

LAKESHORE

AN INTRODUCTION

DOU SET OFF AT FIRST LIGHT WITH THE WARRIORS. NONE of their families are there to send them off, the rules forbid it. Until these young men and women are successful in their trial, they are dead to the village. Taking part in the trial seems to be the only way to gain the trust of these secretive people.

You have been running for hours over rocks, through thick scrub and dense forest, high into the steppes of this barren land. Finally, as you dodge and weave between huge boulders you catch a glimpse of crystal blue water, a lake residing in a rock strewn shallow valley. Without hesitation your young companions jump into the water, weapons held aloft to keep them dry. You follow and with a gasp try to catch your breath as the cold mountain lake saps the heat from your bones. You wade out into the water gritting your teeth as it reaches your waist. Ahead is a small island covered in driftwood and rocks. As you get closer it dawns on you the wood piles are not simply flotsam washed up on the island's shore but is in fact a huge nest!

The first of the warriors reach the shallows around the island. Standing knee deep in water they ready their weapons and look to the skies, waiting quietly. As you catch up to them a cry pierces the air, you turn in its direction to see a shadow racing across the water towards the island, wing tips kicking up spray as it rushes towards your party. It seems the trial is about to begin.

NOTES AND TIPS

- 30x45 grid map
- Think about elevation when using this type of map, as well as cover. Weak monsters become more deadly when the party has trouble reaching them or hitting them.
- Shallow water is hard to move in, difficult terrain!
- I would suggest you describe the water as up to waist deep, at least out to the island, this will allow for more space for combat as well as a wider range of foes!
- Sharks can attack in shallow water! Have the party see shadows gliding around them in the water before things get very 'bitey'.
- The map can be used for something specifically 'nest' related, or simply cut the top of the map off and use it as a travel encounter map with a path along the side of a lake, river or ocean.
- Setup a trial the party must complete with some young NPCs, some kind of coming of age ritual. Hint that it's something flight related, or maybe you are tasked with finding a piece of egg shell. Whatever the task, there are lots of 'nesting' monsters to put up against the party.
- Roc's are incredibly scary (very giant eagles), it will be so much fun to kill your party with one. If you are feeling a little more benevolent try a giant eagle or two, maybe a wyvern or even a lesser dragon of some kind. Even better use one of their stat blocks and reskin it as a unique monster for the occasion.
- A village has hired you to hunt whatever has been killing their livestock, oh dear me, it's a Roc, how unfortunate for the party

VARIANTS

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