

THE MERMAIDS' KNOT

AN ADVENTURE LOCATION BY MICHAEL PRESCOTT

THE HOLY POND

High above the village is the archway where the priestesses of the **temple** call upon the pond **mermaids**.

The mermaids only come for the priestesses, otherwise they are in their chambers, far below.

The clear pond is only neck deep at the center. A submerged tunnel opens into the air-filled chamber inside, which reeks of the sacrificial fat the mermaids smear on ceremonially.

THE TEMPLE PRIESTESSES

Twenty priestesses of "nature's mysteries" govern Magda. Their leader, *Sanesta*, can perform miracles of divination and healing, even raising the dead (if they are fresh).

Her price (supposedly revealed to her by the gods in her trance) is three months of service to her order.

Her goal is to persuade someone to stay behind (alone, perhaps two or three at most) so they can be drugged and delivered to **Avorask**.

She brings truly powerful petitioners (e.g. wizards) to the holy pond for the mermaids to deal with.

THE FUNNEL

The villagers are led by *Unsen*, who blesses salt to keep away the **locusts**.

The Magdans are wily, and have rehearsed trying to get visitors in front of the priestesses.

THE WIFE OF SPRING

Doffna Strand is the midwife, but secretly a druid who has infiltrated the village to dislodge the priestesses. 1 in 4 villagers are loyal to her, and will try to broker a meeting with visitors.

Doffna warns away the weak, and uses the strong: she may suggest the gift of a mirror, blasphemous to the priestesses, in the hopes of starting a fight.

THE LIGHT WATER

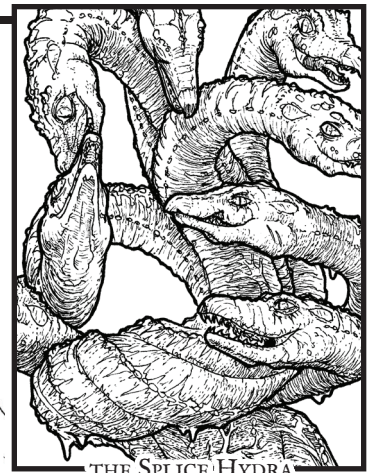
From the shaft on down, the Mermaids' lair is filled with *light water*. Invisible, breathable by surface creatures, too thick for running, but too thin for swimming (very strong swimmers can). Flames burn weakly, but cannot be lit within it.

Doubles healing rates.

THE MERMAIDS

Bubuliga and *Cissek* are half brine troll, half lungfish, sole surviving apprentices of *Vmmn*, a long-dead chimeromancer.

Apart from her sorcery, *Bubuliga*'s touch binds flesh to flesh.



THE SPLICE HYDRA

CHIMERIC SHRINE

This shrine to *Vmmn*'s alien goddess, *Suvuvuna* (Su-VOO-vah-nah) holds the ruined *earthship* in which he and the mermaids fled from the underworld.

With them came a hundred etched metal plates explaining chimeromancy and its role in the worship of *Suvuvuna*.

These are now affixed to the pillars.

AVORASK'S LAIR

After their success with the hydra, the sisters invented a composite being of their own: a man made of insects, pressed together with hydra's blood and prayers to *Suvuvuna*.

His alien mind soon grasped chimeromancy, and he chides the mermaids for their lack of ambition.

He has *Bubuliga*'s powers over flesh, but can use them at range. If attacked, he will use this to seal shut eyes and mouths.

If harmed, he bursts to pieces and reassembles elsewhere.

THE PIT OF VITALITY

This darkened pit is the favored haunt of the *hydra*. It noses about through the murky water.

The bottom of the chamber is *Avorask*'s project: he seeks to make all life into a single organism. A carpet of human organs heaves and writhes in an ecstatic union. Their exhalations are what gives the light water its magical effects.

THE LOCUSTS

Giant locusts are common in the area surrounding Magda. Every full moon, the priestesses venture out to catch a dozen so that *Avorask* can harvest their eggs and feed the rest to the hydra.

The large ones are omnivorous and may attack. *Unsen*'s salts keeps them away from the fields, and the villagers are forbidden from harming them.

THE CHIRPERS

Wanderers may see a wild-eyed local fleeing into the countryside. This is a victim of *Avorask*, who replaces lung tissue with two immature locusts.

The locusts breathe for the victim, replacing the voice with a ghastly chirping. Once they are mature, the victim is compelled to dig a hole and climb in. A pair of locusts emerges a week later.

