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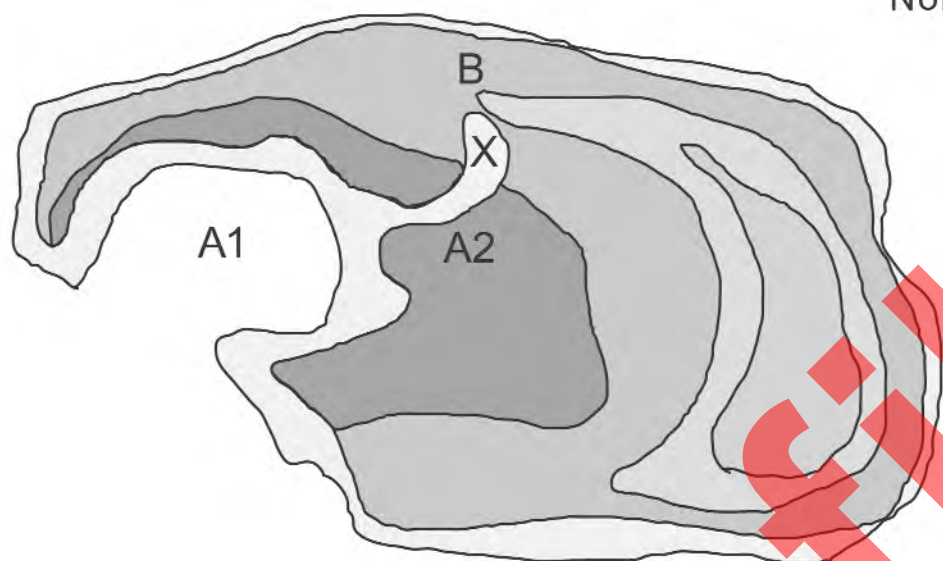
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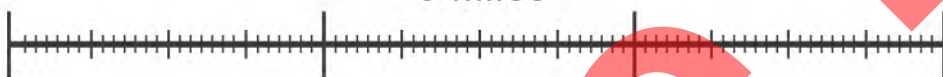
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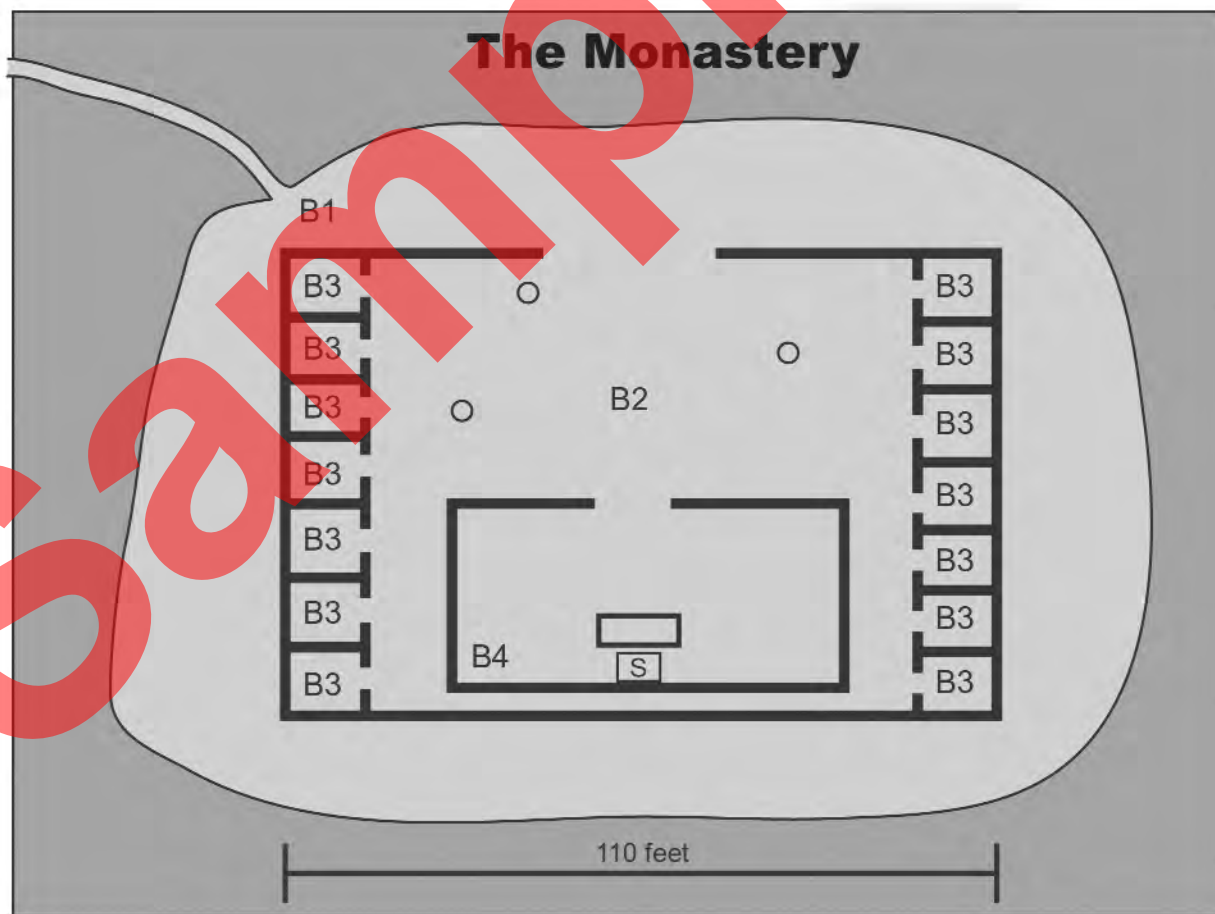
The Island



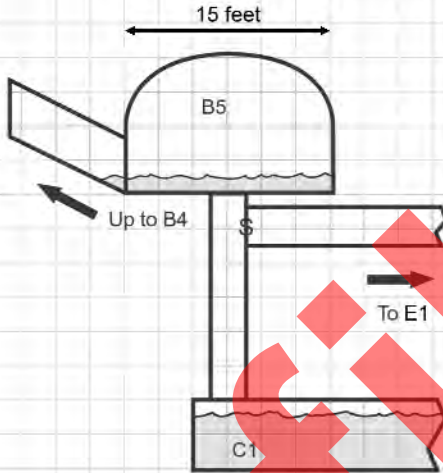
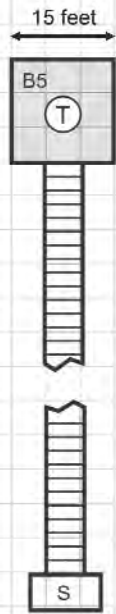
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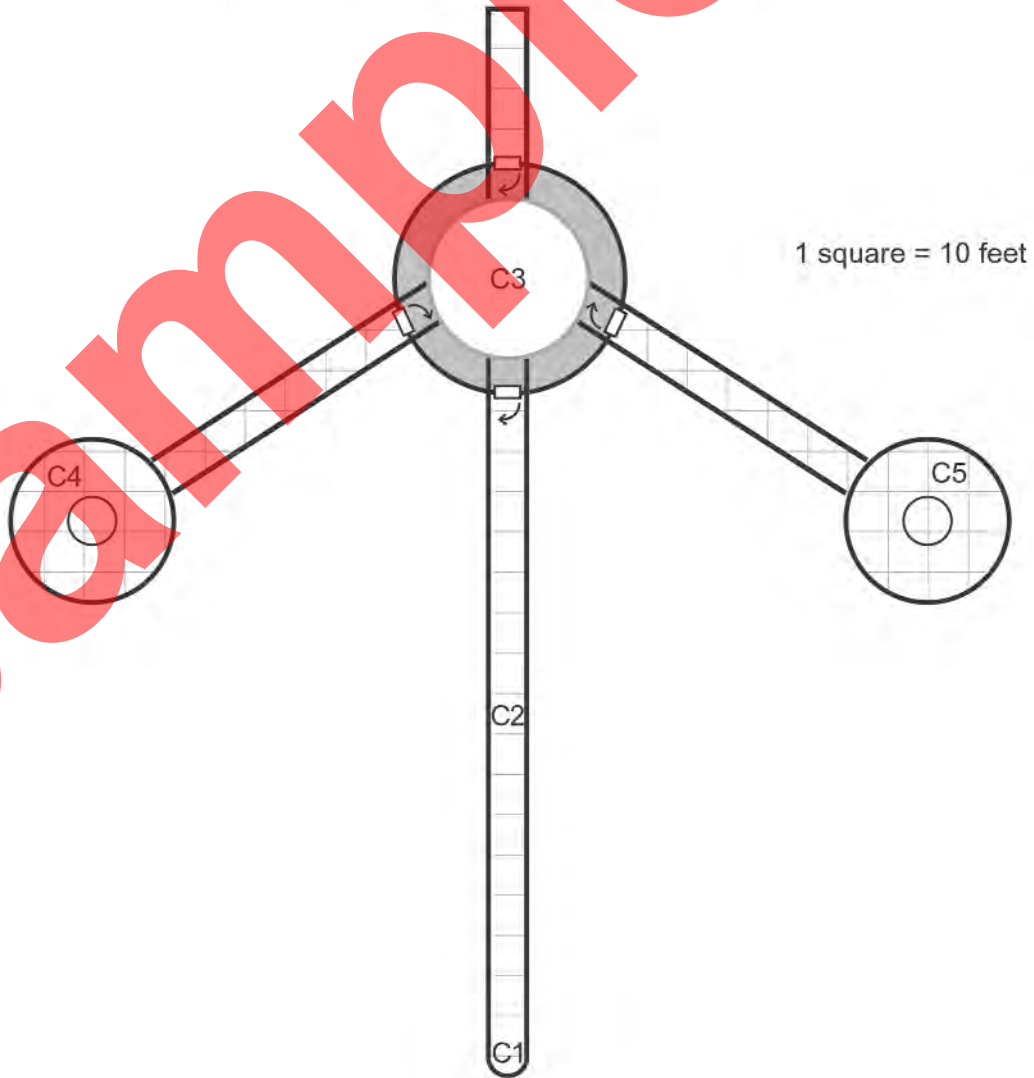
The Monastery



Area B5



The Sea Tunnels



Dungeon Crawl Classics #4

Bloody Jack's Gold

by Joe Crow

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 10-12



Credits

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Game Master's Section	2
Background Story	4
Map Key	7
Level A: The Island	7
Level B: The Monastery	9
Level C: The Sea Tunnels	11
Level D: The First Labyrinth	14
Level E: The Second Labyrinth	23
Appendix 1: New Monsters	29
Maps	31



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Introduction

Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you fear, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

Bloody Jack's Gold is designed to be a challenge for four to six players of 10th through 12th level, with the party's total character levels being at least 50. Though any of the basic character classes can be used, a group without a rogue or other trap-finding character is in for a world of hurting. A positive energy-aligned cleric would also be handy.

Adventure Summary

A century ago, the pirate Bloody Jack Dascombe plundered an Imperial tribute fleet, the greatest hoard of his long and blood-soaked career. Though he was caught and executed shortly afterward, he died without revealing the treasure's location to a single soul. Old sailors whisper tales of the labyrinth Bloody Jack built to hide his booty in, and the horrible end that came to the unfortunate souls who built it. Many have gone in search of it, but none have returned.

The adventurers have acquired a map, tattooed on tanned human skin, that purports to describe the location of Bloody Jack's treasure. They have chartered a ship to take them to the nameless island described on the map. Though the map carries alleged instructions for threading the maze Jack built to protect his loot, these directions say nothing about the creatures now inhabiting the labyrinth. Nor do they tell the tale of Coyopultec, Jack's lieutenant, whom he betrayed and murdered to conceal the secrets of the maze. Coyopultec's ghost has returned from the grave to haunt the labyrinth. He whiles away the long years by capturing intruders and bartering their souls to the forces of Hell in exchange for aid in preparing for Bloody Jack's return.

The adventurers' ship has dropped anchor just inside the shallow lagoon on the coast of an island matching the location on the map. The map also shows the path to the entrance of the labyrinth, a path that seems to start where the jungle meets the beach of the lagoon.

Game Master's Section

Encounter Table

Here is a quick reference table so you can see all of the encounters at a glance. Loc – the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. Pg – the module page number that the encounter can be found on. Type – this indicates if it is a trap (T), puzzle (P), or combat (C) encounter. Encounter – the key monsters, traps, or NPCs in the encounter. Italicized names are classed NPCs. EL – the encounter level.

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
A1	7	C	Fiendish Shark	5
A2	8	C	Fiendish Dire Boar	7
B4	9	C	4 Shadows	8
B5	10	C/T	8 Fiendish Stirges Camouflaged Pit Trap	6
C1	11	C	4 Fiendish Barracudas	7
C2	12	C	5 Fiendish Moray Eels	8
C3	12	C/T	Fiendish Chuul Pinning Spears Trap	9
C4	13	C/T	Fiendish Giant Octopus Tunnel Scythe Trap	10
C5	14	C/T	Fiendish Giant Moray Eel Tunnel Scythe Trap	9
D1	15	C	Fiendish Monstrous Spider Fiendish Spider Swarm	8
D2	16	T/C	Desecrate Trap Wight 6 Zombies 6 Skeletons	8
D3	16	C/T	Fiendish Monstrous Spider Centipede Pit Trap Fiendish Centipede Swarm	7
D4	18	C	4 Phantom Fungi	8
D5	18	T/C	Desecrate Trap Wight 6 Zombies 6 Skeletons	8
D6	18	T/C	Desecrate Trap Elite Wight 2 Wights 10 Zombies 10 Skeletons	9
D8	19	T	Whirling Axes Trap	7
D9/D11	20	C	11 Fiendish Baboons 2 Half-Fiend Baboons	9
D10	20	C	Half-Fiend Dire Ape	9
D12	21	T/C	Stone Hammers Trap 30 Fiendish Barracudas 20 Skeletons 4 Elite Wights 3 Pirate Spectres	12
D13	22	T/C	Poisoned Needle Trap Water-Filled Room Trap Gibbering Moulder	11
E1	23	T	Crushing Wall Trap	8
E2	23	T/C	Desecrate Trap Darkness Trap 3 Elite Wights 5 Wights 12 Skeletons 12 Zombies	12

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
E3	24	C	4 Skeletons	3
E4	24	C	3 Zombies Brown Mold	3
E5	25	C	3 Zombies Wight	3
E6	25	C	3 Chain Devils	9
E7	26	T	Rolling Boulder Trap	8
E8	26	T	Retracting Ladder Trap	8
E10	26	C	<i>Coyopultec</i> <i>Grishnaz</i> and viper familiar 2 Bone Devils Huge Water Elemental 4 Skeletons	14

Scaling Information

Bloody Jack's Gold is challenging even for characters within the recommended level range of 10th-12th. If they are not cautious and don't use good tactics, it will prove to be a very difficult adventure. Or, to put it another way, our playtests had "lethality issues."

The adventure can be easily modified for parties of different sizes or level – or simply to give the players an easier time – as follows:

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters, or characters below 10th level): Remove the fiendish template from some or all of the monsters, depending on the characters' power level. Reduce the Search and Disable Device DCs for the traps by 2-6 points. Limit the ability of *Coyopultec* to reanimate undead that have been destroyed (perhaps he can't leave his final resting place). Halve the number of zombies and skeletons in the more complex encounters: areas D5, D6, D12, E2, and E10. Possibly reduce *Coyopultec's* cleric level in the final encounter.

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or characters above 12th level): Increase the number of zombies and skeletons in areas D2, D5, D6, D12, E2, and E10 by at least 25%, possibly more. Double the number of fiendish opponents in areas A1, A2, B5, C1, C2, and D3. Increase the Search and Disable Device DCs for the traps by 2-4 points. Make *Coyopultec* a 12th or 14th level cleric.

Getting the Players Involved

The following hooks can be used to get the players involved with the search:

- A party member inherits a chest of keepsakes from an old seafaring relation (or finds it in a treasure horde). Hidden in a false bottom is the map, with some scribbled notes explaining what it is.
- Though the Imperial Navy has grown tired of losing ships in the hunt for the gold, an enterprising young captain has found what he believes to be a genuine map. He has hired the adventurers to retrieve the loot,

in exchange for a handsome finder's fee and his patronage for further ventures in the Empire.

- The adventurers are on an unrelated sea voyage, and their ship has stopped at the island to acquire water and provisions. Oh, look, there's a mysterious pathway into the jungle! Let's go exploring! Suckers...

Player Death

Coyopultec has left standing orders with the undead troops to take captives whenever possible. As a result, the wights are sparing with their energy drain ability, only draining characters to within a few levels of death and then pummeling them into unconsciousness. They also make a point of calling off their troops once characters are into negative points, and making clumsy efforts to stabilize them. They don't always succeed (oddly enough, the undead aren't very good at keeping people alive), but they do try.

Unconscious characters are bound securely, stripped of their equipment, and taken to the Barracks in the Labyrinth and then to the Muster Hall on the second level. If they've made a contract with *Grishnaz*, then they are left in the Forge, under the guard of the chain devils. When he has a chance, *Grishnaz* spends some time with them, sounding them out to see if they'll help him convert their comrades.

Those who haven't made a contract are offered one. If they refuse, then they're stripped and left in the Bone Room, under the guard of the skeletons. Later, *Coyopultec* will use them as either trade goods for his infernal partners or as sacrifices to his god. All equipment is stored in the Armory.

Treasure

There's almost nothing for treasure in the labyrinth until the very end. None of the creatures encountered have anything besides minimal (and rusty) equipment, with the exception of *Grishnaz* the imp. Of course, the loot at the end should make up for it, assuming anybody survives to get it. The amount may seem a bit over-sized, but it's supposed to be impressive.

GMs who are nervous about giving their players boat-loads of cash (literally) are reminded that the players have to:

- Get the loot back through the maze and off the island (we're talking about nearly 15 cubic feet of loose metal coins, weighing more than 5 tons)
- Get the loot back to the mainland without the ship's crew cutting their throats for it
- Sneak the loot past Imperial tax-men and naval officers looking to get back all that lost revenue
- Probably cope with the ghost of *Coyopultec* (unless they've been very clever about putting him to rest)
- And maybe even deal with Bloody Jack, now that the treasure is off the island.