

The Wreck of the *Lord Niklas*



Introduction

This small dungeon works well as a diversion along a coastal road, but can also serve as the end of an investigation into missing merchant ships. Play up the shifting, slippery deck, and the fact that the inside of the ship is dark, dank, and rotten.

Background

A sea hag called Sabiya began preying on crews of merchant ships about a year ago, claiming at least six cogs by blinding the crews with fog. The merchant guilds have since changed their trade routes, forcing Sabiya to do her best to lure the greedy into her clutches. She uses the wreck of the trading ship *Lord Niklas*, which ran aground in one of her fogs, as bait. She has littered the beach around the wreck of the *Lord Niklas* with chests, in the hopes that it would draw the curious into the wreck offshore. Once inside her waiting ghoul minions kill them, refilling Sabiya's larders and preventing word of the trap from escaping.

Description

The wreck of the *Lord Niklas* rests on some jagged rocks about 40 feet from shore. The aft third lies beneath the waves. Ruined chests dot the beach, spilling valuable trade goods like silks and furs onto the sand. [A perception check may reveal something glittering through a hole in the hull]

Special Rules

While on board the *Lord Niklas*, the shifting decks and slippery wood make it hard to keep one's feet. Players must make a balance check at the start of each round or fall prone. All rooms except 2 and 5 are dark.

Legend

L – Ladder (leads up to top deck)

Room Key

- Tide Channel:** The ship rests on a rock, about 25 feet above the water. The rock is climbable. A swim check is needed to cross to the rock, and then a climb check to get into the ship.
- Ship's Stores:** Crates of rotten and stinking food, barrels of fouled water. On the side the players enter from, there is a small bag of gold (24 gp), which sits on a wooden chest where it would be visible from shore. Careful searching may turn up ten days worth of trail rations. The room is full of rats, which will attack as a swarm if they are overly disturbed.
- Bunks:** Rows of cotton hammocks, the occasional footlocker. There is old blood on the floor. There are three ghouls here, one right by the door and the other two near the door to room 5. The further ghouls will get entangled in the hammocks as they move towards the players, treat them as flatfooted until they succeed in a strength check to tear through the cotton.
- Forward Cargo Hold:** Mostly empty, save for a few very heavy crates containing pig iron. Digging through the pig iron will reveal a wooden box containing 68 gp worth of gems. There is also a crate loaded with cloth of gold, worth 108 gp. A few human bones litter the floor.
- Mess:** Long tables with benches nailed to the floor. Cabinets line the walls containing broken plates and cups. There are four ghouls here, feasting on rotten, maggoty hunks of meat from a broken crate. They will attack when the players enter, but may be drawn into room 3 if the fight in there is loud or drawn out enough.
- Galley:** This galley has a few small gimballed ovens and a large cookpot hung from the ceiling. There are a few loaves of moldy bread in the cupboards. The cookpot contains the putrefied remains of what was probably the crew. There is one ghoul in here, eating from the pot with its bloody hands.
- Stateroom:** The captain's stateroom was well appointed, but is now in disarray. The desk has been ripped from the wall, spilling papers all over the floor. An examination of the papers reveals that they are the ship's log. Its last entry describes a storm at sea which forced them closer to shore. The captain's footlocker is made of stout oak, and is locked. Inside are a bag of gold (25 gp), maps of trade routes, a spyglass, a horn bound in iron, and four random potions. There is a secret compartment built into the bed, underneath the straw mattress. Within the compartment are a magic ring and a magic scimitar.
- Shop:** Woodworking, sailroom, and smithy. Tools hang from hooks on the walls, a forge sits cold in the corner. There is a masterwork shortsword blade on the anvil, but it does not have a handle. There is a large grinding wheel with strange runes carved into the sides. It has been enchanted to sharpen steel to preternatural keenness, this sharpening lasts for one encounter. There is one ghoul here.
- Armory:** The room contains racks of swords and axes, as well as twenty pots of alchemist's fire in a locked chest. There is also a rack with sixteen studded leather shirts. It seems the armory was used as makeshift quarters, a dozen hammocks have been hung from iron hooks driven into the walls. A stack of sea chests against the far wall contains many changes of clothing, a few pieces of scrimshaw worth a total of 11 gp, four daggers, a small portrait of a noble lady worth 28 gp, and two small hand mirrors.
- Cargo Hold:** About 15 feet from the door, the sloping deck dips beneath the surface and the aft half of the cargo hold is underwater. Bones litter the wooden floor, all broken and covered with gnaw marks. Sabiya the Sea Hag is crouched over the remains of two (well-equipped) adventurers, pulling the meat from their bones. Sabiya herself is a cadaverous woman with blue-green skin. Her fingernails are long and sharp and black, and her teeth are cruel and pointed. There is a blue stone hanging from her neck on a copper chain. Once the players have her nearly beaten, she will rip the stone from her neck and hurl it into the water. The stone will bubble and glow, and summon a sea monster in 1d6 rounds. If Sabiya is still alive when the monster arrives, she will leap into the water and try to escape. The monster can not climb out of the water into the boat but has reach and so can attack from the water. The ferocity of his attack dislodges the boat from the rocks, it will begin to slide backwards into the water the round after the monster arrives. The round after that, all of room 10 will be underwater. The round after that, rooms 8 and 9, the round after that rooms 5, 6, and 7, and the round after that rooms 2 and 3. The players may drown if they can not reach an exit in time. The ladders in room 5 lead onto the deck and so count as an exit, but may require a swim check to reach the shore.