

Cliffhangers Adventures

Sharkbait!

Episode One: The Missing Statue

By Ramon Arjona

Sharkbait! is a short adventure for four 5th-level characters. The adventure takes place initially in the coastal town of Mochdrev, then moves into a system of underwater caverns adopted as a temporary base by a group of sahuagin. Dungeon Masters can adjust this adventure for more powerful PCs by giving levels of cleric and ranger to the sahuagin who oppose the PCs, or by increasing the number of sahuagin. The DM could also increase the size and number of the sharks that accompany the sahuagin and assist them in their attempt to eliminate the PCs. To be particularly vicious, the DM could use dire sharks or weresharks (*Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*, page 92) instead of the relatively innocuous natural forms presented below.



Adventure Background

The coastal town of Mochdrev relies on fishing as its primary industry. As the town has grown, it has come into conflict with a nearby tribe of sahuagin who are expanding their feeding grounds. The leader of the sahuagin, a wily old male called Urtholah, is aware that open conflict with the human settlement could bring wider repercussions, possibly resulting in many neighboring coastal settlements banding together to hunt the sahuagin. This threat, he knows, could force his tribe from their feeding grounds and result in much lost life among his people.

Therefore, Urtholah employs stealth and trickery to frighten the humans away from the ocean. He makes sure that schools of sharks are often visible patrolling the edge of the sahuagin feeding ground. These sharks sometimes attack the Mochdrev fishing boats, occasionally dragging fisherfolk to their death beneath the waves. Urtholah walks a fine line, trying to cause enough death to inspire fear, while not rousing the human community to violent action. He is careful to keep his sahuagin warriors out of sight, revealing them only to those who have no hope of returning to Mochdrev with the truth.

To spread fear of the sharks through the populace of Mochdrev, Urtholah relies on a malenti known as Lurotha. The malenti (*Monster Manual*, page 158) is a sahuagin mutant that looks exactly like an aquatic elf and can remain on dry land longer than a normal sahuagin.

Lurotha uses his mutant appearance to pass as an aquatic elf among the land-dwellers. In this

guise, he mingles with the people of Mochdrev, telling them that the rash of shark attacks are the wrath of the shark goddess Sekolah, who resents their encroachment upon her sacred territory. Only by removing all of their boats from the sea, he says, can the people of Mochdrev appease the goddess and stop the deaths.

To make his point more strongly, Lurotha has arranged for the theft of a wooden statue that is the focal point of Mochdrev's religious life. The statue itself is nonmagical, but its theft by apparently supernatural means related to Sekolah will further panic the already frightened people of Mochdrev.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs are present in the fishing village of Mochdrev when the statue is stolen. The town leaders beg the PCs to help investigate this heinous sacrilege. Clues at the temple and the elf ranger called Cyric (really Lurotha in disguise) lead the characters to a series of underwater caves north of Mochdrev. It is here that he intends for his sahuagin cohorts to slaughter the PCs, using them to inspire the fear of Sekolah in the village folk.

The PCs must get into the caves, retrieve the statue, and defeat or drive away the sahuagin warriors.

Character Hooks

- Player characters find themselves drawn to Mochdrev by rumors of strange deaths among the townspeople and ominous behavior among the local sea life, all of which is reported to be the work of an evil sea deity.
- A powerful noble dispatches the characters to Mochdrev. People up and down the coast are fearful, and fish production has dropped off sharply, impacting the local economy. She wants the PCs to discover the root of the problem and fix it.
- Sailors report an unnaturally high number of shark sightings near the town of Mochdrev. This could indicate the presence of strange magic or perhaps a great evil waking offshore. The PCs should investigate the situation and report back with any discoveries they make.

The Stolen Statue (EL varies)

The adventure begins as the PCs enter the village temple, which has been violated by some mysterious force. If the PCs approach anyone before they go to the temple itself, the villager in question should look rather grim, sad, or frightened, and he or she will mention that the village has lost its cleric:

The village temple is a humble building of whitewashed planks with a thatched roof. It is a single room that is large enough to hold all of Mochdrev's few hundred inhabitants. The front door has been smashed open. The inside of the building is in chaos, with splinter pews cast about and the altar toppled. The heavy smell of fish and seawater hangs thick in the air. Puddles of blood dot the floor. A man is working amid the wreckage, trying to restore order as best he can.

The blood belongs to Thuthir, who was until last night the cleric and nominal leader of the village of Mochdrev. He interrupted Lurotha and the sahuagin in the middle of the theft and paid with his life.

The man working amid the wreckage is Owein, Thuthir's friend and occasional caretaker of the temple. Owein discovered Thuthir's body when the old priest did not show up for his morning tea with Owein. A blood-soaked towel near the altar covers Thuthir's body.

When the characters speak with Owein, he is grief-stricken. He tells the characters about the strange behavior of the sharks, and the rash of attacks that have occurred. Three people have died so far. Then he adds the following:

Old Thuthir told us to have faith and pull together. He said all this talk of a demon shark was foolishness, that the forces of light and good must always prevail. Now that he's gone, I don't know what we'll do. Carry on as best we can, I suppose. But they took the temple statue. Don't know why, but with it missing and Thuthir dead, it's almost as if they've killed Mochdrev's soul.

The characters must make a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15) before Owein allows them near the cleric's body.

If the characters examine Thuthir's body, they find his corpse bloody and torn. A successful Heal or Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) reveals that he was torn apart by the claws and teeth of some wild animal. A successful Search check (DC 20) turns up a single white tooth in one of Thuthir's wounds. The tooth is triangular and serrated, like a shark's. This is not a sahuagin tooth, but an actual shark tooth (shed by Lurotha's pet tiger shark, Cortha) that the sahuagin planted, hoping that one of the superstitious villagers would find it. The presence of the tooth on the old cleric's body makes Owein very nervous.

Another successful Search check (DC 20) turns up traces of black sand and sharp rock fragments around the altar. Owein can identify these as being from a stretch of shore to the north of town.

If the character's attempt to use *speak with dead* on Thuthir, the old man's spirit is not very helpful. It was dark in the temple when the sahuagin attacked and they came at him from behind. He remembers claws, teeth, fins, and bulging yellow eyes coming at him from the darkness. He compares his attackers to bipedal sharks. This news makes Owein even more nervous than he already is.

At an appropriately dramatic moment, a half-naked elf with greenish skin, blue hair, and gills enters the temple. He carries a trident in one hand. This "aquatic elf" is of course Lurotha, the malenti. He addresses the nervous, grief-stricken Owein first, ignoring the PCs:

I am sorry for this great loss, Owein. But it is as I have told you all -- the devil shark Sekolah has sent her dark minions to take their vengeance upon you. You must abandon your fishing ground and your village while there is still time!

Owein introduces the "elf" to the PCs as Cyric. Should the PCs question him, Cyric tells a solid story. He is the last of a band of aquatic elves, wiped out by the devils of Sekolah. He has come to warn the coastal town that the demon shark is asserting her territorial rights, and all those that stand against her will perish. He plays up the "devil" angle as much as he can, and talks about ghosts, weresharks, and horrible beings brought up from the Abyss itself. If the PCs attempt to cast a detection spell on Cyric, Cyric's *amulet of proof against detection and location* should thwart it. If the PCs press the issue, Cyric claims that the amulet is all that keeps him safe from the eyes of Sekolah, who are certainly still hunting for him. Allow any PCs who seem to question the elf's veracity a Sense Motive check against Lurotha's Bluff check.

If the PCs seem abusive or rude to Cyric, Owein interjects:

Don't be unkind to our Cyric. Saved the Culley boy from the sharks, he did, and I can see how it tears him up inside that he couldn't save the boy's father -- forgive me, Cyric. But without him, there'd be still more dead than there already are.

If the PCs have not yet found the shark's tooth or the sand, Cyric finds them both. Once Owein has identified the sand as being from a stretch of shore to the north, Cyric proclaims the following:

It is from the sacred waters of Sekolah, where the demon shark gives birth to her bloodthirsty children! She has come to take back what is hers! That is where the devils have taken the statue. We must get the people of Mochdrev to safety before it is too late.

Once Cyric finishes this rant, Owein flees in panic, to tell the rest of Mochdrev the horrifying tale of Thuthir's death at the hands of shark demons.

Development: It is possible that the PCs will be completely taken in by Lurotha's lies. If so, the adventure may turn toward getting the people of Mochdrev to abandon their village. With the priest dead, and Owein telling everyone who will listen about the demon sharks, this probably won't be very hard.

If the PCs succeed in a Sense Motive check against Lurotha's Bluff check, they know that there's something wrong with his story. Or, they may be unwilling to hand the "demon shark" an easy victory. In either case, the only person they can find who will guide them to the "waters of

Sekolah" is Lurotha. Lurotha feigns reluctance at first, but finally gives in to the PCs.

If you feel the PCs do not have sufficient access to *water breathing* spells, Owein offers to give them part of the temple's most secret and sacred relics to undertake the recovery of the statue: four *potions of water breathing*. Owein doesn't hold a lot of hope for the PCs' success, but reasons that this is what Thuthir would have wanted him to do.

Cliffhanger

The statue lies somewhere in a hidden cave, according to the stranger. Will the PCs recover it and restore the village of Mochdrev? Or will they fail, becoming fish food in the process?

The Dungeon Master should keep the following points in mind as the players decide what their PCs should do throughout the *Sharkbait!* Cliffhanger series.

Mochdrev (village): Conventional; AL NG; 200 gp limit; Assets 8,000 gp; Population 500; Mixed (human 96, dwarf 2, halfling 2).

Authority Figures: Cleric Thuthir, male human Clr4.

Important Characters: Owein, male human Com3.

Notes: The people of Mochdrev are led by an aging cleric named Thuthir (Clr4). Nobody can remember a time when the sharks were so active, or so bloodthirsty. The people of the village, who fish in small one or two person boats, are afraid to put out to sea. Some are already talking about abandoning the village and moving inland, out of fear of the demon shark Sekolah. If the PCs are unable to do anything to prevent it, Mochdrev could become a ghost town.

The Malenti (EL 6)

Cyric (Lurotha): Male malenti Rgr4; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid (Aquatic); HD 2d8+2 plus 4d10+4; hp 41; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 15); Atk +7 melee (1d4+2, 2 rakes) and +5 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws) and +5 melee (1d4+1, bite); or +7 melee (1d8+2, trident) and +5 melee (1d4+1, 2 rakes) and +5 melee (1d4+1, bite); or +7 ranged (1d10/19-20, heavy crossbow or entangle, net); SA Blood frenzy; SQ Amphibious, favored enemy (humans +1), freshwater sensitivity, light sensitivity, malenti traits, speak with sharks, underwater sense; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +7, Bluff +3, Disguise +3, Hide +14 (+18 underwater), Listen +5 (+9 underwater), Move Silently +6, Profession (hunter) +6, Spot +5 (+9 underwater), Wilderness Lore +6 (+14 within 50 miles of his home); Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Bluff), Track.

Blood Frenzy: Once per day, a sahuagin that takes damage in combat can fly into a frenzy the following round, gaining +2 Con and +2 Str, and suffering a -2 AC penalty, until it or its enemy

are dead.

Amphibious (Ex): As a malenti, Cyric can survive out of water for 1 hour per point of Constitution (after that, refer to the rules on drowning in Chapter 3 the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Favored Enemy: Cyric has selected humans as a favored enemy. He gains a +1 bonus to his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks and to melee weapon damage rolls against humans. He also gets the damage bonus with ranged weapons if the target is within 30 feet.

Freshwater Sensitivity (Ex): When fully immersed in fresh water, Cyric must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or leave the water immediately. If he cannot escape, it suffers a -1 penalty on all attack rolls. Even if the save is successful, he must repeat the save attempt every 10 minutes he remains immersed.

Light Blindness (Ex): Cyric is sensitive to light and gets a circumstance penalty of -1 to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Malenti Traits: Cyric is a sahuagin mutant who looks exactly like an aquatic elf.

Speak with Sharks (Ex): Cyric can communicate simple concepts, such as "danger" or "food," to sharks telepathically up to 150 ft. away. He can also use animal empathy to befriend and train sharks.

Underwater Sense (Ex): Cyric can locate creatures underwater within a 30-foot radius, ignoring effects such as *invisibility* or poor visibility. He is not fooled by figments while underwater. Underwater sense is less useful against creatures without central nervous systems, such as undead and oozes; he can locate such creatures only within a 15-foot radius.

Ranger Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st -- *pass without trace*.

Possessions: Trident, net, disguise kit, *amulet of proof against detection and location*

Lurotha is a devious creature who despises all creatures but sharks and other sahuagin. He views his mutant appearance as a gift from Sekolah, which enables him to blend in more easily with the land-dwellers. This allows him to hasten the day when these horrible air-breathing creatures will be wiped off the face of the world by serving as a covert operative for his baron, Urtholah.

Lurotha has invested many years in creating his cover persona, Cyric. He will go to whatever length necessary to preserve this persona, even sacrificing the lives of other sahuagin. To bolster his opinion among the locals, Cyric has even gone so far as to "rescue" a young man from a shark attack. If he is discovered, Lurotha will leave Mochdrev and find another place to begin undermining the land-dwellers.

The Sahuagin

The sahuagin and the sharks that accompany them try to use the water to their best advantage. They attack from above and below, using the three-dimensional battlefield in ways that land-bound PCs are likely not accustomed to. They are especially fond of moving into flanking positions using their superior knowledge of underwater combat.

Dragon Magazine #291 contains rules that, at the DM's option, can be useful for organizing underwater combat. You should also check out the [D&D FAQ](#) for underwater rules.

Loot and Other Important Matters

Should the PCs succeed in defeating the sahuagin and returning the statue to the town, they earn the undying gratitude of the citizens of Mochdrev. They also receive a modest gift from the village temple totaling 2,000 sp. Three moonstone gems worth 50 gp each are hidden in the underwater caves where the sahuagin have stashed the stolen statue. Up a nearly vertical chimney, the PCs can find another chamber that contains a statuette of Sekolah valued at 600 gp. Dungeon Masters should note that if their groups are sure to try to take Lurotha down, the *amulet of proof against detection and location* will put the treasure gain quite high for the encounters you find within these Cliffhangers. The solution to this is either to reward less to the party in following encounters until it equalizes out or to grant Lurotha a *ring of mind shielding* instead. Should the group not indicate that they wish to defeat Lurotha in a manner that would gain them access to his equipment, then it would be fair to grant the group further treasure to bring the treasure total up to a more average level for these encounters.

Cliffhangers Adventures

Sharkbait!

Episode Two: The Expedition

By Ramon Arjona

Sharkbait! is a short adventure for four 5th-level characters. The adventure takes place initially in the coastal town of Mochdrev, then moves into a system of underwater caverns adopted as a temporary base by a group of sahuagin. Dungeon Masters can adjust this adventure for more powerful PCs by giving levels of cleric and ranger to the sahuagin who oppose the PCs, or by increasing the number of sahuagin. The DM could also increase the size and number of the sharks that accompany the sahuagin and assist them in their attempt to eliminate the PCs. To be particularly vicious, the DM could use dire sharks or weresharks (*Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*, page 92) instead of the relatively innocuous natural forms presented below.

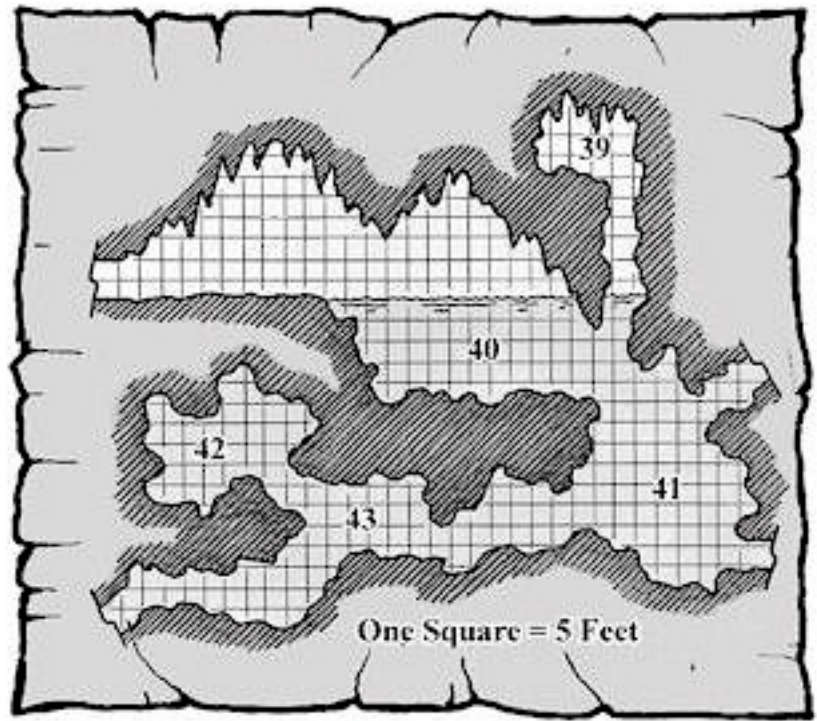


Adventure Background

The PCs came to the village of Mochdrev to find the village leader dead in his temple and the temple's statue stolen. A local by the name of Cyric has offered to take the group to the system of caves where he thinks the stolen statue is. Now the PCs are on their way to the caves.

Above the Cave (EL 4)

The PCs can walk part of the way to the "waters of Sekolah" but need to take a boat the rest of the way. Lurotha/Cyric prefers to take a boat the whole way. He guides the PCs to an area of ocean where the shore is covered in black sand. There is a rock outcropping half a mile out to shore that resembles a shark-fin breaking through the water's surface. Lurotha tells the PCs that this marks the location of a large system of underwater caves where the evil ones have likely taken the village statue. He pretends to be nervous and tries to persuade the characters to turn back from their mission. In reality, he is just waiting for his "pets" to arrive as planned.



As the PCs enter this area, read the following text:

A large black rock juts out of the surf, vaguely suggesting the fin of a tremendous shark that lurks beneath the waves.

"Below us," says Lurotha, "are the caves of Sekolah, where the demon shark lurks with her thousands of blood-thirsty children. If you are determined in this, then I will lend you my trident, but I would hate to see us waste our lives in such a foolish plan."

Lurotha goes on to describe the entrance of the cave system to the PCs, telling them that it is about 200 yards beneath the surface. He wants to ensure that the PCs can find the entrance on their own. He explains that the water is full of silt, and it can be easy for land-dwellers to lose their way in the poor visibility. He recommends that the PCs stay close to him and to each other.

If the PCs make a successful Spot check (DC 25), they notice the sharks approaching. Otherwise, the first they know of the sharks is when one of them rams the boat. Lurotha grabs his trident, exclaiming that these are "the children of Sekolah" who have come to exact vengeance. He feigns panic, standing up suddenly and lifting his trident over his head as if to throw it. The boat begins to rock dangerously. Allow the PCs to try to steady it in any way they see fit. Spellcasters must make a successful Concentration check (DC 10 plus the spell level) to cast a spell while the boat is unstable. All characters who are standing should also make Balance checks (DC 10) or fall out of the boat.

On the next round, the sharks both ram the side of the boat. Lurotha, at the same time, "loses his balance" and pitches over the side. The boat also capsizes if, in the DM's judgement, the PCs have not taken appropriate steps to prevent this. If the boat capsizes, everybody goes into the water.

The PCs see one shark evidently locked in a death struggle with Lurotha. The last they see of him are his legs flailing above the surface, then a cloud of blood in the water.

If the PCs are with Lurotha in the water, the second shark attacks them until it has lost half its hit points, then retreats.

Lurotha is, of course, unharmed. These sharks are ones that he has trained specifically for such tasks. They can make a convincing show of pulling Lurotha beneath the waves, while remaining calm when exposed to the blood leaking from a superficial wound Lurotha makes in his hand. (That is what the PCs see on the water's surface.)

Lurotha's purpose here is two-fold. First, he does not want to be present when the other sahuagin close in for the kill. Should any of the PCs survive, between his little act and a clever story about surviving the fight, Lurotha preserves his cover. Second, he is toying with his prey. He wants them to be as afraid as possible when they finally face the other sahuagin in the caverns below.

Shark, Large (2): hp 38 each; see <i>Monster Manual</i> page 201.
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Development: At this point, the characters are faced with a decision: continue, despite Cyric's apparent demise, or return to Mochdrev. If they go back to the village in defeat, it is only a matter of time before the inhabitants all pack up and leave. Lurotha watches the results of his handiwork from a distance until he is sure of the result, then reports back to Urtholah before moving on to spread lies and fear among another community of land-dwellers. If the characters push forward, they have to face the ambush set for them by the sahuagin in the underwater caves below.

Cliffhanger

Do the characters dare to proceed into the depths of the ocean? Or are they convinced of the demon shark's hold on this place? Will they redeem the spirit of Mochdrev, or do they allow the sahuagin to claim these fishing grounds as their own?

Cliffhangers Adventures

Sharkbait!

Episode Three: Under the Sea

By Ramon Arjona

Sharkbait! is a short adventure for four 5th-level characters. The adventure takes place initially in the coastal town of Mochdrev, then moves into a system of underwater caverns adopted as a temporary base by a group of sahuagin. Dungeon Masters can adjust this adventure for more powerful PCs by giving levels of cleric and ranger to the sahuagin who oppose the PCs, or by increasing the number of sahuagin. The DM could also increase the size and number of the sharks that accompany the sahuagin and assist them in their attempt to eliminate the PCs. To be particularly vicious, the DM could use dire sharks or weresharks (*Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*, page 92) instead of the relatively innocuous natural forms presented below.



Adventure Background

The PCs came to the village of Mochdrev to find the village leader dead in his temple and the temple's statue stolen. A local by the name of Cyric has offered to take the group to the system of caves where he thinks the stolen statue is. The PCs have already faced two sharks on the water as they neared the caves, and now they must swim to enter the cave system.

Area 43 (EL 4)

The characters should have some means of lighting their way, such as a *light* or *continual flame* spell, as no natural light reaches into the caves.

As the characters enter the caves, read the following:

The water is full of silt, making visibility poor. Nothing is visible beyond 15 feet or so. Strange currents and eddies fill the area, as though things were moving in the water.

There is, in fact, something moving in this large chamber: the great hammerhead sharks that the sahuagin placed here as guards. These sharks are not the same as the ones that dragged

Lurotha away, and so they begin the encounter at full strength.

Shark, Large (2): hp 38 each; see *Monster Manual* page 201.

Tactics: The sharks do not have any sophisticated tactics. They pick on the PC who seems weakest, either the smallest one or the one who seems hurt the worst. If any of the PCs are wounded from the previous encounter and still bleeding, the sharks attack him or her in preference to other targets. These sharks are trained to kill. Once blood spills into the water, and they do not stop attacking until they or the PCs are dead.

Area 42

When the characters enter this area, read the following:

The silt here is not as thick, and the walls of this chamber are clearly visible. Strange markings -- fluid blue and red flowing strokes that might be writing -- decorate the walls along with other shapes that resemble the prints of large webbed hands.

A successful Decipher Script check (DC 25) reveals this writing to be a prayer to Sekolah for a successful hunt.

Area 41 (EL 1)

Arrow Trap: CR 1; +10 ranged (1d6/x3 crit) Search (DC 25*); Disable Device (DC 20). *Note:* 200-ft. max range, target determined randomly from those in its path. *Characters receive a -5 circumstance penalty (already applied) to attempts to search for this trap because of the silty conditions.

The sahuagin set up this trap to further soften the PCs before they spring the final ambush on them. The arrows in the trap are specially made sahuagin crossbow bolts, and they receive none of the penalties missile weapons typically do when used under water.

Cliffhanger

The sahuagin, and the possible salvation of Mochdrev, lie just ahead of the PCs. Will they have the strength to see their tasks through? Or will they bleed their last in these caves beneath the ocean.

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Cliffhangers Adventures

Sharkbait!

Episode Four: Fish Food

By Ramon Arjona

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Adventure Background

The PCs came to the village of Mochdrev to find the village leader dead in his temple and the temple's statue stolen. A local by the name of Cyric has offered to take the group to the system of caves where he thinks the stolen statue is. The PCs have already faced two sharks on the water as they neared the caves, and then they had to swim to enter the cave system. The PCs move toward the final battle with the sahuagin. By now, they might realize that they face more than mere sharks in these caverns. The only question is will they live to return to Mochdrev and tell of their adventure? Remind them about the devil sharks Cyric described, and emphasize the lack of visibility in the underwater caves.

Area 40 (EL 5)

As the characters enter Area 40, read the following boxed text:

The silt here is still dense, but not as much as elsewhere in the caves. It seems to thin out the higher up you swim.

If characters continue to swim upward, they eventually break through to the water's surface.

Read the following once they do:

Fresh air! Light reflects off the rough cave ceiling high above. To the west, it seems as if there might even be dry ground on which to stand.

Unless the PCs make a successful Spot check opposed by the sahuagin's Hide (DC 28), they are surprised by the sahuagin. They attack from below, preferring to strike once all the characters have surfaced but before any of them reach the shore.

To ensure that the PCs are enticed to attempt to move toward the shore, the sahuagin placed the missing statue in plain sight, just beyond the water line.

Sahuagin (3): hp 11 each; see *Monster Manual* page 157.

Tactics: The sahuagin chose this chamber for their ambush because they believed the land-dwellers would behave predictably and focus on getting out of the water instead of on combat. The sahuagin cooperate, attempting to prevent the PCs from reaching dry land while also trying to maximize their flanking bonus and the number of attacks of opportunity a fleeing PC will face. The sahuagin frenzy as soon as possible, counting on their advantage in the water to offset the AC penalty.

Should any of the PCs escape to shore, the sahuagin continue to focus on those in the water. Once all of the PCs in the water are dead, the sahuagin turn their attention to any remaining PCs onshore.

Treasure: The PCs can gain more than the statue if they search the area (DC 20). They find three gems stashed away near the waterline against a wall.

Development: Once the sahuagin are dealt with, the PCs may turn their attention to the statue. The statue is made of dark wood and weighs approximately 300 lbs. It is solid and not terribly buoyant. Carrying it through the water is a difficult proposition that is best left up to the DM to deal with and may be based on the maximum amount of frustration his or her players can handle.

A successful Spot check (DC 15) reveals that a very gentle breeze is coming from the tunnel to the west (Area 38). If characters follow the tunnel to the end, they emerge through a small hole onshore, about a half mile away from Mochdrev. The walls of the tunnel are covered with the same strange writing and webbed handprints: prayers to Sekolah for a successful hunt.

If the characters attempt to exit the way they came, they have to face two new sharks in Area 43, identical to the ones they fought before. They also have to face the same sharks that carried Cyric away once they emerge from the cave system. If they return to the spot where the boat ought to be, they find that it is gone, and they must swim the half-mile to shore unless other

alternatives are available. No more sharks attack them at this point, but play up the possibility that some will. Have the PCs roll random Spot checks, say that a shark fin has appeared above the water nearby, and the like. (Any sharks that do appear at this point leave the PCs unmolested, but don't let the PCs be assured of this.)

Area 39

A successful Climb check (DC 20) is required to scale these slippery walls. If one or more of the PCs does this, they find a statue of a great white shark carved from ivory, with mother-of-pearl eyes. This is a statue of Sekolah and is worth 600 gp. The walls are covered with writing identical to that found in Area 42.

The Cliffhanger Ends

If the characters return to Mochdrev triumphant with the statue, the townsfolk rejoice. Owein restores the statue to its proper place. The people of Mochdrev have been given back their strength and will continue to struggle against the incursion of the sharks into their waters. Owein rewards the PCs with 2,000 sp from the temple treasury, because it is what Thuthir would have wanted him to do. If the characters return badly hurt or with their numbers reduced, but at least with the statue, the townsfolk are quiet but grateful. If the characters return without the statue, the townspeople are distraught. Owein tries to rally them, but many begin to make plans to depart Mochdrev forever.

In any of the cases above, the PCs discover that Cyric is still alive and has reached Mochdrev ahead of them. If any of the PCs say something along the lines of, "We thought you were dead," he responds by saying that he thought the same of them. He says that after his fight with the shark, the boat remained but they were gone. He had no choice but to take the boat, return to Mochdrev, and report their loss. Now that they have returned, he pretends to be overcome with joy and relief.

He does not, however, give up trying to convince the townspeople that the demon shark is coming for them and that they should all leave. They are much less receptive to his message if the PCs returned triumphant. After several days, he realizes that he's been dealt a major setback. He disappears from Mochdrev, returning to the ocean where he will devise a new plan.

If the PCs returned with the statue *and* with some tangible proof of the sahuagin's presence, such as their heads, wrapped up in a bag, the people of Mochdrev realize that they have been dealing with a kind of aquatic humanoid, not with some supernatural demon. Talk of flight rapidly turns to talk of war against the sahuagin. Meanwhile, Cyric realizes that this battle is lost and slips quietly away.

Next, the PCs may try to track down the location of the sahuagin village. There are no clues in the cave system, as Lurotha made certain to choose a location sufficiently well removed from his home, but the PCs may devise other means of finding the sahuagin's settlement. For instance, they might look for patterns in the shark activity or attempt to enlist the help of sympathetic beings such as tritons or merfolk.

No matter what the outcome, however, the PCs have certainly not heard the last of Lurotha. The PCs have meddled in the malenti's plans. They've made an enemy of a vicious creature with a long memory, who will strike at them in secret from the depths of the sea when they least expect -- because now, it's personal.

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