



Con of the North Games Convention 2019

presents

By the Seashore: A Red War Tale



Chaotic magic torments the village of Stonedock, presenting opportunity to a devious grifter. Unknown to the scoundrel, a stolen trinket brings with it the wrath of Thay! Who will weather the storm of deception? A Two-Hour Adventure for Tier One Characters. Optimized for APL 3.

CREDITS

Lead Designer: Marcello De Velazquez

Editing: Travis Fuller, Dave Rosser Jr.

D&D Adventurers League Guildmaster: Chris Lindsay

Art Director & Graphic Design: Ashley Von Burtz
(Module) Marcello De Velazquez (Cartography)

D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team: Adam Lee,
Chris Lindsay, Mike Mearls, Matt Sernett

D&D Adventurers League Administrators: Greg
Marks, Alan Patrick, Travis Woodall, Lysa Chen,
Claire Hoffman, Amy Lynn Dzura

Playtesters: Kyle Baker, Catman Ernzen, Vanessa
Schneider, Amphone Nanthavong, Colin McCue, Jordan
Green and Dallas Strasser, Travis Fuller, Edward Fuller,
Michael Fuller, Kathy Fuller, Wayne Fuller,

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Adventure Primer

“Quite a bit colder den normal ‘round dis time uh year, EH?”

- Chauncey Tarkio, fisherman, asker of questions like this.

Background

Chaos magics and elemental rifts ravage **MULMASTER**’s cityscape. Their turbulent combination spawn a **CHAOS STORM** that sweeps the surrounding Moonsea coastline.

A nearby refugee camp and fishing village of **STONEDOCK** are suddenly captured in the magical storm’s freezing temperatures and deadly winds. Villagers **FARO GUPKIN** and **CHAUNCEY TARKIO** offer what comfort they can to all, but the village supplies are all but dried up.

A Mulman grifter named **MAUCIEN LEMONLOON** poses as the Aurilite cleric **FROSTMOURN**. He and his cohorts deceive the people with portents of the coming wrath of Auril the Frostmaiden.

An object swindled from their last con-job, the **CORSAIR’S STAR**, emits a haunting beacon that is answered by allies of its former Thayan owner.

From the Red War battlefield, an undead horde’s sudden departure does not escape notice.

Episodes

The adventure is spread over three episodes that takes approximately two hours to play. These episodes are introduced by a Call to Action Episode.

If you’re planning to play the entire adventure at once, introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play over several sessions, revisit the Call to Action each time you play.

- **Episode 1: Cold Hands, Warm Hearts.** The heroes learn of the recent attacks by undead. The constable Faro Gupkin, asks the characters to investigate. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: Fishing for Answers.** The heroes investigate the scene of an undead attack and speak to locals to unravel the cause of those attacks. Characters may confront the false acolytes of Auril. This is **Main Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: The Ice (es)Capades.** The adventurers pursue Lemonloon across frozen Moonsea waters. Characters obtain Corsair’s Star and must elude its pursuers! They may return Corsair’s Star to Mulmaster. This is **Main Objective B**.

Bonus Objectives

This adventure includes two bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so—earning additional **advancement and treasure checkpoints** in the process. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure’s appendices, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Cold, Cold, Cache.** The adventurers are led to an abandoned druid’s hovel where they may discover a needed cache of supplies. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 5**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Hook, Line, and Stinker.** The adventurers help a villager pull in a big catch to help feed the village and refugees. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 4**.

Episode Sequence

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take approximately two to four hours to play.

How Will You Play?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately 2 hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by pursuing the bonus objectives.

Main Objectives Only. To complete the adventure’s main objective, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 3 in order, however, you may include the opportunity to pursue bonus objectives.

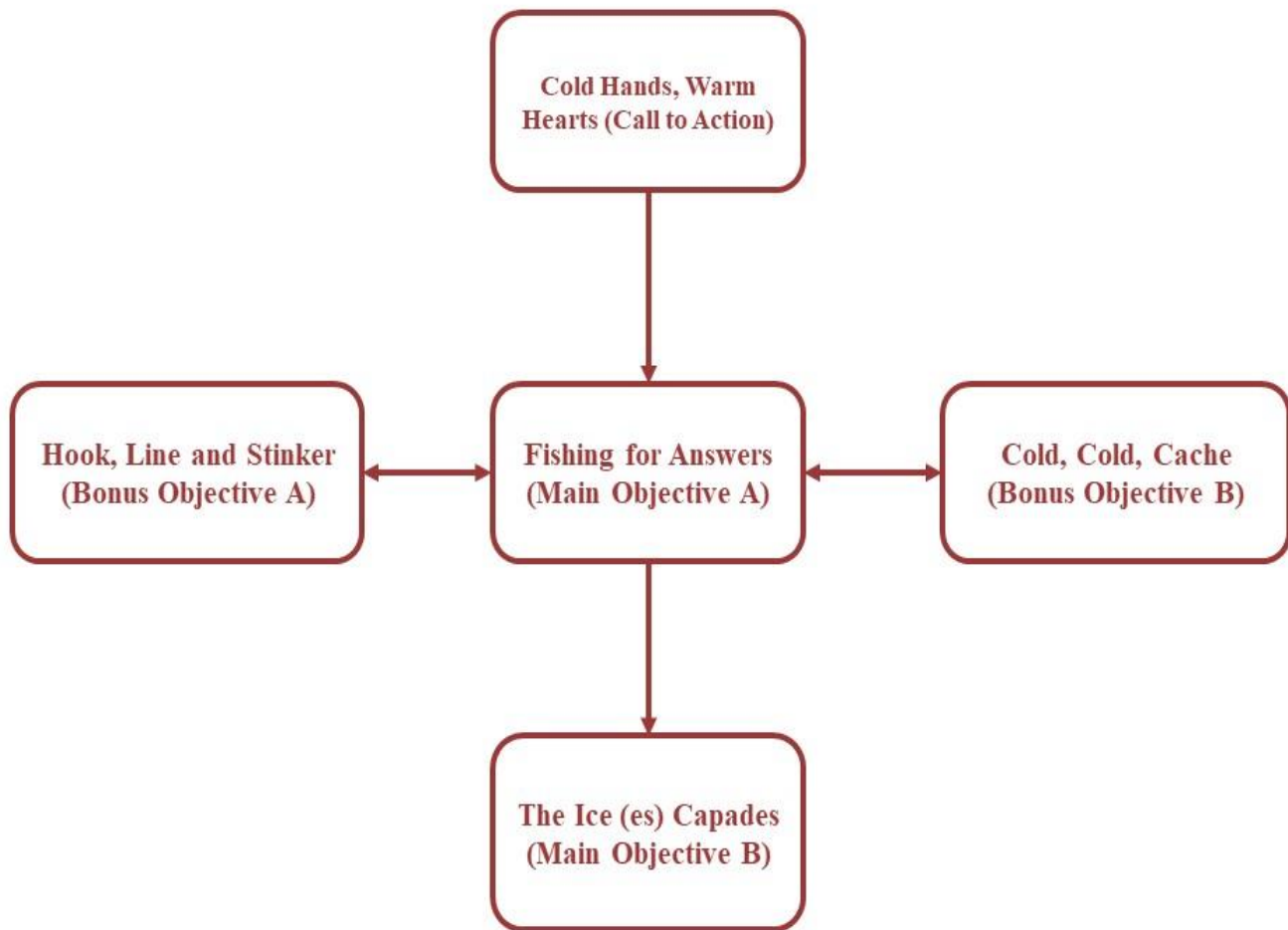
Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue bonus objectives.

These objectives branch off Episode 2, but their order is fluid. However, they must be completed before Episode 3, which completes the story objectives for this adventure.

The Chaos Storm. The erratic phenomena presents a variety of challenges that DMs are encouraged to use throughout the adventure. Consider adding some of these elements while adventurers are in transition from locations, during encounters, or during lulls in the adventure. Please keep the group strength in mind when doing so, Make the adventure fun!

Episode Flowchart

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the episode, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



Episode 1: Cold Hands, Warm Hearts (Call to Action)

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Scene A. The Refugee Camp

The camp, the hosting village, and the surrounding land have been affected by wild elemental and magic-weaved weather. Frequent undead attacks have many worried. Their combined efforts have defeated the undead and managed the hardships thus far.

During the characters travel, they noticed the landscape changes. Seasonal coastal sights and sounds were replaced by a stark, frozen wasteland. The characters come upon a large camp spread along the outskirts of a shoreline village covered entirely in ice.

Adventure Hooks: Characters embroiled in The Red War were sent to hunt a Thayan force that departed a battle, moving towards the nearby coast. Perhaps a concerned family or friend hired adventurers to check on their loved ones in a nearby evacuee camp. These reasons or others could bring the adventurers here.

Area Information

This area has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The camp covers a large stretch of shore. The shoreline and nearby hills are covered in unnatural frost. The waters extending miles from the shore are frozen solid.

Lighting. The skies during the day provide bright light. The nights are pitch black, except for one shining star that indicates nautical north.

Structures. Tents, wagons, and campfire circles of varying sizes encompass the camp. These structures barely keep the cold out and have the following statistics: AC:8 HP:10 DT:3. Adjust as needed.

Chaos Storm. The magic-spawned storm caused a freeze that is immune to both natural and magical fire, and may produce the following erratic effects:

- Direct contact with the ice (or ice-covered areas) deals 1d6 cold damage to those who fail a DC 10 Dex Save (Save for half).
- Frost-biting winds cause 1d6 necrotic damage to those who fail a DC 10 Con Save (Save for half).

- A Detect Magic spell reveals the presence of abjuration and necrotic magic.
- A Dispel Magic Spell clears a 5 ft by 5 ft area of ice, which returns after one minute.

Creatures/NPCs:

Refugees. Hundreds of **commoners** make up the displaced in the camp. Many are injured and weary from being displaced. They are running short on supplies and some have fallen gravely sick from the onset of freeze over the area.

Objectives/Goals. The refugees look for anyone to help them survive the deadly cold and the undead incursion. They wish to know why the local cleric could not repel the undead attacks nor provide succor to the suffering.

What Do they Know? The refugees were not prepared for the drastic weather change. When they reached Stonedock, they were met by Faro Gupkin and Chauncey Tarkio, who offered what supplies they could. They describe the villagers as simple, kind souls. Moreover, they note that the cleric Frostmourn appeared shortly before the undead attack and proclaimed that they give offerings to the Auril to prevent future attacks and to rid them of the unnatural storm. They hope the adventurers can discover what is causing the attacks, where there might be more supplies, and why the local clergyman appears powerless to help them.

Proceeding to the Next Scene

The refugees will direct the heroes to Stonedock, and recommend they speak with the Stonedock people to find out more about these events. They are thankful for the characters help.

Those players who look past the plight of the refugees will be left to the warped weather and any future attacks by undead (DM discretion). Adventurers who agree to help proceed the short distance to Stonedock.

Proceed to Scene B.

Scene B. Outside the Village

Immediately leaving the refugee camp, the characters come upon Stonedock. Faro Gupkin is there to greet them and escort them into the village.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The village covers a quarter mile stretch of shore and juts out 100ft from the shore. Nearby hills are covered in ice. The waters extending miles from the shore are frozen solid.

Lighting. The skies during the day provide bright light. The nights are pitch black, except for one shining star that indicates nautical north. A single hooded lantern atop a 10ft pole offers bright light in 30ft and dim light 30 ft beyond it.

Structures. The village consists of several wood-and-tin roof structures, built on the shore and atop the large dock that gives the village its name. A large dry well acts as supply store. A community cabin is now a Shrine to Auril.

Chaos Storm. The magic-spawned storm caused a freeze that is immune to both natural and magical fire, and may produce the following erratic effects:

- Direct contact with the ice (or ice-covered areas) deals 1d6 cold damage to those who fail a DC 10 Dex Save (Save for half).
- Frost-biting winds cause 1d6 necrotic damage to those who fail a DC 10 Con Save (Save for half).
- A Detect Magic spell reveals the presence of abjuration and necrotic magic.
- A Dispel Magic Spell clears a 5 ft by 5 ft area of ice, which returns after one minute.

Faro Gupkin (**commoner**) greets the characters and to each one of them shaking their hands, as he gives and gets introductions. He speaks quickly about events and walks them through the town. Villagers stare from behind shack doors and pelt-sewn cloaks at the strangers.

Objectives/Goals. Faro Gupkin helps the refugees, but the village doesn't have much. He offered heavy blankets to keep people warm, and fish-cabbage pies to keep bellies full. Gupkin hopes to keep everyone safe but knows supplies are growing scarce. The constable wants the recently-arrived Cleric of Auril to do more to help. The villagers want Gupkin to take care of the problems.

What Do They Know? Gupkin knows the cold spell/storm arrived after the refugees did. He's sure the undead attacks started before the first freeze. He thinks that Frostmourn should be able to keep the undead away from the village but has really done nothing but fleeing to the safety of the shrine.

Call to Action

The adventurers have to investigate the scene of the attacks to unravel their true purpose, while discovering the motive behind the cleric's unusual behavior. Once revealed, the adventurers must put an end to the attacks and the cleric's actions.

Bonus Objective A and/or B. If utilizing this additional content, then during the course of their investigation, the characters will be asked to aid the constable in replenishing dwindling supply stores or help a local fisherman with a big catch!

Proceed to **Episode Two**.



Creature

Episode 2: Fishing for Answers (Main Objective A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Stone Dock

In this episode, characters explore the fishing village where the confrontations with the undead took place, gaining attention of watchers on.

The adventurers speak with village inhabitants about events, search for clues, and may confront antagonists in their search for answers. The characters discoveries should lead them to Maucien Frostmourn at The Shrine to Auril (Scene D).

As a Dungeon Master, feel free to place these scenes in any order you wish. Scene D is crucial to run before proceeding to Episode 3. Consider having NPC's accompany characters; they can add a helpful element to the adventure. Be mindful of time-constraints and adventure progression.

Prerequisites

The adventurers must complete the Call to Action before beginning this episode.

Story Objective A

The adventurers must investigate undead attack scenes and search for clues within the camp/village. They also must question the Stonedock villagers or Mulmen refugees to learn about the behavior of their local cleric. This is **Main Objective A**.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The village covers a quarter mile stretch of shoreline; a dock juts 100ft from the shore, elevated 15ft above the water by beams and piles of rocks.

Lighting. The skies during the day provide bright light. The nights are pitch black, except for one shining star that indicates nautical north. A hooded lantern hangs atop a 10ft pole near the dock, offering 30ft of bright light and an additional 30ft of dim light when lit.

Structures. The village consists of wood-and-tin roof structures, some with boarded-shut windows. The village sets atop a rickety dock that gives the village its name. A large dry well acts as a supply storage. A single cabin on the shore acts as a Shrine to Auril the Frostmaiden.

Chaos Storm. The storm's causal freeze is immune to both natural and magical fire. Consider enhancing play throughout this episode with the storm effects in Episode One or any of the following below:

- Ice sheets cover the entire village, creating difficult terrain.
- Heavily-iced areas force an DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) Check (DMs choice) to avoid falling prone.
- Dangling icicles from roofs and doorways may be temporarily used as simple weapons (1d4 piercing or bludgeoning damage)



Scene A. The Well

This long-dried well serves as the village storage hold. It is also the site of the undead attack. Clues help lead adventurers to **Main Objective A**.

Optionally, NPC dialogue may lead characters to **Bonus Objective A**.

Area Information

The area has the following features:

Structure. The well is 15ft in diameter and 50ft deep. It is partly covered with wooden planks. A rusted winch and tattered rope are still affixed. Remnants of foodstuffs litter the well's bottom. A thin layer of frost covers the well.

Remains. Crows peck away on undead viscera. The rotted remains are all that's left of zombie corpses. Their nauseating stench can be smelled all the way to nearby dock shanties.

Thayan Pendant. Characters may discover a steel pendant of Thayan origin among the remains. Further examination reveals the weak presence of evocation magic.

Creatures/NPCs

If present, Faro Gupkin (**commoner**) keeps close, trying to watch and learn from the adventurers. Worry lines Gupkin's face; the villagers and refugees

are on the constable's mind. Gupkin hums a song while following along. The murder of crows (**swarm of ravens**) are content to scavenge the remains.

Objectives/Goals. Gupkin wants the adventurers to find out what the undead want here and hopes that they can do something to help aid everyone. The constable offer what he knows but holds something back (see 'Playing the Pillars'). The crows want to eat as much as possible before being shooed off.

What Do They Know? Gupkin and the villagers lured the undead from the camp to the well so they could surround them. The constable points out that Frostmourn and the followers did help, but they fled when the undead started getting back up.

Adjusting the Scene

Consider making these adjustments based on your group.

- **Very Weak/Weak** Remove three murder of crows
- **Strong/Very Strong:** Add two murder of crows

Bonus Objective A. If using Bonus Objective A, then Faro Gupkin tells the adventurers about the nearby druid's hovel and the rumored supplies that may be there. This opens up **Bonus Objective A**. You may then proceed to **Appendix 4**.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

Five murder of crows attack if disturbed. Once reduced to half their hit points, they fly off.

EXPLORATION

Discoveries made around the well (see area information above) provide leads that guide adventurers to speak with villagers, reveal the nature of the undead presence, or give insight into the behavior of the cleric Frostmourn and followers.

SOCIAL

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) Check reveals that Gupkin is holding something back. A subsequent DC 10 Charisma (Deception) Check has the constable reveal the information for **Bonus Objective A** above.

Scene B. Tarkio's Shack

This is the home of the halfling fisherman, Chauncey Tarkio. The adventurers spot the fisherman coming from his home, fishing rod in one hand, bucket of bait in the other. Dialogue in this scene may lead adventurers to **Bonus Objective B**, and provide clues that lead to completion of **Main Objective A**.

Area Information

The area has the following features:

Structure. Chauncey's shack has two rooms. One room contains his bunk and most of his belongings. A curtain covers the entrance to the other room, which houses a chamber pot and stink bait buckets.

Fishing Gear. Crude fishing equipment (fishing tackle, nets, poles, knives) hang from pegs, sit in small crates, and are scattered over the floor.

Hidden Objects. Buried under a mess of clothes and blankets is a poorly-made aspergillum, containing salt where holy water should be and a coin with a winged serpent on both sides of it.

Stinkbait. Buckets filled with vile-smelling bait line a wall. Those exposed to it must make a DC 10 Con Save or gain the poisoned condition for one minute. Failed saves can be re-rolled at the end of each minute while poisoned.

Creatures/NPCs

Chauncey Tarkio is a **commoner** with stout halfling traits. Tarkio dedicates his life as a fisherman helping the village. Chauncey is suspicious of the recently arrived cleric and followers, and the unseasonal stormy weather. The halfling is never without his fishing rod and putrid fish bait.

Objectives/Goals. Tarkio hopes the adventurers link the undead attacks to Frostmourn's arrival to the village. The fisherman wants to catch as much fish as possible, fully aware that this odd weather shift can drive the fish towards deeper waters. Tarkio wants to get out to the docks one more time before the weather worsens.

What Does Chauncey Know? Chauncey helped during the fight at the well. The fisherman accounts are similar to Faro's, but also noticed the undead moved through the refugee camp without hurting anyone. They only attacked when attacked. Chauncey thinks that Frostmourn and the cleric's followers did little to help.

Bonus Objective B. If using Bonus Objective B, Chauncey reveals that one last opportunity to catch "Muckmaw", a local legend, exists. The fisherman believes the monster catfish could feed the village for months but may head to deeper waters because of the storm. Chauncey asks for help to catch the fish. If they accept, proceed to **Appendix 6**.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

None

EXPLORATION

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) Check finds the hidden objects (See Area Information). Tarkio reveals they were left there by Frostmourn. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) Check reveals the coin is a symbol of the Zhentarim. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) Check reveals the aspergillum to be improperly filled (normally filled with holy water not salt).

SOCIAL

Chauncey stutters often and prefers to speak non-verbally through hand gestures, nod of heads, and sounds. The halfling is friendly but reluctant to help beyond giving information. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) Check (consider granting Advantage to those who speak as Chauncey does) can convince him otherwise.

Scene C. Dock Shanties

The other villagers of Stonedock live in the remaining shanties on and along the dock. They trust in Faro Gupkin and Chauncey Tarkio but believe that Frostmourn will help protect them from the deadly weather. Dialogue and exploration will lead to clues that help adventurers complete **Main Objective A**.

Area Information

Wispy Nimbus. Looking back from the shanties toward the shore may reveal a faint, multi-colored disturbance in the sky above the shrine. This may lead adventurers to the Shrine and Episode 3.

Creatures/NPCs

The people are **commoners** of different races and ages. All are adept fisherman, while some are also skilled masons, potters, cobblers, and weavers. The villagers watch from their homes. They make their presence known but are reluctant to speak. They avoid the cold by staying indoors. The followers of Frostmourn are actually **five Zhentarim Thugs** who are aiding the bard. The characters can see them walking nearby.

Objectives/Goals. The villagers want the undead attacks to stop and the deadly freeze to wane. They provide offerings to the Shrine of Auril in hopes that Frostmourn can grant divine mercy from these events, which they are convinced is Auril's doing. The Zhentarim Thugs want to continue Frostmourn's ruse as long as possible. Their

instructions are to watch and report the adventurer's activities.

What Do They Know? The villagers watched the undead attacks. They noticed the undead did not pursue them to their homes. Villagers that joined the battle perished; they seemingly had the life sucked out of them. Village children recall the day Frostmourn and the followers arrived. They spied them sneaking from the refugee camp into the village from the woods. The Zhentarim Thugs know that the presence of the adventurers may uncover their deception.

Adjusting the Scene

Consider making these adjustments based on your group.

- **Very Weak/Weak:** Remove two **Zhentarim Thugs**. Add two bandits.
- **Strong/Very Strong:** Add two **Zhentarim Thugs**.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The thugs maintain their guise as acolytes. They attack if accused of wrong-doing, or if presented with the hidden objects found in Tarkio's Shack. They only carry maces.

EXPLORATION

None

SOCIAL

The village adults prove harder to question than the children. The Charisma (Persuasion/Intimidation) Check DCs should reflect that. Grant advantage if Tarkio or Gupkin is with the characters. The Zhentarim Thugs may attempt to persuade the adventurers to come to the Shrine if not antagonized.

Scene D. The Shrine of Auril

The cabin-turned shrine is where Lemonloon/Frostmourn carried out the deception. Suspecting the adventurers already uncovered the ruse, the bard quickly grabbed belongings and fled to the fishing shack town in **Episode 3**. The adventurers find clues that complete **Main Objective A** and lead to **Episode 3**.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The shrine has a 20x20ft. main room and two 10x15ft adjoining rooms, used as a storage and a private chamber. A small shrine is in the main room; a four-pointed wooden snowflake (Symbol of Auril) hangs from the ceiling. A back entrance leads to a camp where the followers rest. A wooded area lies beyond the camp.

Disguise Kit. The contents of a disguise kit lay scattered about a small table.

Escape Plan. A folded parchment lies just outside the back entrance to the shrine. It has Frostmourn's escape route scrawled on it.

Offering bowl. An offering bowl near the shrine contains trinkets, shells and a bottle of perfume.

Journal. A leather-bound journal is hidden in a pile of robes, blankets, and pelts. It describes an encounter between a Red Wizard in Mulmaster and the writer. The writer barely escaped- but with a pretty bauble belonging to the Red Wizard.

Monsters/NPCs

Two dread warriors and **three zombies** have been drawn to the shrine by recent presence of the Corsair's Star. They may arrive at the shrine any time after the adventurers are inside. The

Zhentarim Thugs, disguised as acolytes, may be here if the party did not defeat them earlier or were brought here. If present, they learn that Lemonloon/Frostmourn is gone, and in anger, attack the adventurers, undead, or both. If Faro Gupkin or Chauncey Tarkio are with the adventurers, they may alert the party to the undead presence.

Objectives/Goals. The dread warriors and zombies want to track down the location of the Corsair's Star. They soon realize that it is not at the shrine. They are then called to its current location in **Episode 3**. The Zhentarim Thugs want their cut of the refugee/villager valuables from Frostmourn, but since he has fled, they might double-cross him. They want to get as far away from this wicked weather as possible. Both Gupkin and Tarkio want to protect the village and keep the monsters away.

What Do They Know? The undead heed the call of the Corsair's Star. The Zhentarim Thugs know everything about Frostmourn: his real name, his affiliation with the Zhentarim, and that he possess the Corsair's Star. Gupkin and Tarkio know that players might need help and could offer a Help Action if appropriate during any of this episode's encounter.

Main Objective A. Once the adventurers find the clues in this scene, they complete **Main Objective A**. Whether by following undead or at the NPC's insistence, the heroes may proceed to **Episode 3**.

Adjusting the Scene

Consider making these adjustments based on your group.

- **Very Weak/Weak:** Remove two zombies.
- **Strong/Very Strong:** The freeze coats the undead in a necrotic-fused film of ice that acts as Armor of Agathys cast as a 3rd level spell slot

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The dread warriors attack anyone inside the shrine. The zombies linger about the front of the shrine for two rounds. Then all the undead move towards the shore, over the frozen Moonsea waters to the fishing shacks in Episode 3.

EXPLORATION

Clues (see area information) unravel the truth about the Lemonloon/Frostmourn's ploy. A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) Check of the disguise kit reveal priest vestments amongst its contents. Finally, a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) Check uncovers the journal.

SOCIAL

The Zhentarim Thugs could reveal what they know if properly coerced. A successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) Check gets them to talk. A failed check has them saving themselves and fleeing.

Episode 3: The Ice (es)Capades (Main Objective B)

Estimated Duration: 45 Minutes

Final Scene. The Fishing Shacks

The adventurers find Lemonloon hiding in a fishing shack 'town', with undead closing in. They find the bard with The Corsair's Star and learn its purpose.

Prerequisites

The heroes must have completed Episode 2, Scene D and Main Objective A before beginning this episode.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The ice-fishing shack town sets a mile off the coast. It sets on the ice-covered waters in this area.

Lighting. Bright light is peek through overcast.

Frozen Waters. Falling into the waters deals 1d6 cold damage on a failed DC 10 Con Save (save for half). Saves continue every turn exposed to it.

Fishing Shacks. Wood fishing shacks are sized to fit small to medium-sized humanoids with gear. Wooden store boxes sit on the side of each of them.

The Corsair's Star. The bard carries the stolen compass in his vest pocket. Those that succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) or DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) Check can hear its spectral call for rescue.

Chaos Storm. The storm's causal freeze is immune to both natural and magical fire. Consider enhancing play throughout the episode by using any previously mentioned effects in Episodes One and Two.

Creatures/NPCs

Maucien Lemonloon (neutral-evil **bard**, no weapons) fled Stonedock as the adventurers closed in. The bard hides in one shack. **Two zombies** and **one dread warrior** surround it. The chaos storm's effects have spawned an **undead killer whale** (Killer whale w/80HP, Undead Fortitude, Immunity to Poisoned Condition & Poison damage).

Objectives/Goals. Lemonloon guards the spoils of the con and the Corsair's Star until the bard returns to Mulmaster. The undead seek to recover it for their Thayan masters. The undead killer whale wants to swallow The Corsair's Star before moving into deeper Moonsea waters.

What Do They Know? Lemonloon (Frostmourn) and his accomplices charmed the former owner of the Corsair's Star. They fled Mulmaster with the evacuees to escape the war and previous debtors.

Adjusting the Scene

Consider making these adjustments based on your group.

- **Very Weak/Weak:** Reduce undead killer whale HP to 59. Bite does (9) 3d4+4 piercing damage.
- **Strong/Very Strong:** Each time the whale crashes through the ice, all enemies within 15ft of the it killer whale must make a DC 14 Dex Save or be knocked prone.

Main Objective B. Catching the bard and taking the Corsair's Star is not the end. They must return back to shore with it, destroy it, or return it to Mulmaster to complete **Main Objective B**.

Concluding the Adventure

Before returning Corsair's Star to Mulmaster (or destroying it), the Stonedock villagers offer their thanks, while the refugees hope The Red War will end soon.

Treasure & Rewards

Completion of the Main Objectives unlocks an opal-adorned compass (Orb of Direction). Completion of Bonus Objective B unlocks Chauncey's lucky fishing pole (Immovable Rod). Tarkio offers them the villages unique stinkbait and players take the memory of Faro Gupkin with them (Story Rewards).

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The undead attack all who keep them from the Corsair Star. The undead killer whale appears at the start of the third round. It crashes through the ice floor, attacks, then returns to the water. Once it slays the holder of the Corsair's Star, it leaves.

EXPLORATION

If the characters search the shacks, they find fishing gear and frozen rations in the storeboxes. The shack that Lemonloon hides in is locked (DC 12 Str or Dex Check to open, adding proficiency bonus when appropriate).

SOCIAL

Lemonloon tries to convince adventurers to let him go, casting the Friends or Charm Person Spell on whoever the most susceptible appears to be. If he uses Invisibility, allow a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to hear his footfalls.

Adventure Rewards

Upon completing the adventure, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include special rewards, such as story awards or new downtime activities, as follows:

Advancement Checkpoints

The characters receive one advancement checkpoints for each objective completed:

- **Main Objective A:** Investigate, search, and speak with locals in Stonedock about undead attacks.
- **Main Objective B:** Pursue Lemonloon and obtain the Corsair's Star. Return or Destroy it.

In addition, characters receive one advancement checkpoints for each bonus objective completed.

- **Bonus Objective A:** Recover supplies from an old druid's hovel for Faro Gupkin.
- **Bonus Objective B:** Help Chauncey Tarkio capture Muckmaw, the legendary catfish.

Treasure Checkpoints

The characters receive one treasure checkpoint for each **main objective** and **bonus objective** completed.

Magic Item Unlock

Characters completing adventure's **story objectives** unlock these magic items.

Chauncey's Codbone Cosherer (Immovable Rod). This gnarled bramble and birchwood stick is twisted around the bone-white spine of a humongous Moonsea Cod. Druidic runes are engraved along its handle. It carries a crude reel made of the skull of a sea chub. Any fish-like beasts within 10ft. of the rod will cause it to shake and excitedly exclaim, "You got a bite! You got a bite!" A description of this item's functions are located in the Dungeon Masters Guide.

Corsair's Star (Orb of Direction). This masterwork compass was once the property of a Thayan ship captain. Within its silver casing is a beautifully-crafted compass rose, whose points resemble a nexus of lightning bolts and bone fingers. While in use, the wielder hears the sound of waves crashing, a ship's hull creaking, and a haunting voice which calls, "Bring it back ...bring it back to me...". A description of this item's functions are located in Xanathar's Guide to Everything.

Story Awards

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Faro's Song. You have spent time in the company of the constable of Stonedock, moreso that you can mimic the song Faro is known for humming. This song may sooth the fear-filled hearts and instill hope to those in despair. This innocent homage to this well-loved man may move the displaced and hopeless to action, possibly effecting the Red War or future Con of the North Convention-Created Content.

Stink of Thanks. As a token of gratitude, the fishermen of Stonedock gift you a bucket of their special *stinkbait*. Each batch of this offal-smelling muck is a local mixture of rotten food staples, dead beast viscera, bubbling, vile fluids and a special ingredient that its maker adds to it! The bait's stench is so putrid that many may avoid you while you have it, you might lure beings that enjoy this gut-churning grub to it, or it could serve you in other ways in future Con of the North Convention-Created Content.

DM Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the other rewards listed above.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

About the Author

Marcello De Velazquez, is a retired US Air Force veteran of 20 years, whose love of D&D has led to his fulfilling a life-long dream of designing adventures for the D&D community. He longs for the creation of a carb-free cheeseburger macaroni.

Quote: "Attention All Adventurers! Good Gaming!"

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Appendix 1: Locations & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature **prominently** in this adventure.

- **Maucien Lemonloon/Frostmourn** (*MAW-see-in LEH-men-loon/ FROST-morn*).
Human bard, charlatan. Zhentarim. This scoundrel (along with his associates) take advantage of the fear of the displaced and the goodwill of nearby villagers by posing as a Cleric of Auril, the Frostmaiden. Cunning and flamboyant. Has taken something from someone who has deadly friends.
Personality: "I'm always looking for the next con".
Ideal: "People can be useful tools or useful fools".
Bond: "This compass is an object of beauty. I will keep it until I can find its match in the world".
Flaw: "Betrayal is a necessary ending to any ruse".
- **Faro Gupkin** (*FAR-row GUP-kin*).
Human, commoner, village constable
Appointed leader of the fishing village Stonedock. Kind-hearted and generous-spirited. Enjoys humming songs. Talks with a drawl. Wants to help all the people, but is running out of options.
Personality: "...do what we can fer everybawdy.."
Ideal: "Ah keep hummin to give 'em hope!"
Bond: "Ah help cus Ah know it's right.."
Flaw: "Got me a mind fer solvin', but nuna bravery fer resolving..."
- **Chauncey Tarkio** (*CHON-see TAR-kee-oh*).
Stout halfling, commoner, fisherman
One of the best fishermen in Stonedock. Good-willed and sharp-eyed. Knows he's lucky. Has an idea to help, but nobody to share the risk. His favorite vest has pockets for fish tackle. Stutters.
Personality: "Ah give as much trust as necessary".
Ideal: "... care for Stonedock folk before others".
Bond: "I'd do anything fer Faro Gupkin".
Flaw: "I stu-stu-stu- tter when I talk".
- **Chaos Storm** (*KAY-os STORM*).
Spawn of clashing necrotic and elemental magics. Warped weather. Erratic. Dark-grey clouds that resound with rolling thunder; twisting flares of life-sapping energy with deadly bursts of cold. Unpredictable force unleashed by The Red War.
Personality: I can free your soul or freeze it!
Ideal: Carry me winds! ...across the Moonsea!
Bond: I must share my gift to all those below me.
Flaw: I'm soulless and uncontrollable.

- **Stonedock** (*Like it sounds*)

Small fishing village, simple but strong structures. Recent host to a refugee camp on its outskirts, consisting of displaced people of war-torn Mulmaster. Dealing with an undead attack, a worthless priest, and some nasty weather.

Personality: Provides what it can to its folk.

Ideal: The dock stays strong so the folk can fish.

Bond: Keep me together and I'll keep you warm.

Flaw: Most of my folk are fearful of strangers.



Appendix 2: Creature Statistics

Commoner

Medium 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 any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target

Dread Warrior

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Poison

Senses Darkvision 60ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to one hit point instead.

Actions

Multi-attack. The dread warrior makes two melee attacks.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if wielded with two hands.

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

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

Maucien Lemonloon/Frostmourn (Bard)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (Chain Shirt)

Hit Points 44 (8d8 +8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws DEX +4, WIS +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Perception +5, Performance +6

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. The bard is a 4th level spellcaster. It's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +2 with spell attacks). It has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, healing word, heroism, sleep, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, shatter*

Song of Rest. The bard can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. The bard can confer this benefit on itself as well.

Taunt (2/day). The bard can use a bonus action on its turn to target one creature within 30 ft. of it. If the target can hear the bard, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on

ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of the bard's next turn.

Actions

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

Short Bow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft. one target. Hit 5 (1d6+2) piercing.

Muckmaw, Legendary Catfish (Dolphin)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (natural)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 0 ft., Swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	17 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses Blindsight 60ft. Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Charge. If the dolphin moves at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a slam attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

Hold Breath. The dolphin can hold its breath for 20 minutes.



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

Murder of Crows (Swarm of Ravens)

Medium swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 24 (7d8 - 7)

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

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

Actions

Beaks. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target in the swarm's space. Hit: 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Sentient Roots (Awakened Tree)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (Natural Armour)

Hit Points 59 (7d12 +14)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages One language known by its creator (Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While the tree remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal tree.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Undead Killer Whale (Killer Whale)

Huge Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 90 (12d12 + 12)

Speed 0ft., swim 60ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses Blindsight 120ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Echolocation. The whale can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Hold Breath. The whale can hold its breath for 30 minutes.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (5d6+4) piercing damage.

Zhentarim Thug

Medium humanoid, neutral

Armor Class 11 (Leather Armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

Actions

Multi-attack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

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

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

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target

Zombie

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws WIS +0

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 8

Languages Understands the language of its creator, but does not speak

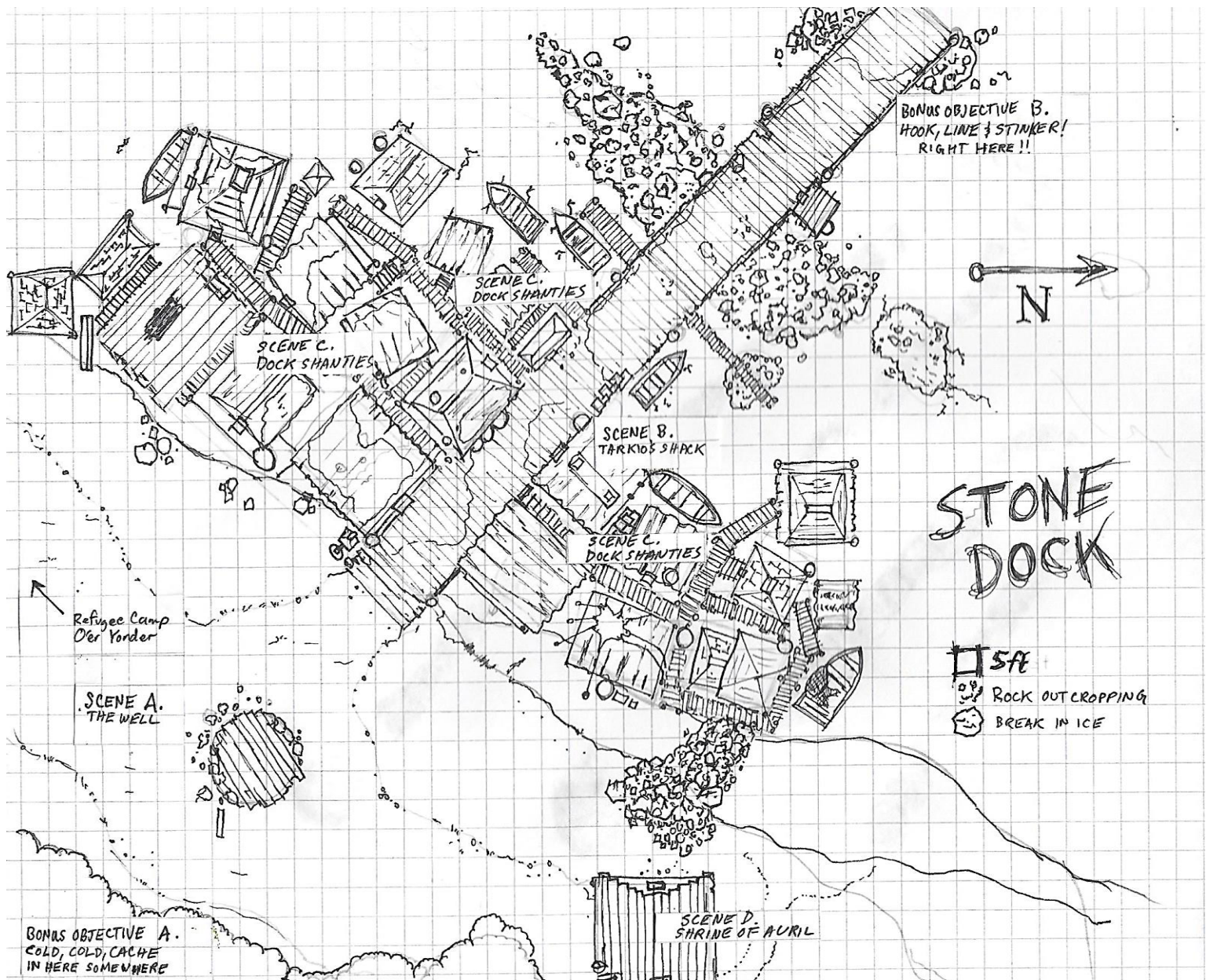
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

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

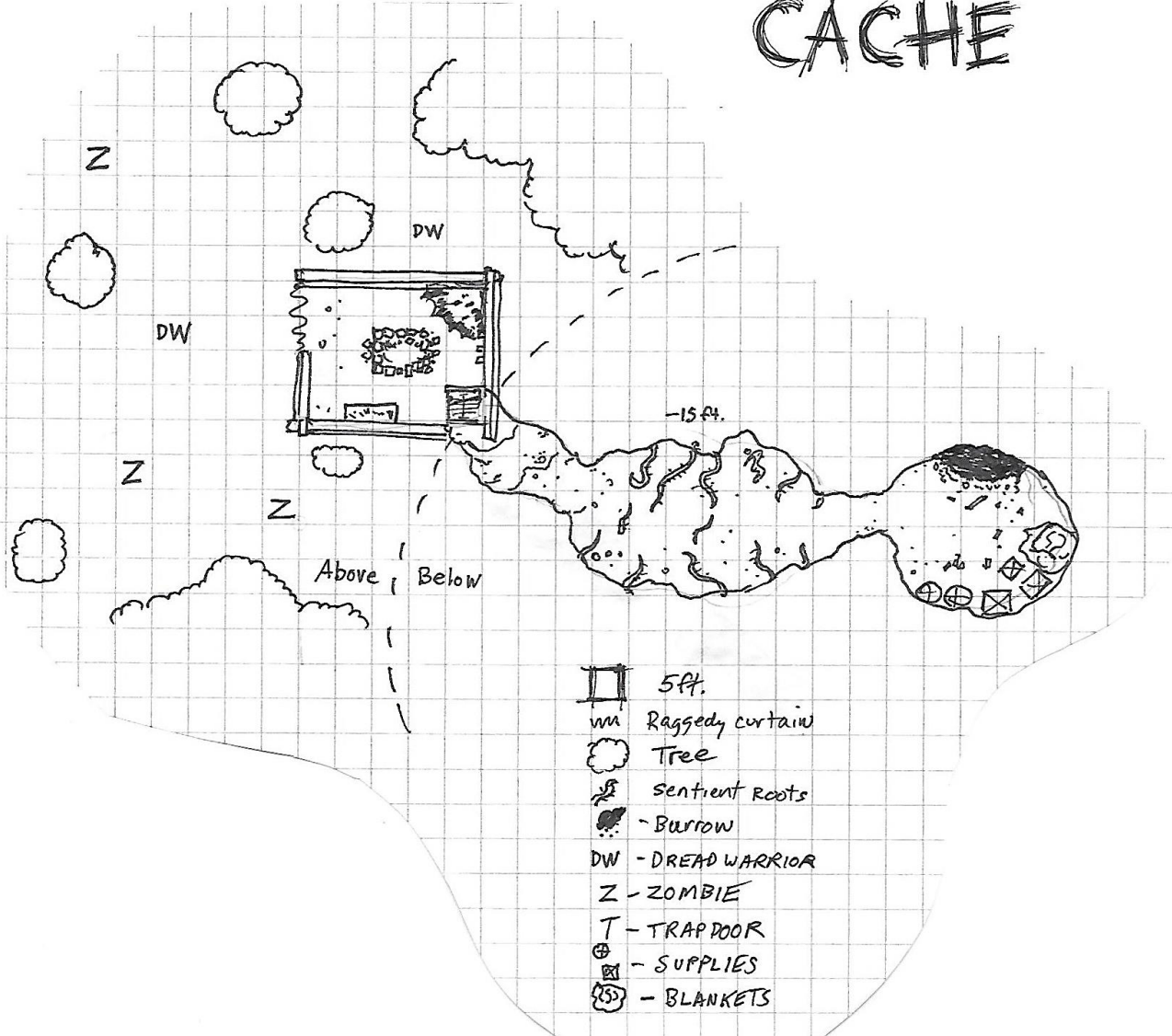


Appendix 3: Map A. Stonedock

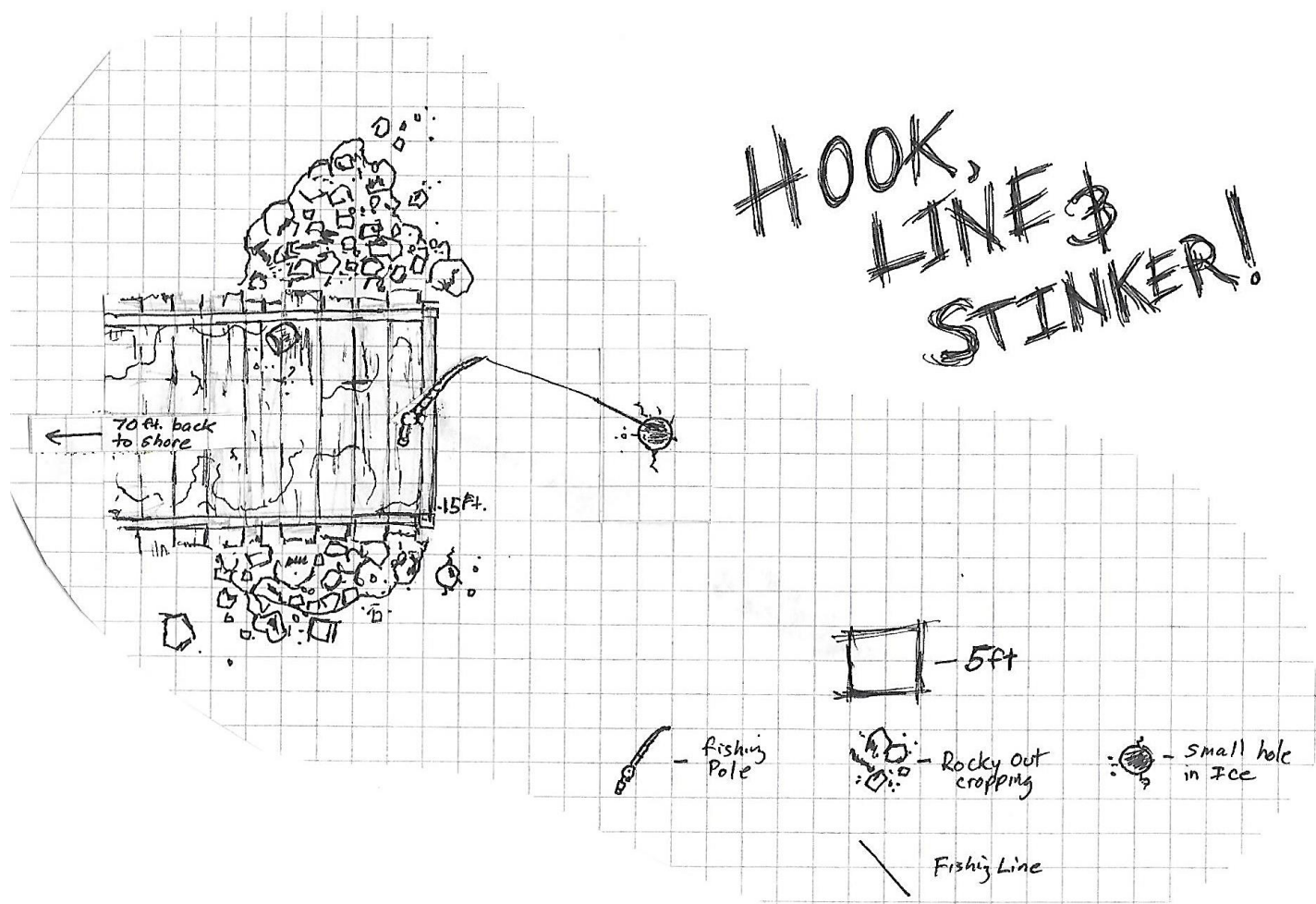


Appendix 3: Map B. Cold, Cold, Cache

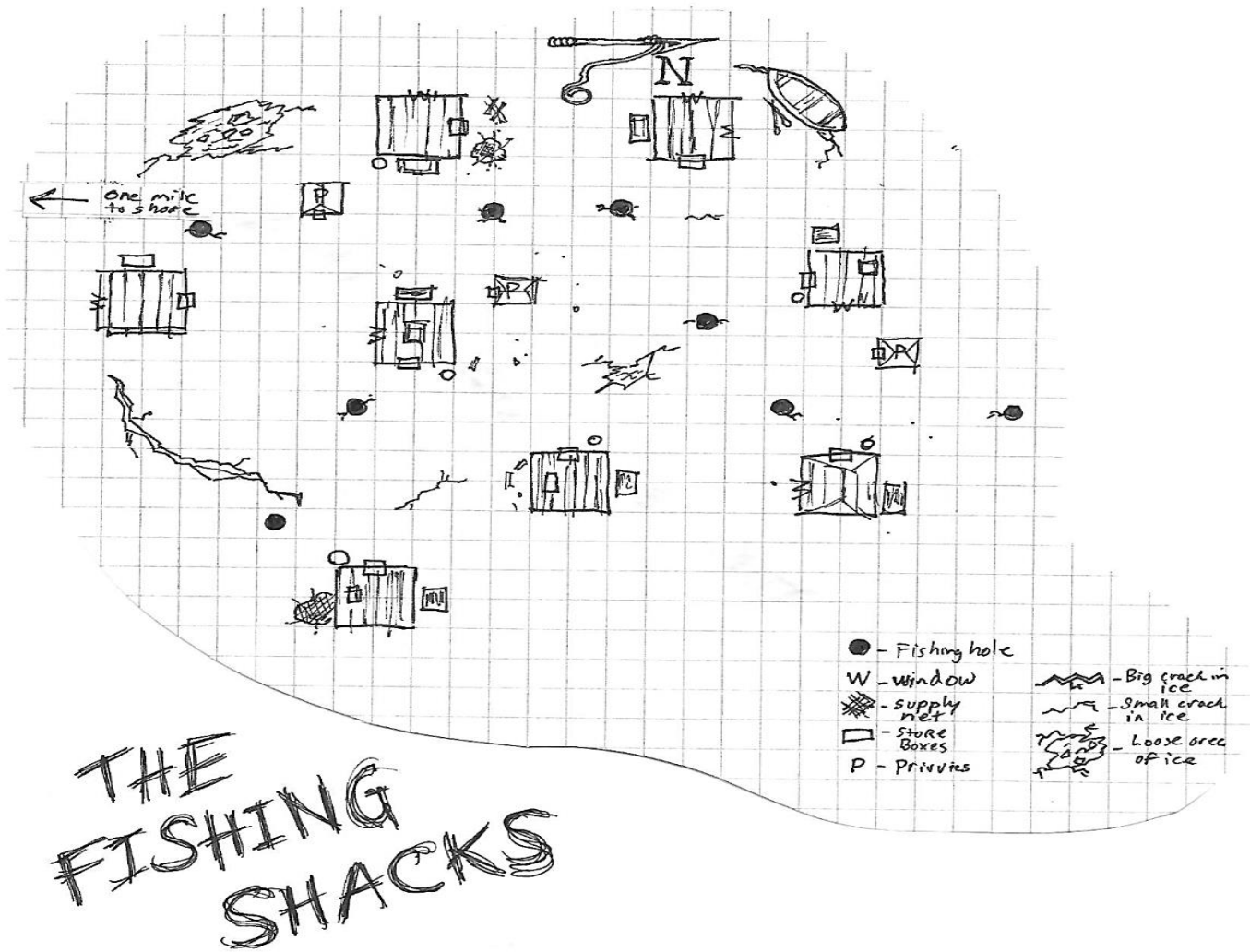
COLD, COLD,
CACHE



Appendix 3: Map C. Hook, Line, and Stinker!



Appendix 3: Map D. The Fishing Shacks



Appendix 4: Cold, Cold, Cache (Bonus Objective A.)

Estimated Duration: 60 Minutes

The Druid's Hovel

Faro Gupkin guides the adventurers into the nearby forest, leading them to the hovel of an old druid, long believed to be dead. In their search, they may find supplies and rations that can help the camp and villagers.

Prerequisites

The adventurers must have spoken to Faro Gupkin and decided to assist him in Episode 2, Scene A.

Bonus Objective A

The adventurers should recover any supplies that exist within the druid's hovel and return them to Faro Gupkin.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The hovel is made of stone and brambles. Its floor is cold earth. It stands 8 ft. high. Inside is a fire pit, pelt blankets and wooden table with trinkets about. A trapdoor leads into underground chambers, one of which contains supplies that have survived the frost. The chamber are guarded (See Creatures/NPCs).

Lighting. There is a hovering disturbance in the skies above, caused by the warped weather front; however, bright light is present. Dim light peeks into the hovel. Below the trapdoor, the only light present is what adventurers bring with them.

Frozen Undead. A presence of zombies and dread warriors are scattered about the area. The unnatural artic-blast has frozen them. (See Creatures/NPCs)

Creatures/NPCS

Faro Gupkin keeps a safe distance from the undead and the hovel. **Four zombies** and **two dread warriors** are located around the hovel. The zombies have one HP. Sentient roots (**awakened tree** with 0 mvt and vulnerability to cold instead of fire) hang from underground ceilings

Goals/Objectives. Faro Gupkin hopes the adventurers will find something that may help the camp and village. The sentient roots carry out their former masters will and protect the entrance into the stores.

What Do They Know? Faro Gupkin suspects that the druid had something hidden, since he rarely came to the village for supplies. The dread warriors and zombies know that the Corsair's Star calls to them.

Adjusting the Scene

Consider making these adjustments based on your group.

- **Very Weak/Weak:** Reduce awakened tree HP to 35.
- **Strong/Very Strong:** Zombies have full HP. Layer of frost acts as Armor of Agathis casted with 3rd level slot. Increase awakened tree HP to 90.

Returning to Episode Two

Upon leaving, the party notices a disturbance in the sky above the village shrine, Faro Gupkin urges them towards it. Proceed to **Scene D in Episode 2**.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

Undead are initially petrified until struck. They then attack. After two rounds of combat, they move towards the shrine (Episode 2, Scene D). Sentient roots grapple victims (DC 15 STR Athletics Check to Escape Grappled condition).

EXPLORATION

Stored in the far chamber are bins and barrels filled with blankets, dried fish, pinenuts, and berries. A successful DC 13 Perception Check spots at the bottom of old fox burrow a hollowed bone containing a **potion of resistance (cold)**.

SOCIAL

Faro Gupkin can be convinced to overcome his fear of the hovel, and provide aid, but only on a successful Charisma (Persuasion) Check contested by Faro Gupkin's Wisdom Check.

Appendix 5: Hook, Line, and Stinker (Bonus Objective B.)

Estimated Duration: 60 Minutes

The Dock

The town's namesake support the villager's homes and their livelihood. The deadly frost has forced villagers into their homes and refugees into their tents, all save Chauncey Tarkio, who is determined to find a way to feed his fellow villagers.

Prerequisites

The adventurers must agree to help Chauncey Tarkio in Episode 2.

Bonus Objective B

The adventurers help Chauncey Tarkio catch Muckmaw, a monster catfish.

Area Information

Dimensions and Terrain. The dock stands 15ft high and juts 100ft into the Moonsea. The end of the dock is the ideal spot to fish. The waters are frozen in a thick layer of ice (AC:15, HP:5, DT:8). Breaking an area of ice removes a 5ft square area that magically refreezes after a minute.

Lighting. The skies are brightly lit, although obscured by the magic-infused cloud cover.

The Chaos Storm. The storm's effect has made the dock dangerous to cross, presenting the following challenges during this objective:

- Frequent strong gusts of wind (STR 15) that can slam people against the dock rails.
- Scattered frozen fish-hooks and tackle that pierce the feet of passersby.
- Threats can be avoided with DC 12 Checks or they deal 1d8 damage (DM discretion)

COMBAT

Muckmaw is forced out of the water w/three DC 14 (min combined STR of 30 needed). While in the water, attacks against it have Disadvantage. An attack roll of one, an area-of-effect magic attack, or at the end of four rounds, the line is broken and Muckmaw escapes! (whichever comes first).

EXPLORATION

Characters observing the small ice hole when Muckmaw is pulled up notices the catfish is too big to fit through the small hole! They may spend an Action to break the ice (Area Information). If a 10ft or wider area of ice around Muckmaw is cleared, attack and STR checks against it have Advantage.

SOCIAL

Tarkio occasionally looks over the dock's edge, hollering words of encouragement (i.e. "You almost got im!", "Make the hole larger!") while his fishing rod annoying yells, "You got a bite! You got a bite!! ..." Allow Tarkio a Help Action or the rod's yelling to force Concentration Checks to spellcasters to keep focus!!!!

The Finish Line

When the adventurers reach the dock's edge, Chauncey has set up his lucky fishing pole, baited the line, and dropped it into a small hole he carved out from the ice below.

Creatures/NPCs

Chauncey Tarkio (**Commoner**) avoids the dangers on the dock with a halfling's luck. Muckmaw is a giant catfish (**Dolphin** without Charge or Hold Breath traits, AC:13 and HP:35). It's uses a Slam Attack twice a round, dealing 6 (1d8 +2) Bludgeoning Dmg.

Objective/Goals. Tarkio wants to catch Muckmaw, a local legend among the fishermen. Tarkio points out how they can help. Muckmaw wants to eat the bait without being hooked. It wants to break free!

What Do They Know? Chauncey Tarkio knows that Muckmaw could feed the village and camp for some time. If the fishing line holds, Muckmaw could be hauled out of the water! Muckmaw will pull, slap, and gulp its way to escape!!!!

Returning to Episode Two

Once Muckmaw is dealt with, the heroes notice a disturbance near the village shrine, Tarkio urges them toward it. **Proceed to Scene D in Episode 2.**

Adjusting the Scene

Consider making these adjustments based on your group.

- **Very Weak/Weak:** Reduce dock dangers DC to 10. Reduce dmg to d6. Muckmaw escapes in six rounds!
- **Strong/Very Strong:** Increase dock dangers DC to 14. Increase dmg to d10. Muckmaw's AC is 15. It has 45 HP. On an attack roll of 1 or 2 by heroes, the line breaks!

Playing the Pillars

Appendix 6: Player Handout (Magic Items)

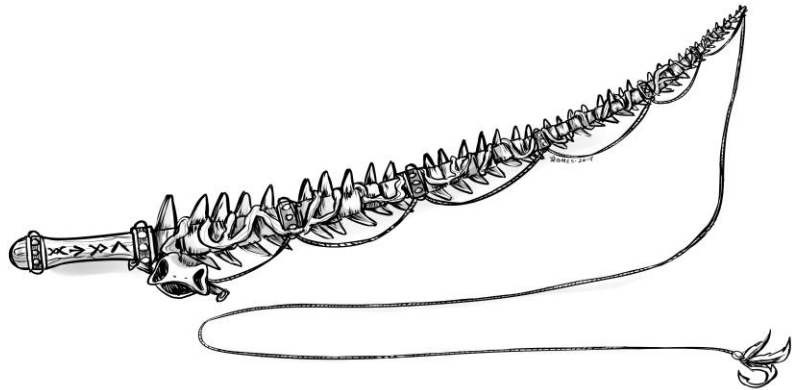
Characters completing this adventure's objectives may obtain/unlock these magic items.

Chauncey's Codbone Cosherer (Immovable Rod)

Tier 1-4 Unlock, Table B of DMG, 8 treasure checkpoints

This gnarled stick is the warped mix of bramble, vine and birchwood, twisted around the spine of a humongous Moonsea Cod. Druidic runes are etched in the handle, their meaning, lost through the seasons. The fish spine permits threading of a line down to a crude reel made of a sea chub's skull. While activated, if there are any fish-like beasts within 10ft. of the rod, it will shake, and the skull will excitedly exclaim, "You got a bite! You got a bite!"

This magic item functions as an *immovable rod*, which can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.



Corsair's Star (Orb of Direction)

Tier 1-4 Unlock, 2 treasure checkpoints

This palm-sized, masterwork compass was once the property of a Thayan ship captain. Housed within its polished silver case is an expertly-crafted compass rose, whose bone-finger points stand out from behind intricately-carved storm clouds and lightning bolts. A diminutive opal orb suffused with a part of the Thayan's soul sets at its center. While in use, the wielder hears the sound of waves crashing along with a ship's hull creaking. A haunting voice calls, "Bring it back ...bring it back to me..."

This magic item functions as an *orb of direction*, which can be found in the *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.



Potion of Resistance (Cold)

Tier 1-4 Unlock, Table B of DMG, 8 treasure checkpoints

A hollow legbone a woodland creature carries in it a thick crème made of dried goodberries, fire thistles, mint, and honey. It carries the strong scent of menthol and has a sweet, syrupy taste.

Appendix 7: Player Handout (Story Rewards)

Characters completing this adventure's objectives may receive this story reward and/or downtime activity.

Faro's Song

You have spent time in the company of the constable of Stonedock, moreso that you can mimic the song Faro is known for humming. This song may sooth the fear-filled hearts and instill hope to those in despair. This innocent homage to this well-loved man may move the displaced and hopeless to action, possibly effecting the Red War or future Con of the North Convention-Created Content.

Stink of Thanks

As a token of gratitude, the fishermen of Stonedock gift you a bucket of their special *stinkbait*. Each batch of this offal-smelling muck is a local mixture of rotten food staples, dead beast viscera, warm-bubbling, vile fluids and a special ingredient that its maker adds to it! The bait's stench is so putrid that many may avoid you while you have it, you might lure beings that enjoy this gut-churning grub to it, or it could serve you in other ways in future Con of the North Convention-Created Content.

Appendix 8: Dungeon Master Tips

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

New to the Annual Storyline?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/story/waterdeep>

New to Being the Dungeon Master?

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/waterdeep-adventures/>

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure’s level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first one if they’re outside its level range.

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything 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. Familiar 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 notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- 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, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting This Adventure

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you’re not bound to these adjustments; they’re here for your convenience and consideration.

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group’s average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining 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