



OPEN DUNGEONS RPG PRESENTS

SALT AND BONE

Monsters and NPCs

Reference Guide

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"The covenant is not a promise. It is a leash."

All encounter difficulty ratings assume a Level 1 party unless otherwise noted. Adjust as needed: for higher levels, add more hit points, higher AC, more attacks per round, etc.

LEVEL-WIDE MECHANICS

Level 1 - The Necromancy Mausoleum: Water throughout - puddles, tidal seepage, partially flooded rooms. Salt and decay in the air. Torchlight off wet stone. The constant drip masks movement, breathing, and the scratch of bone on stone. Some Drowned Scribes are hostile on sight. Others only attack if their work is interrupted. That distinction is what makes this level memorable.



Level 2 - The Altar Temple: White marble, dry air, protected sacred spaces. The sacred font in F4 is the only clean water on Level 2. Vaelith regenerates 3 HP per round inside E2. Outside E2 his regeneration stops and DR drops to 0. Luring him out of his room is the smartest play in the adventure.



MONSTER and NPC INDEX

MONSTER and NPC	ROLE	LEVEL(S)	LOCATION
Bone Harvester *	Encounter	Level 2	D10
Captain Harsk	NPC/Boss	Level 2	D5, G2
Chalk Prowlers *	Encounter	Level 2	D3
Corrosive Ooze *	Encounter	Level 1	B11
Corsair Drell	NPC	Level 1	B9
Depths Devourer	Set Piece	-	Sea Voyage
Drowned Scribe	Encounter	Level 1	A5, B4
Drowned Scribe, Senior	Encounter	Level 1	C7
Gargoyle Sentinel	Conditional	Level 1	C11
Ink Wraith	Encounter	Level 1	A6
The Sovereign	Narrative	-	G4 (finale)
Tide Crabs	Nuisance	Level 1	C1
Vaelith, Covenant Warden	Final Boss	Level 2	E2
Zombie Shambler *	Conditional	Level 2	E2

* Existing Monster Trove creature. All others are adventure originals.

Monster stats may vary from original Monster Trove stats as Open Dungeons encourages Dungeon Narrators to change monster stat blocks to fit their adventures, and to minimize metagaming.

WARNING: though it may mention "Easy" for players in monster stat block, doesn't mean it can't be deadly for player characters.

NOTE: Necrotic and psychic damage bypass DR throughout this adventure. When a stat block says "DR does NOT reduce necrotic," that is a reminder, not an exception.

BESTIARY

Bone Harvester

A jangling frame built from giants' graves; its spear grows, splits, and returns. It clatters with each lurching step, announcing its presence like a macabre wind chime. The creature wields weapons fashioned from its own body, hurling sharpened ribs and femurs that impossibly regenerate moments later. Disturbingly intelligent for an undead thing, it seems to select its victims with purpose, targeting the strongest warriors first as if collecting trophies for its ever-growing frame.

Appears: LEVEL 2 - D10 - The Bone Pile (x1)

Level 2 - D10 - The Bone Pile

24 HP | AC 13 | DR 1

Save Roll: Quick +1, Tough +2, Mind +2

Attack: Bone blade limbs, d20+3 vs AC, 1d8+1 slashing

Special Attack: Bone Spear - 10 ft, Save DEX Quick, fail 2d6+2 piercing, cooldown 2 rounds.

Behavior: Erupts from the bone pile when someone steps within 10 ft. Gets a surprise round if undetected. After emerging, fights aggressively. Does not flee.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard. Surprise round plus Bone Spear land before the party can react.

3-4 players - Challenging.

5 players - Easy.



Captain Harsk

Classic sea dog. Eye patch over a real injury. Tricorn hat, grey-streaked beard. He offers deals he doesn't intend to honor. His empty blood vial is the tell - he needs yours, and he has from the beginning.

Appears: LEVEL 2 - D5 - The Pirate Camp (x1). May reappear at G2 if he escapes.

Level 2 - D5 - The Pirate Camp / G2 - The Midspan (if escaped)

28 HP | AC 14 (studded leather + quick reflexes) | DR 1

18 HP remaining if encountered at G2 after escaping D5

Attacks: 2 per round - Cutlass, d20+3 vs AC, 1d8+2 slashing

Special Attack: Captain's Bark - once per encounter, all allies within 30 ft gain +2 to their next attack roll

Special Defense: Eye for Danger - cannot be surprised. Always acts in the first round

Behavior:

May offer a deal at D5 - he is lying. Uses cave terrain for cover. Retreats below 10 HP. At G2 he has 18 HP remaining and fights to the death.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard alone. Deadly with Drell present - reduce Harsk to 20 HP.

3-4 players - Hard. Two attacks per round keep the pressure up.

5 players - Challenging.



Chalk Prowlers

A small, ghost-pale creature that moves in sudden, deliberate bursts, its claws leaving chalky streaks where it walks. The air around it carries a grave chill that seeps into bones and slows reaction. Chalk Prowlers favor crypts and ruined halls, stalking from the edge of vision and striking when warmth or motion betrays life.

Appears: LEVEL 2 - D3 - Stalactite Grotto (x3)

Level 2 - D3 - Stalactite Grotto

12 HP each | AC 13 | DR 0

Save Roll: Quick +2, Tough +0, Mind -1

Attack: Claw rake, d20+2 vs AC, 1d6 slashing

Special Attack: Bone Chill - Save DEX Quick, fail 1d4+1 necrotic, cooldown 2 rounds

Detection: Wisdom Chance Roll TN 14 to spot before they drop. Dense stalactite formations limit visibility to 15 ft.

Behavior:

Nest in upper stalactites. Drop from above for a surprise round if undetected. Fight on the ground after landing. Flee into the stalactites if reduced below 4 HP.

Scaling:

2 players - Deadly. Reduce to 2 Prowlers.

3-4 players - Hard to Deadly. The surprise drop and limited visibility are the real multipliers.

5 players - Challenging.



Corrosive Ooze

A bubbling, translucent mass that hisses and steams as it slides forward, leaving pitted stone and warped metal in its wake. The ooze shifts between sickly yellows and murky greens, its surface roiling with caustic vapors that sting the eyes and throat. Anything it touches begins to dissolve - leather blackens and curls, iron rusts in seconds, and flesh blisters on contact. The creature seems drawn to metal, perhaps by some primitive chemical hunger.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - B11 - The Corrosive Passage (x1). Contains Jermone's body.

Level 1 - B11 - The Corrosive Passage

29 HP | AC 12 | DR 0

Save Roll: Quick -2, Tough +2, Mind -3

Attack: Pseudopod, d20+2 vs AC, 1d8+1 acid

Special Attack: Acid Splash - 30 ft, Save DEX Quick, fail 1d6+2 acid, then 1d4 next round if not neutralized. Cooldown 3 rounds.

Special Defense: Corrosive Form - melee weapons that strike take -1 to future damage rolls (acid corrosion, cumulative). Wooden weapons may break on third hit.

Immune: psychic, poison

Vulnerability: chalk, mud, water, and milk neutralize its acid

Behavior:

Reacts to movement and heat. Slides toward the nearest warm body. Not intelligent. Slow - 20 ft movement.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard. Kite it - the slow movement is the exploit.

3-4 players - Hard. Weapon corrosion is the real threat, not the HP. Ranged attackers are unaffected.

5 players - Challenging. Ranged sidesteps the corrosion entirely.

Level 3 party - Easy. Add 20 HP and a second Acid Splash per round.



Corsair Drell

Lean, wiry, two fingers missing on his left hand. Claims to be a shipwreck survivor. Offers to join up, makes himself useful in a fight, and waits for the right moment. The brass horn under his shirt is the tell if anyone thinks to look.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - B9 - The Central Hall (x1). Pirate scout, false ally.

Level 1 - B9 - The Central Hall

18 HP | AC 13 (leather armor, quick) | DR 1

Save Roll: Quick +2, Tough +1, Mind +0

Attack: Long knife, d20+3 vs AC, 1d6+2 slashing

Special Attack: Dirty Strike - once per encounter, throws sand/grit in target's eyes. CON Tough Save or blinded 1 round. No damage.

Detection: Wisdom Chance Roll TN 11 - brass horn on a cord under his shirt is an odd thing for a shipwrecked man to be wearing.

Behavior:

A social encounter, not a combat one. Helpful in a fight but will betray the party near the altar. Fights to flee when exposed. Runs below 8 HP.

Scaling:

All party sizes - Not a combat encounter. The danger is the betrayal, not the damage.



Depths Devourer

Not the Sovereign. Not divine. Just ancient and territorial. A shape too large to be real, moving against the current with the slow certainty of something that has never needed to rush. The ships were there. Then they weren't.

Appears: Sea Voyage (narrative set piece only). Ancient deep-sea predator. Never fought.

Sea Voyage - Narrative Set Piece

300+ HP | AC 13 | DR 6

Size: A shape too large to be real.

Number of Attacks: 3 per round

Attack: Bite, 3d10+5 bludgeoning

Attack: Tail sweep, 2d8+3 bludgeoning (30 ft)

Attack: Ram, bludgeoning (ship scale)

Behavior:

What makes the northern sea "cursed." Destroys the rival party ships during the sea voyage. Does not attack the players' ship - it is occupied. Stat block is for DN reference only. If used in future play, these stats fit a Tier 3 party encounter.

Scaling:

N/A - narrative entity. Not fought in this adventure.



Drowned Scribe

Former members of the Scribes of the Drowned Quill, cursed to rise after Oceanus drowned them. They walk the corridors writing the covenant text with their own exposed finger-bones. Some are hostile on sight. The one in B4 is writing and does not know she is dead. That distinction is what makes this level memorable.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - A5 - Crypt of the Lesser Scribes (x2), B4 - The Old Scriptorium (x1, writing).
Reinforcements possible.

Level 1 - A5 / B4 - Crypt of the Lesser Scribes / The Old Scriptorium

14 HP | AC 12 (waterlogged robes, residual warding) | DR 0

Save Roll: Quick +0, Tough +1, Mind +1

Attack: Bone-finger scratch, d20+2 vs AC, 1d4+1 necrotic (DR does NOT reduce necrotic)

Special Attack: Inscription Burn - 15 ft, Save WIS Mind, fail 1d6 psychic damage. Cooldown 3 rounds.

Special Defense: On death, collapses into blood-ink pool (5 ft area). If a second Drowned Scribe walks through the stain, it regains 1d4 HP. Destroy both quickly or separate them.

Immune: poison, disease

Behavior:

Do not pursue beyond their room. Fight to drive intruders away, not to kill. If the party retreats, Scribes return to writing. The B4 Scribe ignores the party unless approached within 5 ft, disturbed, or loud noise is made. If she screams: Probability Roll 1-3 on d6 = 1d2 more Scribes arrive in 3 rounds.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard. Necrotic bypasses DR - do not trigger this while already wounded from A4.
3-4 players - Challenging to Hard.
5 players - Challenging.



Drowned Scribe, Senior

Vaelith's inner circle. They were writing when they died. They have been writing since. Unlike the rank-and-file Scribes, they are alert. Entering the room is the interruption. All four rise together.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - C7 - Scriptorium of the Dead (x4). Vaelith's inner circle.

Level 1 - C7 - Scriptorium of the Dead

18 HP each | AC 13 (warded robes, faded enchantments) | DR 0

Save Roll: Quick +0, Tough +1, Mind +2

Attack: Bone-finger scratch, d20+3 vs AC, 1d6+1 necrotic

Special Attack: Inscription Burn - 15 ft, Save WIS Mind, fail 1d8 psychic. Cooldown 2 rounds.

Special Defense: Senior Binding - when one is destroyed, all remaining gain +1 to attack.

Destroying two = +2. Last one fights at +3 and deals an additional 1d4 necrotic per hit.

Immune: poison, disease

Behavior:

All four rise when anyone crosses the threshold. Fight in formation: two advance, two use Inscription Burn from range. Priority is protecting the desks. Do not pursue beyond C7. THIS ENCOUNTER CAN BE AVOIDED - route through B11 instead.

Scaling:

2 players - DEADLY. Run 2 Senior Scribes instead of 4.

3-4 players - Deadly. Focus fire to prevent the escalating attack bonus from stacking.

5 players - Hard. The biggest fight on Level 1. It should feel like it.



Gargoyle Sentinel

Pristine. Sharp-featured. Not weathered like the shore sentinels. Every feather individually carved, faces intact. Their pedestals bear the Drowned Quill emblem. For the first time since entering this place, the players are not sure they are just stone.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - C11 - Stairs to the Altar Temple (x2, conditional). Divine constructs, threshold guardians.

Level 1 - C11 - Stairs to the Altar Temple

16 HP each | AC 15 (solid stone) | DR 3 (stone body)

Save Roll: Quick -1, Tough +3, Mind -2

Attack: Stone claw, d20+3 vs AC, 1d6+2 bludgeoning

Special Attack: Wing Buffet (once per encounter per sentinel) - all creatures within 5 ft: DEX Quick Save or knocked prone and pushed 5 ft back. No damage.

Special Defense: Construct. Immune to poison, disease, psychic, necrotic, charm, fear. Crumble after 4 rounds regardless of HP.

Bypass: carry the Scribe's Pass Token from C10, pause 1 full round between them, or a Cleric speaks a prayer aloud.

Behavior:

Do not animate if bypassed correctly. Push intruders back from the stairs if triggered. Return to pedestals if party retreats 20 ft. Can trigger a second time but only last 2 rounds on reactivation.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard - but the 4-round crumble timer caps it. Patience wins.

3-4 players - Challenging. High DR, short fight.

5 players - Challenging.

Level 3 party - Extend crumble timer to 6 rounds. Both sentinels trigger Wing Buffet at the start of round one before any other actions.



Ink Wraith

A humanoid shape of flowing dark liquid, letters and words moving through its body like text in a current. It doesn't appear until someone touches the blood-ink residue in the mixing bowls. Then it rises from the largest stained workbench and comes for whoever disturbed the ink.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - A6 - The Ink Workshop (x1). Spectral entity formed from centuries of accumulated blood-ink magic.

Level 1 - A6 - The Ink Workshop

22 HP | AC 13 (shifting form) | DR 0

Save Roll: Quick +2, Tough -1, Mind +2

Attack: Ink Lash, d20+3 vs AC, 1d6+1 necrotic (DR does NOT reduce necrotic)

Special Attack: Word Flood - 20 ft cone, Save WIS Mind, fail 1d8 psychic and blinded 1 round. Cooldown 3 rounds.

Special Defense: Semi-corporeal - physical weapons deal half damage. Magical weapons, spells, and fire deal full damage. Holy water deals 1d6 radiant on direct hit.

Immune: poison, disease, psychic

Vulnerable: fire (double damage), radiant (double damage)

Behavior:

Manifests only when someone touches the blood-ink residue or attempts to take intact vials. Does not appear if the ink is left alone. Does not pursue beyond A6.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard to Deadly. Semi-corporeal means effectively 44 HP against non-magical weapons. Have it dissipate at 15 damage if the party has no fire or magic.

3-4 players - Hard without fire or magic. Challenging with it. Fire or radiant cuts this fight short.

5 players - Challenging.

Level 3 party - No HP adjustment needed. If the party has no fire or radiant at all, reduce HP to 16.



The Sovereign

Ancient texts describe something between a serpent and a living reef. Two hundred feet of armored muscle, crowned with calcified coral that glows like dying embers. Twenty limbs, each longer than a ship. It does not protect Bal out of loyalty. It kills everything in the water because that is what it was made to do. Parents tell their children: "Behave, or the Sovereign will drag you under." The children laugh. The grandparents don't.

Appears: G4 - The Pyre (narrative finale). The covenant's weapon. Never fought.

G4 - The Pyre - Narrative Finale

HP: N/A - narrative entity, never fought

Size: Beyond Gargantuan (200+ ft)

Intelligence: Low (2-4) - follows the leash, not its own will

Alignment: Orderly Impartial (Bound)

Behavior:

Appears twice. First as a shadow beneath the ship during the sea voyage. Second at G4 when the pyre is lit. Crown breaks the waterline. It turns toward the armada. The mystery is the monster.

Scaling:

N/A - narrative entity.



Tide Crabs

Large crabs, shell the size of dinner plates, nesting in the barnacle clusters of the cave entry. They scatter when light appears and fight only when cornered or stepped on. More useful as rations than as a threat.

Appears: LEVEL 1 - C1 - East Shore Entry (x4). Natural scavengers, not monsters.

Level 1 - C1 - East Shore Entry

4 HP each | AC 14 (hard shell) | DR 2 (chitin)

Save Roll: Quick +1, Tough +1, Mind -3

Attack: Pincer, d20+1 vs AC, 1d4 piercing. On hit: STR Chance Roll TN 10 or crab clamps on (1 auto damage/round until pried off, 1 round action).

Behavior:

Scatter when light appears. Fight only if cornered or stepped on. A torch waved near them sends them retreating. If killed: crab meat provides 2 meals of rations.

Scaling:

All party sizes - Not a real encounter. Any party handles this easily.



Vaelith, Covenant Warden

A tall man in waterlogged Scribe robes, skin pale blue-grey, eyes open and luminous with faint white light. Fingers worn to bone at the tips. He has been standing beside the altar for decades. He does not breathe. He does not blink. He is waiting. Not alive, not dead, not fully sane. What the god made from a man who tried to rewrite divine law.

Appears: LEVEL 2 - E2 - The Altar of Oceanus (x1). FINAL BOSS ENCOUNTER.

Level 2 - E2 - The Altar of Oceanus

45 HP | AC 15 (divine warding) | DR 2 (salt-crusted form)

Save Roll: Quick +1, Tough +3, Mind +3

Attacks: 2 per round

- Inscription Claw, d20+4 vs AC, 1d8+2 necrotic (DR does NOT reduce necrotic)
- Covenant Surge (after use, roll a d6 at the start of each of Vaelith's turns - on a 5 or 6 it is available again): 20 ft radius burst centered on altar. All creatures: WIS Mind Save or 2d6 psychic + Shaken (-1 all rolls, 10 minutes). Save = half damage, no Shaken.

Special Defense: Covenant Binding - regenerates 3 HP/round inside E2. Outside E2: regen stops, DR drops to 0. Will not willingly leave E2.

Immune: poison, disease, psychic, charm, fear

Vulnerable: radiant (double damage). Sea-Glass Idol from C5 deals 1d6 radiant on melee touch.

Behavior:

THREE ENCOUNTER SCENARIOS. Scenario 1 (players read A7 journals and A8 murals): Vaelith speaks and steps aside if the party brings the offering willingly. Scenario 2 (players have Pass Token from C10 or ceremonial robe from F5): Vaelith is confused - Charisma Chance Roll TN 13 to talk him down, or he attacks at -2 to hit. Scenario 3 (players know nothing): Vaelith attacks immediately at full stats. Talking mid-fight is always valid.

Scaling:

2 players (Scenario 3) - DEADLY. Reduce HP to 30 and remove regen.

3-4 players - Deadly. Regen is the core problem - lure him out of E2 to shut it off.

5 players - Hard. The fight should feel like the weight of everything learned on Level 1.



Zombie Shambler

Once-human corpses animated by foul magic, these undead drag themselves forward with relentless purpose. Their clumsy gait belies their terrifying persistence, as rotting hands reach out to seize prey with an iron grip that only death can break. These shambling horrors refuse to stop their advance until utterly destroyed.

Appears: LEVEL 2 - E2 - Altar of Oceanus (conditional, x1). Manifests if altar is touched with anything other than the blood vial.

Level 2 - E2 - Altar of Oceanus (Conditional)

18 HP | AC 10 | DR 0

Save Roll: Quick -2, Tough +1, Mind -3

Attack: Slam, d20+1 vs AC, 1d6 bludgeoning

Special Attack: Bone Grasp - Save DEX Quick, target seized until zombie is destroyed, cooldown 2 rounds

Behavior:

Manifests when anyone touches the altar with anything other than the blood vial. Fights until destroyed. Does not respawn. One manifests per touch.

Scaling:

All party sizes - Easy. The real cost is HP burned before Vaelith.



UTILITY NPCs AND EMERGENCY STATS

These entries are not part of the adventure's bestiary index. They are included for table utility if the party starts trouble in Bal or if additional surviving pirates are needed beyond Captain Harsk and Corsair Drell.

Council Guard

Pantheon Hall security. Red tunics over scale mail, iron-spiked tower shields, decorative spears that stop being decorative the instant someone reaches for violence. They are disciplined, sober, and used to breaking up problems before those problems become legends.

Appears: PROLOGUE - Pantheon Halls / Assembly Chamber (use as needed). Emergency-use stat block only.

Prologue - Pantheon Halls / Assembly Chamber

20 HP | AC 14 (scale mail, tower shield) | DR 2

Save Roll: Quick +0, Tough +2, Mind +1

Attack: Spear thrust, d20+3 vs AC, 1d8+1 piercing

Special Attack: Shield Rush - Save STR Tough, fail target is shoved 5 ft and knocked prone, cooldown 2 rounds

Special Defense: Tower Shield - the first frontal physical attack that hits each round deals 2 less damage (minimum 0)

Behavior:

Fight in pairs, lock down exits, and try to pin troublemakers instead of killing them outright. If lethal force is used against the council, more guards arrive fast.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard if two guards engage in the anti-magic hall.

3-4 players - Challenging with two guards, Hard with four.

5 players - Challenging with four. Use reinforcements instead of stronger individual stats.



Pirate Crewman

One of Harsk's hardcases. Scarred, loud, mean, and very comfortable finishing fights that started unfair. Use this stat block for unnamed members of Party 2 in Bal, during the sea attack, or as surviving pirates on the island. This does not replace Drell's specialized B9 scout entry.

Appears: PROLOGUE - Assembly Chamber (Party 2), Sea Voyage, LEVEL 2 - D5 / G2 or any surviving pirate encounter.

Prologue / Sea Voyage / Level 2 - Pirate survivors

22 HP | AC 13 (leather coat, quick) | DR 1

Save Roll: Quick +1, Tough +2, Mind +0

Attack: Cutlass, d20+3 vs AC, 1d8+1 slashing

Special Attack: Boarding Rush - if the pirate moves at least 10 ft straight toward a target, d20+4 vs AC, 1d8+2 slashing, then may shove target 5 ft, cooldown 2 rounds

Ranged Attack: Throwing knife, d20+2 vs AC, 1d4+1 piercing, 20 ft

Behavior:

Presses weak targets, fights in pairs, and gets bolder if Captain Harsk is present. If Harsk drops, surviving crew try to disengage unless they think they still have the advantage.

Scaling:

2 players - Hard if two crewmen engage together.

3-4 players - One is manageable, two are Hard, three are Deadly in tight spaces.

5 players - Two are Challenging. Three feel like a real pirate scrum.

