



General Features

Stone construction, decorated with shipwreck **detritus**. Areas 6-9 **flooded** knee deep with briny mineral-rich water. **Tangy** smell throughout. Areas 4 and 5 **lit** by goblin fires, **smoky**. **Dark** otherwise.

1. Entry Stairs

Stone **stairs** (worn down in center), **door** (to area 2, hacked-out arrow slit between planks, barred from inside, **Glib** the goblin maintains a lookout from area 2), **burn marks on landing** (*Gorg the bugbear from area 3 burns his feces outside the door to torment Glib*), **stairs continue** (south from the landing to area 3).

2. Watch Post

Door (hacked-out arrow slit between planks, barred from inside), **Glib** (**goblin**, resentful of post, afraid intruders will kill him, bullied by Gorg the bugbear from area 3, *will turn traitor for 5 gp*), **faded mural** (on west wall above kneeling block, depicts Aquos holding worshippers in its webbed hands as waves flood the land, killing nonbelievers), **barrels** (**trinkets** left by worshippers and goblin **trash**).

Trinkets include:

- A set of **prayer shells** on a leather cord, inscribed with the mantra of Aquos ("Wrath and storm, without warn, Acquos' hand, bring death to land.") (*can be used in area 4 to access area 5*).
- A crumpled **letter** home from a cultist, regretting that the addressee ("Dearest Elphonse") will die in the coming storm of Acquos's wrath.
- Tin of stinky sardines. Eater will stink as well, but the water stalker won't attack them.

Trash includes:

- Fish bones, sharp, dangerous to bare hands.
- Playing cards (*the missing cards from area 4*).
- Ambergris nuggets, smell awful but worth 400 gp

3. Storeroom

Rumbling **snoring** from **Gorg** (**bugbear**, bored and resentful bully, hired muscle, paid by goblins in flattery) sleeping in the strewn-about remains of the cultists' stores (smashed crates, straw). *Gorg saw the ghouls attack the goblins in area 6 but is fed up with the goblins and this place and told no one.*

4. First Station of Worship

Lit by goblin fires. Towering waxy green stone **statue** of Acquos (looming, threatening posture. Melange of coral, fins, rows of teeth, spines, tentacles. Red **gemstone** eyes cloud over and roil like a storm at sea). **Goblins** laze about (arguing about the **door**, playing **cards**, pranking each other, sleeping).

- The statue's **gemstone** eyes are rubies worth 500 gp each. Weeping oyster-flesh lines the sockets behind them. *Anyone carrying one of the gemstones in this room soon feels feverish as their blood begins to boil, losing 1d4 Con per round. When their Con reaches zero, their body collapses to the ground and their consciousness inhabits a hovering mist of blood (as the potion or spell *gaseous form*). They can return to*

their body (with restored Con) if it is moved to another area.

- The **door** to area 5 is magically locked. It unlocks if the mantra inscribed on the prayer shells in area 3 is chanted before the statue. Anyone who touches the locked door must pass a Medium save or take 1d4 damage from a shock. The goblins like to push each other towards the door.
- A goblin named **Biggle** fancies himself clever and "hacked" the **cards**. *He disposed of the ones he deemed unnecessary in area 3*. The resulting game is virtually unplayable with their absence, but his friends think it's brilliant and shower him with praise. Attempted games progress from rules arguments to fistfights. *The game can be won with the missing cards, deeply impressing the goblins (except Biggle and his friends).*

5. Washing Station

Lit by goblin fires. **Water** (smells of minerals, tastes of salt, not potable unless filtered) cascades from the wall into the **grating** atop a waxy green stone **altar**. The **goblin chief** (**Belga**, patient, crafty, tougher than leather) and an exploratory **group** have been plotting their next move after realizing they lost two goblins crossing area 6 (*ghouls took them*).

- Barbed spikes form the **grating**, curving downwards into the altar to trap the hands of anyone trying to snatch the **treasure** within. The water drains through loose stones in the altar.
- 70 gp and a gold ring with an emerald setting (200 gp) lie atop the loose stones. Retrieving a handful of treasure requires a Hard Dex check, taking 1d4 damage from the spikes and becoming stuck until the treasure is released.

Belga suspects the missing goblins either deserted or were taken by an invisible enemy. She's willing to sacrifice more goblins to test this, but not enough that she would be left vulnerable.

6. Drowning Hall

The **bodies** of cultists (pickled by the mineral-laden water, multiple bite marks, one has a **key** on a cord around its wrist) and two goblins (dead but unspoiled) float just below the surface of the slippery **water**. The last surviving cultists are now two **ghouls** who hide among the bodies they've been slowly eating. They paralyze and drown stragglers.

- The **key** opens the door between areas 7 and 9.

7. Second Station of Worship

Waxy green stone **statue** of Acquos (peaceful repose, eyes closed). **Door** to area 9 (inlaid copper scene of gentle rain over a calm sea, sun breaks through the clouds. Magically locked. *Reciting the mantra inscribed on the prayer shells in area 3 after washing up in area 5 opens it. Anyone reciting without washing takes 1d4 damage as the water briefly turns acidic around them*).

8. Drowning Pillars

Desiccated **legs** hang feet-up from bronze shackles on the **pillars**, with violent bite marks at the waters edge. **Skeletal remains** litter the floor.

- The **remains** are from villagers kidnapped and sacrificed by the cult. *They were hung upside down as if to drown, but then an invisible monster in the water eviscerated them alive.* They can reveal this if magic is used to speak with their remains.

9. Stolen Altar

An **altar** to local sea spirits (orange stone, carved with scene of placid sea life: bountiful fish, fishers on ships casting nets. *Reciting the mantra of Acquos calls the water stalker*). **Chest** (underwater, glued to floor, Hard Str check to break free, *water drains into hole under chest if removed*. Full of glue and 200 gp. Anyone grabbing the gold is stuck, Medium Str check to break free).

10. Treasure Shrine

Water stalker *lairs here*. **Steps** (descend 5 ft deeper into water), **dais** (across from steps, sculpture of 500 gold coins glued together to form a towering wave with a *magic sapphire* at the crest. Large **chest** (on floor, underwater. Locked, Easy to pick (Hard while underwater). Contains 250 gp worth of local holy symbols and **trident of seeking**. *Glued down, covers drain hole as area 9*).

- The bearer of the **sapphire** can command the water stalker. The water stalker can also be commanded to enter the sapphire and to exit it, and it can remain inside indefinitely.
- **Trident of seeking** tugs towards invisible creatures nearby and ignores their invisibility when attacking.

Brine of the Wrathful Mariners

A system-neutral adventure for fantasy role playing games by Andy Dempz. Cartography by Dyson Logos.
More at <https://folkvangr.blog>.

What's Going On Here? A cult of disgruntled sailors dedicated to Acquos, a wrathful sea god, established a shrine near a seaside village. The villagers grew tired of the cult's threats and predations, so when without warning, a wizard walked by, the villagers hired him to seal the shrine doors shut. The cultists, trapped and starving, ritually drowned themselves in the mineral-rich waters that flood the halls, cursing the villagers to their last. And that was the last anyone ever heard of them.

...Until a tribe of goblins, rapid breeders and fervent believers in reincarnation, exhausted the door's enchantment by triggering it one after another. After paying brief respects to the burning bodies of those who died breaking the spell, the goblin chief Belga led the tribe inside to find loot. Their exploration was soon stymied by the shrine's puzzles, and something in the water began killing goblins, one by one.

Two somethings, actually. The last surviving cultists became ghouls after resorting to eating their dead fellows, and they linger on, hungry for fresher meats. Acquos had previously heard the cult's supplications and granted them a water stalker, an elemental predator, invisible in water and utterly ferocious. Though it did the cultists no good while they were sealed in and starving, it remains to carry out the will of Acquos and kills any who oppose its master and dare enter the sacred waters of the shrine.

Word quickly reached the village that the shrine had been breached, drawing adventurers...

Adapting the Adventure. The adventure is intended for low-level characters (1-3), adapt as needed to fit your table. Ability checks and saves are marked as Easy, Medium, or Hard. Some systems like 5e and Shadowdark can derive DCs from these terms, while for other systems, Medium can be applied as a straight roll-under check or save, with Easy giving a bonus to the roll and Hard giving a penalty.

Monsters!

- **Goblins:** Chaos and disorder! They can't keep their attention on anything for long and are growing bored and restless. They aren't immediately hostile, but in a fight, you have as many goblins as you need. An unruly mob, they're difficult to count anyway.
- **Ghouls:** are ghouls. Cowardly but dangerous.
- **The Water Stalker:** Deadly. Should be able to kill a PC in one round if the dice go its way, ripping them to shreds like a school of piranha. Looks like a translucent giant eel with stubby forelegs and wicked claws. Invisible while in the water. Use **troll** stats except it can only regenerate in water instead of being interrupted by the traditional fire/acid bit. Or use a **bear**. Only attacks creatures in the water.

Random Encounters/Events: Check as often as indicated by your system of choice, or as needed to shake things up.

2d4	Encounter/Event
2	Gorg (area 3) is pushing cowardly goblins into area 6 for laughs.
3	A goblin named Milg is looting bodies in area 6. The ghouls will take him.
4	The water stalker travels through open doors in a circuit through areas 7, 8, 9, and 10, one room per roll starting in and returning to 10.
5	Belga and her group brave areas 8, 9, and 10, one room per roll, leaving the doors open, until meeting the water stalker and fleeing back to area 6.
6	Goblin fistfight in area 6 over cards. Loud and distracted.
7	The hungry ghouls are spying on area 5.
8	Glib has had enough of Gorg and organizes an uprising, chasing Gorg into area 8.

Features and **NPCs** are bolded, *secrets* are italicized.