

# Surprise for Sahuagan

Adventure by William Dymock

Winter 801WK

Duration 56 days (1<sup>st</sup> Frost - 26 Snow)

## Party Members

Balode Solgraf	Mind Warrior	Male	Greater Goblin	
Human	Illusionist	Male	Human	
Grendel Beedlenox	Mind(Water)	Male	Human	Leader/MilSci
Lucius	E&E	Male	Elf	
Merrick	Non-colleged	Male	Human	
Bonnie McWee Lass	Binder	Female	Human	
Aqualina	Water	Female	Human	Scribe

## Plane

Elushia

## Employer

Prince Callum (via Alex, his emissary)

## Places

Off the coast of Brandenburg

## Principle NPCs

The Mistress of the Dead - local necromancer/healer

Baron Karga (possibly deceased) - the local sahuagan lord

The demon Furculor - the Duke of the Waters

Harold and Charles of the Calimar Imperial Survey Corps

## Mission

Eradicate the 'devilmen' that are kidnapping and terrorising the local merfolk

# Surprise for Sahuagan

## Adventure Summary

1<sup>st</sup> Frost

Met emissary, Alex, from party employer, Prince Callum, who wants us to do something about the 'devilmen' terrorising the local merfolk population. Spent the day looking for waterbreathing caps that had been stolen.

3<sup>rd</sup> Frost

Sailed off

5<sup>th</sup> Frost

Arrived at area. Attacked by two water trolls and water elemental. Sailed to nearby island where we discovered a group of Aladarians that had been kidnapped by three demon worshippers. Finally reached merfolk village.

6<sup>th</sup> Frost

Village attacked early morning by summoned monster. Defeated that then went after the summoners. They escaped, flying off towards Brandenburg.

8<sup>th</sup> Frost

Reached the merfolk capital where we met the Prince. Found out about sahuagan activity.

10<sup>th</sup> Frost

Investigated the villages that had been raided.

12<sup>th</sup> Frost

Village attacked so we went after raiding party. Rescued captives and took a captive sahuagan. Found out about base of operations in nearby chasm.

13<sup>th</sup> Frost

Headed back to the Guild to do further research

18<sup>th</sup> Frost

Arrived at Guild. Discovered more about Furculator and obtained Holy Water. Headed back to wait for the next attack.

13<sup>th</sup> Snow

Got vision of Calimar talking to sahuagan

14<sup>th</sup> Snow

Village attacked by giant sea slug. We managed to drive it off. Had vision of sahuagan in capital so headed back there. Ended up beating up innocent merman because someone thought he was an illusionary sahuagan.

15<sup>th</sup> Snow

Investigated the wreck. It was a very large twin hulled ship that was stuck in the ooze. Searched it completely for treasure.

16<sup>th</sup> Snow

Finally managed to raise the wreck and get it seaworthy again.

22<sup>nd</sup> Snow

Investigated the sahuagan base. Chasm covered in three layers of plants to keep the heat in. Complex looks like carved squid. Mine nearby where sahuagan using dwarf slaves to mine for 'mad metal' which explodes when wet. Captured and charmed a prisoner. Calimar buying up all the proceeds from the mine in exchange for weapons etc.

The local priests were planning on summoning Furculor so used mad metal 'bomb', carried in by a golem, to disrupt the ceremony. After the resulting battle we captured two of the mages, charmed them, and got more information.

Somehow, that evening, a sentient golem was created which was sent off to assassinate the sahuagan leader.

23<sup>rd</sup> Snow

Went down to investigate what golem had done. Discovered it was assimilating living tissue and binding it to itself, thereby getting larger and more powerful. A trail of carnage had been left behind it. We had a battle with two other mages and defeated them before leaving.

## Surprise for Sahuagan

Our party employer this time was a watermage called Alex who was an emissary from Prince Callum. Our mission was to eradicate the 'devilmen' that were terrorising his land and find out why they were doing it. For payment, there was an ancient elven wreck, a strange three hulled vessel with a living mast, with some treasure stored within that was ours for the taking. Did I mention that this kingdom was underwater and most of the population was merfolk? I just had to go on this one. Besides I suspected that the 'devilmen' were sahuagan and I wanted to give them a good hiding as sahuagan were terrorising Pasifika as well.

The rest of the party were as follows:

Balode Solgraf - 9'8" green greater goblin. He told us he was a professional mushroom hunter with some skills in the Mind College, telepathy, hypnotism, project image. He was mostly a fighter, being a high ranked warrior and carried a large axe called Gorgoloth as well as a composite bow.

Human - 6' tall human wearing red leather armour with bells on. A monkey rode on his shoulder. Needless to say he's a jester by profession and a beginning illusionist. He told us he's from the plane of Solamakaar and was just here to get money. He has fair skin, green eyes, and purple hair. For weapons he uses throwing darts, whip, cestus and quarterstaff.

Grendel Beedlenox - Mind mage with some water spells who was pacted to Itimanuka, the Sage of the Sea (who I also worship). Has flaming red waist length hair one blue eye and one green eye. He's also a warrior and military scientist.

Lucius (the sad elf) - Male E&E. 6'7" tall and grey. Looks rather homely.

Merrick - Human, non-colleged, beastmaster, troubadour. Uses tulwar, dagger & maingauche.

Bonnie McWee Lass. A beginning binder from the same area as Brigetta.

And me, Aqualina. 5'1" tall human female with brown skin, waist length dark hair, blue eyes. I'm a watermage and can transform to a mermaid. Usually use tulwar or a trident/net combo in combat.

I became the scribe while Grendel was appointed the leader/military scientist.

Alex had brought a supply of red caps, eight in number, that provided waterbreathing. Unfortunately he had given them to a hobbit at the guild gates but the hobbit was not part of Guild Security. Lucius used a Crystal of Vision in an attempt to locate them and soon we were looking for them down the dingy dark alleys of Old Seagate and checking with known fences of stolen goods.

Aqualina - "What's the walls made of around here?"

Balode - "Ears!"

Finally we were in the Street of Merchants. Off it was an alley with a silver door. On the lintel was the words 'Come in and be rewarded'. Inside the place looked like an Arabian palace. A

picture of the founder, a large eastern gentleman in a heroic pose, was on one wall and in the middle was a fountain that was spraying coins instead of water.

We were told that this was the temple to the demon Seir - The Willing Prince. After giving them a donation, Balode was able to retrieve the caps that someone had sold them.

Our next stop was a dwarven armorer and weaponsmith. There I purchased a silvered weaponsmithed tulwar [+1SC +1D] and leather gloves for 350sp. Meanwhile Balode was stuffing Human into a set of uber-plate armour. Human could just barely move while he was in it. Merrick and Human needed better armour so I lent Human 15,000sp while Grendel lent the same amount to Merrick so both of them could purchase uber-chain armour.

.2.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Frost

Finally we were ready to go. Grendel created a boat and we sailed out. Once we were clear of the harbour, I generated a Mage Current. Not going to make that same mistake twice. Left Confederation Bay that afternoon.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Frost

Reached the area. I tried a Precognitive Vision using a Waters of Vision spell but a big clawed hand lunged out of the bowl and tried to swipe me. I really had a sense of foreboding after that. Lucius tried a vision and saw three guys standing on water summoning a water elemental. We could see a campfire on a nearby island. Lucius then had a vision of a dark and sinister figure wielding a trident. We decided to keep going anyway.

Suddenly a massive hand reached out of the water and attempted to tip the boat over. Alex went over the side. At the same time a storm blew up. The creature belonging to the hand rose out of the water, revealing itself to be a twelve foot tall water troll, a rather horrifying sight. Another troll grabbed the other side of the boat while a tall towering thing rose out of the water and roared. None of my elementals are that big.

I leapt to attack the troll that was currently working on Grendel while Balode and Human went for the other one. Lucius managed to slow them down and Balode smacked it hard causing it to fall overboard. Balode went after it. Grendel attacked the elemental with a waterspout while the rest of us went for the second troll. It too went overboard where Balode was waiting.

The elemental was a tougher nut to crack. Grendel had the only magical weapon that could touch it although I was initially attempting to fend it off with my new trident. Lucius was smacked around from it and Human was smacked unconscious. So I started firing waterbolts at it and was also smacked around for my efforts. I had to stop and drink a healing potion. Bonnie attempted to attack it with her claymore but somehow managed to entangle the weapon in my sash. Lucien bravely attempted to attack the elemental but his sword broke.

Finally after several blows and a barrage of my water bolts the elemental was defeated. I had used all of my 20pt healing potions and quite a few Waters of Healing were required to bring the party back up to full strength. I swam down to see how Balode was doing with the trolls. He had knocked them unconscious and was keeping them that way. After getting them to the surface, they were taken to another, nearer, island and destroyed on the beach.

An hour passed while we rested. Grendel and Balode designed and created a semi submersible boat. Most of it was below the waterline and flooded so we'd basically be in a floating shark cage. While I ensured everyone's gear was waterproofed, Human did a cloaking in the area.

.3.

In our new boat, we sailed to the island where we had seen the rising smoke from the campfire. We suspected that was where those three mages were and we wanted to give them a good seeing to. As we got closer Grendel did a telepathy and detected eight morose individuals in the area. Once we got close enough to see them, under Human's cloak, we could see that they wore the fashions of the Western Kingdoms and wielding short swords. Lucius, through his Wizard's Eye, could also see a strange writhing symbol on each of their foreheads. I have to admit I was being distracted by the sight of Bonnie attempting to blow bubble rings underwater but someone then reported seeing a small imp nearby, laughing maniacally before vanishing.

Two of these people rowed out to sea in a rowboat in preparation for going fishing. It was decided we wanted to capture those two so I slipped over the side of our boat and transformed into merform before swimming over to the boat. Meanwhile Lucius was attempting to charm them. Once that was completed I was able to pull their boat over to ours and we towed them back to the other island.

They told us that their group was from a small town in Aladar and that they were captured by three demon worshippers with an imp. In all there were twelve slaves, three demon worshippers and six trolls. They're under orders from their dark master. During all of this, Bonnie was making sandcastles.

Finally Grendel let them go and we sailed off. After finding our party employer we arrived at the spot over his town and dove over the side. The city itself looked liked a set of domes clustered on the sandy bottom. The inhabitants were merfolk but were golden skinned rather than the more dusky look of their Pasifikan cousins. After talking to some witnesses we were able to confirm that the 'devilmen' were sahuagan.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Frost

At about 3am that morning, one of the domes exploded and a strange shape emerged from it and oozed into a neighbouring dome which also exploded. I swam out to rescue a mermaid who had been knocked unconscious by this thing and ended up being squeezed unconscious by a tentacle. While the others attacked it, I managed to recover and fired waterbolts at it, as I was in pain from a crushed hip but managed to backfire and collapse, drifting gently down to the seabed.

The others succeeded in vanquishing the monster then Lucius used a crystal to find the summoner's boat lurking nearby. So we headed for our boat and went after them. As we were catching up to them something fell out of their boat. Fortunately we were able to evade the trolls that they had dropped. Grendel threw a waterspout at them and their boat disintegrated. Fifteen odd bodies of Aladarian people were left floating on the water. No sign of the three summoners until three heads popped up from the water and they flew into the air with big black wings. According to the locates they were heading towards the coast. Finally, they flew out of range. From what we could determine they were heading towards West Brandenburg, specifically the area ruled by Lord Azure. We were currently off the Brandenburg coastline.

There was nothing more we could do so we headed back to Alex's village to rest for a few days and wait in case those demon worshippers returned. I couldn't change back because of my injury so I was a bit concerned I would be stuck in merform. However, after two days, I was able to do so even though it hurt like hell.

#### 8<sup>th</sup> Frost

Finally reached the capital and went to see the prince. He wanted to know why the sahuagan were attacking again, under whose orders they were operating and to stop them by any means possible. The attacks were occurring on outlying villages to the north and west of here. He also gave us the location of the wreck so we could check it over when we felt like it. Hopefully there's something useful in there. We also needed to see the Mistress of the Dead, the local necromancer. She could give us more information as well as being able to fix my hip.

.4.

So that was what we did. I was told to lie down while she started a ritual. I'm not sure what happened as I gently went to sleep at the beginning.

#### 10<sup>th</sup> Frost

Regained consciousness two days later all healed up but feeling rather cold. Not even my Resist Cold would counter that. The Mistress was also able to enchant weapons so we could better deal with creatures like elementals so I got my trident done. Each weapon was now imbued with five charges of Rank 5 Spectral Weapon [+6SC +2D 53%BC].

Once that was done we spoke to the local military commander. The sahuagan had been carrying villagers off. They also had a much harder bone structure and tended to act as a mob rather than a tactical military unit. They tended to stick to the sea bottom and were usually accompanied by sharks. The villages attacked were the ones nearest the coast and there were usually 5 to 20 in a raiding party. There were different raiding bands involved and there was a period of 10 to fifteen days between attacks. The last one was ten days ago and they just take what they can catch. The villages are about fifty miles apart with two located to the north, 1 to the NE and 1 to the NW. Sahuagan can also see in the dark but they move slower than merfolk. They also do not like thaumaturgy magics and usually inhabit the depths.

I asked about aquatic elves and was told that they had been in the west but had left suddenly a few years ago.

So we decided to go to each village and leave markers that could be located and broken if the sahuagan turn up. Also Balode was able to obtain 5 squid ink grenades by swapping mushroom essences.

It took a while to travel to all four villages. On the way the party were doing weapons practise. Meanwhile I was practising my merfolk speak with Grendel.

#### 12<sup>th</sup> Frost

We had positioned ourselves roughly between the two middle villages while we waited. Finally one of Lucian's locates dropped out to tell us that the village was being attacked. It took us till late afternoon to get there and the sahuagan raiding party had already left. Weapons had been taken and two of the guard were dead and the other two unconscious. One of the dead guards had

a metal crossbow, rather rare down here, embedded in him. Since the raiding party had left a trail, we armoured up (including my eog armour) and went after them.

After an hour we caught up. There were eight sahuagan, four with spears, the other four with crossbows and tridents. With them was a large net with four merfolk in them.

They fired crossbow bolts at us, one doing serious damage to me so I smacked them back with my trident. Grendel was using his javelin of shocking. Unfortunately something went wrong and he managed to shock and stun everyone in the area. While Balode was powering into the opposition I drunk my power water to get back to full strength and charged in again. Unfortunately I got hit badly again and collapsed. Thank goodness everyone else was doing a better job and succeeded in vanquishing the sahuagan otherwise I might not have been here to write these words.

.5.

At the end of it we had rescued the merfolk and had one sahuagan prisoner. I was making sure it wasn't going anywhere. We also recovered several sahuagan decorations, sixteen small potion bottles half of which were empty, four crossbows, four pikes and four tridents. The crossbows were heavy crossbows and needed quite a bit of strength to use effectively. There were 70 steel bolts, none of which were enchanted. Some of the jewellery was enchanted with accursed magic of demonic origin.

The prisoner was charmed and Grendel detected in his thoughts 'the fools have failed'. We presumed they were referring to the summoners. The slaves had been ordered by Baron Karga, a large plumpish sahuagan with four arms. From what it was saying the sahuagan encampment was around 100 miles away to the northeast, near the coast, and there were lots of them there. There was a big demand for slaves as they were located in a giant chasm and had found some mines. So they were mining for valuable metals, iron, copper and a strange grey metal. It also told us that the potions give them the strength of their mighty lord - the 'fallen angel'.

The sahuagan skulls and the prisoner were taken back to the main town. This took the rest of the day.

### 13<sup>th</sup> Frost

The Mistress thanked us for the bodies and we hung around to see the prisoner tried and executed. Lucius used a crystal to see the sahuagan camp. It was located near a fissure and he could see strange glowing creatures on the walls, some sort of manavore. As he watched a sahuagan swam past dragging some dwarves. Meanwhile Grendel mailed all the notes, jewellery etc back to the Guild for divination and research. After some discussion we decided to head back ourselves as we needed to do more research.

### 18<sup>th</sup> Frost

Arrived back at the Guild. Some of the party started doing research on healing as we didn't have a healer in the party. Meanwhile the rest of us were trying to determine just which demon we were dealing with. With the help of the Guild librarians, we were able to determine that it was the demon Furculor, the Duke of the Waters. He was originally a sea elf and had a score of 6 out of 10 on the SinnFein danger rating. Lucius headed off to obtain some Holy Water and managed to obtain fourteen from the Powers of Light.

The divination results were also in. Two of the bracelets were enchanted to give protection against beings of Good (+10MR v Good). The potions were Rank 20 Waters of Strength that were created by a demon avatar. The tridents were Rank 5 weaponsmithed [+6SC].

Balode and I also wandered over to the Temple of the One Horned God in order to get some holy water off them. We came away with two vials each. Now we just have to figure out how to get the demon to drink it as the priests guaranteed it had some 'interesting' effects.

Finally we headed back to forestall another attack. It took us another four days to get back and, once back we waited for the next attack. Days went past but still nothing. The wreck was over 200 miles away but we didn't want to investigate that as we didn't want to be away when the attack occurs. So we did some cross training. I was teaching merfolk and trident.

### 13<sup>th</sup> Snow

After two weeks, Lucien's crystal ball picked up a sahuagan talking to a human who was dressed as a member of the Calimar Imperial Army. They're planning tactics. He also got a vision of a village being attacked sometime within the week.

### 14<sup>th</sup> Snow

We had picked a village to stay in and during the day we heard rumbling. I swam up to have a look and could see something large crawling along the ground heading towards the village. It's a large slug. So I quickly swam back to tell the others. I tossed a buoyancy on Balode and Bonnie and we prepared to attack it. Meanwhile Lucien had a vision of two sahuagan attacking a house somewhere else. Unfortunately we couldn't tell which village it was.

After a fight we were able to drive the slug off and it wandered out into the ocean. It even ate one of Balode's squid ink grenades before departing. However, we were wondering if this was a planned diversion.

.6.

So Lucien started looking around with crystals of vision. What he saw was a vision of a sahuagan wandering through the capital. So we sped off to do something about it. It took four hours at full mage current to get there and, upon arrival, everything looked normal. So everyone looked around with whatever enhanced vision talents they could bring to bear.

Suddenly Human reported that he could see a merman with an illusion on him. Everyone thought 'Aha! Disguised sahuagan'. So they rushed down to accost him. When he saw them coming he swam off with a crowd following. I think the hue and cry that Balode started had something to do with that. I swam off after them and, since I was the fastest swimmer, I was able to catch him. When questioned he was unaware he had an illusion on and I was beginning to wonder if Human hadn't somehow made a mistake. There were people who could vouch for him. However, Balode started roughing him up and managed to render him unconscious. So I took him to the nearest inn and left him in the care of the innkeeper and secreted a pearl on his person, for compensation. Meanwhile Human was playing around with illusions and managed to make a pair of breasts appear on Grendel. I arrived back just in time to witness an elderly mermaid wanting to know how much we were willing to sell our hermaphrodite for. We decided to beat a hasty retreat.

Checking the wreck seemed like a good idea so that was what we did. It was located off the edge of the shelf and, since it was getting late, we decided to wait until morning.

### 15<sup>th</sup> Snow

The wreck was located in very deep water and it was rather dark so I used one of my vials of light. It didn't take long to find it. In shape it looked like a twin hulled catamaran except very much bigger. The name on the side identified it as the 'Pride of Ullithan'. A large hole was on one side. While checking the decks, Balode spotted something of interest, a small inky black sphere with two ropes attached. He called it a 'tussled void'. I just hoped it wasn't a dark sphere on a rope but Balode replied that it is a rather useful device. There was also a note tacked to the hatch which read 'Salvage is property of Captain Farnsworth'.

The next several hours was spent giving this wreck a complete examination. What we found was a wizard's skeleton, carrying a strangely shaped enchanted broadsword, wearing a necklace, and holding a crystal sphere in one hand. There were also eight non magical suits of chainmail, an assortment of weapons and objects including an elven warbow, battleaxes, broadswords, and spears.

The others wanted to know whether it was possible to raise the entire ship to the surface using a Mage Current. I wasn't sure as it seemed rather embedded in the mud but Balode had the suggestion of sealing the hull with a Ship Strength then using Bound Water to fashion some sort of tube to bring air down to make it more buoyant. We also decided to use a Saturated Earth spell in the hope that the bottom would become looser and some elementals to help lift it.

So that's basically what happened. I was in the process of doing the ritual when two humans rode in on a mage current who were dressed as adventurers. At first we thought we were going to have to fight for this wreck but they immediately surrendered. They introduced themselves as Harold and Charles and they were members of the Imperial Survey Corps, part of the Calimar forces here. Charles had lost his tassled void. Bonnie admitted we had found it so Balode handed it over.

They told us that the ship was cursed to stay at the bottom and that the souls of the crew were staying with it. Could make raising it a bit tricky but we were still determined to try. Unfortunately my first two attempts to summon the elementals failed.

While that was going on, and after Harold and Charles had left, the others had managed to find out more about the treasure. The longbow was used to automatically enchant arrows, the sphere could maintain concentration spells for the user while the broadsword was lighter than normal and could be used by a mage. The necklace was hideously magical and increased the power of the user. Balode also managed to find a magical book on sea creatures.

Finally I was able to summon an elemental which was put to work clearing much of the silt from around the wreck. Unfortunately when we tried to lift the boat, it was still stuck. However the elemental was able to move it slowly along the surface.

### 16<sup>th</sup> Snow

After sleeping we tried again. Balode's tube idea was used to pump air into the hull, which had been previously sealed with a ship strength and more bound water. That took three hours. Basically the water was sucked out with a mage current. Once that was done another mage current was finally able to lift the ship to the surface.

Now we could see it out of the water we could see that this ship was huge. Basically it was a

floating fortress. Our subsequent explorations also found a treasure vault but it was empty. Some drow had left a rather insulting message in place of the contents.

Because it was so large, it took two parallel mage currents to move it. Consequently it took us four days to get it back over the merfolk capital.

.7.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Snow

Balode was talking about taking out all the sahuagan with cockatrice poison. The trouble was, where were we going to get a cockatrice from? Meanwhile Lucien was looking for a mid ranked sahuagan. Finally he found one giving a sword to a priest type. They were located in the area we knew the sahuagan base to be.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Snow

We took our small boat out, leaving the large one over the merfolk city. Some merfolk guards were detailed to keep an eye on it. It took us a day and a half to get to that area and upon arrival, we dived down to the abyss. There was a strange glow coming from that area. When we were about a mile away, we all went invisible. I triggered a witchsight so I could see my companions.

As we got closer to the edge of the abyss we could see tentacles writhing ahead. We were following the cliff face down and suddenly encountered some sort of translucent barrier. We figured it was about six inches thick and consisted of some sort of plant life. Small animals were crawling on the surface. We needed to get through it to continue so we carefully put a hole in it and slipped through. As we did, we noticed that the edges began growing back to heal the wound.

Thirty feet further down, there was another barrier, which we also passed through and a third one was encountered a few hundred feet further down. Once we were through that one we could see large caves in the side of the cliff, several creatures crawling around and a few sahuagan in the distance. The glow was brighter down here and the water was warmer.

Fairly soon we reached the rocky floor of the chasm. We could see the base of ropy tentacles, the same ones that were waving at the top. More sahuagan were swimming around so we carefully made out way between the rock outcroppings towards where the activity was. I had the best underwater vision so, through the mind speech, I was describing what I could see. Up ahead was a ruined building which reminded me of the old Calimar temple buildings I had previously encountered.

There was a mine entrance at the bottom of the cliff, at the base of the tentacles, where we could see slaves being led into and another hole in the floor that looked like a large octopus beak with four sahuagan on guard. Nearby was a huge carved eye in the ground, fifty feet across, that seemed to follow our movements. Some sort of special effect I hoped.

We snuck up around the guards and crept up on the temple. Through a crystal of vision we could look inside and could see a sahuagan testing strange metal on a slave. Telepathy detected two other sahuagan who were discussing the 'master' and not wanting to be fed to a slarg for upsetting the Baron. Presumably a slarg is a rather fearsome and horrifying entity.

One of the sahuagan exited the building and headed for the mine entrance. It never reached there.

Instead it was hit simultaneously by a mental attack and a sleep spell and collapsed. I rushed out and dragged it behind the nearby rocks before any others noticed. Grendel had detected in it's thoughts that he had to get eight bars of 'Mad Metal'.

After turning Grendel's boots to lead, Bonnie succeeded in shaping rock manacles for our prisoner. We then dragged it all the way back up to our ship where we woke it up, charmed it and questioned it. On it was an amulet with a similar shifting symbol that was on the sailors and another amulet of protection from angelic beings.

Its god was Furculator the Mighty, which it is pacted to, and they were mining strange metal, mad metal and demon metal. Mad metal explodes when in contact with water so that the mines are in air pockets. Their plan was to summon Furculator, sometime soon, using mad metal as candles. It thinks that the 'great one' wants to take over the land.

Strange metal has lots of uses but requires a powerful shaper to manipulate it. The Calimar are buying it all and are supplying weapons in exchange.

There are about 100 sahuagan in this outpost and they were sent here by the 'great one'. His description of the outpost seemed to suggest that they were living inside a giant creature, or at least a carved representation of one. They had found this place and inhabited it after killing a kraken that was in the area. The 'great one' lurks at the bottom of the trench where no light shines. He also commented that the slug would make a fine weapon of war if they could control it for more than a couple of hours.

The one thing that would scare them away from here were Deep Ones. There are five priests and this one is a mage. Baron Karga is a troll sized sahuagan who lives deep in the gut and has a pet slarg. They don't use wards and the mad metal is stored in the spleen. The strange amulet grants the favour of Furculator and also allows the demon to see through it.

The back door of the complex leads into a tunnel that descends to the depths of hell. A shipment of strange metal is leaving next week. The slaves are kept in the brain area and they have an arrangement with a solitary Deep One that makes stuff that transforms air breathers to water breathers permanently.

Its master, presumably the head priest, sleeps in the gall bladder and there is lots of loot available, mostly belonging to the Baron. The Baron and the guards all have magical weapons.

Grendel wanted to try disrupting the summoning by teleporting a piece of mad metal into the temple. So I attempted to cast a Waters of Vision so he could see where the metal was kept but something went very wrong and I found I could no longer cast spells. Fortunately all my rituals and talents still worked. Lucius had to take over the role even though he was running out of usable crystals of vision for today.

.8.

Because of that, we were unable to see into the temple to target the bomb. We were, however, able to see into the storeroom where a very nervous human slave was guarding four potion bottle sized lumps of mad metal. Balode started building a waterproof box to house the mad metal while Bonnie constructed another golem. The idea was to put the metal in the box, get the golem

to carry it in then open the box at the appropriate moment and place.

Once the box was ready Grendel teleported the metal into it. Each lump weighed four pounds and, once it was in, Balode closed the box and sealed it with tar. The slave fainted when he saw that there was a lump missing,

The golem, which Bonnie christened Timmy, was activated and we went back down again. There seemed to be a lot more activity. Preparations for the sacrifice were going on in the temple and we figured that the summoning was still two to three hours away. Finally, at dusk, a procession entered the temple. I was sure there were enough sahuagan there for a summoning circle.

Timmy was made invisible and sent into the temple. I used another charge of witchsight so I could watch him until he entered the temple. There seemed to be some alarm as a few of the guards could see Timmy but the rest couldn't. So Grendel sent in a phantasm to stir things up further. One guard was killed so Grendel sent in another. That one succeeded in chasing the guard out.

Lucien and I sneaked up closer. As we did I could see a form, probably a sahuagan, dive into the main entrance. Lucien sent in a wizard's eye so he could see eight beings and a small box inside. Five sahuagan were at five points of a pentagram while the head priest was in the middle, chanting. The victim, a female human, was strapped to the altar which was inside a small circle. Two very worried sahuagan guards was also visible.

Finally the box was in position in the pentagram and telekinesis used to open it. There was a flash of light accompanied by a small explosion, not as big as we had hoped, and, once our vision had cleared we perceive several badly burnt entities in there picking themselves up. They rushed out while we charged in. Human shot the head priest with a crossbow while I netted one of the mages. The rest were casting. Suddenly Bonnie screamed and went unconscious. Other party members were hit by erupting black smokers underneath them. Grendel was knocked over by one of the guards.

We attempted to concentrate on the mages. However, the priest then cast its spell and I suddenly discovered my waterbreathing ability vanish, even though I was in merform. I had to hold my breath but resolved that, if I was going to drown, then I was going to take as many with me as I could. Unfortunately my attack with the trident on the high priest missed.

The battle raged on for a while and it was looking rather bad at first. However Lucien was able to slow the mages and quicken us while Balode stunned the high priest. Lucius then got a healing potion down Grendel then was hit by a black smoker himself. Human and Balode waded into the mages, killing two and knocking a third out. Lucius charmed the high priest but it wasn't able to reverse my affliction. Finally I couldn't hold my breath any longer and lost consciousness. This had to be a nomination for best death - a mermaid drowning.

However, I didn't die. Back on the boat, Balode and Human were able to revive me. I also had the feeling both of them were taking advantage of my condition to satisfy their curiosity about mermaid anatomy.

The high priest had been restrained and searched. On it was a sceptre of dogwood, a silvered

broadsword, a mitre, cap, robes, a girdle of lionskin with strange symbols on it, and a gem encrusted silver censure. None of these items were innately magical.

While the others investigated, I helped Lucius charge up a moonstone.

.9.

So now we had captured Gra the mage and Blargh the summoner. However we couldn't kill them outright as they were both pacted and there was a very good chance that a powerful agent of Furculator would show up to avenge the death. We also found out that the Baron and the three high magi were also pacted. They were Satarga, a water mage, Saturum, of unknown college, and Harn, an earth mage - very rare down here.

We were also bemoaning the fact we didn't have easy access to anyone who could DA or divinate the items we had found so Blargh offered to help by summoning Cabonuth the Insane. Merrick thought that would be a mad thing to do.

Their Calimar advisor was an entity called Belathogara and the barriers across the chasm consist of a sort of plant. They're there to keep the heat in as sahuagan get sluggish when they get cold. Blargh was also able to give us a map of the complex and it definitely looked like the internal plumbing of some sort of sea slug. The mages hang out somewhere in the maze area as there is a place of power there. One of them want to wake up the creature that they're living in. The Deep One that lives a few miles away, had expressed an interest in the location where the sahuagan are living. It looks like a large slug with three slitted eyes and tentacles.

Bonnie petrified both sahuagan with a ritual then created another golem using a slim dagger instead of a hand. Meanwhile I changed back to human form and went to sleep. The rest of the party also napped. While we slept Bonnie was woken by her newly activated golem that wanted to grant her a favour for giving this free wandering soul a body again. So she suggested that the golem assassinate the Baron.

Bonnie (to Grendel) - "I think I made an oops"

### 23<sup>rd</sup> Snow

By the time we woke up it was just past midnight. Bonnie told us what had happened and we decided we'd better investigate. So, we went down again (I was back in merform). There were parts of dead creatures at the first barrier and when we finally got down to the bottom there was a river of blood leaking out of the mine entrance. Grendel picked up a presence in the mine which was screaming and seemed to consist of several parts. The minds then fused into one. I was getting a really bad feeling about this.

Just then a huge bulbous form oozed out of the mine and slithered towards the main entrance. It looked like it was composed out of a very large collection of several body parts.

.10.

Cautiously, we followed it in. The first room that we encountered contained bits of sahuagan, broken weapons, and other signs of carnage. Basically there was massive amounts of death. Continuing on, we passed strange structures, 20' high and 3' wide subdivided by boards. We had

already been told that this was where the slaves were kept.

The next room was immense, 80' across, and the structures holding the roof up looked organic. A bunch of guards were trying to form a defensive line to prevent the creature, which was in the middle of the room, from getting deeper into the complex. Grendel picked up one group of minds talking about releasing the slarg then picked up another group arguing over accessing the artifact.

As the creature charged into the sahuagan, we settled down to watch then headed to one of the side tunnel entrances in the direction where the minds talking about the artifact was. Several party members wanted to acquire it. That tunnel led us into a maze area, consisting of 8' diameter tubes.

Finally we reached another room. The walls reflected scenes of people we had met. There were several objects in the room and two large sahuagan arguing. One of them was keen to use the artifact.

As we went in I triggered a Spectral Weapon on my trident while Merrick and Human shot crossbow bolts at one of them while Balode charged in. The first one grabbed him so I went in to help, just as Lucius's quicken spell hit us. I stabbed the sahuagan in the leg. Grendel must have launched a phantasm at the other one as it became visible when it passed one of the objects. A skull was brandished at me but nothing apparently happened. I think its magic bounced so I hit him again.

The other one roared and several party members nearby took damage. I concluded that this one was a bardic mage. The one we were attacking toyed with an obsidian bracelet and many of its wounds closed up while the other reached into a pouch, pulled out some dark green seaweed and chewed on it. We could see it visibly grow stronger. By now Lucian had dropped a slowness spell on the two of them.

“Oh great. It's aquatic spinach' - Aqualina

Grendel walloped the second one with a battle axe while I was picked up, shaken about, then hurled against the far wall. The second sahuagan did something and healed the first one. Grendel then did a massive blow with his axe, severing the sahuagan's arm. Meanwhile the first one caused Balode to be covered in black shapes that was slowing him down. We concluded that they were spectral weights.

Then the one that Grendel was fighting fell asleep. Lucius struck again. I smacked the first one then went to staunch the bleeding of the second one. We didn't want either of them to die as we had realised that these were two of the arch mages and both were pacted. We didn't want to face an enraged demon. Meanwhile the others piled into the first one and quickly rendered it unconscious.

The others looted while I drunk a Waters of Healing. There were two obsidian rings and two different types of seaweed. Presumably one was for healing and the other for strength.

“Oooh - Power weed” - Grendel

Two curved bones, torcs, skulls, wands, bracelets and belts. Bonnie was even staring at a

magical puzzle cube. After collecting the items we dragged off the mages where Bonnie did the rituals to turn them into stone.

During the second ritual, while we rested and healed up, Grendel picked up another mind. We first thought it was the Baron but after listening we weren't so sure.

“Why are we whispering if we're on Mind Speech?” - Human

It was somewhere outside and seemed fascinated by the structure we were in. We could hear thoughts like ‘I wonder where it came from. I wonder if I can awaken it. Why did the fools dig here? The Master never mentioned it’.

.11.

We waited for a while and the mind went away. We then had a look around some of the complex but didn't find much more to loot. Dead sahuagan were all around. We concluded that the monster was still rampaging down below so we decided to leave it alone for now. Besides we concluded we had done what we had come for. These sahuagan won't be enslaving any more merfolk for a while. As for the devouring juggernaut we had unleashed, it was either slithering its way down towards the depths of Hell where it would be ravaging its way through the denizens, or it was going to work its way back out and slither its way along the seabed, assimilating all it came across. Either way, we didn't want to meet it again without much more firepower.

So we left and headed back to the mercenary where we reported to the Prince. He seemed pleased with our story. We then reclaimed our large ship and sailed back to Seagate, arriving there on the 26<sup>th</sup> of Snow.

Balode was making plans to turn the ship into a floating palace of pleasure and we would become part owners and collect a share in the profits. I was keen on this and decided to move onto the ship, rechristened the ‘Haven of the Sea Goddess’ on a permanent basis. I was also fortunate enough to score the Orb of Concentration in the treasure split.