



## DROWN

*Estimated Duration:* 3 hours

*Suggested Music:* "D&D Ambience - Underwater" by Sword Coast Soundscapes

### THE UNDERWATER VAMPIRE

An often overlooked feature of vampires is their ability to exist in environments that do not require air. As such, some crafty vampires move their lairs to underwater caverns. These remote locations offer vampires several advantages such as a lack of air for creatures who'd hunt it and an overall absence of sunlight. Because of the vampire's weakness against running water, these submerged lairs must be at the bottom of dismal swamps or murky lakes.

#### WHERE TO ADD THIS ENCOUNTER

This side trek is designed for **three to seven 11th to 16th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 11**. Likely, the characters will have tracked the vampire to its lair after following clues that point to its existence.

#### ADVENTURE HOOKS

If you don't already have a hook in mind, roll a d10 and refer to the Aquatic Vampire Adventure Hooks table, or choose a hook that best fits your current campaign.

#### AQUATIC VAMPIRE VARIANT

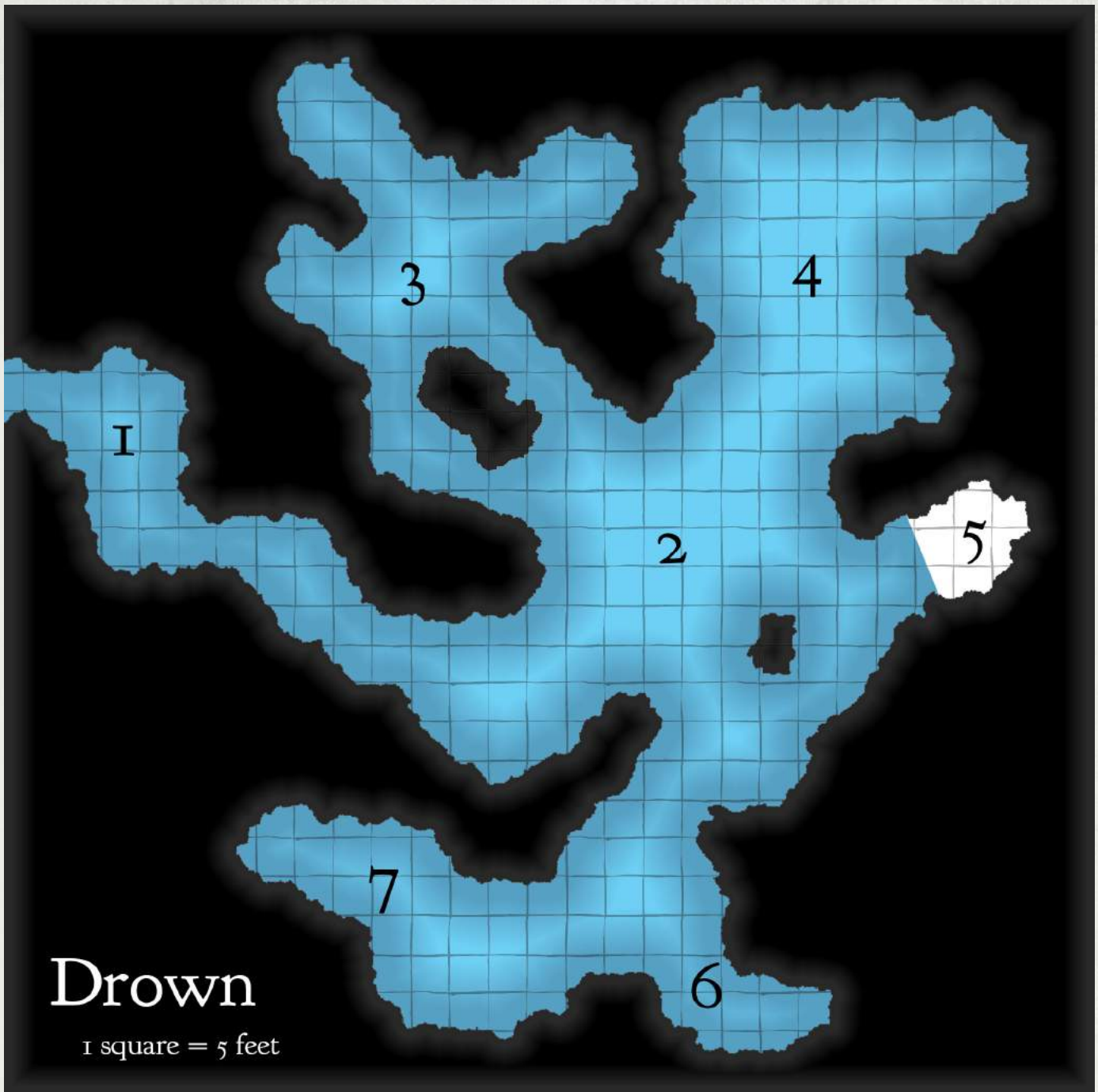
Both the **aquatic vampire** and its **vampire spawn** have a swim speed of 30 ft.

For its Shapechanger feature, the aquatic vampire can change into a quipper. While in this form, it can't speak, and it has a walking speed of 0 ft. but it gains a swim speed of 40 ft. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged.

### AQUATIC VAMPIRE ADVENTURE HOOKS

#### d10 Adventure Hook

- 1 Entire fields of crops wither and die in the area surrounding the haunted pond.
- 2 Foul undead have been attacking passersby traveling on a popular road that cuts through a swamp.
- 3 A noble's daughter disappeared near the lake. Villagers believe that it is the work of a vampire who appears every twenty years.
- 4 The headless remains of bodies are found floating in the nearby swamp. Local medical examiners believe that it might be the work of an undead creature covering its tracks.
- 5 Two children return to a village claiming that they saw evil faces in the water of an old pond.
- 6 The vampire came into village demanding a sacrifice of six children by the full moon. It threatens to kill everyone in the village unless this tribute is paid.
- 7 The vampire seeks revenge against the local priest who, in his/her younger days, eradicated the vampire's old nest.
- 8 While parked next to a murky pond, an armed wagon loaded with treasure, relief funds for the war, is torn apart. All of the guards are killed except for one who claims that horrible creatures rose from the water and drank the blood of the victims.
- 9 One of the characters dreams of the aquatic vampire and its lair.
- 10 The fiancé of one of the character's allies has been turned into a vampire spawn. To save him/her, the characters must track the vampire who turned him/her.



Anything it is wearing transform with it, but nothing it is carrying does. It reverts to its true form if it dies. It can use its bite in its quipper form.

Also, instead of transforming into mist, the vampire can become a cloud of sentient blood. This blood form works the same as its mist form, except it has a swim speed of 40 ft. instead of a flying speed. And if water can pass through a space, the blood can do so without squeezing; unlike its mist form, the blood can pass through water.

For its Children of the Night feature, the aquatic vampire can choose to call 2d4 **swarms of quippers** as well as bats or rats, or 2d4 **reef sharks**.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region surrounding the aquatic vampire's cave is warped by the creature's unnatural presence, creating any of the

following effects:

- There's a noticeable increase in the population of quippers and sharks in the region. Aquatic plants within 500 feet of the lair become black and tangled and sometimes look like outstretched claws.
- The surfaces of water within 500 feet of the lair reflect perversions of the original image, making living creatures seem gaunt or undead.
- A creeping fog clings to the surface of the water within 500 feet of the vampire's lair. The fog occasionally takes eerie forms, such as grasping claws and writhing serpents.
- The entirety of the vampire's lair is considered desecrated. All undead creatures in the aquatic vampire's lair have advantage on saving throws.



If the aquatic vampire is destroyed, these effects end after 2d6 days.

## AREA DESCRIPTION

Unless otherwise stated, the aquatic vampire's lair has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The lair has short ceilings throughout, with tunnels and passages no higher than they are wide. The walls are made of solid rock. Most of the floors are made of rock, too, except areas where silt has collected.

**Underwater.** All areas of the aquatic vampire's lair are completely submerged except for the pocket of air in area 5. Refer to the rules on characters holding their breath (Chapter 8) and underwater combat (Chapter 9) in the PHB as well as the rules for underwater environments in Chapter 5 of the DMG.

**Light.** There is no light within the vampire's underwater lair.

**Sound.** Not only is it difficult to see in the aquatic vampire's lair, but it's hard to hear as well. A creature without a swim speed has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing while underwater.

**Visibility.** The vampire's fiendish presence turns the water cloudy. The vampire, its spawn, and the vampire's minions can see through the water as if it was clear, up to 60 ft. However, all other creatures can only see up to 10 ft in front of themselves.

## 1 - ENTRANCE

The entrance into the aquatic vampire's lair is a steep descent from the hole at the bottom of the lake, lagoon, or other pool of water in which the lair is found. The narrow tunnel is no more than 10 feet between the floor and the ceiling.

### TRAP

The walls, ceiling, and floors of the entrance are covered in thick, black seaweed. On initiative count 10 (losing initiative ties) the seaweed makes an attack against each creature within this area with a +9 to hit. A creature hit by the seaweed takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and is restrained. A creature that starts its turn in the area and is already restrained by the seaweed takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. A creature restrained by the seaweed can use its action to make a DC 17 Strength or Dexterity check (the creature's choice), freeing itself on a success. A creature can also make an attack against the seaweed to free itself. A 5 x 5 patch of seaweed has AC 13, 3 hp, and is immune to psychic damage and resistant to bludgeoning and piercing damage. A destroyed patch of seaweed reforms on initiative count 20.

The seaweed withers away after the aquatic vampire is killed.

## 2 - GUARDIAN

This large, open area has 30-foot high ceilings.

### CREATURE DESCRIPTION

A **rusted iron golem** stands here looking for intruders. The rusted iron golem has the same statistics as an **iron golem** except with the following changes:

- Its movement speed is 20 ft.

- Its Dexterity score is 5 (-3).
- In addition to its other immunities, the golem is immune to lightning damage.
- Instead of Fire Absorption, the golem has Lightning Absorption (as the flesh golem).
- New Trait: Rust. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the golem corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5 the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the golem is destroyed after dealing damage.
- If the golem hits a creature wearing metal armor or carrying a metal shield with its Slam attack, the armor or shield (creature's choice if it has both equipped) takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed.

The iron golem attacks intruders relentlessly until it is told otherwise by the aquatic vampire or one of its spawn.

## 3 - CAVE OF SPAWN

The aquatic vampire's spawn rest in this portion of the cavern.

### CREATURE INFORMATION

There are four **vampire spawn** who rest in this cavern.

**Tactics.** The vampire spawn enjoy feigning innocence to lure unsuspecting prey. They leave one or more of their kindred at the center of the cavern in plain view, usually the one among them most recently turned. It may even be wearing rusted manacles. While the creature weeps and begs to be saved, the others use the murky water, their spider climb, and their Stealth to get the drop on the others. The vampires employ hit-and-run tactics: they attack, grapple, pull the creature into the murk, and drink its blood. Understanding that most creatures can't see more than 10 ft. into the water, they try to divide and conquer whenever possible.

## 4 - TREASURE VAULT

The aquatic vampire keeps its ill-gotten gains in the northernmost section of its lair.

### TREASURE

The aquatic vampire's treasure hoard includes 123,000 cp, 29,700 sp, 9,500 GP, and 2,100 pp. There are also 120 gems worth an average of 10 gp each, and a golden scepter worth 1,000 gp (see below). Although there are a few rusted chests available to carry away the treasure, for the most part, it is strewn about the cavern floor and should take hours to collect.

### TRAP

There is a golden scepter sitting upon the pile of treasure in the cavern. Removing the scepter triggers a controlled collapse of the ceiling. Each creature in the cavern when the ceiling collapses must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature that fails on its saving throw takes 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage and is pinned under the collapsed rock. While pinned, the creature is restrained and takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns.

A creature can use its action to free the pinned target (including the target itself) with a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check.

On a successful saving throw, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. However, its passage out of this area might be permanently blocked. Plus, all of the treasure is buried under the rubble and cannot be easily recovered.

Spotting the trap requires a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A character with proficiency in thieves' tools can disarm the check with a successful DC 15 Dexterity or Intelligence check (character's choice).

## 5 - AIR POCKET

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The vampire keeps its prisoners in this air pocket. There is a 50% chance that the vampire's next victim (a commoner) is here. The commoner has one level of exhaustion and is frightened of all vampires.

## 6 - FALSE COFFIN

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A rusted iron coffin dominates the center of this cavern.

### ANTIPATHY

The front of the cavern is enchanted with the antipathy/sympathy spell (DC 17) with the antipathy feature targeting humanoids. The spell is intended to make intruders believe the coffin has more value than it actually does.

### COFFIN TRAP

The iron lid is easily removed by any creature with a Strength score of 15 or better. The inside of the coffin is magically darkened and cannot be seen into, not even with a trait like a warlock's Devil's Sight. A creature that reaches inside the coffin immediately finds itself grappled (escape DC 17). On initiative count 10 (losing initiative ties), a creature grappled by the coffin takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage and its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. If the creature's hit point maximum is reduced by 1/4th of its hit point total, its arm completely withers to nothing and the grapple ends.

A creature without its arm can no longer hold anything with two hands, and it can only hold a single object a time. A regenerate spell restores both the lost appendage and its hit point maximum.

Recognizing the trap for what it is requires a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check. A dispel magic spell cast against a 5th-level spell disables the hungering darkness within the coffin for 10 minutes. Once the darkness is removed, there is nothing else in the coffin.

## 7 - THE VAMPIRE'S TRUE CAVERN

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The aquatic vampire's true resting place is in the empty cavern to the south.

*Dimensions & Terrain.* This cavern descends at a steep angle terminating in a pit of collected silt. The vampire is careful to cover its tracks when entering the cavern, making it seem as if the entire area is neglected by it and its spawn.

### CREATURE INFORMATION

The **aquatic vampire** hides under 1 foot of silt along with two of its **vampire spawn**. Noticing the disturbed silt requires a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check.

*Tactics.* If the vampire is aware of the intruders in advance, it has already called **reef sharks** or **swarms of quippers** to further protect itself. Its spawn aren't afraid to die for their master, and the aquatic vampire has no objections otherwise. The vampire won't allow itself to be captured and will revert to its blood form the moment it feels that it is at risk.

## WRAP-UP: HORROR IN THE WATER

If the aquatic vampire's lair is disrupted, it will flee to find a new lair. The new lair may be in another body of water or it might even be above ground. While it will want vengeance against those that harmed it and its children, ultimately, it will turn its attention back to its dark goals. Thus, it is up to the characters to seek the vampire and trap it once more.



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