

THE NEORRORH

DOOM UNDER SALTWICH



A 5E Compatible Adventure
Suitable for levels 5-10



www.BESTIARUMGAMES.COM

The n'GORROTH

DOOM UNDER SALTWICH

*A 5e Compatible Adventure
Suitable for levels 5-10*

CREDITS

Developed by:

Bestiarum Games

Lead Game Designer:

Alexander Dovermann

Game Designer:

Giovani C. Fiorini

Graphic Design:

Katarina Popovici

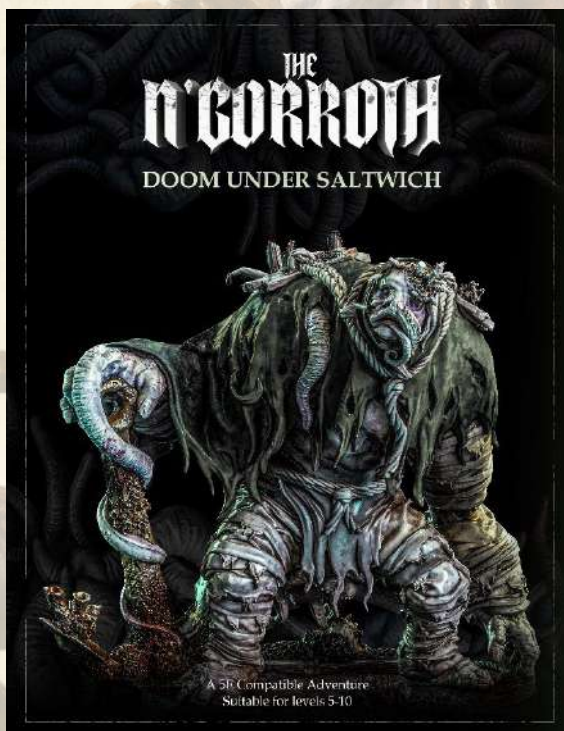
Alexander Dovermann

Cartography:

Giovani C. Fiorini

Alexander Dovermann

Katarina Popovici



ON THE COVER:

SHAMBLER

“

Shamblers are tough and hardy, morphing from the strongest and most rugged sailors and fisherfolk.

Their prodigious strength allows them to effortlessly carry their victims to their fisheries, where they gut their bodies and haul them off for disposal in sheltered waters, where bobbing piles of rotting flesh allow the blue algae to bloom into great agricultural farms.

”

CONTENTS

CREDITS	1	NAVIGABLE LOCATIONS.....	27
CONTENTS	2	G) The Sunken Temple	27
FOREWORD: THE WORLD OF		H) The Luminous Grotto.....	27
DOADEN.....	3	Map 5: Luminous Grotto (GM).....	30
ADVENTURE SUMMARY: DOOM		EPILOGUE.....	31
UNDER SALTWICH.....	4	APPENDIX A: FACTION FOCUS &	
SCENARIO & STORY STRUCTURE	4	BESTIARY	32
Story Hook	4	LAST MEMOIRES of AZERAI PRIEST.	32
Chapters	4	BESTIARY	34
Balance.....	4	SWARMS (CR 1)	35
INTRODUCTION.....	5	FISHERFOLK	35
ADVENTURE NOTES.....	5	STRANGLER.....	37
The N’Gorroth	5	SOLDIERS (CR 2)	39
The People & Culture of Saltwich.....	5	N’GORROTH WARRIOR.....	39
Saltwich Geography.....	6	ELITES (CR 3)	41
Ab'zal Awakening & Madness	6	SHAMBLER	41
Laurent Gilmiere’s Fate	7	TRAWLERS	43
Wave-Based Encounters	7	ABYSSAL PASTOR	45
Adventure Hook.....	7	LEADERS (CR 5)	47
Map 1: Saltwich Town Map (GM)	8	ABYSSAL HIGH PRIEST.....	47
CHAPTER 1: UPPER SALTWICH.....	9	49
STARTING THE ADVENTURE.....	9	BOSSSES (CR 9/12)	49
LOCATIONS IN UPPER SALTWICH.....	9	N’GORROTH GIANT.....	49
A) Town Square	9	N’GORROTH GIANT (TORMENT)	51
B) Floating Sailor Inn	11	APPENDIX B: GAME RESOURCES	52
C) Forlorn Abbey.....	14	RESOURCES 1.1: LETTER & TEXT	52
CHAPTER 2: LOWER SALTWICH	15	Laurent Gilmiere’s Notes.....	52
LOCATIONS IN LOWER SALTWICH	15		
D) Sodden Graveyard.....	15		
Map 2: Sodden Graveyard (GM).....	17		
E) Ruined Chapel.....	18		
Map 3: Ruined Chapel (GM).....	22		
F) Lighthouse.....	23		
G) Fishery	24		
Map 4: Fishery (GM).....	26		
CHAPTER 3: THE LUMINOUS GROTTA			
.....	27		

FOREWORD: THE WORLD OF DOADEN

Welcome to Doaden, the dark fantasy setting of tainted lands and twisted monsters, where an ever-creeping affliction corrodes the very essence of existence. It is a world of decay and depravity where once-righteous men and heroes of glorious purpose now struggle to survive as cults and dark gods vie with one another to consume the last vestiges of humanity.

Doaden is filled with horrific scenarios and impossible decisions. Players will have their morals challenged, and often no outcome will feel “good” or “just”. The heavy decisions these heroes make often leaves them disheartened, and it is important that players prepare themselves for this setting before starting any adventure through the realm.

Hope. Yet as dark as Doaden may be, it is important that your players, as human beings, are able to find respite from the darkness. Light may be found even in the darkest of places, and you should alleviate the mood at the table if you notice your players have trouble adjusting.

***THERE IS LIGHT YET** in Doaden, and though it may seldom come in the form of love or joy, it still shapes itself into a semblance of honor, purpose, and redemption.*

- Dreyen Solius, *Journal of the World's Ending*.

Compatibility. This adventure is intended for use in conjunction with the D&D 5e Player's Handbook (PHB), Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG), and Monster Manual (MM).

Civilization & Trade in Doaden have crumbled. Only gold, silver, and copper are circulated, and only at 1/10th the amount suggested in D&D manuals. Magical items are extraordinarily rare.

Statblocks for Bestiarum creatures are included in the appendix of this scenario. These creatures will be written in bold text. D&D's creatures are referenced by book and page number.

***Narrative Scripts:** are passages of text which should be read aloud or paraphrased as they build the atmosphere or provide key pieces of information to the players. This is an example of the “Narrative Script” format indicating that this section should be read aloud.*

***Recurring Rules:** are mechanics used to resolve specific situations. The rule will appear in this format when it first occurs. You may also use your own rules to resolve these situations as well.*

***Torment Mode:** adventurers in Doaden fall into two categories based on the average level of the party. Normal Mode ranges from levels 5 - 7 while Torment Mode ranges from levels 8 - 10. Encounters are written for Normal Mode, and Torment Mode modifications are given in this format to convert encounters to higher levels.*

Between these two difficulty levels, the enemies encountered will generally have the same statblocks. However, Boss monsters will be provided with a separate statblock for both Normal and Torment Modes.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY: DOOM UNDER SALTWICH



Something sinister lurks below the seaside town of Saltwich. Laurent Gilmiere, a cleric of the Church of Azerai and arcane researcher, was staying at the local inn while researching a source of powerful magical emanations. The Church has not heard from him in several months and fears the worst.

What happened to Gilmiere, and what disquieting nightmares had he found reflecting in the depths of Saltwich's dark waters? The party will investigate the disappearance, uncovering his strange and maddening tale.

SCENARIO & STORY STRUCTURE

This is primarily an investigatory adventure. Players work to follow the trail of clues through Saltwich and piece together the events leading up to Gilmiere's disappearance.

However, in the process, the party will be challenged by swarming waves of mutant fishmen, twisted abominations with writhing appendages, and behemoth monstrosities that have risen from the depths. Worse yet, they will be touched by an ancient god, a horrifying entity of unknowable calamity.

The heroes must remain vigilant, lest they fall victim to this primordial evil, their minds melting, clawing at their own eyes as they fall into insanity, leaving them nothing more than gibbering wretches and lunatics.

Story Hook

The party works as envoys of the Penitent Crusade, hired to track down Laurent Gilmiere and discover his fate. They will visit the isolated southern shores of the Western Reaches to conduct their search of Saltwich.

Chapters

In Chapter 1: the party investigates Upper Saltwich, interviewing a deranged drunkard and searching for clues in a ramshackle inn and cliffside abbey.

In Chapter 2: the party investigates Lower Saltwich. Lower Saltwich is a hostile place, populated by mutated monstrosities. They will be swarmed by enemies and drawn into a crumbling chapel, before searching for clues in a lighthouse, and a gruesome fishery.

In Chapter 3: the party takes to the seas, exploring the spires of a sunken temple and a hidden seaside cavern lit by luminous algae. Here they will uncover a horrific truth behind the people of Saltwich. In the dank caves, they will finally find the end of Gilmiere's maddening journey.

Balance

This scenario is balanced for 3-4 players, with **Normal Mode** levels 5-7, and **Torment Mode** levels 8-10.



INTRODUCTION

The central plot of this adventure follows the investigation of Laurent Gilmire's disappearance. However, adventurers will also uncover other secrets of the Saltwich fisherfolk.

The party will uncover the maddening source of magical emanations, the sickening truth of the strange blue algae that people eat in the area, and the disturbing revelation of the dark gods that slumber beneath the tides.

ADVENTURE NOTES

This adventure takes place entirely within the seaside town of Saltwich.

The N'Gorroth

The N'Gorroth are a varied underwater species that has existed since long before the dawn of man. Their sprawling cities once covered the depths of Doaden's deepest oceans, where they constructed grand temples to the Deep Ones, ancient gods of unfathomable power.

More information about the N'Gorroth is included in **Appx. A: Faction Focus**.

The People & Culture of Saltwich

The people of Saltwich are wary of outsiders. They have lived in the region for hundreds of generations and share genetics with the N'Gorroth, having been blessed by the Deep Ones long ago.

Strange Folk.

The villagers vary in appearance, but tend to exhibit physical oddities including baldness, narrow heads, bulging eyes, pale skin, and an intense fishy body odor. These traits are a result of the genetic mixing between humans of the area and the N'Gorroth, a gift from their god many hundreds of generations ago.

The Metamorphosis.

As they reach late adulthood, many townsfolk undergo a physical change, metamorphosing into an N'Gorroth hybrid. The process begins with the individual feeling compelled to return to the shores of Saltwich.

After returning, they begin the change, turning into one of several forms depending on physical and mental capacities and the amount of N'Gorroth genetics in their blood.

Lowly fisherfolk sprout gills, tentacles, and claws. Strong and physically impressive specimens grow, becoming hulking Shamblers or Trawlers. Myriad other forms and possibilities exist as well.

The highest honor is to become an Abyssal Pastor, gaining telepathy and ability to commune with the Deep Ones. However, this change is rare and requires a gifted individual with high intelligence and magical sensitivity.

Dormant Genes.

The change is not always guaranteed. N'Gorroth genes may lie dormant for generations or be too diluted within an individual to activate.

Though the genes are concentrated in the endemic population, people who descended from Saltwich stock but whose families have originated from the area may still possess enough of the gene combination to undergo the change. In these cases, the individual may have no idea what is happening to them when the change finally comes, having been removed from the Saltwich culture many generations ago.

Disappearing Travelers & Blue Algae.

Rumors abound about sailors, travelers, and merchants disappearing in the Saltwich area. Often, blame is placed on the turbulent seas or thick fog that blankets the region and makes it easy to lose one's way.

However, there is a darker secret at play. The people survive by eating a luminous blue alga. The algae feast on dead bodies, so in order to

cultivate it, the Saltwich folk capture, kill, and mutilate adventurers. The corpses are then anchored into areas of shallow water using ropes or fishing nets, allowing the algae to bloom on the decaying flesh.

Protecting Their Own.

The people of Saltwich protect their own. When Gilmire arrived, they knew he was undergoing his change, and now they work to cover his trail.

Saltwich Geography

Saltwich lies on the isolated southern region of the Western Reaches.

Upper and Lower Levels.

Saltwich is built along a ridge rising from the shore. It has two levels. The explorable areas of the upper level include the Town Square, the Floating Sailor Inn, and far above on the nearby cliff, the Forlorn Abbey. The Explorable areas of the Lower Level include the Sodden Graveyard, Ruined Chapel, Lighthouse, and Fishery, and across the waves, the Sunken Temple.

The Sunken Temple.

A sunken city of the N'Gorroths lies offshore. Though this city is not explorable in this adventure, the players may find and row to a single temple spire that still rises above the waves.

Luminous Grotto.

A hidden sea cave below the cliffs of Saltwich is used by the fisherfolk to cultivate blue algae. They pile the gutted corpses of their victims in the sheltered waters of the cave, allowing the algae to bloom.

The grotto also serves as their place of worship. Gilmire stays there now, sharing his visions of the Deep Ones with his congregation, under the watchful eye of the High Priest. The party will be led here during the last chapter of the adventure.

Ab'zal Awakening & Madness

The people of Saltwich worship a Deep One known as Ab'zal.

A squall brews far off on the horizon, forming a pillar of clouds that churn with sporadic lightning. The storm exists perpetually. But once a year, it grows into a great maelstrom, forming a massive cyclone that draws the water away from the shore to reveal the sunken temple city of the N'Gorroth.

This event is known as Ab'zal's Awakening, and during this period, the townsfolk visit the temple to undergo their change. At all other times, the temple is covered by the sea, and only its highest spire rises above the waves.

The last Awakening happened during Gilmire's stay, and will not happen again for quite some time.

Short Term Madness

The party may experience the effects of madness caused by Ab'zal during this scenario.

***Short Term Madness.** If a player is affected by a short term madness in this scenario, they suffer the following effects for 5 minutes.*

***Madness Effect.** Characters affected by short term madness suffer all the following effects:*

*If the character **attempts to move**, they must roll a d6. On a 1, they retreat into their mind, staying rooted in place and losing any remaining actions for the turn.*

*If the character **attempts to attack**, they must roll a d6. On a 1, they use any remaining movement to run towards their nearest ally and attack that ally if they are in range.*

*If the character **attempts to cast a spell**, they must roll a d6. On a 1 or a 2, they can only babble and are incapable of normal speech, losing the action and being unable to cast spells for the rest of the turn.*

Laurent Gilmiere's Fate

Gilmiere was a gifted individual, possessing high intelligence and latent magical capacity. Unbeknownst to him, he was a descendant of Saltwich stock, though his family moved away many generations ago.

Gilmiere believed he was traveling to Saltwich to investigate a source of magical emanations, but was actually undergoing the first stages of his change. He did not know it, but he was following the inner calling of his N'Goroth genes, being instinctively driven to return to his ancestral home to undergo the change.

After his arrival, Gilmiere spent several weeks in Saltwich as his body and mind were torn apart. When Ab'zal's Awakening occurred, he visited the sprawling temple of the N'Goroth and emerged as an Abyssal Pastor.

The people of Saltwich knew immediately that he was one of them. They were happy to see his affinity and interest in the arcane, and quickly understood that he was meant for great things, being called back to become an Abyssal Pastor.

Wave-Based Encounters

This scenario contains several wave encounters, where enemies spawn on designated combat rounds. When running these encounters, use the following rules.

Spawning Waves: spawn enemies at the beginning of their noted round, according to any rules which may be specified.

Starting Initiative: if a creature is spawned or joins the fight on the first round of combat, roll its initiative as normal.

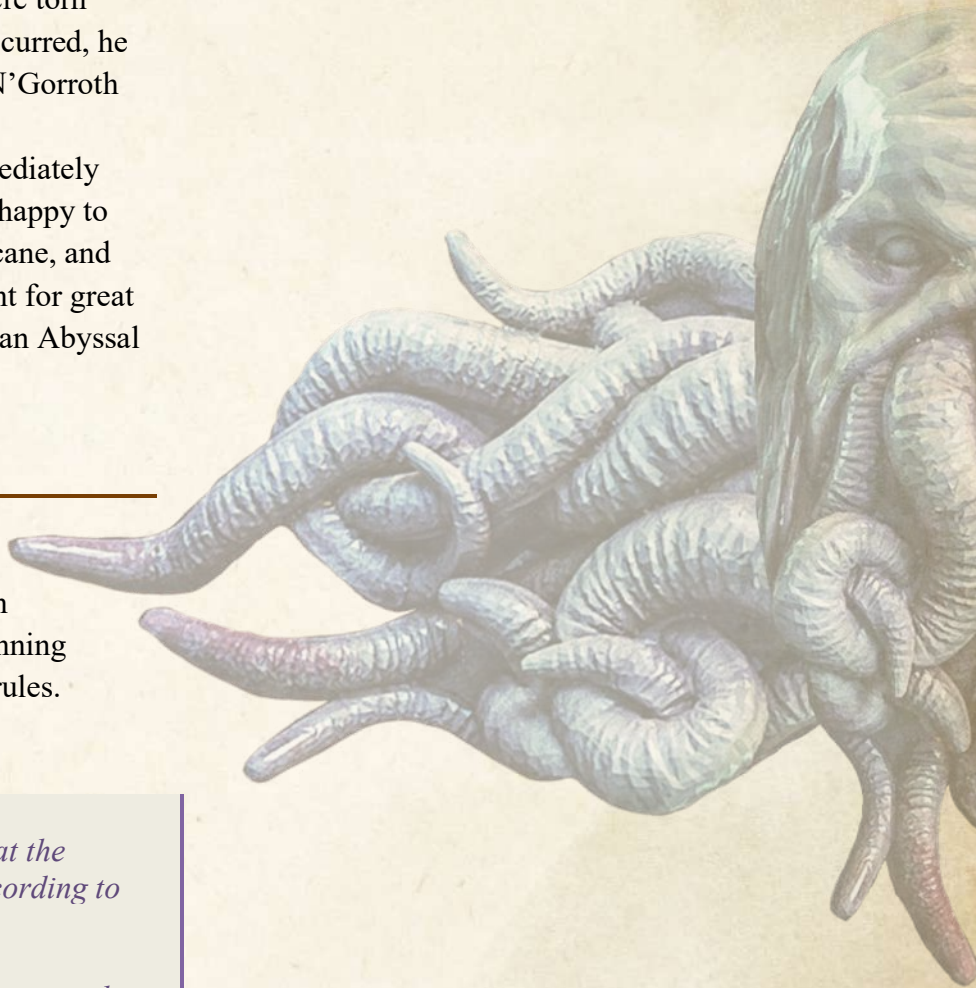
Delayed Initiative: if a creature is spawned or joins the fight on any round after the first, it is added to the end of the initiative order.

Fast Initiative: If a creature has a Dexterity modifier of +4 or higher, it is placed at the beginning of the initiative order.

Adventure Hook

The party will be hired by Father Armitage of the Church of Azerai to find Laurent Gilmiere. Provide the party with **Gilmiere's Note 1** (Appx. B: Game Resources).

After they have reviewed the letter, read the opening script in Chapter 1 to begin the adventure.



Map 1: Saltwich Town Map (GM)



CHAPTER 1: UPPER SALTWICH

The party begins their adventure in Saltwich, the last known location of Laurent Gilmiere. It is a strange and isolated region, and rumors abound about people disappearing in the thick fogs and churning seas of the area.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

To begin this adventure, read this script.

You have been hired by the Church of Azerai to track down a cleric, a middle-aged man by the name of Laurent Gilmiere. Gilmiere was an accomplished scholar and arcane researcher, having made a number of recent discoveries on the source energies of magic.

Father Armitage, his mentor, explained to you that Gilmiere was last traveling south to follow a trail of powerful emanations that he had discovered.

Gilmiere was usually diligent about keeping in touch, providing regular updates about his work. However, the last letter they received from him arrived several months ago. Father Armitage fears the worst as the silence is alarmingly uncharacteristic of him.

It should not be difficult to identify Gilmiere. He wears the yellow robes of the Azerai scholars and a silver pendant hangs around his neck in the shape of a gull, a seabird that once adorned his family's crest before he joined the priory.

In exchange for returning Gilmiere safely to the church, or confirming his fate, Father Armitage has promised you each 15 gold coins.

You should have already provided the party with a copy of **Gilmiere's Note 1 (Appx. B: Game Resources)**. However, if you have not, give the party a chance to review the letter, and then read the following script in the next section.

LOCATIONS IN UPPER SALTWICH

The following sections are each explorable areas of Upper Saltwich and marked in **Map 1: Saltwich Town Map (GM)**.

A) Town Square

Read this script to continue.

A cold wave crashes into the cliffs below, spraying you with a mist of salt water that burns your lips and throat. A squall brews in the distant horizon; a twisting cyclone of darkened clouds that sparks with the occasional spear of lightning.

You have been traveling along the southerly roads for weeks. Once the grand roots of the old empire, they are now nothing more than cracked cobblestones and withered dirt.

After days without encountering a single traveler, you come to a small seaside hamlet, a collection of lichen-crusted shacks that descend from a ridge down to the shore. Perched high above on a nearby cliff sits a lonely abbey, its walls cracked and crumbling.

Making your way into the town, you see fisherfolk shifting about in the shadows, their lanky frames clad in wet rags. You feel them watching you. Never quite directly, but with a sidelong glance here, a backward turn there, or staring indirectly from behind a shuttered window or around a corner.

You come to the town square, just the gnarled husk of a long dead tree framed by a small bare dirt courtyard. At the far end of the courtyard is a two-story building adorned with a rusted placard depicting a man floating face-down in a body of water.

At the base of the tree, a man hunches on the ground, rocking back and forth and reeking of sour alcohol. His unkempt beard is crusted in salt. He shakes and moans, gibbering nonsense and whispering in crazed half-sentences. As he spots you, he raises a finger and cackles.

"More chum for the crop, yes, yes!"

Conversation with the Drunkard

The man expects the townsfolk will kill the party and throw their corpses into the algae farms.

The party may speak to him, but he should not reveal any secrets of Saltwich.

Keep in mind the following while running the conversation:

Background:

The man is a Saltwich resident.

He passed the age of change but nothing happened.

Now, he is distraught, knowing he will remain human, and has turned to drink.

If asked what bothers him, he might say

“Why am I not worthy? Why am I not chosen?” but will not explain his statements.

Incoherent Babbling.

The man may answer simple questions.

However, he will not reveal any meaningful information about Saltwich.

If the party pressures him, he may revert to babbling incoherently.

Gilmire’s Fate.

The man will deny knowing Gilmire.

This is the truth, though it is because he has been too drunk and inconsolable to notice him.

Moving On.

When the party leaves, read the following script:

As you leave, the man suddenly spasms. His eyes open wide, and he grasps at his face with clawing fingers. He yells out,

“It is always watching!”

Then, just as suddenly, he hunches back in a fetal position, shaking uncontrollably and babbling nonsense.



B) Floating Sailor Inn

The Floating Sailor Inn is adjacent to the town square. It was described in the starting script, and is a dilapidated two-story building owned by Innkeeper Marshley.

When the party enters the inn, read:

The rotting wood inn is filled with dusty tables and chairs. Taking a seat, you see a cauldron bubbling over a small hearthfire along the far wall, filled with an oozing gray sludge that gives off a slightly sour aroma.

In the far corner of the room, a narrow staircase leads upward. Next to it, a hunched man sits at a counter, on top of which lies a small envelope bearing the red wax seal of the Church of Azerai.

The man watches you warily, but shuffles over as you sit. He moves with an uneven gait, his swollen feet squelching on the wood floor. He is bald with a narrow head and bulging eyes, and his skin gives off a sickly pale sheen. As he approaches, you are overwhelmed by an intense fishy odor.

Innkeeper Marshley

Marshley is a middle-aged man. He is able to change into a hideous hybrid form. However, he conceals his true nature at first.

He knows what happened to Gilmiere, but will attempt to mislead the party if they speak to him. He will poorly attempt to cover Gilmiere's tracks.

Provisions & Rooms.

Marshley sells several dishes, all made with blue algae. His menu includes Algae Stew for 2 silver, Algae Fried for 1 silver, Glowing Algae for 8 copper, Algae Salad for 7 copper, and Raw Algae with a Secret Sauce for 2 silver.

Rooms cost 10 gold per night, an extortionate rate, but it is the only inn in town and Marshley does not wish for the party to stay. If they do rent a room, Marshley will take them to the

unlocked room upstairs, **Room A**, and leave them there.

Conversation Topics.

If the party speaks with Marshley, he may give basic information about Saltwich, but will not reveal the town's secrets.

Regarding Gilmiere. Marshley will deny seeing Gilmiere. However, if confronted with evidence of Gilmiere's stay, he will admit that Gilmiere stayed for a night, but claim that he moved on the next day.

Combat Encounter

If Marshley worries that the party is digging too deeply into Gilmiere's fate, he will attack with several townsfolk that are hiding nearby.

***A Hostile Welcome:** If Marshley notices the players take Gilmiere's letters on the First Floor, or break into Gilmiere's room on the Second Floor, he will attack immediately with several other fisherfolk.*

In this case, generate the following enemies:

*1x Strangler
2x Fisherfolk*

***Torment:** add the following enemies.*

1x Shambler

GM Note: The **Strangler** should be Marshley.

First Floor

The first floor is a 40 ft. by 40 ft. space, mostly taken up by a dining area of several long tables.

Algae Stew.

A pot of blue algae stew bubbles over the hearth. When cooked, it becomes a bland gray sludge, the staple of the area.

MENU

~Algae Stew.....	2 silver
~Algae Fried.....	1 silver
~Glowing Algae.....	8 copper
~Algae Salad.....	7 copper
~Raw Algae with a Secret Sauce.....	2 silver
~If you are not hungry just go away	0 silver



~ Rooms.....	10 gold
--------------	---------

-FLOATING SAILOR-

Marshley's Desk.

Sitting on Marshley's Desk is one of Gilmiere's letters, which he paid Marshley to deliver. However, Marshley never sent it because he wished to prevent any outside attention. If players retrieve the letter, provide them with copies of **Gilmiere's Note 2 (Appx. B: Game Resources)**.

***Stealing the Letter:** to steal the letter without alerting Marshley while he is **present** in the room and **not distracted**, a character must succeed on a DC 15 **Dexterity** (Sleight of Hand) check.*

*If Marshley is in the room, but **distracted**, they gain advantage on the roll.*

*If Marshley is **not in the room**, they automatically succeed.*

shatters easily, but causes a loud noise when it breaks, alarming Marshley wherever he is.

When entering Gilmiere's room, read the following script:

The cramped room is filled with an array of strange copper rods standing in a circle at the center, attached to which are a variety of slowly rotating dials and meters.

Between the rods, a circular chalk diagram is outlined on the floor and filled in with a geometric pattern. Dozens of numbers are marked at various intersecting intervals of the diagram.

An uneven bed has been shoved into the corner, its yellowed linen sheets covered by scattered handwritten notes and pages of mathematical calculations.

Second Floor

A narrow stairway at the far end of the First Floor leads to the Second Floor, just a small hallway with two doors, one on either side. Each door opens to a cramped 15 ft. by 15 ft. room.

Room A.

The room to the left contains two beds. If the party wishes to rent a room, Marshley will bring them to this room and let them stay here.

Room B.

The room on the right is locked at all times. It holds several of Gilmiere's belongings and equipment for reading magical emanations. If the party asks Marshley why the room is locked, he should give a poor excuse, such as it is "closed for renovations."

***Accessing Gilmiere's Room:** the party may unlock **Room B** by using Thieves' Tools and succeeding on a DC 15 **Dexterity** check.*

If the party fails to pick the lock, they must break the door down. The door is weak and

Gilmiere's Note.

If the players inspect the notes on the bed, they find **Gilmiere's Note 3.1** and the hand drawn map, titled **Gilmiere's Note 3.2**, included in **Appx. B: Game Resources**.

If a character touches the note, they must make a DC 14 **Wisdom** saving throw. On a failure, they take 1d6 psychic damage and are affected by a sudden vision.

Read the following script:

As you step inside, a sharp pain stabs your skull and you see a vision of a crying man, laughing maniacally and clasp his head as he writes frantically in a journal, tearing page after page from the book and throwing them to the ground.

But just as it came, the vision quickly dissipates, leaving you back in the cramped and musty room.

BESTIARY



SWARMS (CR 1)

FISHERFOLK

Medium Humanoid

Armor Class: 12

Hit Points: 20

Speed: 30ft.

Str: 13 (+1) **Dex:** 15 (+2) **Con:** 13 (+1)

Int: 10 (+0) **Wis:** 10 (+0) **Cha:** 8 (-1)

Senses: Darkvision, 60 ft., passive Perception 10.

Languages: Common.

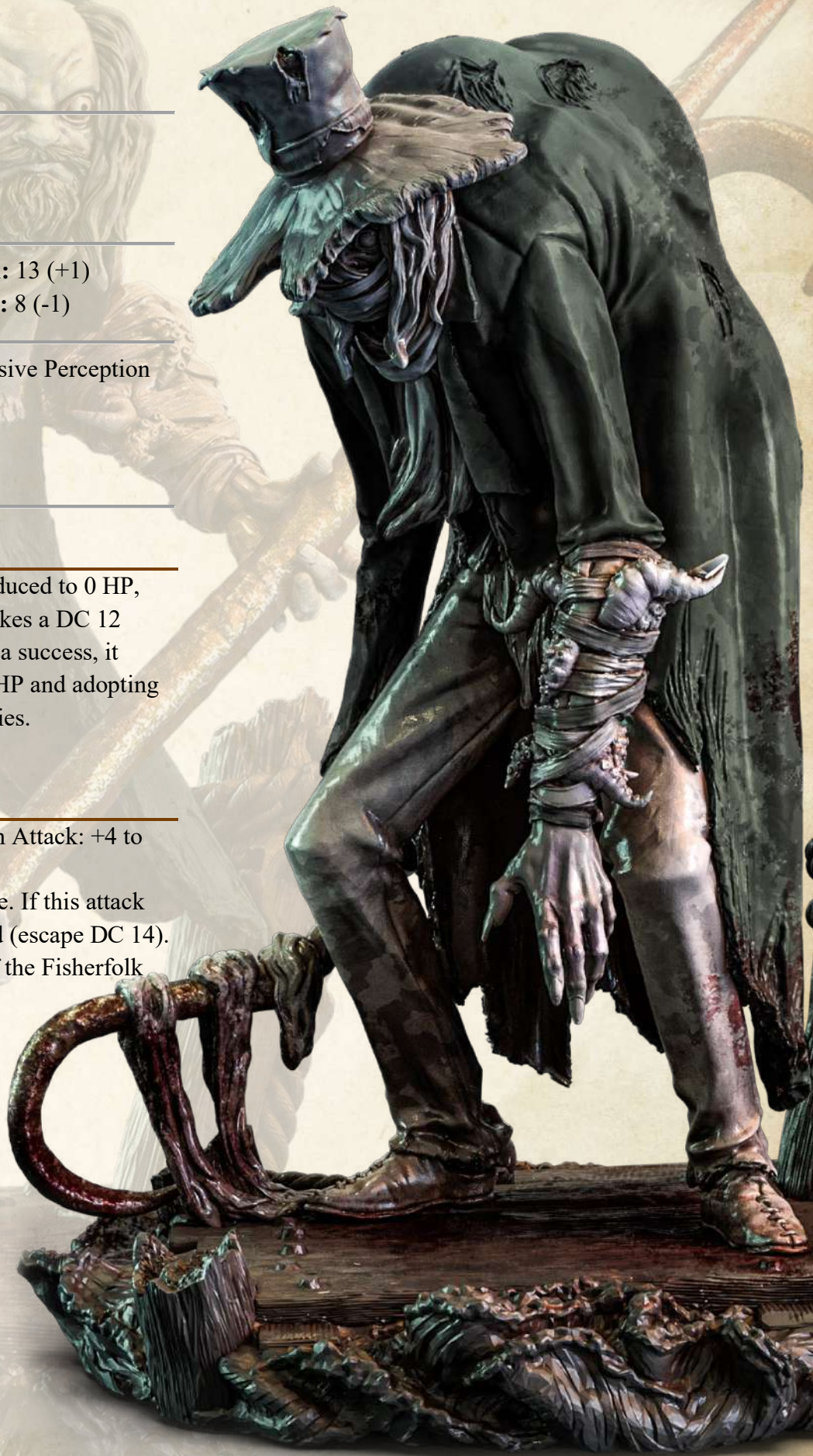
Challenge CR: 1 (200 XP)

Abilities:

Concealing Horror. When reduced to 0 HP, the Fisherfolk immediately makes a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a success, it unmask itself, recovering 10 HP and adopting the Strangler actions and abilities.

Actions:

Snaring Hook. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 10ft., one target.
Hit: 4 (1d6+2) piercing damage. If this attack succeeds, the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The effect ends immediately if the Fisherfolk attacks a different creature.



Fisherfolk of Saltwich are wary of outsiders, wishing most to be left alone and farm their crops of luminous blue algae, the staple of the area.

They share genetics with the N'Gorroth, having been blessed by a Deep One god long ago. Now, they exhibit physical abnormalities including baldness, narrow heads, bulging eyes, scaly skin, and an intense fishy body odor.

As they reach mid-adulthood, many undergo a strange metamorphosis, twisting into a sinister hybrid form. The process begins with the individual feeling compelled to return to the shores of their ancestral home.

After returning, they begin to change, taking on myriad forms depending on their physical and mental capacities, and the amount of N'Gorroth genetics in their blood.

Lowly fisherfolk become Stranglers, gaining gills, tentacles, and claws. Physically impressive specimens grow in form, becoming hulking Shamblers or Trawlers, while the magically gifted become Abyssal Pastors.



STRANGLER

Medium Humanoid

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 22

Speed: 30ft.

Str: 13 (+2) **Dex:** 15 (+2) **Con:** 13 (+1)

Int: 10 (+0) **Wis:** 10 (+0) **Cha:** 8 (-1)

Senses: Darkvision, 60 ft., passive Perception 10.

Languages: Common.

Challenge CR: 1 (200 XP)

Abilities:

Amphibious. This creature can breathe underwater and has a swim speed equal to its regular movement speed.

Strangling Grasp. At the start of the Strangler's turn, it deals 1d8 bludgeoning damage to each creature that it is Grappling.

Actions:

Grasping Tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage.

If this attack succeeds, the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained. The Strangler can grapple up to 2 creatures.



Stranglers are warped fisherfolk bearing a bizarre resemblance to the writhing cephalopods that hide under the water's surface. They are able to cast off their human facades and reveal blade-sharp fins, beaks, powerful tentacles, or a variety of other bizarre mutations, descending upon those who threaten their solitude, and choking the life from their lungs.



APPENDIX B: GAME RESOURCES

RESOURCES 1.1: LETTER & TEXT

Laurent Gilmiere's Notes

These writings are taken from the letters and journals of Laurent Gilmiere.

Gilmiere's Note 1

Provided to the party before their adventure.

Father Armitage,

These last days have been challenging. Some nights ago, my palfrey twisted its ankle in a crack in the road. It was my carelessness to blame. In my earnest to find the source of magic, I pushed the beast well into the moonless night.

Afterward, I slit the braying animal's throat and held its head in my arms, watching the steaming flow of crimson soak into the damp soils until it heaved its last. She had been my sole companion on this long and lonely journey.

Now I am forced to walk, my body wracked with pains from the exertion. My joints ache and my head pounds, and at times a nauseating sickness comes upon me, like a writhing mass of eels in my stomach, making me vomit up whatever meager bits of hard bread I had consumed earlier in the day.

But today I find my spirits lifted, for I met a traveler on the road who directed me to Saltwich, a town overlooking the sea. He told me of an inn there, the Floating Sailor, where I may rest for some time. He has even agreed to carry this message to a place where it may be delivered to you!

I shall conduct more tests once I settle into the town, and shall write to you with what I find.

Your servant in the Light,

Laurent Gilmiere

Gilmiere's Note 2

Found on **Marshley's Desk** in the Floating Sailor Inn.

Father Armitage,

I have conducted a preliminary reading from my room at the Saltwich inn. The results are astounding! I am certain the source of magic is nearby. Two more readings should be sufficient to determine both longitudinal and latitudinal distance of the emanations. I have sketched a map to determine the optimal points for the next readings.

As for the local folk, they are a queer sort. Their heads are narrow and noses flat, and their eyes protrude from the face with wide milky pupils. They subsist on a bland stew made from a luminous blue algae that they harvest from the sea, though the vegetable turns dull and gray when cooked.

I am interested in learning more about them. There is an abandoned Azerai abbey atop the cliffs above the town. I shall make the climb there to search for historical records of this place and its people. The elevated location might also allow for a clear ley-reading.

But first, I must rest, for I am not yet recovered. The nausea returns so strong that I gasp and fall to the ground, coughing up blood at times. My mind is wracked by debilitating headaches. I lose track of time, often arriving at places without recollection of how or why I am there.

P.S. The innkeeper, Marshley, is a good man. He has agreed to run this letter to a town further inland on my behalf so that it may be delivered.

Your servant in the Light,

Laurent Gilmiere

Gilmiere's Note 3.1

Found In Gilmiere's **Room B** at the Floating Sailor Inn.

XII.IV.MCCLV

I am glad to have found a friend in the innkeeper, Marshley. He has taken a great interest in my arcane research, and presented me with ointments to ease my pains and headaches. I was surprised to learn that he has had some experience with these ailments, and that they are common among those who travel here. Perhaps it has something to do with the local climate.

He is a good man. Last night, we spoke for hours over stew and many pints of sea grog. I told him something, a truth that I have felt inside for some time, a truth so strange I struggle to write down, even now.

The truth is that these magical emanations are special somehow, different from those that I have discovered in the past. It is as if they call out to me. I can feel them within myself. They guide me in some strange way, pulling me here. As if they speak to me. Not in words, but in a feeling, an ebb and flow of energies, as if they are the invisible strings of fate that draw me forth.

What a bizarre notion. I could not believe I admitted such a thing to a man I hardly knew. But he said only that I had a gift, that I had been chosen, that I was special, that I had a purpose. What does he mean? Chosen for what? What purpose?

Gilmiere's Note 3.2

Found In Gilmiere's **Room B** at the Floating Sailor Inn.

