

INTO THE UNDERWORLD

PART 2

LOST IN THE DARK



A 2ND LEVEL 13TH AGE ADVENTURE IN FOUR TWO-HOUR SESSIONS

BY ASH LAW

INTO THE UNDERWORLD

PART 2 LOST IN THE DARK



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THE CITY OF SILVER WEBS

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 2nd level characters. At the end of the session, each character should gain an incremental advance.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure, for a longer hour game I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Catacomb dragon
2. Drow patrol
3. Fungaloids
4. Strange flora and fauna
5. Underworld traders
6. Roll twice and combine the results

NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

- The party is not the only group looking for the Heart of the Sky. The icons sent several groups of adventurers into the underworld. The new character is the lone survivor of another adventuring group.

- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark, it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow, it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through, it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

ENTERING THE CITY

The adventurers are attempting to find a meteorite that crashed into the underworld, and the fabled gem that it contains.

The party has finally made it to the city of the drow, the fabled City of Silver Webs! Everywhere in the city shining metal has been spun into strands and used to suspend crystalline orbs full of light. Airy spun-crystal bridges link the towers of the dark elves, who stride majestically through their domain.



I picture this as being an outpost of the dark elves, far away from the underworld beneath the Queen's Wood. Maybe a few thousand dark elves, or "Silver Folk" as they prefer to be called (and their underworld trading partners and 'guests'), live here. Of course, you could play it as being anything from a small fortified trading outpost to a mighty city.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to describe the City of Silver Webs. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a scene or place in the city, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character interacted with the scene or location. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe an aspect of the city and everybody has had a chance to have their character react to or

interact with the city. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example mention the gladiatorial pit in the marketplace). *Work the player's creations into the rest of this session, incorporating elements that they create into your description of the city.*



With a montage scene, you don't need to roll any dice—this is purely narrative play. The first point of the montage is to skip over parts of the story that are less exciting than what comes later, but still acknowledge that the event happened or location has been established: just like in a movie where a long journey is shown as a series of brief images, or a location is introduced in a few seconds by showing its most flavorful parts. The second point of the montage is to introduce new characters, by having them join the party's adventures in an exciting way rather than a flat 'you meet in a tavern'. The third purpose of the montage is to re-introduce existing characters, reminding everybody of their abilities and personalities and relationships.

NPC—LANKMUND

Lankmund is a sniveling goblin that pulls a rickshaw in the city of Silver Webs. When she's not pulling her rickshaw she's nervous, but when she's ferrying passengers her demeanor changes to that of an aggressive speed-obsessed fiend.

Lankmund believes that she's possessed by a demon (a 'speed-freak'), and talks to it when she thinks others aren't looking. She may or may not be possessed, but she believes she is and acts accordingly.

Lankmund knows much about the city's inhabitants, having spent years listening in on her passengers. For a silver piece or two she'll take the adventurers where they want to go, and for gold she'll tell them some tall tales, and for more gold she'll tell them something true and useful.

This NPC can meet the adventurers as they enter the city and take them to the market, as the

adventurers are chased by the guards, or as they escape the arena, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

THE MARKET

The adventurers reach a market where traders from dozens of subterranean cultures are selling their wares. At the center of the marketplace is a deep pit covered with a spider-web shaped iron lattice that has several monsters lurking at the bottom—this is the city's gladiatorial arena.

Getting what the party needs will require either money or skill. The party needs food, maps of the underworld, and information on how to find the meteorite that crashed down into the bowels of the earth.

Trading information and buying goods:

DC 20 or 100 gp. If an adventurer fails the skill check or doesn't have the money they can try again at DC 25—but if they fail that they have angered a market trader, so make the following attack against that adventurer:

Punch to the face +5 vs AC—1d6 damage

OR

Knife below the belt +5 vs AC—1d6+7 damage

The party needs to keep attempting skill checks until they have three successes. Alternately the party could just steal what they need and intimidate market traders into giving them what they want (with three successes required).

Theft, violence, intimidation: DC 20. If an adventurer fails the skill check they get what they need but are spotted stealing—skip ahead to the guards (*Marketplace Guards*).

Icon Option: Elf Queen

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in this game, then the drow of this city recognize her authority and those that adventure in her name.

Spending a 6 on a positive or conflicted relationship with the Elf

Queen lets the party automatically succeed at a skill roll during this scene.

ICON OPTION: PRINCE OF SHADOWS

If the Prince of Shadows is an important icon in this game, then this city has a secret guild house loyal to the Prince.

Trading in a 6 on a positive or conflicted relationship with the Prince of Shadows lets the party reduce all difficulties on skill rolls during this scene by 5.

A WAY DOWN?

The adventurers are ultimately trying to find the meteorite that crashed down into the deep underworld. However, while they know where it is (far below them), the hole that the meteorite punched through the rock has collapsed in on itself, making it unpassable. The adventurers need to find a route into the deeper underworld.

Of course there are many ways downward, but the party needs to find a route that will intersect with the meteorite's path once more.

There are three NPCs who might know how to get where the party needs to go. However, each NPC wants something in exchange for giving the party the information that they need.

Zool Brightstone—A female azer (fire dwarf), Zool is a trade emissary and is interested in strange flora and fauna for an alchemist client of hers.

"The meteorite, yes it crashed through in a cavern near the city, but the cavern collapsed. I know a way deeper down if you are searching for that thing, but it will cost you. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours."

Zool mentions that the city has a gladiatorial arena (well, more of a fighting pit) that has some strange beasts in—and the rule of the arena is that you keep what you kill. If the party kill an arena beast and bring her its parts she'll pay them with information about a ship that could be 'borrowed' by the party to take them deeper into the underworld (*the ship appears in next week's adventure*).

Drangli Duranda—This gnome makes a living by raising fighting animals for fights that take

place in the city. One of his rivals (Trul the Unspeakable) has been boasting about the effectiveness of his new fighting creature.

"You are on the trail of the monster-mask things, right? I can help you, but I've got a favor to ask."

If the party is willing to fight Trul's creature and destroy it totally he'll let them know of a route across an underground ocean that will take them to a beach of bones, and from there down to a far deeper level of the underworld where he hears that star-masks lurk (*the underworld sea appears in next week's adventure*).

Kul Shalesides—The dwarf gambler Kul Shalesides wishes to conspire with the adventurers.

"I know exactly where you need to go to find a path down to your rock. First you've got to help me out. Tell me, how much do you know about fighting giant spiders?"

If the party will fight poorly in the arena long enough for the betting odds on them to become beneficial to him (they have to fight poorly until the escalation die is 3+) he'll tell them of a ship docked on the shores of an underground ocean, and tales that underworld sailors have been bringing back about a meteorite that crashed down into (and through) a far shore (*the ship appears in next week's adventure*).



Wait, all three NPCs want the adventurers to fight in the arena? Help, a railroad! Yes, this adventure session has a very definite 'you will go fight in the arena' vibe to it. If you are cool with that then go for it. Every adventurer deserves at least one arena fight in their lifetime.

If your group prefers a more freeform approach use the plot here as a suggestion and mix in all of the random encounters for this session as part of the plot as your player take the lead. Maybe your players want to go talk with the rulers of the city and your response is that the drow rulers want the adventurers to get rid of a catacomb dragon

before they will grant an audience. Maybe the adventurers want to make the acquaintance of a member of a local thief's guild and must help that guild member distract or fight some guards as part of a heist in order for the guild member to get the information that they need.

Provided the party ends up leaving the city (a) in search of the meteorite and (b) expecting to sail across an underground ocean as part of their journey, then whatever route you want to take through the city is fine.

MARKETPLACE GUARDS

(OPTIONAL)

GMs: If the party doesn't succeed in finding a way down toward their goal (see A Way Down) or choose not to make the attempt then use this section. Otherwise skip ahead to the arena (Arena Fight).

The party spots drow guards heading their way. The guards tell the adventurers that they have violated the rules of the city, and must accompany them to a trial by combat. The truth of the matter is that the guards have been paid off to round up some fresh meat for the next arena fight, and the bogus accusations of criminality on the party's part is just a ruse on the part of the guards.

If the adventurers go along with this they will be thrown into the arena (*Arena Fight*). If the adventurers choose to fight the guards, go to the section with the guards (*Guard Fight*). If the adventurers run away from the guards they must dodge through the city (*The Chase*).

ICON OPTION: DWARF KING OR ELF QUEEN

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in this game then his reach extends this far and maybe he's got some hold over these guards.

If an adventurer rolls a 6 the guards are impressed with the adventurer's connections with an important icon and offer to give the adventurers a head start if they start running now (+2 to all rolls in *The Chase*).

ICON OPTION: PRIESTESS

If the Priestess is an important icon in this game then the guards do not want to lay hands on a cleric or other holy person. If the party contains such a person, they offer to arrest the party and throw them in the arena, but they will sneak the party a couple of healing potions before the fight starts.

Of course if the party fights the guards or runs away from them then all bets are off.



GUARD FIGHT (OPTIONAL)

The drow guards are rounding up people to fight in the arena, and the adventurers are new in town and have no friends.

If the adventurers win the fight then they are free to flee the city, but if they lose or surrender then rather than being killed they are thrown into the arena (*Arena Fight*).

Number of PCs	Drow Soldier	Drow Sword Maiden
3	1	1
4	4	1
5	6	1
6	9	1

DROW SOLDIER

It's easy to ignore them so you can concentrate on more dangerous enemies. And then three crossbow quarrels sprout from your shoulder and you shift your priorities.

4th level mook [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +9

Paired swords +9 vs. AC—6 damage

R: Crossbow +9 vs. AC (one nearby enemy, or a far away enemy at -2 atk)—7 damage

With my dying breath I curse at thee: When the drow soldier drops to 0 hp, one enemy engaged with it takes 2 poison damage before the drow soldier dies.

AC 20

PD 19 HP 18 (mook)

MD 14

Mook: Kill one drow soldier mook for every 18 damage you deal to the mob.

DROW SWORD MAIDEN

She moves with an easy grace, seemly bored by the prospect of fighting you. She arches an eyebrow then bows with a mocking flourish of her sword. A moment later you realize you are already bleeding.

5th level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +13

Cruel cutlass +10 vs. AC—18 damage

C: Dagger dance +10 vs. AC (one nearby enemy, or a far away enemy at -2 atk)—14 damage

Natural even hit: Each other enemy engaged with the sword maiden takes 10 damage.

Nastier Specials

Effortless grace: Once per round when an attack misses the sword maiden, she can move or make a cruel cutlass attack as a free action.

Arcane warrior: The sword maiden has a true magic item (probably a weapon) and uses it to her benefit (adjust stats accordingly).

AC 21

PD 19 HP 75

MD 15

ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE

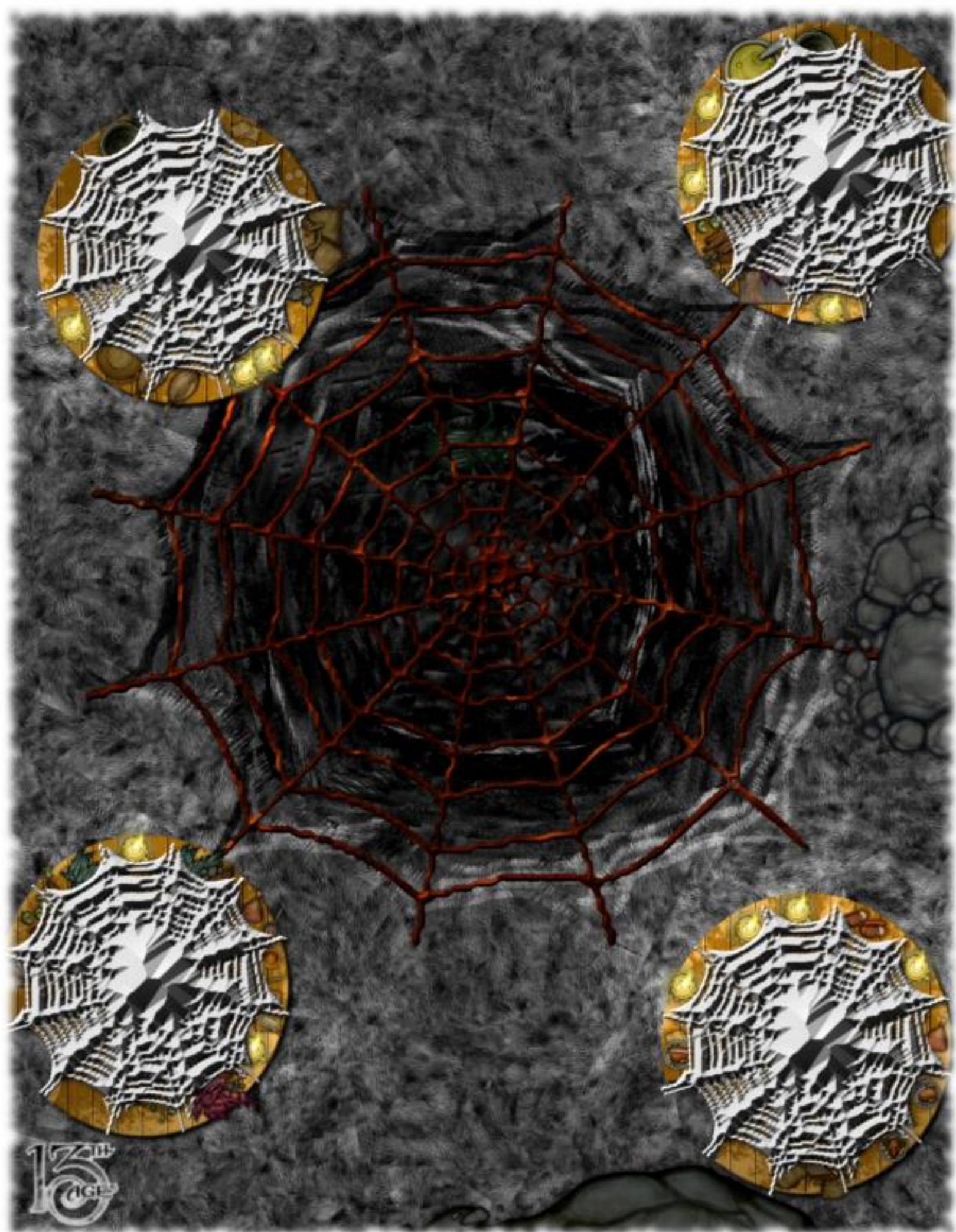
If the Archmage is an important icon in this game, then one of the guards is deathly afraid of magic.

If an adventurer spends a 6 with the Archmage while casting a spell then that guard runs away screaming.

ICON OPTION: DIABOLIST

If the Diabolist is an important icon in this game, then one of the guards has a tattoo on her wrist that marks her as belonging to the Diabolist.

If an adventurer spends a 6 with the Diabolist, then with a wink and a nod from the adventurer that guard will feign injury or death (they dramatically fall over and roll to the edge of the fight).



THE CHASE (OPTIONAL)

The adventurers are attempting to flee the city guards though an unfamiliar city.

Escaping the guards: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check, make the following attack against that adventurer:

Crossbow +5 vs AC—2d6 damage

OR

Net +5 vs PD—the target nominates one other adventurer who has yet to roll their skill check to also be caught in the net, the second adventurer takes a -4 penalty to their skill check.

If every adventurer fails their roll the party has been caught and must either fight (Guard Fight) or surrender and be dragged off to the Arena (Arena Fight).

ICON OPTION: ELF QUEEN

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in this game, then elven design is in vogue and the lay-out of the city is easy to understand.

A character who spends a 6 on an icon relationship with the Elf Queen may direct the party into side-alleys, up ramps and over bridges, and through tunnels—turning one failure by themselves or somebody else into a success.

ICON OPTION: PRINCE OF

SHADOWS

If the Prince of Shadows is an important icon in this game, then the party stumbles into a thieves' den during their flight.

Spending a 6 with the Prince of Shadows means that the party can grab a magic item on their way through. Spending 2 6's means that the angry thieves and the guards bump into each other and get into a scuffle, letting the adventurers get away clean and clear.

ARENA FIGHT

The city's arena is a deep pit, covered with a spider web themed iron grate. It is here that the public life of the city is conducted, as low and high alike haggle and make deals while monsters, criminals, and professional fighters kill and die beneath their feet.

If the adventurers willingly enter the arena they get to start with all their gear, and the rules of the arena are explained: keep what you kill. If they die the arena monsters' owners will get to keep their gear—and if they win they will get to keep the monsters they kill.

If the adventurers were forced into the arena then the party will be stripped of their weapons and armor, which will be dropped into the center of the arena. Characters who resort to fighting with rocks and bones as melee weapons roll 2d4 damage for a hit and do no miss damage. Picking up a weapon from the center of the arena is a quick action, but if the monsters get there first it might provoke an attack. It takes 1d6 standard actions to quickly don heavy armor, and 1d4 standard actions to quickly don light armor.

If the adventurers attempt to escape mid-fight they will have to contend with the crowd trying to push them back in (*Escaping the Arena*).

Number of PCs	Giant Web Spider	Silken Swaddler Spider
3	0	1
4	0	1
5	1	1
6	1	1

If the adventurers did not fight the guards then use the below fight chart, making this a double-strength fight. However, during this very tough fight citizens who have bet upon the adventurers winning throw healing potions into the arena. There is one healing potion per adventurer, though if you are feeling as cruel and unkind as the drow the healing potions land near the monsters and must be retrieved from the skirmish before they can be imbibed.

Number of PCs	Giant Web Spider	Silken Swaddler Spider
3	1	1
4	2	1
5	1	2
6	2	2

GIANT WEB SPIDER

The largest nests of these spiders exist in the root systems of abandoned elven forests and in the caverns surrounding dark elf temples. Elsewhere, you're normally dealing with only one or two spiders at a time on the hunt for a meal.

Large 2nd level blocker [BEAST]

Initiative: +4

Bite +7 vs. AC—5 damage, and 5 ongoing poison damage

Natural even hit: The target also takes 2d6 ongoing poison damage if it's dazed or stuck.

C: Web +7 vs. PD (up to 2 nearby enemies in a group)—3 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the spider's next turn

Natural 18+: The target is also stuck until the end of the spider's next turn.

Wall-crawler: A giant web spider can climb on ceilings and walls as easily as it moves on the ground.

AC 17

PD 16 HP 68

MD 12

SILKEN SWADDLER SPIDER

These massive arachnids use psychic abilities to draw heroes to their lair to rescue cocooned victims, only for the would-be rescuers to fall victim themselves.

Huge 3rd level spoiler [BEAST]

Initiative: +5

Poison bite +8 vs. AC—15 ongoing poison damage

Wrapped and stored: A target reduced to 0 hp or fewer by this spider doesn't die but falls unconscious and is captured and cocooned to serve as a lure (and a later meal).

C: Distress call +9 vs. MD (1d3 nearby enemies)—The target must use their next action to move to the aid of a captured creature.

Natural 19-20: At the end of their move the target becomes stuck (save ends).

Not a wall-crawler: The silken swaddler can climb over almost any terrain, and squeeze its many-legged body through gaps that should be too small for its bulk... but it cannot cling to ceilings or walls.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 145

MD 13





ICON OPTION: THE DIABOLIST

If the Diabolist is an important icon in this game, then the arena monsters are favorite beasts of the Diabolist—something she likes to set upon her prisoners.

The monster is vulnerable to the attacks of anybody who spends a 6 with the Three, due to that character knowing its weak spots.

ICON OPTION: THE ELF QUEEN

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in this game, then it is obvious to those with ties to the icon that the beast was taken from the Queen's Wood.

Spending a 6 with the Elf Queen allows a character with a positive or conflicted relationship with her to temporarily calm one of the creatures down or distract it (causing it to reroll an attack that hit, with a -4 penalty to the reroll).

ICON OPTION: THE PRINCE OF SHADOWS OR DWARF KING OR ELF QUEEN

If the Prince of Shadows, Dwarf King, or Elf Queen are important icons in this game, then post-battle the poison of these creatures can be harvested (post-death). Each monster yields 1d4 doses of a blade venom.

Underworld blade venom—

Applied to a blade or arrow this venom deals 1d6 ongoing poison damage on the first hit made with the weapon, but if the first attack is a miss the poison is wasted.

Spending a 6 with one of the above icons means that the character can harvest the poison more efficiently, giving them 1d3+1 doses harvested per monster.

ESCAPING THE ARENA (OPTIONAL)

GMs: If the adventurers have won their fight in the arena they are let out, and allowed to keep whatever monster parts they want. If they try to escape mid-fight however use this section.

The adventurers are in an arena, a pit covered with an iron grate shaped like a spider-web. The only way out is to climb out of the pit (a standard action). The crowd above doesn't want the party to leave the pit, and is eager to see them rent apart by a horrid beast.

Climbing out of the arena: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check they fail to make it out of the pit and get attacked by the crowd, make the following attack against that adventurer:

Boot to the face +5 vs AC—2d6 damage
OR

Thrown rocks +5 vs AC—1d6 damage and the target is knocked down into engagement with a monster.

ICON OPTION: DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in this game, then one of the party members is familiar with the sport of Kick-Pit, a popular dwarven sport. In Kick-Pit, one team attempts to climb out of a pit with a ball, while the other team stands on the outside of the pit and attempts to keep them in the pit.

Spending a 6 with the Dwarf King lets the adventurer either pull themselves out of the pit through the spider-web shaped iron grate (without passing the skill check) or if they are already out of the pit lets them pull an ally out.

ICON OPTION: LICH KING OR ORC LORD

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game then this pit is strewn with bones of previous victims. Broken bones. Sharp bones.

Any character can use the bones in the pit to throw at the crowd and have them

move back, granting a +1 bonus to the skill check to climb out of the pit. Spending a 6 with the Lich King lets the adventurer use the bones in a more creative way (and it can get very creative if the character in question is a necromancer), allowing them to automatically succeed on the skill check.

THE WAY DOWN

The adventurers, having fought in the arena, are met by their NPC patron.

Zool Brightstone

"Did you get me any monster parts from the arena? I have an alchemist friend who is eager to get hold of them. In order to get deeper into the underdark and find the meteorite you must follow this map down to a beach in a cavern far under this city. Once there you can 'borrow' a ship called the Demon-Queen and follow the current to the bone beach on the other side of the sea. There you should walk inland until you reach a big pit which offers a way downwards."

Drangli Duranda

"You killed Trul's beast. Excellent! To find the mask creatures you must go further down into the underworld. Far beneath the city of Silver Webs is a cavern that links to a sunless sea. I've heard tell of strange masked creatures spotted by sailors down there. If you find a ship willing to make the voyage, or take one I guess, then sail with the currents to the beach of bones, I've heard that is where they come from."

Kul Shalesides

"Well I made money thanks to you, so I'll hold up my end of the bargain. Sailors on the Sunless Sea tell tales of a beach of bones, and I've recently heard that a big rock crashed down somewhere beyond the beach. There is a cavern far beneath this city where the Sunless Sea starts. If you can find a ship to take you there, sailors say that the beach of bones is where all the currents of the Sunless Sea lead to."



The next session starts with the assumption that somebody told the party that they need to travel across the Sunless Sea. If the adventurers somehow manage to dodge every NPC you put in their way then you could always introduce a raving mad sailor in the marketplace or city gates shouting at the top of his lungs about the horrible masked monsters that came out of the meteorite that crashed into the underdark, and how it crashed down on the opposite side of the Sunless Sea.

END OF SESSION

The adventurers leave the drow city, heading down into the underworld in search of a sunless sea that will take them deeper toward the meteorite that they are tracking.



THE DEMON- QUEEN'S SHIP

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 2nd level characters. At the end of the session each character should gain an incremental advance.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking, a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure, for a longer hour game I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Azer sailors
2. Cave orcs
3. Glow moss
4. Meeting with a jorogumo
5. Stirge hive
6. Roll twice and combine the results

NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

- The party is not the only group looking for the Heart of the Sky. The icons sent several groups of adventurers into the underworld. The new character is the lone survivor of another adventuring group.

- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

TO THE DEEP SEAS

The adventurers have been searching for the meteorite that fell deep into the underworld. Unfortunately the direct path down is no longer traversable—the rock of the underworld collapsed into the tunnel left by the meteorite.

After weeks of travel they reached a drow city, reprovisioned, and found somebody who knew how to get deeper into the underworld so they can continue their hunt for the meteorite—a quest that will take them across a sunless sea.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to cooperatively tell the story of the adventurers seeking the sunless sea. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced after leaving the City of Silver Webs, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem and everybody has had a chance to have their character heroically overcome a problem. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example mention underground waterfalls, and deep pools with translucent fish in them).

After this montage, declare that the adventurers have given their pursuers the slip and can finally rest on the shores of an underworld ocean.

RECAP...

Remind the players that the adventurers are tracking down a meteorite that crashed into the underworld, in order to retrieve a gem that their icon patron or patrons believe is in the meteorite. The adventurers followed the path downwards through the rock but eventually found a series of collapsed caverns and no way to directly follow the meteorite. In the drow city known as the City of Silver Webs they learned of a sunless sea which will take them further down into the underworld.

NPC—GHOSTBEARD THE PIRATE

Ghostbeard the Pirate is a ghost, one so old that he can't actually remember who or what he was before he became a ghost. He is travelling the under-ocean looking for clues as to his identity and how he died, so he can move on. The moniker 'Ghostbeard the Pirate' is a name given to him by azer (fire dwarf) sailors, and it kind of stuck.

Ghostbeard is not in fact a ghost, but rather a legend given power and form by the belief of generations of sailors on the under-ocean. Ghostbeard secretly knows this, but won't admit it to himself.

Ghostbeard comports himself like a stereotypical pirate, peppering his speech with nautical phrases and drinking from a ghostly tankard of grog.

This NPC can meet the adventurers as they get to the docks, can come floating across the water to them, or can be found rowing a ghostly boat near the great falls, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

Ghostbeard can be a welcome comic relief to the grimness of the underworld, but if he is too light for your group's tastes change him into the ghost of a widow who died of sorrow after her husband died on the under-ocean. The ghostly widow's name is Furlis and she spends a lot of her time weeping, sniffing, or wailing unless she is engaged in conversation by the adventurers.

THE DEEP DOCKS

The adventurers reach a jetty at the end of which is a massive ship of drow design. The name of the ship is the Demon-Queen. The ship's crew is nowhere to be seen, and this conveyance looks perfect for the adventurers to cross the subterranean sea in their search for a way downwards to the resting place of the meteorite.

However, the ship's crew did not leave their property entirely undefended...

Sneaking on board: DC 20. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer: **Ghostly hands +5 vs MD—2d6** psychic damage

OR

Screaming figurehead +5 vs PD—2d6 thunder damage

ICON OPTION: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then the ghosts bound to this ship obey his commands, and those of his servants.

Characters with a relationship with the Lich King have their skill check DC lowered by 5 (to DC 15).

ICON OPTION: GREAT GOLD WYRM

If the Great Gold Wyrms are an important icon in this game, then this ship used to belong to servants of the Great Gold Wyrms.

Adventurers with a relationship with the Great Gold Wyrms know of a way to sneak aboard this class of ship: spending a 5 or 6 allows the adventurer to sneak aboard without making a skill roll (though a 5 will mean that they somehow anger the ghosts and the ghosts' attack bonus raises from +5 to +10).

UNDEAD SAILORS

The adventurers have set out into the sunless sea, but the ship's owners have returned. Unfortunately for the party, the ship's owners are undead and wade out into the subterranean ocean with the intent of getting their ship back.

The undead swarm onto the ship, angry and hungry for living flesh...

Number of PCs	Bone Wretch	Undead Sailor
3	5	3
4	5	4
5	5	5
6	5	6

BOPE WRETCH

A mismatched pile of bones, bought to life by the dark magic of undeath.

1st level mook [UNDEAD]

Initiative: -1

Shambling smash +6 vs. AC—4 damage

Natural even hit: Another unengaged bone wretch can move into engagement with an enemy as a free action.

Nastier Specials

Twice-dead: When the last mook is down the adventurers have 1 round to destroy them before they all stand back up again with half their full hit points (4 HP each). Killing them a second time will do the job.

AC 17

PD 11 HP 8

MD 13

Mook: Kill one bone wretch mook for every 8 damage you deal to the mob (or every 4 damage if they are *twice dead*).

UNDEAD SAILOR

During a storm the sailors pledged their lives to their ship if only it wouldn't sink. The ship survived, they didn't.

2nd level troop [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +7

Rusted cutlass +7 vs. AC—5 damage

Natural even hit: If the target is staggered the attack deals an extra 2d4 negative energy damage.

R: Ghostly harpoon +7 vs. PD—5 damage

Natural even hit: If the target is staggered the attack deals an extra 2d4 negative energy damage.

Natural odd hit: The target pops free and is vulnerable to attacks that do negative energy damage.

Pick one:

Captain's curse: When this undead is engaged with an enemy all other undead receive a +1 attack bonus against that enemy.

Boson's brawn: On a natural odd hit the target of a rusted cutlass attack pops free and counts as staggered until the end of its next turn regardless of its current hp.

Sea changed crew: Add +4 to the AC of the undead sailor and +1 to its PD and MD, but it only has 25 hp.

Cursed sailor: Enemies engaged with the sailor take 2 negative energy damage at the start of their turns.

AC 18

PD 13 HP 36

MD 14



ÍCON ÓPTÍON: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then these beings are his servants, traders who were in the City of Silver Webs trading for the unique goods of the drow. However, the majority of the traders are still in the city so these are just the sailors themselves.

Remove the captain from the fight, replacing him with 1d4 mooks.

ÍCON ÓPTÍON: ARCHMAGE, DWARF KING, OR PRINCE OF SHADOWS

If the Archmage, the Dwarf King, or the Prince of Shadows are important icons in this game, then these undead were trading magic items for the forbidden goods of the City of Silver Webs.

For every 6 spent with one of the above icons, the party finds a magic item in the ship's hold just before the fight starts.



Yes I know that isn't how seas really behave, but this is the underworld. The rules of nature are different here.

THE GREAT FALLS

The adventurers are sailing on a dark sunless sea deep in the underworld, having stolen a ship from undead sailors.

The current starts to become stronger, sweeping the ship along. The adventurers were unaware of the currents and unique dangers of this body of water, and have ended up headed towards a cliff where this body of water pours into a deeper larger ocean. The ship is about to go over a massive miles-wide waterfall. This is a good thing because it will lead the party downwards toward the meteorite that they seek—but also a bad thing because, well, it's a waterfall!

The waterfall isn't terribly high, but is very long and the water shoots over it at great speed. The stolen ship will survive, but what of its crew?

Sailing and surfing: DC 25. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer: **Slam into the water +15 vs PD—4d6 damage**

OR

Adventurer overboard! +15 vs PD—2d6 damage and the adventurer must succeed on a DC 20 swimming skill check or take a further 2d6 damage.

ÍCON ÓPTÍON: DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in this game, then the dwarves know the signs of a waterfall between heights of a multi-level subterranean ocean—and so do the party.

The DC for 'sailing and surfing' is 5 lower.

ÍCON ÓPTÍON: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then this waterfall is known as the Boneshard Cataract. The adventurers realize what this famous subterranean waterfall is just as the ship goes over it. Lower the damage from d6s to d4s.

SHARK-BAT ATTACK

Shark-bats live in caves behind the vast waterfall, preying on ships that sail over the falls. As the Demon-Queen comes over the falls the shark-bats attack.

Number of PCs	Shark Bat Hatchling	Shark Bat	Elder Shark Bat
3	5	2	0
4	0	3	0
5	5	3	0
6	0	0	1

Shark-bats sound like the sort of thing a wizard would breed for fun, but the truth is that they have no common heritage with either animal—they came to this world from another realm.

For all shark-bats

All shark-bats have the following two abilities.

Supreme senses: Shark-bats have echolocation, can sense tremors in the ground and walls, can smell blood, sense electrical fields... in short *if you are there they know you are there*. They can spot you long before you spot them!

Ambush predator: Shark-bats are experts at surprise attacks and ambushes. When you fight them, two shark-bats get to act before initiative is rolled. Unless the adventurers take extraordinary measures; even if the party ambushes the shark-bats, two of the monsters get to counter-ambush the party.

GMs: Shark-bats are nasty! With their expanding crit range and extra crit effects on top of double damage they can decimate a party if the dice go against the players. Shark-bats don't get nastier specials, they are nastier specials. Remind the players that the adventurers can flee. Fleeing from shark-bats is one of the few times you might want to waive the campaign loss for fleeing—if you choose to waive the campaign loss let the players know.

SHARK-BAT HATCHLING

2nd level mook [BEAST]

Initiative: +8

Savage bite +7 vs. AC—5 damage

Group attack: Instead of each hatchling engaged with an enemy making a separate attack they can make a single *wave of teeth* attack as a group.

Wave of teeth +7+X vs. AC (X = number of engaged hatchlings)—5+X damage

Miss: Half damage.

Wall-crawler: The hatchling skitters up walls and over rocks on its segmented legs.

AC 18

PD 15 HP 9 (mook)

MD 12

Mook: Kill one shark-bat hatchling mook for every 9 damage you deal to the mob.

SHARK-BAT

The shark-bat is strictly speaking neither, yet has attributes of both. If you are imagining a huge winged shark you are not far off.

Large 3rd level blocker [BEAST]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerable: thunder

Bite and sever +8 vs. AC—21 damage

Crit: The target is either stuck and must move with the shark-bat and takes 5 ongoing damage (hard save ends all) OR loses a limb (target's choice).

Scent of blood: The crit range for shark-bats expands by 1 for every staggered enemy or every staggered ally, whichever is higher.

Fly+Swim: Shark-bats can fly and swim with equal grace and speed, but are clumsy when forced to land.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 99

MD 13

ELDERBAT-SHARK

There is no upper limit to how large a shark-bat could grow, the only regulating factor is access to food.

Huge 5th level wrecker [BEAST]

Initiative: +11

Vulnerable: thunder

Bite and sever +10 vs. AC—55 damage

Crit: The target is either stuck and must move with the shark-bat and takes 15 ongoing damage (hard save ends all) OR loses a limb (target's choice).

Scent of blood: The crit range for shark-bats expands by 1 for every staggered enemy or every staggered ally, whichever is higher.

Fly+Swim: Shark-bats can fly and swim with equal grace and speed, but are clumsy when forced to land.

AC 21

PD 19 HP 222

MD 15

ICON OPTION: ELF QUEEN

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in this game, then the adventurers spot an elven ship wrecked on the rocks.

It is a DC 15 skill check to maneuver the Demon-Queen near enough to the elven ship so that the other ship's rigging prevents the shark-bats from making swoop attacks when the escalation die is odd.

ICON OPTION: DIABOLIST

If the Diabolist is an important icon in this game, then these shark-bats have recently feasted on demon flesh and have absorbed some of their demonic energy. The shark-bats are vulnerable to holy damage but do 5 fire damage on a miss.

END OF SESSION

The adventurers are out of danger, for now. Their ship is intact, and is being carried along on a dark ocean. They have previously been told that on the other side of this sea is a way that may lead them to the meteorite that they seek, and it appears that they are headed in the direction that was previously described to them as the correct one.



THE SEA OF FIRE

AND NIGHT

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 2nd level characters. At the end of the session, each character should gain an incremental advance.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure, for a longer hour game I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Cave croakers
2. Kobold warband
3. Meteorite fragments
4. Rust monster
5. Strange flora and fauna
6. Roll twice and combine the results

NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

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- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow, it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

LIGHTLESS ISLANDS

The adventurers are tracking down a meteorite that crashed down into the underworld. To that end, the party has stolen a ship (the Demon-Queen) belonging to undead pirates and are piloting it on a sea in the underworld.

There are many strange islands down here in the underworld, realms cut off from the outside world, places that have never known the light of the sun.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to tell the story of the party as they travel across a subterranean ocean. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a fantastical island that the ship landed at, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character interacted with the island. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to create an island and everybody has had a chance to have their character interact with, react to, or explore an island. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example mention burning ships seen in the distance).

NPC—LASSLITE THE FAIRY

Lasslite is a subterranean fairy, dark skinned with grey mottled wings that blend in with rock. When she is excited, pleased, or angry bioluminescent patterns on her body light up.

Lasslite is a scout for her tribe, searching for new fertile hunting grounds and new resources.

They are currently living on one of the lightless islands (no, she won't tell the adventurers which one, thank you), and she wants to know more about the local area.

Lasslite will want to accompany the party (and fly away during trouble) and learn what they know. Lasslite has heard of strange masked creatures on a far-away shore, where the flow of the sunless ocean carries all things (eventually), and if she finds out that the adventures are intending to head there she will want to follow them all the way.

This NPC can meet the adventurers near the psiren's rocks, just before the fire worms attack, on the lake of fire, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

SUNLESS SEA

The cavernous oceans of the underworld are not like those of the sun-lit world. Levels of the ocean pour over waterfalls to lower levels, strange waterspouts and fountains are driven by unseen chthonic forces, and luminous predators slide beneath the glass-still waters.

Navigating the lightless oceans of the underworld is difficult at the best of times...

Navigation: DC 15. This skill check must be made three times. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against the whole party:

Bio-electric algae discharge +10 vs PD—3d4 lightning damage

OR

Psirens +10 vs MD—1d10 psychic damage and the next roll is DC 20 instead of DC 15

ICON OPTION: GREAT GOLD WYRM

Those with a positive or conflicted relationship with the Great Gold Wyrms are used to psychic communication and only take 1d6 psychic damage.

Spending a 6 with the Great Gold Wyrms grants each character in the party a normal save (11+) to avoid any psychic damage at all.

ICON OPTION: THE THREE

Electric algae is sometimes sold in Drakkenhall, mostly as a light source.

Spending a 5 with the Three lets an adventurer know enough about the sign that bio-electric algae to avoid damage, lets them warn another character about its dangers and let them roll to avoid it (DC 15). Spending a 6 with the Three grants each character in the party a normal save (11+) to avoid any lightning damage at all.



FIRE WORMS

Ahead in the darkness, there is a light. The light is the bright light of fire, not the wan glow of jellyfish, algae, and sliding boneless predators.

Unfortunately for the adventurers, they are not seeing a friendly camp fire but a species of worm that propels itself through the air by burning combustible gasses. The worms have exhausted all the food on the island where they were and are migrating, and have mistaken the adventurer's ship for a new island!

Number of PCs	Fire Worms
3	12
4	15
5	18
6	22

FIRE-WORM

Big burning carnivorous worms that 'fly' by igniting their own explosive slime—you can't tell me that a wizard didn't have a hand in that.

3rd level mook [BEAST]

Initiative: +12

Bite +8 vs. AC—3 damage

Natural even hit or miss: 3 ongoing fire damage.

Explosive flight: When this monster flies it pops free automatically, dealing 1d6 thunder damage to every non-fire-worm creature it was engaged with.

Resist fire and thunder 18+: When a fire or thunder attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 18+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

Nastier Specials

Fire aura: Enemies engaged with this creature take 3 fire damage at the start of their turns. Fighting a fire-worm in water or in heavy rain negates the fire aura.

AC 19

PD 13 HP 12

MD 13

Mook: Kill one fire-worm mook for every 12 damage you deal to the mob.

ICON OPTION: CRUSADER

If the Crusader is an important icon in this game, then the flight of these worms is just like a volley of fire arrows.

Spending a 6 with the Crusader means that the adventurer had just enough time to fill some buckets with water for use in the battle. Ending ongoing fire damage is now an easy save (6+) if it was a normal save (11+), and a normal save (11+) if it was a hard save (16+).

ICON OPTION: ORC LORD

If the Orc Lord is an important icon in this game, then the adventurer knows that fire worms are an orcish delicacy. Of course, the ones that live in swamps on the surface are much smaller and far more sluggish than the ones found in the deep underworld.

Sending a 6 with the Orc Lord means that after the battle, the adventurer can maximize one recovery (take the maximum possible value rather than rolling the dice)—the adventurer simply snacks down on the deliciously fat and self-cooked fire worms.



BRINY FLAME

The adventurers see a light ahead as the current of the ocean carries their ship ever onwards. Floating on the surface of the lake are burning patches of algae and oil, set alight by the migration of the fire worms.

Getting the ship through this will be no problem, the Demon-Queen was designed to sail on this body of water. However, the adventurers might fare less well as strange gasses released by the burning flora and fauna choke them.

Noxious gasses: DC 20. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

Hallucinogenic wind +5 vs MD—target makes a basic attack against themselves or an ally.

OR

Choking hazard +5 vs PD—3d6 poison damage

OR

Sudden explosion +5 vs PD—4d4 thunder damage

ICON OPTION: EMPEROR

If the Emperor is an important icon in this game, then the adventurer knows that smoking hallucinogens is popular with the nobles of Axis, and even some of the commoners of Axis have taken up the habit.

Sure, this is stronger stuff but it is the same principle. Anybody who must make a basic attack can choose to reroll the attack and take the second roll.

Spending a 6 with the Emperor allows the adventurer to be immune to the hallucinogen (or at least have enough of a tolerance for the noxious gas that they keep their head): they can either ignore an attack on themselves by the hallucinogenic wind or make another character reroll their damage on a basic attack and take the lesser amount.

ICON OPTION: HIGH DRUID

If the High Druid is an important icon in this game, then wildfires are a common

occurrence in some parts of the world. Farmers create firebreaks and protect their crops, but druids know that occasionally forests need to burn for there to be new growth.

Adventurers with a positive or conflicted relationship with the High Druid can spend a 6 to make good use of the mystic energy released by the fire: instead of taking damage from the choking hazard they gain temporary hit points!



AZER PIRATES

Drawn by the fire worms and the burning water, a new ship draws into view through the fumes and flames. The people on the other ship appear to be dwarves who are on fire!

Regrettably for the adventurers, these are azer, fire dwarves—worse yet, they are azer pirates!

Number of Azer Sailor PCs	Azer Sailor	Azer Captain
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	4	1
6	5	1

AZER SAILOR

2nd level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +7

Burning axe +7 vs. AC—4 damage

Natural even hit or miss: 2 ongoing fire damage.

R: Throwing axe +7 vs. AC—4 damage

Blistering heat: When an enemy engaged with the azer attacks it, that enemy takes 1 fire damage.

Fighting surge: Once per battle when an attack crits the azer but doesn't kill it, the azer can heal 2d6 hp.

Cold haters: The azer adds the escalation die to its attacks against a target that is capable of dealing cold damage with a spell, attack, or magic item.

Fire resistance 18+: When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 18+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 18

PD 15 HP 30

MD 12

AZER CAPTAIN

3rd level leader [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +7

C: Fiery whip +8 vs. AC (one nearby enemy)—10 fire damage

R: "Yarr!" +8 vs. MD—4 thunder damage and other azer have +1 to hit the target until the end of the target's next turn.

Blistering heat: When an enemy engaged with the azer attacks it, that enemy takes 2 fire damage.

Fighting surge: Once per battle when an attack crits the azer but doesn't kill it, the azer can heal 3d6 hp.

Cold haters: The azer adds the escalation die to its attacks against a target that is capable of dealing cold damage with a spell, attack, or magic item.

Fire resistance 18+: When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 18+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 19

PD 16 HP 40

MD 13

ICON OPTION: EMPEROR

If the Emperor is an important icon in this game, then these azer pirates occasionally make port in a lake of fire far beneath Axis and trade with the surface world.

This isn't a good thing. The azer know that the adventurers are not the rightful owners of the ship they are in, and are adventurers from the world above. The azer fight harder, expecting an easy and quick haul of world above booty to result. The azer have +1 to hit until the first azer drops. Once the escalation die hits 4+ and an azer has dropped they have -1 to their attacks as they realize their mistake in taking on surface dwellers.

ICON OPTION: DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in this game, then these azer have ties to the Dwarf King.

Spending a 6 with a positive relationship with the Dwarf King means that these azer are wanted for piracy; in fact, they collectively have 1000 gp worth of gems, coins, and miscellaneous loot on their persons.

Spending a 6 with a negative relationship with the Dwarf King means that these azer are enemies of the Dwarf King and have stolen a magic item from a dwarven settlement. The last azer left in the battle will offer the magic item in exchange for its life.

Adventurers with a conflicted relationship can choose either of the above two benefits.

END OF SESSION

The adventurers have escaped the pirates, and seem to be out of danger for now. While it is always dark in the starless underworld, it seems to the adventurers that it might be night. This is a good point for them to rest.



BEYOND THE PALE HORIZON

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 2nd level characters. At the end of the session, each character should level up to 3rd level.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking, a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure, for a longer hour game I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Haunted skull
2. Talkative skull
3. Dredge-tribe kobolds
4. Unexpected corpse
5. Bone flower
6. Roll twice and combine the results

NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

- The party is not the only group looking for the Heart of the Sky. The icons sent several groups of adventurers into the underworld. The new character is the lone survivor of another adventuring group.

- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark, it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow, it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through, it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

THE PALE HORIZON

On a mission to locate a legendary gem that crashed into the underworld in a meteorite, the adventurers are sailing on a subterranean sea in a stolen ship called the Demon-Queen. Ahead is a bank of fog, and beyond that, a distant shore.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to describe a voyage on lightless oceans as the party gets ever closer to a bank of fog marked on their maps as the Pale Horizon. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced on the lightless ocean, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a fantastical source of trouble for the party, and everybody has had a chance to have their character overcome the challenges of the underworld's oceans. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example mention ghost ships sailing out of the bank of fog).

NPC—LUNA GOLDFRIEND

Luna is a half-elf explorer and friend of Firigin the inventor; she went looking for Inigo Sharpe (*see the adventure THE STRANGLING SEA by Robin D. Laws*) and has ended up shipwrecked. Her ship ran into a bank of heavy fog and ended up deep in the underworld.

Luna knows where she is, and suspects that this is the afterlife. That might or might not be true, we leave that up to your dear GM. Luna saw a meteorite crash down far inland, and is willing to point the adventurers toward the crash site, though that is many day's travel away by her estimation.

Luna has long white-blond hair that is always falling over her eyes and needs tucking back behind her ears. In contrast to her hair, her skin is of a dark brown tan, the color of good coffee.

This NPC can meet the adventurers on the beach of bones, be a captive of the star-mask skeletons, or be preying in the Temple of Light for somebody to come rescue her, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

As an incremental advance, one of the adventurers can gain Luna as a companion at the end of the session as a feat.

- Luna has hit points equal to the adventurer's level x 14.
- Luna's AC is 15+ the adventurer's level. Her MD is 2 less than her AC, and her PD is 6 less than her AC.
- Luna cannot help in a fight (she hides, flees, or otherwise seeks safety).
- Luna has a background "Inventive explorer" at +3. The adventurer who has Luna as a companion can use that background as if it was a background of their own.

Basically Luna works just like the *further backgrounding* feat but with the ability to die in a fight. If Luna dies the adventurer regains the feat used to have her as a companion.

Conceivably, Luna could be taken as an 'animal companion' by a ranger or druid, bending the rules slightly. Luna's animal companion *advantage* is that she can make ranged attacks.

THE BEACH OF BONES

The sunless sea flows towards a fog-shrouded beach made of pale bones. The beach stretches as far as the eye can see, illuminated by floating lights (will-o'-wisps or ignis fatuus). The ocean itself is flowing into the beach, draining down to some unseen depth below the beach of bones.



A land of the dead, vs THE land of the dead? Frankly that is up to you. This place has bone beaches, skeletons, ghosts, and further inland it has really strange things. If you and your players decide that this is THE 'Land of the Dead' and part of the afterlife, then that is cool. If you instead decide that this is A land of the dead, a place where some of those that die in the underworld end up, that is also an option. Maybe it is simply a dead land like the Necropolis, a place tainted by the corpse of dead titans or some similar necromantic explanation, and that is cool too. Maybe this part of the underworld is beneath the Necropolis (in which case give those who have a relationship with the Lich King an extra icon die due to his influence.

As the Demon-Queen ship grounds with a crunch, the adventurers are faced with the prospect of surviving on the beach.

Survival in a strange place: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer: **Bone crabs +5 vs AC**—2d6 damage as the crabs sense a fresh meal and attack.

OR

Boneslide (like a landslide) +5 vs AC—8 damage, or 4 damage to the adventurer and one ally each if an ally agrees to help them

OR

Mist of forgetting +5 vs MD—3d4 psychic damage

Natural 19+: The target becomes confused until the end of their next turn (they briefly forget who their allies are).

ICON OPTION: HIGH DRUID

If the High Druid is an important icon in this game, then bone crabs are not supernatural creatures and are simply a type of hermit crab that specializes in carrion.

Characters with a relationship with the High Druid can spend a 5 or 6 to shoo the bone crabs away from the party. Spending a 6 not only rids the immediate area of bone crabs but the adventurer uncovers a magic item on the beach during the process.

ICON OPTION: LICH KING OR PRIESTESS

If the Lich King or the Priestess are important icons in this game, then this beach of bones in the underworld is part of the (or a) land of the dead, and the will-o'-wisps on the beach are lost souls.

Any adventurer with a relationship with either of the above icons knows enough of the lore of the afterlife to be immune to psychic damage from the mist of forgetting.

Spending a 6 with either of the above icons means that the adventurer knows enough to teach the lore of the dead to the rest of the party, enabling other characters to make a save (11+) to avoid psychic damage from the mist.



STAR-MASK SKELETONS

As the adventurers walk inland, they encounter a group of star-masked skeletons, wandering near the bone-dust beach.

Of course this is a good thing, it means that the adventurers are getting closer to the crashed meteorite.

These star-masks are following one of the imperatives, to find living creatures (preferably humanoids) and possess them. Guess who the only living humanoids around are? The adventurers...

Number of PCs	Masked Skeleton	Crumbling Masked Skeleton
3	6	5
4	8	5
5	10	5
6	12	5

MASKED SKELETON

The star-mask's tendrils act just like muscles and tendons for this hijacked undead creature.

0 level spoiler [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +8

Stumbling rush +5 vs. AC—4 damage and the skeleton pops free and moves into engagement with a nearby or far away enemy.

Natural even miss: the skeleton pops free and moves into engagement with a nearby or far away enemy.

Natural odd miss: the skeleton pops free.

Unnatural leap: When the escalation die is 0 or 1, as a move action the skeleton moves into engagement with a nearby or far away enemy.

Resist fire 16+: Attacks that do fire damage must be natural 16+ rolls against this creature or they only deal half damage to it.

AC 16

PD 10 HP 20

MD 14

CRUMBLING MASKED SKELETON

The skeleton is starting to fall apart, pulled to bits by the tentacles of the star mask.

1st level mook [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +8

Jagged stumps +6 vs. AC—3 damage

Natural 16+ hit: The attack does double damage, but the skeleton takes 1d6 damage.

[Group ability] **C: Vomit tentacles +6 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies in a group)—4** damage

Group ability: For every four crumbling masked skeleton in the battle (round up), one of them can use vomit tentacles once during the battle.

Resist fire 16+: Attacks that do fire damage must be natural 16+ rolls against this creature or they only deal half damage to it.

AC 17

PD 11 HP 7 (mook)

MD 15

Mook: Kill one crumbling masked skeleton mook for every 7 damage you do to the mob.

ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE OR CRUSADER

If the Archmage or Crusader are important icons in this game, then these skeletons are wearing faded magic armor that was made by the Archmage for the Crusader's troops. The armor that these skeletons are wearing is an echo of what they once were.

The armor gives the skeletons +1 to their defenses, but also inflicts damage equal to the escalation die to the wearer each round. This means that the fight with these skeletons will be quicker, but tougher.

ICON OPTION: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then these skeletal beings are made of a mish-mash of bones, not whole intact skeletons. Each round, roll a d8, if



the roll is below the escalation die the skeletons' joints lock up and they cannot move that round.

Any adventurer who spends a 6 with the Lich King notices the mismatches and poorly set bones and can make attacks in such a way that the skeletons will be vulnerable to their attacks.

THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT

The adventurers continue their trek, as the bone dust dunes give way to a trackless desert of compressed bone dust. This is the start of the White Desert.

The adventurers spot a structure far in the distance. Above the structure is a glowing light, like a miniature sun. As the adventurers get closer, they see that the structure is a temple made out of bone-white bricks. The light above the temple is an orb of millions of glowing souls, singing an anthem to the gods of light.

As the adventurers approach the temple, they hear a sound like an avalanche behind them. The Beach of Bones is itself a giant undead creature, though it is slow to react. It has finally noticed that living creatures have tread upon it and it intends to claim their bones for itself.

This isn't a 'fight' in the traditional sense—the Beach of Bones is akin to a phenomenon like a storm rather than being like a monster with hit points. There are several approaches, but each character must choose one:

Stand and fight: DC 25. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

Bone storm +15 vs AC—3d6 damage

OR

Ghostly teeth +10 vs MD—4d6 psychic damage

Run away as fast as you can: DC 20. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

Exhaustion +10 vs PD—lose a 1d3 recoveries.

OR

Call of the grave +15 vs MD—2d8 psychic damage

Defend the temple: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

Battered by bones +5 vs AC—2d6 damage

OR

Banshee scream +5 vs PD—2d6 thunder damage

ICON OPTION: PRIESTESS

If the Priestess is an important icon in this game, then the Temple of Light offers more than a physical refuge. Characters who choose to take refuge in the temple take only 2d4 damage instead of 2d6 damage from attacks by the Beach of Bones, as the gods protect them.

Adventurers who spend a 5 or 6 with a positive relationship with the Priestess may join in the anthem to the gods of light. Spending a 5 means that the character takes only 1d4 damage while inside the temple. Spending a 6 means that the souls in the orb of light defend the character, making them immune to harm from the Beach of Bones attacks.

ICON OPTION: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then the Beach of Bones is in some ways sentient, if not actually sapient. The beach can be bargained with, perhaps even reasoned with. The beach howls things like *"Give me your bones"* and *"I hunger for souls"*.

We leave it as an exercise for the players and GM exactly how this could be taken advantage of. Adventurers who can offer the beach something that its simple hunger desires or who can bargain with it might be able to turn back the beach's assault entirely.

STARVED VAMPIRES

As the adventurers bind their wounds and get their bearings they notice pitiful looking figures in the distance.

These are vampires. In this land of the dead, there are no living creatures to feast upon and these vampires have been down here for a very long time without anything to eat. They are mad with thirst, enfeebled by hunger, and desperate to feast upon the adventurer's blood.

The adventurers can retreat back to the Temple of Light, but sooner or later they will have to come out to face the undead howling and pleading for blood.

Number of PCs	Death-Grip Zombie	Starved Vampire Spawn
3	1	1
4	1	2
5	1	3
6	2	3

DEATH-GRIP ZOMBIE

3rd level wrecker [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +3

Vulnerable: holy

Death grip +8 vs. AC—8 damage

Natural even hit: The target and the zombie are stuck (target saving ends). Every time the target fails to save they take 4 damage.

[Quick action against targets stuck in a death grip] **Squeeeeze +12 vs. PD—4 damage**

AC 19

PD 13 HP 45

MD 17

STARVED VAMPIRE SPAWN

3rd level spoiler [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +7

Vulnerability: holy

Claw +9 vs. AC—7 damage

Natural even hit: The vampire spawn can make a fangs attack against the target as a free action.

[Special trigger] **Fangs +11 vs. AC—4 damage**, and a humanoid target is weakened (–4 attack and defenses) until the end of the vampire spawn's next turn

AC 20

PD 17 HP 90

MD 15

ICON OPTION: ORC LORD OR PRIESTESS

If the Orc Lord is an important icon in this game, then these vampires were once a clan of subterranean orcs who attacked the wrong traveler.

Canny adventurers might be able to take advantage of the innate orcishness of the vampires, getting them to turn on one of their own by feeding that one some blood but not the others. If that is something that the adventurers try to do, it is a DC 20 skill check to do so successfully and remove one vampire from the fight.

ICON OPTION: PRIESTESS

If the Priestess is an important icon in this game, then the Temple of Light contains some holy symbols that the vampires fear.

If the party uses these items, then the vampires must use their moves on turns when the escalation die is odd to move away from any character with a looted holy symbol from the Temple of Light. The vampires can attack first before moving.



ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE OR LICH KING

If the Archmage or Lich King are important icons in this game, then these vampires want desperately to leave the desert of bone dust and come to the surface world.

If the party agrees to perform a ritual that will send the vampires to the surface world (assuming they can think of a way to do that with ritual magic) the vampires will agree not to attack.

Of course, if the ritual fails the vampires will attack with a +1 to all their attacks. The DC for the ritual is 20, but a 6 with the Archmage or the Lich King can be used to turn a failed roll for the ritual into a success (a 5 allows it to be a success but with some sort of complication or long-term aftereffect for the caster).

END OF PART TWO

The desert stretches onwards as far as the eye can see, with pale mist obscuring everything beyond the adventurer's immediate location. They might be going in circles for all they know. Exhausted after what seems like days of walking, the adventurers can take this opportunity to rest, slumped back to back.

As to what happens next... that is in part 3.



RANDOM

ENCOUNTERS

Each session has optional random encounters available to the GM. If the adventurers have wandered off the beaten path into the unknown and you need to create more adventure, or they have cleverly circumvented the enemies and challenges of the adventure as written then I've got your back.

There are 5 random encounters per session, making 20 random encounter in total—hey, that fits with a d20 roll too!

1. Bone flower
2. Glow moss
3. Meteorite fragments
4. Strange flora and fauna
5. Talkative skull
6. Underworld traders
7. Unexpected corpse
8. Azer sailors
9. Catacomb dragon
10. Cave croakers
11. Cave orcs
12. Drow patrol
13. Dredge-tribe kobolds
14. Fungaloids
15. Haunted skull
16. Kobold warband
17. Meeting with a jorogumo
18. Rust monster
19. Stirge hive
20. Roll twice and combine the results

BONE FLOWER

Growing near areas suffused with negative energy, bone flowers have articulated calcium shells that give them a bone-like appearance.

The flowers are carnivorous, with each one having what appears to be an eye in the center. Scavengers who enjoy eating nice juicy eyes from fresh corpses are often tricked right into the flower's trap—when a living creature moves too close to the flower the boney petals snap shut and

the sticky 'eye' exudes an acid to dissolve the trapped creature.

Provided adventurers keep their hands away from the flowers they should be safe, unless they have accidentally wandered into a field of bone flowers:

Escaping a bone flower field: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:
Acid eye +10 vs AC—2d6 acid damage

GLow MOSS

This moss glows with an inner light, and is found in areas where there is residual magic. Most often the moss is found near veins of metals that have a faint magical aura, but sometimes they grow over more interesting things. Roll d4:

1. The moss is faintly glowing. Maybe many feet behind this cavern wall there is a vein of something that might interest dwarven miners.
2. The moss is glowing strongly. Years ago there was a magical battle here, but apart from there being enough light here to read by there is nothing of interest.
3. The moss is growing over a magic item, lost down here long ago.
4. The moss is growing over something on the wall. The moss is growing over meteorite fragments (see *meteorite fragments*).

METEORITE FRAGMENTS

The meteorite crashed down into the underworld near to here, parts of it blasting off into the tunnels and caverns that its passage bisected.

The glittering volcanic rock is embedded in the walls might be benign, or might not. Roll d6:

1. It's just rock, sparkly in the torch light but it is just coal and scattered diamond dust. There is a 50% chance that a good search of the area will turn up a small uncut diamond worth 2d20x10 gp.
2. The sparkling rock glows with a dull red light, the heat from its violent incorporation into the tunnel's walls still not fully dissipated.

3. The rock is absorbing heat, glistening frost spreading from it along the walls and ice forming on the wet tunnel floor. If a fight occurs here, anybody rolling a natural 1 on an attack falls and takes 1d4 damage.
4. Along with the glittering black rock star-mask eggs were ejected. Fortunately the force of their ejection killed the tiny monsters.
5. A light emanates from the rock, illuminating the tunnel. The meteorite's rock glitters and shines like stars in the night.
6. The magic of the meteorite's rock is causing the adventurers to become ill:
Ionizing radiation +5 vs PD—2d6
negative energy damage

STRANGE FLORA AND FAUNA

The party encounters strange yet ultimately harmless animals of the underworld. Roll d6:

1. A sheet of perfectly black moss, so dark that at first it looks like a hole. The moss is edible, and a tiny transparent lizard is chewing on it.
2. A small inch-tall gelatinous cube is making its way across the ceiling, ignoring the party even if they poke it with their weapons.
3. Carnivorous cave limpets, moving slowly about looking to eat anything that moves even slower than they do.
4. Creatures that resemble a foot-long slugs hang from the ceiling on threads of slime. If disturbed they unfurl their bodies into something resembling manta rays and flap around the adventurers before disappearing off into the dark.
5. Vast sheets of bacterial slime drip from the cavern ceiling and pool on the floor. They are harmless extremophiles who thrive in some areas of the underworld and form the base of quite a few food-chains down here.
6. What at first looks like a bank of scree rock turns out to be hundreds of cockroach-like insects, they scurry off into the dark when the adventurers step upon one of them.

TALKATIVE SKULL

This skull is haunted, but is keen to talk to the adventurers. Its name is Naheulbeuk and it hasn't seen much of the underworld yet (it is currently staring at its own former shoulder blades).

Naheulbeuk would very much like to join the party (it claims it used to be an adventurer and that it died fighting an icon called the Dark Jester). If the party carries it about with them the talking skull will offer advice now and again (good for one rerolled failed skill check with a -2 penalty per session).

UNDERWORLD TRADERS

These traders come from many races and are carrying a supply of dwarven ales from a colony of dwarves several days travel upwards to a settlement of oozefolk.

The traders are seeking a new route, the tunnels that they normally traverse were destroyed by the meteorite's passage downwards.

The traders are not interested in fighting the adventurers, and will flee from any conflict.

UNEXPECTED CORPSE

Pow! With a blinding flash of light a dead wizard appears in front of the party. A victim of a curse, a teleport spell gone awry, or a wizard disposing of a rival's body? Who knows, but this corpse has some magic items still on it.

AZER SAILORS

These azer (fire dwarf) sailors might be encountered by the adventurers on the lightless under-oceans, or trading in the City of Silver Webs. The azer sailors would rather avoid a fight in favor of trading, but if the adventurers insist on fighting they are more than happy to oblige...

Number of Azer Sailor PCs	Azer Sailor	Azer Captain
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	4	1
6	5	1

AZER SAILOR

2nd level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +7

Burning axe +7 vs. AC—4 damage

Natural even hit or miss: 2 ongoing fire damage.

R: Throwing axe +7 vs. AC—4 damage

Blistering heat: When an enemy engaged with the azer attacks it, that enemy takes 1 fire damage.

Fighting surge: Once per battle when an attack crits the azer but doesn't kill it, the azer can heal 2d6 hp.

Cold haters: The azer adds the escalation die to its attacks against a target that is capable of dealing cold damage with a spell, attack, or magic item.

Fire resistance 18+: When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 18+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 18

PD 15 HP 30

MD 12

AZER CAPTAIN

3rd level leader [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +7

C: Fiery whip +8 vs. AC (one nearby enemy)—10 fire damage

R: "Yarr!" +8 vs. MD—4 thunder damage and other azer have +1 to hit the target until the end of the target's next turn.

Blistering heat: When an enemy engaged with the azer attacks it, that enemy takes 2 fire damage.

Fighting surge: Once per battle when an attack crits the azer but doesn't kill it, the azer can heal 3d6 hp.

Cold haters: The azer adds the escalation die to its attacks against a target that is capable of dealing cold damage with a spell, attack, or magic item.

Fire resistance 18+: When a fire attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 18+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 19

PD 16 HP 40

MD 13



CATACOMB DRAGON

Catacomb dragons normally haunt caves near mineral deposits. The meteorite's passage has roused the dragons to action, and they have burrowed up to the adventurer's location.

Number of PCs	Catacomb Dragon
3	1
4	1
5	2
6	2

CATACOMB DRAGON

Catacomb dragons inhabit deep subterranean lairs near large veins of ores and precious stones. They have no use for the materials themselves, but viciously protect the veins from dwarves and dark elves.

Large 3rd level wrecker [DRAGON]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerability: thunder

Acid fangs +8 vs. AC (2 attacks)—8 damage, and 5 ongoing acid damage

Natural 5, 10, 15, or 20: The dragon regains the use of its caustic breath if it's expended and can use it during its next turn.

C: Caustic breath +7 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—10 acid damage, 5 ongoing acid damage, and the target is caught in an acidic haze (see below) with an effect that depends on the roll

Even hit: While in the haze, the target is dazed from choking or blinding.

Odd hit: While in the haze, the target takes a -5 penalty to all saves against acid damage.

Miss: 5 ongoing acid damage.

Acidic haze: The haze is magical, semi-aware, and remains around the target until the end of the battle or until removed magically. A spellcaster can cast a spell that targets AC or PD to attack the haze and destroy it—the haze has 1 HP and an AC/PD of 22. The GM is encouraged to play fast and loose with physics here: the mist can be burned, condensed/ frozen, blown away, absorbed, transmuted, etc. At the GM's discretion, there may be physical ways to

remove the haze, but it should require a hard DC.

Limited use: 1/battle, as a quick action.

All-terrain terror: A catacomb dragon flies reasonably well, powerful and fast in a straight line though it's not as maneuverable as more agile flyers. It can also burrow quickly and effectively due to the acidic coating on its skin.

Corrosive contact: When an enemy is engaged with the catacomb dragon at the start of its turn, it takes 3 acid damage.

Resist acid 14+: When an acid attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 14+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 104

MD 15



CAVE CROAKERS

Looking like rock-skinned toads, these ambush predators use their long sticky tongues to snatch travelers of paths through caverns and pull them up to their ceiling roosts.

Whichever adventurer is walking in the front must make a wisdom-based skill check:

Noticing the piles of bones before the cave croakers strike: DC 20. If the lead adventurer fails the skill check two cave croakers get a free attack against the party before initiative is rolled

Number of PCs	Cave Croakers
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	4

CAVE CROAKER

Looking like rock-skinned toads, these ambush predators use their long sticky tongues to snatch travelers of paths through caverns and pull them up to their ceiling roosts.

3rd level spoiler [BEAST]

Initiative: +10

Kick +8 vs. AC—8 damage

Natural even hit or miss: the cave croaker pops free and bounces away.

C: Sticky tongue +8 vs. AC (one nearby or far away enemy)—10 damage OR the target loses their headgear

Target took damage and the natural roll was above their Strength: The target is pulled into engagement with the cave-croaker. If the cave croaker is on the ceiling then the target and cave croaker fall after moving, the target taking 2d6 damage.

Echolo-croak-ation: Cave croakers can see in the dark by croaking, though doing so gives away their position too.

Wall-crawler: A cave croaker can climb on ceilings and walls as easily as it moves on the ground.

Nastier Specials

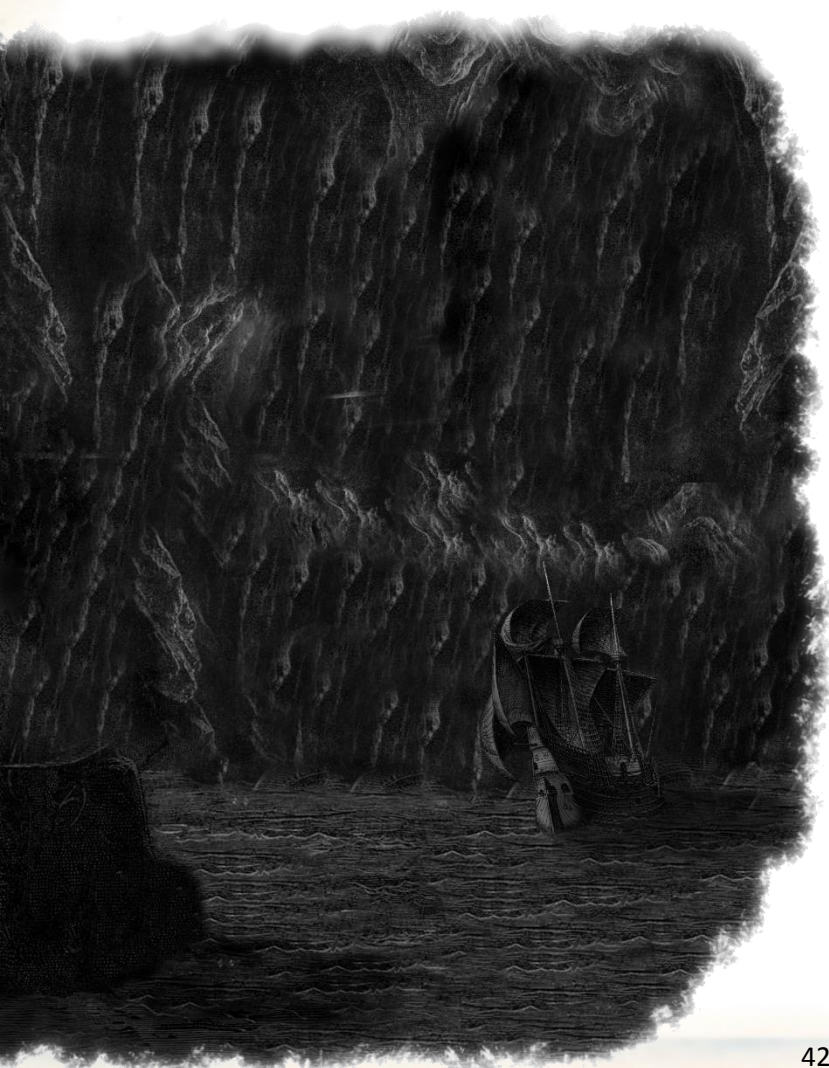
Stickier tongue: If the cave croaker's natural roll was above the target's Constitution then the target takes an extra 1d6 damage as a patch of their face or scalp is ripped clean off!

Rocky skin: The cave croaker takes only half damage from attacks that are natural 1-5s.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 45

MD 13



CAVE ORCS

Horrid subterranean humanoids, on the hunt for food; these orcs have bat-like ears and huge pale eyes.

Number of Cave Orcs	PCs	Death Plague Orcs
3	2	1
4	5	1
5	8	1
6	12	1

CAVE ORC

Their bodies are thin and twisted with bat-faced grinning skulls and huge nearly-blind eyes, but the high-pitched screeching they use as sonar is perfect orcish. The sounds are nearly 100% curse words, but that's not uncommon for orcish.

3rd level mook [HUMANOID]

Initiative: ~~+6~~ +12 at night or in dark caves

Obsidian knife +8 vs. AC—4 damage, and +1d4 damage for each other orc engaged with the target (max +4d4)

R: Rock +7 vs. AC—5 damage

Hears everything: Increase the DC to sneak past cave orcs silently by +5.

Nocturnal predator: If the battle is at night (or in darkness), the orc gains a +2 attack bonus. If the battle is during the day (or in daylight) it takes a -2 penalty to all defenses.

AC 19

PD 18 **HP 10 (mook)**

MD 12

Mook: Kill one cave orc mook for every 10 damage you deal to the mob.

DEATH-PLAGUE ORC

Large 3rd level spoiler [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +2

Huge spiked flail +8 vs. AC—21 damage and the target must immediately save (11+) or lose a recovery due to pestilence*.

AC 20

PD 18 **HP 90**

MD 12

**The 13th Age Bestiary has more intricate rules for fun orc-related diseases and a slightly different death-plague orc.*



DROW PATROL

The drow are patrolling this section of the underworld, concerned that the recent cataclysmic piercing of the layers of the underworld will cause normally separated dark dwellers to come into conflict.

The drow don't actually care about spreading peace, they just want to keep the balance of power in their favor.

The adventurers might be able to trade with the drow, might end up sharing a meal with them, or could end up in a fight.

Number of PCs	Drow Soldier	Drow Spider Mage
3	5	1
4	8	1
5	6	2
6	9	2

DROW SOLDIER

It's easy to ignore them so you can concentrate on more dangerous enemies. And then three crossbow quarrels sprout from your shoulder and you shift your priorities.

4th level mook [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +9

Paired swords +9 vs. AC—6 damage

R: Crossbow +9 vs. AC (one nearby enemy, or a far away enemy at -2 atk)—7 damage

With my dying breath I curse at thee: When the drow soldier drops to 0 hp, one enemy engaged with it takes 2 poison damage before the drow soldier dies.

AC 20

PD 19 HP 18 (mook)

MD 14

Mook: Kill one drow soldier mook for every 18 damage you deal to the mob.

DROW SPIDER-MAGE

She stalks silently toward you, her sharpened wand pointed at your heart. A spider the size of a cat hisses malevolently at you from her shoulder. Why is she smiling?

3rd level caster [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +8

Sharpened wand +8 vs. AC—10 damage

R: Shadowfire +8 vs. PD (one nearby or far away enemy)—8 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends)

Limited use: Once the spider-mage hits with shadowfire, she can't use it again until the target saves against it.

C: Malediction of webs +8 vs. PD (up to 2 nearby enemies in a group)—The target is stuck (save ends), and takes 5 damage each time it fails the save

Dark orison: Each time the spider-mage misses with an attack, the crit range of attacks by drow and spiders in the battle expands by 1.

Spider speaker: The first time each battle an enemy hits the spider-mage with a melee attack, that attacker takes 8 ongoing poison damage from her familiar.

AC 19

PD 13 HP 40

MD 17

DREDGE-TRIBE KOBOLDS

These kobolds are adapted to live in extreme conditions, on islands in lightless oceans and in deserts where nothing grows. Existing in symbiosis with an underworld moss, they have a shaggy, almost furry appearance.

These kobolds might turn up to trade honestly with the adventurers, or might just be distracting the adventurers while a kobold thief steals from the party's packs and scabards.

Noticing the kobold pick-pocket: DC 20.

Only one adventurer needs to make this roll, but if they fail they lose an important item (maybe even a magic item).

If the kobolds do steal something then doubtless the party will give chase:

Kobold chase: DC 15. Each adventurer must roll the skill check. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

Low ceiling meets tall adventurer +15 vs AC (+10 vs halflings, dwarves, and gnomes)—2d6 damage

If the party keeps chasing the kobolds the kobolds will enter a trapped area:

Kobold traps +10 vs AC—2d6 damage from (roll d6):

1. Ankle-trapping blades
2. Crotch-height oil-squirting bladder, and a candle on a spring (fire damage)
3. Neck-height noose
4. Bucket of angry crabs
5. Glue pot and scorpions fired by slingshot (poison damage)
6. Face-slicing swinging blades

If the party keeps chasing the kobold tribe they will corner the kobolds and be able to fight them.

Number of PCs	Kobold Hero	Kobold Dog Rider
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	1	3
6	2	3

KOBOLD HERO

2nd level leader [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +3

Shortsword +7 vs. AC—6 damage, and each nearby non-leader kobold deals +3 damage with its next attack this battle that hits

Natural even miss: 3 damage.

Evasive: Kobolds take no damage from missed attacks.

AC 18

PD 16 HP 34

MD 12

KOBOLD DOG-RIDER

Here comes the cavalry! Riding feral terriers, savage corgis, and dire-schnauzers! The tiny doggy armor is adorable, the flaming lances of the riders much less so.

3rd level troop [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +8

Flaming lance +8 vs. AC—6 damage, and 3 ongoing fire damage

Natural 16+: The kobold and its steed pop free from all enemies and can move as a free action.

R: Tiny crossbow +8 vs. AC—9 damage, and the kobold and its steed can move as a free action.

Natural roll is above target's Wisdom (trapster): There is line tied to the barbed dart, pulling/tripping the target into a trap. See Trapster at the end of the kobold entry.

Evasive: Kobolds take no damage from missed attacks.

Canine steed: The steed can't be targeted separately from the kobold. If the kobold dies the dog runs away.

AC 19

PD 16 HP 41

MD 12

FUNGALOIDS

The strange fungus people of the underworld are using the meteorite as an opportunity to expand their fungal kingdom.

These fungaloids are not immediately hostile, and if the adventurers prove to be friendly to the fungaloids then they will summon a twygzog (fungaloid 'prince' or 'princess') to speak verbally to the adventurers—the fungaloids initially encountered can only communicate via spores.

Of course if the adventurers are unfriendly then the fungaloids will choose to attack.

Number of PCs	Aerial Spores	Sporriors	Fungaloid Drudge
3	5	1	1
4	5	2	1
5	5	3	1
6	5	4	1

FUNGAL ATTACKS

Some fungaloids can make special attacks, usually triggered with a natural 16+ attack roll, though the attacks can be used as a standard action too in some cases. When building fungaloid battles, decide what sort of attack or attacks these fungaloids have. The monster entries will tell you how many attacks to pick. Add the fungaloid creature's level to attacks and damage, as indicated.

C: Poison tentacles 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—3 + level poison damage, and the target is vulnerable to fungal attacks (save ends)

C: Brown noise 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—3 + level ongoing thunder damage

C: Hallucinogenia 3 + level vs. MD (one nearby enemy)—The target is confused (easy save ends, 6+)

C: Infectious spores 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—3 + level ongoing poison damage

C: Piercing shriek 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—4 + level psychic damage

AERIAL SPORE

It floats serene, red and deadly. The long tendrils push it spasmodically as it crawl-drifts closer, flickers of bioluminescence pulsing through its small, languid body.

2nd level mook [PLANT]

Initiative: +1

C: Stinging tendrils +6 vs. PD (one nearby enemy)—4 poison damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn

Puffball exploder: The first time each round an aerial spore in the battle drops to 0 hp, it explodes and 1d3 nearby non-fungus non-construct creatures are covered in spores and begin to choke. Until the end of the battle, when a choking creature rolls a natural 1–5 on an attack roll, it takes damage equal to the natural roll. If a creature is affected twice by this attack, the damage it takes on a natural 1–5 doubles; if affected three times, it triples, etc.

Spores: A creature choking from puffball exploder can use a standard action to wash the spores off itself and/or cough them up, preventing further choking effects until it's affected by puffball exploder again.

Weightless: The aerial spore floats upon air currents, but it prefers to stay within 5 to 7 feet of the ground so it can use its tendrils to keep it in place or propel it. A free-floating spore too far away from the ground to use its tendrils can easily be blown about from strong winds or similar magical effects.

AC 15

PD 9

HP 7 (mook; puffball

exploder)

MD 13

Mook: Kill one aerial spore mook for every 7 damage you deal to the mob.

SPORRIOR

Fungi are not known for being fast, but this one is. A strange pale ape-dog thing, with a head that hinges open to unleash a high-speed spore attack. Clouds of choking fungus accompany chitinous darts launched by compressed air.

2nd level wrecker [PLANT]

Initiative: +10

Chitinous bite +7 vs. AC—5 damage

Natural even hit or miss: The sporrior can make a spore cloud attack this turn as a quick action.

R: Parasitic darts +6 vs. AC (1d3 nearby or far away enemies in a group)—5 poison damage

Natural even hit or miss: The sporrior can make a spore cloud attack this turn as a quick action.

C: Spore cloud +6 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—4 poison damage

Sprinter: A sporrior gains an extra move action when the escalation die is odd.

Wall-crawler: A sporrior can climb on ceilings and walls as easily as it moves on the ground.

AC 18

PD 16 HP 36

MD 12

FUNGALOID DRUDGE

Some look like walking mushrooms with arms and faces, others are clearly corpses that have become infested with spores.

3rd level troop [PLANT]

Initiative: +5

Pitchfork +8 vs. AC—10 damage

Natural 16+: The drudge can make a fungal attack this turn as a quick action.

Fungal attack—Make ONE fungal attack

AC 19

PD 17 HP 32

MD 13

TWYGZOG DIPLOMAT

It is tall and beautifully proportioned like an elf, but its pale grey-green skin and large pupil-less eyes give away its heritage: this is an independent mind within its subterranean fungal kingdom, able to talk with outsiders as though they were its equal.

Double-strength 5th level spoiler [PLANT]

Initiative: +12

C: Spore cloud +10 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—12 ongoing poison damage

Natural even hit with first attack each turn: The twygzog makes up to TWO fungal attacks a quick actions.

C: Parasitic spores +10 vs. PD (up to 3 nearby enemies)—Until the end of the battle when the target spends a recovery the twygzog makes a fungal attack that originates from the target and the target loses a recovery.

Limited use: Once per battle only.

Nastier Specials

Fungal resurrection: The fungaloid will regrow within the hour unless the whole area is cleansed with fire or otherwise sterilized. If the adventurers fail to do the same for their equipment they might wake up covered in growing fungaloids.

Alien mind: The fungaloid looks humanoid, but is a peripheral part of a huge gestalt mind whose individual parts are linked by spore-communication. It gains a bonus to its MD equal to the number of other fungaloids currently in the battle.

AC 21

PD 17 HP 146

MD 19

HAUNTED SKULL

A ghost is bound to its remains, and is angry about that!

Number of PCs	Bone Wretch	Zombie Shuffler	Watch Skull
3	These appear only if summoned by a skull's screech.		2
4			3
5			4
6			5

WATCH SKULL

1st level troop [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +9

C: Screech +8 vs. MD (1d3 random nearby creatures)—4 psychic damage

Natural 16+: The target is stuck (save ends).

Natural roll is equal to or lower than the escalation die: 1d3 enemies hear the alarm and join the battle. The creatures attracted by the constant screeching are (usually) 1st level mooks of a type that would be appropriate for the skull's location.*

Immobile: The skull can't hop, jump, roll, or fly. It can't even move its jaw.

Lost opportunity: This creature can't make opportunity attacks.

Nastier Specials

Allies: Creatures that have been mystically "keyed" to the skull aren't affected by its screech attack.

Gem eyes: The skull can sense the unseen and things from beyond the world. A wizard using a blur spell, a rogue shadow walking, and other similar abilities offer no protection from the skull and its screech attack. (If the PCs come up with a plausible tactic to bypass the skull, give the skull a normal save to detect them.)

Move-triggered: When an enemy near the skull uses a move action to move, the skull can make a screech attack against that creature as a free action that interrupts the move. The skull can use this ability twice per round. Shadow walking, teleporting, and other non-standard

modes of movement will trigger the screech attack.

AC 16

PD 11 HP 20

MD 16

BONE WRETCH

1st level mook [UNDEAD]

Initiative: -1

Shambling smash +6 vs. AC—4 damage

Natural even hit: Another unengaged bone wretch can move into engagement with an enemy as a free action.

Nastier Specials

Twice-dead: When the last mook is down the adventurers have 1 round to destroy them before they all stand back up again with half their full hp. Killing them a second time will do the job.

AC 17

PD 11 HP 8

MD 13

Mook: Kill one bone wretch mook for every 8 damage you deal to the mob (or every 4 damage if they are *twice dead*).

ZOMBIE SHUFFLER

1st level mook [UNDEAD]

Initiative: +0

Vulnerability: holy

Rotting fist +5 vs. AC—3 damage

Natural 16+: Both the zombie and its target take 1d4 damage!

Headshot: A critical hit against a zombie shuffler deals triple damage instead of the normal double damage for a crit.

AC 14

PD 12 HP 10 (mook)

MD 8

Mook: Kill one zombie shuffler mook for every 10 damage you deal to the mob.

KOBOLD WARBAUD

The kobolds march to war against their ancient enemies: everybody else.

Number of PCs	Kobold Engineer	Kobold Heroes
3	1	2
4	1	3
5	1	4
6	1	5

KOBOLD ENGINEER

Kobold engineers are part of the reason why kobolds thrive in almost any environment, although they are also adept at creating traps and undermining dwarven tunnels and mine shafts.

3rd level leader [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +8

Wrench, pick, or shovel +8 vs. AC—8 damage

Natural 16+: The engineer's kobold allies gain a +2 attack bonus against the target until the start of the engineer's next turn.

R: Explosive flask +5 vs. PD—The target is vulnerable to non-magical attacks (easy save ends, 6+)

Natural roll is above target's Wisdom (trapster):
The blast knocks the target into a trap. See Trapster at the end of this kobold's entry.

Evasive: Kobolds take no damage from missed attacks.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 45

MD 13

Trapster

Creatures adept at making traps have the trapster ability. When a creature makes a trapster attack and rolls a natural attack roll that is higher than the target's Wisdom, the creature has maneuvered the target into a trap with the attack. A creature can only be subjected to one trap per round.

Effect

1d4 + escalation die OR half normal damage as ongoing damage OR half normal damage plus a condition (roll d4)

1. The target is stuck.

2. The target is hampered.
3. The target is dazed.
4. The target is vulnerable.

Underworld tunnels (d8)

1. Fake rock explodes.
2. Deadfall (falling rock trap).
3. Tripwire and concealed pit.
4. Fake wall props slam together.
5. Dagger blades fall from the ceiling.
6. Acid bladders disguised as rocks, burst when stepped upon.
7. Bag of cave scorpions and a noose
8. Flammable fire-worm slime

Dungeon / Ruins (d6)

1. Spring-loaded floor tile, flings creatures into the ceiling.
2. Hidden chute, target falls into it.
3. Floor tile is fake, bear-trap underneath.
4. Wall has a tiny hidden door that disgorges marbles.
5. The ceiling conceals an oil-and-flame trap.
6. Razor-sharp blades shoot out from between masonry.

KOBOLD HERO

2nd level leader [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +3

Shortsword +7 vs. AC—6 damage, and each nearby non-leader kobold deals +3 damage with its next attack this battle that hits

Natural even miss: 3 damage.

Evasive: Kobolds take no damage from missed attacks.

AC 18

PD 16 HP 34

MD 12

MEETING WITH A JOROGUMO

A jorogumo is travelling in this area with her entourage. The jorogumo might decide to stop and talk with the party, send one of her companions to parlay with the adventurers, or might attack the party.

Number of PCs	The Woven	Spinneret Doxy
3	5	1
4	7	1
5	10	1
6	12	1

THE WOVEN

They were your friends, your family, your loved ones. Now they are puppets, dancing from heart strings.

4th level mook [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +6

Clumsy strike +9 vs. AC—7 damage

R: Why aren't you happy for ussss +8 vs. MD (1d3 nearby enemies)—5 psychic damage as the target's mind reels against the horror of the truth

AC 18

PD 16 HP 13 (mook)

MD 12

Mook: Kill one woven mook for every 13 hp you deal to the mob.

SPINNERET DOXY

The doxy's wide skirts are there to hide her spider legs.

3rd level spoiler [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +5

Bite of the love bug +8 vs. AC (or automatic critical hit vs. an infatuated enemy)—10 damage, and target is infatuated (save ends)

Infatuated: Infatuated enemies can't attack the spinneret doxy or her Woven, but can convince themselves that other allies of the doxy don't love her properly and should be slain. They also prattle on about how their friends shouldn't attack her, but are too love-smitten to properly prevent it—they won't attack their real allies.

R: Bring me flowers +8 vs. MD (one infatuated enemy)—The target chooses one: it takes 6d6 psychic damage; OR as a free action, it moves next to the spinneret doxy (possibly provoking opportunity attacks), who engages it

C: Stop in the name of love +8 vs. MD (each nearby infatuated enemy)—The target chooses one: it takes 6d6 psychic damage; OR it's stuck (save ends)

Give me your heart: When the doxy drops an enemy to 0 hit points or lower, she will move next to that creature and attempt to remove the target's heart. The creature must begin making last gasp saves as she cuts their chest open. On the fourth failure, the doxy takes the heart and the target dies and becomes undead under her control. If the bride is stunned or moved away from the creature and can't return to it on her turn, the creature doesn't have to make a last gasp save that turn.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 45

MD 13

(Note, the Doxy doesn't have to be female in appearance, many jorogumo present a male aspect. Close to drow settlements they might choose to appear female, or maybe the drow have an easier time dealing with female jorogumo.)

RUST MONSTER

Rust monsters feed off mineral deposits, but much prefer the easy meal that adventurer's equipment offers.

Number of PCs	Rust Monster
3	2
4	3
5	3
6	4

RUST MONSTER

This odd creature will make quick work of your belt buckle and your dagger, then your axe, and finally your chainmail. It might even sniff around in your pack for a little dessert.

3rd level spoiler [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +5

Caustic bite +8 vs. AC (one creature wearing light armor or no armor)—10 damage, and 5 ongoing acid damage

Natural 16+: The target is now considered to be wearing no armor (the armor is damaged beyond repair; adjust defenses accordingly). If the target's armor is magical, the target must roll a hard save (16+). On a success, the armor isn't affected. This effect is permanent until the creature obtains new armor.

Rusting antenna +8 vs. PD (one creature wearing heavy armor)—1 damage, and the target is now considered to be wearing no armor (the armor is damaged beyond repair; adjust defenses accordingly). If the target's armor is magical, the target must roll a hard save (16+). On a success, the armor isn't affected. This effect is permanent until the creature obtains new armor.

Corrupting body: Whenever a creature hits the rust monster with a melee weapon, the attacker must roll a save; on a failure, the weapon is destroyed. Magic weapons require an easy save (6+) instead. This effect is permanent.

Rust's targets: Magic items wielded by creatures with 60 hp or more are not affected by the rust

monster's ability to destroy items (but the target still takes damage).

Saving quirks: Before rolling a save for a magic item, a PC can gain a +5 bonus to the save by agreeing to roleplay the item's quirk as a huge element of their personality until the next full heal-up. Failure to live up to this roleplaying agreement means that the item hasn't received the support it needs from its owner to survive the rust monster's destructive effects, and the item is destroyed at the end of the next battle even if its owner successfully saved.

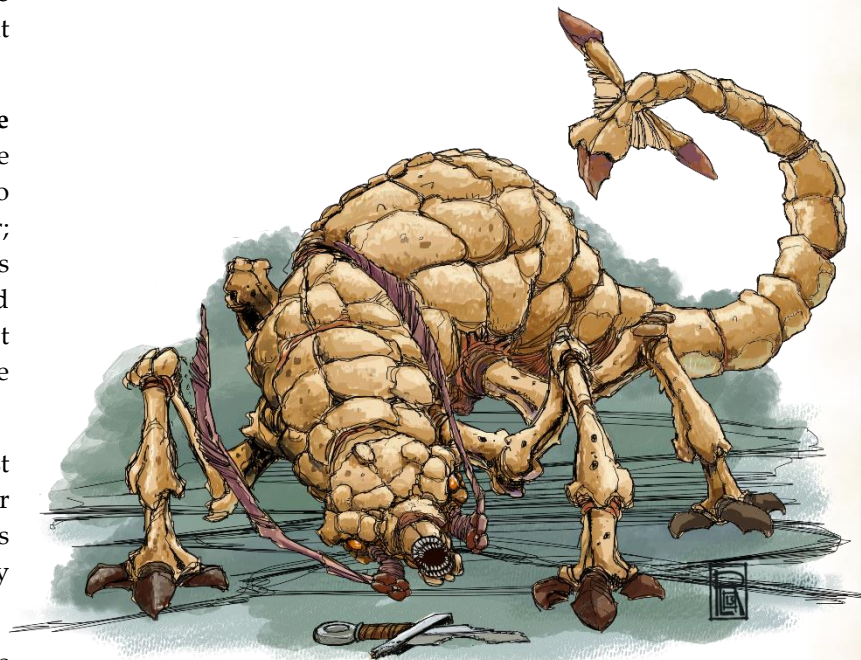
Nastier Specials

Big antenna: When the rust monster scores a critical hit, it can try to destroy another random magic item in the target's possession (or a random normal item if the target has no other magic items). The creature must roll a save for the item, as usual.

AC 19

PD 17 HP 45

MD 13



STIRGE HIVE

These giant insects were hibernating, until the adventurers disturbed them.

Number of PCs	Number of Stirges	Archer Stirges
3	4	2
4	2	5
5	4	5
6	6	5

STIRGE

Known by its deep red coloring along the claws, the common stirge does most of the hive's dirty work. It drains the blood of its victims with a hollow proboscis designed for exactly that job.

0 level troop [BEAST]

Initiative: +4

Claws +7 vs. AC—2 damage, and the stirge can make a draining probe attack against the target during its next turn if it's still engaged with the target

[Special trigger] **Draining probe +7 vs. AC (one enemy hit by claws last turn)**—5 damage, and 5 ongoing damage

Flight: Stirges fly well. Also, the pitch of their wings is high and thin, allowing a stirge to get very close without tipping off its prey.

Nastier Specials

One and done: After hitting a living creature that has blood with its draining probe attack, the stirge heals 5 hit points and will use its next turn to move, fleeing to the hive to feed the stirgelings . . . and to alert the hive that there is an easy meal nearby. A new full-strength stirge enters the battle during the next round on the same initiative count.

AC 16

PD 14 HP 18

MD 10

ARCHERSTIRGE

The proboscis of this bright-striped stirge looks like a quiver of arrows. The barbed stingers shoot out at range, and the serrated claws cause nasty wounds.

1st level archer [BEAST]

Initiative: +6

Serrated claws +7 vs. AC—4 damage

R: Barbed stinger +9 vs. AC (one nearby enemy)—3 damage, and 3 ongoing damage

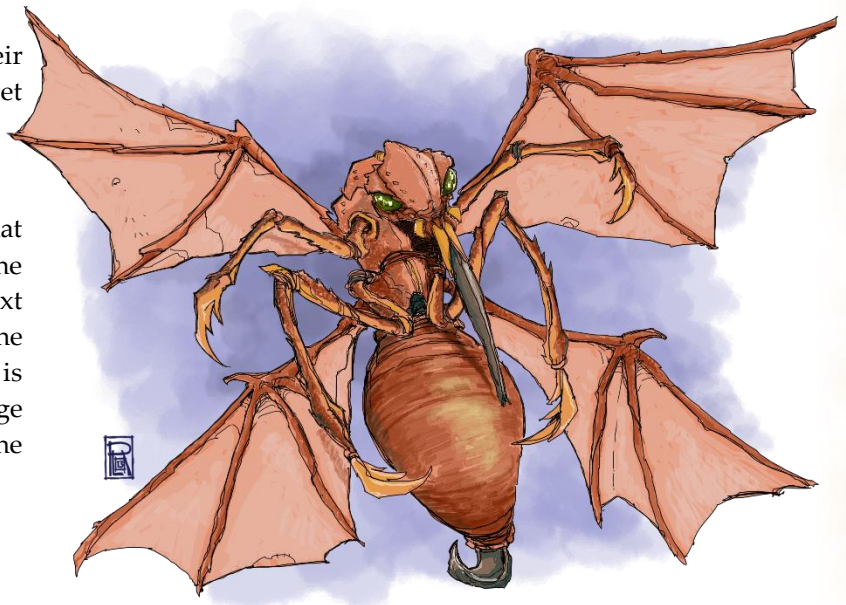
Natural 16+: One stirge ally engaged with the target can make a melee attack against it as a free action.

Flight: The archer stirge flies faster and higher than a normal stirge, but on louder wings.

AC 18

PD 14 HP 22

MD 12



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