

The Guns of Azzagrath

Ebon Tendrils: Episode Two

**A Two-Round AD&D Living City Adventure
Featuring Low and High Tiers**

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Low Tier/Round Two: A Celestial Crown

People have been disappearing from Ravens Bluff without a trace. Clearly magic is involved, but how far will the search take you? This is a two-round event with high-tier and low-tier components, and is meant to run in a full advancement scheme (all players advance to the second round).

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This is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event. It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

The actual playing time will be about three hours. Make sure you use the last 20 to 30 minutes of the event time block to have the players capsulize their characters for each other and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Complete the Judge's Summary before you collect the players' scoring sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their ratings and comments.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

A note about the text: Some of the text in this module is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Tier Structure

Add the levels of the PCs to determine which tier they are on. Tiered encounters and foes are marked throughout the text.

Levels 4-13	Tier 1
Levels 14-25	Tier 2
Levels 26-37	Tier 3
Levels 38-56	Tier 4
Levels 57+	Tier 5

PCs should get the experience points of the tier for which they qualify, regardless of which tier is actually played. For example, if you have a Tier 3 group and you have to bump the combats by one tier to challenge them, they still get the experience points for a Tier 3 group, not for a Tier 4 group.

Introduction

This is the second round of the regularly tiered version of *The Guns of Azzagrat*. After completing Round One, the judge should reconvene with the same players who ventured together in part one, *The Brigadier*, and either

continue wherever the previous module left off or begin at the beginning of this module (assuming the PCs completed the first round on time). If not, the judge may choose to summarize the final events of Round One to keep things moving.

Summary of Round One

In *The Brigadier*, the PCs investigated a strange disappearance on the *Celestial Monitor*, a foreign ship under the command of the Grand Emperor of far-off Shou-Lung. The missing first mate, Weng Chen-Seng, was only one of several dozen citizens and visitors to Ravens Bluff to vanish in the last two tendays. The importance of this fact was brought home to the PCs upon a visit to the Wizards Guild, where they and the captain of the *Celestial Monitor*, Minh Lao-Tsing, learned that the abductions were the result of an Abyssal power, Ebulon, tampering with a foul artifact known as the *Scour Perilous*.

The Guild, determined to stop the abductions, enlisted the party to track down a reclusive hermit said to have intimate knowledge of Azzagrat, the Abyssal layer home of Ebulon. The hermit turned out to be a Giff, a hippo-headed alien obsessed with revolutionary *smoke powder*, and a determined enemy of the tanar'ri.

This Giff, the Brigadier by name, returned to the City of Ravens to tell his tale. Once a minor officer aboard a spelljammer ship known as the *Tarsus*, the Brigadier was on board when the ship fled through a portal in arcane space, was magically transported to the Abyss, and crashed. The guild, enchanted with the Brigadier's story, figures that a spelljamming ship using that portal might just be the best way to bring the captured citizens from the Abyss back home, but the city has no spelljammers at its disposal. Enter Minh Lao-Tsing, Captain of the *Celestial Monitor*.

Running This Module

A Celestial Crown is a difficult module to run properly. Most of the action takes place aboard a strange alien vessel. Essentially, the bulk of the adventure is a dungeon crawl, albeit a crawl in a very strange dungeon, indeed. Before running the module, judges should read through the module, particularly Encounter 5, at least once.

Because much of the module involves exploration, judges may find it very useful to use miniatures and a wet-erase battle mat. In lieu of these materials, judges should draw out the group's progress on normal paper,

perhaps marking party members with coins. The point is that a number of encounters herein involve the strategic placement of enemies, PCs and their environment, and simply explaining things might not be enough to represent what is really going on.

When the party is ready to begin Round Two, continue.

Encounter One

The Strange Tale of Captain Minh

Korbador's office grows silent at Captain Minh's words. After an awkward moment, the dean of conjuration speaks.

"What do you mean, Captain?"

Minh steps forward. "I have not revealed all there is to know of my ship, the Celestial Monitor," he says, his voice carrying the accent of a distant land. "For it is a spelljammer. It was not the Dragon Reach we plied when Weng vanished, but the upper atmosphere of Toril. Exactly," he pauses, "above the city of Ravens Bluff."

The Brigadier looks to your group, his huge mouth contorted into what must be a smile. "Excellent news!" he exclaims. "We can bring your helm with us to power the Tarsus, and get these people out of the Abyss!"

Minh shakes his head curtly. "I am afraid that will not be possible. I will not put the property of my emperor at undue risk simply to rescue my first mate. Likewise, while I am pained to hear of the losses your city has incurred thanks to this vile beast, it does not concern Shou-Lung or its emperor. Neither the Celestial Monitor nor its helm will visit the Abyss this day."

Korbador looks to the ground, slowly shaking his head. "Then I'm afraid we must come up with another plan, or these people are lost..."

Luckily, Captain Minh has exactly such a plan in mind. Weave the following points into the narrative:

- The reason the *Monitor* left arcane space to return to Toril was due to war damage – damage suffered at the hands of the neogi, a deadly race of intergalactic slavers.

- Minh knows that the leader of the neogi, a being known as Tss'chossil, holds in his treasury a great artifact, a *crown of the stars*.
- In order for a spelljammer ship to operate, it must be fitted with a spelljammer *helm*.
- Such a device, usually a chair or throne, allows a seated wizard or priest to channel his or her magical energy to provide locomotion to the ship. The *crown of the stars* is a mobile *helm* that may be worn – it even can command ships at a great distance from the wearer.

This is a chance for the PCs to learn a little more about spelljamming from with Captain Minh or the Brigadier. Jerrod Korbador is as clueless as the PCs on the matter, and will listen silently until he has heard about the *crown of the stars*. At that point, he will ask Minh and the party, very matter-of-factly, if they will plan an assault on the neogi ship. Minh accepts, and agrees to bring the PCs as close as possible to the ship, but cannot afford to further endanger his crew by pledging them into a mission into the ship itself. The Brigadier elects to help prepare for the mission to the Abyss. The unenviable task of actually fetching the *crown* will have to go to the PCs.

Encounter Two To the Stars

Leaving Korbador's office, Captain Minh leads you to his ship, the Celestial Monitor. Once again, you are amazed at the intricate carvings on the ship's hull. Painted in vibrant reds, greens and yellows, the Monitor stands out from the other ships in Ravens Bluff's harbor. The colors are not the only thing that sets the ship apart – the hull is shaped in the form of a huge serpentine dragon, and the ship appears to sport a large temple structure. Could this ship actually fly, you wonder?

Minh leads the party onto his ship. You may wish to review the section on the *Celestial Monitor* in round one, *The Brigadier*. This time, however, Minh will not restrict access to any room on board. In fact, he leads them directly to the helm room, where he introduces two individuals.

The first, Ni, is ship's recorder. In this capacity, the beautiful woman records the history of the *Celestial Monitor* on large scrolls that eventually will be turned over to the Emperor himself. She seems constantly to be at work, though she has time to speak with anyone

who appears to be intelligent, probing them for stories of some of the strange places they've visited.

Minh also introduces the party to Xaing Wu-Hai, the ship's wu jen, or wizard. Wu-Hai is a proud young man, very skilled in the ways of magic. When the PCs investigated the ship in Round One, Xaing was forced to take on the role of a simple crewman, so as not to cast suspicion upon the ship. Now, he seems to act as if he is above the entire group. He is uninterested in chitchat. The journey ahead will be tiring, and he does not wish to waste time speaking with foreigners.

After introductions are made, Wu-Hai seats himself on an ornate throne of jade – the *Monitor's* spelljammer helm. Captain Minh explains that the helm powers the ship by siphoning the magical energies inherent to Wu-Hai. Any spellcaster, wizard or priest, can power a ship, though naturally those who command more control over magic are better suited for speed and maneuverability. Spelljamming, Minh explains, is tiring, but no more so than spellcasting, and the energy always can be regained.

The PCs may make any preparations they wish. Minh will answer their questions to the best of his ability. The upshot of spelljamming is this: as far as the PCs are concerned, it's no different than sailing on the sea. Granted, the speeds are hundreds, or even thousands of times faster than in the water, but the magic masks any strange effects of speedy travel. Further, Minh explains that the PCs need not worry about breathing – while jamming, the *Monitor* will carry with it an envelope of air that should easily last them as long as needed to fetch the *crown of the stars*.

A warning, however. Once that envelope is crossed, the PCs are unprotected from the dangers of arcane space. Said dangers include becoming stranded, starving to death, and, of course, suffocation.

After he has explained the rudiments of spelljamming, Captain Minh asks the PCs if any among them have experience with sailing. He explains that he is short several crewmembers, and will assign PCs to tasks appropriate to their level of familiarity with seamanship. Before the PCs take their stations, however, Captain Minh suggests that they get settled in their quarters (area 9 on the *Celestial Monitor* map from Round One).

Once the PCs are settled in their quarters, proceed.

Just as you finish sorting your belongings into the small footlocker beside your bed, the portal to your group's quarters opens. It's the ship's recorder, Ni.

She smiles widely, complimenting her exotic features. In perfect Common, she speaks. "The ship is about to leave harbor. I recommend you come to the deck. You won't want to miss this."

Following the ship's recorder, you reach the deck just as the Shou dragonship slowly lifts out of the harbor of your home city. On the docks, you see seasoned seamen drop their cargo in awe, as all eyes turn to you. Standing at the rear of the ship, looking down to the helm room through a large glass dome, Captain Minh gives the order, and the Celestial Monitor zooms into the air, leaving the city of Ravens Bluff behind it in a matter of seconds. You marvel as huge swaths of Faerun become visible over the horizon. Then, the clouds come, and you are temporarily blinded in a damp field of pure white. Just as soon as it came, however, the white is gone – replaced with a deep, beautiful black.

Behind you, a hundred thousand feet away, Toril itself hangs in empty space like a ball of bright blue dotted with streaks of browns and greens. It is home, you think, as it grows smaller and smaller.

Encounter Three Wreckage

A little less than an hour later, you stand on deck with Ni, who beams at the sight of the approaching Tears of Selune. "Imagine," she says. "Almost 5,000 years, and they are just as they were when Tu Pei Chei first recorded them for our emperor!"

The Tears, always a beautiful site from land, look absolutely radiant from up here. They appear to be formed of reflective rocks, some as large as a mountain. Could it be that dangerous creatures, these neogi, dwell within?

"Full stop!" You turn to see Captain Minh pointing off the stern. "There! A ghost ship!"

Minh points to what must be a spelljammer – a construction of wood, and perhaps ceramic, stylized in the form of an insect, or dragonfly.

Captain Minh will ask the PCs if they wish to explore the wreck. He will tell them that he is inclined to do so, but cannot offer any of his men, as there may be dangers within. He does not want to risk his already severely limited crew.

He orders one of his men to prepare a small boat, which will take the group to the wreck. Show the PCs the dragonfly ship picture attached to this module (Player Handout #1), adding that the “wings” appear a bit damaged, but that the ship is in otherwise perfect condition. Once the PCs get on board, they are free to explore the ship. A map of the dragonfly ship can be found in DM Handout #1.

Upper Deck

Investigating the dragonfly’s upper deck reveals little of interest. There is a plaque near the door leading belowdecks, but the writing is in some alien language (if magic is used, the plaque reads as follows: *The Rocky Tumble, dedicated 24329 F.H. in the Port of Thirty Dawns. To venture to the stars and spread the sacred word of NOG!*)

1. Mainmast

This tall mast can be rigged with a sail, ostensibly for travel on solar winds. No sail is present, however. A crow’s nest rests atop the mast, and can be reached via a number of pegs.

2. Main Catapult

The catapult appears not to have been used for some time. There is a bundle of shot next to the catapult, tied to the deck and held secure by a net.

3. Cargo Doors

Large wooden doors seem to lead to some sort of cargo bay, though they are chained and locked.

Lower Deck

1. Bridge and Spelljammer Helm

This room looks as though it was once richly appointed, with tapestries, statuary and paintings adorning the wooden walls. Now, all is a smashed ruin. Bits of broken art litter the center of the room, here, covering the remains of a smashed chair, facing toward two large windows – the dragonfly’s eyes. A hunched-over blond-haired humanoid form sits in the chair, its back to the stairs leading up to the deck. Pointed ears suggest elven heritage, but it is impossible, from a distance, to determine if the figure is dead or alive.

The figure is not even real. In fact, it is a *phantasmal force* cast by a resident spiritjam, an undead creature indigenous to wildspace. The spiritjam is hiding out in area 4, watching the proceedings via a *wizard eye*. Once investigators move toward the form, the spiritjam uses an *audible glamor* to simulate a quiet plea for help from area 2. That door stands slightly ajar.

Should someone investigate, the spiritjam telepathically orders an unseen servant to shut the door while it moves to cast *wizard lock* upon it. It then rushes to the main door to the upper deck, closes and *wizardlocks* it. Having thus divided the party, it concentrates upon the most isolated foes first, attempting to drain them dry.

If during the course of this encounter you can come up with a better way to isolate the group, feel free to use it. The creature’s statistics and spells are included at the end of this encounter.

2. Captain’s Cabin

The interior walls of this posh cabin have been torn, as if by claws, from ceiling to floor. The large bed has been ripped to shreds; sheets, blankets and the remains of pillows litter the floor in a great pile of junk. The room itself holds very little illumination, which comes through two large windows on the chamber’s outer wall.

This room is largely empty. The spiritjam hopes to trap at least one PC herein.

3. Crew Cabin

The Celestial Monitor is visible through the large windows of this room, a simple bedroom. Four unmade beds line the north wall, and a series of low chests rests against the walls opposite them.

The beds are cold, having been out of use for several days. The chests are unlocked, and contain several changes of clothes for three males and one female of average height. Careful searching reveals 23 gp worth of assorted gold coins.

The spiritjam inhabiting the ship will attempt to trap PCs within this room, if possible.

4. Cargo Bay

This area may be accessed only through the two locked cargo bay doors abovedecks. There is no light source within the cargo bay, so torches or magic will be needed to illuminate its contents.

The bay is filled with a variety of cargo, ranging from foodstuffs in wooden boxes and barrels to large bolts of an elaborate silver cloth unknown to the PCs. This material hangs from hooks attached to the ceiling, and gives the bay an appearance of a maze.

Careful searching in the rearmost section of the bay reveals the desiccated corpses of five humans, four men and one woman. All are tied by the wrists from the ceiling hooks, and hang a few feet from the ground.

Careful searching reveals that the woman is not quite dead – a long string of drool drips from her open mouth as her eyes look forward in a vacant stare.

The crew was, until recently, the foodstuff of the spiritjam. The woman is alive, barely, and has a functional Intelligence of 1. She has been hanging by the wrist for three days without food and water, and is within hours of final rest. If healed and fed, her intelligence will return in several weeks, well after the PCs have completed the adventure. If returned to the *Celestial Monitor*, Captain Minh will promise to look after her.

If the woman's intelligence is somehow restored by the PCs, she will explain exactly what happened to the crew – in an alien and completely unintelligible tongue. If this barrier is somehow transcended, she introduces herself as Sevess Beld-Bordui, second in command of *The Rocky Tumble*. She knows little of the attack, but can identify the creature that killed her friends as a spiritjam.

Should the PCs investigate the hold prior to the crew quarters, the spiritjam will attempt to trap them within (using *wizardlock*) and split them up within the bay by use of an *unseen servant* and an *audible glamer*. Thanks to the stacked cargo and hanging cloth, it will be relatively difficult for PCs exploring different parts of the hold to stay within sight of each other, and the spiritjam hopes to use this fact to its own evil advantage.

Plundering the hold will net the PCs 10,000 gp in Ravens Bluff (particularly for the silver cloth), and Minh will demand half of this sum for his crew.

The Spiritjam

Tier One

Spiritjam (1): Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 6; MV Fl 24 (E); HD 9; hp 40; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA Intelligence drain, gaze, spells; SD edged weapons to hit, immune to petrification and fear spells; MR 25%; ML 16.

Spiritjams envy and hate all life, especially spacefarers. A spiritjam prefers to move through a ship's walls, remaining hidden and observing the crew until it has selected its first target, which it will attack from behind with its claws. Each hit from the claws drain 1d3 points of Intelligence. When a victim reaches 0 Intelligence, it dies. Lost Intelligence is regained at a rate of two points per day.

When threatened or outnumbered, spiritjams attack with spells to put the odds in their favor. This particular spiritjam makes good use of *wizardlock* to slit up the party in different rooms, if possible, to allow for easier dining.

Spiritjams also have a gaze attack. Creatures meeting the gaze of a spiritjam must save vs. petrification or stand paralyzed in fear for 1d4 rounds. Spiritjams are immune to petrification and fear spells.

Blunt weapons, even magical ones, cannot harm spiritjams. Only magical (at Tiers 3-5) edged weapons can deal them any damage. They are turned as special undead. If *dispel evil* breaches their magic resistance, a spiritjam is driven away for 1d12 hours.

This spiritjam favors the spells *wizardlock*, *unseen servant*, *audible glamer*, *phantasmal force* and *wizard eye*, which it may use as many times as it wishes.

Tier Two

Spiritjam (1): Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 3; MV Fl 24 (E); HD 10; hp 45; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA Intelligence drain, gaze, spells; SD edged weapons to hit, immune to petrification and fear spells; MR 25%; ML 16.

Tier Three

Spiritjam (1): Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 0; MV Fl 24 (E); HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d8; SA Intelligence drain, gaze, spells; SD +1 edged weapons to hit, immune to petrification and fear spells; MR 30%; ML 16.

Tier Four

Spiritjam (1): Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 0; MV Fl 24 (E); HD 15; hp 60; THAC0 6; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d8; SA Intelligence drain, gaze, spells; SD +1 edged weapons to hit, immune to petrification and fear spells; MR 40%; ML 16.

Encounter Four The Set-Up

Nearly an hour after leaving the strange dragonfly ship behind, the Monitor lifts over a huge shimmering rock, revealing an unsettling sight. Some distance away, two huge ships are locked in combat. The first ship is fashioned in the form of a gigantic spider. Six arms reach out from the front of the vessel, as if to grab any who might pass before it. A sixth leg stands upright, tethering what looks like giant webbing – some sort of alien sail.

The other ship is more alien. It looks vaguely nautiloid in shape, the bulk of it making up a huge “shell,” like that of a snail. Long, entwined tentacles make up a huge battering ram, a ram that has pierced the rear section of the spider ship. Both vessels are many times the size of the Celestial Monitor, and appear to have been fashioned from glass, wood, ceramic and unidentifiable, foreign substances.

From time to time, bright flashes erupt from within the belly of the spider, as if the area within is the site of a great and fierce battle.

Player Handouts #2 and #3 contain illustrations of the two ships.

Captain Minh will look absolutely horrified at the sight, and bow his head in a moment of contemplation. Ni, the ship’s recorder, will explain that they had not anticipated this. The spider, she explains, is the flagship of the neogi fleet. It is captained by Tss’chossil, the being who possesses the *crown of the stars*. The other ship, however, is an illithid nautiloid. A ship full of mind flayers and their demented servants.

Minh will approach the group, and tell them that the added threat of the mind flayers makes their task that much more difficult. He suggests they turn around and seek out another spelljammer helm – this one is too dangerous.

At this, Ni speaks up, suggesting that since the two evil crews are at battle, their fighting might provide the needed distraction to make the mission a success. She adds that her offices include a number of scrolls that she might use to give the party magical protection from the inhabitants of the ship. Finally, Minh asks the party what they would like to do. Though he is concerned about his missing first mate, the *crown of the stars* is ultimately the goal of Ravens Bluff. He is willing to risk it...are they?

Ni can cast the following spells upon each and every member of the party, based upon tier.

Tier One

Free action (Pst4), *invisibility* (Wiz3), *non-detection* (Wiz3), *stoneskin* (good vs. 13 attacks) (Wiz4).

Tier Two

Free action (Pst4), *invisibility* (Wiz3), *non-detection* (Wiz3), *stoneskin* (good vs. 10 attacks) (Wiz4).

Tier Three

Free action (Pst4), *invisibility* (Wiz3), *non-detection* (Wiz3), *stoneskin* (good vs. 5 attacks) (Wiz4).

Tier Four

Invisibility (Wiz3), *stoneskin* (good vs. 5 attacks) (Wiz4).

Given the power of the scrolls, the above spells should last until the PCs get back with the *crown of the stars*, but it is possible that things will go very poorly for them. Remember that *invisibility* wears off the moment an attack is made. PCs will not want to become visible while within the neogi deathspider, but may have to. A visible PC will in many cases amount to a dead PC, so be sure that the players are aware of the consequences before they make any rash decisions. As they will soon find out, however, some decisions have been made for them...

PCs may wish to cast their own spells on themselves. Be sure to track durations.

Once Ni has read her scrolls, you all board a special dinghy. A member of Minh’s crew sits at the rear of the small boat, working a box-like device. In stilted common, he explains that he can power the boat for only short periods of time, during which it will be completely invisible to the naked eye. This power, he explains, will last but a single hour. His plan is to swing the dinghy alongside the hull of the ship, and cut a way in using a special wand.

Allow the PCs to amend this plan as they wish. No matter what they do, it will take the invisible craft five minutes to reach the deathspider.

Encounter Five

Nightmares of Neogi

The bulk of the rest of the module takes place within the neogi deathspider, where a pitched battle is being waged by both the arachnid neogi and the squid-like illithids. It is highly unlikely that the PCs have been in a more dangerous situation. However, the key to successfully running this encounter is by appropriately presenting the atmosphere of the location indirectly, a creaking deck here, a human slave, frozen in death and minus a brain, there.

It would be incredibly easy to wipe out a party in this section, but that is not the intent (unless foolish parties bring it upon themselves). In general, as long as the

party keeps moving and keeps their goal in mind, they should face relatively little danger outside of a few “near-miss” encounters that will, more than likely, turn into fights.

If things are going terribly for the PCs through no fault of their own, keep in mind that the primary conflict on board is between the illithids and the neogi. Therefore, it would be perfectly logical for an umber hulk slave of the neogi to bear down upon a mind flayer just as it is about to savage the party. Try to make the players think about strategy and safety. Always try to make them think they are in considerably more danger than they really are.

That said, PCs who don’t think, or who decide to do something really stupid such as join the main battle, probably deserve to be taught a permanent lesson or two. If this is the case, use the monsters within to severely challenge the PCs.

Atmosphere Aboard the Deathspider

Presenting the correct mood for the search will be of paramount importance to the players’ enjoyment of this module. The deathspider is essentially a large dungeon, but always keep in mind that it is an alien dungeon, filled with strange and alien artifacts, designed by and for an alien people.

The following creatures may be encountered while within the ship. When applicable, Monstrous Compendium summaries have been included as an appendix to this module:

Neogi: The neogi are perhaps the most hated race in Arcane Space. Vicious slavers, these arachnid creatures care only for themselves, and are as greedy and craven as possible. Neogi appear as a mix between a spider and an eel, and are about three feet tall. If the PCs are invisible, they are generally safe from the neogi. If outnumbered and without a human or umber hulk slave, most neogi will attempt to flee.

Umbur hulks: The brutish slaves of the neogi, these creatures exist to protect their “small masters.” They have no means by which to detect invisible (silent) PCs, but their gaze attack (see appendix) can be an unexpected danger to even fully protected PCs.

Human slaves: Both the neogi and the illithids keep slaves. The neogi use those slaves for labor. The illithids use their slaves for food. Neogi slaves wear nothing but loincloths (regardless of sex), and have an elaborate tattoo on both sides of the left shoulder. Most are insane and very few speak common. If ordered, the

humans will do whatever the neogi ask. Illithid slaves can be found on the nautiloid, devoid of their brains. They will not be encountered during the hunt for the *crown of the stars*.

Illithids: The mind flayers present by far the most tangible danger to the PCs. As it happens, their battle against the neogi is going well, and the illithids might be found anywhere on the ship. Like the rest of the folk onboard the ship, the illithids cannot see invisible PCs. However, they often use their *ESP* ability to search hallways for hidden dangers, and unless protected by a *ring of mind shielding*, *non-detection* or similar magics, the PCs will register in the illithids’ alien brains. This means danger, since mind flayers enjoy nothing more than devouring the brains of sentient folk. Though the point is debatable, most PCs from Ravens Bluff qualify as sentient.

Once the PCs are ready to enter, Minh’s agent opens a hole in the deathspider’s hull. The PCs enter Area 8 of the Hold Deck, explained below.

Gravity in Arcane Space

In Arcane Space, all bodies produce their own gravity. The effect of this is that a crewman could walk all the way from one end of the deck to the other, by way of the lower hull, without actually “falling” anywhere. A ship’s gravity is based on its “gravity plane,” as shown on the ship schematics attached to this module. The practical effect of this strange gravity system is that the entire Hold Deck is essentially “upside down.”

Running the Assault

Once the PCs have set out aboard the *Celestial Monitor’s* dinghy, action begins at Location 8, Hold Deck (Visitor’s Cabin). Thereafter, use the map of the Neogi deathspider attached to this module (DM Handout #2) to track the group’s progress. Keyed encounters below match the numbered locations on that map.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It’s very likely that some PCs lost several points of Wisdom during the first round of this tournament. An NPC within the Hold Deck of the deathspider will be able to help these PCs, eventually, so it is imperative that the judge pay particular attention to the screams heard in Location 7, emanating from Location 4.

Hold Deck

1. Cargo Doors

Opening these doors is a terrible idea. The sounds of a ferocious battle above are obvious, and opening the bay doors immediately brings a good portion of the battle to the lower cargo hold. The remaining neogi and umber hulks will be unable to notice invisible PCs, but the same cannot be said of the mind flayers. The room soon becomes bathed in *mind blasts*, and is not at all a safe location. Everyone in the room is hostile to each other, and the illithids hunger for the knowledge contained in the fresh brains of adventurers from Ravens Bluff...

Neogi (6): Int Highly; AL LE; AC 3; MV 6; HD 5; hp 30; THAC0 16; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6 (claw/claw/bite); SA Slowing poison; SD Nil; MR Nil; SZ S; ML 12.

Anyone bitten by a neogi must save vs. poison or be *slowed* for 1d8 rounds.

Umbur hulks (4): Int Exceptional; AL CE; AC 2; MV 6; HD 8+8; hp 52; THAC0 12; #AT 3; Dmg 3d6/3d6/1d10 (claw/claw/bite); SA *confusing* gaze; SD Nil; SZ L (8' tall); MR Nil; ML 13.

Those meeting the gaze of an umber hulk must save vs. spells or suffer *confusion*, per the spell.

These neogi and umber hulks are on the run, but will stay and fight the illithids, holding them to the area of the cargo doors. If any PCs are visible, however, the combatants attack them immediately. Do not allow these combatants to attack the party for more rounds than their tier. The mind flayers are worthy adversaries, and can take the heat off, if needed.

However, should the PCs flee after opening the bay doors, the mind flayers will destroy all neogi and umber hulks within the area within ten rounds. Thereafter, the squid-like aliens will take control of the entire Hold Deck, killing all prisoners and making wreckage of the majority of the ship. They will not enter Area 8, and hence will not discover Minh's dinghy and agent. However, it will be essentially impossible for the PCs to negotiate the lower passageways without alerting 2d4 full-strength mind flayers.

Mind flayers (6 or 2d4): Int Genius; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 8+4; hp 49; THAC0 11; #AT 4; Dmg 2 (see below); SA mind blast; SD edged weapons to hit; MR 90%; ML 16.

A mind flayer's preferred method of attack is the *mind blast*, projected in a cone 60 feet long, 5 feet wide at the mind flayer, and 20 feet wide at the opposite end. All within the cone must make a saving throw vs. wands or

be stunned and unable to act for the next 3d4 rounds. While its victim is stunned, the mind flayer then attempts to attack the victim's head with a tentacle.

A successful tentacle attack causes two points of damage, and holds the victim, while its other three tentacles attempt to find purchase. Holding tentacles do no additional damage, and may be forced off a victim's head upon a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. Once all four tentacles have attached themselves to a victim's head, the mind flayer has found a path to the brain and kills the PC within one round.

A mind flayer can also use the following arcane powers, once per round, as a 7th level mage: *suggestion*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *ESP*, *levitate*, *astral projection*, and *plane shift*. All saving throws against these spells are made at -4 due to the creatures' mental prowess.

If it comes to a low-tier party fighting mind flayers, be sure to give the PCs a good idea that they have absolutely no chance against these creatures, and that a hasty retreat might be in order.

2. Cargo Hold

This huge room houses much of the deathspider's cargo, huge balls of rock entwined with veins of pure gold. The balls are easily ten feet tall by twenty feet wide. There are seven such balls tied to the hull.

The room also contains a massive lever, clearly the operating mechanism for a huge set of double cargo bay doors on the floor.

If somehow the balls were to be salvaged and sold, they could net the seller 100,000 gp each. However, transporting from the hold is impossible without accessing the Flight Deck, which is currently the site of a pitched battle between the neogi and illithid forces. This fact is obvious, as the sounds of battle (alien screaming, explosions, etc.) can be clearly heard on the opposite side of the floor.

See Area 1 for more information on the doors, and what happens if the PCs should be foolish enough to open them.

3. Slave Quarters

Upon opening the door to the hallway of the slave pens, you discover the twisted, broken body of a fat neogi. Inspection reveals that its head has been twisted forcibly, breaking the neck. The creature is still warm, and must have died very recently.

The door directly to the right of the entrance has been smashed off its hinges, but has been clumsily replaced, leaning against the jamb. A thick trail of fresh red blood leads from the wall nearby the neogi to the room beyond [Area 4]. It looks as though a man-sized creature might have been smashed against the wall, as the blood is particularly thick at eye height, and seems to be about the right size for a head.

From within the room to your right, you hear a loud scream, followed by a man's voice, saying "Holy Celestian, please take your dedicated servant from this journey to the one beyond the horizon!" The plea is panicked, and obviously comes from a man about to die.

Investigation of the ten slave pens reveals a dirty bunk in each, though all are currently vacant. Anyone spending a significant amount of time here is likely to contract fleas, lice, and all manner of unpleasant afflictions.

4. Slavemaster Quarters

The door to this room lies against the doorjamb, having been torn from its hinges.

Peeking through the doorway reveals a huge umber hulk, obviously enraged, as it literally tears a shirtless man apart at the arms. The man must surely be dead, however, as the lower half of his body lies within the beast's mouth. As you look on, the hideous creature belches out the remains of the man, and turns its attention to an older man, who lies on the floor, one of his legs bent in an irregular angle. The man has a stylized blue tattoo above his shoulder (as did the first victim), but he also has a field of stars tattooed upon his chest.

It is very obvious that, unless the PCs do something fast, the man will be senselessly murdered by the marauding umber hulk.

Enraged umber hulk (1): Int Exceptional; AL CE; AC 2; MV 6; HD 8+8; hp 12/22/32/42/52 (by tier); THACO 12; #AT 3; Dmg 3d6/3d6/1d10 (claw/claw/bite); SA *confusing* gaze; SD Nil; SZ L (8' tall); MR Nil; ML 13.

Those meeting the gaze of an umber hulk must save vs. spells or suffer *confusion*, per the spell.

If rescued, the surviving slave will introduce himself as Arvin of Celestian. He explains that all of the slaves have been moved from their chambers here to somewhere on a higher deck. He tells the PCs that the deathspider was attacked nearly an hour ago, and

suggests that the neogi are probably losing, if they've pressed their slaves into combat, as he suspects. He and his companion, Urden, were to be moved last, and attempted to escape. Urden killed the neogi "slavemaster," but the enraged umber hulk captured the two of them.

Unless the PCs are feeling very generous, Urden is beyond their help. Arvin's leg is shattered, and will need either a *cure critical wounds* or a more powerful spell for it to ever function again. The man explains that this is not a problem, however, as he is himself a powerful priest of Celestian, a god of spacefarers. Arvin asks the PCs to take him with them, but knows that he cannot help in a fight. If he is rescued and allowed to rest, he could heal himself.

Arvin knows a good deal about the general layout of the ship, and knows that Tss'chossil keeps the *crown of the stars* somewhere on the Primary Deck. He also explains the gravity shift in Area 7. He has not been away from the deathspider in many months, however, and cannot help the party in any more significant way.

If the PCs should happen to get in a fight while attempting to escape with Arvin, the old cleric will certainly be killed. He is weak, and can sustain no more than 5 hit points of damage.

Remember that any PCs who took hostile action against the umber hulk will lose the benefit of Ni's <i>invisibility</i> spell.

5. Jettison

This large room contains all manner of junk, including the dead bodies of both slaves and umber hulks. A large lever just inside the door opens a hatch on the outside wall, and a *gust of wind* spell blows the trash, and everything within the chamber and outside a ten-foot radius of the lever, outside the deathspider and its air envelope. Supposing something blocks the PCs from exiting from Area 8, the jettison might be their best exit from the madness of the deathspider.

Those ejected float in Arcane Space, with a very small air envelope of their own. Minh's agent, however, sees the ejection, and after nearly an hour (during which several parts of the deathspider catch fire), he comes to investigate the wreckage and rescue the PCs.

6. Passageway

The passageway is about six feet wide, and features three oval doors, one double set, which leads to the Cargo Bay (Area 2), one that leads to the Slave Pens (Areas 3 and 4), and one that leads to the ship's Trash

Jettison (Area 5). The Slave Pens door is wide open, the others are closed, and may be opened in the usual side panel manner.

7. Hatch to Primary Deck

The center of a large open area is marked by a large hexagonal structure running from floor to ceiling. Each of the structure's six sides is marked with an ovular door about eight feet high.

The first time the PCs visit this area, they will hear violent, definitely human screams coming from the aft hallway (Area 6).

Investigation of the hexagonal chamber reveals a central ladder leading “down” (actually toward the top of the ship – see “Gravity in Arcane Space,” above). Anyone climbing “down” the ladder must make a surprise check or be caught unawares by the shift in gravity, essentially swinging around on the ladder and crashing with a loud “oomph” (and taking one point of damage). Anyone who has seen this will be prepared for it, and can avoid the damage by being careful. The ladder leads up some twelve feet, where it opens to Area 12 on the Primary Deck.

8. Visitors Cabin

Minh's man removes a section of the spidership's hull, revealing a strange room within the belly of the beast. The chamber's interior seems to be fashioned from a dark wood and ceramic; light green panels of an unknown substance glow faintly, lending an eerie illumination to the room.

Three fields of translucent, slowly flowing energy run from the floor to ceiling along the aft wall. A raised shelf along the fore wall looks as though it might act as a long table, though it is high enough only to reach a human's knees. A single, ovular door marks the wall opposite you. In the distance, you can make out intermittent explosions and loud, alien screams.

Experimentation with this room reveals that the energy fields are a sort of suspension system. Someone could simply slip into the field and be raised a comfortable distance from the floor, gently floating on a pleasant bed of energy and air. The green panels are a sort of magical lighting, controlled by touch. There are three settings – low, full, and off.

The door likewise raises by pushing a small panel about two feet off the floor (the door itself is about eight feet tall).

9. Head

A slightly raised area in this cramped room makes for an interesting seat, of sorts. A number of pliable tubes run from the interior of this seat to various openings around the room.

Though unlike any toilet the PCs have seen before, the smell of the room leaves little mystery as to its use.

10. Lesser Neogi Quarters

This room is lit with the dull green glow of the wall panels. It is meticulously clean, save for ten opaque, web-like sacs hanging from the ceiling, about four feet from the ground. Beneath these sacs rest ten round sculptures.

The round sculptures are actually chests, and may be “unscrewed” to reveal strange cloth outfits. These seem to be quite thin near the neck, and wider near the waist. The size could fit nothing taller than three feet, and the garments do not include holes for arms. A few chests contain gem-encrusted necklaces, though these are generally of poor quality (worth 13 gp, in total).

The sacs are neogi beds, and may be opened like a laundry bag.

11. Lesser Neogi Quarters

This room is identical to Area 10, save that one of the sacs is inhabited by a neogi. This creature looks like a mix between eel and spider, with a humanoid head. While the rest of its brethren fight off the illithid incursion on the Primary Deck, this neogi rests in its sleep sac. Unless the PCs have made a terrible racket, they will catch it sleeping. A wide gash is apparent upon the thing's stomach, and it appears to be missing one of its eight legs.

Injured neogi (1): Int Highly; AL LE; AC 3 (9 in sleep sac); MV 6; HD 5; hp 3; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6 (claw/claw/bite); SA slowing poison; SD Nil; MR Nil; ML 12.

Assuming the PCs have made noise, the neogi will be waiting for them, feigning sleep. The moment its sac is disturbed, it lashes out (remember that it suffers a -4 to hit penalty if its victim is invisible). Those struck by the neogi's bite must save vs. poison or be *slowed* for 1d8 rounds.

Primary Deck

1. Bridge & Spelljammer Helm

Opening the door to this chamber reveals a horrible site. Large, multifaceted windows make up the eyes of

the spidership, and reveal the beautiful black of Arcane Space. In the center of the room, the tallest mind flayer you have ever seen bends over the corpse of a bloated neogi, who sits in a large, alien chair that appears to have been recently destroyed. The neogi is obviously dead, but before you can react, the mind flayer turns and looks directly at you. It is dressed in elaborate purple and dark red robes. Its eyes grow wider. You immediately feel alien tentacles probing the recesses of your minds. The creature cocks its bulbous, tentacled head, as if waiting for you to react.

This is a Bloshelskin, an illithid noble and captain of the mind flayer nautiloid. Allow observation checks to notice that this illithid sports six long tentacles, rather than the normal four. Bloshelskin's statistics are included only if the PCs are stupid enough to attack him. He is super-aware, and has cast *true seeing*. He will notice the PCs' entrance.

He knows that the PCs are not members of Tss'chossil's crew, and so they fall outside of his orders to destroy everything owned by the neogi. Assuming his probe is successful, Bloshelskin simply gestures to a panel on the aft wall, the location of the neogi captain's secret door to the treasure room.

If a low tier party attempts to attack Bloshelskin, feel free to have the alien laugh at them mentally and shake his head. If they do attack, the Ulitharid will very likely kill them. This does not please him as much as one might think, as he much prefers the brains of *intelligent* creatures.

Bloshelskin (Ulitharid): Int Supra-genius; AL LE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 11+8; hp 75; THAC0 9; #AT 6; Dmg Special; SA mind blast; SD Stoneskins (13); MR 95%; ML 16.

Once Bloshelskin has hit a single target with at least three tentacles, he will find a route to that target's brain within 1d3 rounds (at which point the target dies). One tentacle may be removed from a "held" victim per person pulling, per round, upon a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. The creature also attacks with its potent *mind blast* ability. All within a 60' cone (5' at base, 20' at terminus) must save vs. spells at -4 or be *feeble-minded*.

Bloshelskin also has the following spell-like abilities, at 10th level, once per round: *astral projection*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *ESP*, *eyebite*, *forget*, *legend lore*, *levitate*, *plane shift*, *suggestion*, *telekinesis*, and *true seeing* (operative).

2. Captain/Owner's Cabin

This room is the most ornately decorated in the entire ship. The walls have been painted in abstract patterns that must pass for art to the neogi, and a large sleepsac hangs from the ceiling. The entire room seems damp. A door marks the fore wall.

The door leads to the deathspider's bridge. Tss'chossil is not present.

3. Captain/Owner's Treasures

This room is inaccessible from the outer hallway. The captain of the vessel, Tss'chossil, is even more paranoid than the rest of his race, and installed a magical security system that ensures the safety of his treasures. In effect, the door to this room has merged with the wall (both of which are made of super-strong ceramic plates). Though the door is still visible, it is no longer a door, per se. The only way through is to employ a spell or a weapon. It takes 45 points of damage to break through the door, and any weapon brought to bear on it must save vs. crushing blow at -2 each round it is used in this fashion.

There is a secret door to the treasure room, through the aft wall of Area 1.

Within the room are seven ovoid chests. These chests contain 1000 cp, 1000 sp, 1000 ep, 1000 gp, 1000 pp, 5000 gp in assorted gems and eight dozen slave contracts, respectively. All are locked and trapped.

Tier One

Needle trap, opener must save vs. poison or be put to sleep for ten rounds.

Tier Two

Needle trap, opener must save vs. poison or suffer 2d8 points of damage, as well as be put to sleep for ten rounds.

Tier Three

Magical trap, opening a chest bathes the room in a 20th level *dispel magic*. Further, everyone in the room must save vs. spells or be put to sleep for ten rounds.

Tier Four

Gas trap, opening a chest unleashes a terrible gas. The PCs must save vs. poison at +2 or die. Further, opening a chest bathes the room in a 20th level dispel magic.

The aft wall also contains a large, elaborate glass case. The front pane of the case reveals an ornate crown and a large ivory horn, resting on a small bolt of red velvet. Below the glass case, which is attached to the wall about three feet from the ground, is a sort of magical

touchpad featuring a number of neogi patterns. The glass case opens only if the correct patterns from the top row are added to the correct spaces in the bottom (see Player Handout #4).

The top row represents neogi numerals, 1-9 and 0.

The bottom row lists successive prime numbers, which are made up of the symbols from the first row, followed by two blanks. These numbers are 5, 7, 11, 13, and 17. The blanks must be filled by two numerals from the first row (1 and 9, making 19) to complete the sequence of prime numbers. This is done by touching the upper numeral and a blank space, in sequence. A correct solution to the puzzle would involve the following: Touching the numeral equal to 1, touching the first blank space (the numeral appears in place of the blank space), touching the numeral equal to nine, touching the final blank space.

Touching any wrong square at any time elicits a magic missile from the “keyboard,” which strikes the toucher for 1d4 points of damage. Subsequent mistakes power the discharge cumulatively, so the third mistaken touch would elicit a magic missile that deals 3d4 points of damage. There is no upper cap to this.

Breaking the glass case bathes the room in a flow of disruptive energy, which deals the following damage to everyone in the room, no saving throw:

Tier One: 2d6
Tier Two: 3d6
Tier Three: 3d8
Tier Four: 4d10
Tier Five: 6d10

Once the code has been broken, the glass slides open, revealing both the *crown of the stars* and the *horn of the spheres* (included in the treasure summary, below).

Any magic-using character who attempts to put on the *crown of the stars* loses all memorized spells, and gains immediate contact with the ship. However, a hideous slave beast of the illithids is currently controlling the ship. A *crown*-wearing PC in contact with the ship will not be able to control it, and must save vs. spells for each round past the first. Failure to save results in that character suffering from *feblemind*, due to the powerful alien mental link.

Once the PCs have the *crown*, they will attempt to flee the dying spidership. Feel free to improvise some “close call” encounters with mind flayers or enraged umber hulks, but do not bog down the rest of the adventure with combat. The PCs have won the day, and

should escape with their lives (unless they’ve done something *really* stupid).

4. Helmsmen’s Quarters

This chamber appears to be the home of some sort of noble neogi. A single sleepsac hangs from the ceiling, and a number of pieces of what must be furniture line the walls and floor. The room is otherwise empty.

5. Forward UMBER Hulk Pens

This room is filthy, and contains a number of large enclosures obviously meant for storing umber hulks. There is little of interest to be found here, as all the room’s occupants are either dead or fighting on the Flight Deck.

6. Galley

A smaller version of Area 13, this location is used to prepare food for the human slaves.

7. Pantry

Sweet-smelling dry goods are stored in this room, though many of the jars here have fallen from their shelves and broken upon the floor. You imagine that a careful search and cataloguing of all the rare and alien spices here would take the better part of a week.

8. Sail Locker

This room is in fact empty, though pegs on the walls suggest that something very large and delicate is meant to be hung here.

9. Helmsman’s Locker

This small room contains a number of star charts, neogi texts and instruments crucial to the ship’s mundane day to day operations. There is nothing of value to the PCs here.

10. Lesser Neogi Quarters

This area is identical to Area 10, Hold Deck. Unlike the quarters in the lower level, however, the neogi sleepsacs here have been torn from the ceiling and lie strewn about the room.

11. Lesser Neogi Quarters

This area is identical to Area 10, above, with one important exception. When the PCs enter, they discover a mind flayer bent over the wriggling corpse of a human slave. All four of its tentacles are attached to the man’s head, and the creature seems to be in some form of euphoric state – it does not notice the PCs at all. Allow PCs an observation check to notice that this human is armed with a battle axe, and seems to be wearing an ornately decorated iron collar, perhaps denoting some sort of “favored” status.

The PCs may attack the feasting illithid. Because it is so deeply engorged, it will not immediately notice the PCs, even if they are visible. This equates to a full round of free attacks for the PCs. Should they be unable to kill the creature, however, he will leave his meal and attack with a vengeance.

Feasting mind flayer: Int Genius; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 8+4; hp 39; THAC0 11; #AT 4; Dmg 2 (see below); SA Mind blast; SD edged weapons to hit; MR 90%; ML 16.

A mind flayer's preferred method of attack is the *mind blast*, projected in a cone 60 feet long, 5 feet wide at the mind flayer, and 20 feet wide at the opposite end. All within the cone must make a saving throw vs. wands or be stunned and unable to act for the next 3d4 rounds. While its victim is stunned, the mind flayer then attempts to attack the victim's head with a tentacle.

A successful tentacle attack causes two points of damage, and holds the victim, while its other three tentacles attempt to find purchase. Holding tentacles do no additional damage, and may be forced off a victim's head upon a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. Once all four tentacles have attached themselves to a victim's head, the mind flayer has found a path to the brain and kills the PC within one round.

A mind flayer can also use the following arcane powers, once per round, as a 7th level mage: *suggestion*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *ESP*, *levitate*, *astral projection*, and *plane shift*. All saving throws against these spells are made at -4 due to the creatures' mental prowess.

The dead slave's weapon is a *battle axe* +3. The collar can be removed, and is the *iron collar of obedience*, described in the treasure summary.

12. Passageway

The passage to the fore is littered with the corpses of several human slaves. Each has the blue tattoo near the left shoulder, and all look as though they died in the same, agonizing manner. Inspection of the corpses reveals that the humans' brains have been removed through holes in the tops of their heads. Several doors line each wall.

13. Interrogation & Food Preparation Area

This spartan room has seen little action in the current fight. Large tables and shelves hold all manner of cooking implements and ingredients, most of which are suitable to the tastes of alien creatures such as the neogi. Jars of worm-like creatures, strips of

unidentifiable meat and kegs of foul-smelling gruel can all be found here.

Neogi do not cook their own food, hence there is no stove here.

14. Open Portal to Hold Deck

PCs should access this area from Area 7, Hold Deck. Like that location, this "tube" is hexagonal, with oval doors on all six sides of the structure. After the PCs have dealt with the "gravity shift" explained above, they are free to open one of the doors and explore the Primary Deck.

However, the sounds of battle are very loud here. The enclosure is very warm, as if a fire is raging nearby.

15. Cargo Doors

These massive cargo doors open to Area 1, Hold Deck. The operating mechanism, a large lever, can be found near the door to Area 12. Once the lever is thrown, it takes the doors a full round to open. Note that the PCs face considerable danger every minute they spend here.

Another lever just inside the door to Area 16 controls the retractable roof of the spidership's abdomen. This larger lever requires a Strength of 18 or greater to throw. However, the abdomen will retract only a few feet, as the nautiloid's battering ram is holding it in place.

16. Flight Deck: Additional Cargo Area

This symmetry of this massive room might once have been pleasing, but the chaos of the battle between illithid and neogi has disrupted the sense of order inherent to its design. Perhaps a dozen smaller craft, evocative of the neogi deathspider, lie in various stages of disrepair throughout the cavernous flight deck. The room is clearly the "abdomen" of the ship's spiderlike form, though this abdomen has been pierced by the entwined, tentacle-like battering ram of the illithid ship.

From the door, you can see at least ten dead umber hulks, as well as twice that number ferociously battling hideous, pinkish creatures on the far side of the room. The latter creatures stand some eight feet tall, and stare eye to eye with the ferocious slaves of the neogi. On closer inspection, the pinkish brutes appear to be composed entirely of brain matter. The umber hulks do not appear to be faring well against these creatures.

Elsewhere in the huge chamber, a half dozen mind flayers gesture toward a smaller group of desperate neogi. A few of these creatures stand stock-still in

place, as the squid-like illithids close for hand to hand combat.

Lastly, the entire room seems to “wiggle” from time to time, as if covered in some sort of strange magical field, if only briefly.

This field is actually the powerful mind blast of the mind flayers’ brain golems. The radius of this attack falls just short of the PCs, so anyone walking into the room will be subject to at least one such attack every single round.

Try to give the impression of an incredibly dangerous fight. It is extremely unlikely that PCs who enter this room will live to tell about it. If by some miracle the PCs do manage to reach the far end of the room, simply have the mind flayer nautiloid withdraw – exploring its hideous depths is outside the scope of this adventure.

Desperate neogi (6): Int Highly; AL LE; AC 3; MV 6; HD 5; hp 30; THAC0 16; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6 (claw/claw/bite); SA Slowing poison; SD Nil; MR Nil; SZ S; ML 12.

Anyone bitten by a neogi must save vs. poison or be *slowed* for 1d8 rounds.

Harried umber hulks (20): Int Exceptional; AL CE; AC 2; MV 6; HD 8+8; hp 52; THAC0 12; #AT 3; Dmg 3d6/3d6/1d10 (claw/claw/bite); SA *Confusing* gaze; SD Nil; SZ L (8’ tall); MR Nil; ML 13.

Those meeting the gaze of an umber hulk must save vs. spells or suffer *confusion*, per the spell.

Triumphant mind flayers (6): Int Genius; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 8+4; hp 49; THAC0 11; #AT 4; Dmg 2 (see below); SA Mind blast; SD edged weapons to hit; MR 90%; ML 16.

A mind flayer’s preferred method of attack is the *mind blast*, projected in a cone 60 feet long, 5 feet wide at the mind flayer, and 20 feet wide at the opposite end. All within the cone must make a saving throw vs. wands or be stunned and unable to act for the next 3d4 rounds. While its victim is stunned, the mind flayer then attempts to attack the victim’s head with a tentacle.

A successful tentacle attack causes two points of damage, and holds the victim, while its other three tentacles attempt to find purchase. Holding tentacles do no additional damage, and may be forced off a victim’s head upon a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. Once all four tentacles have attached themselves to a victim’s

head, the mind flayer has found a path to the brain and kills the PC within one round.

A mind flayer can also use the following arcane powers, once per round, as a 7th level mage: *suggestion*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *ESP*, *levitate*, *astral projection*, and *plane shift*. All saving throws against these spells are made at -4 due to the creatures’ mental prowess.

Hideous brain golems (11): Int Low; AL LE; AC 3; MV 6; HD 12; hp 60; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 2d12; SA Mental blast; SD Spell immunities, +2 weapons to hit; MR 70%; SZ 8’ tall; ML 20.

Brain golems are superaware of their surroundings in combat, always focusing their attacks on the weakest member of their enemy’s party. A brain golem’s physical attack is a swift punch with its fist. Once per turn, it can unleash a *mind blast*. This energy strikes everyone within 60 feet. All those hit must make a successful save vs. spell or suffer 2d8 points of damage and become stunned for 1d10 rounds. Those who do not save only lose initiative for the next round and suffer 1d8 damage. Mind flayers are immune to the *mental blast* of a brain golem.

Brain golems are immune to all forms of poison and cannot be affected by mind-influencing spells such as charms or illusions. They are also immune to death magic.

17. Ramp to Citadel Deck

Flames lick the hallway leading up to the Citadel Deck. It’s clear that the entire upper level has been gutted with fire, and is inaccessible. Any PC not protected by fire can attempt to go up the ramp, but will suffer 1d10 points of fire damage. Those protected from fire will find a number of illithid, neogi, umber hulk and human bodies.

Encounter Six Conclusion

Minh’s agent steers the dinghy away from the neogi spidership, just as a huge explosion rocks the foremost cabin. As flames play about the surface of the ship, the mind flayer nautiloid pulls away and quickly disappears in the distance. In minutes, you are once again on board the Celestial Monitor, and Captain Minh greets you excitedly, asking about your mission.

Aftermath (Assuming the PCs returned with the crown of the stars)

Korbador happily accepts the crown. “Without this, the people abducted by Ebulon might be lost to us forever. I know the mission was difficult, but you stood up to it like heroes. I thank you, as does the city of Ravens Bluff.

Aside from the *crown of the stars*, Korbador allows the PCs to keep anything they might have found during their journey. Further, he gives each member of the party a gem worth 4,000 gp.

If the PCs were unsuccessful, Korbador gives them his sincerest thanks, as well as the gem reward. He apologizes for any losses the group may have incurred, but tells the party to prepare for more loss, as the power of Ebulon is currently unchecked.

If the PCs rescued Arvin, the High Priest of Celestian, that NPC visits them the day after their return from the stars. He asks the party to gather in a tavern, and explains that he is Celestian’s favored in this region of Arcane Space. Because they rescued him, his god has instructed him to help them in a single manner. He can either resurrect one PC who died on the current mission, for free, or he can restore all lost Wisdom points drained from the entire party in Round One of this module. Sadly, he cannot do both. If the PCs require neither of these services, he will not mention them. Regardless, Celestian’s god bestows the *Favor of the Star Wanderer* upon the one PC who showed the most kindness to his favored throughout the ordeal aboard the neogi ship. This gift is bestowed first to the PC who healed him most effectively. If no one healed him, it goes to the PC who showed the most interest in rescuing or caring for him. In all cases, ties are to be awarded to the PC with the higher Charisma.

All PCs who participated in a successful raid on the neogi deathspider receive a fame point in the general category.

Any knight or knight-squire who risked his or her life to save Arvin receives one Chivalry Point.

Experience Point Summary

Experience is calculated as follows for Living City events:

1. Sum the experience listed below for objectives.
2. Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-500 points). These should reward accurate character

portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially.

3. Finally, multiply the total by the tier according to this chart:

Levels 4-13	Tier 1
Levels 14-25	Tier 2
Levels 26-37	Tier 3
Levels 38-56	Tier 4
Levels 57+	Tier 5

PCs should get the experience points of the tier for which they qualify, regardless of which tier is actually played. For example, if you have a Tier 3 group and you have bumped up combats by one tier to challenge them, they still get the experience points for a Tier 3 group, not for a Tier 4 group.

Encounter Three

Exploring ghost ship:	50 xp
Defeating spiritjam:	100 xp

Encounter Five

Discovering sick neogi:	50 xp
Rescuing Arvin:	200 xp
Destroying feasting flayer:	100 xp
Not attacking Bloshelskin:	100 xp
Or	
Killing Bloshelskin:	200 xp
Solving glass case puzzle:	200 xp

Highest objective experience:	800 xp
Role-playing experience:	0-500 xp

Highest possible experience award:	1,300 xp
For Tier 2:	2,600 xp
For Tier 3:	3,900 xp
For Tier 4:	5,200 xp
For Tier 5:	6,500 xp

Treasure Summary

If it’s not on this list, the PCs cannot keep it. This is a house rule which overrides what they may actually acquire in the scenario.

5000 gp (half the value of the dragonfly ship cargo, if the PCs plunder it)

1000 cp, 1000 sp, 1000 ep, 1000 gp, 1000 pp, and 5000 gp in assorted gems (from the neogi deathspider treasury)

4000 gp gems (Korbador gives one to each PC who successfully completes the mission)

Horn of the spheres: This magical horn is carved from the bone of a Great Dreamer, an immense, three-eyed whale-like creature that plies the vast of wildspace. When sounded by a priest in a foreign crystal sphere (i.e. prime material world other than Toril or any of the celestial bodies surrounding it), the ensuing sound has a 55% chance of drawing the attention of that priest's god.

This opens a channel for that power to confer spells as normal to the sounder for a period of one week. This link is severed by the use of a dimensional *gate* or travel to another plane (including the Ethereal), and may be disrupted by a successful casting of *dispel magic* against 12th level. It may be sounded once every seven days, and has no effect in the home sphere of the sounder. Each use elicits a cumulative 5% chance that the horn will shatter and become useless.

Favor of the Star-Wanderer: For rescuing a member of his clergy, Celestian, god of travelers and the stars, grants the owner of this certificate a special boon. When redeemed, the *Favor of the Star-Wanderer* allows the favored PC and up to six companions to act in all ways as if on the Prime Material plane for the period of seven days. Items do not lose "plusses" or potency due to planar travel, priests and wizards may cast and regain spells without penalty, etc. While under the effects of a *Favor of the Star-Wanderer*, PCs may not redeem any *favours*, *boons* or similar magical gifts of any god other than Celestian. This favor may be used once and only once.

Iron collar of obedience: Removed from a dead neogi slave, this simple collar appears to be constructed of durable iron. When locked around the neck, it allows the wearer to live indefinitely without the need for food, water, rest, or sleep. The wearer effectively is immune to *sleep*-related spells, as well as any magic designed to hinder progress (such as *slow*, *fumble*, etc.). The collar does not aid against those spells designed to stop the victim completely (such as *web*, *hold person*, etc.).

The *iron collar of obedience* may be removed from a living body only by a neogi or a being of power equivalent to a godly avatar. Once the *collar* is placed on someone, it becomes a solid piece of metal. *Dispel magic* will not reverse this transformation, it can only be removed as stated above or by destroying the item.

As long as the *collar* is worn, the PC saves at 15 for all mind-affecting spells that allow saving throws. This base saving throw may not be modified in any way, regardless of Wisdom bonuses or penalties or other magical items (including a *scarab of protection*). If the spell in question does not allow a saving throw, the wearer cannot use items or powers to grant himself a save. So powerful is the mind-weakening magic of the

iron collar of obedience that elves and other races normally resistant to charm-related spells still suffer all negative effects of the *collar*. The *collar* may not be traded if in use until removed in a manner described above.

This collar has been put on by _____ (character name), witnessed by _____ (GM signature) and cannot be removed except as stated above (if removed safely, document the method on the back with signature by a witness).

Battle axe +3

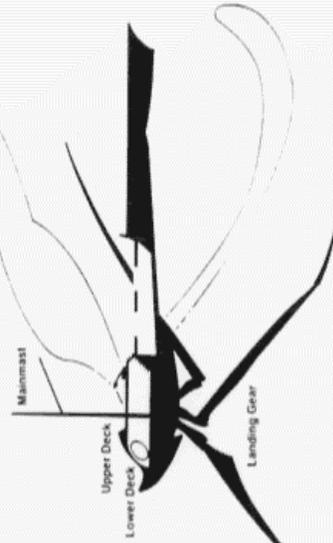
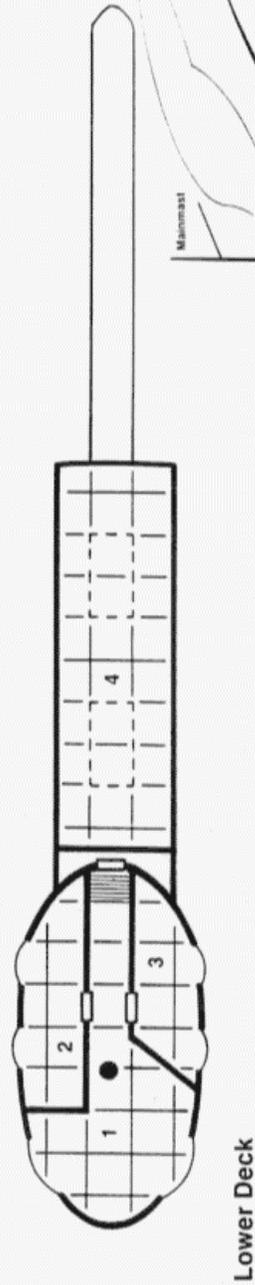
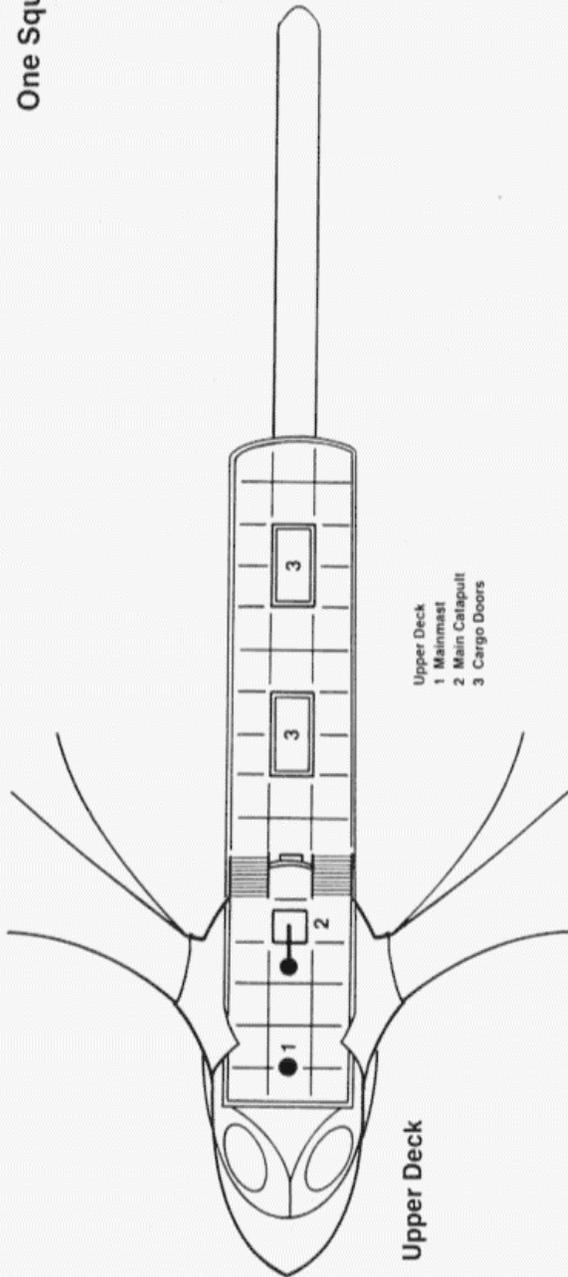
Fame and Chivalry

All PCs who participated in a successful raid on the neogi deathspider receive a fame point in the general category.

Any knight or knight-squire who risked his or her life to save Arvin receives one Chivalry Point

DM Handout #1 - Map of the Dragonfly Ship

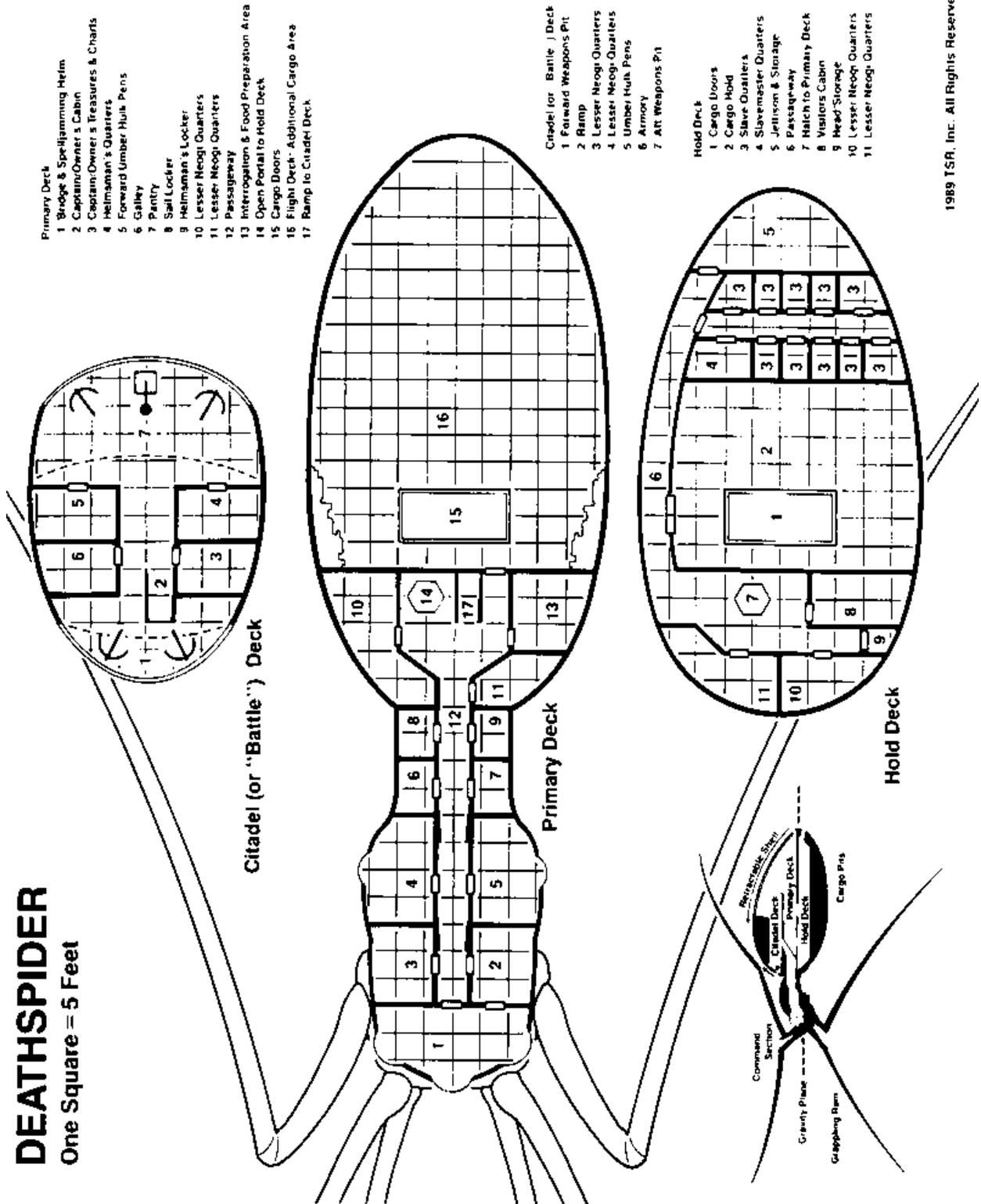
DRAGONFLY
One Square = 5 Feet



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DM Handout #2 - Map of the Neogi Deathspider

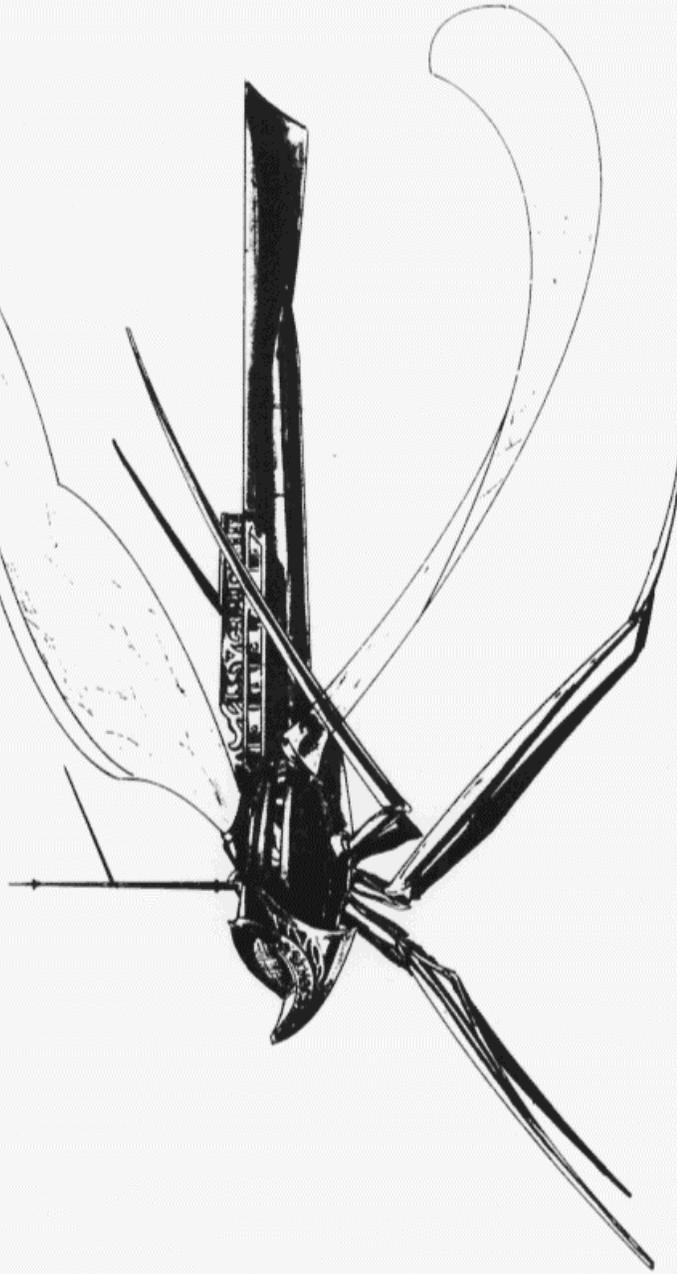
DEATHSPIDER
One Square = 5 Feet



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Player Handout #1 – Illustration of the Dragonfly Ship

DRAGONFLY

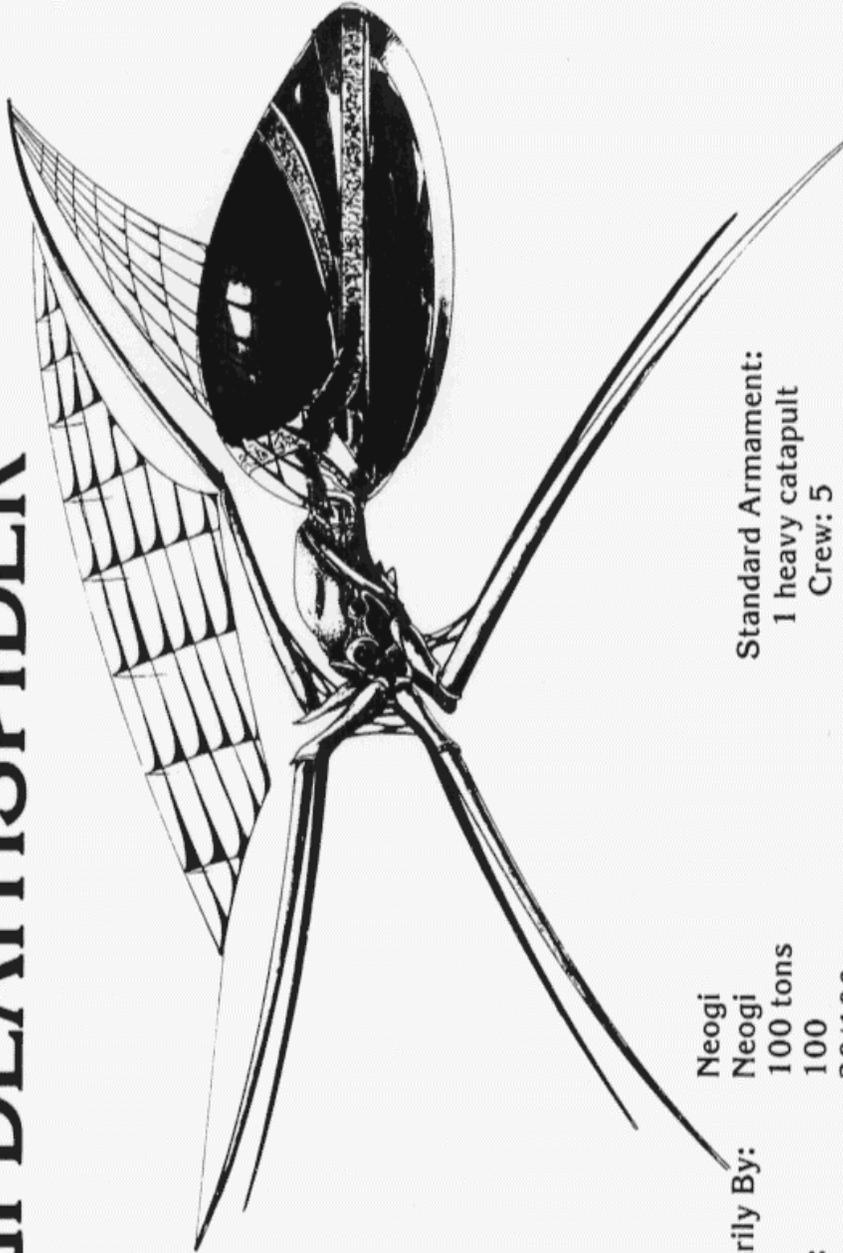


Built By: Humans
Used Primarily By: Humans, elves
Tonnage: 10 tons
Hull Points: 10
Crew: 3/10
Maneuverability Class: C
Landing—Land: Yes
Landing—Water: No
Armor Rating: 8
Saves As: Thin wood

Power Type: Major or minor helm
Ship's Rating: As for spelljammer
Standard Armament:
 1 light ballista
 Crew: 1
 OR 1 light catapult
 Crew: 1
Cargo: 5 tons
Keel Length: 100'
Beam Length: 20'

Player Handout #2 – Illustration of the Deathspider

NEOGI DEATHSPIDER



Built By: Neogi
Used Primarily By: Neogi
Tonnage: 100 tons
Hull Points: 100
Crew: 30/100
Maneuverability Class: E
Landing—Land: No
Landing—Water: No
Armor Rating: 5
Saves As: Crystal
Power Type: Major helm
Ship's Rating: As for spelljammer

Standard Armament:
 1 heavy catapult
 Crew: 5
 1 heavy jettison
 Crew: 4
 4 heavy ballistae
 Crew: 4 each
 1 grappling ram
Cargo: 50 tons
Keel Length: 175'
Beam Length: 50'

Player Handout #3 – Illustration of the Nautiloid

NAUTILOID

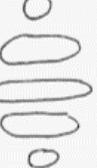
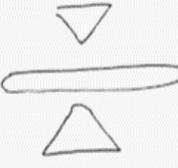
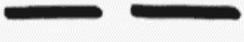
Built By: Mind flayers
Used Primarily By: Mind flayers
Tonnage: 35 tons
Hull Points: 35
Crew: 10/35
Maneuverability Class: D
Landing—Land: No
Landing—Water: Yes
Armor Rating: 4
Saves As: Thick wood
Power Type: Series helm (90%)
 Pool helm (10%)

Ship's Rating:
 2-5 (series helm)
 5 (pool helm)



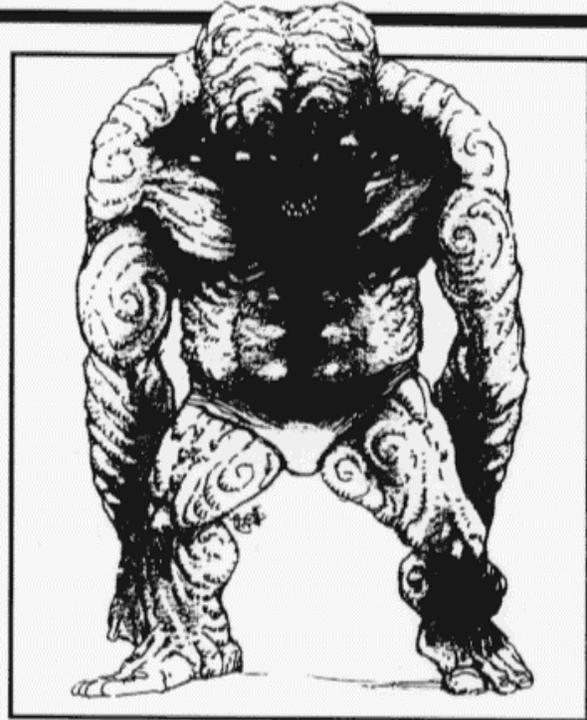
Standard Armament:
 3 medium ballistae
 Crew: 2 each
 1 medium catapult (forward)
 Crew: 3
 1 medium jettison (rear)
 Crew: 3
Piercing ram
Cargo: 17 tons
Keel Length: 180'
Beam Length: 30'

Player Handout #4 – Neogi Treasure Room Puzzle

Neogi			Treasure			Room		Puzzle	
									
									

Golem, Brain

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Subterranean
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	6
HIT DICE:	12 (60 hp)
THAC0:	9
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2d12
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Mental blast
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Spell immunities, +2 weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	70%
SIZE:	L (8' tall, 5' wide)
MORALE:	Fearless (20)
XP VALUE:	10,000



A creation of the ancient race of mind flayers, brain golems may be the most horrible of all their kind. They exist purely for the desires of illithids and are unswayed from their goals.

A brain golem appears as a huge, burly humanoid with an oversized brain for a head. In fact, the whole body is made up of brain tissue, but is covered with a thin film of slimy skin.

Although brain golems are more intelligent than other golems, they are completely unable to communicate.

Combat: Brain golems are used as muscle or guards for illithids, and they attack an opponent only if so ordered or if the opponent tries to get at what the brain golem is guarding. Regardless of the situation, brain golems never attack mind flayers, which limits their effectiveness in battles between members of that race.

In combat, brain golems are more aware of their environment than other golems. They always aim for wizards first, knowing that a quick strike could easily kill a member of that physically weak class. They seem to have an innate ability to roughly determine an opponent's condition (i.e., hit points), so they can continue to aim for the next weakest character after defeating a wizard.

A brain golem's physical attack is a swift punch with its fist. It is unable to employ both fists in a round because of its singular thought pattern, but the one fist is often good enough. In addition, once per turn, a brain golem can release a form of the mind flayer's mental blast. This energy strikes everyone within 60 feet. All those hit must make successful saving throws vs. spell or suffer 2d8 points of damage and become stunned for 1d10 rounds. Those who do save only lose initiative for the next round and suffer 1d8 damage. The golem generally calls upon this attack if reduced to 15 hp or less, or if ordered to do so by a mind flayer.

Like all golems, brain golems are immune to all forms of poison and cannot be affected by mind-influencing spells such as charms or illusions. They are also immune to death magic.

Habitat/Society: In a book by a sage called Hapworth is a tale told by two rescued human prisoners of the illithids, who apparently saw a brain golem created. Although the magic used was unknown to the humans, the brain golem's body seemed to be a combination of different racial brains. As for the head, this was taken from a part of the elder brain of the mind flayers. The skin was a membrane oozed from that same being.

Mind flayers use brain golems as they use all slaves: as heavy guards, used against monsters resistant to mind attacks or the physical attacks of the illithids. In addition, they are used to perform tasks that are beneath mind flayers, such as guarding food stocks and slaves, etc. Because of their undying loyalty and obedience, the mind flayers prefer brain golems over other races or constructs. A cynical phrase used by the githzerai, "treated like a brain golem," means to be treated well by a slave master.

No city or community of mind flayers will have more than 25 such golems, probably because the illithids don't want to take too much tissue from their beloved elder brain.

Ecology: Except in the services of their masters, brain golems have no place in any ecology. However, parts of them are useful in the manufacture of mind-affecting magical items (according to Sage Hapworth, at least).

Ulitharid (Noble Illithid)

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Any subterranean
 FREQUENCY: Very rare
 ORGANIZATION: Community

ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
 DIET: Brain tissue
 INTELLIGENCE: Supra-genius (19-20)

TREASURE: S,T,Z (D)
 ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil

NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: 3
 MOVEMENT: 12

HIT DICE: 11+8
 THAC0: 9
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 6

DAMAGE/ATTACK: Special
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: Spells, mind blast
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: Spells

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 95%
 SIZE: L (7½' tall)
 MORALE: Champion (15-16)
 XP VALUE: 11,000



Ulitharids are the elite of mind flayers, favored by their god the elder brain and free to exercise their will upon lower illithids and all other humanoids that fall under their power.

Ulitharids tower over their lesser kin by more than a foot, standing 7½ feet tall. They are colored similarly to other illithids, but they are darker than normal mind flayers. They have six writhing tentacles surrounding their mouths, not four like their common underlings, which are filled with sawlike teeth. Like most mind flayers, ulitharids dress in robes that cover their grotesque bodies from the ground to the neck, and high-crowned headdresses are not uncommon.

With their incredible intellect, ulitharids can understand the spoken languages of many races, but their mouths are ill-suited for speech. Of course, they can communicate freely with any creature through the use of their innate telepathy.

Combat: The ulitharid's six faceted tentacles are much stronger than those of normal illithids, so the monster requires only 1d3 rounds to reach a victim's brain, once the tentacles have taken hold of the victim's head. Each tentacle inflicts 1d4 points of damage upon a successful hit (at which point the tentacle has seized the victim's head unless the DM rules otherwise), and only three tentacles are needed to establish a grip that allows the creature to begin boring into the opponent's head in quest of his brains.

A ulitharid's mind blast is also much more deadly than its common counterpart. It has the same area of effect as a normal mind blast—a cone 60 feet long, 5 feet wide at its point of origin, and 20 feet wide at its terminus—but those who fail to save vs. spell with a -4 penalty become *feble-minded* (as per the 5th-level wizard spell). Ulitharids also have the following spell-like powers which they can employ, one at a time, once per round, as a 10th-level wizard: *astral projection*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *ESP*, *eyebite*, *forget*, *legend lore*, *levitate*, *plane shift*, *suggestion*, *telekinesis*, and *true seeing*. All saving throws

vs. these powers are rolled with -4 penalties. Ulitharids can also heal up to 25 points of personal damage per day. This process requires a full round to occur, during which the ulitharid must pause and concentrate fully upon healing.

Habitat/Society: Ulitharids are the noble folk of illithid society. About one in every 25 illithid tadpoles matures into a ulitharid. The ulitharids become caretakers for the community's elder brain, ambassadors to other illithid cities, and leaders of small illithid villages or outposts. A few sages believe that they answer to even more powerful illithids, although none of these beings have ever been seen by surface dwellers.

Ecology: Ulitharids live twice as long as normal illithids, or about 250 years. They also spend twice as much time in the tadpole state. Ulitharids are among the most feared creatures of the subterranean world, and few creatures will challenge them.