

AT-02

FOR
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
FIFTH EDITION

Dungeon Module AT-02

It's About Time

Quest for the Mithral Sphere

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AN ADVENTURE FOR SECOND LEVEL CHARACTERS.



This is the second adventure in a series of adventures that make up the "Its About Time" campaign arc. It also provides a framework for the players to incorporate the use of time travel into the game by using supplement **AT-01 Time Travel Rules for D&D**. These adventures will take a group of adventurers from level 1 to level 20. It starts with our adventures arriving at the mysterious Island of Aethelgard.

This module brings back some of the classic "anything can happen" feeling of the earlier versions of the game.

Requires the use of the fifth edition *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, and *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Contents

Introduction

PREPARATION.....	1
Encounter Levels	1
The Campaign World - Manoria	
TRACKING WEEKS AND MONTHS.....	1
Quest for the Mithral Sphere	
THE HEROES' JOURNEY THUS FAR.....	1

Aethelgard Island

The Map

How to Read the Map	3
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Running the Adventure

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS	5
ENCOUNTERS BY TERRAIN	5
FEATURED LOCATIONS	6
Hex B3: Magmin and Cinderbats	6
Hex B4: Mountain Goat Skeletons	7
Hex C1: Beach Hags.....	8
Hex C2: Cultist Ambush	8
Hex C3: Entrance to the Ancient Temple.....	9
Hex C4: Interrupt a Cultist Ritual.....	10
Hex D4: Giant Wolf Skeleton	12
Hex D5: Dire Wolves.....	12
Hex E2: Will-o'-wisps	13

Hex E3: Burial Ground.....	13
Hex E4: Monkey Skeletons.....	13
Hex F4: Twig Blights.....	14
Hex G3: Giant Toads.....	14
Hex G4: Crater, Cultists.....	15
Hex H3: Zombies	16
Hex I3: Giant Frog & Snapping Turtles	16
Hex I5: Undead Pirate, Giant Spiders	17

Concluding the Adventure

Appendix A: Player Handouts

Handout #1 - Players Map	19
Handout #2 - Pirate's Map	19
Handout #3 - Gravestone.....	20
Handout #4 - Blackheart's Note	20

Appendix B: New Monsters

Beach Hag.....	21
Cinderbat.....	21
Cultist Acolyte.....	22
Cultist Deathless	22
Cultist Whisperer.....	23
Giant Snapping Turtle	23
Giant Wolf Skeleton	24
Monkey Skeleton.....	24
Mountain Goat Skeleton.....	25
Skeleton Soldier	25
Undead Pirate.....	26
Young Griffon.....	26

Disclaimer

The following is an adventure module for the fantasy role playing game Dungeons and Dragons. You will need the fifth edition Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide and Monster Manual to make full sense of this.

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This document is intended to assist Dungeon Masters in running a game using an already standing game system. No information herein is to be copied and sold for profit. A free copy can be downloaded here: <https://olddungeonmaster.com/>

Digital Accessories Pack

Each of the adventures in the "It's About Time" adventure path includes a "Digital Accessories Pack" which is a .ZIP file containing copies of the maps, player handouts, and other playing aids related to the adventure.

Abbreviations

PC.....	Player Character	PHB,,,,	Players Hand Book
DM.....	Dungeon Master	DMG,,,	Dungeon Master's Guide
NPC....	Non Player Character	MM ,,,,	Monster Manual

Introduction

This is Dungeon Module **AT-02 Quest for the Mithral Sphere**. It is the second adventure in the **It's About Time** campaign. The entire campaign is an adventure arc that will take characters from 1st level to 20th level. This adventure is intended for a party of four 2nd level characters. By the end of this adventure they will be ready to start the next adventure as 3rd level characters.

Preparation

Quest for the Mithral Sphere is written for Dungeon and Dragons, 5th Edition. It requires the use of the **Player's Handbook**, the **Dungeon Master's Guide**, and the **Monster Manual**.

You will also need The first book in this series, the Time Travel Supplement **AT-00 Time Travel Rules for D&D**, and **AT-01 An Ancient Evil**. AT-00 was written to be used throughout the **It's About Time** campaign. The PCs start this adventure with 2 Time Points. AT-01 is the first adventure in this campaign and you will need it for information regarding Saltport Cove, the small fishing village the PCs have traveled from and may return to for rest and/or supplies. It also contains some background information you will need throughout the campaign.

The text in white boxes with rounded corners is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased to the players. The green shaded boxes (sidebars) contain additional information. The statistics for monsters are included in abbreviated form with each encounter [similar to the abbreviated stat block format shown here <https://theangrygm.com/abbreviate-stat-blocks/>]. Monster names are in bold type. The page number is listed where common monsters can be found in the **Monster Manual** (MM), or the **Dungeon Master's Guide** (DMG). For new monsters and NPCs the page number is listed for where they can be found in this document.

Encounter Levels

Quest for the Mithral Sphere is designed for a party of four 2nd level PCs, you may need to adjust the encounters to account for a larger or smaller party. The encounters may be especially deadly for a smaller party.

As your charters proceed through the **It's About Time** campaign, it is recommended that instead of experience points you allow the characters to "level up" before starting an adventure designed for the next level. This is commonly referred to as using the milestone method of character advancement.

The Campaign World - Manoria

Refer to **AT-01 An Ancient Evil** for background information on the campaign world of Manoria regarding the counting of the years, the creation myth, the pantheon, and the overarching story.

Tracking Weeks and Months

Manoria travels once around the sun in 336 days, visiting the 12 Lairs of the Zodiac in an appointed round that never varies. The Great Moon, called Luna, waxes and wanes in fixed cycles of 28 days (Luna's cycle governs lycanthropy).

Each lunar cycle marks the passage of one month, which is further subdivided into four weeks of seven days each.

The seven days of the week are: **Sun's Day**, **Moon's Day**, **Air's Day**, **Water's Day**, **Earth's Day**, **Fire's Day**, and **Ether's Day**.

This adventure starts on the first day of the year 1,000 AD. (Refer to **AT-01 An Ancient Evil**). If your group played that first adventure, they may have taken longer to step onto the Island of Aethelgard. If so, simply adjust the days mentioned below by adding the appropriate number of days.

The first day of the year is also the first day of spring, the first day of the first month, and the first day of the lunar cycle which starts with a new moon.

The months are divided into 4 seasons.

- The 3 months of spring are: **Flowers**, **Festivals**, and **Greengrass**.
- The 3 months of summer are: **Highsun**, **Tournaments**, and **Leaffade**.
- The 3 months of fall are: **Leaffall**, **Markets**, and **Rotting**.
- The 3 months of winter are: **Winds**, **Ceremonies**, and **Storms**.

With the name of this campaign being "It's About Time" it should come as no surprise that you should keep track of the passage of time during these adventures.

I created a tool to help the DM track time during an adventure. You might find it useful. You can download a copy here: <https://olddungeonmaster.com/2016/08/20/dd-5e-time-tracking-tool/>

Quest for the Mithral Sphere

The Heroes' Journey Thus Far

The previous adventure, **AT-01 An Ancient Evil**, ended with our heroes stepping onto this island, instantly taken back in time where they met Lander and Puck who told them of a powerful artifact called the Mithral Sphere reported to be somewhere on the island, and then returned to a point in time only 6 seconds after they left here.

Lander is a flump. A flump is a creature that is only a couple of feet in diameter that floats in the air and resembles a jellyfish. But appearances can be deceptive. Lander has powerful magical abilities and unwavering resolve. He is the one responsible for the heroes time jump. He told them that they must find the artifact to prevent the future destruction of the world.

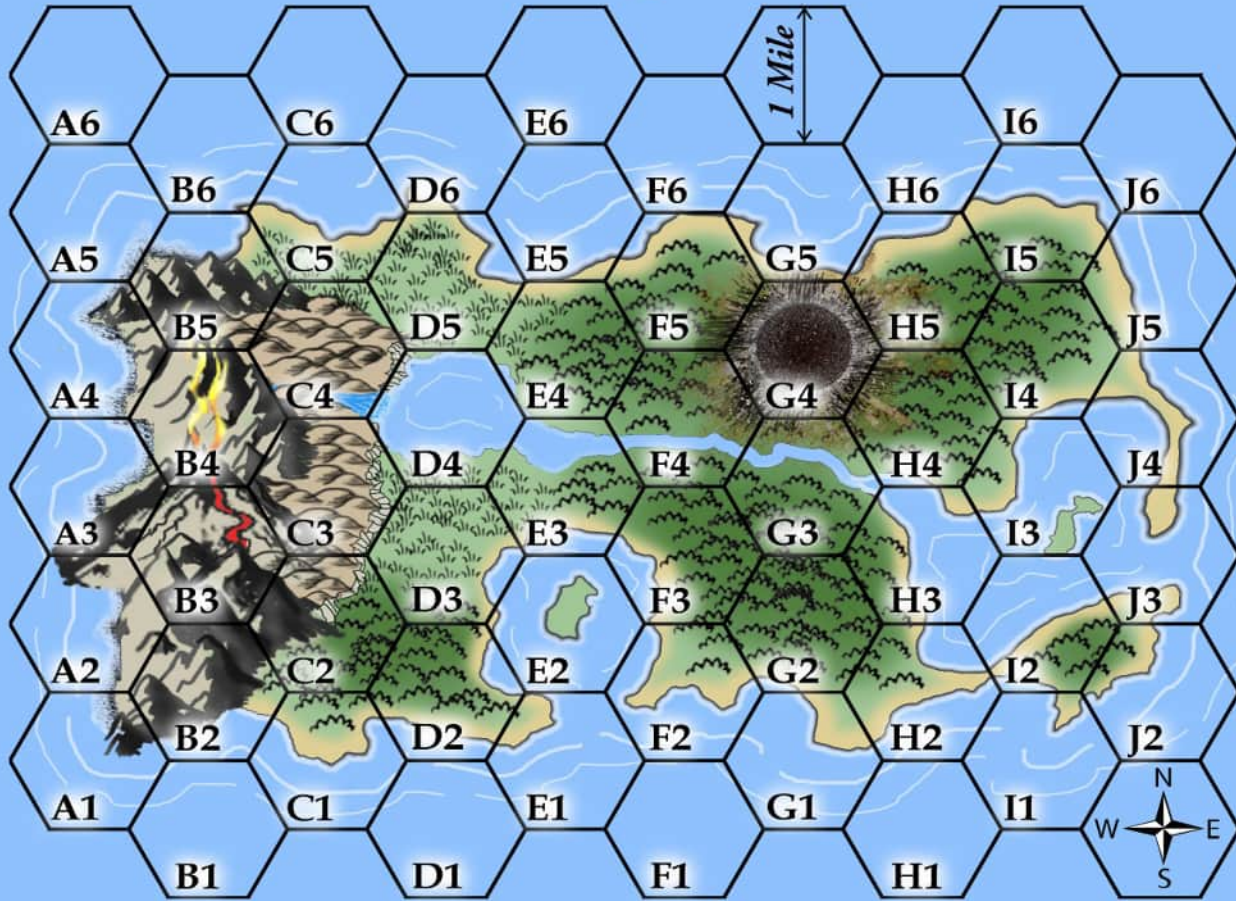
Accompanying Lander was a mischievous sprite named Puck. What his association is with Lander was never quite explained.

Well the heroes are back on the island now.

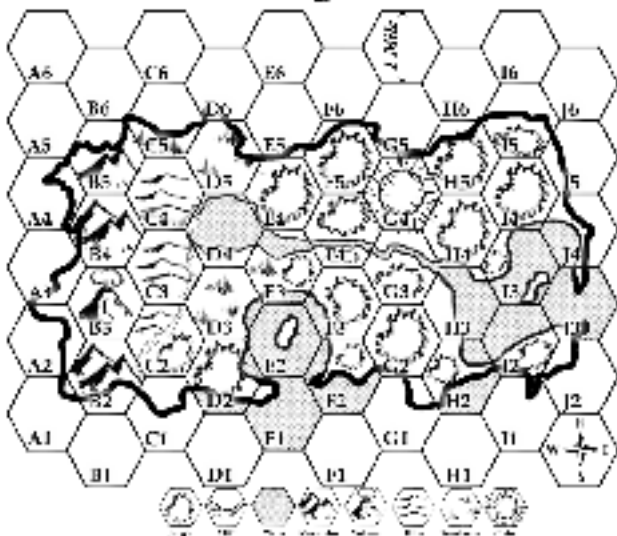
12 miles away, in Saltport Cove, before they left they made an agreement with Sheriff Amelia Waveshield to map this island and survey it for any possible dangers it might present to the fishing village. She gave them a map she got from a fisherman that shows the outline of the island and agreed that she would give them 20 gp each if they did. She also paid Captain Silas Hawser to take them to the island on his fishing ship The Salty Gull, furnish them with 7 days rations, and return to pick them up 7 days later.

Captain Silas dropped them off in a rowboat about 100 feet from the beach, and watched until they were safely on shore before sailing away.

Aethelgard

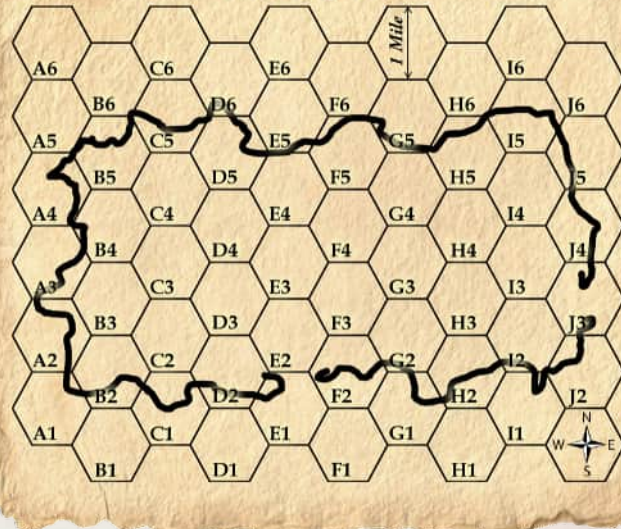


Aethelgard



Aethelgard Island - Schematic

Aethelgard



Aethelgard Island - Handout

AETHELGARD ISLAND

The Map

On page 2 are three different maps of the same island. The one that is in color is an overview for the DM. The one in black and white is also for the DM. It has symbols representing the terrain found in each hex. The third one is a map the sheriff gave to the PCs and only shows the island's outline. This Players Map is available as a handout on page 19. They can use it to track their movements and fill in the map to give to Sheriff Amelia. If they want to, they could use symbols similar to the ones shown on the black and white map.

How to Read the Map

The following refers equally to all 3 maps.

Each hex on the map represents an area that is one mile across. The map uses a coordinate system to identify each hex.

The letters across the bottom (A, B, C, etc.) designate the columns, while the numbers running up the side (1, 2, 3, etc.) designate the rows. Each hex is identified by combining a letter and a number (e.g., A1, B2, C3).

Each hex has 6 equal sides. Because north is up on the map, the top is the north side. Going clockwise around the hex are the north-east side, the south-east side, the south side, the south west side, the north west side, and that brings us back to the north side.

The coastline is mainly sandy beach except on the west side of the island, which has a mountainous coastline.

There are several different terrains on the island. It is mostly jungle, but there is also grassland, hills and mountains.

There is also a volcano, a cliff, a waterfall, a river, a lake, and a crater that was left by the meteor explosion that was witnessed back in Saltport Cove.

Terrain Types (listed alphabetically)

The terrain descriptions include a speed factor, i.e., (x2). Refer to the "Running this Adventure" chapter in the "Speed Factor" section for information on this.

Crater: (x2) Refer to the description on page 15 of Hex G4.

Grassland: (x1) Rolling plains dominated by tall grasses swaying in the wind.

Hills: (x2) A series of steep, rocky inclines marking the transition from flat plains to towering mountains. These hills are weathered and worn, dotted with patches of scrubby vegetation clinging to the slopes.

Jungle: (x3) A dense and tangled rain forest teeming with life. Towering trees form a thick canopy overhead, filtering sunlight.

Terrains found in each hex. Featured Locations (shown below in red) have additional descriptions starting on page 6.

A1: Mountains
A2: Mountains
A3: Mountains
A4: Mountains
A5: Mountains
B2: Mountains
B3: Volcano
B4: Mountains
B5: Mountains
C1: Beach
C2: Jungle, Hills

C3: Hills
C4: Hills
C5: Grassland
D2: Jungle.
D3: Grassland
D4: Grassland
D5: Grassland
E1: Jungle
E2: Jungle, Grassland
E3: Jungle, Grassland
E4: Jungle

E5: Jungle
F2: Jungle
F3: Jungle
F4: Jungle
F5: Jungle
G1: Jungle
G2: Jungle
G3: Jungle
G4: Crater
G5: Crater
H2: Jungle

H3: Jungle
H4: Jungle
H5: Jungle
I1: Jungle
I2: Jungle
I3: Jungle
I4: Jungle
I5: Jungle
J2: Jungle
J3: Jungle
J4: Jungle

Vines climb and twist between the trees, while lush foliage and exotic flowers fill the undergrowth. The air is thick with the calls of unseen creatures and the constant hum of insects.

Mountains: (x4) Steep, knife-edged peaks pierce the sky on the island's western flank. These imposing mountains rise abruptly from the sea, forming a narrow, jagged wall no more than a mile wide at their base. The constant battering of the ocean waves has carved sheer cliffs into the rock face, while the summits are often shrouded in mist.

Volcano: (x8) A hulking, conical mountain dominates the landscape. Its peak, perpetually shrouded in swirling smoke and flashes of red, pierces the sky. Jagged black rock crumbles down the slopes, contrasting with the vibrant green vegetation clinging to its lower flanks. The air carries a faint smell of sulfur.

Natural Barriers (listed alphabetically)

Bay: A crescent-shaped indentation in the coastline, sheltered by land on three sides. In the center is a small island.

Beach: All shore lines (except for around the lake and along the river bank) are sandy beaches that extend from the water line 50 feet into the island except at hex C1 where it is much larger.

Cliff: A 100-foot wall of weathered stone, its surface etched with the passage of time. It takes 40 min. to climb with a climber's kit, or 60 minutes without one.

Mountainous coastline: There are steep rocky cliffs rising directly out of the water at the base of the mountains behind them.

River: A ribbon of deep brown water snakes through the dense jungle, its surface is dappled with sunlight filtering through the thick canopy overhead. Vines hang low, dripping with moisture, while exotic birds call from the hidden depths of the foliage.

Waterfall: A curtain of cascading water plunges 100 feet down the cliff face, thundering into the lake below.



Running the Adventure

This might be called a micro-hex crawl. Where hex crawls typically use a scale of 6-10 miles per hex, or 20-70 miles per hex for larger regions, this adventure uses a map where each hex is only one mile across. This micro-hex crawl packs a lot of interesting features and encounters into a relatively small area.

Exploration and Discovery

Since the hexes are small, players will be able to cover a good amount of ground in a day. This keeps the exploration moving and encourages them to uncover the island's secrets. The focus becomes less on long journeys and more on piecing together the island's history and ecology through smaller discoveries in each hex.

Where to Start

When the heroes return from their time travel into the past, they are on the beach. They will need to decide what to do with their rowboat, and they may also have a large mammoth tush that they may not want to carry through the jungle.

Captain Silas drops them off in a rowboat about 100 feet from the beach in hex C1. This is the spot on the island that is closest to Saltport Cove. It is also the place on the island that has the largest sandy beach, where the characters could see any potential dangers coming out of the jungle in time to prepare for it. So you can assume that the PCs start their exploration there. But players don't always do the expected.

What about Puck?

Puck arrives a few minutes after the characters does. (*Refer to his stat block in AT-01 An Ancient Evil.*) But he remains invisible and hidden until their first combat encounter. Puck is a sprite, a tiny fey creature with a playful demeanor that masks a surprisingly deep understanding of time and destiny. He loves a good prank, but don't let his lightheartedness fool you. Puck has a serious purpose – to guide those chosen by fate to fulfill their roles in protecting the world from the return of Thanatos.

Master of Pranks and Premonitions: Puck's high Dexterity and Acrobatics make him a nimble trickster, adept at pulling pranks and evading danger. His exceptional Intelligence and Wisdom grant him an uncanny knowledge of history and an intuitive grasp of fate's flow.

Invisible Ally: Puck's invisibility and telepathy allow him to observe events unseen, subtly nudging people and situations towards the desired outcome. He can communicate telepathically, offering cryptic advice or playful jabs to those he deems worthy.

Defender of Destiny: Despite his playful nature, Puck is fiercely loyal to his duty. He shares a connection with Lander, another champion against Thanatos, both working towards the same goal but in different ways.

Puck's Quirks:

Playful to a Fault: Even in serious situations, Puck can't resist a good prank, which can sometimes frustrate those he's trying to help.

Trusting to a Flaw: Puck's belief in destiny can lead him to trust those chosen by fate a little too readily, even if they seem unworthy.

Playing Puck:

Impish Guide: Let Puck's playful personality shine through, using pranks and riddles to deliver important information.

Cryptic Wisdom: Speak in riddles and metaphors, forcing those he interacts with to think for themselves.

Invisible Helper: Observe from the shadows, offering aid or nudges when needed, but avoid directly interfering.

Combat: The DM can play Puck, or you can have one of the players play him during combat (perhaps a different player each session). He will remain close but invisible most of the time. He is not supposed to interfere, but can't help himself sometimes. On his turn, roll 1d6. On a 6 he will ready a help action so that when a PC next makes a melee attack, Puck tries to trip that PC's opponent with an contest check, Puck's DEX vs his opponent's STR. If Puck wins the contest, his opponent falls prone and the PC's attack misses. If Puck loses the contest, the opponent is still standing, but the PC makes his attack with disadvantage as the opponent shakes off Puck, who is now visible until the start of his next turn. At the start of the opponent's next turn, he first uses half his movement to stand up.

Puck's unique combination of mischievousness and profound knowledge makes him a fascinating NPC. He can be a frustrating yet invaluable ally, a source of both amusement and cryptic guidance for those on the path of destiny.

Tracking Time

Captain Silas provided the characters with 7 days rations and pledged to return to pick them up in 7 days. This is barely enough time for the heroes to explore and map the island, but it is not enough time for them to search much of it. They have a rowboat and can row themselves back to Saltport Cove whenever they want to. It will take them 4 hours to row there, starting from hex C1. (Refer to the "Returning to Saltport Cove" sidebar on page 18)

It will be easiest to track time on the island in 10 minute increments. In addition to the exploration times shown below, add time when they take long and short rests. Also add a minimum of 10 minutes for each encounter, or time they spend doing other things such as foraging or deciding which way to go. They rest for about 20 minutes every couple of hours, and will take at least 30 minutes for each meal. You can just tell them that you will be adding this time to your timekeeping so, with the exceptions of short and long rests, they won't need to specifically tell you when they are stopping for lunch, for example.

They won't normally be exploring after dark, and if they insist on exploring for more than 8 hours a day, use the rules for Forced March (PHB p.181), they risk suffering the effects of exhaustion. This also applies to rowing for over 8 hours.

If they will be on the island for more than 7 days, and they haven't brought additional rations, they can forage for food. There is abundant food and water sources on the island. Refer to the rules for foraging (DMG p. 111).

Speed Factor

The terrains listed in the previous chapter include a speed factor. For example **Hills: (x2)**. This indicates that the "hills" terrain has a speed factor of x2.

In a hex with a speed factor of x1, it will take the characters 20 minutes to walk from one side of the hex to the other (one mile). You can multiply 20 minutes by the speed factor of the terrain they are in, or refer to the "Hex Speed Factors" table.

On the table, "**Cross**" is how long it takes to walk from one side of the hex to the opposite side. "**Search**" is how long it takes to quickly walk through all the area, criss crossing it about three times. This is enough to identify anything obvious in the area. Finding hidden or hard to notice items or traps requires twice this time if searching an entire hex.

Hex Speed Factors					
	x1	x2	x3	x4	X8
Cross	20 min.	40 min.	1 hr.	1.5 hr.	3 hrs.
Search	1 hr.	2 hr.	3 hrs.	4.5 hrs.	9 hrs.

Special cases

Beach: You can ignore the time it takes to cross a typical beach.

Bay, Lake, River, Waterfall, and the water surrounding the island: Swimming or rowing has a hex speed factor of (x2).

Mountainous coastlines have no areas to step onto from a boat. It is a sheer climb directly up from the waterline.

Hexes with Multiple Terrain

If the majority of a hex is filled with a single terrain, apply the speed factor for that land type to the entire hex.

If there are two terrains in one hex, cut the times for each speed factor in half, and apply that when the party crosses that half, unless their path only takes them through a single terrain type.

Circumnavigating the Island

One reasonable decision the PCs might make would be to circle the island first. This would verify the outline they were given and fill in the two gaps in the map. You can use this information for any time they venture into the sea around the island.

For a review of swimming, drowning, holding your breath, and combat in and under water refer to my post here: <https://olddungeonmaster.com/2022/04/02/dd-5e-above-and-below-the-waves/> (This post includes my house rules on these topics.)

Rowing has a hex speed factor of (x2) so it takes 40 minutes to row one mile, across one hex. So, starting at hex C1 and then rowing through hexes D2, E1, F2, G1, H2, I1, J2, J3, J4, J5, I5, H6, G5, F6, E5, D6, C5, B6, A5, A4, A3, A2, A1, B2, and then back to C1 is a 25 mile trip, will take 16 hours and 40 minutes, or 2 days rowing for a standard 8 hour travel day. You would add to that the time they take to explore and map the two bays. They might even decide to row up the river to the inland lake.

Random Encounters

The following Random Encounter Table may be different from ones you are used to. You roll a single die, but which die varies. The larger the die, the more likely the chance for a more difficult encounter.

THE DICE CHAIN

The potential difficulty grows from 1d4 up to 1d12. We call this a "dice chain." The dice chain we will be using for random encounters, in full, runs like so: **d4, d6, d8, d10, d12**

When to check (and what die to roll)

These are the times you should roll on the random encounter table, which die you should roll, and a brief description.

The start of a long rest (1d4): You choose when during the rest the encounter should occur.

The end of a long rest (1d12): This is a once-a-day check. If it is a deadly encounter, have it be the first encounter of the day so the party will have the best chance to survive. Otherwise you decide when the encounter occurs, use the terrain type they are in at the time of the encounter.

On spending 12 hours in the same hex (1d8): The party won't avoid random encounters by staying in one place.

On moving into a different hex (1d8): You decide when to run the encounter, if the hex contains a fixed encounter decide if this random encounter should run before, or after the other one, or maybe they should both occur at the same time.

On moving into a different terrain (1d6): This is only for when the party moves from one terrain to another while still within the same hex.

Adjusting the Difficulty

These random encounters may be too difficult, or too easy, for your party. If your party has fewer than 4 characters, is only level 1, or the players are inexperienced, you may need to decrease the difficulty. If you have more than 4 PCs in your group, they are higher than 2nd level, or for whatever reason they are breezing through these encounters, you may want to increase the difficulty.

An easy way to decrease or increase the difficulty is to use one die smaller or larger on the dice chain.

Random Encounter Table

Die roll	Encounter Difficulty
1	If you rolled a d12 there is no encounter, otherwise roll again, using the next higher die on the dice chain.
2,3	None (No combat encounter)
4,5	Easy
6,7,8, 9	Medium
10,11	Hard
12	Deadly

Encounters by Terrain

After rolling on the Random Encounter Table, refer to the following to find what the encounter actually is, depending on the terrain and the encounter difficulty.

Crater

Difficulty	Encounter
None	Find 1d6 Glowing Crystal Shards (Refer to sidebar)
Easy	2 Smoke Mephits (MM p.217)
Medium	4 Skeletons (MM p.272)
Hard	6 Skeletons (MM p.272)
Deadly	4 Skeletons (MM p.272) and 1 Ghoul (MM p.148)

Grassland

Difficulty	Encounter
None	Either a Herd of Grazing Aurochs (indifferent unless spooked) -or- a Flock of Songbirds (pleasant melody)
Easy	2 Skeletons (MM p.272)
Medium	4 Skeletons (MM p.272)
Hard	2 Skeletons (MM p.272) and 1 Ghoul (MM p.148)
Deadly	4 Warhorse Skeletons (MM p.273)

Hills	
Difficulty	Encounter
None	Either Mountain Goats (surefooted climbers) -or- No Encounter
Easy	4 Cultist Whisperer (New Monster, page 23)
Medium	4 Cultist Acolytes (New Monster, page 22)
Hard	1 Young Griffon (New Monster, page 26))
Deadly	1 Mummy (MM p.228)

Jungle	
Difficulty	Encounter
None	Either Playful monkeys or brightly colored birds -or- a Swarm of Mosquitos (minor annoyance)
Easy	2 Skeletons (MM p.272)
Medium	1 Giant Spider (MM p.328)
Hard	6 Skeletons (MM p.272)
Deadly	1 Green Hag (MM p.177)

Mountains	
Difficulty	Encounter
None	Either Mountain Goats (surefooted climbers) -or- No Encounter
Easy	2 Cultist Acolytes (New Monster, page 22)
Medium	1 Ghoul (MM p.148)
Hard	2 Ghouls (MM p.148)
Deadly	1 Yeti (MM p.305)

Volcano	
Difficulty	Encounter
None	Either Volcanic Ash Cloud (reduced visibility) -or- No Encounter
Easy	2 Smoke Mephits (MM p.217)
Medium	4 Zombies (MM p.316)
Hard	1 Ghast (MM p.148)
Deadly	1 Cultist Deathless (New Monster, page 22)

Featured Locations

These are hexes that need additional descriptions beyond the simple terrain descriptions already listed. Many also contain one or more fixed encounter area and/or areas that will only be found if the characters take the time to search the hex. If a hex isn't included here then a search will not find anything more than what is in the terrain description. If the hex requires it, there will be information regarding tracking time while in the hex.

The Featured Locations are listed alphabetically.

Hex B3: Magmin and Cinderbats

Description: The major feature of the island is this volcano. It dominates the western side of the island and fills this hex.

Time: It will take the characters 2 hours to cross from one side of the hex to the other, practically all of it climbing up or down its steep slope. To quickly search all the faces of the volcano will take 6 hours. If they make a quick search, make an additional (1d8) roll on the Random Encounter Table. They won't find anything other than random encounters and the two fixed encounters.

The two fixed encounters below assume the characters decide to climb up to the rim.

Volcano Encounter 1: The pathway up.

The characters find a path leading upwards.

You cautiously navigate the precarious slope of the volcano, the ground hot beneath your feet. The air is thick with volcanic ash, making visibility poor. Ahead, you see a narrow, twisting path leading upwards towards the peak

A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices faint scorch marks on the volcanic rock near the path. When the characters approach the path, magmins erupt from behind volcanic rock formations.

Creatures:

2 **Magmin** (MM p.212)

Magmin (Small CN Elemental) (100 XP)
AC 14 HP 9 SPD 30 ft.
STR -2 DEX +2 CON +1 INT -1 WIS +0 CHA +0
Resistant: bludgeon, pierce, slash from nonmagical attacks. Immune: Fire Darkvision 60' Languages: Ignan
Death Burst. When it dies, it explodes., radius 10 ft. make (DC 1 1) DEX save or 2d6 fire damage, save for half.
Touch. MWA: +4, 2d6 fire damage and ignites. Also takes 1d6 fire damage at the end of each turn 'till a creature takes an action to douse the fire. Bonus Action: Can set itself ablaze or extinguish its flames. While ablaze, bright light 10-ft. & dim light 10 more ft.

Tactics:

The Magmins use their advantage in the smoky environment to attempt to surprise the party. They focus on attacking characters who seem the most vulnerable.

After the Encounter:

If the characters defeat the Magmins, they can safely navigate the path further. A successful (DC 14) Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a small, heat-resistant pouch hidden within a crevice near the path. Inside is a collection of vials filled with a strange, glowing liquid.

Treasure:

1 Heat-resistant pouch containing:
3 *Potions of Fire Resistance* (DMG p.188)

Volcano Encounter 2: Volcano Rim.

When they reach the top, they find themselves on the precarious ledge of a smoking volcano. Molten rock churns and bubbles

below, casting an eerie red glow on the surrounding rock face. The air is thick with the stench of sulfur and ash.

The ground beneath your feet trembles as you cautiously navigate the narrow ledge of a smoking volcano. Molten rock churns and bubbles in the distance, casting an eerie red glow on the surrounding rock face. The air is thick with the stench of sulfur and ash, making it difficult to breathe. Ahead, you see a narrow tunnel that cuts into the side of the mountain.

Cinderbats use their Heatsense ability to detect the characters approaching the tunnel entrance. They erupt from the darkness within the tunnel, their bodies glowing with a faint red ember light.

Creatures:

3 **Cinderbats** (New Monster, page 21)

Cinderbat (Medium monstrosity) (50 XP)
AC 12 HP 18 SPD 10 ft., 40 ft. fly
STR +0 DEX +3 CON +2 INT -4 WIS +1 CHA -3
Resistant: fire damage. Darkvision 60' Languages: Ignan
Heatsense. Can sense warm or hot creatures within 60 feet through walls or other opaque barriers.
Bite. MWA: +3, 1d6+1 piercing Ember Spark. RWA: +5, r. 30 ft., 1d6 fire damage

Tactics:

The cinderbats use their Bite attack on characters in close range, and their Ember Spark attack on characters who try to maintain distance. The cinderbats are not particularly intelligent but are fiercely territorial and will fight to the death to defend their volcanic home.

After the Encounter:

If the characters defeat the cinderbats, they can safely explore the tunnel. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a hidden chamber within the tunnel, partially blocked by volcanic ash. Inside is a small, locked metal chest. The chest is scorched and dented, but still functional.

Treasure:

1 Locked Metal Chest, (DC 15) DEX (Thieves Tools) check to pick the lock. Containing a collection of:
3d4 Glowing Crystal Shards (refer to hex G4).

Hex B4: Mountain Goat Skeletons

Description: Mountains fill this entire hex.

Time: It will take the characters one and one half hours to cross from one side of the hex to the other, practically all of it climbing up or down its steep slope. To quickly search all sides of the mountains will take four and one half hours.

Fixed Encounter:

A biting wind whips around you as you finally reach a rocky plateau near the summit of the tallest mountain. In the distance, a lone, skeletal pine tree stands sentinel against the harsh environment.

If the characters approach the skeletal pine tree, Mountain Goat Skeletons charge out from behind the tree, attempting to knock characters prone with their horns

Creatures:

3 **Mountain Goat Skeletons** (New Monster page. 25)

Mountain Goat Skeleton (Medium LE Undead) (100 XP)
AC 13 HP 22 SPD 40 ft.
STR +2 DEX +3 CON +2 INT -4 WIS -2 CHA -3
Darkvision 60' Keen Smell. Adv. on WIS (Perception) checks Charge. On moving 15 feet straight toward target and hits with a ram attack, target takes extra 1d6 piercing damage. Undead Fortitude. If the skeleton has any hit points remaining at the start of its turn, it regains 2 hit points.
Multiattack. 2 ram attacks. Ram Attack. MWA: +5, 1d8+3 piercing Horns (Recharge 5-6). a head-butt attack. MWA: +5, 2d8+4 piercing and (DC 13) STR save or pushed 10 ft.

Tactics:

Mountain goat skeletons are nimble and relentless attackers. They use their Keen Smell to track prey and charge into them, dealing extra damage. Their Horns attack can knock a character prone, leaving them vulnerable to further attacks from the goat or its allies.

After the Encounter:

If the characters defeat the Goats, they can explore the base of the skeletal pine tree. A successful (DC 10) Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a small, hollowed-out space hidden beneath the tangled roots. Inside is a weathered leather satchel containing a gemstone and a crudely drawn map depicting a hidden crevice within the hills at the foot of the volcano leading to what is described as “*The Entrance to The Temple of Thanatos*” (refer to Hex C3). The map also depicts a small symbol resembling a mountain goat.

Treasure:

1 Weathered Leather Satchel containing:
1 Crudely Drawn Map
1 Gemstone (Amethyst, value 10 gp)



Hex C1: Beach Hags

This is where the PCs will most likely begin their adventure.

Description: The majority of this hex is water. The north portion of the hex is almost entirely beach. At its deepest, it extends about 2,000 feet from the water up to the north side of the hex, where there is a wall of dense jungle. The jungle extends along the north-east side of the hex. On the northern most portion of the north-west side of the hex is a 100 foot high cliff face at the base of a mountain.

This pristine stretch of golden sand slopes gently into the turquoise ocean. Lush palm trees sway in the breeze. The beach is backed by a dense tropical jungle.

To your left, beyond the tree line, rises a smoking volcano.

Time: The beach fills less than half this hex. It will take the characters only 10 minutes to walk from the shoreline to the tree line, but it will take them an hour to quickly search this entire beach.

Fixed Encounter:

If they take the time to walk the whole beach they find a rocky outcrop that juts into the turquoise water.

Half-buried in the sand at the base of the rocks lies the bleached wreckage of a small ship, its broken mast pointing accusingly towards the sky.

Twin Beach Hags are residing in a hidden underwater cave beneath the rocky outcrop. Approaching the wreckage instigates the following encounter.

Creatures:

2 **Beach Hags** (New Monster page. 21)

Beach Hag (Medium CE Fey) (450 XP)
AC 16 HP 22 SPD 30 ft., swim 40 ft.
STR +2 DEX +2 CON +3 INT +1 WIS +1 CHA +2
Darkvision 60'
Languages: Aquan, Common
Slippery Skin. Adv on DEX (Acrobatics) check
Spells (at will): <i>Darkness</i> (self only)
Claws. MWA: +5, 1d6+3 slashing
Spiked Chain. MWA: +5, r.10 ft, 1d6+3 piercing & grappled (escape DC 13), can't move more than 5 feet away while grappled, and the hag has Adv on attack rolls against the target.
Dagger. MorRWA +5, r.20/60, 1d4+2 piercing

Tactics:

When the characters approach the wreckage, one Hag steps out from behind the rocks and throws her dagger at the closest PC. On round 2, the other Hag emerges from the water behind the characters. Have the PCs each make a (DC 14) perception check. Any PCs who fail the check are surprised by the second Hag and can't act against her this round. Both hags attempt to grapple a character with their Spiked Chains. The Hags then attempt to drag their grappled prey towards the water, aiming to drown them in their underwater lair.

If the characters defeat the Hags, they can explore the wreckage.

Treasure:

A successful (DC 14) Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a hidden compartment within the wreckage, containing:

1 Locked Chest. (DC 15) DEX (Thieves Tools) check to pick the lock. Containing:

1 Pouch containing 25 gp

5 Flasks of Alchemist's Fire

1 Rolled up parchment [Handout #2 - Pirate's Map] that contains a rough map with a big red X. On examination the players will probably be able to figure out that it is a map of this island (shown upside down). The X is hex I5 on their map. What they don't know is that the pirate drew it to show where he buried a treasure chest. Refer to Hex I5 for further information.

HOW TO PICK A LOCK

Refer to my post on how to pick a lock in D&D 5E. You can find it here:

<https://olddungeonmaster.com/2016/11/03/dd-5e-picking-locks/>

Hex C2: Cultist Ambush

Description: A natural stone cliff that divides this hex in two from the south-west corner to the north east-corner. South of the cliff is jungle terrain and north of the cliff is hills terrain.

Time:

Jungle: It will take the characters 40 minutes to cross from hex C1 to D3 or visa-versa, but only 1 hour to quickly search the area because it only occupies half the hex.

Hills: It will take the characters 1 hour to cross from hex B2 to C3 or visa-versa, but only 1 1/2 hour to quickly search the area because it only occupies half the hex.

Cliff: Refer to "Cliff" in the "Natural Barriers" section on page 3 for time to climb the cliff.

Fixed Jungle Encounter:

Run this encounter the first time the characters cross this hex through the **jungle**. Unknown to the characters, a group of Deathbringer cultists have been tracking them for some time, hidden amongst the foliage.

Pushing through the thick canopy, you emerge into a sun-dappled clearing. Towering trees, their bark slick with moisture, give way to a carpet of ferns and tangled vines that writhe underfoot.

As the characters reach a clearing, the cultists spring their ambush.

Creatures:

6 **Cultist Whisperers** (New Monster page. 23)

Cultist Whisperer (Medium LE Human) (25 XP)
AC 12 HP 8 SPD 30 ft.
STR -1 DEX +2 CON +0 INT +0 WIS +1 CHA +3
Darkvision 60'
Languages: Common
Deception Expertise. Adv on Deception checks
Cantrips (at will): <i>minor illusion</i> , <i>message</i>
Dagger. MWA: +4, 1d4+3 piercing
Chant of the Dead (Recharge 5-6). range 30'. (DC 12) WIS save or 3d6 necrotic, + Disad on its next attack roll. half damage and no other effect on a save.

Tactics:

The cultists charge from the undergrowth, attacking with their daggers. Have each character make a (DC 12) perception check. Those characters who fail their check are surprised and don't move or take any action the first round of combat.

Treasure:

The *Cultists Whisperers* have no treasure other than their daggers.

As you crest the next rise, the wind whips around you, carrying with it the sharp scent of ozone and... something else, musky and primal. The weathered hills sprawl before you, dotted with patches of scrubby vegetation that clings tenaciously to the wind-battered slopes. Suddenly, a flicker of movement catches your eye - a flash of gray fur disappearing over a rocky outcrop a short distance away. A low, guttural growl carries on the wind.

It's a pack of wolves, their forms lean and muscular, their eyes glinting with a predatory hunger. They spot the characters and attack.

Creatures:

4 **Wolves** (MM p.341)

Wolf (Medium beast) (50 XP)
AC 13 HP 11 SPD 40 ft.
STR +1 DEX +2 CON +1 INT -4 WIS +1 CHA -2
Languages: -
Keen Hearing and Smell. Adv on WIS (Perception) checks
Pack Tactics. Adv on attack rolls if wolf ally within 5 feet
Bite. MWA: +4, 2d4+2 piercing & DC 11 STR save or prone

Tactics: The wolves fight as a coordinated unit. They may use flanking maneuvers to surround a character, taking advantage of their Pack Tactics feature.

If the characters search the area they will find the wolves den, a shallow cave in the side of a nearby hill. A (DC 12) Intelligence (Investigation) check in the northern half of the den turns up an old leather backpack half-buried under a pile of humanoid bones. The backpack contains:

Treasure:

- 1 miner's pick
- 1 Hunting trap
- 1 chain (10 feet)

Hex C3: Entrance to the Ancient Temple

This hex contains the hidden entrance to **The Ruined Temple of Thanatos**.

Description: This hex is entirely hills with a 100 foot cliff falling off to grassland on the east, mountains to the north-west and the volcano to the south-west.

Time: The time to cross and/or search this hex is typical for the "Hills" terrain type.

Concealed Entrance:

There is a difficult to see crevice located in the corner between the north-west and south-west sides of this hex.

The weathered hills at the volcano's foot are a maze of loose scree and jagged rocks.

Searching for the entrance: A character proficient in Survival can make a (DC 13) Wisdom (Survival) check to recall stories or legends about hidden entrances often disguised by natural features. Success grants them advantage on the following Perception check.

A successful (DC 15) Wisdom (Perception) check allows a character to spot a subtle disturbance in the pattern of the scree piles, hinting at an opening beneath.

Only if the check fails, Puck flits around the party, giggling and zipping between them, before landing with a flourish right in front of the crevice.

Puck: "Looky, looky! What do we have here? A perfectly good secret passage just begging to be explored!"

Although, knowing you lot, you'd probably walk right by a talking door if it didn't have a giant blinking arrow pointing at it."

He winks, his voice laced with amusement. "So, what are you waiting for? An invitation? Off you go, on your grand adventure! Just don't come crying to me if you get lost in the belly of the beast."

Read or paraphrase the following to the players.

Nestled amidst these slopes, near the base of the volcano itself, lies a hidden crevice. This narrow opening, barely wide enough for a single person to squeeze through, cuts deep into the hillside, its entrance concealed by a curtain of thorny vines and thick, low-hanging scrub.

This tunnel slopes downward at a gentle incline, offering easy passage. The rough-hewn stone walls are cool and damp, with occasional patches of phosphorescent fungus providing dim illumination. The tunnel is roughly 10 feet wide and maintains this width for its entire length of about a quarter-mile (400 ft.).

Fixed Encounter 1:

Halfway through the tunnel, a couple of Giant Bats have taken roost.

Creatures:

2 **Giant Bats** (MM p.323)

Giant Bat (Large beast) (50 XP)
AC 13 HP 22 SPD 10 ft., fly 60 ft.
STR +2 DEX +2 CON +0 INT -4 WIS +1 CHA -2
Blindsight 60 ft.
Languages: -
Echolocation. Can't use blindsight while deafened.
Keen Hearing. Adv on hearing WIS (Perception) checks
Bite. MWA: +4, 1d6+2 piercing

Tactics: The bats are startled by the intrusion and attack the party if they don't take steps to avoid disturbing them (such as using torches or loud noises).

Fixed Encounter 2:

At the end of the tunnel is a dark chamber roughly 30 feet square and 20 feet high. The air is stale and carries a faint scent of mildew. In the center of the back wall are the two massive, ancient stone doors.

The tunnel opens into a large chamber. In the center of the chamber stands a lone figure, its skeletal form draped in tattered robes. Its hollow eyes burn with an unnatural green light. On the wall behind it are a large pair of stone doors.

This is a Wight, an undead guardian bound to this place.

Creatures:

1 **Wight** (MM p.300)

Wight (Medium NE undead) (700 XP)
AC 14 HP 45 SPD 30 ft.
STR +2 DEX +2 CON +3 INT +0 WIS +1 CHA +2
Resistant. Necrotic ; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons Immune. Poison, exhaustion Darkvision 60' Languages: Common
Sunlight Sensitivity. In sunlight, Disad on attack rolls, & WIS (Perception) checks that rely on sight.
Multiattack. 2 longsword or longbow / or / 1 longsword & 1 Life Drain Life Drain. MWA: 1d6+2 necrotic & (DC 13) CON save or HP maximum is reduced by like amount, lasts until long rest. dies if PH maximum reduced to 0. [Refer to MM for info on becoming a zombie.] Longsword. MWA: +4, 1d10+2 slashing (using two hands) Longbow. RWA: +4, r. 150/600 ft., 1d8+2 piercing

Tactics: The wight It attacks anyone other than a deathbringer cultist who enters the chamber.

The only things of value that they find on the wight are his weapons.

Treasure:

1 Longsword
1 Longbow
3 Arrows

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters approach the doors. [Image on page 18]

At the rear of the chamber stand two imposing stone doors, their surfaces etched with scenes of skeletal figures offering tribute to a shadowy figure. Strange symbols and glyphs snake around the edges of the doors. Each massive door has a series of recessed panels lining its surface. The back of each recess is carved with a different animal – a serpent, a ram, and an owl, to name a few.

Opening the doors requires solving a puzzle.

The Puzzle:

Each door has a series of recessed panels. The back of each recess is carved with a different animal. Above the doors, an inscription in a forgotten language. Neither Puck nor any of the PCs recognize the language. The carvings in the recesses are: Crab, Hawk, Fox, Rabbit, Boar, Deer, Wolf, Bat, Monkey, Frog, Serpent, Cat, Owl, Goat, Bear, and Fish.

The Solution:

A *Comprehend Languages* spell can reveal the meaning of the text above the door. It reads: “Only the worthy follower of Thanatos can pass. Present the faithful servant.” A successful (DC 15) Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check reveals that the symbols represent various offerings made to Thanatos. One symbol depicts a goat, which the PCs may not know was the preferred sacrificial animal associated with the deity. When a character places a physical representation of a goat (carving, figurine, etc.) in this indentation a clicking sound is heard, and the doors grind open slightly.

The PCs may have a small stone image of a mountain goat that they can use if they interrupted the ritual in hex C2. There is also a hint in hex B4 where they may have found a map that directed them to this spot. It contains a small symbol resembling a mountain goat.

What is beyond the doors will be revealed in the next adventure in the “It’s About Time” adventure path, “AT-03 Secrets of the Shattered Temple”. For now, go to “Concluding the Adventure” on page 18.

Hex C4: Interrupt a Cultist Ritual

The characters emerge from a dense undergrowth into a hidden clearing revealing a disturbing scene.

In the center of the clearing stands a crude stone altar, adorned with grotesque carvings and dripping with a viscous black liquid. Around the altar, a group of cultists chant in a guttural tongue, their voices laced with a disturbing fervor.

The characters have stumbled upon the ritual in progress, and the cultists are currently unaware of their presence. This allows the characters a moment to assess the situation and determine their course of action.

Creatures:

4 **Cultist Whisperers** (New Monster page. 23)

1 **Cultist Deathless** (New Monster page. 22)

Cultist Whisperer (Medium LE Human) (25 XP)
AC 12 HP 8 SPD 30 ft.
STR -1 DEX +2 CON +0 INT +0 WIS +1 CHA +3
Darkvision 60' Languages: Common
Deception Expertise. Adv on Deception checks Cantrips (at will): <i>minor illusion, message</i>
Dagger. MWA: +4, 1d4+3 piercing Chant of the Dead (Recharge 5-6). range 30'. (DC 12) WIS save or 3d6 necrotic, + Disad on its next attack roll. half damage on a save and no other effect.

Cultist Deathless (Medium LE undead) (450 XP)
AC 16 HP 45 SPD 30 ft.
STR +2 DEX +1 CON +2 INT +0 WIS +1 CHA +1
Resistant. Necrotic Immune. Poisoned Darkvision 60' Languages: Common
Multiattack. 2 claw attacks. Claws. MWA: +4, 1d8+2 slashing, +2 necrotic once per turn. Shadow Step (Recharge 5-6). In dim light or darkness. teleport 30 ft. Doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

The Whisperers wear tattered robes and wield bone daggers. Their eyes are glazed over with fanaticism as they participate in the ritual.

The Deathless one stands guard near the altar, its hulking form a grim testament to the cult's dark magic. He is wearing a black hooded robe over his armor that he sheds if he engages in combat.

The Ritual:

A central symbol of Thanatos (a dark skull) is etched into the top of an altar. Upon the symbol lies a writhing mass of dark energy. As the chanting reaches a crescendo, the deathless one steps forward, brandishing a dark slime covered weapon.

Unseen Arrival:

The characters have arrived undetected. Describe the scene in a way that emphasizes the unsettling nature of the ritual: the chanting, the pulsing darkness, the stench of decay emanating from the deathless one.

Choices and Consequences:

Do Nothing: The characters can choose to observe the ritual from the shadows. This will give them valuable intel on the cult's activities but may allow the ritual to complete with unknown consequences. If they wait too long, the ritual could be nearing completion, making it more difficult to disrupt.

Direct Intervention: The characters burst out of the undergrowth, charging towards the cultists. This will likely result in a fierce combat encounter (see below).

Stealthy Approach: More cautious characters may attempt to sneak closer to gain a better understanding of the ritual before deciding how to proceed. A successful (DC 15) Dexterity (Stealth) check can allow them to get closer to the action without being noticed.

Encounter (if the characters attack):

Actions:

Initiative: The characters and the cultists roll for initiative. The cultists are momentarily stunned by the characters' sudden appearance so if the characters choose to attack directly the cultists get no movement or actions until round 2.

Cultist Actions: On the second round of combat, the Cultist Deathless drops his black slime covered weapon, some item he has in his other hand, throws off his robe revealing his rusty armor, roars and attacks the nearest character. The whisperers



scramble, some fumbling for their weapons, others continuing the chant in a panicked frenzy.

Playing the Cultists:

The cultists are unprepared for a fight. They will prioritize defending the ritual over attacking the characters. The whisperers will likely attack recklessly, while the deathless one focuses on grappling and inflicting raw damage.

The ritual is nearing completion, describe the dark energy on the altar becoming more intense and unstable. The cultists become even more frenzied, desperate to finish before the characters disrupt them.

Aftermath:

The outcome of the encounter depends on the characters' actions.

Victory: If the characters defeat the cultists, they can examine the incomplete ritual and its components. This could provide valuable clues about the cult's goals and the nature of Thanatos' power.

Failure: If the ritual completes, the black liquids on the alter coalesce to form a powerful undead in the form of a **Skeleton Soldier** (New Monster page 25). It remains unconscious for the first two rounds, then it will follow the directions of any remaining cultist. If there are no remaining cultists, it simply attacks the closest character.

Skeleton Soldier (Medium LE undead) (1,100 XP)
AC 14 HP 84 SPD 40 ft.
STR +3 DEX +2 CON +3 INT -1 WIS +0 CHA +0
Languages: - Darkvision 60 ft.,
Undead Fortitude. Unless at 0, regains 4 hit points at the start of its turn.
Multiattack. 1 claw. Claw. MWA: +5, 1d8+3 slashing Shove. STR contested by STR or DEX, pushed 5 feet away.
Legendary Actions: 3 from list. 1 at a time at the end of another's turn. Regains spent ones at the start of its turn. Attack. Makes 1 claw attack. Move. Moves up to its speed.

The Cultist Deathless' plate armor falls apart when he dies and is worthless, otherwise he haws no treasure. If the skeleton soldier appeared, he has no treasure.

After removing the slime they find that the Deathless one dropped a magical sword and a roughly carved image of a mountain goat. Each cultist whisperer had a dagger, and most of them has a few gold pieces and some Glowing Christal Shards (refer to hex G4).

Treasure:

- 1 small stone image of a mountain goat (value 1 gp)
- 4d4 Glowing Christal Shards
- 3d6 gold pieces
- 4 daggers (each Cultist Whisperer has 1)
- 1 longsword, +1 (the slime covered weapon)

Hex D4: Giant Wolf Skeleton

Description: A crystal-clear lake, perhaps a mile across. Rolling grasslands border the lake to the north and south. To the north-east is a jungle. To the west rises a sheer cliff where a plume of mist rises at the base of a waterfall. The lake itself appears calm. To the east, a winding river exits its way through the jungle.

Waterfall & Cliff: Refer to the "Natural Barriers" on page 3.

Time: This hex is almost completely water. Whether the characters swim or row, it will take them 40 minutes to cross from one side to the other, or 2 hours to quickly search all the lake bank's.

A crystal-clear lake, vast and still, reflects the azure sky. Rolling grasslands border the shore to the north and the south. To the west, the grasslands bleed into a sheer cliff face where a 100-foot waterfall spills into the lake, creating a swirling mist. A winding river snakes out into the jungle to the east.

Fixed Grassland Encounter:

Run this encounter the first time the characters enter the grassland near the lake's bank on the north or south side of the hex.

As you wander the tall grass, the once vibrant green blades seem dulled, and an unnatural stillness hangs in the air. Suddenly, a low moan ripples from the tall grass ahead. Two skeletal figures, their bones bleached white by the sun, emerge from the foliage, wielding crude bone weapons. Behind them, a larger skeletal monstrosity, the former form of a giant wolf, lumbers into view, its empty eye sockets gleaming with an unnatural light.



Creatures:

2 **Skeletons** (MM p.272)

1 **Giant Wolf Skeleton** (New Monster page. 24)

Giant Wolf Skeleton (Large LE undead) (450 XP)

AC 16 **HP** 59 **SPD** 40 ft.

STR +4 **DEX** +3 **CON** +2 **INT** -4 **WIS** -2 **CHA** -3

Languages: -

Darkvision 60 ft.,

Undead Fortitude. Unless at 0 or max, regains 1 hit point at the start of its turn.

Multiattack. 1 bite and 1 claw.

Bite. MWA: +7, **2d8+4** piercing

Claw. MWA: +7, **2d6+4** slashing

Tactics:

The skeletons attempt to surprise the party using the tall grass for cover. Roll initiative with advantage for the skeletons.

The skeletons have no valuables on them, but scattered amongst the tall grass, the PCs can find a single, rusty weapon that belonged to a past traveler who met their demise here.

Treasure:

1 shortsword, mace, or axe

Hex D5: Dire Wolves

Description: A series of rolling plains dotted with ancient burial mounds, some overgrown with vegetation, others partially crumbled and exposed.

A gentle breeze rustles the tall grass as you crest a small hill. Before you stretches a landscape of rolling plains, dotted with numerous mounds of earth and stone. Some mounds are overgrown with wildflowers and scrub brush, while others have partially collapsed, revealing dark openings within. An unsettling silence hangs in the air, broken only by the occasional cry of a distant bird.

A character who succeeds on a (DC 10) Wisdom (Perception) check notices faint animal tracks leading towards a particularly large, weathered mound in the distance.

Fixed Encounter:

Trap: Pit Trap (x2)

Two pit traps (10 ft. square x 10 ft. deep) are hidden beneath a thin layer of grass near the base of the large mound (revealed by a (DC 12) Intelligence (Investigation) check. The first pit is 20 feet from the mound, and the second is 5 feet from the mound. A creature that fails a (DC 12) Dexterity (Acrobatics) check when moving within 5 feet of a hidden pit falls prone in the pit and takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Creatures:

2 **Dire Wolves** (MM, p.342)

Dire Wolf (Large beast, unaligned) (50 XP)

AC 14 **HP** 37 **SPD** 50 ft.

STR +3 **DEX** +2 **CON** +2 **INT** -4 **WIS** +1 **CHA** -2

Languages: -

Keen Hearing and Smell. Adv on WIS (Perception) checks

Pack Tactics. Adv on attack rolls if wolf ally within 5 feet

Bite. MWA: +5, **2d6+3** piercing & **DC 13** STR save or prone

Tactics:

The Dire Wolves lair within the large mound, using natural tunnels to emerge and ambush prey. When the characters approach the mound, both Dire Wolves use their superior Stealth to remain hidden until the first character triggers one of the pit traps. The Wolves then erupt from the mound. They focus on flanking characters and bringing them down quickly.

After the Encounter:

If the characters defeat the Dire Wolves, they can explore the large mound. A successful (DC 14) Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a hidden entrance within the mound, leading to a small cavern. Inside the cavern lies a pile of gnawed bones and a weathered chest partially hidden in the shadows. The chest is unlocked and contains a collection of hunting trophies - a set of wolf fangs, a set of bear claws, and a single, polished boar tusk. A character who succeeds on a (DC 12) Intelligence (Nature) check identifies the boar tusk as belonging to a rare and legendary boar.

Treasure:

- 1 Weathered Chest containing:
 - 1 Collection of Hunting Trophies (value depends on the DM - could be trophies for hunters or interesting crafting materials)

Hex E2: Will-o'-wisps

Description: A natural salt-water bay, a little over a mile across fills this hex. It is surrounded by sandy beaches with dense jungle behind the beach except to the north-west where grassland comes up to the beach. In the center of the bay is a desert island about half a mile long and 1/4 mile wide.

The Island:

A gentle breeze ruffles the water in the bay, creating shimmering ripples. In the center, a small, densely wooded island rises from the water, its trees shrouded in mist.

The characters notice strange, shimmering lights dancing amongst the trees on the island.

Creatures:

- 2 Will-o'-wisps (MM, p.301)

Will-o'-wisps (Tiny CE undead) (450 XP)
AC 19 HP 22 SPD 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)
STR -5 DEX +9 CON +0 INT +1 WIS +2 CHA +0
Immune lightning, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious Resistant acid, cold, fire, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical att.
Darkvision 120'
Languages: the languages it knew in life
Ephemeral. Can't wear or carry anything. Incorporeal Movement. Moves through other creatures and objects (difficult terrain). Takes 1d10 force damage if it ends turn inside object. Variable Illumination. Bright 5 to 20 ft. radius + same dim light. Can alter the radius as a bonus action.
Multiattack. 2 claw Claw. MWA: +5, 1d6+3 piercing Bite (Recharge 5-6). MWA: +5, grappled and restrained (escape DC 11). Bonus Action - Consume Life. r. 5 ft., one creature it can see that has 0 HP & still alive. The target makes a (DC 10) CON save or die and the will-o'-wisp regains 3d6 hit points.

The Will-o'-wisps flit amongst the trees on the island, their flickering lights appearing almost playful. However, they are

drawn to living creatures and will attempt to lure the characters onto the island with their enticing lights. The Will-o'-wisps will avoid attacking characters who seem unwilling to follow them.

After the Encounter:

If the characters defeat the Will-o'-wisps, they can safely explore the island. They find a small clearing in the center of the island. In the center of the clearing stands a weathered stone statue depicting a blindfolded woman holding a set of scales. Behind the statue, partially obscured by vines, is a hidden compartment. A successful (DC 14) Dexterity (Acrobatics) check is required to squeeze through a narrow opening to reach the compartment. Inside is a small, ornately carved wooden box.

Nature Check: A character who succeeds on a (DC 16) Wisdom (Nature) check recognizes the statue as a symbol of blind justice and may ponder its connection to the strange lights they encountered.

Treasure:

- 1 Wooden Box (DC 12) DEX (Thieves Tools) check to pick the lock. Containing:
 - 1 A set of finely crafted jeweler's scales (worth 25 gp)

Hex E3: Burial Ground

Description: The west (left) side of this hex is grassland, the east (right) is jungle. There is a beach on the south side, and a 1/2 mile wide river crosses the hex across the north side.

Fixed Jungle Encounter:

The party stumbles upon a hidden burial ground deep within the jungle. The spirits of wronged villagers, awakened by the curse, rise as Skeletons seeking revenge on any living soul.

The dense foliage parts before you, revealing a hidden clearing. Sunlight struggles to penetrate the thick canopy overhead, casting long, distorted shadows across a forgotten graveyard. Moss-covered stones and crumbling statues stand sentinel over weathered gravestones, their inscriptions faded and cryptic.

A hidden inscription on a gravestone provides a clue to the source of the curse (an ancient evil buried in a temple beneath the volcano).

If the characters examine the old gravestones, they will find this inscription: [Handout # 20]

In Memory of the Order of the Obsidian Eye Defenders of the Realm, they fell to the whispers of Thanatos. Their sacrifice bound the the Necromancer God, but the chains weaken with time. Beware, for beneath the fiery mountain, a darkness stirs.

Hex E4: Monkey Skeletons

A flurry of movement erupts from the dense foliage above! Four skeletal figures, their forms twisted mockeries of simian anatomy, descend from the trees with a bone chilling screech. These are no ordinary monkeys. They land with a clatter on fallen branches and moss-covered stones, surrounding you with a circle of bared teeth and hollow rage.

Creatures:4 **Monkey Skeletons** (New Monster page. 24)

Monkey Skeleton (Small NE undead) (50 XP)
AC 12 HP 13 SPD 30 ft. , climb 40 ft.
STR +0 DEX +3 CON +1 INT -2 WIS -1 CHA -3
Darkvision 60' Languages: -
Keen Smell. Adv on WIS (Perception) checks Spider Climb. Can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down, without needing to make an ability check. Undead Fortitude. Regain 1 hit point each turn, if no t at 0.
Multiattack. 2 claw attacks. Claw. MWA: +5, 1d6+3 piercing Bite (Recharge 5-6). MWA: +5, grappled and restrained (escape DC 11).

After the Encounter:

The monkey skeletons crumble to dust. As the dust settles, there is a lingering scent of decay and an unsettling quiet.

A close inspection of the area reveals a small, moss-covered shrine nestled amongst the roots of a massive tree. Inside, a weathered wooden chest lies hidden. Prying it open reveals a collection of semi-precious stones (amethyst). Etched onto the inner lid is a crude symbol – a stylized monkey skull with fiery eyes.

Treasure:

1 Small Chess containing;

2d4 gems, amethyst (valued at 25 gp each)

Hex F4: Twig Blights

A narrow, rickety wooden bridge connects the across the banks of the river.

Perception Check DC 12: A character who succeeds on a (DC 13) Wisdom (Perception) check notices strange symbols carved into one of the bridge's supports. The symbols resemble swirling vines and leaves.

Trap: Glyph of Warding (Sleep)

The bridge is protected by a magical Glyph of Warding inscribed on one of the supports, disguised as the strange symbols. The glyph is set to trigger when a creature steps on a specific pressure plate hidden beneath a loose floorboard 5 feet from the support. When triggered, the glyph releases a sleep spell that puts that creature to sleep, unless it has more than 20 hit points.

Disabling the Trap: A character who succeeds on a (DC 14) Intelligence (Arcana) check can identify the magical nature of the symbols and locate the pressure plate. Disabling the pressure plate requires a successful (DC 12) Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.

Creatures:2 **Twig Blights** (Monster Manual, p.32)

Twig Blight (Small NE plant) (25 XP)
AC 13 HP 4 SPD 20 ft.
STR -2 DEX +1 CON +1 INT -3 WIS -1 CHA -4
Vulnerability: fire Immune: blinded, deafened Blindsight 60' Languages: understands Common but can't speak False Appearance. While still, it looks like a dead shrub.
Claws. MWA: + 3 , 1d4+1 piercing

Tactics:

The Twig Blights are hanging under the bridge. When someone attempts to cross the bridge they quickly climb onto the bridge and attack.

Hex G3: Giant Toads

Description: This entire hex is jungle with a slow moving river crossing it between hex F4 and Hex H3. The center of the area south of the river is mostly filled by a swamp (not shown on the map). There is no bridge over the river, but there is one over the swamp.

Crossing the river:

The river is 30 feet across and appears to be shallow and slow moving. The river is deeper than expected, requiring a (DC10) Strength (Athletics) to cross safely.

Giant Frog: A Giant Frog (MM p.325) lurks in the river, attempting to ambush the party for food.

Crossing the swamp:

A narrow, rickety wooden, 5 foot wide, bridge spans a deep water area of the murky swamp. The air is thick with the buzzing of insects and the stench of decay. Willows with gnarled branches weep into the stagnant water below. Across the bridge, a faint path leads into the dense swamp forest.

You cautiously approach a rickety wooden bridge spanning a murky swamp. The air is thick with the buzzing of insects and the stench of decay. Willow trees with gnarled branches weep into the stagnant water below. Across the bridge, a faint path leads deeper into the dense swamp forest.

A character who succeeds on a (DC 13) Wisdom (Perception) check notices strange claw marks on the bridge planks, leading from the far side towards you.

Creatures:2 **Giant Toads** (MM, p.329)

Giant Toad (Large beast) (200 XP)
AC 11 HP 39 SPD 20 ft. , swim 40 ft.
STR +2 DEX +1 CON +1 INT -4 WIS +0 CHA -4
Darkvision 60' Languages: -
Amphibious. Can breathe air and water. Standing Leap. Long jump 20 ft. High jump 10 ft., without running start.
Bite. MWA: +4, 1d10+2 piercing + 1d10 poison damage, grappled & restrained (escape DC 13). It can't bite another 'till grapple ends. Swallow. If bite hits grappled target, it is swallowed (ending grapple), blinded, restrained, has total cover, & takes 3d6 acid damage at the start of each of the toad's turns. Only one target swallowed at a time. If toad dies, swallowed creature not restrained. Can escape with 5 feet of movement.

When the characters first enter the bridge one toad on each side try to grapple characters who are on the bridge.

After the Encounter:

If the characters defeat the Toads, they can safely cross the bridge. A successful (DC 14) Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a small pouch hidden beneath a loose floorboard near the center of the bridge. Inside is a pouch containing 5 gp and a crudely drawn map on parchment depicting a hidden smugglers' trail through the swamp.

Treasure:

1 Pouch containing 5 gp

GLOWING CRYSTAL SHARDS



These curious fragments (like the one in the Net Mender's General Store) are scattered throughout the crater.

Appearance: Small and faintly luminous (sheds dim light in a 5-foot radius), they are easily missed in bright light, as their glow is overwhelmed.

Magical Detection: A *detect magic* spell reveals their magical nature, though its type remains unidentified.

Identification: An *identify* spell confirms they are magical, with two key properties: they glow and they shatter with a loud bang. A thrown shard that forcefully hits a hard surface, or takes at least 5 points of bludgeoning damage in a single blow, explodes in a loud bang audible for 300 feet. This shattering causes no additional damage. The spell also reveals that the shard has additional magical features that it cannot identify.

CRYSTAL SHARD SECRETS

The Truth: The Glowing Crystal Shards are crystallized tears shed by Xythan at the moment of his Sundering. These tears hold fragments of Xythan's past benevolence and his deep regret for succumbing to Thanatos' corruption.

Party Discovery: A successful (DC 15) Intelligence (Religion) check will recognize the shards' faint connection to the life energy and sorrow inherent within. Speaking to a priest or cleric familiar with Xythan's lore (such as Alana Sunray) can reveal the origin of the shards.

Campaign Impact: The shards have many secret features which will be revealed from time to time during the campaign. In this adventures the heroes will learn these two:

1. The shards, when brought together, act as a compass, guiding the party towards the remaining Necrotic Anchors.
2. The Deathbringers, with their connection to Thanatos, are also be drawn to the shards, potentially leading the party to hidden Deathbringer cults or rituals.

LEARNING ABOUT THE COMPASS

Experimenting with the crystals reveals an intriguing feature. (If the PCs don't do this Puck will suggest it, or do it himself.)

When 2 shards are touching the lights within appear to move slightly. And when 6 or more are arraigned on a fairly flat surface and all of them are touching, their lights merge and hover a few inches above the tops of the shards. For a few minutes the light moves around over the shards, appearing to be searching for something. Eventually they form the rough shape of an arrow and point in a specific direction.

This process takes 10 minutes. If the shards are moved or disturbed they return to their original state.

Wherever the PCs are when they do this, the compass points directly to the hidden crevice (in hex C3). If inside the tunnel it points down the tunnel towards the chamber at the end, or directly at the doors if in the chamber in front of the doors.

They will learn more about this feature in future adventures.

Hex G4: Crater, Cultists

While they were in Saltport Cove the PCs witnessed a meteor fly overhead and strike this island. This is the crater that formed when it hit the ground and exploded.

You come upon a mile wide crater of jagged black earth, devoid of life. The air is thick and acrid with the stench of burnt vegetation. Charred tree trunks surround it like fallen soldiers, pointing outwards as if flung back by an invisible giant. The southern rim is choked by the blackened remnants of the once vibrant jungle, but to the north, the crater breaches the treeline, revealing a stark, white beach that seems out of place. Smoke still rises from the crater's depths, hinting at the unknown power that carved this horrifying scar into the landscape.

Description: The crater fills this hex.

Time: It will take the characters 40 minutes to walk across the width of the crater. It will take the PCs 2 hours to walk all around the crater, quickly searching it.

Search: Have the PCs make perception check. The character with the highest result notices a crystal shard faintly glowing in the shadow of a black rock. They will discover 1d6 shards for each hour spent searching the crater, with a maximum of 12 total, regardless of time spent.

Fixed Encounter:

The heroes spot a group of hooded men searching the ground. They are Deathbringer cultists gathering Glowing Crystal Shards. As soon as they spot the PCs the *Cultists Acolyte* yells "Thanatos hungers... and soon, all shall feel his cold embrace!" as they attack.

Refer to "The Overarching Story" in *AT-01 An Ancient Evil* for additional information on the Deathbringers.

Creatures:

4 **Cultist Whisperers** (New Monster page. 23)

1 **Cultist Acolyte** (New Monster page. 22)

Cultist Whisperer (Medium LE Human) (25 XP)

AC 12 HP 8 SPD 30 ft.

STR -1 DEX +2 CON +0 INT +0 WIS +1 CHA +3

Darkvision 60'

Languages: Common

Deception Expertise. Adv on Deception checks

Cantrips (at will): *minor illusion, message*

Dagger. MWA: +4, 1d4+3 piercing

Chant of the Dead (Recharge 5-6). range 30'. (DC 12) WIS save or 3d6 necrotic damage, and Disad on its next attack roll. half damage on a save and no other effect.

Cultist Acolyte (Medium LE Human) (50 XP)

AC 14 HP 11 SPD 30 ft.

STR +0 DEX +2 CON +1 INT +1 WIS +2 CHA +0

Darkvision 60'

Languages: Common

Cantrips (at will): *Sacred Flame, Thumaturgy*

1st Level Spells (3 slots): *Guiding Bolt, Inflict Wounds*

Dagger. MWA: +4, 1d4+3 piercing

Chant of the Dead (Recharge 5-6). range 30'. (DC 12) WIS save or 3d6 necrotic damage, and Disad on its next attack roll. half damage on a save and no other effect.

The cultists all have some glowing crystal shards and a dagger. The acolyte's dagger is ceremonial.

Treasure:

1d4 Glowing Crystal Shards

4 daggers

1 ceremonial dagger (normal dagger specs)

Hex H3: Zombies

Description: Refer to hex I3 for information regarding the bay that occupies most of this hex. Only a tiny corner in the north-east corner and less than half of the west side of this hex is jungle.

Time: You can consider the north-east corner to be beach. The jungle on the east side will only take 1 hour to cross from G3 to H2 or visa-versa, and only one additional hour to do a quick search of the entire jungle area.

Fixed Encounter:

Run this encounter the first time the characters enter the jungle in this hex.

The humid air hangs heavy as you push deeper into the jungle. Suddenly, a guttural moan erupts from behind a thick veil of vines! Four grotesque figures, their flesh a sickly green and hanging in tatters from their decaying bones, shamble into view. With a chorus of rasping moans, they charge towards you, their outstretched arms ending in ragged claws.

Creatures:

3 **Zombies** (MM p.316)

Zombie (Medium NE undead,) (50 XP)
AC 8 HP 22 SPD 20 ft.
STR +1 DEX -2 CON +3 INT -4 WIS -2 CHA -3
Darkvision 60' Languages: - can't speak
Undead Fortitude. At 0 HP (if the damage wasn't radiant or a critical hit) make a CON saving (DC = 5 + damage taken) to drop to 1 HP instead.
Slam. MWA: +3, 1d6 + 1) bludgeoning

After the Encounter:

The stench of decay intensifies as the lifeless bodies of the Zombies slump to the ground. Their moans fade into an unsettling silence.

The Zombies might have remnants of their former lives clinging to their decomposing forms. These include bits of tattered clothing and rusty tools. On one of them the characters find a tarnished silver locket containing a faded portrait – a melancholic reminder of the person who once inhabited this decaying body.

Treasure:

1 silver locket (value: 5 sp)

Hex I3: Giant Frog & Snapping Turtles

Description: A salt-water bay occupies parts of several hexes. White sandy beaches backed by dense jungles border the bay on all sides. There is a small island in the south-east corner of hex I3.

Time: This hex is almost completely water. Whether the characters swim or row, it will take them 40 minutes to cross from one side to the other of any of the hexes. or 3 hours to quickly search all the beaches of the entire bay. It will take then 20 minutes to cross from the beach to the small island, or

visa-versa. Add to this any time spent on the island or for other encounters.

Sunlight filters through the leaves of towering trees, dappling the calm surface of this bay. A lone island, shrouded in mist, sits near the center. The air is still and silent, broken only by the occasional chirp of a bird.

Fixed Encounter:

Run this encounter the first time the characters cross the bay to the island.

As you draw closer to the small island, the silence is broken only by the rhythmic lap of water against the shore. The island itself appears unremarkable - a low, rocky outcropping covered in a thick carpet of emerald moss. Only a few scraggly trees claw their way skyward their branches gnarled and windswept.

As the characters reach the island they are attacked by the unseen creatures that have been observing their approach. The turtles try to attack them before they leave the water.

Creatures:

1 **Giant Frog** (MM p.325)

2 **Giant Snapping Turtles** (New Monster page 23)

Giant Snapping Turtle (Medium beast) (50 XP)
AC 14 HP 18 SPD 10 ft., swim 20 ft.
STR +2 DEX +1 CON +1 INT -4 WIS +0 CHA +3
Darkvision 60' Languages: -
Amphibious. Can breathe air and water. Shell Defense. +2 to AC while underwater.
Bite. MWA: +4, 1d6+2 piercing & (if Small) grappled (escape DC 10) and restrained. It can't bite again until the grapple ends.

Tactics:

Giant snapping turtles use their Amphibious nature to their advantage, attacking from the water or dragging prey underwater with their Bite attack. While the frog leaps from the bushes and attempts to bite and then swallow a small character.

Aftermath:

After the combat, the characters are free to explore the island. They find a small stone circle at the center of the island. Within the circle lies a weathered chest partially covered in moss. The chest is unlocked and contains a collection of polished stones engraved with swirling vine and leaf symbols. A character



who succeeds on a (DC 12) Intelligence (Nature) check identifies the stones as druidic symbols associated with plant growth and protection.

Treasure:

1 Weathered Chest containing: 3d4 polished stones (value: 1 sp each)

Hex 15: Undead Pirate, Giant Spiders

Description: Only the south half of this hex is jungle.

Time: The jungle on the east side will only take 1 hour to cross from G3 to H2 or visa-versa, and only one additional hour to do a quick search of the entire jungle area.

Fixed Encounter:

Run this encounter the first time the characters enter the jungle in this hex.

You emerge into a clearing bathed in dappled sunlight. Lush ferns carpet the ground, and towering vines snake through the ancient trees overhead. In the center of the clearing stands a gnarled banyan tree, its sprawling branches forming a natural canopy. At its base, nestled amongst exposed roots, lies a weathered wooden chest, its brass fittings glinting in the sun.

As soon as the characters enter the clearing, a skeleton dressed like a very tattered pirate steps into the clearing on the far side and points a pistol at the party. They don't recognize it for what it is because they have never seen one before.

Creatures:

2 **Giant Spider** (MM p.328)

1 **Undead Pirate** (New Monster page 26)

Undead Pirate (Medium CE undead) (450 XP)
AC 16 HP 58 SPD 30 ft.
STR +3 DEX +2 CON +3 INT +0 WIS +1 CHA +1
Immune poison Darkvision 60'
Languages: Common (understands but doesn't speak)
Undead Fortitude. Regain 1 hit point each turn, if no t at 0.
Scimitar. MWA: +5, 1d8+3 slashing Pistol. RWA: +4, r. 30/120 ft., 1d10+1 piercing

Tactics:

Spiders. The spiders will position themselves on either side of the entrance to the clearing, attempting to ensnare characters as they approach the chest. They will use their webs to try and restrain characters, making them easier targets for the undead pirate's attacks.

Pirate. The undead pirate steps out into the far side of the clearing and fires his pistol at the character that he perceives to be the heaviest armored. The pistol explodes when fired (causing **1d10** points of damage to the undead pirate). He drops the useless weapon, draws his scimitar, and charges the PCs.

The pistol cannot be fixed and the last of the gunpowder was used. The undead pirate captain's hat with a Jolly Roger emblem is filthy, but still in good condition. Inside the chest, the characters find a pouch containing gold pieces, a handful of assorted gemstones, and a rolled-up scroll. The scroll is a fragment of the pirate captain's log, detailing his final days and clues to the location of another treasure.

The fragment of the log provides the characters with a clue to the location of the entrance to the Ruined Temple of Thanatos.. [Handout #4]

“Yarns fly faster than gulls on the wind about a treasure chest overflowing with gold doubloons hidden on this very island! Some salty dogs point their fingers towards the fiery belly of the volcano, but shiver me timbers, I got the lowdown from a fella who swore he saw the entrance to this

legendary loot locker. Didn't want to share the secret at first, the scurvy landlubber, but let's just say a persuasive glint of my cutlass loosened his tongue. He spilled the beans, sayin' the entrance lies nestled near the base of that fire-spittin' mountain. Aye, a hidden crevice within the hills at the volcano's foot supposedly leads to the treasure's guarded doors. But mark my words, this bounty ain't fer the faint of heart! The entrance be protected by” ... The rest has been torn away.

Treasure:

1 pirate's hat

1 weathered wooden chest containing:

4d4 assorted gemstones (value: 10 gp each)

1 scroll (fragment of the pirate captain's log)

1 pouch containing:

1 Weathered wooden chest containing:

100 gold pieces

What happened here?

Puck can explain,

Puck: “Listen closely, because time gets a bit tangled here.

“Imagine a fearsome pirate named Blackheart Billy, a right scoundrel with a heart blacker than a moonless night! Sailed the seas a hundred years from now, this Billy did, until one stormy night, his ship got caught in a swirling time whirlpool! He and his vessel were tossed back two hundred years, right here to this very spot! Talk about a bad case of seasickness!

“Seems this buccaneer stashed his treasure in this very clearing, planning to grab it later. But fate, that fickle wench, had other plans. A nasty spider with a grudge sent poor Billy belly-up. After that he was stuck here, a skeleton guardian of his gold, forever grumbling about the unfairness of it all. Boo hoo hoo!”



RETURNING TO SALTPORT COVE

Refer to “AT-01 An Ancient Evil”.

The PCs can return there as often as they want. They may want to rest, restock supplies, or seek information. Here are how some of the NPCs might help:

Sheriff Amelia Waveshield: She is eager to hear what they have learned about the island. If they give her the finished map of the island she will gladly give each of them the 20 gp as she promised.

Jingle Silverstring: She is eager to hear about their adventures. She will sell them anything they need if she has it. If she doesn't she will send to the nearest big city for it, but it will take 7 days. There is no maximum cost limit, but she will require pre-payment for any item with a cost of 50 gp or higher and the items must be in the Players Handbook. The Glowing Crystal Shard she has in her glass-fronted display case is identical to the ones the party found on the island. She doesn't know where it came from. It was here when she acquired the shop last year. She will sell it to them for 10 gp (can be persuaded to part with it for 5 gp).

Alana Sunray: She will provide healing to the characters (with an appropriate donation). She is very familiar with Xythan's lore and can reveal the origin of the shards, but she doesn't know anything about their abilities. She can also translate the inscription above the doors to Thanatos temple if the PCs can provide her with a faithful copy of it, and can identify the animal images on the doors as the only sacrifices he accepts, (other than humanoids) and that the one he likes best is the goat. She thinks it has something to do with a mountain goat who once wronged him somehow.

Concluding the Adventure

When the heroes open the doors to Thanatos temple (in hex C3) they should be ready move on to character level 3 and “**AT-03 Secrets of the Shattered Temple,**” the next adventure in the “It's About Time” campaign arc.

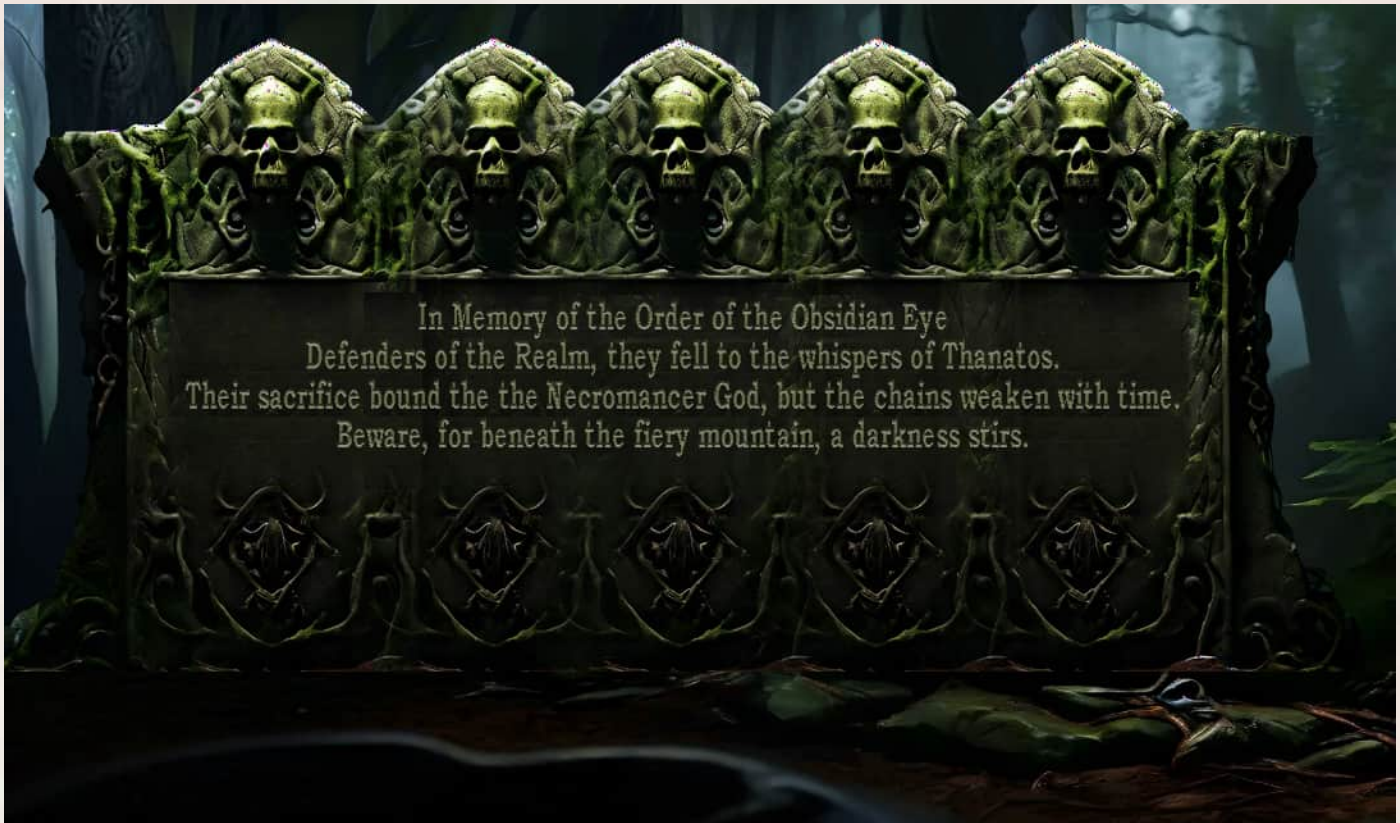
But, if they aren't ready or simply wish to return to Saltport Cove for a bit, they have earned a break, so some time to kick back with friends in Saltport Cove might be appreciated.

Also, if they haven't completed at least 6 encounters of medium difficulty or higher they rally need more experience before advancing to the next level.

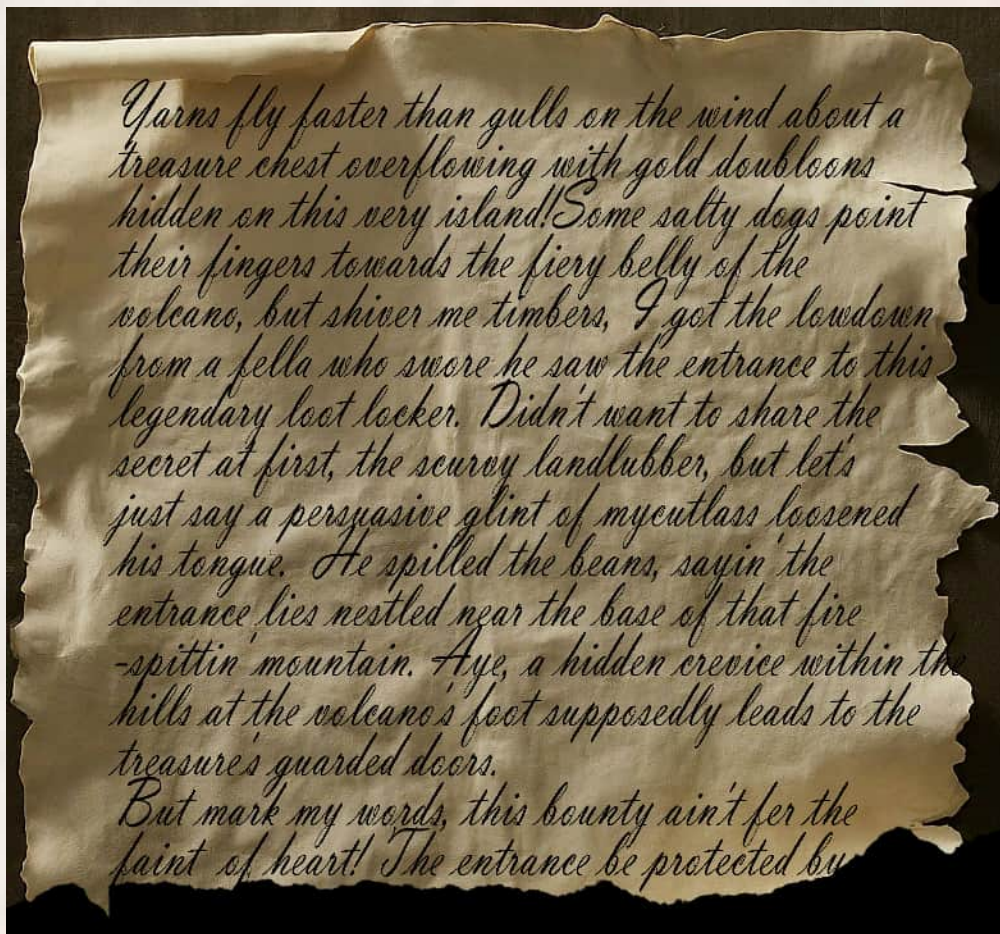
So they may want to finish exploring the island. By the time they have finished mapping the island, they should be ready to continue the fight against Thanatos.

Remember, they are still looking for the Mithral Sphere. Perhaps they will find it in the Shattered Temple. Only time will tell!





Handout #3 - Gravestone



Handout #4 - Blackheart's Note

Appendix B: New Monsters

BEACH HAG

Medium fey, chaotic evil



Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Aquan, Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Slippery Skin. The hag has advantage on Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks

Spells (at will)

Darkness (self only)

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 7 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Spiked Chain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 7 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until the grapple ends, the target can't move more than 5 feet away from the hag, and the hag has advantage on attack rolls against the target.

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

CINDERBAT

Medium monstrosity, unaligned



Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 10 ft., 40 ft. fly

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Molten Resilience. A Cinderbat has resistance to fire damage.

Heatsense. Cinderbats can sense warm or hot creatures within 60 feet of them through walls or other opaque barriers.

ACTIONS

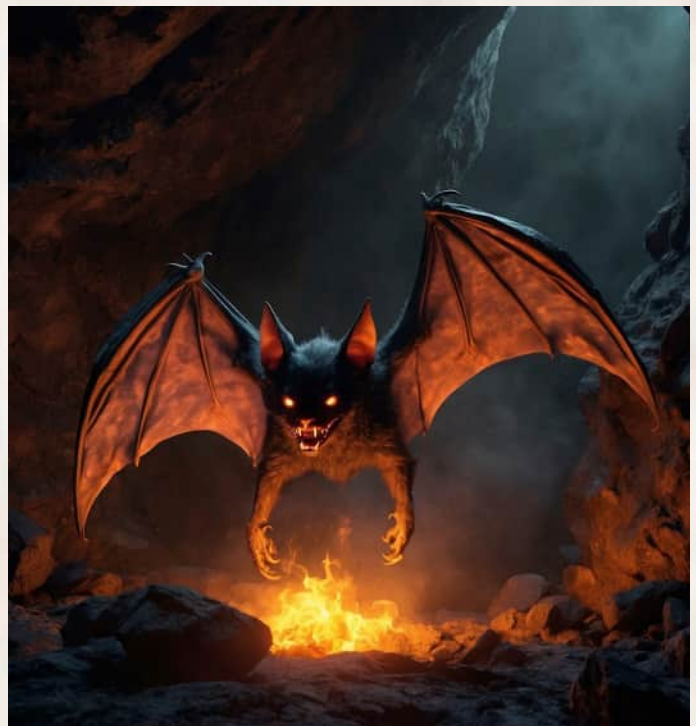
Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 5 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage

Ember Spark. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 5 (1d6) fire damage.

Cinderbats use their Bite attack on characters in close range, and their Ember Spark attack on characters who try to maintain distance. The Cinderbats are not particularly intelligent but are fiercely territorial and will fight to the death to defend their volcanic home.



Beach Hag



Cinderbat

CULTIST ACOLYTE

Medium humanoid (Human), lawful evil



Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +3, Intimidation +2, Religion +3

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Cantrips (at will): *Sacred Flame*, *Thaumaturgy*

1st level (2 slots): *Guiding Blot*, *Infect wounds*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target
Hit: Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Chant of the Dead (Recharge 5-6). The Acolyte spends an action chanting a dark prayer and gestures towards a creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 12). On a failed save, the creature takes 3d6 necrotic damage, and it has disadvantage on its next attack roll until the end of its next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and suffers no other effect.

CULTIST DEATHLESS

Medium undead (any race), lawful evil alignment



Armor Class 16 (plate armor)

Hit Points 45 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +4, Intimidation +3, Perception +3

Damage Resistances Necrotic

Condition Immunities Poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common (and any other appropriate to their race)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Shadow Step (Recharge 5-6). The Deathless magically jumps short distances through the Shadowfell. It disappears from its current location and reappears up to 40 feet away in dim light or darkness. This movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Deathless makes two claw attacks.

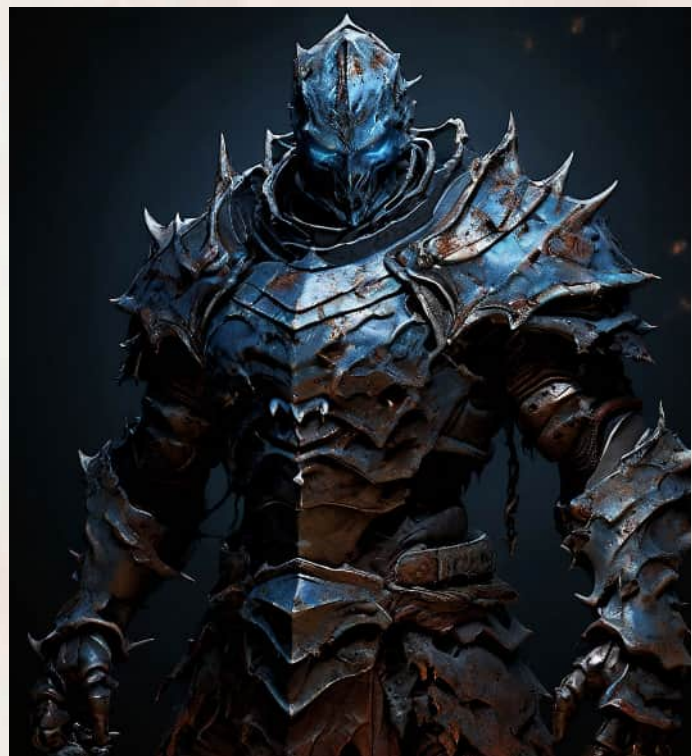
Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 7 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage. Once per turn it does an extra 2 necrotic damage.

Acolytes are those who have fully embraced the Deathbringer ideology. They see the end of all things as inevitable and seek to hasten Thanatos' rise. Their favor lies entirely with Thanatos, and they crave power and influence in the coming oblivion.

Deathless were once powerful Acolytes who volunteered (or were forced) to undergo a horrific ritual that binds them to Thanatos' will. This ritual grants them a twisted form of undeath, immense power, and a ravenous hunger for life force. They are utterly devoted to Thanatos, driven by a warped sense of immortality and a desire to spread Thanatos' dominion.



Cultist Acolyte



Cultist Deathless

CULTIST WHISPERER

Medium humanoid (any race), any evil alignment



Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 8 (2d6 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +3, Persuasion +5, Stealth +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common (and any other appropriate to their race)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Deception Expertise. The Whisperer has advantage on Deception checks.

Spells (Spell save DC 13)

Cantrips (at will): *minor illusion*, *message*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

GIANT SNAPPING TURTLE

Medium beast, unaligned



Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (5d6 + 5)

Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +2 Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The giant snapping turtle can breathe air and water.

Shell Defense. While the giant snapping turtle is underwater, it has a +2 bonus to AC.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 7 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature of Small size, it is grappled (escape DC 10). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the snapper can't use this attack again until the grapple ends.

Tail Snap. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

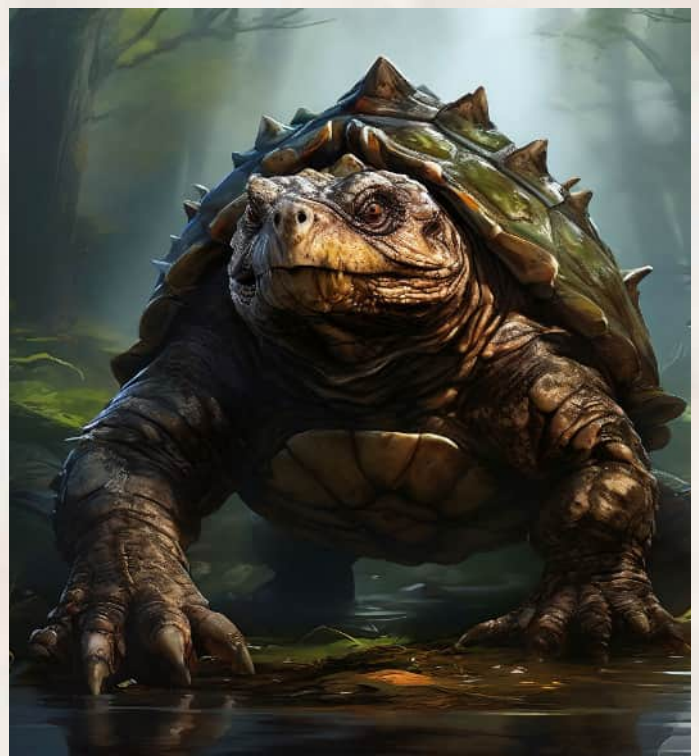
The Cultist Whisperer is a cunning member of the Deathbringer cult who uses deception and stealth to further their agenda. They spread misinformation, sow discord, and gather information for the cult.

Giant snapping turtles are monstrous reptiles with thick, leathery skin and powerful jaws. Their shells are covered in algae and barnacles, and their eyes gleam with a reptilian intelligence. These territorial predators lurk in freshwater swamps and lakes, ambushing prey with their lightning-fast bites.

Giant snapping turtles use their Amphibious nature to their advantage, attacking from the water or dragging prey underwater with their Bite attack.



Cultist Whisperer



Giant Snapping Turtle

GIANT WOLF SKELETON

Large undead, lawful evil



Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Undead Fortitude. If the giant wolf skeleton has fewer than its hit point maximum, it regains 1 hit point at the start of its turn. This trait ends if the giant wolf skeleton is destroyed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant wolf skeleton can make two attacks: one bite attack and one claw attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

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

MONKEY SKELETON

Small undead, neutral evil



Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

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

Spider Climb. The monkey skeleton can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down, without needing to make an ability check.

Undead Fortitude. If the monkey skeleton has any hit points remaining at the start of its turn, it regains 1 hit point.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The monkey skeleton makes two claw attacks.

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

Bite (Recharge 5-6). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* On a hit, the target is grappled (escape DC 11). Until the grapple ends, the target is considered restrained, and the monkey skeleton can't use this attack again.

Giant wolf skeletons are the animated remains of monstrous wolves, imbued with a dark and vengeful spirit. Their once mighty bodies are now a twisted collection of bones, held together by necromantic energy. They roam desolate lands, driven by an insatiable hunger to rend the living.

Monkey skeletons are the animated remains of monkeys twisted by dark magic. Their nimble bodies hang from crumbling ruins and dense jungle foliage, their empty sockets glowing with an eerie light. Monkey skeletons often lurk in groups, using their agility and climbing skills to ambush unsuspecting prey.



Giant Wolf Skeleton



Monkey Skeleton

MOUNTAIN GOAT SKELETON

Medium undead, lawful evil



Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Keen Smell. The mountain goat skeleton has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Charge. If the skeleton moves at least 15 feet straight toward a creature and hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Undead Fortitude. If the skeleton has any hit points remaining at the start of its turn, it regains 2 hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The goat skeleton makes two ram attacks.

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

Horns - head-butt (Recharge 5-6). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target *Hit:* On a hit, the target takes 10 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage and must make a Strength saving throw (DC 13). On a failed save, the target is pushed 10 feet away from the mountain goat skeleton.

Mountain goat skeletons are the animated remains of mountain goats twisted by dark magic. Their once-proud horns hold a sinister gleam, and their skeletal bodies clatter with an unnerving rhythm as they charge. Skeleton goats are often found guarding haunted tombs or roaming wastelands, adding to the desolate atmosphere



Mountain Goat Skeleton

SKELETON SOLDIER

Medium undead, lawful evil



Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (12d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

ACTIONS

Undead Fortitude. If the skeleton soldier has any hit points remaining at the start of its turn, it regains 4 hit points.

Multiattack. The skeleton soldier makes two claw attacks.

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

Shove. The skeleton soldier shoves one creature within 5 feet of it. On a successful shove (strength contest contested by the target's Strength or Dexterity), the target is pushed 5 feet away.

REACTIONS

The skeleton soldier can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The skeleton soldier regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The skeleton soldier makes one claw attack.

Move. The skeleton soldier moves up to its speed.

Skeleton soldiers are the animated remains of warriors infused with dark magic. These once-proud fighters march relentlessly, their empty sockets flickering with an eerie light.



Skeleton Soldier

UNDEAD PIRATE

Medium undead, chaotic evil



Armor Class 16 (leather armor)

Hit Points 58 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common (understands but doesn't speak)

Challenge 2 (450 XP) Proficiency Bonus +2

Undead Fortitude. If the undead pirate has fewer than its hit point maximum, it regains 1 hit point at the start of its turn. This trait ends if the undead pirate captain is destroyed.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The undead pirate can add 2 to its AC against one melee weapon attack that it can see coming in on its turn.

YOUNG GRIFFON

Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned



Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Keen Sight. The griffon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pounce. If the griffon moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that creature is grappled (escape DC 12). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained.

Flyby. The griffon can move through a creature's space without provoking an opportunity attack on that turn, but it must leave the creature's space before the end of the turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The griffon makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

The Young Griffon is less aggressive than the adult.



Undead Pirate



Young Griffon