



CHAPTER 3: RUINS OF GOLCRASSAR

Once a thriving merfolk city, Golcrassar was destroyed when the isthmus rose from the ocean depths. Ruins of sun-bleached coral towers decorate the region. Skeletal remains of merfolk, giant sharks, and other aquatic beasts are partially buried in the sand; some are even preserved within the semi-transparent crystal clusters.

Several expeditions have tried to unearth the city's treasures. The few that have returned usually arrive empty handed. The survivors speak of sudden sinkholes, unstable structures, and horrible undead apparitions that haunt the region.

CATAclysmic Echoes

The destruction of Golcrassar caught its residents off guard. Hundreds of sharp crystal clusters emerged from below, puncturing sand, stone, and flesh. The entire city was lifted to the surface over the course of just a few minutes, its aquatic residents included. Those who survived the initial destruction suffocated in the open air of their ruined home.

The event was so traumatic that it echoed into the Ethereal Plane in the region, imprinting an ethereal memory. Centuries after the disaster, the Ethereal Plane still reenacts the final moments of Golcrassar over and over in an endless cycle. From its serene and mystical oceanic beauty, to the dying breaths of merfolk on the crystal surface.

Mages with the power to peer into the Ethereal Plane (i.e, by casting *see invisibility*) can watch history unfold before them and those who enter can even interact with the ghostly merfolk in their final moments.

DALKIRI'S DESCENT

Most of the merfolk population of Golcrassar died when the isthmus emerged, but a small group of two dozen merfolk was carried by the currents into a cavern inside the crystal. When they regained consciousness, they cried in pain and anguish upon discovering that the only exit leads to dry land.

Among the survivors was Princess Dalkiri the Pearlescent, the heir of Golcrassar's throne. While Dalkiri was confused and terrified like the rest of the merfolk, she put up a hopeful facade, hiding her true feelings from her people. She promised her subjects that she would bring everyone back to the ocean.

Dalkiri tried to summon her divine powers but found that they would not manifest. She tried to break through the crystal through sheer physical force, but her people were ill-equipped for the task. They even tried to take short expeditions into the open air, but these risky trips bore no fruit either. Through every failed attempt to reach the sea, Dalkiri continued to promise that she would find a way. Inside her, however, hope began to waver.

At first, they survived by eating the sharks. That bought them two weeks, but it didn't take long for hunger to strike once more. A few of them tried to resort to cannibalism, but Dalkiri opposed that route. She claimed that it was a test of their will and faith – "Better to die with dignity than to live by abandoning who you are." Her speech seemed to move the rest of the survivors, and they swore to die under her command. A few of them did not swear with noble intent, however, and Dalkiri was soon after stabbed in the back with a shank made of shark bone. The remaining survivors died a short while later.

In death, Dalkiri's betrayal and pent-up emotions twisted her soul with madness. Dalkiri's ghost remained tethered to the grotto, and she bound her subjects when they died. Now, they float around the ruins of their old home, experiencing its destruction over and over in the Ethereal Plane.

THE WAILING GROTTO

Near the center of the ruined city there is a small lake of tainted, murky and still water. On one shore resides the mouth of a flooded crystal cavern from which faint echoes of crying people can be heard. While the cave is only 50 feet long, the water is about five times in depth. The bottom of this pool holds the skeletal remains of two dozen merfolk and several giant sharks.

Undead merfolk **specters** and **wraiths** emerge from this cavern and haunt the surrounding region, seeking to quench all life they encounter. Killing these creatures stops them only temporarily, as they respawn in the grotto a short while after. Only by carrying the bones of the dead to the ocean can these twisted ghosts be laid to rest. To collect their bones, one would have to defeat or banish Dalkiri the Mad, the powerful wraith that commands the others. Dalkiri remains at the bottom of the grotto, guarded by her spectral minions.

DALKIRI THE MAD

When her life was snatched from her by the people she trusted, Dalkiri became a mad wraith. With eyes of burning hatred and a body of dark mist, her ghostly visage is a twisted mockery of her previously regal form. Now she is determined to kill anyone who enters her domain, blindly blaming them for the destruction of her beloved city and people.

Served Beyond Death. When Dalkiri died, her ghost was bound by her promise to return her people to the ocean. However, combined with her pent-up emotions, her people's betrayal shattered her sanity and she twisted the oath they swore to her in life to bind them to serve her in death. The **wraiths** and **specters** that guard Dalkiri are the same two dozen merfolk that were trapped with her when the isthmus rose, and whenever one of them is destroyed, she can bring it back to her service an hour later. The only way to prevent Dalkiri from doing this is by taking the bones at the bottom of

DALKIRI THE MAD

Medium undead

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 90 (20d8)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +8

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages Aquan, Elvish, Sylvan, Common

Challenge 9(5000 XP)

Detect Life. Dalkiri can magically sense the presence of creatures up to 5 miles away that aren't undead or constructs. She knows the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

Incorporeal Movement. Dalkiri can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

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

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If Dalkiri fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Drowning Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 22 (5d8) necrotic damage.

Etherealness. Dalkiri 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 feet of Dalkiri that can see her must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if Dalkiri is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the Dalkiri's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours.

Pull Of The Depths (1/Day). Dalkiri releases a maddened scream that sucks the air out of creatures lungs, provided that they are underwater. The wail has no effect on creatures that do not require air. All other creatures within 30 feet of her that can hear her must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature drops to 0 hit points and starts drowning. On a success, the creature takes 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Ghostly Escape. Dalkiri teleports 30 feet to an unoccupied space that she can see.

Drowning Touch. Dalkiri makes one drowning touch attack.

Service Beyond Death (Costs 2 Actions). Dalkiri commands up to 2 specters or wraiths within 60 feet of her to snuff out the life of her foes. Each targeted creature can spend its reaction to make one melee attack.

the Wailing Grotto to the ocean. If Dalkiri herself is reduced to 0 hit points, she reforms in the grotto 24 hours later.

Haunted by Memories. The destruction of Golcrassar repeats in an endless loop inside the Ethereal Plane. As an entity that lives between the physical and spiritual realms, Dalkiri experiences that devastation again and again. A part of her knows it isn't real, but a different part of her tries to stop it regardless. When other creatures approach the ruins of Golcrassar, Dalkiri blames them for its destruction and sends her minions to punish them for their "crimes."

Redeeming Dalkiri. Characters that venture into the Ethereal Plane can learn about Princess Dalkiri the Pearlescent, and even meet her briefly as she tries to escape from the imminent destruction with her people.

WRAITH

Medium undead

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 67 (9d8+27)
Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages The languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The wraith 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.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the wraith has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (4d8+3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. The wraith targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. The wraith can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.

While Dalkiri isn't likely to converse with them for long (as her home is being destroyed), the characters can learn who she was by watching how she interacts with her people. A character that converses with the ghost of Dalkiri may remind her of the power she once held and convince her that her current path of fear and despair brings only misery. If Dalkiri is convinced, she will ask the characters to take the merfolk remains to the ocean so that she and her people can move on.

SPECTER

Medium undead

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The specter 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.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the specter has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

THE CRYSTAL ISTHMUS

This is just a sample of September's supplement - *Denizens of the Crystal Isthmus*. The supplement includes 15 new creatures, new rules (including goat racing mechanics), several factions with rich lore and much more. You can find more information on the full supplement [in this link](#).

~Aviad from [Beyond the Screen](#)