

BOTTOMS UP



A MAPS & MONSTRUM URBAN SIDE-QUEST



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MAPS & MONSTRUM COMPENDIUM

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The Side-Quest adventure that follows is based on a “loose end” from one of the full-length adventures that will soon be found in **Maps & Monstrum Compendium**. All adventures leave behind loose ends which are seldom explored by the adventuring heroes as they move on to greater things. The Eldritch Press expects to develop some of these loose ends and bring them to you as short, Side-Quest adventures.

Side-Quests can be used at the spur of a moment and can be dropped into any campaign quickly and easily. They work perfectly as a single-session filler or in a short pick-up game.

MMC is a compilation of adventures that will be launched soon on **Kickstarter**. It offers numerous

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This adventure is the collaborative effort of several creators, all of whom will be involved with the **Maps & Monstrum Compendium**. Please visit their space and show them some love. We all appreciate your support.

We would also love to have you **follow the [Kickstarter](#)** page as we ramp up for our launch. You can also stay on top of all the work in progress through the **[Instagram](#)** account of The Eldritch Press.



BOTTOMS UP

Written by Fletcher Haug

This urban-based side-quest is designed for 3-5 characters that are of 4th-5th level. It has an APL of 5. It makes for a challenging single session adventure that can easily be dropped into the waterfront urban location of any campaign setting.

Suggested Soundtrack

By Tabletop RPG Music



Introduction

In this adventure, the party is contacted by a figure who wants to scuttle a ship called the Ocean Bitch. Characters must infiltrate the ship and place a box in its ballast hold without being discovered. Players receive their mission late in the afternoon and have several hours to investigate the docks before performing their mission in the evening. Characters will need to use subtlety to infiltrate the ship but should be able to find ways to utilize less stealthy characters to create diversions or act as guards or lookouts for infiltrating characters.

The players are given a small but heavy chest (20 lbs). It is locked and feels like a box full of mud. They are instructed that the chest must be damaged with a sharp blow just before being placed into the ballast hold. What they are not told is that it is a glass-lined chest and once the glass is shattered a black pudding will

be released which will eat through the hull of the ship in about eight hours.

The nefarious backer of this mission is none other than Lord Tedric Dondarion, the king's spymaster. He is working to weaken and drain the coffers of any noble that supports Duke Targrove, the king's chief political rival.

General Features

Dock Patrols. The city guard patrols the docks at regular intervals, watching for any signs of trouble. They make a 30-minute patrol circuit.

Ship Decks. The doors and headroom of the ship can easily accommodate Medium or smaller creatures. Large or larger creatures suffer from difficult terrain.

Ship Lighting. The main deck of the ship is lit with oil lamps on the fore, aft and mid decks. These shed bright light out to 15 feet and dim light to 30 feet. It is dark below decks with no lighting except in areas that are occupied, which are lit by oil lamps.

Ship features. There are closed portholes in all areas of the cargo deck, and the fore and aft cabins. These are closed but unlocked, Small or smaller creatures can easily fit through a porthole, but Medium creatures must pass a DC 12 Dexterity check to pass through.



A. The Wet Leg Tavern

This tavern is filled with the crew of the Ocean Bitch, including **halfling captain** Zeppo Sharpear, 2 **halfling bosun**, and 10 **halfling sailors**. The sailors move regularly between the tavern and the nearby Ocean Bitch until the captain and crew retire sometime during the wee hours. Interactions with the crew are non-hostile unless they are provoked, in which case the crew fights with gusto. Information about the ship and crew can be discovered at the tavern, including that the captain is a legitimate merchant with a benign reputation who commands a crew of seventeen.

B. Guard Patrol

The city guard will first be seen here moving toward the Wet Leg. They take about 5 minutes to pass, checking on warehouses and the tavern as they move along. Their next patrol returns about 30 minutes later. The patrol consists of 3 **guards**.

C. Gangplank

The gangplank connecting the dock to the main deck is not guarded, but it makes a lot of noise when used, requiring a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check to use without making too much noise. If noise is made, it has a DC 10 to be heard by those nearby. A rope gate separates the gangplank from the main deck.

D. Other Ships

All the ships at the docks have their own guards. The vessel nearest to the Ocean Bitch has a **guard** who is alert and will raise an alarm if she sees anyone suspicious in the water or interacting with any nearby ship.



E. Main Deck

The main deck is guarded by 3 **halfling sailors**. There are two sailors talking quietly on the foredeck and one sailor on the afterdeck. These guards have been drinking and suffer disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks except for any sound caused by the use of the gangplank. They challenge anyone they perceive and raise the alarm if threatened in any way. If an alarm is raised, reinforcements from the Wet Leg arrive 3 rounds later.

In the center of the deck is a closed, grated hatch with stairs leading down to the cargo deck (area H). It is unlocked and can easily be lifted open, but it makes a noise similar to the gangplank in area C.





The Ocean Bitch

The Ocean Bitch is berthed at the city docks, an area filled with warehouses and taverns. The majority of the ship's crew is spending the evening at the nearby Wet Leg tavern after having worked the day loading cargo for tomorrow's dawn departure. The ship carries a cargo of livestock, fine liquors, and foodstuff, and the valuable belongings of a noble family destined to resupply one of their holdings. The ship is captained by Zeppo Sharpears (LG halfling male) who commands an all-halfling crew of two officers and fifteen sailors. The captain is also served by a ship mage and cleric.



Main Deck Area E



F. Ship's Mage, Galley, and Stores

Under the foredeck are the quarters of the ship's mage and the galley, along with their needed supplies. This area is accessed from the main deck (area E). The **ship mage**, (Galer Finn, NG halfling) is here and if an alarm is raised or a character is perceived, he will engage and call for help.

Treasure. 29 gp and a spellbook containing the *death grip* spell.



G. Officer's Cabin and Mess

Under the afterdeck are the officer's quarters and mess hall. This area is accessed from the main deck (area E). Both officers are at the Wet Leg tavern and no one is in the mess. There is no access to the stairs here.



Treasure. Two small chests contain various personal items and a total of 38 gp, 89 sp, and 2 *potion of swimming*.

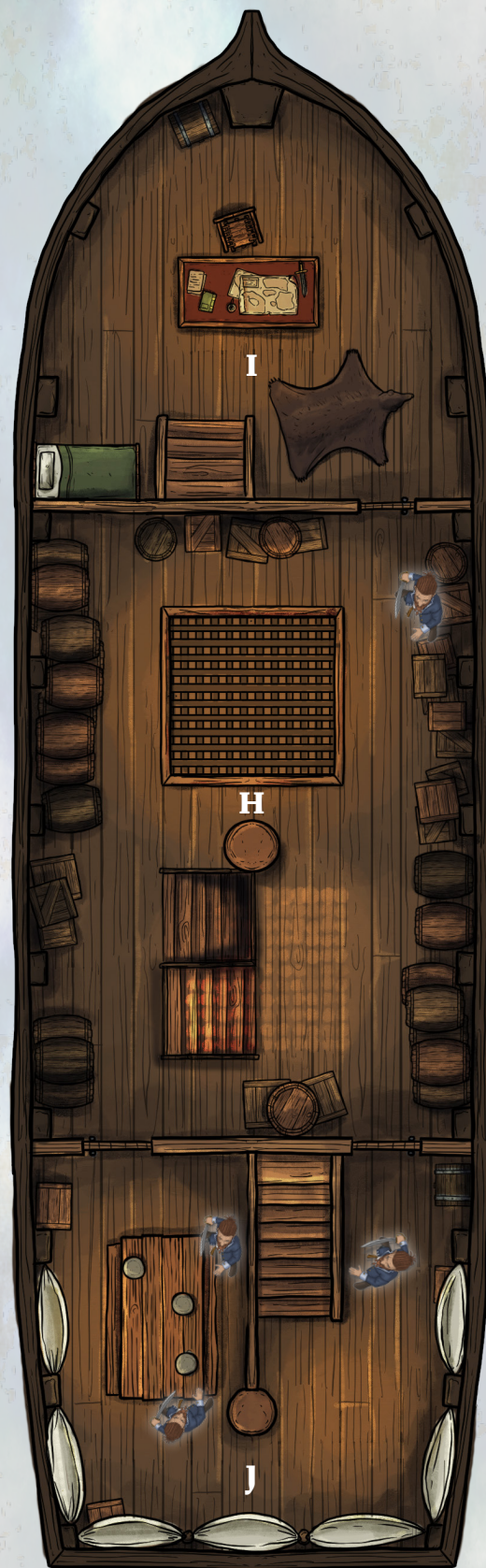
H. Cargo Hold

The cargo hold is full of supplies. The stern section of this area has doors leading to the crew quarters. The bow section has a door leading to the captain's cabin, which is locked and guarded. A halfling sailor is near the door, but he is asleep at his post and suffers disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks.

A closed, grated hatch in the center of the deck is unlocked and leads down to the lower deck (area K), but opening it makes a noise similar to the gangplank in area C. Stairs near the hatch lead down to the lower deck (area K) and up to the main deck (area E).

I. Captain's Cabin

This cabin is well-appointed with a desk, bed, and wardrobe, and is unoccupied. Stairs lead up to the main deck. A cargo manifest on the desk reveals the ship's cargo, which includes the valuable belongings of a noble family,





the Greycastles, allies of Duke Targrove, which is to be brought to an island estate two weeks' travel south. With these supplies are an assortment of quality liquors and other luxuries to resupply the estate. The stairs here lead up to area E.

Treasure. In a locked chest are five 50 gp opals, 45 pp, 112 gp, 201 sp, four potions of *water breathing*, and a *seafarer's belt*

J. Crew Quarters

There are three *halfling sailors* sleeping in the crew quarters. Any loud noise or alarm will wake them. They fight anyone they see in the room and raise the alarm immediately. If alerted to a problem, they can arrive at any area on the ship in two rounds. The stairs here go up to area E.

Treasure. If the room is searched the personal belongings of the crewmen amount to 8 gp and 47 sp.

K. Lower Deck

The ship cleric has a cabin on this deck along with vital ship supplies and repair materials. There is a brig in the stern of the lower deck, which is currently unoccupied. The cleric tends the sick bay, supplies, brig and livestock on this deck, which is completely below the waterline.

A double stairway leads up the hatch to area H. There is a floor hatch beneath these stairs that drops down to the ballast hold below.

L. Livestock

There is a herd of sheep held in the livestock area of this deck. The sheep will become nervous if anyone approaches their pen and they bleat loudly if threatened or scared.

M. Ship Cleric and Supplies

The **ship cleric**, (Telli Bodannel, LG halfling female) is reading at her desk. If the sheep make too much loud noise she leaves her room to take her anger out on the poor animals. She will raise the alarm if she perceives any strangers and will disengage as quickly as possible if threatened.



Treasure. In her desk along with personal trinkets is a pouch containing 74 gp, 39 sp, and 3 black pearls worth 40 gp each.

N. Ballast Hold

The ballast hold of the ship is filled with heavy stones which provide the ballast the ship needs to keep upright in the water. There are no stairs leading down to this musty pit. The chest the characters were given must be deposited here. Any sharp blow to the chest, or a fall

Halfling Seafarers

The halflings from this island region share similar features with other halflings throughout the realms, but those of the isles are most notable as skilled shipwrights and lucky seafarers. It is common to find a ship entirely crewed by halflings at any port throughout the kingdom. Halflings excel at operating a sailing ship and halflings shipwrights are revered in many port towns. Halfling crewed ships are considered especially lucky, and many choose them first for this reason. Some suggest that the halflings of the isles are protected by the sea loci, the protective spirits of a place, and they use this blessing to keep their ships safe from harm. A curious note about halfling ships is that most carry racy, vulgar names, such as the Watery Tart, the Lothario, the Hooded Pearl, One-eyed Jack, or the Ready Vixen. A strange quirk for otherwise respectful people.

from the cargo deck onto the stones below are sufficient to break the glass lining of the chest, releasing the **black pudding** within to do its insidious work.

Adventure Conclusion

Total Success. If the party manages to successfully sneak aboard, plant the chest and escape without raising the alarm then the ship sets sail on schedule. The ship will be reported lost with all hands aboard.

Partial Success. If the party manages to deploy the chest and escape but raises the alarm in the process the captain assumes the infiltration was the work of thieves and orders an inspection of the cargo. The ship sets sail behind schedule. It sinks in the harbor and the crew manages to make it back to the docks safely.

Failure. If the party does not manage to deploy the chest or gets captured in the process the mission is considered a failure. The party will be approached by their contact, who informs them that their employer will not be pleased. Failure will have consequences.

If the party is captured the crew will imprison them in the brig for questioning. The captain will also press gang the party and have them serve on his vessel until he believes they've paid their penance. He refers to this as "the law of the sea."

Scaling Actions

Things can easily get out of hand during this quest and the players could find themselves fighting the entire crew of the Ocean Bitch. If you wish to avoid this and make some encounters easier, you can choose to make any of these adjustments.

If most of the Ocean Bitch sailors get into a mass brawl with the characters, you can make the encounter easier by making some of the sailors drunk by imposing the poisoned condition on a number of them.

A non-lethal brawl is a good time, but bloody murder is not. If a crewman is killed on the street, the city watch will immediately be summoned and six will arrive 1 minute later to aid the crewmen and put an end to the brutality.

You can have any of the halfling sailors on the ship's deck, the ship mage, or the ship cleric be sleeping when a PC is in their area, requiring a considerable commotion to alert them.

If you need to make an encounter more difficult, allow the halfling captain, bosuns and any halfling sailors on board the Ocean Bitch to invoke a single use of their choice from one of these Sea Loci Favors, which can be invoked as a bonus action.

Watersides. Your body becomes watery when you are hit by an attack. Until the beginning of your next turn you are immune to slashing, piercing and bludgeoning damage from non magical weapon attacks.

Windyshin. A zephyr wind drives your step. Until the end of your next turn you are under the effects of the expeditious retreat spell.



Halfling Bosun

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral good

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d6 + 10)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5

Skills Acrobatics +5

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Brave. The halfling bosun has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness. The bosun can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than itself.

Loyal Defense. The bosun has advantage on a single attack rolls against a creature that is threatening or attacking its captain.

Lucky. When a 1 on the d20 is rolled for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, the bosun can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Sea Footed. The bosun has advantage on Dexterity saving throws when on board a ship.

Actions

Multiattack. The bosun makes two melee scimitar or dagger attacks.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.



Halfling Captain

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral good

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 55 (10d6 + 20)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +3

Skills Athletics +3, Nature +3

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish, Halfling

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Brave. The halfling captain has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness. The captain can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than itself.

Lucky. When a 1 on the d20 is rolled for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, the captain can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Sea Footed. The captain has advantage on Dexterity saving throws when on board a ship.

Actions

Multiattack. The halfling captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Commander. The captain can use its reaction and cause one creature under its command that can see and hear it, to make a single melee or ranged weapon attack.

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.



Halfling Sailor

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral good

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Brave. The halfling sailor has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness. The sailor can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than itself.

Lucky. When a 1 on the d20 is rolled for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, the sailor can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Sea Footed. The sailor has advantage on Dexterity saving throws when on board a ship.

Actions

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Belaying Pin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 15/30 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage. A target hit by a ranged belaying pin attack must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be knocked prone.



Ship Cleric

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral good

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 35 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +5

Skills Medicine +7, Religion +5

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Brave. The ship cleric has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Divine Eminence. As a bonus action, the cleric can expend a spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. If the cleric expends a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the extra damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1st.

Halfling Nimbleness. The ship cleric can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than itself.

Lucky. When a 1 on the d20 is rolled for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, the ship cleric can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Sea Footed. The ship cleric has advantage on Dexterity saving throws when on board a ship.

Spellcasting. The ship cleric is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy
1st level (4 slots): cure wounds, guiding bolt, sanctuary
2nd level (3 slots): holy deflection*, spiritual weapon
3rd level (2 slots): spirit guardians, water walk

*New spell

Actions

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Ship Mage

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral good

Armor Class 12 (15 mage armor)

Hit Points 38 (7d8 + 7)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11(+0)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Int +5

Skills Arcana +7, History +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Brave. The ship mage has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness. The ship mage can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than itself.

Lucky. When a 1 on the d20 is rolled for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, the ship mage can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

Sea Footed. The ship mage has advantage on Dexterity saving throws when on board a ship.

Spellcasting. The ship mage is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The ship mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): fire bolt, light, mage hand, mending
1st level (4 slots): fog cloud, grease, mage armor, magic missile

2nd level (3 slots): enlarge/reduce, misty step, suggestion

3rd level (3 slots): counterspell, fly, haste

4th level (1 slots): death grip*

*New spell

Actions

Dagger (+1). Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.



Magic Items

Potion of Swimming

Potion, uncommon

When you drink this potion you gain proficiency on any checks made to swim and ignore all movement penalties caused by armor or other heavy equipment for 1 hour.

Seafarer's Belt

Gear (wondrous item, belt), very rare

While wearing this belt, your Dexterity score increases by +1 and you gain a swimming speed of 30 ft.. Once per day as a reaction when you are submerged in water, you can invoke magic that gives you water breathing, which allows you the ability to breathe underwater for 1 hour.

Spells

Death Grip

4th-level evocation

Casting time 1 action

Range: 30-foot cone

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Classes: Sorcerer, warlock, wizard

You point your finger at up to three creatures that you can see within range and the targets must make a Constitution saving throw versus your spell save DC. On a failed save, a target is raised one foot off the ground, it is grappled, it takes 3d6 force damage, and it cannot speak as it begins to suffocate (see Suffocating). On its turn a target can use its action to make a constitution save to end the effects.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, its damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 4th and you can target one additional creature with the spell.

Holy Deflection

2nd- Level Divination

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: self

Components: V, S, M

Duration: 1 minute

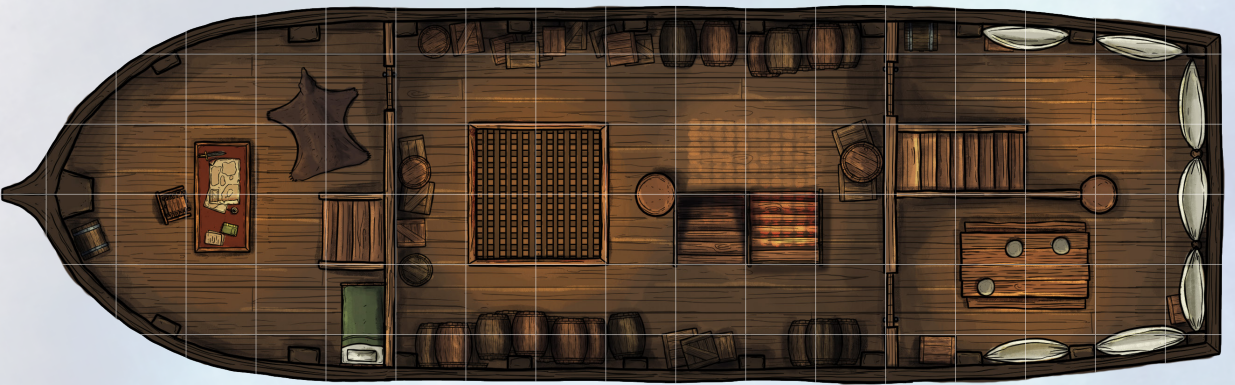
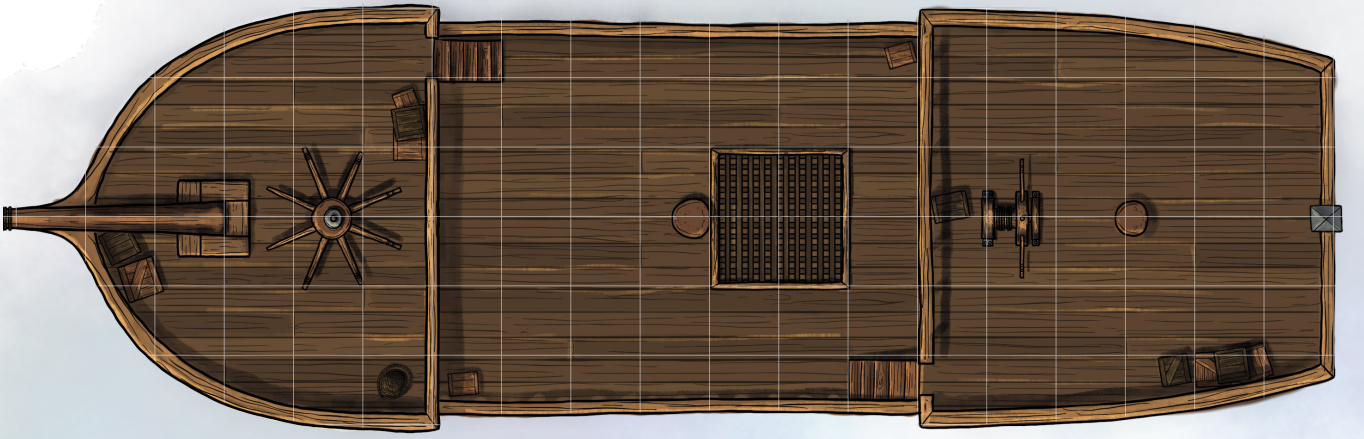
Classes: Cleric

The caster is guarded by the power of their deity while this spell is in effect. The caster can choose to thwart any melee or ranged attack made against it from a single creature. When this happens, a glowing sigil of the deity's holy symbol intercepts and blocks the attack and it takes no damage and the spell ends. The decision to block the attack must be made before damage is rolled.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, you can block one additional attack for each spell slot level above 2nd.







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