

Demon Tainted Waters

Roll d20

(1) Ten thousand fishhooks along fishing line strung up between several large stones, organized like a maze. Small glimmer of treasure in the middle of the maze acts as bait, but it is not valuable (shiny rocks and sand). If mermen are chasing the party or are encountered near here they will attempt to chase the party inside, they know the ins and outs of this area.

(2) Several tropical fish swim in this miniature reef. One of them is a bright orange 'Proud Puffer'. If molested the fish will puff up which also unleashes a horrible noise through the water which will attract an Aquatic Encounter. Fish is worth 3 GP if captured alive and 1 GP if dead.

(3) Dolphin graveyard. Several dolphin bones are here, most arranged into long rows and columns. Fish bones are even left here as if offerings for the dead. 50% chance nearby dolphin pod is here but they will not attack unless the graves are disturbed. They will fight any sharks they see, including (8).

(4) Merman camp. Appears to be made of several stacked stones and kelp as a 'roof'. Kelp 'curtain' keeps out curious fish. The inside is dark but seemingly has little of value except for a net, two bone tridents and a pet octopus. The octopus is hidden in a corner and blends in with the color, so only someone very perceptive will notice it. 10% chance the Merman Party [2] is here.

(5) Seahorse grotto. 1d8 seahorses will appear here and will fight any intruders, but will not pursue outside of the area. Half of them are male and are very pregnant; killing them will release a cloud of tiny baby seahorses that will blind anyone within the cloud.

At the bottom of the grotto is a dead Seahorse with a silver dagger lodged in its skull. It is inscribed with the words *Liberation from Ourselves*.

Seahorse (1HD, Kick d6, AC 10, +2 AC when moving) they can kick twice if they don't move, but prefer hit and run tactics.

(6) It's a Merdragon! It looks like a regular dragon except without wings, stupidly small flippers on the ends of its limbs and a large padded tail. Surprisingly fast and agile. The dragon is gone but every minute grants a 10% chance it will return. Outside of its cave is what looks like a dead demon of some kind, ripped apart and left to the small feeder fish that swim nearby. Will give chase but not if the party hides in small areas such as (7) or (19), or if it sees another group of humanoids.

Within the Merdragon's cave is its hoard. It has treasure that is mostly created by the merman (such as natural gold smashed into the shape of fish, rare shells used to make expensive dyes on the surface and several megalodon teeth used to make a necklace) with some doubloons and silver candlesticks from trading vessels. Also within the treasure pile is d100 pearls with at least one pearl being a magical, softly glowing pink pearl that grants +1 when casting *Charm* or similar.

Merdragon (HD 6, AC 16, Bite deals 2d6, Tail d6 to all hit in a cone behind it) Breath weapon; fires out a riptide of water that pushes anyone back save vs breath weapon to avoid getting slammed into something. This wastes a turn of anyone pushed away so they need to swim back to the fight or if it pushes them back into rocks and coral instead that person takes d8 damage. On a roll of 8 the person is also knocked unconscious.

(7) Craggy sea cave. Several entrances are only big enough for a small person like a child to enter, some are large enough for a person and some are larger. The cave has many cracks and crevices where one can look out if hiding from something (like a Merdragon). The cave also contains d6 tainted crabs. These crabs appear small and harmless but are overly aggressive. If killed or if around the party too long the crabs will start to foam up and release weird fluid into the water that will make that person tainted. This means all demon's will treat that person as friendly but that person will ping as evil or of abyssal origin.

If the party sleeps, camps, or spends a few hours inside the cave roll on encounters to find out what is lurking just outside when they leave it.

(8) The blind shark. What appears to be an evil looking tiger shark is actually surprisingly friendly. The poor thing is starved because it can't hunt very well without sight; it's not actually blind it just has poor eyesight. If fed the shark will become friendly to the party and will even follow them around to the best of its ability. Has 1d6+2 HP and a d6 bite attack, can only attack in good light conditions or if it is trained to attack an enemy.

(9) Strange coral. This area is reef-like and has one kind of weird coral in it; roll a d6.

1. Bright red coral. If it touches bare skin or is used as an attack save vs poison or take 1d4 damage. This coral creates a horrible, shooting pain and if the victim is holding their breath they will be unable to hold it when struck by this coral. Mermen may use this for weapons; *Coral Spear*, etc.
2. Green membrane coral. Looks like a brain; if touched with bare skin it instantly deals 1 damage to the character's Int. Magic users must save vs magic or lose 1 spell of the lowest level memorized for today.
3. Yellow Tree-like coral. Does not seem to have any special properties, but it loses color if introduced to an area with poisonous water. Most merman carry a small twig up to a full branch.
4. Brown shelf coral. Dull colored coral that grows out in mostly straight shelves. Mermen use them for furniture and plates.
5. Demon spore coral. This coral looks like small spikes and is growing over the other types. The infection grows very fast.
6. Roll again but with a Merman gatherer who is tending to the coral, gathering it, or fighting it if it's demon spore.

(10) What appears to be a knight in full plate armor. Is skeletal and the armor is rusted beyond any usefulness. Inside the armor lives 2d4 carnivorous fish that pop out and deal 1 damage per fish each round, swarming around whoever disturbed the armor. Can only be chased away after many rounds of flailing, each has only 1 HP. The Knight appears to also have a golden tooth and handkerchief. It is actually a dead pirate, thrown overboard wearing a knight's armor.

(11) Regular patch of ocean but with some weird phenomena as a result of the demonic taint. 1d8

1. Low Oxygen water. If party members are aquatic and breathe it or have the means to breathe water this water will still make them weak and maybe knock them out. This area appears very dead and a few fish can even be seen floating belly up.
2. Extremely murky water. Can't see hand in front of face, very easy to get lost. 25% chance home to an opportunistic shark.
3. Evil laughter can be heard here. If anyone in the party is evil, tainted, or part demon in ancestry they don't hear anything.
4. Fish found in a totally different biome. If near the surface you will find abyssal fish, if deep in the water you will find surface fish instead.
5. Fire burning in the center of a small ring of stones. Gives off light and warmth just like a real fire. If one of the stones is moved it stops and doesn't come back.
6. Large bubble of air stuck to the ground. Going into it is like passing through a waterfall, the inside is filled with perfectly breathable air and even has grass and flowers. Nothing of value is here though.
7. Upside down whirlpool. If entered you get shot out into the sky and then fall back into the ocean nearby. Playful seals and dolphins are using it to have fun.
8. Roll twice and take both.

(12) Group of 1d4+1 Mermen burying a blob-like demonic jellyfish that slithers across the ground underneath piles of stones. If they are interrupted the demon will be released and will scoot off towards **(2)**, **(5)**, and **(18)** to feast. One of the Mermen has a tentacle staff.

(13) Generic shipwreck of a small viking-like vessel. Within is a magic shield that can be thrown and return like a boomerang but it doesn't work underwater. If the party is not at least 50% Fighters or they disturb the remains 1d4+1 skeleton vikings will rise up and try to kill the intruders with whatever they can find.

(14) Merman base. Small colony of Mermen, at least 3d6+3 of them; at least one of them is a shaman that knows 1st and 2nd level cleric spells. Not all of them are here at one time; they go to and fro during the day. Most return at night to sleep, but they keep guards posted. They have two pet octopi within their compound that will attack intruders; they like to crawl and nap over doorframes. There are also several traps nearby, such as clams that trap a person's foot inside of them and the dangerous red and green coral.

Any merman scouting parties will take anyone suspected of being demons back here and capture them. They will also force them to touch Brain Coral directly; their shaman knows how to extract some of the 'mind' found within. 1d4 green tablets are in his workshop, swallowing one grants a random memory. (roll on the Memory table.) None of these Mermen will speak common but do not attack directly; they do however point their weapons at intruders and try to get them to leave. There is a 50% chance their special character party is present (see Mermen party table).

Within their storage room is several gold coins, some rare alchemical reagents, 1d4 more green tablets, multiple nets and tridents, and a month's worth of bottled and jarred fish and fish-eggs.

(15) Demon murders. Several fish were tortured here, staked onto poles and eaten by other smaller fish. One merman corpse is also here, eyes removed. This place radiates evil and will lead anyone that uses *Detect Evil* to it. 25% chance a Merdemon will be here, doing grisly things.

Merdemon (2HD, 12 AC, 1d4 stingray tail and 1d6 spear. Has +1 to hit, damage, and AC while within this area, strengthened by the evil aura).

If anyone in the party is evil, tainted, or was once an executioner or torturer he will be amicable and even talkative, but offended if they refuse to eat any Merman meat he has prepared for guests. Wishes to torture and kill things here to summon more demons, but having trouble drawing runes in water. If turned he squirts ink like an octopus.

(16) Merimp swimming around in a turtle shell, pretending to be a turtle. (stats as goblin, but aquatic). The imp is also an evil little demon but is cowardly and will do anything anyone says if forced out of his shell. Currently looking for things to steal and put inside his hoard; which is nothing more than a small crack in the rocks. (2d6 silver)

The Merimp is mostly harmless and useless but has some information on the demonic taint developing in this area. He claims that a Sorcerer wished to become king of the sea but the position was already taken by the king of the Mermen, so he waged war on the Merpeople. He eventually lost and was killed, but not before unleashing a curse that infected the area with infernal energies. 50% chance for this story to be complete and utter bullshit, the Imp also wishes payment for info.

(17) Sunken, unopened treasure chest. 50% chance the party gets here first and then the Merman party appears, otherwise the Merman party gets here first. They would be unwilling to share and will attack the party if they seem overly tainted; but a skilled negotiator may be able to share the loot. Within the chest is... (roll d10)

1. Mummified cat, now soaking wet. It has a small gemstone embedded in its paw.
2. Demonic Urchins. They release a cloud of tainted water tainted everyone nearby.
3. Tiny Gold Crown. If inspected it appears as a toy crown for children, but is still made of actual real gold. No gemstones.
4. Small shining silver chain. Wearing it gives +1 vs save or die effects.
5. Five gemstones; random type and quality.
6. Set of Silverwear. The dinner spoons are inscribed with one very common name each (Jack, Jill, etc), as if belonging to that family member.
7. Delicate and handcrafted Wizard's wand locked in an airtight, waterproof container.
8. Smoking herb that brings Euphoria. If must be dried out for days now to use it.
9. Several religious items used in the worship of sea-spirits. Using them grants a +1 to luck and swimming, but only if untainted.
10. Spellbook. Sadly ruined by water.

(18) Dead whale, stuck up on a sandbar. It's body is currently being ravaged by a huge number of tiny fish, crabs, and microorganisms. The party could potentially get something useful here, if not from the whale itself then from the life around it. 25% chance that a Merimp is here guiding a large number of demonic hagfish and trying to get them to spawn and reproduce. If the party spends more then 10 minutes in this location, roll on the Encounters table.

(19) Kelp forest. Useful for cover and hiding from any nearby encounters or dangerous foes, such as a Merdragon. Within this forest is a group of 2d4 ferocious Sea Otters. (stats as wolf, but +2 AC). Every hour another 1d4 will return to this location. The otters won't chase if the party leaves, unless if the party has been tainted. The otters will also not return to the kelp forest if the party has **(8)** or if they are hiding from a shark. Hidden within the kelp forest is a magic starfish that grants a one time regeneration effect to a person. It has almost been hunting to extinction.

(20) Witch Boat. Small vessel overhead that appears to have a hole in the bottom. The hole is actually a moon pool, safely allowing access to the water below without sinking the ship. If approached or entered the party will probably encounter a friendly witch. She is willing to trade ocean maps of this area as well as general goods for any samples of demon tainted animals or plants. If the party is tainted she will offer to cure it for 3 Silver each, claiming it is the only way to remove the taint. (This is a lie. The taint will wear off in about a week or less if the party goes on land or bathes regularly.) The Sea Witch is armed with a tentacle staff, several spells, and guards who wear diving suits seemingly made out of kelp and fishbone.

Wandering Encounters Table

Roll d6

[1] *Demon Hagfish* (HP 1 each, 1 damage bite each, AC 14, slippery and hard to handle) The hagfish travel around in a cluster and mostly only eat dead things. Will attack untainted people.

[2] Mermen Party. This is the group the Mermen are using to scout the nearby area and bring back demon-tainted things and people to kill or capture them; they will also be called to defend the Merman compound if attacked by the players.

Scaler the Thief. Speaks common, carries a coral dagger. Has the modified Thief skill *Swim Silently* at 50% or 3 in 6.

Bondero the Fighter. Uses several bone weapons and carries a net. Has a bag of poisonous urchins (1d6 poison damage, save for half) that he uses as traps or flung at enemies.

Fishface the Fighter, +1 HD. Bone harpoon, shell armor grants +2 AC. She has a fish-like face as well as a mermaid's tail, making her rather ugly. Claims she was cursed by a jealous goddess, but could have also been born like that.

Umar the Cleric. Old and slow, mostly stands back and casts healing spells or bless. Surprisingly speaks Dwarven, learned from stone tablets that fell in the ocean. Worships a Dwarvish God.

Innmar Brightfin (Magic User). Comes from the Merman aristocracy, not a local. Knows the *Water Orb* spell, uses this to help capture people. Not afraid to get in close with his bone knife.

[3] *Huge Jellyfish* (HD 3, 11 AC, very slow and can't chase or escape. 4 stingers that deal d4 damage and have save or get stunned for a round). Going along its merry way, peacefully. 50% chance for it to be tainted, meaning it wishes to inflict pain and suffering. Intentionally keeps victims alive as long as possible but stunned constantly and hurt by its horrible stingers. Tainted version does not attack tainted people.

[4] *Reef Shark* (HD 2, 12 AC, Bite d8) On the first round of combat the shark will charge giving +2 to Hit and damage. Won't usually attack party unless they are already injured (blood in the water) or smell like food. 50% chance for tainted version, which will attack no matter what and fights to the death; doesn't attack tainted people.

[5] Two Mermen scouts (As bandit, but aquatic) Only 25% chance to encounter them normally; they will follow the party instead and report back to the compound if the party is not attacked by demons; then Mermen will know party is tainted.

[6] *Sea Turtle* (1HD, 18 AC, d4 bite, cowardly)
The Sea Turtle does not fight unless tainted.
Tainted turtle isn't very useful but likes to spray taint around itself when it fights, tainting whoever gets too close. Once it taints the whole party it will just leave.

Magic Item- Tentacle Staff

Appears as a metal rod with rubbery lumps on the end. This magic item can create up to 3 tentacles at a time from the end of it. Each tentacle can either whip at enemies in front of the user (dealing 1 damage each tentacle, ignoring AC, knocking them back or keeping them away) or can attempt to constrict (make an attack roll +1). If constricted, the Tentacles can squeeze for d4 damage EACH. The tentacles can also pick up objects, open doors, carry things, anything a tentacle could do.

The tentacle staff is unique in that using a tentacle does not permanently expend it; instead it can be drawn back into the staff and saved again for later use. If any tentacle takes 1 point of damage however it will fall off the staff, expending that tentacle.

When found, each tentacle staff has 2d4 Tentacles remaining inside it, ready to be used.

Random Memory Table

Whenever you eat a Green Tablet; Roll d10

[1] Suicidal memory of jumping into the ocean with a heavy weight tied around foot. Sad, but otherwise useless.

[2] Memory of a scholar examining Atlantean Languages and artifacts. You might be able to stop the Mermen from attacking by shouting some of these words; 1 in 6 chance.

[3] Memory of a Merman seeing and hiding from a Sea Dragon. Gives a general direction to (6), (7), and (19).

[4] You have memories of savage hunting and dominance in the ocean. You remember being a shark; otters are now innately scared of you.

[5] You have the memories of a Merman alchemist or medicine man. You know the inherent uses of each type of coral and also you know about the existence of the magic starfish at (19).

[6] You remember playing gleefully with the dolphins in the reef. The dolphins at (3) will be friendlier and one will even follow you around as a companion and help fight until it reaches half health, the party camps, or the party leaves the water. (*Dolphin* 1HD+1, 11 AC, Ram attack d4, high speed. Can spot enemies and signal them to party with high pitched calls.)

[7] Short and violent memory of you nearly dying. You are kicked to hell by a bunch of seahorses but not before jamming your lucky silver dagger into one of their skulls and escaping. You know of the dagger at (5) and have some vague clues about this character; you even have a hunch they headed south from here for later adventuring.

[8] Merman trapper. You know the path of (1) and you know where the hidden traps are at (14).

[9] You have the entire sad tale of the Merman's lover memorized now in your mind. It details a young woman who loved a Merman and wished to be with him so much she slaved away to buy a potion that would let her breathe water. When she finally bought it she jumped into the sea, but in her excitement she speared herself against the rocks below. The morale is look before you leap and love makes you stupid. This tale is short and sad but will probably make a wench or two heart's swoon after you. Otherwise, nothing useful.

[10] You have the memories of being the lucky fish. Lucky fish are not found in this area but one of them apparently wandered here, at least long enough to touch a green coral and deposit this magical memory, which only functions once. The next time you get a critical failure or fumble, treat it instead as a critical success.