



# SALT AND SACRIFICE

A Shadow of the Demon Lord adventure for novice characters  
by Jerry LeNeave and Ben Menard



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A creeping threat has begun to swallow up small coastal settlements throughout Rûl as a race of monstrous fish people known as gleran devour their residents. These

creatures, originally transformed from the drowned bodies of sacrifices made in the name of Oceanus have been skulking among the watery recesses of Urth for ages.

*Salt and Sacrifice* is an adventure for novice characters who find themselves on an island that's been overrun by gleran. The isle's inhabitants have all been killed and used in a ritual set to birth a spawn of Oceanus known as The Keeper into existence. A preternatural ring of fog envelops the island as the ritual strengthens, making attempting to escape just as deadly as staying. The adventure ends once The Keeper is defeated, or when the characters perish and their souls are used to make the ritual complete.

## Background

With their numbers recently swelling, a few sects of gleran have begun making more audacious sacrifices in the name of Oceanus. Raiding coastal villages, growing more confident with each strike, each sacrifice more profane than the last.

Due to a recent uptick in destructive storms and deluges of rain, the gleran believe they've pleased their maker and have set their sights on a series of small inhabited isles. Their latest target is an isle known as Selkie Rock, where a lighthouse has long stood as a symbol of hope to the beleaguered locals. A small brood has descended upon the isle and begun turning it into a grisly beacon dedicated to the The King Under the Waves himself. However, they still need a few more sacrifices and eagerly await whoever arrives next to investigate.

## Setting the Scene

On Selkie Rock sits the now-defiled home of the Anottagrem family, a people who had lived on and prospered from the sea's many gifts for generations. The entire family has been drowned or devoured by gleran and their home turned into a ritual site that will be used to honor Oceanus.

The characters can happen upon the island while travelling or have overheard people talking about the light vanishing from the shoreline. They've either decided to investigate why it's gone out on their own volition, or have been hired to do so.

Selkie Rock is approximately 1 mile from the shore and contains the family's home, a small dock just north of the house, and a lighthouse to the east.

## Outdoor Areas

Regardless of time of day or weather, a thick fog will always set in around Selkie Rock after the group arrives, making the entire area partially obscured. There is always at least dim light either from an overcast or moonlit sky, or from the crimson glow emanating from atop the lighthouse.

Generally, the gleran lurk outside or in the lighthouse while the characters are inside poking around. They mostly avoid them unless they can outnumber them or somehow get the upper hand. Their main objective is to swarm the players once they reach the top of the lighthouse where the ritual is taking place.

### Dock

This small dock only meant to store a ferry and a few small boats sits empty aside from a singular rowboat that lazily bobs up and down with the lapping of the waves.

Once arrived, the fog sets in and makes navigating back to shore extremely difficult. Additionally, 1d3+3 gleran lurk beneath the surface of the water and will capsize any vessel leaving the island, attempting to kill or drown its crew. Once the ritual is stopped these gleran attempt to escape deeper into the ocean, allowing the characters to return to the mainland.

### Outhouse

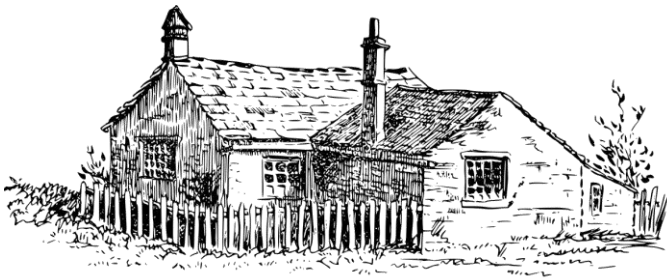
The outhouse holds the scant remains of the eldest of the family, grandpa, who was devoured anus-first by a gleran while relieving himself. The salt-caked wood bears a crescent window carved into the door. The interior is equally worn and warped. Claw marks can be noticed on the seat by any character investigating the interior.

The seat opening gives way to an excrement choked tunnel that leads out to sea, eviscerated human remains are scattered about the top of the opening along with a golden pocket watch. Characters who want to fetch the watch from inside must succeed a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes or become diseased until they take a rest.

## The House



The inhabitants were done away with a short time ago, a few lanterns still sputter and burn with oil in the study and kitchen. The house is otherwise completely dark and drafty, doors ajar and belongings lie strewn about. Puddles of seawater and entrails pool on the floor and streak the walls.



## House Locations

**A. Common Room** Several paintings of old sailors with dour looks on their faces decorate the walls here. There are dilapidated couches and an arm chair, as well as a small table holding a chess set. Characters investigating the room and succeeding a Perception challenge roll will notice a loose floor board, beneath which is an interesting thing (*p.26 Core Rulebook*).

**B. Study** This room is dominated by an empty fireplace flanked with overstuffed chairs and the smell of moldy paper. A broken window over a desk blows papers around the room. On the desk is a large book and a flickering lantern.

The book is a log of supplies, events, and operations for the light house. In its margins are indecipherable scrawlings and sketches of mutated sea creatures. One of the last entries recalls a ship that deliberately sailed into a cliffside. If a character investigates the window, a gleran from outside claws at them. It then immediately crawls through to attack, while 3 others enter from behind, via the common room.

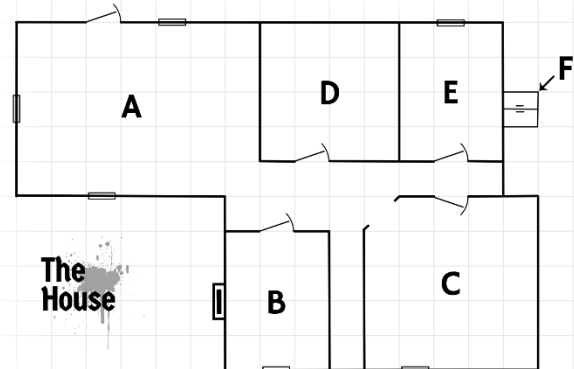
**C. Kitchen** Atop a rickety wooden table sits 2 waterlogged human corpses, partially dismembered and decapitated. The room is bathed in a ghastly light sourced from barreleye fish heads impaled upon a chandelier covered in a thick slime. When a character sees this for the first time they must succeed a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1d3 insanity. Any creature searching through the “meal” finds a discarded pouch of 5ss and an iron ring bearing a family crest. Doing so requires succeeding a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or becoming impaired for 1 hour due to vomiting profusely.

**D. Bedroom** This bedroom is well kept, except for the unmade bed at its center. An armoire and vanity littered with

the personal effects of a married couple sit opposite one another on either wall. Upon entering, the faint yet moist sounds of masticating can be heard coming from a small closet in the northeast corner. Within this closet are 2 gleran feasting on what remains of a body and have no intentions on leaving anytime soon, unless disturbed.

**E. Guest Bedroom** A cot sits alone at the center of this mostly empty room, covered in a thick viscous liquid that slowly drips into a puddle that’s gathered beneath it. Sinew and blood is thickly smattered across the walls here. Atop the bed sits a translucent mass of tissue stretched over human remains. The veiny sac is riddled with clusters of what look to be fist-sized fish eggs.

This is a gleran nest, destroying an egg causes a cloud of poisonous vapor to erupt from the sac, dealing 1d3 damage to creatures within 1 yard. On the floor beside the cot, lies a heavy iron key that unlocks the lighthouse door.



**F. Storm Cellar** Below a shoddy wooden door, shallow steps lead to where various lighthouse and fishing supplies are stored, as well as well-preserved food and potable water. Whale oil canisters, spare lenses, nets, boat oars, fishing spears, and other similar supplies can be found here.

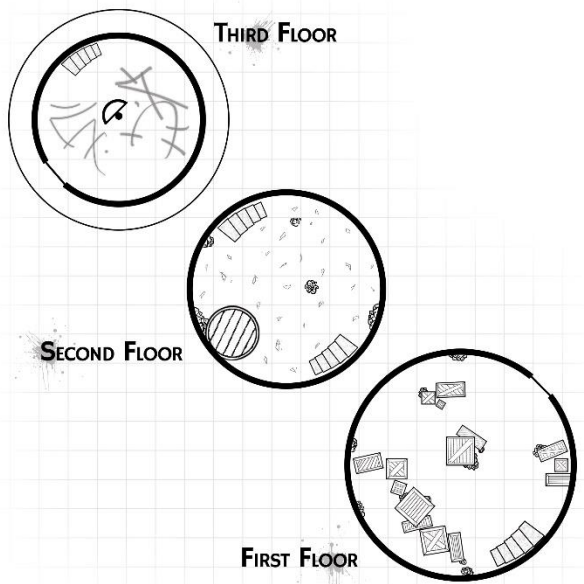
## The Lighthouse

The lighthouse is made of stone and well-weathered from the surrounding sea. The structure itself seems to predate the house and dock, at its top is an iron catwalk and within are 3 floors connected by a spiral staircase. Its red glow penetrates the surrounding fog, creating what looks like a blood mist. At its base the entryway holds a sturdy oak door, locked and reinforced with riveted iron bands. Several gleran stir inside,

most of which are at the top along with the keeper, furthering the ritual and waiting for fresh sacrifices.

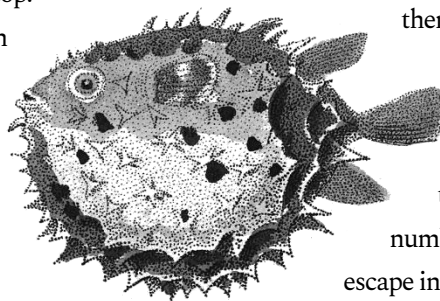
## First Floor

The bottom level is devoid of light and littered with crates, some broken open. Tools and other equipment lie strewn about the room, several large barnacles have formed into clusters throughout as well. Three gleran lurk behind a wall of crates piled high opposite the door, they pause from their meal of a waterlogged corpse when the characters enter.



These gleran will silently wait for the characters to leave and then attempt to scuttle up the side of the lighthouse unnoticed to wait and attack them within the confines of the top level. If discovered they will defend themselves but ultimately attempt to flee and reach the top.

Characters that disturb or get within 1 yard of a barnacle causes it to excrete a thick vapor, creatures within 1 yard of it must make a Strength challenge roll or become poisoned for 1 minute. Gleran are immune to these vapors.



## Second Floor

This room is dominated by a large brass barrel fitted with a pump and contains whale oil for the lamp upstairs. Connected to the top of the barrel is a pipe that leads up to the center of the ceiling into the top level. Large shards of jagged glass cover the floor where a set of the beacon's lenses were smashed on the

ground. Among the glass are more barnacle clusters, sinew, and seawater. The entire area counts as difficult terrain and creatures falling prone here take 1d3 damage from the glass and must succeed a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or bleed for an additional 1d3 damage.

Characters investigating the area can easily discover a trail of wet webbed footprints and blood that leads up the stairs.

## Third Floor

The floor here is marked with profane sigils made of intricately arranged trails of blood and viscera. Players who succeed an Intellect challenge roll recall this symbol being associated with the cult of Oceanus (*p.36 Uncertain Faith*) and notice that it's not fully complete. The bloody skin of a human has been stretched and pinned over the lens of the lighthouse which sits at the center of the room, via several harpoons (*treat as javelin*). Upon seeing this, characters must succeed a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1d3 insanity. The exterior of this floor has a narrow metal catwalk surrounding it that can be accessed via a single unlocked door.

This ritual site was used to create The Keeper and summon the fog, those with magical or occult paths or professions succeeding an Intellect challenge roll with 1 boon can easily deduce that simply disrupting the sigil won't be enough to put a stop to it.

The Keeper lies in a pool of slime and saltwater at the center of the nearly-finished sigil as the ritual is conducted by 4 other gleran. Additionally, any remaining gleran from the house or the lighthouse have gathered here to set up an ambush. Any of these remaining gleran retain any damage previously dealt to

them. Upon the characters arriving in this chamber, The

Keeper and all gleran immediately attempt to kill and consume them. Gleran are unaffected by the Keeper's frightening appearance and will fight to

the death, but if The Keeper is killed and their numbers have been halved they will flee in an attempt to escape into the deep ocean.

## Conclusion

Provided the characters could defeat The Keeper and survive, the fog lifts shortly thereafter and they should be able to easily reach the mainland once again. The local townsfolk hail them as heroes, celebrating the lifting of the fog and reclamation of

their beloved lighthouse. The revelry is bittersweet though, due to the loss of the Anottagrem family and various others who died. The local inn offers free meals and lodging to them for the next week.

## New Creatures

The following new creatures appear in the adventure. There is also a new descriptor: **(Amphibious)** An amphibious creature can breathe water as well as air and has the swimmer trait.

### Gleran

Gleran are a race of amphibious humanoid creatures with the heads of angler fish, complete with a bioluminescent pod that dangles just above their massive black eyes. Their supple frog-like skin spans the many cold hues of the ocean. Their webbed hands and feet secrete a sticky mucus that aids in climbing, and their distended near-translucent bellies often places their last meal on display.

Their origins trace back to a time when the cults an ancient god of the deep, Oceanus, once thrived. The first gleran was created by Oceanus himself from the sacrificially-drowned remains of his most devoted acolyte. Oceanus now absent, gleran are created in a similar if somewhat more makeshift fashion via the laying of eggs to gestate atop humanoid remains.

**GLERAN**

**DIFFICULTY 5**

*Size 1 amphibious monster*

**Perception** 13 (+3); **darksight**  
**Defense** 14 (natural armor); **Health** 15  
**Strength** 13 (+3), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 10 (+0)  
**Speed** 10; climber, swimmer

**ATTACK OPTIONS**

**Claw** (melee) +3 with 1 boon (1d6+2)  
**Bite** (melee) +3 (1d6+3)

**SPECIAL ATTACKS**

**Drowning Grasp** If within 1 yard of a body of water, if the gleran makes a successful claw attack it also automatically grabs its target.

**SPECIAL ACTIONS**

**Blinding Pulse** The bioluminescent sac suspended above the gleran's head flashes brightly and each creature within 2 yards not averting their eyes must succeed a Strength challenge roll or become blinded for 1 round. Other gleran, blinded, and sightless creatures automatically succeed.

## The Keeper

The Keeper was once a man of the Anottagrem family, now the byproduct of a grisly ritual and transformed into a half-man, half-crustacean abomination. What portions of its mangled body aren't covered in gashes that seep blood and seawater, are covered in thick clusters of barnacles and corded ripples of muscle. Its entire right arm is chitinous and ends in a massive crablike pincer.

Still undergoing transformation and not at full strength, The Keeper requires more souls to be sacrificed in the name of Oceanus to be complete. Because of this, its body twitches violently as it tries to take its final shape. The Keeper's head is bifurcated and a fishlike tadpole has begun attempting to congeal and re-fuse its split cranium.

None of his former personality intact, the creature acts out of pure aggression and instinct.

**THE KEEPER**

**DIFFICULTY 25**

*Size 1 frightening monster*

**Perception** 9 (-1);  
**Defense** 16 (natural armor); **Health** 24  
**Strength** 14 (+4), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 10 (+0)  
**Speed** 8

**ATTACK OPTIONS**

**Punch** (melee) +4 with 2 boons (1d6+3)  
**Slice** (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6 plus Amputate on attack roll 20+)  
**Amputate** The target takes 1d6 extra damage.

**SPECIAL ATTACKS**

**Deep Cuts** The Keeper makes an attack with his pincer, aiming directly for the base of an appendage and deals an extra d6 damage if successful. Roll a d6. On a roll of anything but a 5 or 6, The Keeper cannot use Decapitate again for 1 minute.

**SPECIAL ACTIONS**

**Abyssal Mending** The Keeper heals 1d3 damage.







Who doesn't enjoy carnivorous fish people and human sacrifice?

*No one, that's who.*

Like all Black Candle adventures, *Salt and Sacrifice* focuses on the idea of being able to run it *tonight*, with little to no prep. It's a malleable adventure you can plug in just about anywhere or use as a one shot.

Be sure to keep an eye on [www.BlackCandleGames.com](http://www.BlackCandleGames.com) and [@PlayBlackCandle](https://twitter.com/PlayBlackCandle) on Twitter for news on upcoming *Shadow of the Demon Lord* adventures and other products!

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