

Administration:

1. Check character sheets
2. Becker profs?
3. Full list of who is coming
4. Provision for journey
5. Salaries/loot distribution?

You spend another night in the house of Baldred. Come morning there is an energy on the air. The men who lay resting before, nursing wounds, have risen and are preparing for the journey ahead. Aethelwulf walks from man to man in the manor, checking their readiness and helping with preparations. A few housemen are seated at the table in the hall, eating and sharpening their weapons.

As you approach Aethelwulf says "Hail High King! Are we to set off this day?"

"May the luck of Aurvandil be on our side then. High King, shall we call for volunteers to replace the fallen and bring the troop back to full strength? I have been approached by men from Baldred's house, some are eager to join for the quest, some for silver."

[do planning etc]

Ricberht (sergeant), Wuffa (sergeant), Ecgric (Thegn): Approaches Angvard: "High King, before we depart I ask you to consider an outstanding matter. If we are to camp on the shore we will need some form of shelter besides the bedrolls and blankets the men carry now. The winds blowing in from the waters and mountains will be too much to resist, no matter the fortitude of our hearts. Might we provision some tents from King Baldred?"

How long to build ship:

Rædwald, ship builder

Mountains

After a day of trudging across the frozen plains and soft rolling foothills east of Leptus, arctic wind blasting down upon, the mountains far off on the horizon grow closer. Great white caps, steep peaks and sharp jagged rock, all partially hidden by some feet of pack snow. A mountain valley lies ahead of you. A light snow begins to flutter down from the gray sky.

Other passes?

There are, but they are snowed in.

You march throughout the day: the valley widens and narrows and twists into the mountain range, forming into a maze of rock and snow. You hear rocks tumbling around the peaks, as if the snow is about to give way. Nightfall comes and the men seem weary and wish to make camp.

Where do you sleep and how do you make camp? Sentries? etc

In the middle of the night you find yourself awoken by someone shaking you Angvard. Aethelwulf is looming over you with a few of his men. "High King, there is something you must see."

"Eowa, one of the lads in the troop, went out before to relieve himself and from his own mistake fell over in the snow. When he rose he realized that the snow there was thin and he saw the floor under it. We are walking atop a frozen river, this was a fjord. The ice appears stable, but that cannot be said of the entire range. I thought you needed to know this, High King."

Frost Giant Ambush

You set out for the day. Some hours pass as you navigate the freezing mountain range. [hawk/familiar flying around?]

Suddenly you see a giant boulder fly through the air at tremendous speed, a blur of brown and black rock. It cracks into the mountain walls behind you, instantly creating an avalanche which slowly sweeps down the mountainside, a few hundred feet away. The boulder sticks into the snow and clings for a moment, then rolls off and crashes down into the snow of the pass below, sending a wave of water into the air. The ice below you cracks open in huge swathes, from the tremendous shockwave force. Water spills onto the snow, and the fjord ices splinter. The solid ice under you is now a river, and you cling to bergs of ice which jut upturned from the force.

[roll dexterity checks etc]

Atop the mountain peaks hundreds of feet upward on both sides of the valley you can see housemen the size of two or three men with boulders over their heads standing on the peak crags of the mountain. They loose stones upon you, which come crashing down all around, sending ice splinters into the air which sting your faces. You notice now that the boulders are three to five feet across.

The avalanche from whence you came has filled in the valley, blocking off an escape, while the area you are in now is quickly being turned into a river.

Rushing toward you from the tops of the mountain is what appears to be a half dozen ten foot long white furred wolves from both sides of the valley. They stumble, rush and skid down the mountainside, sending echoing barks and roars through the air.

6 winter wolves

THAC0 15, 2d4 damage, 6d4 frost breath weapon 1/10 rounds, HP 24, AC 5

6 frost giants warriors with boulders

HP 60, THAC0 7, 1 attack (boulder: 2d10, weapon: 1d8+9), AC 0

1 frost giant wizard

HP 60, THAC0 7, 1 attack (boulder: 2d10, hands: 1d8), AC 5

1st- Burning hands 1d3+8 (sv spell ½), audible glamor (save vs spell or sound), change self, chill touch (save vs spell or -1 str), color spray (5x20x20 spray, 1d6 peeps knocked unconscious for 2d4 rounds), enlarge/reduce (40%, 20 rounds), sleep (2d4 HD sleep for 20 rounds)

2nd- Blindness, Blur (-4 to enemy hit first attack, -2 second), flaming sphere (save vs spell or 2d4 damage in contact, or in area 1d4), fog cloud, Tasha's Laughter (save vs spell 30' cube at Those with Intelligences of 8-12(average to very) save with -4 penalties. Those with Intelligences of 13-14 (high) save with -2 penalties: laugh for a round, lose next round, then -2 strength for 2 rounds), summon swarm (1 damage per/round if defended, 3d4+3 if try to do anything, 20 AOE damage will disperse, caster must concentrate or dissipates in 2 rounds, 10 foot area), invisibility

3rd- Explosive runes, dispel magic, flame arrow (1d6 piercing, 4d6 fire, 2 of them)

4th- Confusion (1d4+10 creatures, wander away, stand confused, attack nearest creature, act normally, save vs spell at -2, 12 rounds), Contagion (save vs spell or -2 dex/char/str, -2 attack rolls, 1d3 weeks of bed rest or remove disease), fear (save vs spell or 60% -5%/level chance of running for 10 rounds), fire shield (12 rounds, any damage dealt to caster is dealt back to attacker)

5th- Conjure Elemental (4d8 damage, 13 THAC0, 64 health, AC 2, can bore through earth)

1 frost giant warband leader

HP 80, THAC0 5, 1 attack (boulder: 2d10, weapon: 1d8+9), AC 0

As you near the top of the mountain you can now see the giants before you. They look to be housemen of your own people, except three times in height, and frost clings to their faces and beards as if they were killed by exposure. One of them appears to be a chief or warband leader of some sort, donning an ornate silver full face helm, and with a bold purple cloak at his back billowing into the wind, while one wears a blue linen robe and is singing spells on the wind in a guttural, hateful tongue. Their armor and equipment appears ancient, but is familiar, they are steeled with giant axes, spears and broadswords.

Onward

After a week more of marching through the mountains the valley widens into a coastal plain. You are blasted by salty, freezing winds from the water. Soon you come upon a wooded bluff overlooking a sandy beach and a gray, swirling sea. Soft waves roll across the beach. Hundreds of sea birds pick at the remains of a rotting whale which is beached onto the land.

[build boat etc? Rædwald]

Giant Squid lol

[describe launch of boat etc]

[You sail east on calm seas for a week, past icebergs, the winds becoming warmer as you near the Seleucid isles. By the end of the week the winds are warm enough so that the men working the sails and oars overheat at work under their furs. Far on the horizon you can see the islands scraping the sky. Sea birds circle the ship and pick at the remains of garbage and scraps thrown overboard. Some of the men are able to coax the birds to land on the ship, and make them into pets, giving them stupid little names. What do you do during this time?]

[Another week passes and the island is nearly into view, far ahead you can see fishing boats and galleys sailing near the coast line. It is a fair and bright day, and by now the winds are temperate, 50 or sixty degrees. Instantly and without warning the skies begin to churn violently and sea salt blasts your face as powerful winds throw the boat side to side. Giant waves form and batter the vessel, and soon you are riding giant looming hills of sea which sink away in moments. Rain and hail comes from the sky as the winds intensify to levels you have never experience before. Men stow the oars, but some fly into the sky and into the ocean. What do you do?]

[The storm continues, and at several points the ship nearly upends. Several men are unaccounted for, and you can barely hold on. Wave after wave crashes into the ship, sending it sideways, dumping supplies and men overboard. The sky darkens. You see on a distant wave, hundreds of feet away, the outline of something terrible and massive, with tentacles, a shadow in the water. The mast of the ship snaps in half and collapses into the center of the boat, covering the crew with the sail.]

[...?]

[When you manage to uncover yourselves from the sail a horrific creature is in front of the ship. A giant squid, of mythical proportions, at least a hundred feet long, is riding the wave with you. Ten black tentacles, covered in sharp circular suckers the size of a human head, shoot out from it and attack the ship. You recognize this creature as the kraken, a fabled sea monster which rules underwater kingdoms and is said to pull down dragon ships to their doom. You catch a glimpse of a giant white beak coming from under its two massive, emotionless eyes as the water tosses the ship into the air. Straddled atop the squid's head, standing in the wind, is the mahir which you banished from Aleisa, and which consequently killed Bestla and Angantyr.]

[Roll initiative, after 4 rounds the ship is snapped into half, mahir flies away]

[summons 4 killer whales]

Kraken

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Very deep oceans

FREQUENCY: Very rare

ORGANIZATION: Solitary

ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any

DIET: Carnivore

INTELLIGENCE: Genius+ (19-20+)

TREASURE: G, R, S (+A)

ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 5/0

MOVEMENT: Sw 3, Jet 21

HIT DICE: 20

THAC0: 1

NO. OF ATTACKS: 9

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-18(x2)/2-12(x6)/7-28

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil

SIZE: G (90'+ long)

MORALE: Fanatic (18)

XP VALUE: 14,000

Krakens attack as huge varieties of giant squid. Two of their tentacles are barbed and cause 3d6 points of damage when they hit. They then try to drag prey toward their gaping maws for a bite of 7d4 points of damage. The other six free tentacles inflict 2d6 points of damage when they hit and constrict for 3d6 points each round thereafter. A kraken's tentacle must suffer 18 points of damage from sharp or edged weapons to be severed (these hit points are in addition to those the kraken gets from its Hit Dice). If three or more of its tentacles have been severed, the monster is 80% likely to retreat, leaving behind a cloud of ink to discourage pursuit. The kraken is 50% likely to retreat to its den if four or more of its tentacles have victims. It leaves behind an ink cloud in this case also. The ink cloud of a kraken is 80 feet high by 80 feet wide by 120 feet long and is poisonous (it dissipates in 2-5 rounds). Those within the cloud receive 2d4 points of damage every round they remain. Krakens jet away to their lairs at a movement rate 21. Krakens can drag ships of 60 feet long down in the same way as normal giant squids attack. They have the innate power to cause airy water in a sphere 120 yards across or in a hemisphere 240 yards across (they can do this continuously). They can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time, at will: *faerie fire* for up to eight hours, *control temperature* in a 40-yard radius continuously, *control winds* once per day, *weather summoning* once per day, and *animal summoning III* (fish only) three times per day (note that this spell does not grant control of the fish once summoned).

[Everyone dies etc]

[You are all pulled into the churning waters, the freezing seas fill your lungs. As you are dragged deeper and deeper into the dark deep, your skin freezes and you begin to choke for air. You see the two halves of the ship being pulled down amidst you, and the killer whales circling and biting at the men who survived the initial fight, ripping them apart and creating dark currents of blood. Everything goes black.]

Cult of the Kraken

[You all awake, severely weakened, your eyelids heavy as stone. About half of the men you set out with from Leptus are here. A heavy fish or brine smell fills your nose, causing immediate nausea. You are in a cave of some sort, tied with metal twine to posts which have been driven into the rock. You are all naked, and your feet drag in a few inches of putrid, black water. A few torches line the walls, revealing the fossils of long dead marine animals protruding from the rock. There is a hole in the rock, a passageway, to the west.

Three heavily scarred, emaciated men in soiled, simple tunics walk around the room in a trance, their eyes rolled back white, their hair encrusted with lice. As you begin to move one of them tugs on the tunic of another and points. A gray bearded, strung out, elder one nods and says “Master will want to know they are ready. Prepare the altar!” The other two run out, and you hear splashing of feet down the passage. The elder one wobbles over to your assorted company and begins to emotionlessly poke and prod at your bodies, as if picking out a fine slab of meat.

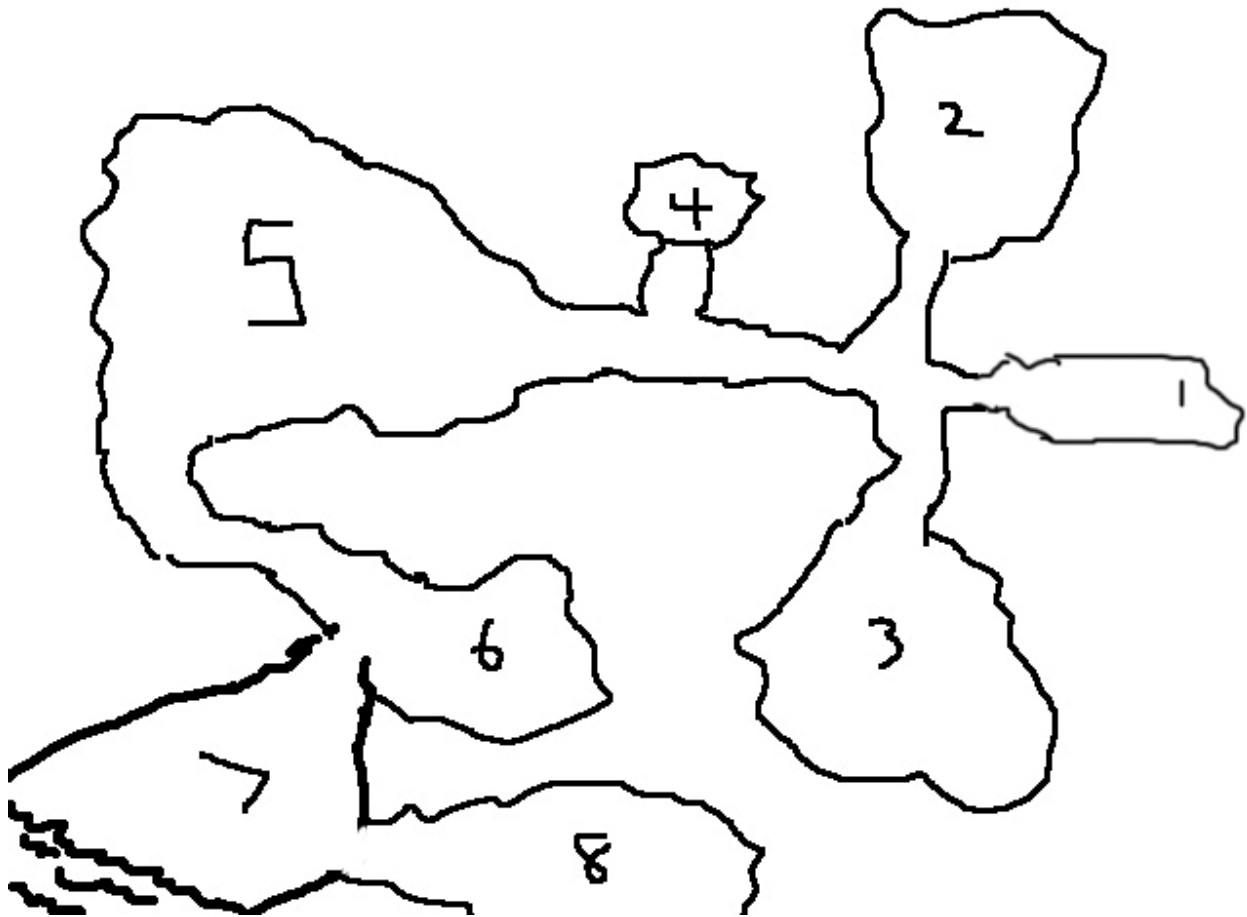
After a few minutes the other two return and nod wildly. The elder takes out a rusty fish gutting knife from his belt and walks over to Readwald the ship builder. He emotionlessly slashes his throat and the ship builder spasms wildly, gurgling and thrashing. A calm, comforting, female voice enters into your minds: “Do not try to escape, your magic will not work here. Serve me as thrall or empower me with your consumption.”

The elder stares at Readwald for a few minutes, and when he stops thrashing about, unties his bonds and throws the body over his shoulder, walking out of the room with the others. A barbed wire door is closed over the passageway, and you hear the splashing of feet down the way.]

You all have 1/3rd health or 1 health (if you died in the previous fight), and -4 strength, constitution and dexterity

Escape:

The voice of the woman enters your mind again “Foolish, I was hoping to spare at least a few of you. Die now.”



1: Exiting the cave you come into a crossroads with dark, broad, billowing tunnels headed north, south and west. The tunnels are about fifty feet in diameter and are pitch black. You can hear murmuring and the echoes of people talking to the north. To the south you hear a blacksmith at work, as well as clanging of steel and men shouting.

[light?]

2: Slave Nest

You head north for about fifty feet and the tunnel widens into a large circular cavern. The center of the cavern is raised, and is littered with dozens of putrid tents, bedrolls , blankets and other bedding. Small fires are visible, and huddled around them are naked savages as you saw before, including several pregnant women who lay prostrate. There are a few of them mating out in the open, as children play in the muck. The base of the raised cropping of rock in the center is a moat of shit, tarnished water and waste. You see perhaps two dozen individuals here. [attack if not stealth, 8 men]

3: Warrior den, blacksmithy, industries

You head south and the tunnel widens into a large tear-shaped cavern. A dozen men are in rusted chain mail and rotting leather armor, striking dummies with spears and clubs. Looking closer, you realize the dummies are actually decaying upper bodies, covered in maggots. A brawny man works at an anvil far to the back of the cave, smashing a hammer onto its face and forging what appears to be spear heads. Other men lay scattered about the chamber on rugs and matting, working crafts of various types, spear shafts, tents, bowls and tunics. [if not stealth, attacked by 12 warriors]

4: Armory

Passing through the cavern passage you notice a gleaming of light coming from the north: a short tunnels leads to jail bars, behind which is all of your equipment, amidst a greater hoard of gear, all of which is sunk in about 3 inches of putrid black water. [requires key from high priest to open]

5: Temple

Continuing west the passage you are in widens into a massive rectangular cavern, with a ceiling hundreds of feet high. In the center is an idol of dark green stone dozens of feet high, a stylized form of the squid you encountered earlier: it's eyes are black pearls. At the base of it is a rough stone altar, protruding from the rock, it's top stained with a covering of blood jelly. The idol is surrounded by dozens of soiled circular pillows, which face it in a circular fashion. Many of the pillows have cross-legged thralls on them, facing and bowing before the idol. Priests in black cowls move through the room with emotionless form, grabbing the skulls of the worshippers and wiping ash across them. A priest with a coiled staff stands near the altar, a gold key hanging from his belt. [attack if they are not stealth:

20 worshippers, 3 priests, one high priest]

6: Processing area, remains of ship are here

You head south. The passage bends east and then widens into a chamber, with another tunnel headed south. This spacious cavern is filled with the two split pieces of the ship that brought you here. IT appears to have been ripped apart and searched thoroughly, although bins of provisions remain unmolested scattered about the rock floor. You can see now that the ship was cracked clean in half, and it will not tread water without serious repair. There is a gradient of elevation in this chamber, and the bottom of it is filled with about a foot of pooled, filthy water. Accordingly, remains of the ship which came loose float by.

7: Dead here, as well as point of departure

The southern passage leads to a gargantuan tear shaped cavern, leading on a slope downward. To the south west is an opening to the ocean, and the waters are calm there. The chamber here is freezing. Scattered about the room is a thick track of wooden debris and blood, probably from when the ship was dragged into the chamber you just came from. Human bodies lie stripped and partially devoured across the incline: they are the companions of yours who were not so lucky to be captured alive. Beetles of the sea are feasting on them, and scatter when you approach, diving into the water. There is a passage headed to the south east.

8: Kraken's den

You head through the passage and enter into another massive, rectangular cavern. A giant red bed, lined with red velvet, is in the center of the cave, flanked by dozens of human skeletons. It is brightly lit. Resting atop the bed is the kraken, surrounded by dozens of retainers who pet its skin and fan it with giant silk fans. Its tentacles draw nearer to its body as you approach, causing the cavern to rumble and shake. The thrall remain emotionless. A few drag the body of Readwald to the center of its head, wherein the tentacles part and reveal a massive man sized beak. The kraken snaps Readwald in half and swallows his body whole. "So, Angvard, do you still wish for this death? Or will you serve me and so be spared? Worship me. It is I who showed mercy when the ancient one would bid me otherwise. Are you prepared to feed your courageous fellows to this fate?"

[If attack, weather control, hurricane, push them up against the wall]

Battle:

20 retainers

Kraken

Skald Knowledge: Seleucia/Sea of Stone

The Sea of Stone is called as such because it is a calm, salty sea, known for its remarkable flatness and weak swells. The waters are filled with an abundance of fish and are also said by the locals to be inhabited by sea monsters. Regardless, fishing is the prominent means of supporting one's family and the calm seas allow for frequent commerce and settlement of the outlying islands surrounding Seleucia. The islands are part of a current which keeps them relatively warm year round, even during the winter. It rarely snows on the islands, or frosts over, and the islands are rocky, hilly, sandy places, marked by sparse vegetation. There is an abundance of life on the islands however: seals and sea birds frequent the shores, while the region is also home to one of the most feared wild animals in all the country: the Seleucid Monitor, which is said to poison men with its scratches and bites. These hardy lizards inhabit the coastal areas of the islands, and range in size from five to ten feet in length. They aggressively defend nesting areas.

Few people have traveled to the east since the time of King Cearl of Seleucia, ten generations ago, when upon the king and a company of his men were lost while attempting to establish trade with the inhabitants of the east. The few men who made it back alive said that they were waylaid by naked, tattooed savages who ran out with clubs and overcame them. Those who were captured were cannibalized. Accordingly, no ships have gone east for hundreds of years.

As for the Kingdom of Seleucia itself, it features a prominent Thing which rules the city and the outlying islands. The King mainly functions as a leader in times of war, and rarely, as an advisor on matters in which the Thing cannot decide decisively, ranging from law making to justice. This may be due to the general peacefulness of the island chain, which has few external enemies to contend with, and so does not need a strong central leader. The king as of your last visit was Deoric: an old warrior who lives on the eastern coast of the island with his wife Aethfreia, a seer, his sons, and a few thrall. He is a fisherman by trade, and is rarely seen in the city proper, not a politician or lusting after power. He can be relied upon when crisis looms, but prefers simple pleasures, the company of family and time on the sea, performing his trade, to the pretenses and power of kingship. The last time you were here the island was threatened by a fleet of raiders from the mainland: Deoric lead an armada against them, killing them all, and then immediately retired to his estate, returning the power to the Thing.

Rarely ships from the mainland will raid the islands, but the Seleucid navy is extensive and powerful, and no organized campaigns have ever been successful against them. Of this latter point, the kingdom is known: They have an extensive harbor and ship building industry and are known for their quality craftsmanship.

The Kingdom is known to make commerce with the mainland by use of a landing at the mouth of the river north of Hvalsey. Main exports include salted fish, lizard skins, ink, wine (one of the few places in Ascomania where grapes can grow) and pottery.