

# The Treacherous Black Heart

## Part 2:

### The Curse of Ardak

The party return to the ship and systematically start to go through it.

#### Lower Deck

- **Magic Holding cells:** contain the drained bodies of the wights' victims (minus their hands). Pendants are used as keys. **Potion of Rainbow Hue found.**
- **Fighters' Mess:** Signs of battle.
- **Aft port room:** Cheshire and slave. A badly wounded man is attended by the slave he received from the Deck of Many Things. You take them both topside and offer them passage on the Crest Dancer. They agree.
- Forward starboard cabin: Foreman, the mad pugilist. The occupant of this room was locked in because he needed to win a fight to magically gain a level from the Deck of Many Things. When he realises the wights are gone he tries to pick a fist fight with one of the party. You decide to leave him in the room.
- **Sleeping area for Lower rank officers:** Stairs lead down to the next level. Curtained off berths. This is where the wights slept in a pile of the middle of the room. The party went through this section last time.

#### HOLD

**Aft Storage Area: Shrub's stronghold.** The party meet the nemesis of the Mates of Stiles. This large area was fortified by a crate wall. Shrub turns out to be a religious fanatic who had "seen the errors of his ways". He comes across as a TV evangelist. He had a small following with him.

In this room are the following:-

##### True followers of Shrub

Reogge Shrub (Human)  
Manky Pete (Human)  
Port Willy (Bugbear)

##### NPC that turn on party

Badger (H/E)  
Buckner (H/E) **Spell Book** (Appendix A)  
Kornith (H/O) **Ring of Ram**  
Sanchez (Human)  
5x 1<sup>st</sup> level fighters

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Shrub has the **Electrum pendant** and claims ownership of the ship. The party negotiate with him to help gain access to the vault. Some of the NPC don't like the deal and decide to ambush Shrub and the party once they return. One of the bad NPC takes a potion of Invisibility and follows the party and sees them enter the Magic Circle portal.

**Skins Storage:** The cook is in this room and is drunk and has gone mad. He picked the card that gave him an extra planar enemy. When the rip into the void was found, he hid waiting for his enemy to come. The wait has driven him mad.

**Rum Storage:** *Double locked doors with strong padlocks. Contains barrels of alcohol. (stays on Ship)*

**Grain storage:** *This room is full of sacks of flour and grain that went off due to the presences of the Wights. (Thrown overboard)*

### **Storage Room:**

*This room is full of crates marked with a large red dot. (Captain Hobb's share of the booty)*

**Storage room:** *This room is full of animal cages. (Captain Hobb's share of the booty)*

### **The Treasury**

*This door is iron with five padlocks on it. The door is magically trapped (you defuse the trap when you have the Captain's pendant (after the adventure has finished)).*

*This room contains two iron chests on a pile of coins. The chests are not trapped.*

*Each contains 5000gp in gold coins. The pile on the floor contains 2000sp, 2000ep, 5000cp (half goes to Captain Hobb's)*

### **Armoury:**

Contains several racks of various weapons (50% went to Captain Hobb). **Exceptional silver pick** (Captain Hobb's share)

### **Doors outside the Main Hold:**

There is a trap on each door that you have to set off to get past. It makes you think you have been transported to a cell with monsters; however, the monsters are the rest of your party who also see monsters. The party work out that the cell is an illusion and wait for it to finish (smart cookies). Knowing the result of the trap, you sent the other trap off at a later time. You find in this part of the Hold a **Potion of Heroism**.

**Main Hold/ Treant and Dead Captain:** You find that a Treant has been captured and been made into the mast. It had managed to partially escape the Magic collar that controlled it and had been trying to sabotage the ship. The Treant was the traitor the captain had been looking for. The captain tried to kill the Treant but only wounded it with a golden scimitar. The Treant killed the Captain.

- The Treant asks for help. The key to release his collar is in the Vault.
- The Captain is wearing:
  - Finely crafted **white leather armour**. (will fit E, HE, H, O or HO)

- Gold ear rings (200gp)
- Gold Bracelets (200gp)
- Gold Scimitar (500gp non-magical)
- The captain has the Athelerite pendant.

The party works out that a pile of crates in the middle of the room are a permanent illusion cast onto a carpet. The party rolls up the carpet and the illusion disappears (it later reappears when the carpet is unrolled).

In the centre of the room is a magical circular design. The party works out that the pendants are placed in an order to create a magical portal. It won't work unless all the pendants are in the correct spot. The portal closes if any are removed. The party also work out that the other two teleport rings in the room will allow the wearer of the Captain's pendant to teleport to the teleport rings on the deck.

When the portal is activated a large spout of water comes out pushing one of the party into the roof causing them some damage. It becomes a still circular pool after that.

The party decide to grab some of the coats around the wall before entering the pool. Luckily they did because it is very cold at the other end.

## The Ice Caves.

The party emerge dry from the pool and find themselves in a huge ice cave that is lit by an unknown light source. Around the pool stand 6 x 2 foot high stone pillars engraved with gold symbols. The symbols are glowing. The walls of ice contain rubies, emeralds and other precious stones. There are also coins and other trinkets. Each item is frozen into the wall about 2 inches behind ice. **(DM note: To retrieve items is the same cost and profit as a gem mine)** In every square foot there is at least one thing that is shiny. The temperature is below freezing. Luckily the party has the cloaks otherwise they would be taking damage from the cold.

The party makes its way down to the other end of the cave. It looks like a major battle occurred here as the floor is covered with about 100 snow/ice mounds which on closer examination are corpses dressed in white fur cloaks (very similar to what you are wearing) and what looks like dead pirates. They are frozen to the floor and covered in a layer of snow and ice. The party come across what appears to be a sleeping white dragon. The party deduces that it is an illusion cast on the corpse of a dead White Dragon. The dragon's body blocks any exit out of these caves. The dragon's body has been picked of scales and teeth. Both eyes have been removed.

Not far from the dragon's head is a set of double doors. They are oak with iron edges. There is a lock in the middle and an iron door handle. The door is mechanically trapped which the party bypass (less chance due to cold). Inside is a small chamber roughly cut. It is approximately 15 feet in radius. In the centre is a sarcophagus. Around the walls are sacks, shields, chests and other pieces of treasure (see Appendix B). The sarcophagus is ornately carved with Dwarf ruins and scenes of battle and glory. It is made from a beautiful green stone. It must be worth a fortune (if there is a market for such things).

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Inside the sarcophagus lie the remains of Ardak. Held in his arms is a small wooden box. The arms have been put back over the box which suggests it must have been originally here. There is nothing of value in the sarcophagus.

Inside this plain wooden box is a set of cards that have been laid into a special made indent. The party realises that Ardak treasure/folly is a Deck of Many Things. Thrown into the box, and obviously does not belong, is a gold ornate pendant, the size of a small plate. It has the same design as the other pendant.

The party and Shrub negotiate on splitting the treasure. The party decide to leave the treasure in the Vault. That way they it doesn't count as treasure found on the ship and it doesn't have to be split with the captain of the Crest Dancer. You agree with Shrub that you will split this treasure with him. Shrub will take Ardak's Treasure (he encourages you all to take a pick. Port Willy the bugbear does and gets the Void). One of the twins is very tempted. **Does Guest Star take one? )** . Shrub will relinquish all claims to the Black Heart in exchange for half the treasure and safe passage to the Great City (where you plan to meet up with the Resolute). You all agree.

On the way back to the teleport pool, the party and allies are ambushed by the rest of Shrub's gang. Shrub is just as surprised as they are firing on him as well.

### **Battle Highlights:**

Shrub is killed and Manky Pete in desperations picks 3 cards from the deck. He gains one wish and wishes that "All his friends were okay" which not only brings back Shrub but restores everyone to full hit points. Unfortunately, the second pick sees Manky Pete sent to the Void.

The party once again sees Andrew's nemesis, the crossbow. It is a close call but the party defeats their enemy. The last one makes a bolt for the pool hoping to leave you trapped. One of the twins chases him down and crash tackles him before he makes it. He surrenders.

The party gets back to the Black Heart. The ship is in the hands of the Sea Princesses, Ardak folly/treasure is in the hands of a religious fanatic. All that is left is to help the Treant.

The party goes and tells Lenovo about the Treant. He immediately stops his weather control preparation. He refuses to do anything else until the Treant is healed and freed, even if that means letting the ships sink.

Everyone agrees to return the Treant to its homeland. Not everyone is considered worthy by the Treant to go with them. The party and certain crew members are allowed to come. They are:-

Myfinger

Rolt

Lenovo (Lenovo stays with the Forest of Knowledge).

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No adults from the pirate ship are allowed to come. This leaves the ship undermanned. You will need the help of the Captain Hobb. The party goes into negotiation with the Captain about splitting the booty.

Hobb takes all the cargo from the Black Heart. He doesn't want the ship. Party keeps ship and Hobb lends a skeleton crew for 25% of any profit or booty from the ship and/or its crew within the next six months (party adventures where there is no assistance from crew is free of the 25%).

Hobb and the party decide to create a trading alliance with the hope of joining Captain Pellington and the Resolute. It is hope that the three ships can join forces to form a small armada.

As the Crest Dancer is not allowed to follow the Black Heart, the Treant will see it to save waters. Bonswa goes with the Crest Dancer to await Pellington in the Great City. He will meet you there. He will be staying in the most expensive inn in the city. He will "open his mind" at Sunset for 10 minutes if you want to try use psionics to contact him.

Once in safe water the two ships part company. The Black Heart travels for two weeks in magically created dense fog. It is impossible to get a bearing by the stars.

Coral places Marasotte's staff into the deep to fix the current charges. Once again the staff sends out a concussion wave that dispels the magic on the ship. However, the Treant is impervious to the dispel magic and no harm comes to the ship.

During this time, the skeleton crew (where did those undead come from?) make repairs on the ship and convert it into a new ship.

- All keys and locks are in the party's hands.
- All traps have been disarmed.
- A ship inventory of supplies is gathered.
- All magic items including the teleport pillars in the Ice cave are identified.
- Sails are repaired.
- The Treant agrees to drink the Potion of Rainbows Hues. This allows him to change the colour of the ship.
- A new ship flag is made.
- A new name is carved into the Stern. The ship is called the "Pearls of the Sea" (?)
- A new figure head is carved.

5 cannons are returned with enough stuff for 10 shots between them. Rest of the cannons are left in the void to guard against Ethereal wandering monsters.

The party finally gets to the mysterious forest island of the Treants. The ship is overrun by Water Elementals and only the party is allowed to leave. The crew must stay on board. It takes a day to remove the Treant.

The party is taken into a 2 day hike into the forest. The party is taken to meet the Treants. The party learns that the island is the home of one of the Oracles. As a

reward each of the party is granted a boon if it is within the Oracle's power (see Appendix E). The party also trains on the island. Each member sinks into a special pool and can access the knowledge they need to train.

**The end of the module** sees the ship (minus a main mast), the party (and their new toys) and the crew (disgruntled due to being kept on the ship for the last 2 months) ready to leave the Island of the Forrest of Knowledge. It is the 90<sup>th</sup> of Spawning (last day of spring).

**The ship is stocked with:**

- Water, food and rum to last 3 months for a full crew.
- Full compliment of sails, ropes, tools etc.
- 5 working cannons with 10 shots between them.
- 6 pendants for the Magic portal.

**Other Ship notes:**

- The crew understand that the ship is owned by the party but they still need to know the chain of command.
- The ship has been changed and is unrecognisable as the Black Heart. It is clean and seaworthy for travelling in the Shallows.
- The inter-dimensional door is in place in the doctor's old quarters. The time trap cannot be dispelled while the tear in space exists. There are no other security measures in place at present.
- The ship is maned with a skeleton crew of 20 sailors, 2 Midshipman (Myfinger and Rolt) and the party. The ships maximum speed is currently have its normal movement rate.
- The crews current is green (Lowest to highest order is green, average, trained, crack).
- Current crew morale is 8.

**Current goals:**

- Divide Treasure
- Assign additional XP to armour
- Find whale bone mast.
- Get to The Great City.

**Appendix A:**

**Buckner's Spell Book** (written on loose parchment. Not an actual spell book)

Mirror Image,

Levitate

Magic Missile,

Wall of Fog

Armour

**Appendix B:**

+2 shield that acts as a Ring of Warmth.

5000pp  
5000gp  
5000ep  
20000sp  
50000cp

## **Appendix C:**

### **When will our Powerful enemies find us?**

We cannot see into the future. The forest sees the Now. From this we can extrapolate what we believe will be the closest answer. We do know that your enemies are looking for you. Crater currently seeks one of the 12 Oracles. He seeks the Pool of Tomorrow which can see into the future. If the party takes reasonable precautions, it will be at least a year before your enemies will catch up with you.

### **What are our powerful enemies planning with regard to us?**

At this present time:

- Veramos seeks a Reincarnation scroll for a component of one of his spells.
- Crater seeks the Pool of Tomorrow.
- The Black Guard have been commissioned to find and capture you.
- One other hides amongst one of your families. You will not recognise him.
- Corso draws energy from the Negative Material Plane.

### **How much wealth is in our Ice Cave?**

Cost and profit is similar to mining a Gem mine. Have to factor in working in the cold when calculating cost.

### **Where is the Ice Cave?**

Your Ice Cave is in the Reaches of the Centaurus arm (approximately six months sailing).

### **How long before it will be breached?**

We cannot see into the future. The forest sees the Now. From this we can extrapolate what we believe will be the closest answer. We believe that there is a **95%** chance it will be after 6 months.

### **How do I open Merralox's spell books?**

Given your current abilities and predicament, the best possible chance for the next six months would be to find a Elven Spell Filcher.

## Appendix D:

### Experience.

	Guest Star	Coral	Kelp	Mystery	Harmony
Game Goals	6000	6000	6000	6000	6000
Non-monetary Treasure*	3840	3840	3840	3840	3840
Monsters	4660	4660	4660	4660	4660
Individual XP	2750	2500	1500	2100	3350
<b>Total</b>	<b>17250</b>	<b>17000</b>	<b>16000</b>	<b>16600</b>	<b>17850</b>

## Appendix E:

Guest Star: see Grant

Harmony: Weather control panel

- Placed on Mast made from Whale Bone that has not been killed.
- Permanent weather control: Has three settings and a colour code PIN.
- Have to experience weather to set it. Settings can be changed not permanent
- Attached to base of the mast.
- Has a 100 yard radius

Mystery: Planar Door

- Placed in Inter-dimensional tear will hold it together but not permanently.
- Acts as a door.
- Can be opened from both sides.
- Hard to detect from other size.

Coral:

- Coral is shaved and the top of her head is covered in a magical tattoo of a grape vine. When she is in a natural setting with plants she can commune with Nature to receive answers. **See Appendix C for questions asked so far.**
- The strength of the answers depends on the setting. For example while in the Forest of Knowledge the answers are strong and plentiful. If in a desert or at sea, the answers would be non-existent.
- A saving throw is made vs. willpower for each question. If the save fails the link is severed. Minus apply depending on the location. -1 to save accumulative for each question.

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- One attempt is allowed per week. If attempted more than once a week, the character must make a system shock roll. Failure sees the character's consciousness join the Forest of Knowledge (similar to the Void card in a DOM)

Kelp:            Compass

### Compass

- Looks like a small pocket compass. Has two needles. One needle always points North and the other acts as a super powerful augury which points to what is being divined. The second option can be cast once per day.
- There is no range limits except it must be on the same plane of existence.
- It is not blocked by any substance.
- It takes one full day to cast the initial spell for a desired item. After that it only takes one round, if looking for the same thing. IF a new item is being sought, it requires another day to reset it.
- If it cannot locate the item, or the item is too vague (eg the best place to eat).