

RETURN OF THE PERPETUAL

eturn of The Perpetual is a Fifth Edition adventure designed for four to five characters of 5th to 6th level, and is optimized for four characters with an average party level of 5. The DMDave Worlds' Dark Sea setting is this adventure's default setting, however, it can just as easily be placed in any coastal or aquatic themed adventure where one would expect to find pirates.

BACKGROUND

The Perpetual Rises! Long thought claimed by Suen's Clutch, The Perpetual, a legendary pirate ship of ill repute, returns to wreak havoc on the sailors of Dark Sea. A literal ghost ship manned by a literal skeleton crew, The Perpetual hovers over the water, attacks ships with its ethereal weapons, and vanishes into fog as if it was never there.

The ship's captain, Carlos the Red, still guides the dead ship through the Dark Sea. Whispered tales say he still hunts for his long lost love, the Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort. As such, *The Perpetual's* been targeting ships carrying women who bear a passing resemblance to the long-deceased Baroness—dark hair, dark eyes, dark heart.

Woe unto the sea dogs of Dark Sea should this menace and his crew not return to their watery grave.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Ash Hallow needs adventurers! Those with a high-level cleric are especially in demand, as the mission is a deadly one: find the ghost ship, *The Perpetual*, and put an end to its undead crew. Ash Hallow is offering a reward of 500 gp to anyone who can bring proof that *The Perpetual* sails no more.

Should the characters heed the call, they meet with Ash Hallow's Naval Captain, Thibaut Rousseau (LN male human **veteran**). Thibaut explains that *The Perpetual* was just

sighted two days ago a few klicks north of Ash Hallow. The ghost ship sank a noble vessel en route to Drifthouse and kidnapped a young woman named Matilda. Rousseau has reason to believe that *The Perpetual* is operating out of old Pentagon Cove. He offers the characters directions, a ship to bring them near the cove, and any mundane supplies they might need.

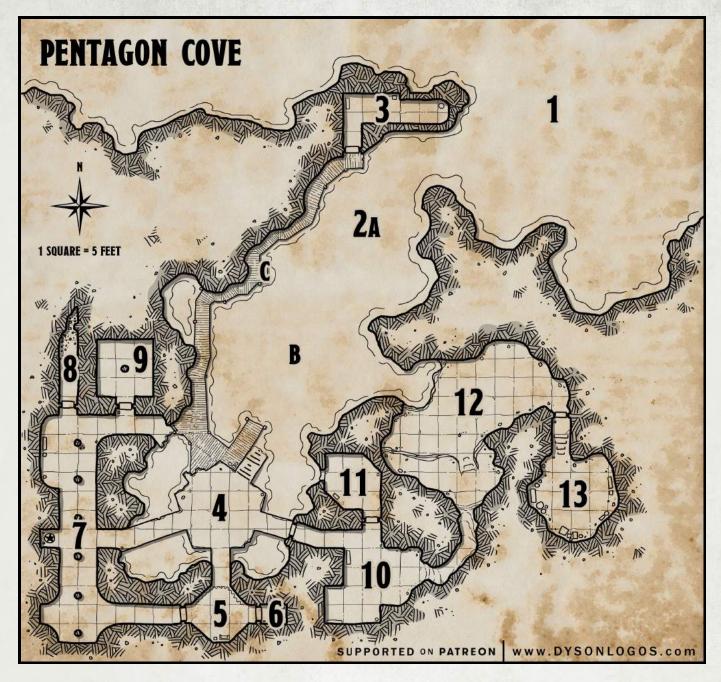
PENTAGON COVE

Once a naval fortress, Pentagon Cove now acts as a base of operations for Captain Carlos the Red and his undead crew. The cove itself is carved into a massive sea rock, where hewn caverns act as living spaces—or non-living spaces, as it were —for *The Perpetual's* Crew. Unless otherwise stated, the cavern ceilings are as tall as the cavern is wide. Doors are made from sturdy timbers hung on iron hinges with iron hardware, and the majority are unlocked. A door has AC 15, 18 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Pentagon Cove is cursed. So long as the ghost of Captain Carlos the Red remains and the ghost of Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort remains his captive, the curse will not lift. However, if the characters destroy the captain and free the baroness, all of the undead that haunt the cavern return to their graves.

1 - THE PERPETUAL

When the characters arrive at Pentagon Cove, their first impression should be that the massive sea rock doesn't seem to be haunted. There's no fog surrounding the location, no eerie sounds, no creatures of any sort really. In fact, they won't even see *The Perpetual* docked in front of the rock. The naval ship Rousseau lent them anchors a half mile from the cove and deploys one of its rowboats for the characters.



Get the VTT-ready version of this map from Dyson logos blog.

As the characters row their way to the cove, that first impression washes away. A hundred feet, right near the cave mouth, lies *The Perpetual*. The old ghost ship's sails are tattered, its hull breached, and all manner of aquatic creatures slither through its ruined decks. The characters would mistake the ship for any other sunken vessel were there not a pair of ghosts unloading items from its lower decks into a sunken rowboat.

After a few minutes, the ghostly pair get back into the sunken rowboat and start to row their way to the surface. Reemerging with a splash, the rowboat sails into the cove unless it's stopped by the characters.

Encounter: Ghost Pirates. The two **ghosts** are too focused on their task to notice the characters. They've been "unloading" *The Perpetual* for over a decade now, and are cursed to repeat the same actions over and over again.

However, if they are attacked, they fight back. Each ghost has the stats typical for a ghost, but is also armed with a ghostly pistol.

Ghost Pistol. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one creature. *Hit*: 8 (2d6 + 1) necrotic damage.

Rowboats. A typical rowboat is a Large vehicle with AC 11, 50 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If two creatures use their action in the same round to paddle with the ship's oars, the ship moves 15 feet.

Treasure: The Perpetual's Bounty. The Perpetual's hull still hides the treasure it sunk with over a century ago. If one or more of the characters swim down to search the sunken ship, they will find three rusted treasure chests. The chests contain a combined bounty of 1,000 cp, 8,000 sp, 2,000 gp, and 100 pp. Each chest weighs 100 pounds.

2 - BAY

When the characters enter the bay, they get their first real look at the inside of Pentagon Cove.

Eternally burning candles light the way along rickety wooden platforms at the eastern side of the 50-foot high cavern, completely illuminating that side. The southside of the bay—and the pentagonal rock from which the cove derives its name—is also illuminated by a trio of everburning bamboo torches. Once past the entrance, the bay's waters are no more than 6 feet deep at their deepest point.

2A - BAY ENTRANCE

There is a "watch tower" carved into the front of the cove which allows a peg-legged **skeleton** and his **skeletal macaw** (see The Appendix) to keep an eye on the bay (see area 3). Unless the characters are especially stealthy (probably kind of hard to do in a rowboat) the skeleton sends its skeletal macaw to alert both the haunted cannon (area 4) and Carlos the Red (area 5).

2B - WITHIN THE COVE

Characters who turn their gaze into the bay's waters will immediately notice that the bay's floor is littered with hundreds of bones. Naturally, these bones spring to life the moment they detect living creatures in their home.

Encounter: Skeletons. Twenty **skeletons** rise from the floor of the bay and attack. Although they're armed with shortswords and shortbows as normal, they prefer to use their attack to grapple characters and drag them to the bottom.

2C - PLATFORMS

The platforms surrounding the bay are made from old, rotten wooden planks.

Hazard: Rotten Planks. Each time a character weighing 50 lbs or more moves along the old planks or starts his or her turn on the platform, roll a d6. On a result of 1, the planks under their feet break. The character must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the bay.

3 - WATCH TOWER

A peg-legged skeleton uses this "watch tower" to keep watch over the bay (see area 2).

Encounter: Peg-Legged Skeleton. After sending its skeletal macaw to alert the other undead pirates, the **skeleton** draws its shortsword and waits for the intruders to enter the tower.

Treasure: Spyglass. The skeleton keeps an ornate, silver spyglass in the tower. The spyglass is valued at 1,000 gp.

4 - THE CANNON

The cove gets its name from this pentagonal shaped hunk of rock that rises two feet above the water. An old cannon set on rickety wooden wheels stands guard here.

Encounter: Haunted Cannon. The cannon is possessed by the spirits of the three ghosts who once operated it. Once the alarm goes up, the cannon starts firing on any intruders that it can detect within 120 feet of it. See the Appendix for the haunted cannon's statistics. Once the cannon is destroyed, the three spirits haunting it emerge as specters and continue to fight.

5 - CARLOS THE RED

A large curtain conceals the northern entrance to this area. So long as the characters remain stealthy, they might catch Carlos here pouring over his treasure map. Otherwise, the captain is ready to face his enemy.

"Avast, mateys! Fill yer hand with yer weapon and prepare to stand toe-to-toe with Captain Carlos the Red! Arrrr!"

Encounter: Carlos the Red. The ghost captain of *The Perpetual*, Carlos the Red, is a **legendary ghost** as detailed in the Appendix. If the characters successfully destroy Carlos and free the ghost of Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort in area 9, all of the undead populating the Cove are freed from their curse and return to their graves.

Treasure: Map of Sanvild's Delve. A weathered map depicting a labyrinth of tunnels, pentagonal chambers, and other oddities hangs from the southern wall. This map offers clues to a mysterious dungeon known as Sanvild's Delve. This location is featured in the adventure of the same name, available in late 2020 on DMDave's Patreon.

6 - CARLOS' CLOSET

This old closet is filled with captain's livery, the majority of which is now rotting from their hangers. There is nothing else of value here.

7 - SHRINE TO SUEN

This long corridor's 12-foot high ceiling is held aloft by a series of sturdy wooden timbers. Hung lanterns light the path. In the center of the western wall stands a six-foot-tall statue of Suen, the Goddess of Storms. The undead crew light candles at her feet.

Hazard: Suen's Glare. If a creature starts its turn within 10 feet of Suen's statue and the creature can see Suen's eyes, the creature must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or become cursed. While cursed, the creature's throat and lungs become filled with water. If the creature can't breathe water, it starts to choke. The creature continues to choke until the curse is removed or their hit points are reduced to 0, at which point the water leaves its lungs and throat. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw, or once the curse ends for it, does not have to make another saving throw to avoid this hazard. The statue has AC 17, 100 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Once destroyed, it can no longer curse those that look into her eyes.

8 - ICHOR PASSAGE

This cavern once led to a lower level of the cove which has since collapsed. No one living remembers what happened here, however, there is strange, black ichor all over the floor. The ichor is harmless. There is nothing else of value here.

9 - Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort

The door to this chamber is locked, its key long gone (it still opens when Carlos approaches it, as if he had the key). Picking the lock requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools, and breaking the door down requires a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check.

This chamber was used as a place to store Carlos the Red's prisoners. Now, its floors are covered in corpses, all in varying stages of decay. Each corpse is a female human with dark hair. A pair of manacles hang from the timber support at the center of the room. When a creature enters the area, the **ghost** of Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort materializes, her ethereal arms still held over her head by these rusted manacles.

"Please," cries the semi-translucent woman. "I just wish to return to my home. See my husband. My children. Why are you doing this?"

She continues to cry for a few moments and fails to respond to anything the characters say or do to her.

Encounter: Zombie Surrogates. The five corpses are all lookalikes for the dead Baroness. Just as cursed as the other undead that haunt Pentagon Cove, they rise from the ground and attack the characters as **zombies**. These zombies are tougher than normal, and have advantage on Constitution saving throws made to use their Undead Fortitude trait.

The baroness won't attack the characters. However, if they destroy her or the manacles holding her ghost in place, she thanks them and vanishes, free of her curse. Freeing the baroness and destroying the ghost of Carlos the Red will relieve all of the undead in the cove of their curse.

10 - TANTALIZING

The floors of this room are littered with a ghostly version of the same treasure found in the hull of *The Perpetual* (see area 1), minus their chests. When the two ghosts from area 2a "bring the treasure back", they dump it here, adding to the ever growing pile.

Hazard: Cursed Treasure. Of course, the treasure isn't real. However, it can still be picked up, but vanishes almost instantly. A character who touches any of this ghostly treasure becomes cursed. The cursed target has disadvantage on all saving throws, and if the target dies, its soul joins the crew of The Perpetual, where it serves as an animated skeleton. The curse lasts until removed by a remove curse spell or other magic, or until Carlos the Red is destroyed and Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort is freed from her prison.

11 - THE WHITE ARMORY

Oddly, the entire inside of this chamber is white, including all of its contents.

A desiccated corpse sits at the center of this room (it's white, too). It's still clutching a heavy crossbow. Despite the plethora of undead haunting the cove, this skeleton is just a skeleton.

Treasure: Old Armory. Most of the weapons and armor in this area are destroyed thanks to time and neglect. However, there is a crate that holds four functioning muskets. Each musket has a range of 40/120 feet, and deals piercing damage equal to 1d12 plus the wielder's Dexterity modifier. The weapon has the loading and two-handed properties. There is enough ammunition in the crate for 100 shots. Depending on how you handle firearms in your campaign, the characters may need to spend two weeks of downtime

training to use the rifles with proficiency.

12 - UNSTABLE

This sandy side cave holds the pirates' old supply of dynamite and gunpowder. Unfortunately, the majority of it is highly unstable now.

Hazard: Boom-Boom. The cavern contains six unstable crates filled with dynamite and ten kegs of gunpowder. If one of the crates is dropped, damaged, or moved in a violent manner, roll a d6. On a result of 5-6, the crate explodes. If the crate takes fire damage, it automatically explodes. Each creature within 20 feet of the crate must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 6d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the crate explodes while it's near the other crates and barrels, it may cause a chain reaction. If this happens, each creature in this area must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The dynamite can be recovered. A character with proficiency in alchemist's tools who spend 1 hour per stick of dynamite resealing the dynamite's casing can make a DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. On a success, the character repairs the dynamite, otherwise, it's still unstable. If the character fails this check by 5 or more, the dynamite explodes.

There are 20 sticks of dynamite in each crate, for a total of 120 sticks.

13 - SUPPLIES

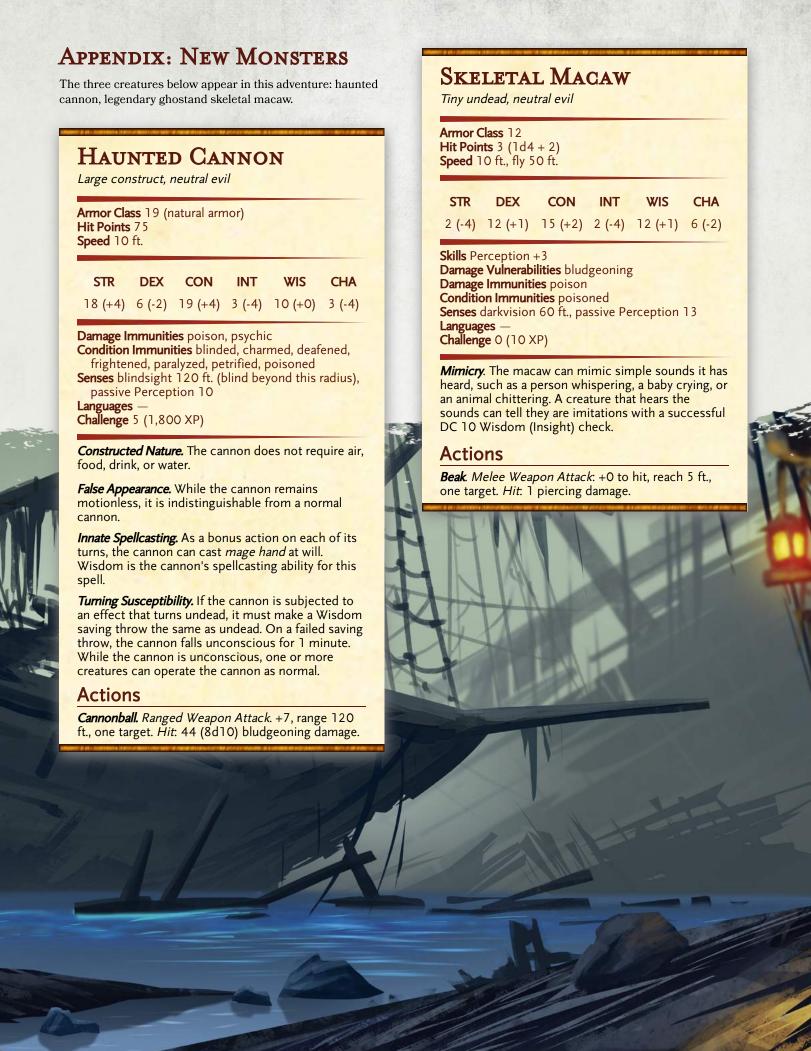
This chamber used to be where *The Perpetual's* crew stored its supplies—food stuffs, building supplies, etc. All of it is ruined now.

Hazard: Black Mold. If the characters shift any of the old crates and barrels in this area, black mold kicks up dust and pollen. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 2d4 poison damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

AFTERMATH

If the characters free Pentagon Cove of Carlos the Red's curse by destroying the pirate captain and freeing Baroness Adelaine Mont de la Mort, all of the undead vanish. However, *The Perpetual* that lies at the bottom of the sea is the real deal, and its bounty can be claimed by anyone brave enough to claim it.

If the characters fail to destroy Carlos and free the Baroness, their run-in with the characters leaves them sour toward life. Instead of repeating the same cycle for all eternity, the ghosts become revenants, determined to kill all living beings they come across. Whether it's Carlos at the helm of *The Perpetual*, or his ghostly love Baroness de la Mort, the ship haunts all of Dark Sea, leaving no survivors in its wake. Ω



LEGENDARY GHOST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 Hit Points 81 (18d8) Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA 7 (-2) 13 (+1) 12 (+1) 12 (+1) 16 (+3) 20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +5, Wis +7 Skills skills

Damage Vulnerabilities damage_vulnerabilities
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder;
bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from
nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13 Languages any languages it knew in life Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The ghost can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Nature. The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the ghost fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The ghost makes two attacks with its Withering Touch, or two attacks with its ghost pistol.

Withering Touch. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (4d6 + 5) necrotic damage.

Ghost Pistol. Ranged Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, range 30 feet., one creature. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) necrotic damage.

Etherealness. The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 ft. of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 x 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this ghost's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a greater restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Possession (Recharge 6). One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 ft. of it must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies. The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a bonus action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the dispel evil and good spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 ft. of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

Legendary Actions

The legendary ghost can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The legendary ghost regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- Move. The ghost moves up to its speed without provoking attacks of opportunity.
- Withering Touch (Costs 2 Actions). The ghost makes an attack with it Withering Touch.
- Summon Undead (Costs 3 Actions). Up to three skeletons or zombies appear in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of the ghost and remain until destroyed. Undead summoned in this way roll initiative and act in the next available turn. The ghost can have up to three undead summoned by this ability at a time.

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