

CCC-AWE-01-02



The Chi Directive

An AwesomeCon Adventure

Stories of Muckflash Marsh have been told for decades—deep whispered voices and floating lights. Recently the lights have brightened, and the voices turned higher pitched. A young woman has brought tales of evil doings at the march and a plea for aid.

Mischief of Profiteering Series, Part One.

A Two-Hour Adventure for Characters of 1st to 4th Level.

Optimized for APL 3.



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Adventure Primer

If you want something done right, get someone else to do it for you.

Tenet 102 – Cult of Squerrik

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

This adventure occurs in the Mulmaster refugee camp outside the town of Elmwood after the events of the Red War. Locations include the refugee camp and a tidal marsh west of Elmwood.

Background

The Mischief of Profiteering centers around the activities of the followers of Squerrik, God of Wererats. The **CULT OF SQUERRIK** has only recently sought followers among non-wererats who identify with a lust for money and the unscrupulousness of attaining it through schemes and theft. For more information about the Cult of Squerrik, see **Appendix 1**.

The Chi Directive introduces the Cult of Squerrik as a background force that is trying to get “heroes” to do their dirty work and eliminate a rival cult—that of Raxivort, God of Xvarts and Rats.

Overview

This adventure is in **three parts** and takes approximately **two hours** to play. The adventure begins with a **Call to Action** scene. If you’re planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you’ll want to revisit the **Call to Action** each time you play.

- **Part 1: Were-lights of Muckflash Marsh (Call to Action)**. The characters are recruited to find a missing person who went to investigate the

change in the lights at Muckflash Marsh. This is the **Call to Action**.

- **Part 2: Into the Marsh**. Characters proceed to the marsh to search for the missing person. Unbeknownst to them, this is a ruse. The Cult of Squerrik hopes they exterminate the xvarts. **Story Objective A** is to thoroughly investigate the marsh for the missing person. **Story Objective B** is to discover why the lights are disturbed.
- **Part 3: The Rats’ Thank You**. Characters return to report their findings.

Dungeon Master Notes

All encounters are straightforward and can be handled through combat. Each scenario offers alternative resolutions.

Adventure Hooks

Adventure Hook 1. Characters with the sailor background have heard stories of woe and bad tidings ever since the lights at Muchflash Marsh changed.

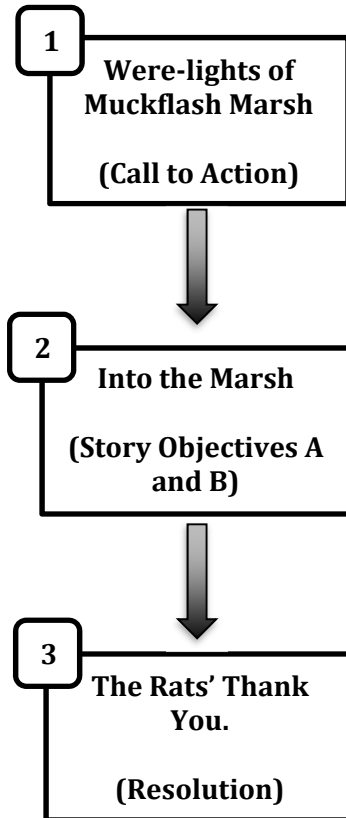
Adventure Hook 2. Characters who are acolytes, clerics, or otherwise worship **UMBERLEE** receive a vision in the night: small lights winking out one by one as purple-skinned humanoids are drowned by crashing waves, struck by lightning, and battered against coral reefs, followed by a voice crying, “Kill the infestation!”

Adventure Hook 3. While walking through the Mulmaster refugee camp, characters see a notice on a kiosk requesting heroes to find a missing person who traveled to a nearby marsh.

Adventure Hook 4. Characters recently arrived in Elmwood by sea remember seeing and hearing the strange lights and sounds when sailing past the Marsh. The sailors remarked that something evil must have the lights so disturbed. They decide to check it out.

Adventure Flowchart

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



Part 1: Were-lights of Muckflash Marsh

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

The characters arrive at the designated tent to hear about the quest to Mudflash Marsh, each for their own reason.

Setting Information

The Mulmaster refugee camp outside of Elmwood is a dank and depressing place with too many people inhabiting too little space. It was once fallow fields, but now it is a sea of mud. Characters arrive at a small, squat tent. They will meet with **HAZEL**, a **wererat** follower of Squerrik in humanoid form.

Dimensions. The round tent is wide but not tall, measuring about 12 feet in diameter and 6 feet tall at the center. Characters who are not small sized must hunch to fit inside.

Light. Candles ring the center pole of the tent in holders about four feet off the ground. Additional light enters from the tent flap.

Sound. Clanks can be heard as Hazel rustles through her pack looking for “Stupid cheddar cheese rations, where are you?”

NPC Information

Hazel is a member of the **Cult of Squerrik** (collectively called “Squeakers”), which operated secretly in the sewers below Mulmaster before being displaced by the Red War (or other event). She moved the Squeakers with the refugees, seeing opportunity to exploit the situation for her own gain. Among the Squeakers, the more money you make for your superiors, the higher rank you can achieve, and Hazel has her eyes set very high.

Hazel learned upon her arrival to Elmwood that a rival cult—that of **Raxivort, God of Rats and Xvarts**—has been operating in the area around the Muchflash Marsh. Action must be taken to eliminate them—this is called the “Chi Directive” among the Squeakers.

Call to Action

While the Chi Directive requires Hazel to act, she has full discretion regarding how to do so. She hires the PCs on false pretenses to investigate her missing “grandfather.”

You open the flap to the round, squat tent and look inside; straw has been spread on the ground. Only two pieces of solid furniture are seen—a low coffee table turned into a bed with more straw and a three-legged stool. Seated upon the stool is a young human woman preparing to eat a simple meal of cheese and a cup of bitterroot tea. Hazel is dressed in threadbare clothes that are torn and ripped it is hard to tell the color, perhaps a faded mustard yellow.

“Come in. Have a seat, my friends. Please say you are you here to help me find my missing grandfather.”

Hazel goes on to explain that she and her grandfather, Callum, came here as refugees from Mulmaster. Her grandfather used to be a librarian and historian for a Zor who was killed. They have been trying to make ends meet, but there is little need for his skills these days. When they heard of the strange happenings in Muchflash Marsh, Callum went to investigate, saying that he had heard stories of the place and thought if he could resolve the issues, he might earn respect with some of the other Zors and perhaps a place as an advisor.

The lie. Everything involving Callum is a lie, but a very well developed one. Only a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check will reveal that there may be more to the story. If the PCs press her on this, she says that Callum was not actually her grandfather but a friend of her grandfather to counter discovery of the half-truth.

Hazel offers a finely made silver shortsword, a family heirloom, as payment. Although she never intends to give it to them. See Part 3 for details.

Part 2: Into the Marsh

Estimated Duration: 90 minutes

The players proceed to Mudflash Marsh to investigate the strange new were-lights and look for a missing person. It is about a three hour walk westward past Elmwood along the coast of the Moonsea.

Setting Information

The Mudflash Marsh is a tidal marsh along the coast of the Moonsea. While this place has always had were-lights at night, no one in Elmwood gives it much thought. Locals avoid this place at night. There are natural beasts. Hunters regularly hunt along the forested borders of the marsh. Fish are also plentiful.

Dimensions. The marsh is roughly oval-shaped, about 1¼ miles along the long axis (west-to-east) and about ¾ of a mile along the short axis (north-to-south). **See Appendix 2.**

Map 1 Mudflash Marsh for details.

Terrain. Coastal. The marsh has four subsections—the channel, the lily pad cove, the tall grass field, and the high marsh.

Light. Direct sunlight shines during the day. At night it is dark, except for nocturnal happenings.

Sound. Normal marsh sounds and waves from the Moonsea.

Story Objective

Story Objective A is to thoroughly search the marsh for Callum. **Story Objective B** is to discover what has disturbed the marsh.

An Unusual Ecosystem

For nearly a century, a **sea hag** devotee of Umberlee called the Muchflash Marsh home. She developed a strange lifecycle for her **sea spawn** “children.” She used **will-o’-wisps** to lure victims into the waters, where they would soon find themselves surrounded by **swarms of lamprey**. Through a ritual she gave them a choice: serve Umberlee and live, or become food for lamprey and **will-o’-wisps**. Those that chose to serve she transformed into lamprey-headed **sea spawn**. Those that refused were left to die in terror.

As **sea spawn** lived, they served her as “mother.” When it came time for them to move on, she performed another ritual, sacrificing the bodies to Umberlee and transforming their souls into **will-o’-wisps**, thus starting the cycle anew.

Word spread about the marsh, and rumor became a sea-faring legend. If the lights were seen and low chanting heard by passing ships at night, sailors believed Umberlee consented to allow them to pass safely. This is why most sailors have become very concerned by the changes in the sound and light coming from the marsh at night.

Arrival of the Xvarts

XvartKen—a **xvart warlock of Raxivort** and tribal speaker—found an ancient, broken metal tablet with a void infernal contract etched into it. The contract was an infernal pact between Bel and an unknown warlock who sought power to fight in the blood war against Orcus. XvartKen mistranslated the tablet and believes it describes a ritual that would allow him to capture the souls of incorporeal undead (followers of Orcus) inside a magic lantern and send them to add power to his patron (Raxivort). This is not at all true, but he convinced his tribe that it was and then set out to go “undead hunting” for the glory of Raxivort.

Being known for the were-lights, Muchflash Marsh seemed to be a good place to start. When they arrived a few weeks ago, they found plentiful will-o’-wisps and set forth to slay them and trap them in XvartKen’s magical lantern.

Their attacks against the will-o’-wisps greatly angered the local sea hag. In an act of hubris, believing Umberlee would empower her, she confronted them one night alone. She was quickly overwhelmed by their numbers and died from a powerful eldritch blast to the chest. Her sea spawn children found her body the next day and have been mourning her ever since. They are preparing to perform one last ceremony to lay her body to rest in the sea when the PCs arrive at the marsh.

1. The Channel

The main channel is a large open-water area just over the rise that separates the marsh from the Moonsea. A wide, flat inlet allows water to come into the Marsh when the tide is up. When the PCs arrive, the tide is going out, so the inlet is about one foot deep and getting shallower. The channel is about four to six feet deep.

Daytime

Fisher. Characters who approach during the day find a fisher sitting along the channel named Vruk (human **commoner**). He is wary of strangers but is non-threatening. He keeps a loaded light crossbow by his side. He knows nothing of the marsh other than “ya do not go here at night ‘cause of them were-lights.”

As the PCs talk with Vruk, he continues to fish. He pulls out a deer brain from his bait bucket and ties it to the end of his line. As soon as the brain bait hits the water, slapping sounds are heard. A moment later, Vruk tugs the brain out, which now resembles a brain with tentacles—three lampreys have attached themselves to the bait. He then says, “What a good use of deer offal.”

Sea spawn. These creatures retreat here during the day. They sleep buried in the muck at the bottom of the channel.

Nighttime

Fishing spot. Vruk is not there at night. Characters who make a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Survival) check find where Vruk sat, along with a dozen lamprey heads.

Light show. From this vantage point on the map, the full lightshow can be seen.

- **Lily Pad Cove.** A mist covers the lily pads, and multicolored were-lights float and dance.
- **Tall Grass Field.** A single green light can be seen in the center of the field, accompanied by distant, deep chanting.
- **High Marsh.** Darkness rules the high marsh, punctuated every few minutes by a bright white light and the sounds of high-pitched screaming and flashes of lightning.

Swimming in the Channel

If characters enter the channel, they encounter local fauna. On average party strength, they meet one swarm of leeches (**insects**) for each PC entering the water. Replace the climb speed with a swim speed.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak.** Replace **swarms of leeches** with one **giant poisonous snake** per PC that enters the water.
- **Weak.** Replace **swarms of leeches** with two giant poisonous snakes per PC that enters the water.
- **Strong.** Replace **swarms of leeches** with **swarms of lampreys (quippers)** for each PC that enters the water.
- **Very Strong.** Replace leeches with two **swarms of lampreys (quippers)** for each PC that enters the water.

2. The Lily Pad Cove

The water in the lily pad cove is about 2½ to 3 feet deep. The lily pads are massive, about 8 feet across. Characters weighing less than 200 lbs. can walk across this area on top of the pads so long as they walk at half-speed. Characters walking at full speed must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check to avoid falling in the water. See **Appendix 3: Map 2. Lily Pad Cove Encounter**.

Daytime

Pleasant frogs croak, and the breeze is cooling. There is nothing of interest except the splendor of nature during the day.

Nighttime

The were-lights (**will-o'-wisps**) are present.

The nightly scene over the lily pad cove is both eerie and breathtaking. A cool mist floats just above the pads. Were-lights float just above the mist. Red, pink, green, gold, and purple lights can be seen. It is hard to tell how many—maybe 12?

The nearest were-light comes closer to you, moving hypnotically and glowing silver.

Allow the characters time to observe, discuss, make checks, etc. Succeeding on the following checks provides information

- **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** or **DC 17 Intelligence (Nature)**. The were-lights are **will-o'-wisps**.
- **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight)**. The wisps are avoiding the bank next to the high marsh.
- **DC 24 Wisdom (Perception)**. There is a second **will-o'-wisp** hiding invisibly nearby. This is for average or higher strength parties, only. See **Adjusting the Scene**.

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The **will-o'-wisp** intends to lure the PCs onto the lily pads, while a second **will-o'-wisp** waits for combat to begin by hiding with invisibility. Neither attacks until a PC steps onto the pads; they simply take the Dodge action each round. When at least one PC is on a pad, the visible **will-o'-wisp** turns red. It flies to attack, targeting lily pads first (AC 10, HP 5). When a lily pad is destroyed, the PC falls into the water. Wait until after the **will-o'-wisp** attacks the lily pad to call for initiative. A **swarm of lampreys** waits under the water for an expectant meal.

Exploration. With a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, a PC thinks the **will-o'-wisp** wants them to follow it. A success of at least 17 is needed to realize the nefarious intent. If they want, they can simply walk away.

Social. This **will-o'-wisp** understands common. If they engage it in conversation, it repeats, "Come. Come" over and over. If the PCs explain why they are here, have the players roll a group DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If they succeed, it says, "Go to the high marsh. Kill the purple ones." It then turns invisible and leaves.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak.** Remove one **will-o'-wisp** that is hiding and replace one **swarm of quippers** (lampreys) with one **swarm of insects** (leeches).
- **Weak.** Remove one **will-o'-wisp** that is hiding.
- **Strong.** Add one **will-o'-wisp** that is hiding.
- **Very Strong.** Add one **will-o'-wisp** that is hiding and one **swarm of quippers** (lampreys).

3. The Tall Grass Field

The tall marsh grasses grow to a height of nine to twelve feet. The ground is constantly soggy with a few inches of water. All movement along the ground is considered difficult terrain. See **Appendix 4: Map 3. Field of Tall Grasses Encounter.**

Shrine to Umberlee

At the center of the grassy area sits a partially sunken shrine to Umberlee. The shrine contains a stone bier (i.e., a stand on which a corpse of coffin is placed) and a statue of Umberlee's merfolk form with one arm held aloft. Any worshiper of Umberlee recognizes this immediately. Otherwise, characters must succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check to determine this. Those with the sailor background have advantage on this check.

Daytime

The sea spawns only occupy this area at night. A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival)** check is needed to pick up the path to the center where the shrine to Umberlee is located. The shrine is easily visible from the air.

If the PCs wait here for nightfall, allow them a group **DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth)** check to hide from the **sea spawn**. If the party has a ranger with the coastal favorite terrain, the party automatically hides from the sea spawn.

Shrine. This site is abandoned during the day. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the statue shows that something is meant to slide into the statue's hand as if holding a torch aloft. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the bier finds a hidden compartment holding the *green-flame mace*—*The Face of Umberlee's Fury*.

Nighttime

The glowing green light serves as a guide. Successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check made with advantage is needed to find the shrine. If they attempt to approach unheard, a successful group **DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth)** check at **disadvantage** is required—sloshing through muddy water is noisy.

Five **sea spawn** carry in a dead woman (**sea hag**) wrapped in seaweed to perform a burial ceremony. The body is laid upon the bier. They begin to chant. Their voices are guttural and nonsensical but full of sorrow. The *green-flame mace* is lit and in the statue's hand.

Treasure

The Face of Umberlee's Fury is found at this location (*green-flame mace*).

Playing the Pillars

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. If attacked, the sea spawn viciously and unrelenting attack for such disrespect. These sea spawn all have the same **piscine anatomy**: a bite attack, due to lamprey-like mouths.

Exploration. Succeeding on a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check alerts the PCs to the burial ceremony. Any cleric or acolyte automatically succeeds.

Social. Interacting with the **sea spawn** can be delicate. Without their "mother," their social order is confused. Only if the PCs wait until after the ceremony is complete will they have an opportunity to talk. Even then, the players must make a successful group DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check to keep them from immediately becoming hostile. If the PCs politely inquire as to the reason for the ceremony, the **sea spawn** mime and grunt in response to communicate that the "little ones" killed "mother." Characters who succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check can understand the miming; anyone with the Anthropologist background automatically succeeds. If the PCs promise to rid the marsh of the xvarts, they give them **the Face of Umberlee's Fury** to aid them.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak.** Remove two **sea spawn**.
- **Weak.** Remove one **sea spawn**.
- **Strong.** Add one **sea spawn**.
- **Very Strong.** Add two **sea spawn**.

4. High Marsh

The high marsh area only floods at the highest of tides. The ground is still rather spongy, but otherwise solid. The xvarts make their nightly hunts from the high marsh. If encountered in the high marsh while on a hunt, see **Appendix 5: Map 4. High Marsh Encounter**.

Daytime

Searching the high marsh in the day reveals signs of various battles and skirmishes across the area. The most prominent area for signs of battle is along the bank to the lily pad cove. Characters who make and succeed on the following checks learn additional information:

- **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival)**. There are signs of bodies being dragged to the water's edge. A quick look under the water reveals many xvert bodies in varying stages of decay and consumption.
- **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine)**. The xvarts were killed over a period of several weeks. The most recent dead xvert was killed yesterday. All xvarts show signs of taking lightning damage.

Nighttime

The xvarts make their raids on the marsh each night. The hunting practice is simple: they come in under the cover of darkness, find a **will-o'-wisp**, turn on their *Lantern of Revealing*, and attack.

Xvert Soul Hunters

This group of xvarts call themselves **soul hunters**. They are led by a particularly radical xvert named **XvertKen**, a **xvert warlock of Raxivort** who serves as the tribe's speaker.

The xvarts always work in pairs and are highly attentive to their surroundings. They focus on one individual until they are unconscious.

Goals and Objectives. The xvarts are here for a specific reason: harvesting souls. XvertKen (**Xvert Warlock of Raxivort**) carries an ancient metal tablet on which he believes an old ritual is scribed. He thinks the ritual gives the *Lantern of Revealing's* magical light the added ability to capture and send spirits to Raxivort. **It does not.**

Combat Option 1 (Kill the xvarts). At average strength, the group consists of eight **xvarts**, one **xvert warlock of Raxivort (XvertKen)**, and one xvert **priest** of Raxivort named XvertBob. If encountered while "hunting," there are three **will-o'-wisps** present.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak.** Remove four **xvarts**.
- **Weak.** Remove two **xvarts**.
- **Strong.** Replace one **xvert** with one xvert **priest** of Raxivort (named XvertMike)
- **Very Strong.** Replace two **xvarts** with two xvert **priests** of Raxivort. (named XvertRob and XvertMike)

Combat Option 2 (Joining the Hunt). The PCs may interact with XvertKen, who is willing to talk. He asks them to join them in their hunt. If they agree, the xvarts will be allies in the fight against the **will-o'-wisps**.

When the battle is won, XvertKen says that they have captured enough wispy souls and the tribe departs the area afterwards. He does not willingly give the party the lantern or the tablet. If the PCs are hostile, engage in combat option 1 above.

Adjusting the Scene

In addition to adjusting the number of kinds of xvarts as in combat option one above, adjust combat option two as follows:

- **Very Weak.** Remove two **will-o'-wisps**.
- **Weak.** Remove one **will-o'-wisp**.
- **Strong.** Add one **will-o'-wisp**.
- **Very Strong.** Add two **will-o'-wisps**.

Combat Option 3 (Stolen Complications). If the party previously visited the Umberlee shrine in the tall grasses, found the *green-flame mace*, and stole it without encountering the **sea spawn**, five **sea spawn** arrive at initiative count 20 on round two and join into either Combat Option 1 or 2 above. Roll initiative and add them to the combat. They focus attacks on whomever has their holy relic. If it is not visible, then they attack indiscriminately, targeting both PCs and xvarts.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene as the sea spawn enter this battle:

- **Very Weak.** Remove two **sea spawn**.
- **Weak.** Remove one **sea spawn**.
- **Strong.** Add one **sea spawn**.
- **Very Strong.** Add two **sea spawn**.

Treasure

XvartKen carries a *Lantern of Revealing*. In addition, he carries the broken metal tablet upon which the infernal contract is scribed. The table would have value to the right buyer interested in arcane relics.

Part 3: The Rats' Thank You

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

The PCs return to Hazel's tent to report that there was no sign of her "grandfather."

Setting Information

The characters return to Hazel's tent in the Mulmaster refugee camp.

Dimensions. The round tent is wide but not tall, measuring about 12 feet in diameter and 6 feet tall at the center. Characters who are not small sized must hunch to fit inside.

Light. There is no light inside the tent.

Resolution

The PCs arrive at Hazel's tent only to find it empty. In the center of the tent is a copper trade bar with a note tied to it (See **Appendix 6**).

The note expresses the gratitude of the Cult of Squerrik for ridding the area of their rivals, the xvarts of Raxivort. There is no sign of the silver short sword, but they can keep the copper trade bar as payment. The trade bar is stamped as 99.99% pure copper along with the seal of the Black Rat Bank and Trust.

Note that this happens even in the case where the party worked with the xvarts to fight the will-o-wisps. After helping them, the xvarts departed this area going deeper into the Cormanthor forest.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check is needed to know the details of the obscure cult of Squerrik and that of Raxivort. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the Black Rat Bank and Trust is a banking operation someplace in Hell.

Rewards

At the **end of the session**, the characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments.

Character Rewards

The characters earn the following rewards:

Advancement

Upon successfully **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind your players that the amount of gold that their characters can earn per level is limited; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no gold.

Gold

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

Magic Item(s)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **Appendices 7 and 8**:

- *Green-Flame Mace*
- *Lantern of Revealing*

Dungeon Master Rewards

For running this adventure, one of your characters gains a level. That character receives gold based on their tier prior to advancement:

Tier	GP Earned
1	80 gp
2	240 gp
3	1,600 gp
4	6,000 gp

You may also complete DM Quests for running this adventure. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- **Hazel (HAY-zell).** A young female human **wererat** from Mulmaster. She is cleaver and greedy. She has plans to increase in the ranks of Squarrik's cult and will do anything necessary to achieve her goals. She leads a small band of wererats and wererat wannabes in various get-rich-quick schemes around the refugee camp.

Personality: *Devious and self-promoting.*

Ideal: *Hard work is for those who cannot get someone else to do it.*

Bond: *Money is the path to personal salvation.*

Flaw: *At heart, I am a coward.*

- **Mulmaster Refugee Camp.** The Mulmaster Refugee Camp is situated on the outskirts of Elmwood. It is wet, muddy, smelly place, full of displaced, disheartened people. The camp has many tents, hovels, and ramshackle huts constructed with whatever the residents of Mulmaster could find. Even some old ships were pulled ashore and converted into housing.

Personality: *Look down upon what we have become.*

Ideal: *Even a thread can hold a people together*

Bond: *We must stick together if we are to survive.*

Flaw: *The Zhent Ghettos were better than this.*

- **Vruk (Varook).** Human male **commoner** in his late fifties. Lives about a mile from the Muckflash Marsh.

Personality: *He approaches life pragmatically.*

Ideal: *Self-sufficiency.*

Bond: *He plans to die of old age in his small hut.*

Flaw: *His indifference is cold and rude.*

- **XvartKen (EXS-v-art-KEN).** A **xvart warlock of Raxivort** and tribe speaker wears flimsy half-moon reading glasses. Inquisitive for a xvart, XvartKen is interested in arcane knowledge and serving his master by finding and stealing the souls of undead.

Personality: *He seeks to increase his knowledge of the world—so long as it does not contradict his personal worldview.*

Ideal: *Serving Raxivort is all he wants.*

Bond: *This iron table is worth his life.*

Flaw: *Extremely delusional about what he believes to be true, xvarts, and many other topics.*

Creature Statistics

Acolyte

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spellcasting. The acolyte is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The acolyte has following cleric spells prepared:

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

1st level (3 slots): *bless, cure wounds, sanctuary*

Actions

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

Commoner

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Action

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

Giant Poisonous Snake

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2

Senses blindsight 10ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Priest

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 25 ft.

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

Skills Medicine +7, Persuasion +3, Religion +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Divine Eminence. As a bonus action, the priest can expend a spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. If the priest expends a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the extra damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1st.

Spellcasting. The priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

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

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

2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (2 slots): *dispel magic, spirit guardians*

Actions

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

Sea Spawn

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Aquan and Common but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

Actions

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

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

Piscine anatomy. The sea spawn has one or more of the following attack options, provided it has the appropriate anatomy:

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

Poison quills. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12) if it is a Medium or smaller creature. Until this grapple ends, the sea spawn can't use this tentacle on another target.

Adjustments.

- All sea spawn encountered in this adventure have the **Piscine Anatomy – Bite** option.

Swarm of Insects (Leeches)

Medium swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., burrow 5ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled,

Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Senses blindsight 10ft., passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Adjustments.

- Replace climb 20 ft. with swim 20 ft.

Swarm of Quippers (Lampreys)

Medium swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 28 (8d8 - 8)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (-1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	2 (-4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Blood frenzy. The swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

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

Water breathing. The swarm can breathe only underwater.

Actions

Beaks. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage, or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Xvart

Small humanoid (xvart), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Abyssal

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Low cunning. The xvart can take the Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing pack. The xvart has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's tongue. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Xvart Warlock of Raxivort

Small humanoid (xvart), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 22 (5d6 +5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Stealth +3

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Innate spellcasting. The xvart's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *mage armor* (self only)

Spellcasting. The xvart is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (Spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*, *prestidigitation*.

1st-2nd level (2 2nd-level slots): *burning hands*, *expeditious retreat*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*.

Low cunning. The xvart can take the Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing pack. The xvart has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's tongue. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Adjustments.

XvartKen is the tribe's speaker as per *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, page 200.

- **Intelligence** 13 (+1)
- **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Will-o'-wisp

Tiny undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 19

Hit Points 22 (9d4)

Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	28 (+9)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Necrotic, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Non-magical Attacks

Damage Immunities Lightning, Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Consume Life. As a bonus action, the will-o'-wisp can target one creature it can see within 5 feet of it that has 0 hit points and is still alive. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw against this magic or die. If the target dies, the will-o'-wisp regains 10 (3d6) hit points.

Ephemeral. The will-o'-wisp can't wear or carry anything.

Incorporeal movement. The will-o'-wisp can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Variable illumination. The will-o'-wisp sheds bright light in a 5- to 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional number of feet equal to the chosen radius. The will-o'-wisp can alter the radius as a bonus action.

Actions

Shock. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) lightning damage.

Invisibility. The will-o'-wisp and its light magically become invisible until it attacks or uses its Consume Life, or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell).

Appendix 1: Squerrik and The Chi Directive

Adventure Primer

Background

Squerrik is patron god of wererats. Organized and sly, Squerrik combines the deviousness of a trickster god with a lust for coin and the prestige it brings. After a millennium of hiding in his secretive, trap-filled warren of Cheisin, located on the plane of Gehenna, Squerrik saw opportunity in the shifting of the main battlefield of the Blood War from Gehenna to Avernus. Making a pact with Asmodeus, Squerrik established a stronghold in Minauros and engaged a plan to build his followers across the multiverse in secret. His goal is simple: acquire coin and use it to buy safety for himself and crush his enemies.

A millennium of isolation bred interlopers upon Squerrik's domain. Several of the other lycanthropic deities had begun using wererats as pawns and slaves. His followers had split off to other deities like Shar and Mask in the Realms. His biggest rivalry came from Raxivort, the former demon lord turned Demigod of Xvarts and Rats. Raxivort pretended to be an exarc of Squerrik to attract followers among wererats and proclaimed wererat lycanthropy to be the highest form of dedication Xvarts can show to Raxivort. Such blasphemy from a chaotic evil demon upon his divinity led Squerrik to declare Raxivort and his Xvarts as blood enemies, giving him the title of "The Most Hated One."

Despite Squerrik's blood enemy declaration, Raxivort has a far more potent threat in the form of Graz'zt. Raxivort's efforts to hide from Graz'zt are legendary. These protections also mean that while Xvarts exist, Graz'zt can never find Raxivort.

Standing Orders

Squerrik has given his cult leaders and wererats one standing order that supersedes all others—*The Chi Directive*. Whenever they learn of xvirt activity, all other plots, schemes, and plans are put on hold. The xvarts are to be exterminated.

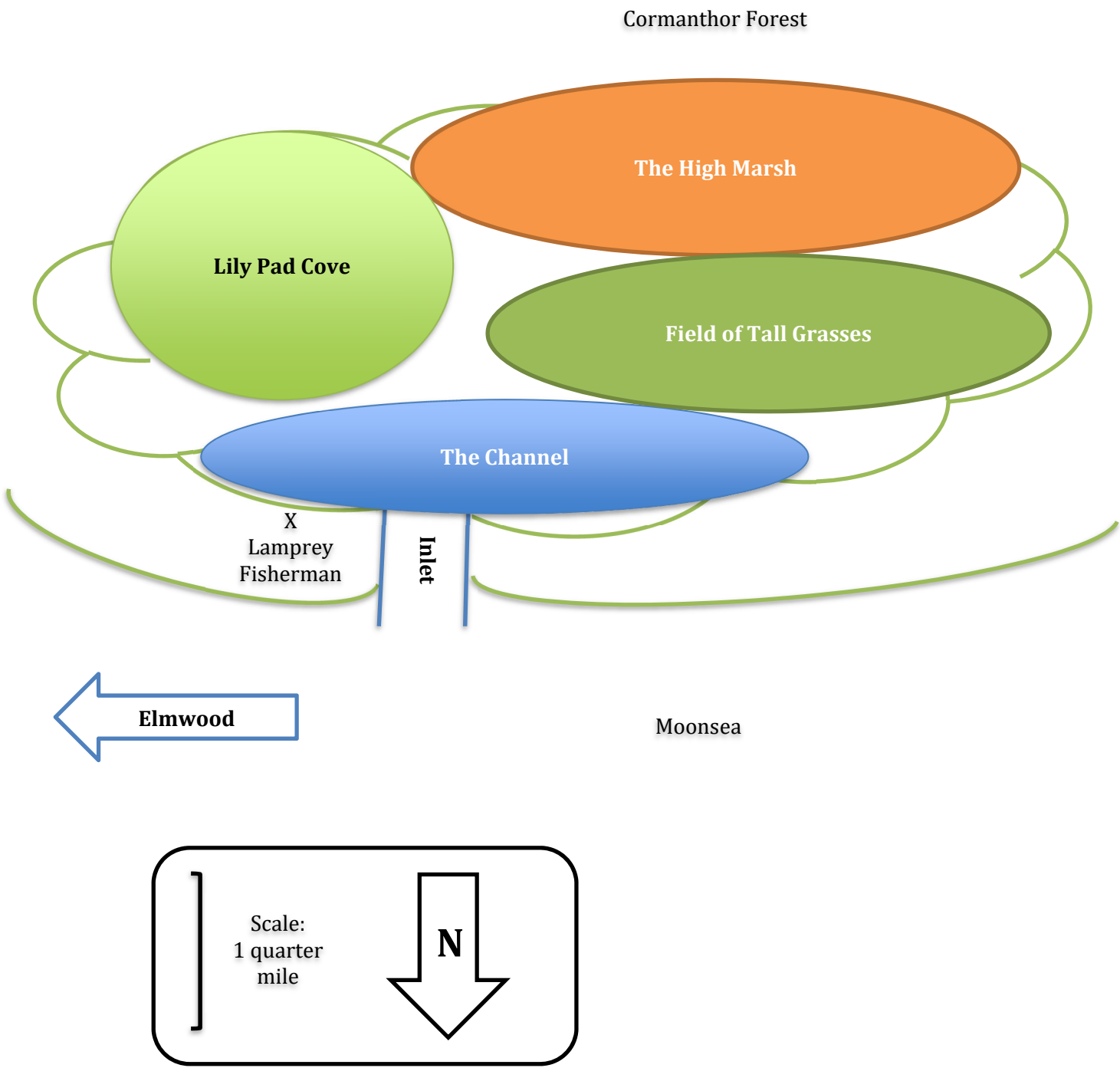
The method of elimination is up to the individuals who discover the xvarts. However, Squerrik's followers prefer to use subversive means to achieve their goals, even when the goal is genocide, preferring to get others to do their dirty work.

Additional Resources

- For additional information on Raxivort and xvarts see *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, page 199–200.
- For additional information on Squerrik, see *Monster Mythology (2e)*, pages 109–110, 113.

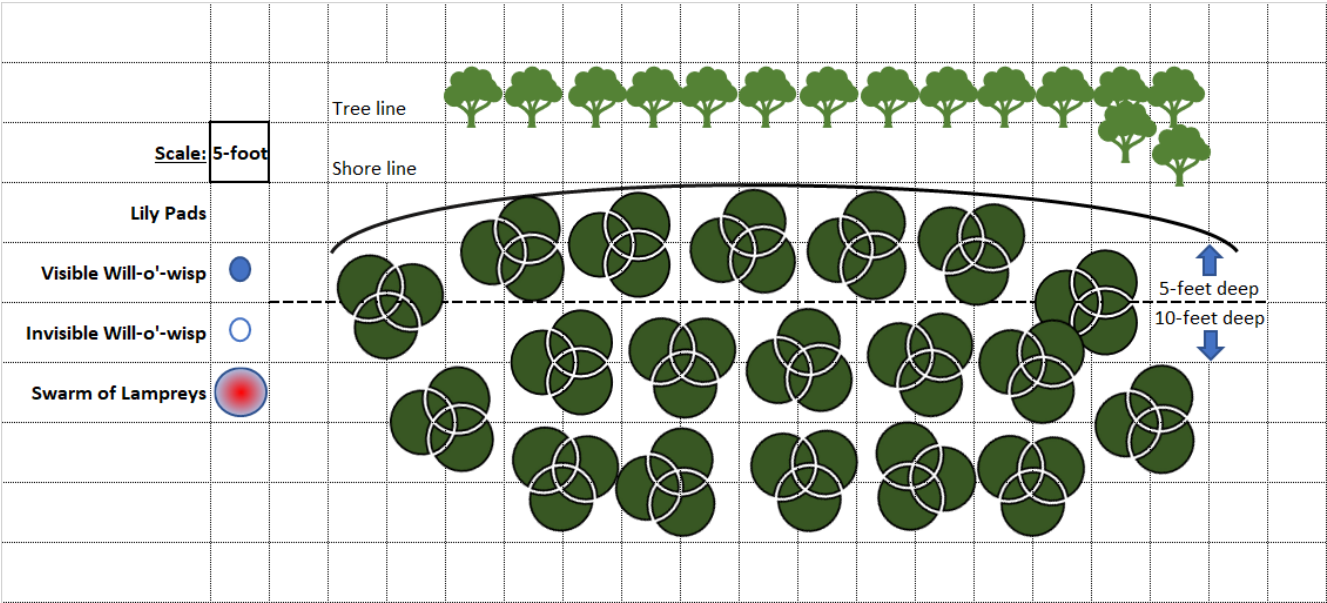
Appendix 2: Map 1. Mudflash Marsh

Section 2.



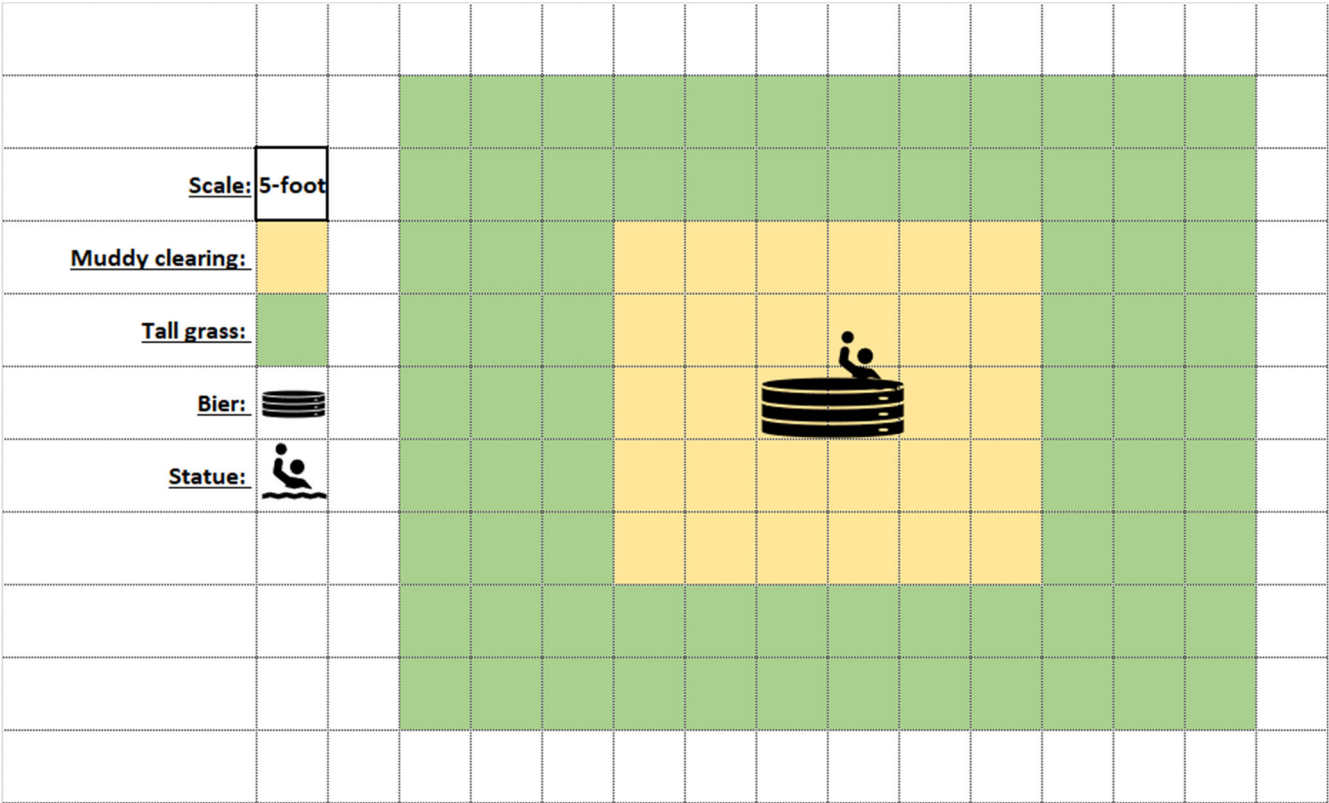
Appendix 3: Map 2. Lily Pad Cove Encounter

Section 2.



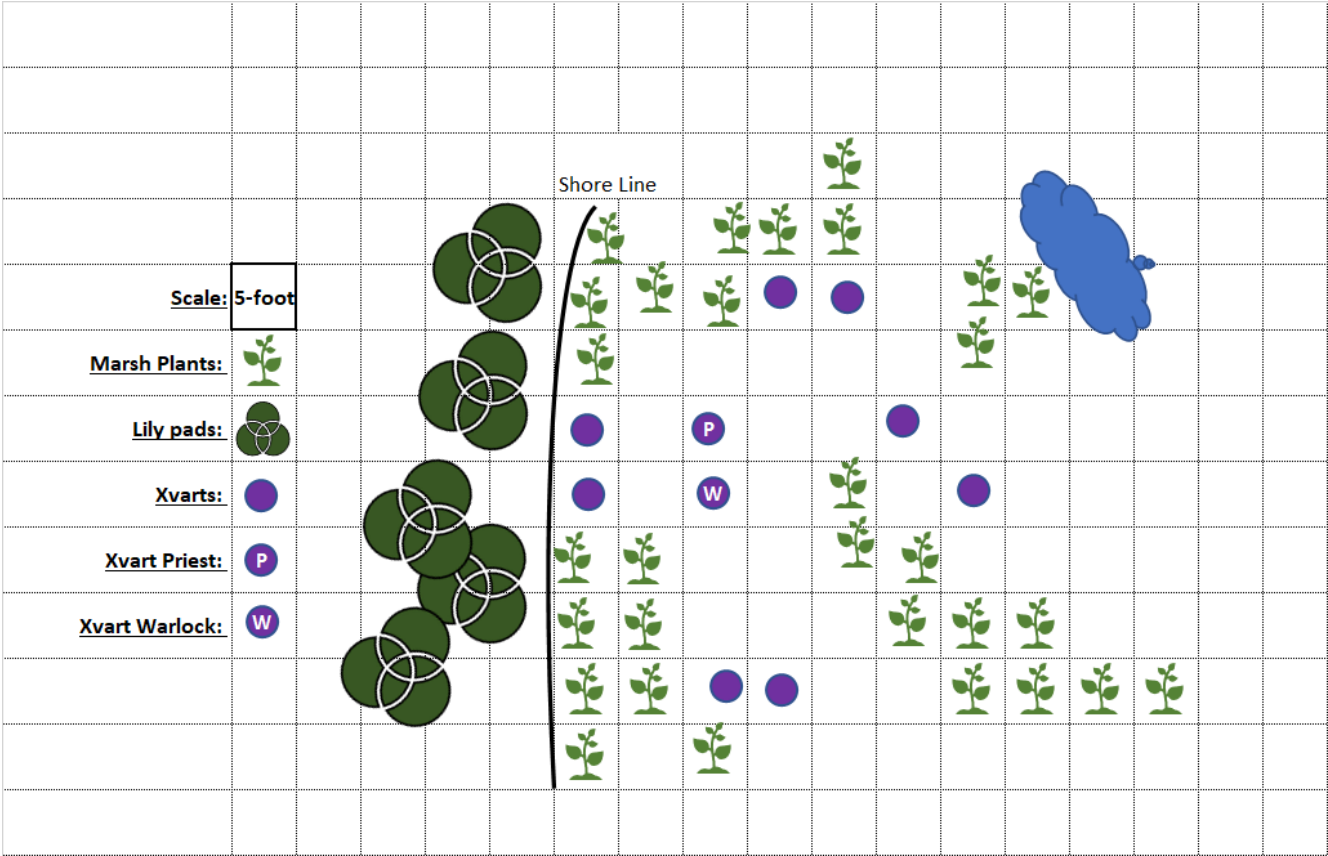
Appendix 4: Map 3. Field of Tall Grasses Encounter

Section 2.



Appendix 5: Map 4. High Marsh Encounter

Section 2.



Appendix 5: Hazel's Note

Section 3.

Hello Dear Heroes,

Please accept our thanks. Squerrik's Mulmaster Mischief is happy you took the bait and got rid of the nasty xvarts. Raxivort's followers always seem to make a mess of things.

Alas, I am sorry that I cannot provide the silver shortsword as promised seeing as, well, I lied. I never intended to give it to you.

I have left a copper trade bar as payment for services rendered.

Sincerely,
Hazel, High Mischief Maker



**Black Rat Bank
and Trust**

**Copper Trade Bar
Certified 99.99%**

Appendix 7: Character Reward – Green-Flame Mace

Green-Flame Mace (Face of Umberlee's Fury)

Weapon (Mace), Common (attunement)

This mace is a common magic item. While attuned to the weapon, the wielder can use an action to make the head of the mace alight with green flame or use an action to extinguish the flame. While the mace is “lit,” it glows as brightly as a torch and deals an extra 1 fire damage on a hit.

The mace’s head is shaped to resemble the head of a merfolk female. While “lit,” the green flame resembles the merfolk’s hair flowing gently in water. The command words for the mace are the words “Fury” (to light) and “Rest” (to extinguish) in Aquan.

Source: *Out of the Abyss* page 35.

Appendix 8: Character Reward – Lantern of Revealing

Lantern of Revealing

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

While lit, this hooded lantern burns for 6 hours on 1 pint of oil, shedding bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. Invisible creatures and objects are visible as long as they are in the lantern's bright light. You can use an action to lower the hood, reducing the light to dim light in a 5-foot radius.

Source: *Dungeon Masters Guide* page 161.

Appendix 9: Dungeon Master Tips

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

New to D&D Adventurers League?

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

New to the Annual Storyline?

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

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

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure’s appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

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

your information is added at the end of the adventure session—whether the completed the adventure or not.

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

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

Adjusting This Adventure

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

Determining Party Strength

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