



LIGHT OF LOST SOULS

BY NIGEL D. FINDLEY

What the living
forget, the dead
remember forever.

Artwork by Bob Gladrosich
Cartography by Diesel

Nigel tells us he's still doing all the things mentioned in his last bio (see "Nightshade," issue #7), with one addition: he has taken up a new sport and discovered that emergency-room nurses tend to be nicely sympathetic toward injured skiers. Nigel should be off crutches by beach volleyball season.

"Light of Lost Souls" is an AD&D® game scenario for 3-6 characters of 2nd to 4th level. Characters should be well equipped, with at least one party member armed with silver or magical weapons. If a cleric is present in the party, it is recommended that he *not*, at first, have an *exorcise* spell available.

Adventure Background

While traveling north along the shore of a bay late in the afternoon, the PCs see an old, run-down lighthouse far out on a rocky headland. As the party nears the headland, lowering clouds blow in from offshore, and a vicious ocean storm lashes the coast with high winds, lightning, and heavy rain.

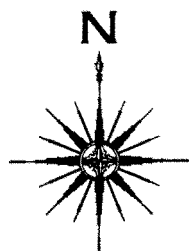
Because of the direction of the wind, the headland promises some protection from the violence of the storm. As the PCs approach, they see a shallow cave that can provide even more shelter. In the strobelike flashes of the lightning, they can see that the cave — a mere indentation in the rock — extends back no more than five or six feet and is totally empty. The sandy floor is dry, and the overhanging lip should keep out most of the rain. Although there is no room to light a fire, a night in the cave promises to be infinitely more comfortable than a night out in the deluge.

For the Dungeon Master

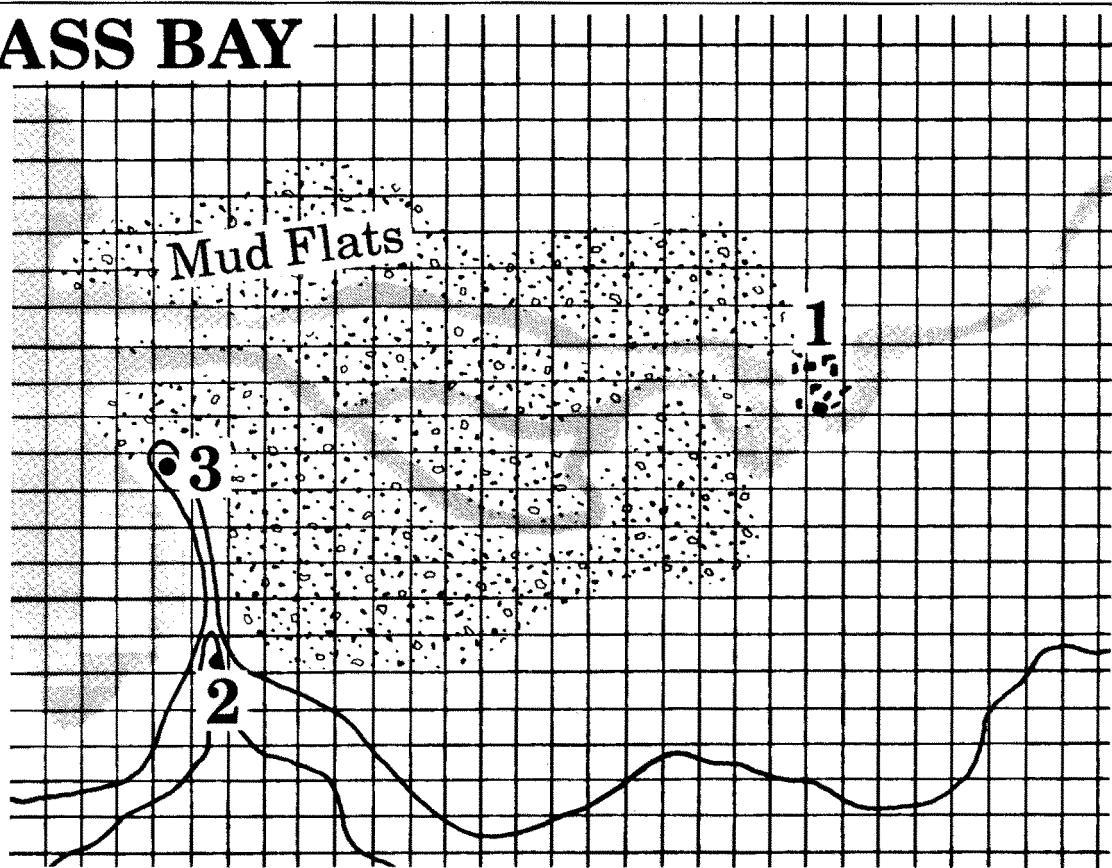
One look at the bay explains why the lighthouse is disused. While the bay was once an excellent natural harbor, the flow of a large river has filled it with silt, turning much of the bay into a mud flat. Near the river mouth are the decayed, deserted remnants of Ravenglass, once a bustling port village. When the bay silted up and the harbor became unusable, the shipping trade went elsewhere and the village quickly became a ghost town. For the last 35 years it has been totally deserted, except for the many ravens that gave the town its name.

In the better days of Ravenglass, the

RAVENGLASS BAY



contour lines = 50'
1 square = 100 yds.



lighthouse — tended by a human named Danelon — was vital for the safety of shipping. When one of the frequent local storms blew up, it was only the lighthouse beacon that kept incoming ships from wrecking themselves on the rocky headland. At first, Danelon took his great responsibilities seriously. But as the years went by, the loneliness began to affect him, and he took heavily to drink.

One stormy night, Danelon was so drunk he was unable to climb the stairs to light the beacon. Without the light to guide him, the captain of an incoming ship misjudged the entrance to the bay. The ship foundered on the rocks and went down with all hands. In the morning, when Danelon found out what had happened, he was overcome with remorse. Even the discovery that the sunken ship, the *Barracuda*, was a smuggling vessel and its half-elven captain a brutal pirate did nothing to ease Danelon's guilt. He was immediately replaced as lighthouse keeper, but the bottle helped to ease the pain; he took to drinking even more and soon he died, a drunken, broken madman.

By chance, the cave in which the

party is sheltering from the storm is the exact spot where Danelon finally drank himself to death. Also by chance, this night is the 50th anniversary of the sinking of the *Barracuda*.

Danelon

In his last days, Danelon became insanely obsessed by the belief that he could somehow set everything right again and atone for his own guilt, if only he could light the beacon for one more night. For obvious reasons, the new keeper would not let Danelon anywhere near the lighthouse. When Danelon finally died, his monomania continued beyond the grave. Danelon has become a haunt, and an insane haunt at that, his soul trapped forever in the cave until he can fulfill his last wish.

Danelon (haunt): AC 0/victim's AC; MV 6"/as possessed victim; HD 5; hp 25/victim's hp; #AT 1/1 (as 5 HD monster); Dmg special/by weapon type; SA possession, dexterity loss; SD in natural form, hit only by silver or magical weapons or by fire; AL N.

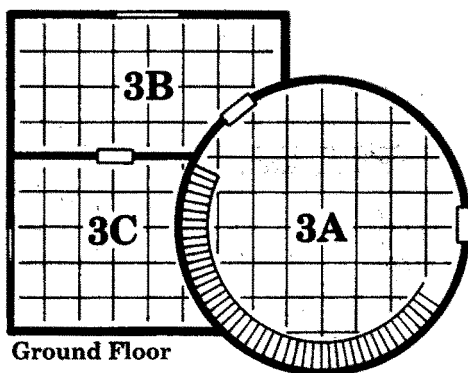
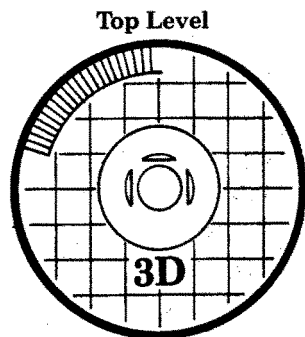
Two hours after sunset, Danelon's haunt manifests itself within the cave, choosing one member of the party to

attack (probably with surprise). His first choice is a human male, but he may also attack (in order of preference) a human female, a half-elf, or any other demi-human.

If he successfully possesses his chosen victim, Danelon runs out into the storm to the lighthouse and up the stairs. When he reaches the beacon room, he uses the scrap wood and rotting furniture there to kindle a fire behind the lenses. If he is successful, he crouches in the ruined structure, watching to the west for the ship he expects to sail by. He explains to anyone who will listen that he must keep the beacon going to save the souls aboard the ship. Nothing will persuade him to leave.

Danelon will be freed from his haunt form when he has successfully spent an entire night in the possessed body in the lighthouse, after having lit the beacon fire. The touch of sunlight on the possessed victim on the following day will expel the haunt; Danelon will never reappear. However, casting out the haunt before dawn (by *exorcism* or by slaying the character possessed by the haunt) or otherwise preventing it from fulfilling its goal will cause it to reap-

THE LIGHTHOUSE



1 square = 2½'

pear on the following year on the same anniversary date, again attempting to light the beacon for one full night.

If he is prevented from reaching his goal, Danelon babbles monomaniacally about how he must kindle the beacon or the *Barracuda* will run aground and all its crew will be lost (this is a chance for the DM to really play it up). Danelon does not listen to reason or logic, and explanations about the bay being silted up do not deter him.

Two and a half hours after sunset — the exact time that the *Barracuda* went down — a ship's bell is heard from off-

shore to the west, although nothing can be seen through the storm. This occurs whether or not Danelon's haunt has been successful in lighting the beacon.

The Crew of the *Barracuda*

Bound to this plane by their own indomitable will — and in some strange way by Danelon's obsession with bringing them back — Captain Tal Galgilad and six members of his crew have returned this night to play out the last act of the drama of the *Barracuda*. Drowned when their ship foundered, the smugglers

became huecuvas. Now they have returned to visit their revenge on the one responsible for their deaths. They can sense Danelon's presence (or that of his haunt) and know exactly where he is. Since becoming undead, they have been patiently digging their way up from the silt-buried hulk of the *Barracuda* to the surface. Tonight, they are free.

Huecuvas (7): AC 3; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 16 (captain), 12, 11 (x2), 10, 8, 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA disease; SD hit only by silver or magical weapons; AL CE.

Anyone who looks west toward the ocean, 15 minutes after the ship's bell sounds, sees seven figures walking out of the waves and across the mud flat toward the lighthouse. The huecuvas have used their *polymorph self* powers to take on the forms they had in life. Captain Tal Galgilad is the most striking — a dark, roguishly handsome man of medium height who appears to be in his mid-thirties. He and his crew climb ashore near the lighthouse some 20 minutes after the ship's bell has rung. The men never smile, and their eyes are lifeless and dark.

The huecuvas' behavior now depends on what has happened to Danelon:

1. If Danelon has successfully possessed his victim and is now within the lighthouse, the huecuvas do everything in their power to enter the lighthouse and confront a terrified Danelon. They then revert to their true forms and tear his possessed victim's body asunder. If they succeed in this, the huecuvas turn and attack the rest of the party — but not before they "kill" Danelon. If they are triumphant against the PCs or if the PCs flee, the huecuvas leave for the deserted town of Ravenglass, which they will haunt. If handled well by the DM, the huecuvas' siege of the lighthouse can become a scene straight out of a horror movie.

2. If Danelon has possessed his victim but has been prevented from reaching the lighthouse, the huecuvas track him until they can confront and attack him as above. Once the possessed victim is slain, the huecuvas then head for Ravenglass, attempting to slay every living being they meet.

3. If Danelon has been unsuccessful in possessing his victim, or if he has been expelled from his victim's body (by a *hold person* spell, for example), the huecuvas sense Danelon's presence in the sandy cave. They do everything in their power to obtain fire, sensing that fire is harmful to Danelon's current

form, and attempt to burn the haunt to destroy it. Once this is done, the huecuvas move on to Ravenglass.

This adventure should take on a claustrophobic feel with great tension and horror. Unlike Danelon, the marauding huecuvas do not vanish at dawn; they will remain in the area for years until destroyed. The fate of the nonpossessed PCs is irrelevant to them until their score with the former lighthouse keeper is settled. Being only semi-intelligent creatures in their unliving state, the huecuvas have no sense of subtlety except for their use of their *polymorph self* powers.

If the huecuvas are vanquished, the party may find some valuable possessions on the body of Galgilad: a gold chain and medallion (worth 100 gp), an amethyst-encrusted gold ring (worth 500 gp), and a plain gold ring (worth 25 gp).

Key to Maps

Ravenglass Bay Map

1. Town of Ravenglass. The town is deserted and has been for 35 years. Those buildings left standing are decrepit and decayed, and nothing of value remains. About 20 small wooden buildings, each with 2-5 rooms, remain standing.

2. Danelon's Cave. See the description under "Adventure Background."

3. The Lighthouse. Built of weathered granite, it stands 75' tall. The one-story living quarters attached to the tower are 10' tall.

Lighthouse Map

3A. Ground Floor. Most of the interior of the lighthouse is empty space. The narrow spiral staircase rises steeply, making almost one complete turn before reaching the beacon room itself. The staircase has no guardrail, and the center of the spiral is open. The lower level rises 65' to its ceiling, the floor of the beacon room above.

3B. and 3C. Living Quarters. Both rooms are completely empty.

3D. Beacon Room. The ceiling here is 8' high. There is no guardrail around the opening to the stairwell. Empty windows encircle the entire room, starting 4' above the floor and reaching to

the ceiling, leaving this room open to the elements. In the center of the room is the beacon light itself, a shallow iron crucible faced on the north, east, and west by rough-hewn lenses of quartz. If a fire is kindled in the crucible, these lenses intensify the light to make it visible for several miles. The room is otherwise empty except for some scraps of wood from a shattered crate and a broken wooden chair.

Encounters

If the player characters remain in the Ravenglass Bay area long enough to warrant random encounters, the DM can use the following table, developing details on the monsters according to the AD&D game's hardbound manuals:

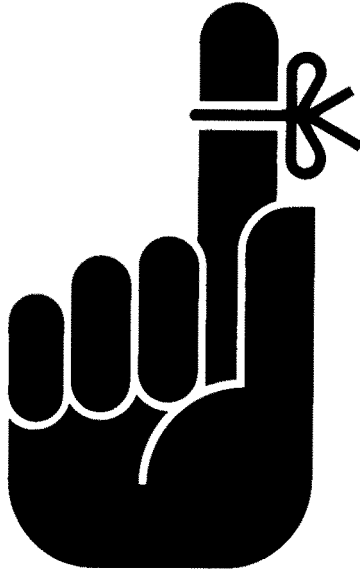
1d6	Day	Night
1	4-16 ravens	1-6 huge ravens
2	2-12 ravens	1 giant raven
3	1-3 muck-dwellers	1-4 muck-dwellers
4	1 large pedipalp	1 large pedipalp
5	No encounter	1-3 huge centipedes
6	No encounter	1 giant bat

Concluding the Adventure

This adventure has few major effects on any other part of the greater world at large. It is simply the final act in a tragic episode into which the PCs unknowingly wandered, and from which they must escape.

Unless destroyed, the huecuvas will continue to plague the bay area, preying upon the few wayfarers who happen upon them. Similarly, without an *exorcise* spell, Danelon the haunt will continue to reappear every year on this date, trying to light the lighthouse fires; on the same night, the huecuvas will attempt to destroy Danelon — an endless quest, since Danelon merely reforms to appear the following year.


There is, of course, the possibility that the PCs will want to look for the remains of the *Barracuda* in hopes of finding treasure. Given that the ship is now buried under 60' of mud, this might be a vain hope — but the DM should consider this possibility if the players seem determined to have the PCs hunt anyway. Ω



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