



Ruined gate seen  
from the  
Siren's Edge

# The arrival at Hot Springs

## Day 15 -

*Aboard the Siren's Edge*

*Partly cloudy, light rain before noon*

Our search for a suitable location to found this new port continues. After the incident on the Webbed Isle, and Vance's death on the Isle of Blooms, Captain Rand has ordered all crew to remain aboard the Siren's Edge and Siren's Folly until scouting parties from the Martel Company return with an initial report. Scuttlebutt is souring, and the normal pranks the crew direct towards Martel Company representatives are escalating towards open hostility. The crew is clearly not handling the death of Vance well, and while I understand Captain Rand's desire to not risk his crew, our men are itching to get off these ships and explore the islands that will be their new home, even if they have proven an inhospitable home so far.

This island, and the one further south, are two of the largest in the Swordfish Island's chain, and the Martel Company believe they have the most promising potential for deep water ports. Now we just have to determine if any inhabitants want to drink our innards or use our teeth as currency here too. That said, if Martel marines keep returning to the ships with reports of "no suitable locations" and packs full of treasure, I'm not sure how long Jeremy can keep the crew in check, captain or not.

This island does appear quite beautiful from the safety of the ship. Twin volcanoes, heavily cloaked in jungle, rise nearly 3000 feet above black sand beaches, and I have spotted numerous signs of hydrothermal activity. The ruins of elven pleasure palaces and a large wall (in a style similar to those seen on the Isle of Blooms), tumble off the lower slopes of the smaller volcano and into the sea. Some kind of white stone structure gleams from the volcano's slope above the city, but I have not been able to discern its true purpose at this distance. Curiously, these ruins seem to lack the broad avenues and colonnades seen on the Isle of Blooms and Ruined Isle. In their place are what appear to be giant sized stairs resembling white, woodland fungi. Hopefully the beauty of this island does not prove deceptive too. I look forward to the marine's report.

## Day 16 -

*Aboard the Siren's Edge (morning)*  
*Sunny with winds south by southwest*

Mood among the crew remains sour. Twelve Martel Company marines, led by the recently promoted Lieutenant Barvus, dropped skiffs at dawn and headed in. Representative Amberlin continues to express her conviction that this will be an excellent location for our new port town, but the crumbling wall and ruins lead me to believe that much of this city rests beneath the waves ready to split ship bellies. Opinions aside, for now, we wait.

## Day 16 -

*Aboard the Siren's Edge (midday)*  
*Sunny, calm and humid*

Smoke has been spotted in the ruins. Speculation rampant. Orders are to remain anchored off the coast for 48 hours awaiting potential survivors.

## Day 17 -

*Aboard the Siren's Edge (morning)*  
*Calm and overcast*

Heavy clouds rolled in during the night but the tropical heat has not abated. As the day heats up this humidity may steam us like lobsters in a pot beneath a lid of clouds, and the crew's heated enough as it is. Representative Amberlin was fished out of the sea in the pre-dawn hours after reportedly tripping over a pile of poorly stowed rope. Captain Rand has Stonejaw investigating. A change in weather or mood can't come soon enough.



## Day 18 -

*Aboard the Siren's Edge (pre-dawn hours)*

*Overcast. Light breeze, south by southeast*

We are now sailing towards the large southern island, and my hand feels as if it will drop off at any moment. I have been in Captain Rand's quarters writing non-stop since about midday when the four survivors returned. I know I can trust Zilbee's quill of transcription to accurately record conversations as they happen, but old habits die hard in old men, and writing down what I hear as I hear it helps it stick in the memory as well as the page. Over the coming days I will compare my notes to Zilbee's auto-notes and compile the three accounts we heard into a sensible order, but for now, a recap:

This island, which I now call Hot Springs, has proven to be unsuitable for our port town. As I surmised, much of the coastal ruin (confirmed to be elven) continues into the sea, making the waters treacherous for large, ocean-going vessels. The broad ways and avenues I'd thought missing from the ruins are still there, but overgrown by terraces of white rock formed by overflowing pools of hot water. These white terraces, resembling woodland fungal growths, indicate that the hydrothermal activity here is even more robust than I suspected, and the marines report seeing many smaller hot springs, mud pits, vents and geysers as they fled through the jungles.

Hot Springs Island seems just as hostile as the other islands we have come across, and Lieutenant Barvus' poor choices in the ruins (splitting the company and focusing on loot) led to his death, and the death of most of his troops to a lizardman ambush. Of the twelve marines that went into the ruins, only four returned, and one (Unger) sustained a belly wound that may have placed him within the reach of Death's bony hand. The marine Harp fled northwest from the ruins and spent last night in a tree on the shores of what he calls Crab Mouth Lagoon. The marine Harvard carried the wounded Unger southeast and camped in a glade of ancient pine trees filled with swarms of exceptional bees and the marine Indio braved a night in the ruins themselves.





# THE ELVES

Matthias Mayford!

You utterly insufferable old git! Don't play coy with me. You knew damn good and well exactly the sort of response that package was going to evoke from me when you sent it. Upon opening it I was immediately forced to begin groveling and prostrating myself before Melinda in order to receive a sanctioned release from my duties as a tenured professor. It took three weeks and you cannot fathom the tribulations I have had to endure, wooing that gluttonous edifice of bureaucracy, for special dispensation to leave the college for a time so I could come throttle you personally. Yes, that's right, by the time you receive this letter I should be en route to the Swordfish Islands, as you doubtlessly expected.

I have spent my entire life studying the ancient Isle of Light, and you dared to ask me to research for you via correspondence after sending me proof of its existence, and telling me you were *living on it*?! Not on your life Mayford!

The charcoal rubbings you sent were basically garbage, and only list the prices of oils, perfumes and bath salts, but the symbols and language are a perfect match for the writings of the island. Did these come from ruins near thermal springs? The elves are said to have had a city of pools and baths built into the side of a volcano, and their magic was supposedly powerful enough to cap the volcano's cone and protect the city from eruptions.

The chimes you sent were amazing, and further prove you have found the island (or its remnants). The elves of the Isle of Light locked their homes and belongings with music instead of conventional mechanical locks, and they used these chimes as keys. There is a stone chest in the basements of the palace of Banuvo that can only be opened with the tone of a copper chime, and is known to have come from the Isle of Light back when the Reywish moved caravans in ancient days. The symbols engraved inside the mithril chime say "fountain 37", and neither the blacksmiths guild, nor

the jewelers guild have been able to identify the red metal of the second chime. When I arrive on the islands, the first thing I want to see is the singing stone head you spoke of. Legend says the elves embedded their chimes into stone automaton servants, and that broken head may be the key to palaces or storehouses. Are there symbols carved behind the ears? I will probably be there before any reply you write can reach me, but there is so much that I wish to know! Have you been able to identify the shift yet? Based on the treasures and rubbings returning from the ruins? There are two distinct periods of elven culture and the known objects from the island change suddenly from being aesthetically structured and geometric to loose and asymmetrical with a heavy floral motif. Have you noticed this? Have you seen the flower? Is it actually a real thing? Or is it all some decadent metaphor that went along with the supposed fetishisation of pregnancy before the culture's sudden disappearance?

Beware symbolism of the veil Matthias. I have next to no actual information, but after the shift, and before the fall, I believe there was darkness under the shine of the Isle of Light. We will speak more on this when I arrive. This man Harvard, are you sure of his loyalty? We both know the past, and they say the Martel Company buries its hooks deep...

I feel like I've looted half the college's library packing for this journey. You know I never need much, but please make sure there is someplace I can keep my books dry. There will be at least three trunks. You may have already written her, but Helena would love to hear from you (as always), and she has recently been placed in charge of the palace's archives in addition to her normal duties. All the information of Banuvo can now be yours for a few exotic flower pressings and flirtatious words.

Of all the people I've ever known, only you could have stumbled onto the Isle of Light. You've made me feel like a young man again Matthias.

Yours in haste, hatred, and undying friendship,

-Simon Blade feather



# THE ELVEN ALPHABET

---



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I



J



K



L



M



N



O



P



Q



R



S



T



U



V



W



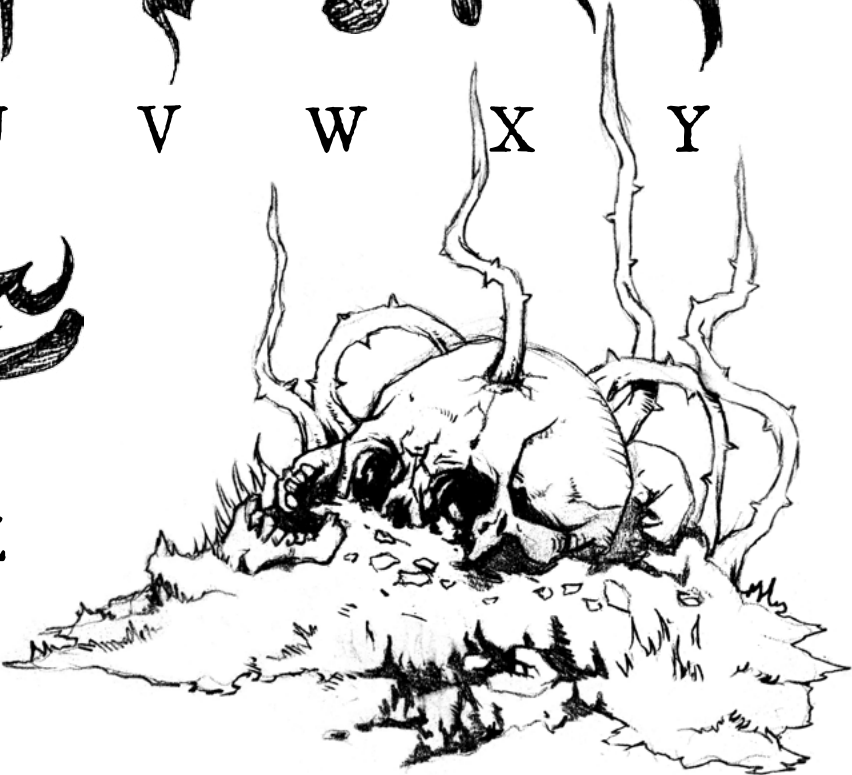
X



Y



Z



## AMBERMOSS

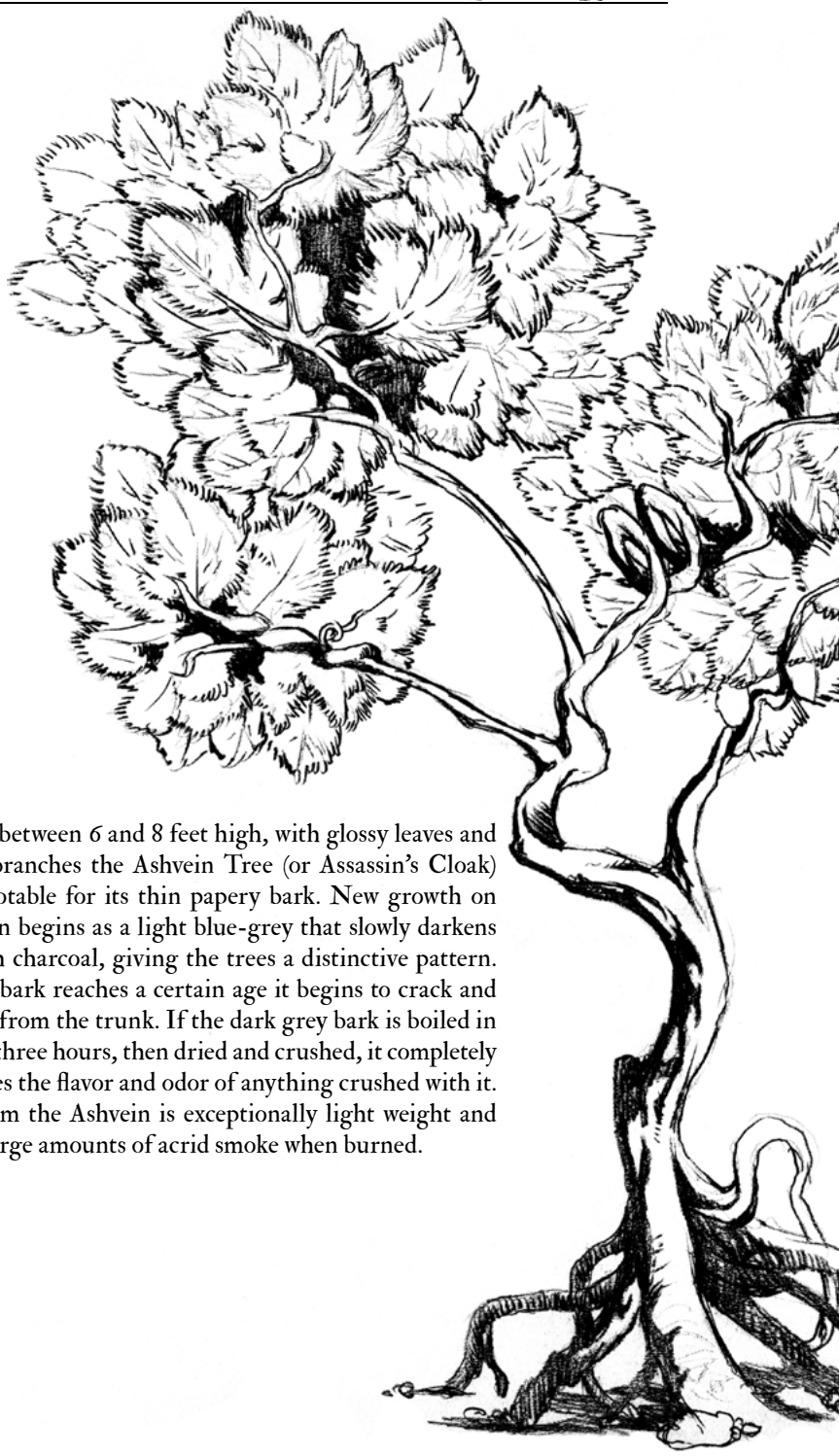
---

Ambermoss, or “Ginger Beard”, is a great, toxic, rarity of a plant growing in isolated locations on Hot Springs Island. It clings to vertical stone surfaces where it can trail downward in a distinctive, triangular manner, resembling long orange beards. The plant tends to grow above doorways and archways where it can hang and move freely. The texture of ambermoss looks and feels like a fine cotton velvet, but great care should be taken to avoid touching it with bare skin as the moss secretes a translucent orange liquid of exceptional toxicity. The effects of the poison begin to take effect in as little as fifteen minutes and can have vastly different effects on two different people touching the same spot on the plant. Once a person has been poisoned by ambermoss they will experience the same reaction in any subsequent encounters. Some of the effects recorded so far are blindness, aural hallucinations (commonly buzzing or a deep, repetitive “wub wub wub”), hypersensitivity to touch, amnesia, agoraphobia and reverse kleptomania. While the effects are temporary they can last up to four hours. It is said that the liquid, toxic or not, functions as an incredible lubricant.



## ASHVEIN TREE

---



Standing between 6 and 8 feet high, with glossy leaves and twisting branches the Ashvein Tree (or Assassin's Cloak) is most notable for its thin papery bark. New growth on an Ashvein begins as a light blue-grey that slowly darkens into a rich charcoal, giving the trees a distinctive pattern. After the bark reaches a certain age it begins to crack and peel away from the trunk. If the dark grey bark is boiled in water for three hours, then dried and crushed, it completely neutralizes the flavor and odor of anything crushed with it. Wood from the Ashvein is exceptionally light weight and releases large amounts of acrid smoke when burned.

## CACHUGA PEPPER

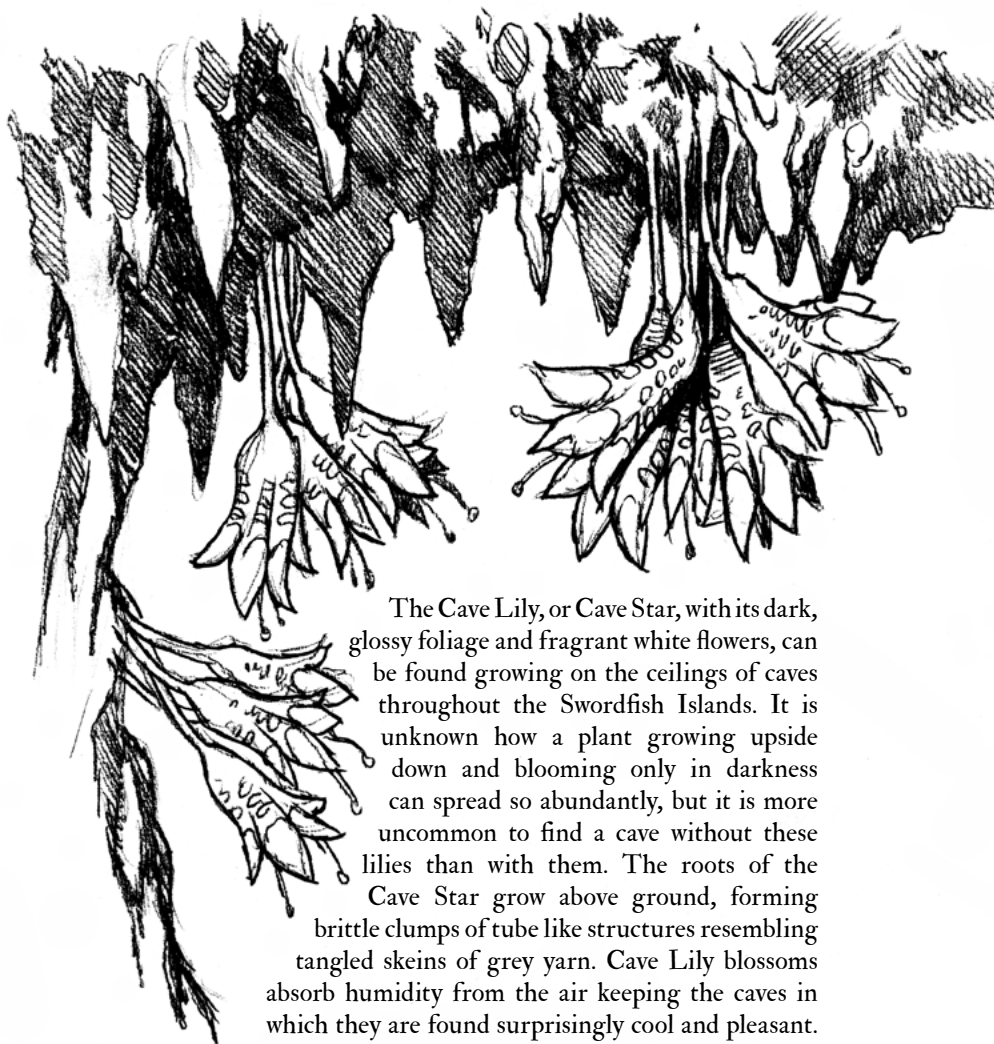
---



Pronounced *Ka-hoo-gah*, and sometimes called “Magma Bites” or “Lava Bursters”, Cachuga Peppers can only be found on Hot Springs Island. Vaguely pyramidal shaped woody bushes with profuse foliage bear clusters of small, fragrant yellow blooms which eventually give way to fiery peppers of a marbled red-orange. The bushes bloom continually in the tropical climes of the Swordfish Islands. The peppers themselves are 2-4 inches long and hang from the bushes by thick, green, vein-like structures. Cachuga Peppers are exceptionally spicy and flavorful, rivaling the heat and potency of even the Blindfire Vine. The skin of these peppers is leathery and can be mashed into a paste then shaped and dried into chips or a flavorful yet non-spicy paper-like wrapping, pairing nicely with raw fish. The peppers dry well, retaining their fire and flavor for exceptional periods of time, and their seeds can be ground into a powder that causes severe eye and skin irritation.

# CAVE LILY

---



The Cave Lily, or Cave Star, with its dark, glossy foliage and fragrant white flowers, can be found growing on the ceilings of caves throughout the Swordfish Islands. It is unknown how a plant growing upside down and blooming only in darkness can spread so abundantly, but it is more uncommon to find a cave without these lilies than with them. The roots of the Cave Star grow above ground, forming brittle clumps of tube like structures resembling tangled skeins of grey yarn. Cave Lily blossoms absorb humidity from the air keeping the caves in which they are found surprisingly cool and pleasant. It is said that if a drop of nectar falls naturally from the bloom of a Cave Lily and is caught upon the tongue it will grant visions of the past or future.

# BLINDFIRE VINE

---

Feathery leaves cover the core of the blindfire vine disguising a circular maw ringed with long teeth used to chew its prey. About a dozen vines, dotted with red flowers and orange peppers, snake from the central cluster. The ends of some vines widen into a diamond shaped leaf like structures with a barb covered underside to help the plant grasp its prey.

**SIZE:** Maw 3' to 5' in diameter. Vines easily 20' and longer

**DIET:** Carnivore

**SOCIAL:** Solitary

**HABITAT:** Light Jungle, Heavy Jungle, Mountainous Jungle, Ruins

**DEN:** Blindfire vines are always found somewhere their vines can dangle downwards, like trees, cliff sides and crumbling ruins.

**COMBAT:** Blindfire vines wait passively until something large moves one of its tendrils, at which point it lashes out, seeking to entangle and constrict the thing causing the disturbance. The plant will bring its diamond tipped vines to help hold and crush this potential prey. The vine waits until its prey stops struggling before raising it to its dripping maw to feed. Blindfire vines are able to slowly regrow cut or damaged vines and are most effectively killed by targeting the maw.

**USEFUL PARTS:** peppers

**SPECIAL:** Blindfire peppers are flavorful and spicy and a number of cook-offs and festivals have sprung up in Swordfish Bay that celebrate or make use of them. The more a blindfire vine or carpet kills, the spicier and more prized its peppers become, especially around festival time.

**RUMOR:** Deep beneath each blindfire vine is a pool of lava. That's why the peppers are so hot and the plant is so angry.



“Sunlight or soil? HA! That flavor is death. Tasty, tasty death.”





# DIRE BOAR

---

Thick matted fur covers this monstrosity of a boar. Its humped back and massive legs help support a pair of truly gigantic tusks. The tusks grow constantly and a dire boar's territory can be easily identified by the damaged trees, rocks and cliff faces that have been ripped up by its efforts to control the growth. Even after death the tusks of a dire boar, if left attached to the skull, can grow another 1' to 2'.

**NICK NAME:** Canniboar

**SIZE:** 15' to 30' long and 9' to 15' tall at the shoulder

**DIET:** Carnivore

**SOCIAL:** Solitary, with group mating displays twice a year

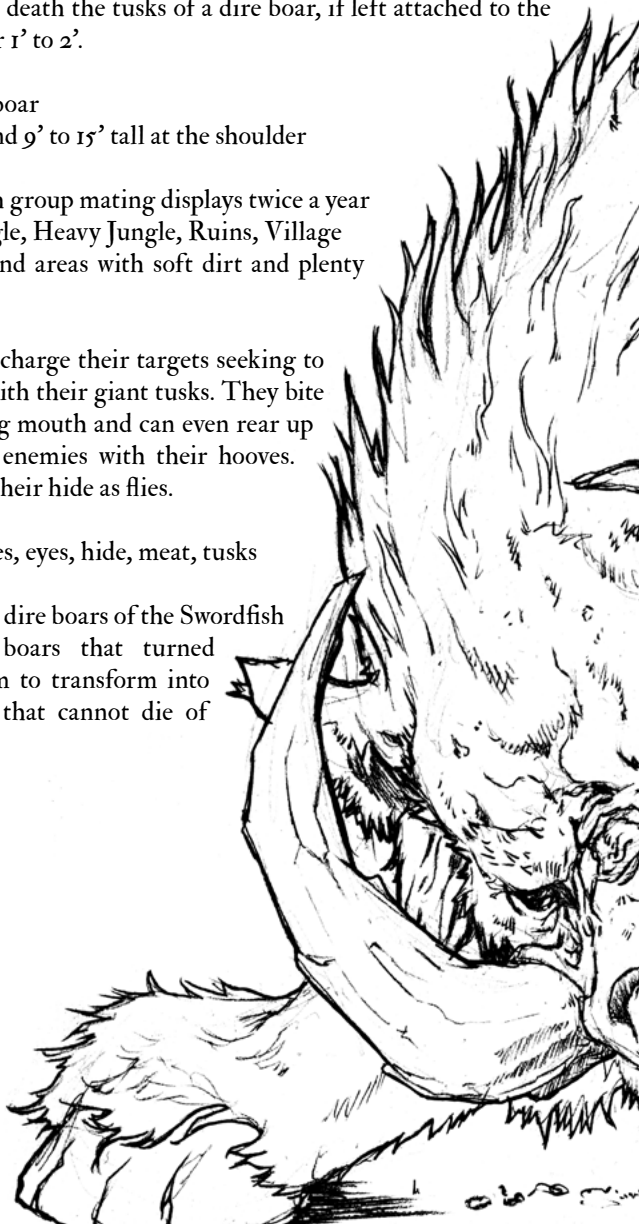
**HABITAT:** Light Jungle, Heavy Jungle, Ruins, Village

**DEN:** Shallow caves and areas with soft dirt and plenty of shade

**COMBAT:** Dire boars charge their targets seeking to trample, gore or toss with their giant tusks. They bite with their foul smelling mouth and can even rear up and attempt to crush enemies with their hooves. Normal arrows are to their hide as flies.

**USEFUL PARTS:** bones, eyes, hide, meat, tusks

**RUMOR:** Some say the dire boars of the Swordfish Islands are regular boars that turned cannibal, causing them to transform into monstrous berserkers that cannot die of natural causes.



“There’s a group of monkeys that’ll enchant boars to giant sizes and ride them around slinging spears on the southern island.”



## ZIP BIRD

---

These flightless white birds, with powerful red legs have small wings that stand up on their sides like fins as they run. Although they do not fly, zip birds are able to leap almost 30' allowing them to get the drop on their enemies from above. Able to cruise through rugged terrain at fifteen miles an hour while screeching "woop woop woop", zip bird packs are often preceded by a steady stream of small, fleeing animals.



**SIZE:** 3' to 4' tall

**DIET:** Carnivore

**SOCIAL:** Zip birds live in odd numbered packs of three to thirteen.

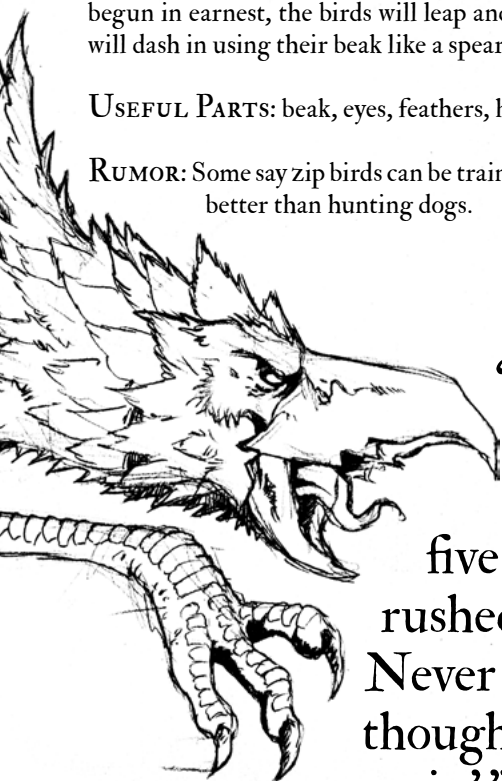
**HABITAT:** Light Jungle, Mountainous Jungle, Ruins

**DEN:** Zip birds only nest in the bases of witchweave palm trees.

**COMBAT:** Zip birds are fearless and a pack will attempt to kill anything once. If their opponent proves too daunting they will flee, shrieking into the undergrowth. The packs remember challenging opponents and will call for aid or flee from those encountered again. When engaging in combat, packs will generally harass their enemy by zipping past it one bird at a time, from multiple directions, leaving their true number uncertain. Once combat has begun in earnest, the birds will leap and slash with beak and talons, or they will dash in using their beak like a spear.

**USEFUL PARTS:** beak, eyes, feathers, heart, meat

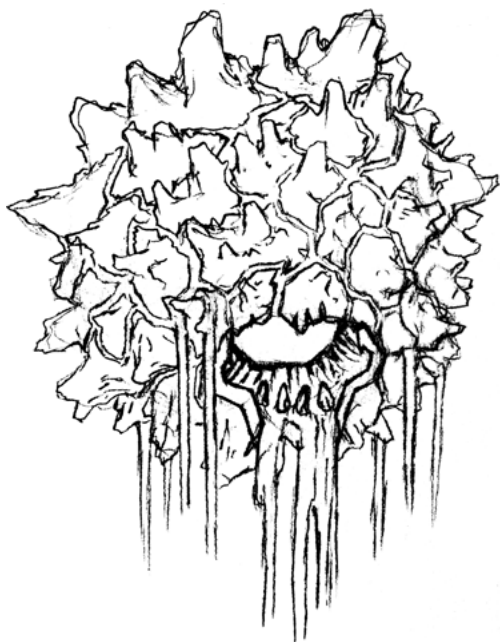
**RUMOR:** Some say zip birds can be trained to learn tricks and solve problems better than hunting dogs.



“One of those copper bird cats was about to finish me off when five of those whoop birds rushed up and attacked it! Never saw how it turned out though ‘cause I was too busy runnin’.”

# MAGMA

---



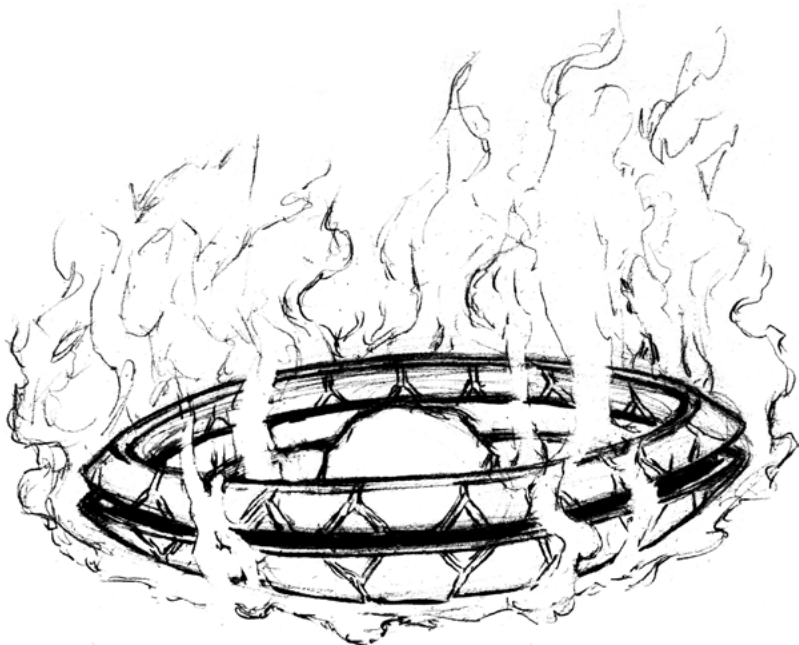
Magma elemental cores appear as glowing, molten dodecahedrons encased in cracked shells of glittering, black rock.

Ranging from 1' to 3' in diameter magma elementals can create one whiskey barrel's worth of magma from nothing each day, and can effortlessly control a volume of magma the size of approximately ten whiskey barrels.

Magma elementals are able to command and control volumes of molten rock, or most anything that has reached a state hot enough to glow and liquid enough to flow. When exposed to non-molten environments solid plates of glittering blackness encrust their surface yet still reveal their molten interiors. These chunks of black stone float and shift across their surface for a time before being recycled and reabsorbed. Magma elementals will occasionally guide this solidification process into useful, but temporary, shapes (e.g., spikes, blades, blocks) that will aid in their current pursuits.

# STEAM

---



Steam elemental cores appear as a shining metallic ring, usually silver, covered in water droplets, but cool and dry to the touch.


Ranging from 1' to 3' in diameter steam elementals can create one whiskey barrel's worth of steam from nothing each day, and can effortlessly control a volume of steam the size of approximately ten whiskey barrels.

Steam elementals are able to command and control volumes of steam, or most other volumes of water droplets suspended in air such as fog, clouds and mist. They raise and lower the temperature of the steam they command by increasing and decreasing its pressure. While they cannot chill their steam to freezing or below, they can increase its pressure, and heat, to almost unimaginable levels, and enjoy setting up explosive situations. Steam elementals are also the only elementals known that will form the element they control into a humanoid shape. When in this form, their elemental core floats slightly above the form's "head" leading many to refer to these creatures as "Steam Kings".

## SVARKU AND THE FUEGONAUTS



An efreet calling himself Svarku lives in Hot Spring Island's central volcano, and oversees a veritable army of imps, salamanders and creatures of obsidian. Svarku appears to control great wealth which he uses for grand acts of narcissism and splendor. The actual operations generating this wealth are unclear, but seem focused on a certain type of red crystal found here. The crystal appears to contain flickering flames and glows softly in the dark, but seems to be perfectly mundane when subjected to all manner of arcane tests. There is evidence of mining, but nothing to indicate off island transport of the materials leading some to speculate that there are extra-planer portals inside the volcano itself.



Root causes in the war between the Fuegonauts and Night Axe ogres are still poorly understood. Both sides blame the other of initiating the conflict, escalating it unnecessarily, and breaking peace treaties.

Svarku has showered many adventurers with powerful and lavish gifts and reportedly even treated some adventurers to opulent feasts in his palatial tower complex. Those invited to the volcano are given a red crystal hexagon on a platinum chain to guarantee safe passage in Fuegonaut controlled territories. The adventurers fêted by Svarku are always invited back to the tower again for a job opportunity, but none who have taken it have returned to report on its specifics.

When Fuegonauts are encountered in the jungles away from the volcano it is uncertain how they will react. Adventurers report being attacked on sight almost as much as they report being entreated to be a guest of Svarku, so keeping one hand on the sword hilt is probably a good idea.

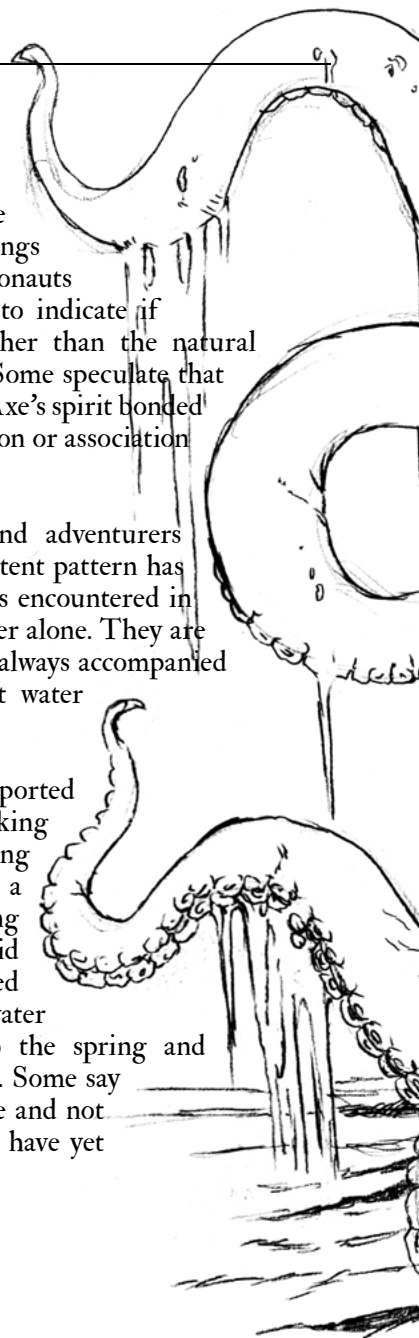


# THE NEREIDS

Nereids are the most elusive of the intelligent creatures found on Hot Springs Island. We know they fear the Fuegonauts and Svarku, but there is no evidence to indicate if this aversion stems from anything other than the natural combativeness between fire and water. Some speculate that the nereids are the source of the Night Axe's spirit bonded water elementals, but no direct connection or association has been proven.

While encounters between nereids and adventurers have been few and far between, a consistent pattern has emerged. The nereids are almost always encountered in a water source (usually flowing) and never alone. They are normally encountered in pairs, and are always accompanied by animal companions, commonly salt water crocodiles.

Additionally, there has only been one reported instance of a nereid directly attacking adventurers. The party stopped at a spring to refill their water skins and startled a sleeping nereid. Apparently, upon seeing an elven woman in the group, the nereid began shrieking in an unrecognized language and unleashed a torrent of water based spells before disappearing into the spring and leaving her companion animals to fight. Some say the attack was the result of the surprise and not the elf, but no other elven adventurers have yet encountered a nereid to test this theory.





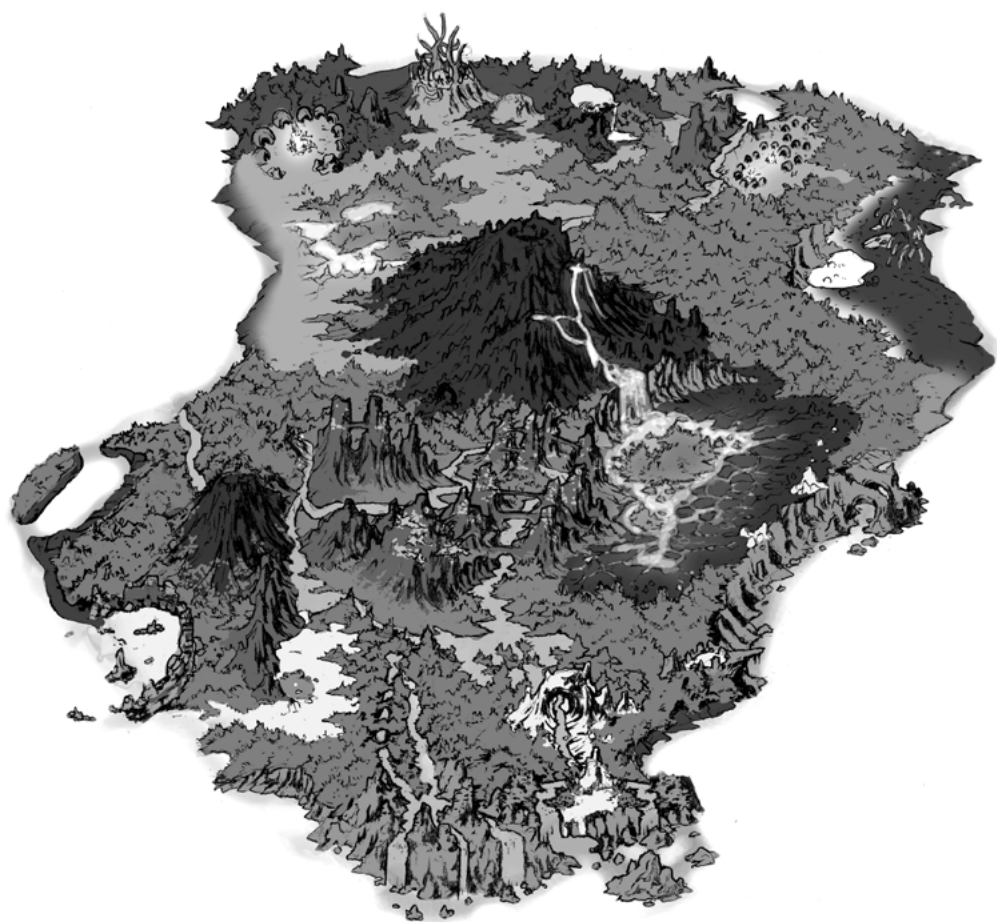
## DAY 60

*Sunny and fair. Light winds from the east.  
Aboard the Siren's Folly.*

Jeremy has finally given in to Patrick's demands to lead an expedition around the islands. Layout, planning and clearing is in full swing on our new port town, Swordfish Bay, and Patrick was adamant that if Captain Rand was going to tie him to a desk as the leader of some adventurer's guild then he (Patrick) would need to do some adventuring here himself. Arguments between the two old friends went on for several days before Jeremy finally conceded to Patrick's point that a guild leader without first hand knowledge of the islands was a guild leader that could never be respected.

I am not certain how much of Jeremy's reticence to agree to this excursion was anchored in his love of testing people's commitment to an idea by telling them "No", and how much it may have been influenced by the recent death of Vance and the losses we incurred on the Webbed Isle. Regardless of the reasons, Captain Marsh is once again at the helm of the Siren's Folly with his best crew, an old man, and a goblin. Jeremy insisted Zilbee and I accompany Patrick on this trip, and while I understand that Zilbee's tree clearing plans were all somewhat destructive, I can't help the fact that more volunteers lined up at my tent to recover relics and rubbings from the ruins than lined up at his tent to chop down trees.

The Siren's Folly departed from Swordfish Bay this morning, and our plan is to sail around the reefs and explore the northeastern side of Hot Springs Island. Spirits among the crew are high, and even though most will be left aboard while few go ashore, the fishing in these waters has proven to be fantastic and they could all use a few days relaxing in this beautiful weather. Luca has been playing his violin on deck non-stop since we left, and it is good to see the fire of wanderlust in Matilda and Jarvis' eyes as they ready their weapons to face the unknown once more.



‘Course we’re gonna cut up the body.  
What’d you think we came out here  
for? A picnic? All the parts are worth  
something to somebody.



In the end, everything is just so much meat and useful parts that somebody, somewhere wants to buy. Especially here in the Swordfish Islands. The guild, of course, pays top coin for raw materials, but to get that coin you've got to get the goods back to Swordfish Bay on Rand's Retreat, and that may not always be in the cards. Besides, the natives on Hot Springs Island like raw materials just as much as we do, and since this is a field guide for that island you probably want to know what they want in case you need to hustle in a pinch.

On the following pages we go through each creature listed in the bestiary and identify the parts we know the various factions like to buy, steal or trade for. An "X" means they usually want the item, and ".." means they're usually disinterested. It ain't the end all, be all, of course. Individuals may always want something different than their faction at large, but on the whole, if you want to sweeten up the Night Axe they'll probably like it if you show up with tusks of some kind. There's nothin' we know of that these factions consider revolting or offensive, but if you find out that's wrong the hard way, let us know, and we'll get the next edition of this guide updated.

Happy hunting!

