to work if the blood is spilled and the diamond is removed from it. Breaking the diamond also disables the font. Someone can use an action to break and topple the pedestal by succeeding on a DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check. Other creative solutions might remove the blood from the font, such as a precisely aimed *gust of wind*. The diamond has AC 10; resistance to all damage; immunity to necrotic, poison, and psychic damage, as well as damage from area attacks; and 15 hp.

The hags used the diamond as a spiritual focus, but they also chose it because its obvious value protects it from greedy would-be attackers. The hope of anyone who tries to preserve the diamond is in vain. It cracks apart if the hags die or it moves more than 100 feet from the font.

Hag Eye

Ulemay wears a *hag eye* amulet. The character with the highest passive Perception score notices it during the second round. Alter the following text if her true form has been revealed.

The large, bent sea spawn wears a string of pearls with a giant-sized eyeball as a pendant.

Anyone who scrutinizes the amulet during combat (a Search action) notices the *jewel key* imbedded in it. A character who has proficiency in Arcana and succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check (no action) knows what the amulet is. *Detect magic* can reveal it has an aura of divination magic.

Attacking or grabbing the *hag eye* while Ulemay wears it requires a hitting Ulemay with disadvantage on the attack roll. Taking the eye after grabbing it requires a successful DC 13 Strength or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. Destroying the eye requires dealing it 1 damage that isn't poison or psychic. It has AC 10 if someone attempts to attack it while it's not on Ulemay. If the eye is destroyed, each hag takes 16 (3d10) psychic damage and is blinded for 24 hours. In addition, the *jewel key* comes free from the eye.

If blinded, the hags surrender, begging for their lives in return for the *jewel key*. If given the opportunity, however, they take hostages or otherwise try to harm the characters. For example, if all the hags are alive, Ulemay touches the character receiving the *jewel key* and casts *bestow curse* using a 5th-level spell slot.

Features

The area has the following features.

Broken Ship. The rudder, quarterdeck, and hold of a broken merchant cog rests, leaning, on the seafloor. A lower deck is about 10 feet up, and the quarterdeck another 10 feet, almost to the ceiling. The wheel and part of a mast have been broken off and lie nearby. The prisoners huddle within the lower hold for cover during the fight.

Furnishings. The area contains furnishings such as a couple stone-slab tables, chairs and couches of coral or wood, and two coral pedestals. One in red is the *blood font* and the other holds a mirror made of dark, polished metal. These objects create little obstacle given the airy water. Some can be used for cover.

Seaweed and Shoal. Patches of long seaweed (green) and a shoal of tiny fish (orange) provide a few lightly obscured areas.

Prisoners. The bald half-elf, Rikur, a bosun aboard the sunken cog *Slippery Quipper*, comes forward when the group wins. Rikur doesn't know anyone named Vel Gahnto. He is willing to gather prisoners wherever the characters want them to go.

Thirteen other prisoners are kept here. All the prisoners bear marks of treatment like Rikur's, with the prettiest the most abused.

Treasure

The hags store their treasure on the carved shelves.

Valuables. The shelves hold reagents and foul substances. Among can be found an ornate spyglass (1,000 gp), 8 flasks of alchemist's fire (50 gp each), 2 *potions of superior healing* (8d4 + 8 hp regained), and a brass coffer holding 24 half-pound gold trade bars from a Mulmaster mint (coffer 3 pounds, 40 gp; bars 12 pounds, 600 gp). The *hag eye* necklace holds 27 large, irregular pearls of varying colors (50 gp each). On one pedestal is a polished scrying mirror (250 gp). Diamond chips from the *blood font* are still worth 1,000 gp.

Jewel Key. The hag eye pendant has a *jewel key* embedded in the back. The hags didn't trust one another enough for only one of them to have attunement to the *jewel key*. The unified magic of the *hag eye*, which the hags take turns wearing, provided the solution.

Adjustments

This encounter is intended to be medium in difficulty. One tactic you can use to ease the danger is that the hags don't care about their minions, so catching sea spawn with a *lightning bolt* means nothing to the hags

but might take pressure off the group. Plus, it's entertaining when evil monsters beat each other up.

Very Weak. The sea hags have no merrow and only three sea spawn as guards. Avoid using spells that deny actions.

Weak. Include two merrow and no more than four sea spawn fight. The hags can't use the *blood font* to damage the merrow. Avoid spells that deny actions.

Strong or Very Strong. A hidden chuul, buried in the seafloor, emerges to fight. The chuul is connected to the *blood font*, allowing the hags to steal the chuul's hit points. For very strong parties, start out allowing the hags to steal hit points using bonus actions. Return to using actions if that seems too strong.

3. Prison and Larder

This large cave-like area has walls that curve inward about 20 feet overhead but no ceiling. Carvings of sea monsters and a kraken adorn the walls. Along the northern walls are debris, boxes, and casks. In other walls, merrow and sea spawn rest on stone or coral shelves. Prisoners, most sick or injured, sprawl or sit on the floor.

Three **merrow** and five **sea spawn** rest here. They are alert only if other minions have retreated to this area. Once the monsters are gone, this area is a safe place for a short rest.

Prisoners

The monsters left the sick, injured, or frail prisoners, nine in all, in this area. These abductees huddle in the northeast, and they need help to escape. Among them are six corpses left to lay where they died.

Features

This chamber has only a couple features.

Seaweed. A bed of seaweed (green) provides a lightly obscured area.

Stores. Goods stored here include food and drink, along with other mundane supplies and weapons taken from the prisoners. It's up to you what can be found here, but nothing is particularly valuable.

Adjustments

This encounter is intended to be trivial. You can increase the monster numbers by half (round down for strong, up for very strong), but you don't need to.

4. Warlord Throne

Lantor, a scrag loyal to Kwalos, holds court here. Read or paraphrase the following, amended as appropriate:

The bow of a merchant cog is planted in the seafloor here, the quipper figurehead looking toward the surface. A broken mast and crow's nest lie beside it. Also at hand are a couple overturned lifeboats, one cracked in half.

Perched on the figurehead is a massive troll with fishlike features and an inky jewel in its forehead. A rope holds a two-pronged harpoon on the creature's back. The troll gnaws on a humanoid's femur.

Normally, another **scrag** is here, squatting in the crow's nest. Four **sea spawn** also keep watch.

Tactics

The monsters attack intruders with straightforward, brutal tactics. Lantor reserves his harpoon to hurl at a troublesome ranged attacker.

During the battle, Lantor demands to know who killed "Froggy," referring to the froghemoth. Over the course of this dialog, the scrag makes clear what Froggy is. Lantor helped capture the beast and wants revenge for its slaying, focusing attacks on anyone who admits to killing it and promising prolonged suffering. The warlord won't back down while the admitted Froggy slayer is still conscious, and might threaten fallen characters with death to force someone to admit fault.

Features

The area has the following features.

Ship Bow. Sitting so its upper deck is slanted at about 70 degrees, the cog bow is about 12 feet high at the top of the quipper figurehead. Most of the prisoners hide in the wreckage.

Seaweed. Patches of long seaweed (green) provide a few lightly obscured areas.

Prisoners. Fifteen prisoners are kept here sticking together for safety. Among them is Kendric, a halfling sailor from a ship called *Hippocampus*. He considers himself to be a swashbuckler; his abilities may or may not be overstated. Kendric also follows Tymora.

Treasure

Lantor has considerable treasure.

Valuables. Lantor keeps loot in the crow's nest. Within, a severed head still wears an ornate eyepatch made of carved dragon bone to look like a skull with red garnet for eyes (300 gp). Piled around a shattered

coffer are 40 half-pound silver trade bars (100 gp), 20 half-pound gold trade bars (500 gp), and two half-pound platinum trade bars (500 gp). These bars also bear the mark of a Mulmaster mint. Amid the bars is a scattering of coins (360 gp) and gems (4 pounds, 4,000 gp).

Jewel Key. The *jewel key* is on Lantor's forehead.

Adjustments

This encounter is intended to be on the hard side of medium difficulty.

Very Weak or Weak. Remove the extra scrag. Lantor has merrow (one for very weak, two for weak) and sea spawn (three for very weak, five for weak) as backup.

Strong. Lantor has an additional entourage of two merrow and two sea spawn.

Very Strong. Add another scrag. If that turns out to be too tough, reduce the extra scrag's hit points.

5. Approach

When the characters head for the shrine, read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead, a gate archway pulses with violet light, and ink squirms in the liquid portal.

Three *jewel keys* must be used to open the final gate. If the group lacks three jewel keys, trying to open the gate fails, and the key-bearer knows why. Separate key-bearers must focus on opening the gate together. Doing so otherwise works like opening any other gate in the dungeon.

When the gate opens, read or paraphrase the following text:

The thunderous voice speaks again. "Still you rush toward doom. Come, then. Open the way, and face me, Kwalos, heir to the ancients and Voice of Varklothan! Face me and die!"

Proceed with part 4 (see area 6 on the map).

Part 4. Shrine of Varklothan

Kwalos waits for the characters in area 6.

The central shrine is a deep, round depression like an arena. Despite the monstrous wall carvings, similarly carved pillars, and the stairs leading to its floor, natural formations indicate this area was once a cave.

On the floor, which is paved with stone obscured with sand, is an altar made of black material veined with purple crystal that faintly glows. A pedestal of the same stone, shaped like an eruption of tentacles, holds a font in the altar's center. Looking at the altar makes your head hurt.

Behind it is a tall, lanky sea spawn draped in seaweed and crusted with barnaclelike growths. His wide, fishlike eyes stare, unblinking, and his beard is a mass of tentacles like those of a jellyfish. Four squidlike tentacles sprout from his side, two under each humanoid arm. He wears a gorget of gold, coral, and black pearls arranged to resemble radiating tentacles, as well as similar bracers.

"The sacrifices arrive," he says, but his mouth didn't move. His voice is in your mind.

He gestures to the chuuls that flank him on either side. They move to intercept.

Two chuuls, servants of Zuilp'ithuh, guard Kwalos. The blood font here connects them to him.

Let the players question whether Kwalos's voice was literally aloud or only in their heads. Neither confirm nor deny.

Tactics

Kwalos remains mobile, relying on his reaction-denying attacks and spells. He shouts with Voice of Varklothan first, saying, "Varklothan sleeps, and you are but his fitful dreams!"

After that, the theme is tentacles. Kwalos uses his spell slots along with legendary actions to drop *Evard's black tentacles* and keep that spell up. He uses *arms of Hadar* in a similar way. Describe these spells as manifestations of the kraken's power or tentacles, so the players see Kwalos's connection to this sleeping, distant "god."

Kwalos no longer concerns himself with capturing the interlopers; he wants them dead. If he thinks defeat is inevitable, he casts *circle of death*, placing the area to catch as many of his foes as possible. The circle manifests as the opening of a gigantic, monstrous eye. Kwalos doesn't consider his own survival or that of the chuuls, declaring everyone present a sacrifice.

Altar

The weird altar is a magic object.

Effects. The altar is the focus of the magic creating the dungeon and a *hallow* spell focused against celestials. Whenever a creature that doesn't follow Varklothan or serve Zuilp'ithuh enters the shrine, that creature must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, for the duration of the encounter, whenever the creature takes damage within 60 feet of the altar, the creature's pain is amplified, so it takes 10 (3d6) extra psychic damage, but never more psychic damage than triggering damage. This effect lasts until the creature leaves the area, but it will have to make the saving throw again if it re-enters.

Revelations. The altar reveals itself as the source of the unholy magic. When a creature takes extra psychic damage, the violet crystal in the altar glows briefly, and the altar emits a bizarre growling noise along with vibrations in the water. The intensity of the display increases with each affected creature.

To *detect magic*, the altar has an aura of evocation. Someone who sees the aura and has proficiency with Arcana or Religion understands the nature of the magic with a successful DC 10 Intelligence check using the appropriate skill (no action required). A character who succeeds by 5 or more knows the source is a *hallow* spell. Without *detect magic*, the same deduction is possible, but coming to it requires using a Search action to scrutinize the altar and a successful DC 15 check.

Countermeasures. A *hallow* spell can be dispelled with *dispel magic*. If the *hallow* spell is dispelled, each monster here takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage. This psychic damage doesn't cause the dispeller to take damage from Kwalos's Thought Shield.

Blood Font

The pedestal on the altar holds a font of Kwalos's blood mixed with that of the chuuls. The font also contains a large, rare diamond (which cracks if Kwalos dies or it is moved more than 100 feet from the font). This font functions like the hags' *blood font*, but it connects Kwalos to the chuuls, allowing him to share his damage with them. He can't steal their hit points.

Features

The area has the following features.

Ceiling. Because the shrine is within a depression, the ceiling is 45 feet from the floor.

Pillars. Carved to resemble entwined tentacles, these 22-foot-tall pillars hold up nothing. A couple have fallen over.

Seaweed. Patches of long seaweed provide a few lightly obscured areas.

Treasure

Kwalos's jewelry is worth 4,000 gp. Diamond chips from the *blood font* are worth 1,000 gp.

Adjustments

This encounter is intended to be hard to deadly. Kwalos is more concerned about preserving his allies than the hags were, but he's still evil enough to consider damaging a friend to kill a foe.

Very Weak. Kwalos should be hard enough against a very weak party. You can add a few sea spawn for him to use the *blood font* with for show. Consider limiting damage from the altar to 3 (1d6).

Weak. A weak party should be able to handle Kwalos and one chuul. Monitor the action, and have the chuul die early if the situation seems too hard. Consider limiting damage from the altar to 5 (2d4).

Strong or Very Strong. A few merrow might also be in attendance here. For very formidable groups, three chuuls guard Kwalos.

Development

When Kwalos dies, the following happens:

A rumbling moan comes from the altar, and its light goes out. *Jewel keys* disperse like ink in water. The airy water vibrates and thickens as the whole structure groans.

The dungeon's structure breaks down 2 rounds later, giving the characters time to take a couple actions each. When the dungeon breaks, read the following:

Water, real water, rushes in at the floor level. Then, with a massive crackling sound, the airy water collapses from underneath and surges toward the surface.

Airy water rushing out of the dungeon pushes creatures and loose material rapidly upward. The lingering magic of the *airy water* protects creatures from the sudden pressure change.

Moments later, you float on choppy water amid massive amounts of flotsam. Prisoners cling to the debris, which has intact lifeboats among it.

Three lifeboats (one from wreckage outside the dungeon area) are part of the flotsam, although if you have the time, and the characters had an easy time up until now, you can have them forced to build a raft while under attack by surviving cultists (who were out on a patrol earlier).

Unless the group mended (or now mends) the damaged boat from area 4, one of the lifeboats present is unusable.

Each lifeboat can hold eight prisoners, and twenty-nine need a ride. The *folding boat* can hold fifteen comfortably, but twice that number can squeeze aboard.

Conclusion

When Pola sees the remains of the chuuls among the debris, she comments on them. As an aside, anyone who has proficiency in Arcana or History and succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence check with the appropriate skill knows chuuls once served aboleths and not krakens, suggesting they are unusual minions for a servant of a kraken deity.

The characters need only to gather their wits and rescues, and head for shore. On approach to Hulburg, read the following text:

The ruins of Hulburg are in sight. Near the shore, a raven wheels and flies toward you, and soon, it lands on your ship. White feathers adorn its neck.

The raven is Goreth Toothless, and he uses his beast form's Mimicry trait to speak without changing shape.

"I am Goreth, yes!" croaks the raven. "You've earned glory, but it must wait. I found . . . something . . . unnatural . . . in Hulburg's ruins. Yes! A rift! The aberrant leaks into our world. We must warn the others. Deal with this threat. Yes? Yes!"

The adventure ends here, although everyone makes it back to Hulburg. Any lingering curses end 24 hours after the destruction of the Deep Gaol. Characters have time to recuperate before the next adventure.

Rewards

Each player should note rewards on an adventure log sheets. Give the players your name and DCI number so they can record who ran the session for them.

Experience

Award experience points using the tables here.

Combat

Total up combat experience for each foe overcome. Divide by the number of characters in the battle.

Foe	XP per Foe
Kwalos	10,000
Scrag warlord	5,900
Froghemoth	5,900
Scrag	1,800
Sea hag	1,100
Chuul	1,100
Deep scion	700
Merrow	450
Sea spawn	200

Story

For story-related experience, grant each character the shown amount.

Story Event	XP
Reveal Vel during "Meeting"	200
Disable a <i>blood font</i>	225
Dispel the <i>hallow</i> spell	450
Rescue the prisoners	900
Mend an extra lifeboat	300

Treasure

Characters receive the following treasure, divided as evenly as possible.

Item	GP Value
Bone eyepatch	300
Brass coffer	40
Coins	360
Diamond chips	2,000
Gems	4,000
Kwalos's jewelry	4,000
Ornate spyglass	1,000
Pearls	1,350
Scrying mirror	250
Trade bars	
Gold	1,100
Platinum	500
Silver	100
Total	16,000

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Consumable magic items can be divided however the group sees fit. You can determine randomly if the group can't decide. The *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* tells how to distribute other magic items.

Folding Boat

Wondrous item, rare

This object appears as a wooden box that measures 12 inches long, 6 inches wide, and 6 inches deep. It weighs 4 pounds and floats. It can be opened to store items inside. This item also has three command words, each requiring you to use an action to speak it.

One command word causes the box to unfold into a boat 10 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 2 feet deep. The boat has one pair of oars, an anchor, a mast, and a lateen sail. The boat can hold up to four Medium creatures comfortably.

The second command word causes the box to unfold into a ship 24 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 6 feet deep. The ship has a deck, rowing seats, five sets of oars, a steering oar, an anchor, a deck cabin, and a mast with a square sail. The ship can hold fifteen Medium creatures comfortably.

When the box becomes a vessel, its weight becomes that of a normal vessel its size, and anything that was stored in the box remains in the boat.

The third command word causes the folding boat to fold back into a box, provided that no creatures are aboard. Any objects in the vessel that can't fit inside the box remain outside the box as it folds. Any objects in the vessel that can fit inside the box do so.

Renown

Each character receives 1 renown. Those who belong to the Lords' Alliance gain 2 renown for acting boldly to solve a problem rather than acquiescing to a weak authority figure. (Lord Hulmaster is unlikely to be as appreciative in future dealings.)

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Appendix 1. Monsters

Vel Gahnto (Deep Scion)

Medium humanoid (shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. and swim 40 ft. in hybrid form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +3, Stealth +3

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Primordial, Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. Vel can use his action to polymorph into a human-sea spawn hybrid form with tentacles for hair, or back into his human form. Equipment he is wearing or carrying doesn't transform. Vel reverts to human form if he dies.

Amphibious. Vel can breathe air and water.

Actions

Multiattack. In humanoid form, Vel makes two melee attacks. In hybrid form, Vel makes three attacks: one with his bite and two with his claws.

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

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

Claw (Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Psychic Screech (Hybrid Form Only; Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Vel emits a terrible scream audible within 300 feet. Creatures within 30 feet of Vel must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of his next turn. In water, the psychic screech also telepathically transmits the Vel's memories of the last 24 hours to Kwalos, regardless of distance, provided Vel and Kwalos are in the same body of water.

Sea Spawn

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Aquan and Common but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Limited Amphibious. The sea spawn can breathe air and water, but needs to be submerged in the sea at least once a day for 1 minute to avoid suffocating.

Actions

Multiattack. The sea spawn makes three attacks: two unarmed strikes and one with its Piscine Anatomy.

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

Piscine Anatomy. The sea spawn has one or both of the following attack options, based on its anatomy. You can decide or roll a d6 for each spawn.

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

5–6 Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the sea spawn can't use this tentacle on another target.

Froghemoth

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 184 (16d12 + 80)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	2 (–4)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +5

Skills Perception +9, Stealth+5

Damage Resistances fire, lightning

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages —

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Amphibious. The froghemoth can breathe air and water.

Shock Susceptibility. If the froghemoth takes lightning damage, it suffers several effects until the end of its next turn: its speed is halved, it takes a –2 penalty to AC and Dexterity saving throws, it can't use reactions or Multiattack, and on its turn, it can use either an action or a bonus action, not both.

Actions

Multiattack. The froghemoth makes two attacks with its tentacles. It can also use its tongue or bite.

Tentacle. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16) if it is a Huge or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the froghemoth can't use this tentacle on another target. The froghemoth has four tentacles.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) piercing damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is swallowed. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the froghemoth, and takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the froghemoth's turns.

The froghemoth's gullet can hold up to two creatures. If the froghemoth takes 20 damage or more on a turn from the inside, the froghemoth must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, each of which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the froghemoth. If the froghemoth dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 10 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tongue. The froghemoth targets one Medium or smaller creature that it can see within 20 feet of it. The target must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pulled into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the froghemoth, and the froghemoth can make a bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Merrow

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	8 (–1)	10 (+0)	9 (–1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal, Aquan

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amphibious. The merrow can breathe air and water.

Actions

Multiattack. The merrow makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws or harpoon.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

Harpoon. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must win a Strength contest against the merrow or be pulled up to 20 feet toward the merrow.

Sea Hag (Coven)

Medium fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 66 (7d8 + 21; above-average hp intentional)

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Aquan, Common, Giant

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amphibious. The hag can breathe air and water.

Horrific Appearance. Any humanoid that starts its turn within 30 feet of the hag and can see the hag's true form must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the hag is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the hag's Horrific Appearance for the next 24 hours.

Unless the target is surprised or the revelation of the hag's true form is sudden, the target can avert its eyes and avoid making the initial saving throw. Until the start of its next turn, a creature that averts its eyes has disadvantage on attack rolls against the hag.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Death Glare. The hag targets one frightened creature she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the hag, it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or drop to 0 hit points.

Illusory Appearance. The hag covers herself and anything she is wearing or carrying with a magical illusion that makes her look like an ugly creature of her general size and humanoid shape. The effect ends if the hag takes a bonus action to end it or if she dies.

The changes wrought by this effect fail to hold up to physical inspection. For example, the hag could appear to have no claws, but someone touching her hand might feel the claws. Otherwise, a creature must take an action to visually inspect the illusion and succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the hag is disguised.

Chuul

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	5 (–3)	11 (+0)	5 (–3)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Deep Speech but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amphibious. The chuul can breathe air and water.

Sense Magic. The chuul senses magic within 120 feet of it at will. This trait otherwise works like the *detect magic* spell but isn't itself magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The chuul makes two pincer attacks. If the chuul is grappling a creature, the chuul can also use its tentacles once.

Pincer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the chuul can't use this pincer against another target. The chuul has two pincers.

Tentacles. One creature grappled by the chuul must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The target is paralyzed while poisoned in this way. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Lantor, Scrag Warlord

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d10 + 90)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	9 (–1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Common, Giant

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Amphibious. Lantor can breathe air and water.

Indomitable (2/Day). Lantor can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

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

Regeneration. Lantor regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If Lantor takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of Lantor's next turn. Lantor dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. Lantor makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws. Lantor can replace one claw attack with a harpoon attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Harpoon. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must win a Strength contest against the Lantor or be pulled up to 20 feet toward Lantor.

Legendary Actions

Lantor can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from these options. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Lantor regains legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. Lantor makes a weapon attack.

Bully. Lantor targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear Lantor, the target can use its reaction to make one weapon attack, gaining advantage on the attack roll.

Scrag (Aquatic Troll)

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (–2)	9 (–1)	7 (–2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Giant

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Amphibious. The scrag can breathe air and water.

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

Regeneration. The scrag regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the scrag takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the scrag's next turn. The scrag dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

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

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

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

Kwalos, Kraken Priest

Medium humanoid (sea spawn), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +9

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +7, Intimidation +8

Damage Resistances lightning, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities frightened, paralyzed

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages understands Abyssal, Aquan, and Common but can't speak; telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Amphibious. Kwalos can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. Kwalos's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. He can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 16), requiring no material components:

At will: *command*, *detect magic*, *disguise self*

1/day: *circle of death*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Kwalos fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Spellcasting. Kwalos is a 14th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). He regains expended spell slots when he finishes a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast* (see Actions), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *Varkloth's shocking grasp* (see Actions)

1st–5th level (3 5th-level slots): *armor of Agathys*, *arms of Hadar*, *contact other plane*, *control water*, *counterspell*, *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel magic*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *misty step*, *witch bolt*, *telekinesis*

Thought Shield. Kwalos's mind can be read by telepathy or magic only if he allows it to be. A creature that deals Kwalos psychic damage takes the same amount of damage he does.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, Kwalos can't use this tentacle on another target. Kwalos has two tentacles that can function as weapons this way.

Varkloth's Shocking Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit (advantage against a target wearing metal armor), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) lightning damage plus 13 (3d8) thunder damage, and the target can't take reactions until the start of its next turn. Kwalos can't make opportunity attacks with this melee attack.

Eldritch Blast. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit; range 120 ft.; three blasts, each at one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) force damage. A Large or smaller creature struck by the blast must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Voice of Varkloth (Recharge 6). Kwalos opens his mouth to loose the voice of Varkloth, which is audible within 300 feet. Creatures of Kwalos's choice that can hear him must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw can't be frightened by the Voice of Varkloth for 24 hours.

In addition, once per day, Kwalos can cause targets within 60 feet of him that can hear the voice to take 17 (5d6) psychic damage plus 17 (5d6) thunder damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Reactions

Entropic Ward (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When a creature makes an attack roll against Kwalos, he can impose disadvantage on that roll. If the attack misses you, his next attack roll against the creature has advantage if he makes it before the end of his next turn.

Legendary Actions

Kwalos can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options here. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Kwalos regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Arms of Hadar. Kwalos casts *arms of Hadar* as a 3rd-level spell without spending a spell slot.

Attack. Kwalos casts a cantrip.

Varkloth's Tentacles (Costs 2 Actions). Kwalos casts *Evard's black tentacles*.

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Appendix 2. NPCs

This section contains statistics for the NPCs you might use in this adventure. Besides Pola, unless these people find weapons (see area 3), they fight only if they must, using unarmed strikes and dealing only 1 + Str bonus bludgeoning damage.

Commoner

Medium or Small humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

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

Pola

Medium humanoid (half-orc), chaotic good

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 20 ft. (missing one leg)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	9 (–1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Skills Medicine +4, History +5, Persuasion +3. Stealth +1, Religion +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Common, Orc

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Relentless Endurance (Recharges after a Long Rest).

When Pola is reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, she can drop to 1 hit point instead.

Spellcasting. Spellcasting. Pola is a 4th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Pola has the following cleric spells prepared:

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

1st level (4 slots): *bless, cure wounds, sanctuary*

2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, lesser restoration*

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

Rikur

Medium humanoid (half-elf), neutral

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Athletics +3, Insight +2, Nature +2, Perception +2, Persuasion +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Common, Elvish

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

Cunning Action. Rikur can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Actions

Multiattack. Rikur makes two melee attacks: one with his dagger and one with his rapier.

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

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

Kendric

Small humanoid (halfling), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 25 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +4, Deception +5, Perception +4, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

Cunning Action. Kendric can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Halfling Nimbleness. Kendric can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than him.

Lucky. When Kendric rolls a 1 on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, reroll and use the new roll.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Kendric deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Kendric's that isn't incapacitated and Kendric doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

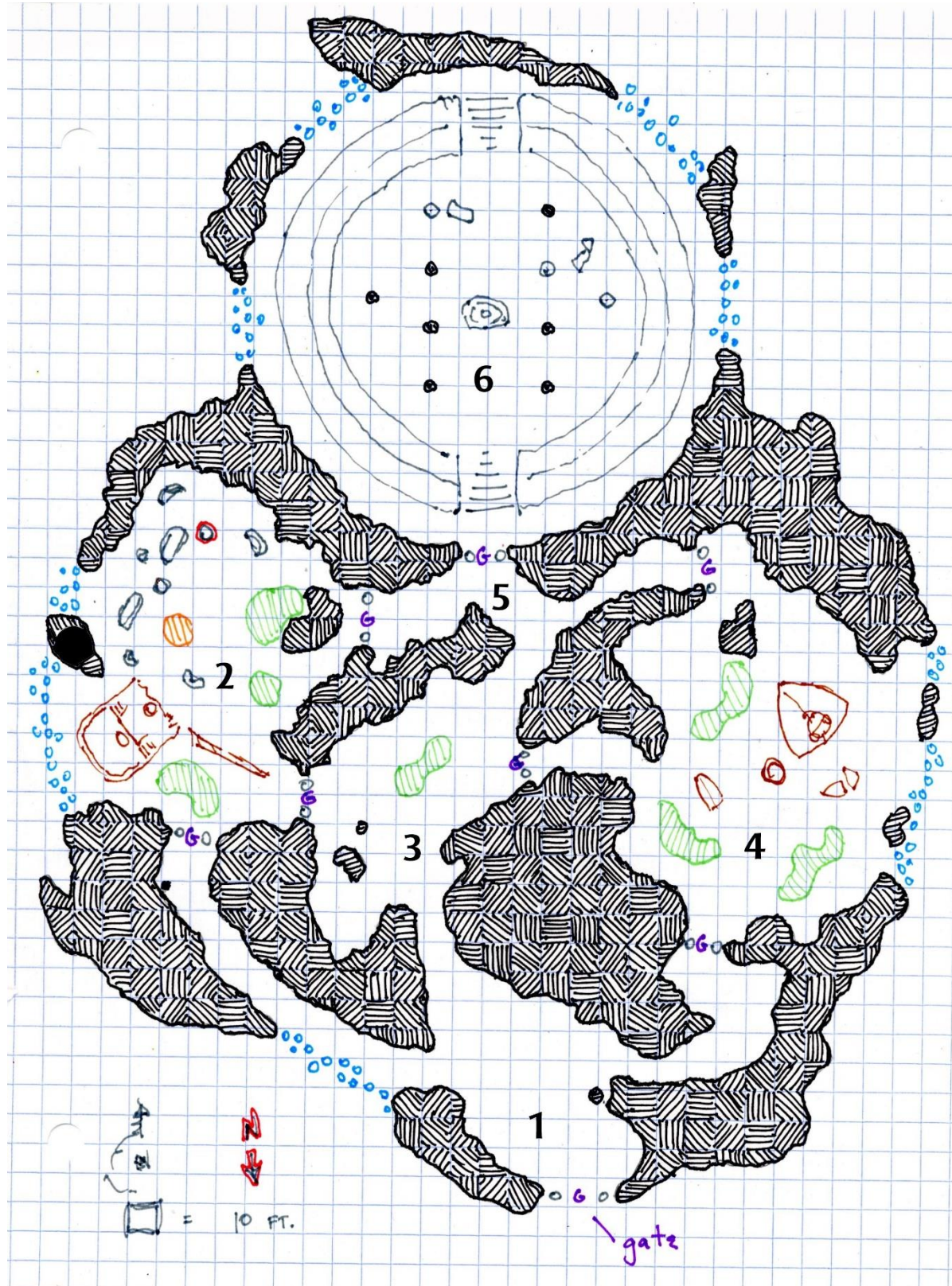
Actions

Multiattack. Kendric makes two melee attacks.

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

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Appendix 3. Deep Gaol DM Map



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 CCC-BMG-HULB04-02 Voices from the Deep

Handout 1. Lost Ships

The following sailing ships (all cogs) have gone missing on their way to Hulburg.

Ship	Type	Cargo
<i>Confounder</i>	Merchant	Building materials, supplies, and settlers
<i>Fire Drake</i>	War	Armaments, Lord Hulmaster's payroll, supplies, and a few soldiers
<i>Magpie</i>	Merchant	Food, liquor, and supplies
<i>Slippery Quipper</i>	Merchant	Food, supplies, settlers, and Vel Gahnto
<i>Sprightly</i> (merchant cog)	Merchant	Building materials, food, supplies
<i>The Hippocampus</i>	Merchant	Food and supplies

Handout 2. Magic Item

Folding Boat

Wondrous item, rare

This object appears as a wooden box that measures 12 inches long, 6 inches wide, and 6 inches deep. It weighs 4 pounds and floats. It can be opened to store items inside. This item also has three command words, each requiring you to use an action to speak it.

One command word causes the box to unfold into a boat 10 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 2 feet deep. The boat has one pair of oars, an anchor, a mast, and a lateen sail. The boat can hold up to four Medium creatures comfortably.

The second command word causes the box to unfold into a ship 24 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 6 feet deep. The ship has a deck, rowing seats, five sets of oars, a steering oar, an anchor, a deck cabin, and a mast with a square sail. The ship can hold fifteen Medium creatures comfortably.

When the box becomes a vessel, its weight becomes that of a normal vessel its size, and anything that was stored in the box remains in the boat.

The third command word causes the folding boat to fold back into a box, provided that no creatures are aboard. Any objects in the vessel that can't fit inside the box remain outside the box as it folds. Any objects in the vessel that can fit inside the box do so.

Handout 3. Player Map

