
A CREEPING TIDE



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Saxford you say? Yea I know it. Small outpost on the far side o' Lake Argos. Sure you want to go there, stranger? Lot o' death in Saxford, I hear. Nay, not by beastmen nor barbarian... Saxfords' are taking their own lives. Why? Har! Might as well ask why the sun sets at dusk, eh? Wodon knows, wanderer. Wodon knows.

The Black Spire

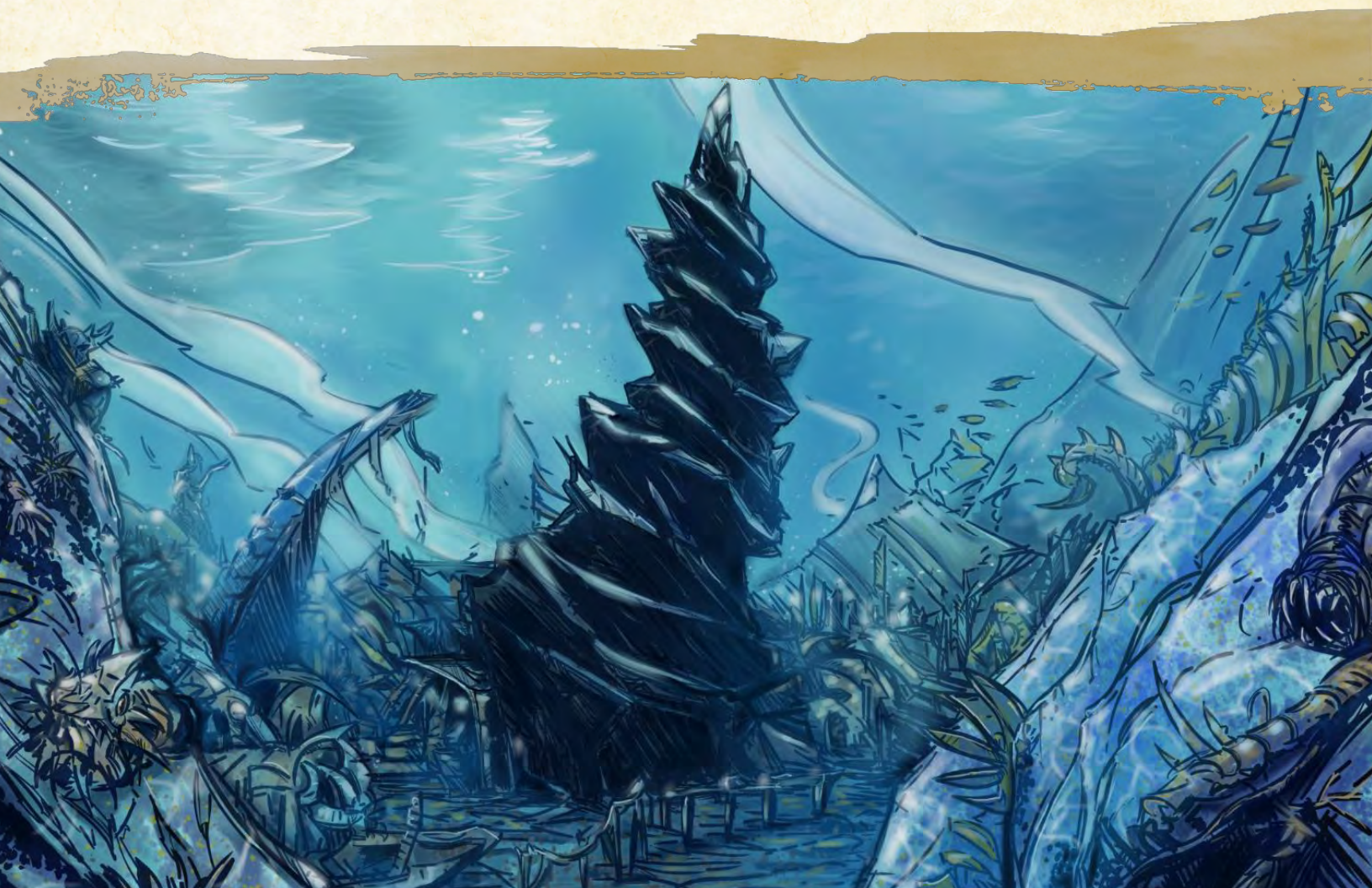
Saxford, a little known mineral harvesting outpost situated on the fringes of the inland sea known as *Lake Argos*, is in trouble.

But not trouble of the usual kind. Indeed, barbarian and skorn (beastmen) assaults on the settlement are curiously rare, such that the standard palisade and ditch defences have been dispensed with. *Saxford's* danger is much older, and vastly more insidious, than banal cannibal raiders.

Since before the *Second Age*, the lakeside region has been subject to a creeping and terrible doom, emanating from beneath the waters of *Lake Argos*. A few hundred metres from shore lurks a twisting *Spire* of black, alien stone, an exceedingly rare non-organic substance not of this galaxy.

The *Spire* acts as an unnatural amplifier, strengthening or weakening the Veil in millennia long cycles. Unfortunately for *Saxford*, the Veil has been in decline for centuries, and is now at its lowest ebb. Infinitely patient forces from beyond are aware of this, and mean to exert their influence on the region in cataclysmic fashion.

In this adventure, *Saxford's* outlanders (exposed to the *Spire's* subtle taint for years) engage in increasingly bizarre, hivemind like behaviour, as they unwittingly summon a tsunami that will claim the outpost, and everyone in it.



The party might become involved in this adventure (i) as messengers delivering sealed letters from *House Menok* to the alchemist *Ramiro* (ordering him home immediately), (ii) as researchers hired to determine why raiders keep clear of the area, (iii) to study the hidden *Spire* after finding reference to it in the *Shenzu* tome *Yu Shan Mingyun* (*Libram of Five Fates*) or (iv) taking shelter at the outpost during terrible weather on the road to elsewhere.

Random Encounters

The GM decides the precise location of *Saxford* in their campaign and the distance that must be travelled to reach it. Some random encounters appear below (by land trek or water voyage) for the GM's assistance:

Land Trek Encounters

1. A small party of 1d6+1 *Skorn* can be heard hooting and yelling nearby, careful to stay out of bow range. Over the next few hours, they draw 2d6 more of their kind every hour, until the beastmen outnumber their prey by 5:1. Then they attack. PCs knocked unconscious are quickly snatched up and carried away for eating. If more than half the *Skorn* are killed, the remainder retreat. For now.
2. A searing *heatwave* settles in for a few days, threatening travellers with dehydration and heatstroke. A Con (Athletics or Wilderness Lore) check is required to avoid 1 Con loss (at advantage if the PCs take precautions such as not travelling in the middle of the day, drink lots of water, etc).
3. A low rumbling can suddenly be heard, as if the earth is shuddering. A sleeping *Bulette* is directly beneath the party. If the party moves carefully, they might slip away without waking the beast (Party Challenge, 8 successes, focusing on Dex (Stealth), Perc (Detection), Int (Animal Lore or Wilderness Lore)).
4. Smoke signals a nearby campfire. 5d6 *Thuels* (barbarians) of the *Still Wolf* clan are settling in for a rest. *Cromot*, one of the teenage scouts out hunting for food, is hiding nearby (Perc (Det) check vs Dex 15 to spot him).
5. An archway made of two trees with intertwined branches stands in a small clearing. The trees are petrified with age, covered in vines, moss and other parasitic plants. *Pierce the Veil* reveals conjuration magic. Placing an offering of some kind draws a blessing from a forgotten spirit (a strangle fruit drops from a petrified branch, if eaten it acts as a random potion, once only).
6. 2d6 *Ogres* are out hunting, famished for a meal and complaining loudly. There is a 50% chance they are upwind of the party and have already detected their scent. If defeated the ogres carry 1 x Carry Loot.

Water Voyage Encounters

1. A lone *Argosan Strangler* (Midlands) attaches itself to the underside of the hull. Once darkness falls, it clambers aboard and seeks out a victim to drag beneath the depths. It attempts a degree of stealth, if possible.
2. In the midst of the night, 1d4 PCs notice a faint siren song can be heard drifting on the wind. A *Luck* (Will) save is required to resist going above deck and diving overboard to reach the source. If unsuccessful, a *Lake Harpy* (as *Harpy* but fish like and amphibious) is waiting to drown and devour the victim in her

underwater lair. If all PCs save, an NPC crew member is lost instead.

3. Favourable currents and strong winds gust today, doubling the ship's travel speed.
4. A *Longship Raider* (4d6+30 pirate crew) appear on the horizon, making a bee line for the adventurers' ship. *Drar Ferthan* might be bought off with treasure if convinced he would suffer heavy losses during boarding.
5. *Diseased* rats are found below deck in the ship's hard tack supply. All PCs must make a *Luck* (Con) check or suffer a random disease.
6. Some of the crew get drunk one night playing cards and singing sea shanties. If any of the PCs join them, *Ruher* (Rogue 1, Dex 13) attempts to pilfer something from them (ideally someone intoxicated). If caught out, *Ruher* offers his services in lieu of having his hand cut off (the Captain's usual punishment for thievin').

Somethin' Ain't Right

Once the party draws close to *Saxford* (within 1 day's travel), they begin to experience some unusual oddities. The oddities may be removed with *Purge the Accursed*, naturally subside in 1d6 months, or suspended for 2d6 rounds with *Sever Arcanum*. Roll 1d10 on the following table every 2d6 hours (or other period the GM decides).

1. A random PC starts to notice that anything they drink has a strong metallic tang (as if there were blood or iron in it).
2. Animals (excluding birds) become extremely scarce (they have vacated the area or are hiding in their lairs). Hunting for such becomes extremely difficult (disadvantage on Int (Wilderness Lore)

checks, and a great success is required). Birds can still be found, but are eerily silent.

3. A hireling's or NPC's (including pets) hair turns damp and limp, no matter the sun, towel drying, etc.
4. A random PC leaves watery footprints between dusk and dawn. The water swiftly vanishes into soil or wood but lingers on stone. Wearing or removing boots has no effect.
5. A random PC if afflicted with coughing up water from their lungs every 4d6 hours (disadvantage on actions if it occurs during a combat round).
6. A hireling or other NPC (including pets) bleeds water in instead of blood. If injured, pouring water on the wound miraculously heals it within 1d8 hours. This effect ceases to operate if the character dies.
7. A random PC no longer casts a reflection in liquids of any kind, and develops a phobia of being exposed to such.
8. A random PC cannot quench their thirst, no matter how much they drink. After 24 hours, resisting a drink requires a Will check (if successful, do not check again that day).
9. Rain mixed with blood falls from the sky, staining everything for miles around. All PCs lose 1 *Luck*.
10. A random PC suffers a moderate madness: "*I never bathe, nor swim, nor enter water of any kind. The clinging wet attracts them, you see; the daemons of the deep.*"



Saxford

The outpost of *Saxford* is nineteen years old, an enviable achievement in comparison to most outlander settlements, given the ever present threat of beastmen raiders.

Curiously, despite the potential dangers, assaults on *Saxford* are improbably rare. Protected only by a small stone fort, and standing retinue of soldiers, it's a wonder the outpost hasn't been razed many times over.

Yet the outlanders not only survive; they thrive. In addition to record fish stocks and gold panning success, *Saxford* is the unique supplier of *Void Salt*: a fine black mineral deposited on nearby shores (shed from the *Black Spire* hidden off the coast and washed inland). A closely guarded

secret, *Void Salt* has latent magical properties that may be unlocked with the correct alchemical processes (see Area 12).

Unbeknownst to her residents, *Saxford's* success is inextricably linked to the *Black Spire*. Hidden beneath the waves, the interdimensional edifice radiates an invisible field of sorcerous energy for approx two miles, subtly granting the residents good fortune, and dissuading invaders from attack.

While they don't comprehend the why, local skorn and thuel clans have suffered enough ill fortune to know that *Saxford* curses foreigners, and keep their distance. At least one elder skald recalls the dirge of the *Doom Tide* that swept through the region many generations ago.

The Joining

When the PCs arrive, the outlanders have been exposed to the *Spire's* energies for years, slowly but surely corrupting their minds in subtle ways.

With the *Doom Tide* imminent, forces beyond the Veil have dialled their influence up to eleven, usurping the residents' minds and effectively seizing control of the outpost.

Since the last caravan two months ago, the outlanders have been absorbed into a gestalt consciousness; an aberrant mind melding that the residents call the *Joining*. All of the townsfolk are merged to a greater or lesser extent, susceptible to instruction from Veil entities and able to feel each other's needs/emotions (sometimes even reading each other's thoughts).

The purpose of the *Joining* is twofold: (i) to ensure co-operation between residents to invoke the *Doom Tide*, and (ii) to influence and ensnare as many victims as possible. The entire town is bent upon these twin objectives. Once the party arrives, they will do everything in their power to prevent the PCs from leaving until the tide is summoned.

Signs of the outlanders' illness however are prevalent. Any time the party interacts with or observes the local NPCs, there is a 50% chance of strange behaviour. If such occurs, roll 1d20:

1. Two or more *Joined* speak in unison for a moment (a sentence), before reverting to normal. They are oblivious that they have done so.
2. A *Joined* mumbles to themselves from time to time. A Perc (Det) check catches "*Embrace the tide, none can hide.*"
3. One or more *Joined* suddenly clutch at their head, dropping to one knee in pain. It passes after a moment. If queried, they blame it on "bad meat".

4. A *Joined's* eyes take on a watery glaze for a moment, spilling drops onto the ground. The effect might be confused for tears.
5. All nearby *Joined* suddenly emit a shrill, keening wail. They then revert to normal, oblivious to what just happened.
6. A *Joined* in close vicinity projectile vomits up a large volume of lake water.
7. A *Joined* chants "*Into the deep, no retreat*" over and over for a few seconds, then scurries away, grinning inanely.
8. A *Joined* breaks into low, spluttering laughter for a few seconds for no apparent reason. If queried, they explain it's an inside joke they just remembered. Guess you had to be there.
9. All *Joined* in close vicinity adopt an unblinking gaze for several minutes.
10. A *Joined* blurts out an exasperated "*Yes! I'm listening!*" (either to apparently no-one, or midway through conversation with a PC).
11. A *Joined* bumps into a PC as if distracted, muttering something darkly beneath their breath (Perc (Det) check: "*Into the lake, no mistake.*")
12. Nearby *Joined* have black stained hands or clothes, as if from soot or similar (in fact *Void Salt*, from panning earlier in the day).
13. Two or more *Joined* meet and stare at each other for a long pause (enough time to exchange a few sentences), then immediately separate and head in opposite directions.

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14. All *Joined* in the immediate vicinity act in unison for just a moment (eg they all turn their head to look at the PCs, all take a drink from their mug, etc), then revert to normal, oblivious to their conduct.
 15. A pack of hounds, chickens or other animals silently pass by, walking in perfect single file. Nearby *Joined* pay no heed.
 16. A *Joined* the party is speaking to (or that can be overheard) suddenly shifts tone of voice, becoming flat and robot like. This continues for a few sentences, then the speaker reverts to normal, unaware of what occurred.
 17. For a short period, all *Joined* stop referring to each other by their names, instead calling one another "*Sethmul*". They refer to the PCs as "*Yan-Sethmul*". If queried afterwards, they deny it ever happened. An Int (Arcane Lore) check recalls legends of an ancient (now extinct) race of undersea dwellers named *Sethmul*.
 18. A nearby *Joined* pauses to squat down and make strange gurgling, croaking noises in their throat, then inexplicably sprints away.
 19. A nearby *Joined's* skin has a glistening sheen, as if wet. If touched however the effect disappears. The NPC and other *Joined* are oblivious.
 20. A *Joined* the PCs are speaking to interrupts them mid sentence to say "*Father Morverd does not approve*", then excuses themselves, and departs.

Doom Tide Ritual

The tide ritual has been underway for weeks, once the *Joining* was strong enough to ensure the outpost would work together to achieve it.

Under the direction of *Father Morverd* (Priest of *Shennog* and *Overseer* of *Saxford*; see Area 15), large numbers of residents gather at the keep each night to participate. The ceremony takes 1d4 hours, extracting blood from the *Joined* and mixing it with refined *Void Salt* from Area 11. The foul smelling *Bloodsalt* is then rowed out onto *Lake Argos*, and poured into the waters above the *Spire*. Some *Joined* are so traumatized by their experience on the lake that they end their own lives shortly after.

When the PCs arrive, the tide ceremony has been conducted every night for the last month. Just one more offering is required to trigger the *Doom Tide*.



Locations

Saxford's inhabitants are primarily fisherman and precious metal prospectors, until recently fierce, independent outlanders. Unwittingly tainted over the years by the *Black Spire*, they are now victims of the *Joining*, and wholly devoted to conjuring the *Doom Tide*. If a *Joined* must give their life to complete the alien ritual, they gladly do so.

Joined, AC 10, HD 1, Axe 1d8, Spear 1d6+1, or Shortbow 1d6, 19: as weapon, S10 D10 C11 I10 P10 W9 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. *Joined* never make morale checks and will sacrifice themselves to ensure the *Doom Tide* comes to pass.

Area 1 - Docks

The docks are mostly empty, other than 1d2 small fishing craft (single mast sloops or whaleboats), and the PC's vessel (if they sailed to *Saxford*).

Most of the outlanders' ships were scuttled a few days before. The fishing boats that remain are chained beneath the hull to the wharf's underwater pylons. Freeing a ship is difficult but not impossible if the party is determined enough (requiring the padlocks beneath the water to be picked).

If the PCs arrive by ship, their craft's rudder is secretly disabled by *Joined* shortly afterwards. Repairs require the ship to be drydocked (taking at least a day).

3d4 dock workers are milling about, playing cards, repairing wharves, or otherwise seemingly making themselves useful (in fact they are present to keep watch for ships and help with *Void Salt* panning (see Area 2)).

Area 2 - Warehouses

The large warehouse facilities include three portable loading cranes, shelving, crates and a multitude of buckets, barrels, etc, typically used for trade deals.

6d10+30 dock workers inhabit or linger about the warehouses (an inordinately large number, given *Saxford's* population of approx 150 to 200). In recent months, the labourers spend most of their time panning for *Void Salt* by the shore. If PCs are present during the day, they can't miss the many labourers panning along the shore.

2d6+20 *guards* are on duty at the warehouses day and night, keeping watch over *Void Salt* hauls, and

escorting salt bottles to *Ramiro* (the alchemist in Area 12).

Area 3 - Fishmongers' Hall

The wooden Fishmonger's hall has a carved shark idol hanging above the door (made by *Nersa*, 80's crone, leathery skin, "*I keeps them menfolk in line and on time*" as she is prone to say). Inside is a large open space for fish scaling, preparation and trade, plus an assortment of knives, nets, etc.

4d6 fishermen are half heartedly working on their catches, fishing gear, etc, but since most of the boats were scuttled, there's not a lot of fish to go around (highly unusual for *Saxford*; an Int (General Lore) check might recall such if the party did any research before leaving for the outpost).

Apart from knives, nets and fishing spears, a small two man rowboat is hanging from the ceiling. *Bloodsalt* delivered from Area 15 is conveyed to the *Spire* by fishermen using the rowboat after midnight.

Area 4 - Domiciles

Various wooden homes are clustered together here, each containing 3d6 outlanders of several vocations (labourers, fishermen, woodsmen, etc). Each domicile contains a total of 1 x Carry Loot.

Area 5 - Nebeson's Herbs

Nebeson (20's, clean shaven, ruddy complexion from too much drink) is the outpost's herbalist, a relative newcomer of two months, his predecessor a recent suicide. In addition to being an alcoholic, *Nebeson* is fond of *Marpleweed* (a pipeweed calmate and disinhibitor), which he sells in small tins for 5 sp. Healing poultices, anti-toxins, and disease treatments are also available (50% chance of 1d4, otherwise they take a 4d6 hours to brew).

Area 6 - Blacksmith

Geraint (short, heavy set, stubble, bad teeth) is *Saxford's* blacksmith, crafting tools, weapons, armour, horseshoes, etc. He has 1d4 apprentices working with him. There is generally 2d6 random

tools, weapons, armour or shields about the shop. Additionally, *Geraint* also has a *cold iron* mace, and enough silver ore to forge two *silvered* weapons.

Area 7 – The Sword & Board

The *Sword & Board Inn & Tavern* is a wooden structure managed by *Master Thorpe* (30s, 6 ft, athletic, bullying), serving wench *Riga* (40s, dark haired, thin lipped, amicable) and cook *Oxley* (short and strong, mute, signs). At the time the PCs arrive, there are no other guests (pure coincidence) and plenty of vacant rooms (lock and key, baths, plus door bar if requested).

The common room is relatively spacious, if hard seated, with a generous fireplace. The *Sword's* best brew is *Silversack Old* (smokey whiskey with a strong aftertaste). On the menu this week is:

- Seared Perch & Big 'Taters.
- Chicken Thing with Sweet Grit.
- No Salad for Old Men.

Area 8 – Food Market

The Food Market is made up of stalls in a wooden hall. Generally speaking 4d6 farmers have an assortment of meats and vegetables for sale or barter. With the *Doom Tide* imminent however, it's slim pickings (most of the *Joined* spend at least half of their day panning for *Void Salt*, instead of attending to their usual chores). Observant PCs (Perc (Det) check) might notice many of the farmers have black stained hands (similar to soot, but *Void Salt* residue).

Area 9 – General Store

Yelma (plump lady, anaemic, prone to dizzy spells and fainting) runs the general store, running the gamut of odds and ends outlanders need: clothing, sewing gear, rope, lanterns, candles, oil, etc. There is a 50% chance Yelma suffers a fainting episode when the PCs are present. If so, and they attend to her, the party might notice multiple precise cutting marks around her calves (very fresh; made by

Morverd when extracting *Yelma's* blood tithe the night before, see Area 15).

Area 10 – Panners' Association

Saxford's prospectors, drawn to the settlement on account of its extraordinarily high find rate, typically cut, polish, and make their precious metal trades here. *Oliver* the jeweller (lanky, glasses, crooked smile, fair dealer) buys much of the product, shipping it back to the closest city. In the last few weeks, the trade hall has generally been empty; all of the panners (and Oliver) are out collecting *Void Salt*. A strongbox in a hidden compartment (Perc (Det) check to locate) contains 2 x Valuables (quality lock, -2 penalty on Dex (Traps & Locks) checks).

Area 11 – Temple

Saxford's wooden church has shrines dedicated to the Midlander pantheon, but the *Shennog* altar (goddess of night, darkness, mystery, deceit, madness) is the only one with offerings decorating it (flowers, coins, sealed prayer scrolls, etc). There are generally 2d6 *Joined* in the church day or night, attending to Shennog related ceremonies.

The church is maintained by *Brother Dunkley* (40's, 5' 8", prominent jaw, long winded), second in charge to *Father Morverd* who now spends most of his time in the keep as *Overseer*. If queried about Shennog's obvious favour, *Dunkley* explains *Captain Caera's* recent suicide has sparked a raft of offerings to appease the goddess.

Area 12 – Alchemist

Ramiro the alchemist (tall 6'1", slim, Karok albino exile, with black dyed hair) lives here with his 1d4 apprentices, conducting the secret processes required to unlock the latent magic within the *Void Salt*.

1d4+3 *guards* are stationed here at all hours, the salt (refined and raw) kept in an iron strongbox bolted to the floor in a sealed room (very difficult locks, imposing disadvantage on Dex (Traps & Locks) checks and requiring a great success). At

the time of the adventure, only a few small vials remain (3d6 x 100 gp worth); the rest have been consumed in the tide ritual (see Area 15).

Ramiro, AC 10, HD 3, Knife 1d4 + poison 19: as weapon, S7 D10 C8 I16 P10 W14 Ch11 L9, Mv 25 ft. Ramiro may add poison to his knife as part of an attack (*Ghoulshreen Admixture*, 3 doses). He never makes morale checks and will sacrifice himself to ensure *Doom Tide* comes to pass.



Area 13 - Barracks

The western barracks houses 2d6 + 30 soldiers at any one time, up to half of which will typically be on patrol or sentry duty in nearby borderlands.

Sergeant Walker (30s, balding with square features, dark red cloak, lion motif sword) leads the guard, after *Captain Caera* recently ended her own life.

Guardsmen, AC 14 (heavy chain), HD 1, Sword 1d8+1, Spear 1d6+2 or Shortbow 1d6 19: as weapon, S13 D10 C12 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. The guard never make morale checks and will sacrifice themselves to ensure the *Doom Tide* comes to pass.

Sergeant Walker, AC 16 (heavy chain & shield), HD 3, *Silvered* Sword 1d8+3 or Shortbow 1d6 19: as weapon, S17 D13 C12 I10 P13 W11 Ch14 L8, Mv 30 ft. Sgt Walker has the Fighter *Protector* style, and may choose from the following twice per combat: *Charger*, *Opportunist*, *Two Hander*. He is immune to morale and will sacrifice himself to ensure the *Doom Tide* comes to pass.

Area 14 - Empty

This old brothel is now empty, the prior occupiers departed for the nearest city after one of their number recently suicided. The building is two storey, with locked front and rear, and boarded up windows.

If broken into, departed *Meedra's* belongings can be found sitting in a pile on her old bed (folded clothes, silver bracelets (13 gp) and dove brooch heirloom (17 gp). A journal in spidery handwriting keeps a ledger of her clients, but also refers to disturbing dreams in her last weeks (a tentacled titan that rises from the lake to swallow the land). The last entry is dated a month ago.

Area 15 - Keep

This stone walled keep is Saxford's main defence against serious attack. Thick stone ramparts allow bowmen, boiling oil and four ballistae (one on each corner) to be unleashed against attackers.

Inside the walls is *Father Morverd's* residence, ration stores, guest quarters, additional barracks, five cell dungeon, and a private shrine to *Shennog*. In addition to *Morverd*, at least 4d6 *guards* are present. During a ritual, another 4d10 + 40 *Joined* are also in attendance.

The tide ritual is conducted here each night under *Morverd's* careful ministrations (when outsiders are present in the town, it is conducted in secret) and the *Bloodsalt* conveyed to Area 3 by *Morverd* 1d6+6 *guards* (none of the *Joined* know that the *Doom Tide* will trigger tonight, only that it is imminent).

Suspicious PCs might prevent the midnight rowboat (see Area 3) from reaching the *Spire* to deliver the final offering. If so, the party postpones disaster until the offering can be made. If the offering is never made (because it is lost, and *Father Morverd* killed preventing new offerings, etc) the party successfully averts a terrible disaster (see **Aftermath** for more).

Father Morverd, *Boss Monster*, AC 12, HD 4 (46 hp), Staff 1d6+1, 19: Morverd channels the void, triggering a DDM effect, S13 D9 C9 I11 P9 W15 Ch15 L11, Mv 30 ft. Morverd has *Off Turn Attacks*, *Stronger Luck* and *Major Exploit Protection*. He may choose from the following Cultist Blessings three times per combat: *Unholy Smite*, *Lay on Hands*, *Sever Arcanum*, *Place of Perfect Night*, *Shennog's Blessing*.

If defeated, the Keep includes a strongbox (locked) in a hidden floor compartment (Perc (Detection check with -2 penalty to find), containing 1 x 5 HD Lair Treasure and 1 x Potion.

Doom Tide Stage 1

Stage 1 of the *Doom Tide* involves a 40 ft high wave of water crashing into *Saxford* at dawn, surging inland for approximately 900 feet.

1d4+1 minutes before it arrives, the water on the beach recedes by several hundred feet, stranding boats and fish on the sand, and exposing the top half of the *Black Spire*. Thirty seconds before it strikes, the wave is preceded by a deafening roar (loud enough to wake anyone sleeping).

The tidal wave is similar to a surging river, sweeping away everything in its path. *Saxford* is obliterated; buildings, animals and people helpless against the devastating flood. The wave is too fast to be outrun (horseback or otherwise), and flattens all buildings other than the stone walls of the Keep.

The tide is magical in nature, and does not extend more than a mile either side of *Saxford*. All *Joined* are automatically killed and their bodies claimed by the lake, which drags their corpses back to the *Spire* (their bodies vanish). PCs knocked unconscious suffer a similar fate unless rendered aid.

Adventurers on the walls of the keep are safe from the tsunami. PCs anywhere else (including aboard ships, which are capsized and torn apart) are caught in the deadly tide.

For hirelings or other allied NPCs, roll d100: whatever percentage results is the percentage of survivors (randomly determine who). The party may choose to make a *Group Luck* save to prevent up to 1d3 specific NPCs from drowning, if desired.

For PCs, surviving the *Doom Tide* is run as a *Party Challenge* (hard; 11 successes), focusing on Athletics, Acrobatics, Sailing, Wilderness Lore, Leadership, and any other skills the GM determines appropriate (having regard to PC actions).

Each failed check requires a roll on the Tsunami table (all PCs must roll, separated in the turbulent waters). The first failed check is a d8, the second d10, and the third failed check d8+4.

Roll	TSUNAMI
1	Struck by fast moving building/tree debris; 1d12 damage.
2	Crushed against a building wall or other unyielding object; 3d6 damage.

3	Keeps head above water but utterly exhausted; lose 1d4 Str and Con.
4	If the PC survives they suffer an extreme phobia of water (applies whenever relevant, treat as a serious madness for recovery purposes).
5	Bruising and lacerations cause 2d6 damage, and the PC goes into shock (1d4 Int and Will loss).
6	The PC is injured by sharp debris; roll on the <i>Injuries & Setbacks</i> table.
7	Sucked beneath a fallen tree or building rubble. Make a <i>Luck</i> (Dex) save to wriggle free each round. Check for drowning as if fighting underwater (the unrelenting water is exhausting to resist).
8	The PCs is tumbled about underwater, slamming into various hard/sharp objects (2d6 damage). In addition, a valuable piece of equipment is lost (weapon, shield, or other item - determine randomly).
9	Pinned beneath the waves by a heavy object; a Str (Athletics) or Dex (Acrobatics) check at disadvantage is required to break free. Check for drowning as if fighting underwater (the turbulent water is exhausting).
10	1d3 7 ft <i>sharks</i> , whipped into a frenzy by all the broken bodies, attack the PC! (as <i>Giant Shark</i> but 3 HD, 2d6 dmg).
11	Driven below the surface and tumbled over and over for 1d4+2 rounds, suffering 1d8 damage each round. Check for drowning as if fighting underwater.
12	The PC is reduced to zero hp. Without help they will surely drown.

PCs rendered unconscious may be at risk of drowning depending on their location and circumstances. If it is necessary to determine where one PC is relative to another, roll 2d6 (modifiers at the GM's discretion):

2d6	PC LOCATIONS
2-3	On their own.
4-5	Within sight and hearing of at least one other PC (same building, or if outside 3d4 x 20 ft).
6-8	Within sight of at least one other PC (same room, or if outside 2d4 x 20 ft).
9-10	Within sight and hearing of at least one other PC (same building, or if outside 2d6 x 20 ft).
11-12	11-12: On their own. May make a <i>Luck</i> save to miraculously float into an ally's line of sight in 1d3 rounds.

If the PCs succeed in the Party Challenge, or otherwise survive, they have found themselves a safe place to wait out the flood waters. The tide recedes after a few minutes, vanishing as quickly as it came, leaving only ruin in its wake.

Doom Tide Stage 2

4d6 minutes after the tide recedes (during which time the PCs might look for allies, survivors, retrieve their gear, retreat further from the shore, etc), 1d4+3 *Crabmen* and 1d4+1 *Monstrous Crabs* emerge from the lake.

The *Crabmen* are hunting for survivors, intending to drag them back to the *Spire* and drown them (the victims vanish, never to be seen again).

Crabmen, AC 14, HD 3, Claw 2d4, 19: the crabman's whip begins choking the PC (use suffocation rules), S17 D13 C12 I8 P10 W11 Ch7 L6, Mv 30 ft inc swimming.

Crabmen are the demonic merging of the drowned *Joined* in recent weeks, and the crabs that feasted upon their corpses. They are immune to cold based damage and non-magical weapons other than *cold iron*. Fire causes double damage.

Monstrous Crab, AC 16, HD 4, Claw 2d6, 19: the crab tears a random limb off the target (below elbow or knee, *Luck* (Dex or Con) save resists), S19 D10 C14 I3 P10 W10 Ch5 L7, Mv 40 ft inc swimming.

Monstrous Crabs are 8 ft monstrosities with iron like carapaces and gigantic snapping claws. They are swift swimmers and equally quick on land, scurrying about with a sideways motion. They may burrow into soft sand at 10 ft per round.

Aftermath

If *Father Morverd* is killed and the *Doom Tide* prevented, the *Joined* continue to act strangely for the next week. About half drown themselves in the lake, but the other half return to normal within the month. The *Spire's* energies wane, and otherworldly forces rue the day the adventurers

became embroiled in their plans! Within the year, the *Spire* sinks into the lake bed, and begins a new cycle of strengthening the Veil.

If the *Doom Tide* triggers, *Saxford* is destroyed with no trace remaining, save for the stone walls of the keep. Searching the decimated region has a 75% chance of locating some kind of loot (randomly determine from amongst the various buildings). A successful PC *Luck* check also allows adventurers to retrieve most personal items they might have lost during the tsunami. No outlanders bodies are ever found (absorbed by the *Spire* and transported elsewhere). As sole survivors of *Saxford's* cataclysm, the party might earn some fame/infamy at the GM's discretion.





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