

Beware the Cannonballs! – A drop-in encounter for ZEITGEIST Adventure One – Island at the Axis of the World

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Background: This encounter is designed to be run during “The Assault” section at the beginning of Chapter Three of Adventure One in the ZEITGEIST campaign from EN World Publishing. If the PCs are not content to wait in the captured lighthouse as the battle rages outside, they may find themselves running along the sea wall during a heated battle.

Enemies: **3 Rebel Soldiers** (page 31 of Island at the Axis of the World), **16 Rebel Musketeers**. Half of the musketeers and two of the soldiers begin out on the wall, with the rest inside the tower. **Cannonball Attack** environmental effect triggers at the end of each round, affecting PCs and enemies alike

Rebel Musketeer		Level 2 Minion Artillery
Medium natural humanoid human		XP 31
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +3
AC 15; Fortitude 12, Reflex 15, Will 14		Perception +6
Speed 6		
Standard Actions		
⊗ Dagger (weapon) • At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. AC		
Hit: 4 damage.		
⌘ Musket Shot (weapon) • Recharge Special		
Attack: Ranged 20 (one creature); +9 vs. AC		
Hit: 7 damage.		
Reload Musket		
Effect: Musket Shot recharges		
Str 11 (+1)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 11 (+1)
Con 10 (+1)	Int 12 (+2)	Cha 9 (+0)
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common	

Cannonball Attack	Environmental effect
<i>A cannonball shoots across the bridge from one of the ships in the harbor below</i>	
This effect occurs at the end of each round, alternating sides of the bridge for the origin of the attack.	
Effect: Roll a d20 to choose a random column. Make the following attack against each creature in that column and in both adjacent columns,	
Attack: +6 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and is dazed (save ends).	
Miss: Half damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
Special: Prone targets have a +2 bonus to Reflex against this attack. A prone target takes only half damage on a hit (no push, no daze) and no damage on a miss.	
Effect: The three squares where the cannonball first hits the bridge become difficult terrain. If any of these squares were already difficult terrain, they instead collapse and become open to the water below.	

Terrain: It is night time, but the enemies have set lanterns around them in order to see, so the area beginning within 5 squares of the nearest musketeer and continuing up to the walls of the tower is in bright light. Smoke fills the air, making all squares lightly obscured.

The bridge is 40 feet above the level of the water below. The walls of the tower extend 20 feet above the level of the bridge (DC 15 Athletics to climb). The door to the tower is closed but not locked. The tower has windows 15 feet above the level of the bridge in all directions; musketeers on the second floor focus on the ships in the harbor until the PCs breach the tower.

The bridge walls are waist height, providing a +2 bonus to saving throws to avoid being forced over the edge. This bonus no longer applies to squares of the bridge reduced to difficult terrain by cannonballs.

Tactics: As the PCs approach, the enemies are focused on the bombardment coming from Risuri ships on both sides of the sea wall. They will not notice the PCs until they are within 10 squares of the closest musketeer or

until the PCs attack (which can involve a surprise round for the PCs if they make their initial assault from more than 10 squares away).

Once initiative is rolled, the enemies focus on the nearest PCs. The Soldiers close to melee while the Musketeers fall back toward the tower as the PCs approach.

In round 3 the tower door opens and enemies can either fall back inside the tower, or reinforcements can come out from within the tower (whichever is more appropriate for the particular flow of combat). Stairs on the north side of the tower lead to the second floor; enemies have descended to the first floor by the time the door opens.

