

Fate of the Nightworms

A 4-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters

Strange geothermal activity brings adventurers to the tiny coastal village of Jarko'tu'ta.
A dangerous cave descent leads them into the dark world below the surface.
Waiting for them there are encounters with creatures strange, beautiful and deadly!



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Fate of the Nightworms



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Optimized For: APL 3

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Introduction

Welcome to *CCC-HAL-01 Fate of the Nightworms*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and Con Created Content Program.

This adventure takes place in the Moonsea region, is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters,	APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters,	APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters,	APL greater than	Average
5 characters,	APL less than	Weak
5 characters,	APL equivalent	Average
5 characters,	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL less than	Average
6-7 characters,	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

How about we just talk to them before we start throwing math problems at them?

— from the film *Arrival*

Adventure Background (DM Only)

Not far from Elmwood, situated on a rarely-visited shore of the Moonsea, lies the tiny village of Jarko'tu'ta. As long as anyone remembers, the surrounding area has been blessed with an unusually warm climate. Steam beds, geysers and an occasional whiff of sulfur have all served as clear indicators of strong yet stable geothermal activity.

Recently, something has changed, causing strange and irregular spikes and drops in temperature. These events have caused injuries and a general sense of unease in the village.

Unbeknownst to the villagers, the cause of the geothermal oddities is the on-going construction of an underground dam by a tribe of lizardfolk who have recently fled their home to escape a large predator. They have begun efforts to dam an underground river in order to create a better habitat for themselves.

In addition to affecting the village above, the dam is interfering with the nesting grounds of a peaceful species of “nightworms” – a unique and generally harmless type of creature only visible in total darkness.

The lizardfolk dam is not the biggest threat to the nightworms however. Members of a duergar mining expedition have found a way to harvest the nightworms' magical glow with a special apparatus and are hunting the defenseless creatures.

Possessed of a limited intelligence and unique communication abilities, the nightworms do not fully comprehend what threatens them, nor know the sources of the danger.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs, locations and entities feature prominently in this adventure.

Residents or Friends of Jarko'tu'ta:

Halona Washanthi (hello-na). Female elder half-elf of Jarko'tu'ta.

Mella. Female child half-elf of Jarko'tu'ta.

Artaov(art-eh-oh). Male guide and trader of Jarko'tu'ta. May have been saved by adventurers in the previous adventure. If he is asked about, he is “away on a trading run to Big Folk Island”.

Osse'tinne (oss-eh-tin). Awakened shark companion of the female firbolg Sharkfriend Who Left. Osse'tinne is only present if any characters had met him in a previous adventure.

The Nightworms

The nightworms have no given names. The party is encouraged to name them as they see fit based on interactions.

The Gloomscale Lizardfolk

Valtux (val-tux). Shaman, one of the leaders of the tribe.

Chusk. (choo-sk). Male hunter. May be encountered teaching hatchlings to shoot or throw axes.

Krishada (kri-shada) Older female hunter. May be encountered teaching hatchlings to fish.

Yelchi (yell-chi) Older male gatherer, may be encountered leading hatchlings to plant luminescent mushrooms.

The Deepaxe Delvers:

Gimtim Deepaxe Male duergar. Brother of Gimtin. Leader of expedition with his sister. Does not speak common.

Gimtin Deepaxe. Female duergar. Sister of Gimtim. Leader of expedition with her brother. Does not speak common. Does not appear if party is very weak.

Murghol (moor-goal). Male duergar illusionist and researcher. Only member of the Deepaxe Delvers to speak common. Will translate, but does not make decisions.

Adventure Overview

Part 1. The characters arrive in Jarko'tu'ta, meet the locals and set off on their mission underground.

Part 2. Following a hazardous descent, the adventurers encounter a nightworm emissary and discover that the creatures are in trouble.

Part 3. Seeking to the source of the trouble, the lizardfolk camp is discovered and must be dealt with.

Part 4. With the lizardfolk problem solved, the mystery of the nightworm deaths remains. The party must follow sparse clues, find a hidden camp and finally face off with the devious duergar.

Adventure Hooks

Exquisite Stonework: The inhabitants of Jarko'tu'ta are a reclusive group of half-elves of earth genasi lineage. Living in total seclusion until recently, the half-elves have lately begun to use their unique stoneshaping skills in commerce and other efforts – such as to help rebuild destroyed cities. Though few leave the village, the some outsiders have made inroads and local artisans produce a small amount of particularly complex stonework when requested. Big city merchants have interest in the unique products and the transport of valuable stonework provides caravan security (and other) opportunities. As such, quite a few interested parties could have asked or hired the adventurers to investigate the troubles in the village.

Shark friends: Characters that recently participated in CCC-CIC-09 *Steamy Shores of Danger* could have ended that adventure in Jarko'tu'ta and may discover the geothermal issues firsthand and continue their adventures in the village. Those that have since left the area could be said to have kept in touch and received a letter.

More about Jarko'tu'ta

The geothermal village of Jarko'tu'ta first appeared in the stand-alone unrelated adventure *Steamy Shores of Danger* (CCC-CIC-09).

The short, the long and the rest.

The adventurers may take a short rest any time after their descent into the caves.

If the adventurers attempt a long rest prior to part 3, the humidity, heat and general unease of the area require them to make a DC10 Constitution check or suffer a level of exhaustion upon the completion of the rest (this exhaustion would not be cured by this same rest).

After the party has completed Part 3 by defeating either the Lizardfolk or the tentacle beast, they are able to take either a short or long rest as they wish and without consequence.

No light, no light

The adventure begins in the morning and in bright sunshine. Once the adventure proceeds underground, there is no light unless otherwise noted.

Part 1. Steam and Stone

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Story Beat: Adventurers arrive in Jarko'tu'ta and descend underground to investigate the geothermic anomalies.

Arrival

Characters arrive in Jarko'tu'ta using one of the adventure hooks provided in the primer above.

- If arriving from outside the village, the adventurers have been told of the troubles in the village and that the villagers are offering a reward.
- If the adventurers are arriving directly from playing *Steamy Shores of Danger* this adventure can take place a few days later. If need be, the party could have traveled to Elventree to re-supply and/or touch base with their faction superiors.

Roleplaying the villagers

Centuries ago, a group of wood elves and earth genasi drove out the last of the sahuagin in the area and founded this village. Many years of cross-breeding have resulted in the current population consisting of a people that are half elf and half genasi. For the most part, they have elven features, but with slightly darker skin and occasional "szuldar" line patterns that mark their skin.

The villagers, who call themselves the Whanau, are friendly but reserved – not used to having outsiders in their village. They move slowly and gracefully, and are slow to judge, taking time to ponder and answer any question even when those questions are inconsequential in nature. To each other, they act as a big family – a trait of the genasi heritage – everyone seems to be a "sister", "brother" or "uncle". If there are any half-elves, wood elves or genasi in the party, they will also be addressed as part of the villagers' extended family.

Mist and warm humid air make a morning in the village of Jarko'tu'ta uniquely more pleasant than the oft inhospitable conditions elsewhere on the shores of the Moonsea.

Steam comes off the thermal pools littering the rocky ground of the village. Glassy surfaces of the water can be seen whenever a light gust briefly sweeps away their smoky veils.

The Whanau villagers go about their daily business in their usual slow-paced way, yet there is unease in their motions and distress in their typically serene expressions.

At one of the thermal pools a short robed figure can be seen slowly lowering a box into the water using a rope. Suddenly, the pool begins to violently boil and explodes outwards in a loud blast of steam and scalding hot water that steams as it hits the ground all around. The robed figure yelps in pain jumping awkwardly away from the pool and dropping the rope. Bystanders rush to the area.

Development

The robed figure is a half-elven child named **Mella**. Her arm has been scalded and she is in great pain and needs to be helped before she able to fully converse. While this may not be immediately obvious, the party must act quickly to help the girl. If the party takes **6 or more rounds**, the girl passes out and will be less helpful later.

Initiative can be used but is not required here, the rounds are approximate and actions have specific lengths assigned to them. It takes **1 round** to initially react and ascertain that the victim is a girl and get her name (if the party is particularly slow to react, count as **2 rounds**).

- A DC13 Wisdom (Medicine) or Intelligence (Nature) can be used to determine that a soothing poultice of some sort would relieve the pain. (If the check is made immediately and succeeds on first try, the Charisma check below can take place in the **same round**. Otherwise, it takes **1 round** to figure out the girl's condition).
- The locals are somewhat in shock and need some prodding to act. A DC13 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) gets a bystander to tell the party that healing poultices are stored. The conversation takes **1 round**. Whoever is being questioned says: "Yes, I will go get it," and begins walking in their slow and manner towards the far end of the village where the herbal supplies are stored. Anyone with a passive perception of 14 or higher notices that the person is walking very slowly. If the party leaves the bystander to get the poultice, it takes them **4 rounds** to get it and return. If a member of the party instead runs to get it, it only takes **2 rounds**.
- The use of a medicine kit or magical healing extends the time that the party has by **1 round** – it obviously helps with the wound and to stabilize the child, but not with the pain or itching that the burn is causing – only the specific poultice can help this.
- It takes **1 round** to apply the poultice, at which point the child calms down and talks to the party.

If the party fails to apply the poultice within the first 5 rounds, the girl falls unconscious and needs to be left to rest, even if the poultice is applied.

- Whether through talking with the girl or through investigation and speaking with the bystanders, the party learns that this particular geothermal pool is used for cooking and that what she was doing is a common chore – placing a sealed stone container of vegetables into the water, so that it cooks in by mid-day. While there are geysers in the village, this pool is stable and has never exploded before. However, there has been odd geothermal activity over the past couple of weeks in other places.
- As the party is learning the above, **Halona** – an elder in the village arrives.

The small crowd around the girl parts suddenly as to let an older half-elf woman pass. The woman's short pitch-black hair is braided and she carries a thin staff seemingly made of stone. One of the bystanders quickly fills her in on the situation as she kneels down to examine the child, then stands again and turns to you. "I am Halona, we should speak."

Roleplaying Halona

Halona Washanthi is one of the elders of Jariko'tu'ta. She is experienced and measured. She acts and speaks with confidence and authority, but not in a showy or imposing way.

While it may seem that she has no concern for the pain of the injured child, the truth is that she's extremely worried about the implications of the area destabilizing and the fate of the village. She is keeping herself composed and looking at the bigger picture.

- Halona thanks the party for helping the girl (if they did). If the characters are newly arrived, she thanks them for coming. If the characters had previously helped the village, she praises their help in re-establishing trade with the Big Folk – the village is in their debt. She leads the characters away from the crowd, to a small clearing where they are given space by the rest of the populace.
- Halona explains that there have been other signs of odd geothermal activity in recent weeks. Due to their earth genasi heritage, the villages are quite in turn with the earth and have not sensed anything strange from area. Yet something is clearly wrong. Examples of strange activity include gradual cooling and then sudden heating of the air and instances of extreme heat in places

where none had existed for decades. Mella is not the first person to be scalded or injured by these effects.

- The elders are willing to reward the party for finding the source of the troubles. She knows of caves below the village, though none are easily accessible or wide enough to be inhabited (as far as she knows). Children sometimes play in them, but no one goes deep. She believes that going below might be a good place to start. She tells the party of several potential entry points, but doesn't expect any of them to be easily accessible. She points out the one she thinks is most likely to be passable.
- Without any additional guidance, the party will have a **difficult descent**.
- If the party succeeded in saving Mella in time, they find her waiting to thank them immediately after their meeting with Halona. Mella is one of the children that tend to climb into caves and she knows of way down that she can show the party. Using her path results in an **easy descent**.
- If any members of the party had partaken in *Steamy Shores of Danger* and interacted with **Osse'tinne** the awakened shark, a messenger comes to greet them after their meeting with Halona. The messenger says: "Pardon me, there is .. uhm... a shark at the shore. The shark says that he is here to speak with you." The shark is Osse'tinne – an awakened shark saved by the party in a previous adventure. He has noticed unusual temperature shifts near this shore and has been exploring. He has not found the source, but he has seen a strange flying worm creature that he thinks came from deeper underground. He can show the party the sea cave where he saw this creature – he believes there is a way deeper below through there also. Following Osse'tinne results in an **easy descent**.
- While the village does not have an elaborate store, if characters wish to procure items for caving, they may buy most items from the PHB, however, these items are a bit odd – with certain parts of stone rather than typical materials. This has no mechanical effect. Two jars of the **village poultice** are also available for free if the adventurers ask. If the adventurers had been successful in helping Mella in time, Halona gives them two additional jars.

Roleplaying Mella

Mella is a half-elf child. For roleplaying purposes, consider her to be the equivalent of a 12-year-old human. Her parents are away on a trading expedition to Big Folk Island nearby.

She is a very independent child. Cooking (which she was doing when injured) is a common chore for village children and she has been doing it for many years.

Roleplaying Osse'tinne

Osse'tinne is an awakened shark. He is intelligent and speaks common. He is the companion of Sharkfriend Who Left – a firbolg of Big Folk Island. During the events of CCC-CIC-09 *Steamy Shores of Danger* some characters had the opportunity to save him. He only appears in this adventure if that was the case.

Osse'tinne has typically only interacted with Sharkfriend, but since the recent encroachment of the Sahuagin, he's taken to patrolling the waters for trouble.

Osse'tinne is brave and friendly, a personality that is ill-suited by the fact that he is an imposing shark with a large scarred fin and has a very deep and hoarse voice.

Caving is Hard

Difficult Descent

Without any additional guidance, Halona directs the party to a small cave, from where they'll have to spelunk down below. **Map 1** is provided for general layout of the village.

The way down is not a walkable hallway. You're directed to a small cave at the end of which there is a crack in the rock, barely a couple feet wide. Shining a light into it shows little in the way of wiggle room – you'll need to crawl.

Difficult Descent

Descending is hard on both mind and body. Characters must crawl through crags in the rock and making their way down one at a time. The way through is very tight, so it is difficult to assist others. Be sure to describe the challenges of the descent and reward any creative fore thinking or magic use with advantage on the relevant step. The descent requires a character's full attention – any character concentrating on a spell has disadvantage. Proceeding requires 2 checks and 2 saves:

(1) DC13 Wisdom Save

- While this is not a fear effect, a resistance or immunity to fear provides advantage on this save.
- **Result:** Caving is claustrophobic and disorienting. Failing this save results in a level of exhaustion.

(2) DC13 Dexterity (Acrobatics)

- Advantage given by any climbing or caving gear (including improvised).

- Disadvantage given by lack of light or by holding any object that is not caving gear – including shield, weapon, torch.
- **Result:** Sharp edges abound and cut anyone that isn't careful. Failing this check results in taking 1d4 piercing damage. On a result of 6 or less, the damage is 2d4. This damage cannot reduce a character below 1 HP.

(3) DC13 Strength (Athletics)

- Advantage given by any climbing or caving gear.
- Disadvantage given by lack of light or by holding any object that is not caving gear – including shield, weapon, torch.
- **Result:** Pockets of steam and hot water can be found throughout the caves. Avoiding them requires strength as well as agility. Failing this check results in taking 1d4 fire damage. On a result of 6 or less, the damage is 2d4. This damage cannot reduce a character below 1 HP.

(4) DC13 Constitution Save

- Having succeeded on ALL previous steps gives advantage on this save.
- Having failed both the Dexterity and Acrobatics checks gives disadvantage.
- **Result:** The way down is physically and mentally draining, failing this save results in a level of exhaustion.

The **difficult descent** deposits the party arrive into **Area C** on **Map 2**.

Easy Descent (Mella's path):

Mella directs the party to a small cave, from where they'll have to spelunk down below. Mella provides the party with specific info. As a matter of fact, she keeps talking down into the crag long after the party has gone into it.

The way down is not a walkable hallway. You're directed to a small cave at the end of which there is a crack in the rock, barely a few feet wide. Shining a light into it shows little in the way of wiggle room – you'll need to crawl.

Mella is too hurt to accompany you, however, she has climbed down this way many times and provides an almost overwhelming amount of information about the way down.

Refer to the **Difficult Descent** chart for reference.

Taking Mella's path has the following benefits:

1. Characters automatically succeed on the Wisdom save (1)
2. Characters have advantage on their Dexterity check (2)

This descent deposits the party into **Area B** on **Map 2**.

Easy Descent (Osse'Tinne's path):

Osse'tinne directs the party to a small sea cave that can also be accessed from shore. There is no sign of

the strange creature Osse'tinne had mentioned, but there are cracks in the rock which he believes lead down below. Osse'tinne says that there is an underwater path that leads to a cavern below this one from which they would be able to walk. He thinks going through these cracks will lead to it. (Taking his underwater path is not an option unless the characters have a means to breathe water for more than an hour, as the undersea passage that leads there begins farther away from shore.)

The way down is not a walkable hallway. You're directed to a small cave at the end of which there is a crack in the rock, barely a few feet wide. Shining a light into it shows little in the way of wiggle room – you'll need to crawl.

Osse'tinne is unable to accompany you through the rock, but promises to meet you at the lower sea cave, should you be able to find your way to it.

Refer to the **Difficult Descent** chart for reference. Taking Osse'tinne's path has the following benefits:

1. Characters automatically succeed on the Wisdom save (1)
2. Once the party arrives in the lower sea cave, they meet up with Osse'tinne. If any members of the party have a level of exhaustion, Osse'tinne brings a sizeable freshly killed fish. Eating the fish right away removes one level of exhaustion. If the fish is stored, it loses its restorative benefit.

This descent deposits the party into **Area A** on **Map 2**.

It's Dark in the Dark

The characters arrive underground in an area that has three immediate caverns and a path that leads to Part 2 of the adventure.

Only one of the caverns (**Area C**) contains a combat encounter or anything of interest. Unless the party arrives directly into that cavern, the combat encounter is entirely optional and provides no clues or special treasure.

Once the party proceeds in the direction of **Area D**, move to **Part 2** of the adventure.

Area A

This is a small cave with a deep pool of saltwater. The pool actually contains an underwater passage

that leads all the way out to the Moonsea. It would take more than an hour of swimming underwater to exit the cave into the Moonsea and there is little point in doing so.

- If the party is following Osse'tinne directions, he meets them here and brings them a delicious freshly-killed fish.
- If the party has not met Osse'tinne, the cavern contains nothing of interest.

Area B

This is a small cave that contains nothing of interest other than a natural opening into a sort of natural corridor. A DC13 Perception check locates an old but intricate figurine made of stone. It's a toy belonging to one of the children that had previously come down here – perhaps even Mella herself.

Area C

This small cave contains a random combat encounter. Select one of the encounters detailed in the **Adjusting the Encounter** sidebar below or roll a D6 to determine randomly.

Time Check

It is recommended that this encounter be skipped if it has taken the party more than 30 minutes game-time to arrive here.



Adjusting the Encounter

Encounter A (Roll of 1-2): Darkness Falls

Very Weak: 2 Darkmantles

Weak: 3 Darkmantles

Average: 1 Trapper, 2 Darkmantles

Strong: 1 Trapper, 3 Darkmantles

Very Strong: 2 Trappers, 2 Darkmantles

Encounter B (Roll of 3-4): Why? Why?

Very Weak: 6 Poisonous Snakes

Weak: 5 Giant Poisonous Snakes

Average: 1 Giant Constrictor Snake, 6 Giant Poisonous Snakes

Strong: 1 Giant Constrictor Snake, 2 Swarms of Poisonous Snakes

Very Strong: 2 Giant Constrictor Snakes, 2 Swarms of Poisonous Snakes

Encounter C (Roll of 5-6): That Silken Feeling

Very Weak: 4 Giant Wolf spiders

Weak: 2 Giant Spiders

Average: 4 Giant Spiders

Strong: 6 Giant Spiders

Very Strong: 8 Giant Spiders

To add some flair to your descriptions of this encounter consider using the following monster traits:

- **Encounter A.** Darkmantles can cast darkness, snuffing out any existing light. Maybe this happens suddenly just as the party gets comfortable after the descent. Trappers can be patient in waiting for their prey, perhaps someone inadvertently crawls across one, feeling the surface change only to discover it's too late as the monster smothers them!
- **Encounter B.** Snakes can slither out from the porous holes in the rock. Perhaps one character sees a snake coming up from behind a less perceptive character!
- **Encounter C.** Perhaps someone trips during the final part of the descent and are relieved to be caught by something soft... only to discover that webs do not weave themselves! Spiders also tend to come from all sides – think in 3D!

Development

Once the characters proceed toward **Area D**, move onto **Part 2**.

Part 2: First Contact

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

Story Beat: Adventurers meet the strange nightworm creatures and must find a way to communicate with them.

Strangeness of Sight

Tricks of the Trade:

The Speech of Light segment is intended to allow for creativity among both DMs and players. You're encouraged to improvise unique ways of displaying the nightworms' light patterns and to encourage players to do the same.

Due to the somewhat abstract nature of this, be mindful of players becoming frustrated. Drop hints or allow checks where needed and move on once the overall concept has played out.

Additional tools: Some DMs may wish to use a light emitting device such as a flashlight, a small mirror or glow sticks (untz-untz-untz!) as props. Please take care in using such things safely!

The Nightworms

Nightworms are peaceful intelligent creatures unique to this area. They use an adjusted stat block of a faerie dragon (younger), but are in no way related to dragons. Adjust the faerie dragon (younger) stat block as follows:

Nightworm (Faerie Dragon - Younger)

Tiny aberration, neutral

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 14 (4d4+4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages can neither speak nor understand any existing language (even with the aid of magic).

Lightspeech While nightworms are able to communicate with each other telepathically, their natural mode of communication is comprised of changing the colour of their inner glow while moving their bodies in a pattern to create a visible light effect that is understood by others of their kind.

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Lighthide. Due to their natural biological composition, nightworms are completely transparent when any light is present. The effect of

this is similar to being invisible. In darkness, nightworms emit a dim glow which they can control but cannot turn off. Over time, they have adapted to colour their glow to be imperceptible by those that rely only on normal *darkvision* to see in darkness.

Limited Telepathy. Using telepathy, the nightworm can magically communicate with any other nightworm within 60 feet of it.

Read thoughts. The nightworm has a natural ability to read thoughts. This innate natural ability functions as an always-on *detect thoughts* spell. Due to the nightworms' inability to understand language, only visual thoughts are of use to them. Nightworms do not use the "probe deeper" part of *detect thoughts* unless the creature is either willing or openly hostile.

Forethought. Whenever a creature casts a spell or uses an ability that would target an area where the nightworm is present, the nightworm can use its reaction to move up to its speed. This does not prevent the nightworm from being directly targeted and cannot be used if the creature's mind is protected from intrusion (such as by a *ring of mind shielding*).

Magic Resistance. The nightworm has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Slap. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1 bludgeoning damage.

Kaleidoscope of Colour (Recharge 5-6). The nightworm twists its body into swirl of dazzling colours aimed at one creature within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, or for 1 minute, the target can't take reactions and must roll a d6 at the start of each of its turns to determine its behavior during the turn: 1-4. The target takes no action or bonus action and uses all of its movement to move in a random direction.

5-6. The target doesn't move, and the only thing it can do on its turn is make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Area D

Area D is a fairly large cavern with nothing of interest other than a single nightworm. While it's being explored, the nightworm makes contact with the group and attempts to communicate the predicament of its colony.

Be sure to establish whether the party is carrying any light prior to entering this cavern. If the party has light, the nightworm can't be seen when they enter and the cavern looks empty. This also true if the party is using darkvision.

The nightworm is visible only to members of the party that do not have darkvision and when there is no light present. If this is the case, they see it immediately upon entering the cavern:

Within the darkness, you see a line of faint blue light. Long as the tail of a cat, the line suddenly twirls in midair its colour shifts from blue to a slightly brighter yellow and back to blue again.

If the party has seen the Nightworm, proceed to **First Contact** section.

If the party has not spotted it due to the presence of light, the nightworm will attempt to signal for them to put out the light by flying past the light source and creating wind. If the party has a friendly disposition (which the nightworm can read telepathically), the nightworm might even brush against someone or gently nudge them to announce its presence. If the light is out and the party has not seen the nightworm due to their reliance on darkvision, the nightworm realizes this and changes its glow to be visible.

The Speech of Light

The initial encounter with the nightworm in this cavern intended to allow a lot of creativity for both the DM and the players. Use the following guidelines to create the scene:

- The nightworm is able to read surface thoughts and by the time it reveals itself, it has ascertained that it wants to get the players' help.
- The nightworm can't speak, formulate thoughts into words or even understand that sounds are words. It communicates through light patterns by changing the colour of its glow and moving around to create light patterns out of it.
- The goal of the scene is to get the players and the nightworm achieve a basic level of communication. Because it can read surface thoughts of players, it will initially try to respond to them to establish some kind of

baseline. Likely the most basic things it will learn/do first is move up and down to indicate "yes" (or a nod) and side to side to indicate "no" (or a shake of head).

- The nightworm doesn't directly answer spoken questions. If the character is evocative in their language (signaling that they're visually imagining things associated with their question) the nightworm will respond to those images.
- Allow the encounter to proceed organically and reward players with more clear responses if they try interesting approaches. Some things that might work are:
 - Using a light (natural or magical) to create patterns or visual illusions. (they'll need to turn light off to get response – the nightworm will wait for it go out)
 - Using telepathic abilities – but only in visual ways. No spells or special abilities are required for this, simply thinking visual things will help – ask characters to be specific in what they're trying to project.
- Refer to **Appendix B: Lightspeech Dictionary** for a list of potential things the nightworm may communicate to the party and how it would do that. Feel free to invent your own!

Eventually, the nightworm will beckon the characters to follow it. Depending on how well communication is proceeding, this could happen either early on in the conversation (to help it along) or later on in the conversation (after situation has been established). It leads the characters through several passages and into the nightworm nursery.

As the characters proceed through the tunnels, several more nightworms appear eventually lighting up the tunnels with a dull multi-coloured glow.

Area E The Nightworm Nursery

The cavern is almost unbearably hot and (given the party is able to see them) full of countless glowing lights. There is also a great deal of steam as a wall of water falls from a ledge above into a natural opening in the floor. The loud sound of crashing water echoes through the chamber.

Development

- Upper parts of the cavern are full of living nightworm "nests".
- Lower parts are full of dead nests – only tiny specs of glow remain from dead nightworms – but they DO still emit a glow.
- The nightworm indicates sadness at the death of many others.
- It explains the heat variations have caused the death. It points to the waterfall, where a DC13

Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check reveals a previously heavier glow.

- A DC13 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Nature) check shows dead fungi in the lower and hotter part of the cavern, indicating that it was once cooler.
- If anyone touches the water in the waterfall, they find it to be ice cold.
- Looking into the “steam vent” reveals that there is hot magma flowing at the bottom and as water hits it, the evaporation creates steam.

Once the group has had a chance to look around, trigger the “explosive event”:

Despite the loud environment of the large cavern, a much louder rumbling can suddenly be heard, coming from the direction of the waterfall.

If nightworms can be seen by party add:

The dim lights of the nightworm creatures begin to blink and twirl in a dazzling display of colourful patterns and then, almost as one giant all of light, all the nightworms fly up and away from the waterfall.

- Characters with a passive Initiative of 13 or higher can move up to their speed prior to the explosion happening. Others remain where they are when the explosion event triggers.

The rumbling grows louder and closer and suddenly a wider wave of water comes rushing over the waterfall's edge and smashes down into the hot depths below. There is a loud hiss and suddenly scalding steam explodes from several places in the ground.

Steam Explosion:

- Everyone in cavern must make a Dexterity Save to avoid being struck by the steam. The DC of the save for anyone within 30ft of the waterfall is 15. The DC of the save for anyone more than 30ft away from the waterfall is 13.
- Those more than 30ft away take 1d6 fire damage on a fail and no damage on a success.
- Those within 30ft take 3d6 fire damage on a failed save and half on a success.

One character who fails their save takes the most fire damage from the explosion suffers from serious burns and crippling pain. They must make a DC15 Constitution save or suffer a level of exhaustion. This specific level of exhaustion,

as well as all damage associated with this wound can be removed by immediately applying the **village poultice**.

In the unlikely event that the explosion knocks out the entire party, the nightworms manage to stabilize one character and bring them to 1hp at the end of the first full round after the explosion.

- A DC13 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check after the explosion connects this sudden explosion to the explosion witnessed on the surface.
- If appropriate communication has been established (DM discretion), the nightworms will explain to the party that the waterfall used to flow heavier all the time. This kept the temperature (slightly) cooler and there were no sudden explosions. Recently (nightworms don't really know measurement of time) the waterfall has become irregular – it becomes small, then it becomes big, then small again. They believe this is the cause of their deaths.
- Several nightworms that went to investigate did not return. At least a couple were found dead in the upper tunnels alongside the Cold River.
- The nightworms want your help to find the cause of their deaths and of the waterfall irregularities. They offer no reward for the former, but the latter matches up with the characters' existing objective.

The original nightworm that the party encountered can be convinced to accompany the party with DC13 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Grant advantage if the party has behaved peacefully or anyone has formed a particular bond/relationship with the nightworm. The nightworm senses deception, so if the check is being performed by character that is not altruistic in their request, it has disadvantage.

Part 3. Lizards dam It!

"There is always a bigger fish."

- Qui-Gon Jinn

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Story Beat: Adventurers discover a lizardfolk dam and must confront the tribe.

Cold River

The party climbs up and proceeds along the natural banks of the Cold River to seek the source of the disturbances. Once away from the nursery cavern, the temperature drops noticeably—whatever the source of the river is, it must be extremely cold. As the party proceeds, they notice that the river branches off in many places. Most such offshoots disappear into rock and cannot be followed. At least a couple lead to other areas where they interact with magma or superheated rock and cause steam.

A DC13 Intelligence (Investigation, Nature, Survival) ascertains that it's likely that several of these offshoots lead to area of high geothermal activity at least some of which likely pass underneath Jarko'tu'ta. Whatever has been affecting the flow is likely causing the explosions in those areas as well.

Area F

- Along the way, the party discovers a small side cave. A successful DC10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the corpses of 3 nightworms.
- No check is required to see that these were not killed by the heat or a steam explosion as you saw in the nursery. If there is no light present, the characters notice that they do not see the remains of "death glow" they had seen from the dead Nightworms of the nursery
- A DC13 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that something tore these apart from the inside.
- A DC13 Wisdom (Survival) check finds a boot print. It's just about impossible to tell what type of humanoid left the print (An extremely high check or Favoured Enemy: Dwarf feature would identify this as likely belonging to a member of a squat race, but that as much detail as it is possible to learn given the poor condition of the print.)

Area G

This is a large cavern where a tribe of subterranean lizardfolk has built a dam to create an artificial lake for themselves. They're also tunneling to extend it.

The village has a dozen or so crudely built huts that look be built of bone and leather. The area is fairly open and phosphorescent mushrooms grow in neat rows all around – providing dim light. A DC13 Intelligence (Nature) check helps realize that the mushrooms must have been cultivated and planted for the very purpose of providing light.

As the party approaches they encounter one of the following scenes (roll a D6 or pick):

- (1-2) An adult male lizardfolk named Chusk (Choo-sk) is teaching a hatchling to use weapons – they are throwing hand-axes and shooting a makeshift crossbow at a dummy.
- (3-4) An older female lizardfolk named Xrishada (kri-shada) is teaching two hatchlings how to spearfish by the dam.
- (5-6) A lizardfolk named Yelchi (yell-chi) uses an old spear as a walking stick as he leads two hatchlings toward the edge of the cave. The hatchlings are each carrying a pot with a large glowing mushroom.



- If approached, the adult lizardfolk draws their weapon cautiously while the hatchlings run off to get help. A DC15 Charisma (Intimidation only!) check is required to stop the hatchlings. Any particularly loud noise also draws attention. The adult lizardfolk does not attack the party unless provoked (for example if the party tries to harm one of the hatchlings).

- Eventually, a party of well-armed lizardfolk shows up to confront the characters or the single lizardfolk takes them to leadership. (Note: if the party is being particularly stealthy, they may be able to sneak up on a group of these more senior lizardfolk and act as they wish.) The leadership explains that this is their home and the dam is required to maintain their way of life. They don't care about anyone it might be hurting.
- If questioned about the nightworms, they have seen the "dancing lights" but dismiss the idea that they are sentient. They claim that they did not kill any (this is true, they did not).
- Overall the lizardfolk are not scared of the party and are actually strongly considering killing and eating them. Intimidation may help dissuade the lizardfolk from outright trying to attack and eat the party, but is of no help in getting them to move. The only way to resolve the lizardfolk situation peacefully is offer to kill the "giant tentacle monster" the lizardfolk original home.

Roleplaying the Gloomscale Lizardfolk

The Gloomscale lizardfolk were once a surface tribe. A year of terrible famine forced them to look to nearby caves for sources of food. Unaccustomed to the dark, the hunting was hard but the abundance of cave life was worth it.

In time, they found a subterranean lake fed by a river. In addition to the harder prey found in the underdark, they now had fish and a habitat similar to what they had left on the surface.

Years passed, the tribe remained underground and even began to develop basic darkvision. Over time they grew to sustain themselves more and more on the fish brought in by the river and less on forays into the underdark to hunt more dangerous prey.

Eventually – as is oft to happen in the underdark – a predator found them. It made its home in their lake and began preying on their numbers.

In their practical, emotionless way, the lizardfolk abandoned their homes and relocated to their current camp in the Cold Water Cavern. Since the cavern did not have a lake, they decided to simply build one by damming the river.

Not having much experience with stone, the digging of the lake is going slowly and is very hard and uncomfortable work.

The Gloomscale will protect their territory if they can, but in lacking emotions, they have no special attachment to it.

They will do whatever they believe is the more practical thing – fighting or moving. Food has lately been scarce and fresh softskin meat is always a welcome scent.

If it comes to a battle, use the lizardfolk encounter Below.

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak: 3 Lizardfolk

Weak: 2 Lizardfolk, 1 Lizardfolk Shaman

Average: 4 Lizardfolk, 1 Lizardfolk Shaman, 10 commoners

Strong: 5 Lizardfolk, 1 Lizardfolk Shaman, 10 commoners

Very Strong: 10 Lizardfolk, 2 Lizardfolk Shamans, 5 commoners

Use your discretion to determine the actions of the commoners in combat – they may jump into the fight or watch and cheer or flee. The presence of the commoners is important as it establishes that the characters are fighting a whole village. It is not recommended that commoners join the weak and very weak encounters.

Development – Lizardfolk Defeated

- If the lizardfolk are defeated, the characters can restore proper flow to the river and destroy the dam without issue.
- If the characters choose to not investigate further, upon starting back, a nightworm will ask them if they've found the cause of the nightworm deaths. If the characters claim that the lizardfolk were entirely at fault, this will be accepted.
- If the characters are satisfied with their progress. They can return to the surface and complete the adventure. Proceed to **Part 5: Conclusion**. (To fill time, you may wish to run one of the encounters offered in Part 2 (Area C) on the way out, but this is not required.)
- If the characters wish to proceed further, they do so on their own. Proceed to **A Bigger Fish**

Development – Lizardfolk Negotiated With

- If the characters agree to go kill the tentacle beast, they are given directions by the lizardfolk and are free to proceed to **A Bigger Fish**. If the party is very weak, two **lizardfolk** and a **lizardfolk shaman** accompany them. If the party is weak, only the **lizardfolk shaman** accompanies. Any other party can make a DC13 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince one **lizardfolk** to come along, for such a party, he will act strictly as a guide and will not join combat.

A Bigger Fish

- On the way further up river, the party finds a side cave identical to **Area F** including all the same findings (no checks required if they were successful in the original **Area F**). The only difference is that there is a pair of boot prints this

time around. If there are lizardfolk with the party and they are asked about boot prints, they will say “Maybe gray ones? Sometimes there are gray ones. Very rare. Dangerous.” They describe dwarves (without using the word “dwarf”) with gray skin that they have seen a couple of times but generally avoid due to them being dangerous. They hadn’t seen any lately, but say the gray ones have ways of moving unseen.

Area H

A passage winds around another corner and opens up into a large cavern. A foul smell and an eerie silence fill the air. Lizardfolk huts stand in various states of disrepair. The bones of several lizardfolk make an odd counterpart to the larger bones that had been used by their kin to build the huts themselves. (If there is a Lizardfolk with the party, they will not that the bones will make good salvaging.)

After about 60ft of huts there is 30ft clearing that forms the shore of the lake. The lake itself looks to have a large island about 40 feet in. Several smaller stones are in the water near the shore. (These are actually tentacles).

When anyone approaches within 15 of the shore, the Otyugh emerges from the water and attacks. It is large and unlikely to surprise the party, but it has 120ft darkvision and is unlikely to be surprised or snuck upon either. It can be circumvented entirely by going around the edge of the cavern.

Adjusting the Encounter

These adjustments take into account the accompaniment of Lizardfolk. Weaker Parties that killed the lizardfolk would have no chance against it and should be given an opportunity to run away or avoid the monster.

Every version of this encounter has an Otyugh, use the following adjustments:

Very Weak: The Otyugh does not have its Bite or Tentacle Slam abilities. It makes only two attacks (Tentacle)

Weak: The Otyugh does not have its Bite and makes only two attacks or uses Tentacle Slam.

Average: Otyugh

Strong: Otyugh, 2 Piercers

Very Strong: Otyugh, 4 Piercers

Tactics: For weak and very weak parties, the lizardfolk shaman tries to immobilize the monster with spells and the other lizardfolk attack it head on. For Strong and Very strong parties, the Otyugh begins by “flinging” 2 piercers at

the party. This uses up the piercers’ actions (but not the Otyugh’s) and uses same distance calculations for damage as if they were falling (see piercer stat block). The remaining piercers (very strong) remain on the cavern ceiling, 50 feet up and attack in the second round.

Additional Adjustment: If the party is less combat-oriented, at your discretion, you may include a 40ft long, 5ft wide chunk of rock that has fallen down near one of the cavern’s walls, creating a narrow 5ft wide passage. As the Otyugh is too big to fit into the 5ft space without squeezing, this can give the party a great advantage in fighting it.

Once the Otyugh is dead, the lizardfolk (if any are alive) are satisfied and immediately start making plans about they will move back into the cavern and renovate. They also get to cutting up and trying out the meat of anything dead – including any of their companions. They assure the party that they’ll go back and inform the tribe. This part of the mission is a success and the lizardfolk give the characters an old scroll case they found and had no use for. The case contains a **Spell Scroll of Clairvoyance** and a pair of mundane spears made of bone.

Examination of the cavern reveals more (duergar) boot prints on the outskirts. They clearly circumvented the beast when going through here, but couldn’t help but prints in the more humid cavern. The tracks can be followed out of the cavern deeper underground (toward **Area J**). **Proceed to Part 4.**



Part 4. Hidden in Stone

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Story Beat: The party comes to a dead end must figure out what lies beyond it and how to deal with it.

Dead End

After following the prints through several caves, the party comes to a small cave and a very clear dead end (**Area J**).

While the tracks lead clearly into this tunnel, the ground soon becomes dry and rocky and any trace of prints disappears. Soon enough, the tunnel opens up into a small chamber. Barely tall enough for a human to stand in, the chamber is sheer rock on all sides. This is a dead end.

This is the noise that keeps them awake

The amount of noise made by the characters in this chamber determines whether the duergar on the other side are alerted. As the chamber is empty, there is no overt reason for the characters to be stealthy, so keep track of their behavior! If the characters are purposely trying to be sneaky throughout their investigation and in the chamber, the thickness of the stone will cover any basic conversation. Otherwise keep track of the following "noise points":

- Knocking on the wall to tell if it's hollow: 3 noise points
- Any non-ritual spell with verbal components cast: 1 point
- Any spell with verbal components cast as a ritual: 5 points
- Any spell that does thunder damage cast: 25 points
- Any hit of stone with a weapon: 3 points
- Every round of conversation that is not explicitly quiet: 1 point

If the party decides to take a short rest, there is a 50% chance the duergar naturally wake up during this time, open the passage and attack the party. If the party decides to take a long rest, this definitely happens.

The particular duergar expedition that the characters are tracking is able to manipulate stone and used *stone shape* to pass through and subsequently seal this passage. When the party arrives, the duergar are actually asleep on the other side of the stone wall. This is unknown to the party and isn't easily learned. The party is able to discover the following in the chamber:

- DC13 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check that involves knocking on

the stone allows the characters to tell that the wall is 3-5ft thick.

- A DC12 Wisdom (Survival) check discovers unnatural marks on the stone floor. The marks are definitely recent and lead a short distance between from the middle of the chamber toward the far wall, ending 5ft before it. With a result of 16 or higher or with a subsequent Intelligence (Investigation) check of 13 or higher, the party can tell that these are the signs of a large metal item having been dropped and then dragged a short distance before being picked up again.
- A *detect magic* spell picks up a faint aura of transmutation magic on the wall.
- A successful DC13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a slightly wider crack/hole in the stone above the door, near the ceiling. If the party is specifically looking for such a thing, no check is required. The crack is 10ft off the ground. The crack is fairly small – approx. 5 inches wide at the opening and narrower in places inside. It goes to the other side, but not directly, so it does not offer line of sight. A DC13 Wisdom (Perception) check at the crack picks up the snoring of the duergar.
- A *tiny* creature such as a familiar, pet or shapechanged druid is able to go through the crack and to the other side.
- The stone is 4ft thick and solid. While the characters do not know the exact thickness of the wall, a DC12 Intelligence (History) check tells them that solid stone walls typically have 30 hitpoints per inch of thickness. This wall can be destroyed, but this is very difficult. It has AC15 and 1440 HP. It is immune to fire, poison, necrotic and radiant damage. It is resistant to slashing damage. The wall can be destroyed by any group of players in 20 minutes. If they wish to try and destroy it faster, they must make appropriate attack and damage rolls (an average can be used to expedite this process – roll 3-5 rounds worth of combat to get the average.)
- The characters can choose to **Breach the Stone Wall** (see sidebar) or devise **A Clever Ruse** (see sidebar) in order to face the duergar.

Breach the Stone Wall

If the characters' intention is to breach the stone wall, the amount of noise they make determines the duergar state. If the duergar are awake, they will be hostile.

- 0-5 points of noise: If the characters are able to breach the wall while making 5 or less points of noise and without carrying any bright light, none of the duergar are awake when the wall is breached.
- 6-15 points of noise: at 6-15 points of noise, the duergar will be awake once the wall is breached, but will not have readied actions or surprise.
- 16+ points of noise: duergar will get ready, go invisible and surprise the party on entry.

A Clever Ruse?

Drawing the duergar out requires some clever thinking – allow the players to get creative here. Waking the duergar up (on purpose) is not difficult; some shouting is enough to do it. Possible scenarios that would cause the duergar to come out:

- talking to them about the nightworms – either claiming that they have one (bait!) or that the characters intend to stop their continued killing.
- devise some sort of other ruse – from pretending to be lost and helpless, to wanting to hire the duergar, etc.

Reward creativity here, but as the characters plan their ambush consider that there is a very good chance that the duergar – regardless of any deal made – ALSO plan to simply kill the characters. When ready, the **duergar illusionist** will cast *stone shape* and open a 5ft passage in the wall.

Area K

On the other side of the stone wall is a slightly larger chamber which the duergar expedition has been using as their staging area into the upper caves. A round “manhole cover” made of solid stone covers a narrow shaft 200ft deep that leads into a vast Underdark cavern. The expedition made their way up the shaft, clearing it out as they went.

There are several of the gray dwarves in the room, including one dressed in a sort of tunic (the illusionist). Strewn across the room is a variety of expeditionary equipment including pickaxes, pitons, climbing ropes. Also in the room is a heavy-looking 3ft tall metal contraption that as several arcane runes inscribed into it. A small bowl-shaped with

rich purple lining sits on the tables beside it. In the container are several round marble-sized items that each glow with a distinct dim light – these are extracted nightworm essences. (They are dead for the purposes of sentience.)

Adjusting the Encounter

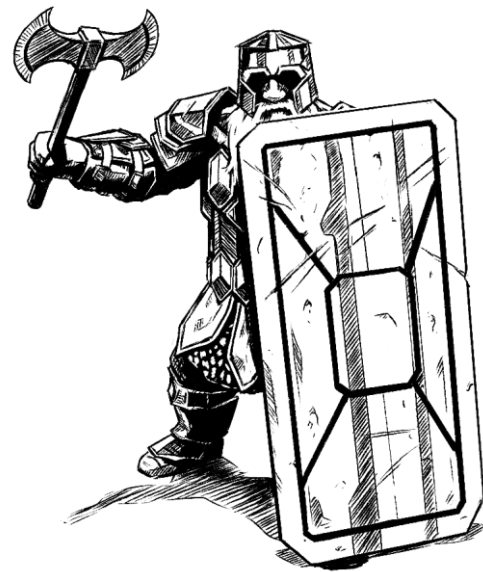
Very Weak: 1 Duergar, 1 Duergar Illusionist (22hp, level 1 and 2 spells only)

Weak: 2 Duergar, 1 Duergar Illusionist (22hp, level 1 and 2 spells only)

Average: 3 Duergar, 1 Duergar Illusionist

Strong: 3 Duergar Spies, 1 Duergar Illusionist

Very Strong: 3 Duergar Spies, 2 Duergar Illusionists (replace *phantom steed* with *enemies abound (XGE)* on the Illusionist stat block.



The Deepaxe Expedition

The DEEPAXE DELVERS are an exploratory team working for the AV MINING COMPANY.

Typically tasked with finding new routes through and out of the Underdark, these duergar have been given special equipment and an additional mission to evaluate the viability of harvesting innate magical properties of Underdark creatures for other uses.

After having tunneled their way up, they discovered several nightworms in the tunnels. With some experimentation, they found a way to extract nightworm essences from the creatures and store them using a specialized mecha-magical contraption. Their goal now is to extract more and use them to develop advanced invisibility runes. The extraction is painful and lethal for the nightworms.

These duergar have a mercenary mentality – they are greedy and proud. They’re certain they’ve stumbled upon something extraordinary and are making copious research notes on their progress. While they’re unlikely to share their findings, they DO require more specimens and access to the upper tunnels. They have not yet discovered the nursery.

While the duergar may make a temporary deal with the characters to achieve their ends, they’re likely ambush and kill them in the end. There is nothing that would convince the duergar to pack up and leave or to stop “harvesting” the nightworms.

Once the duergar are defeated (whether here or elsewhere), characters discover a detailed journal found which explains the duergar activities and lists their employer as the Axcelon-Vyth'tyl Mining Company (AV MINING).

The characters must decide what to do with the extraction contraption, the research notes and the shaft into the underdark.

Their choices have no immediate mechanical impact, but result in one of the following resolutions:

Destroying the contraption and research notes, seal or somehow collapse the shaft:

With the duergar notes and cruel contraption destroyed, the nightworm colony is safe. The wondrous creatures have learned to fear the gray dwarves and to hide from them, which should serve them well if they are once again found.

Destroying the contraption and research notes, leave the shaft (no special plan to report it):

With the duergar notes and cruel contraption destroyed, the nightworm colony is safe. The wondrous creatures have learned to fear the gray dwarves and to hide from them, which should serve them well if they are once again found. Yet the ominous shaft into darkness remains. Will other duergar follow? Or will something perhaps even more sinister crawl its way up from below?

Destroying the contraption and research notes, leave the shaft with the intention of reporting it to proper authorities or relevant contacts:

With the duergar notes and cruel contraption destroyed, the nightworm colony is safe. The wondrous creatures have learned to fear the gray dwarves and to hide from them, which should serve them well if they are once again found. Yet the ominous shaft into darkness remains. While it is uncertain what may crawl its way up through, your knowledge of this secret path into the underdark may yet be of use.

If either the contraption or the research notes are not destroyed:

Thanks to your actions, the nightworm colony is safe – at least for now. The duergar research, however, is disturbing. Knowledge may be power, but in the wrong hands it can spell the doom for an entire species.

Part 5. Conclusion

Nightworms

If the characters are successful in discovering and defeating the duergar, the nightworms reward them a special Driftglobe called Faint.

Faint (Driftglobe)
Wondrous Item, uncommon

The nightworms of Jarko'tu'ta have imbued this driftglobe with some of their magic and fears. When used to emanate the *light* spell, ALL of the light generated is dim. If Faint is ON when the item is within 120ft of a Duergar, it goes out and can be reactivated again using the normal command word and will stay on regardless of continued Duergar presence. If it is OFF when the item is within 120ft of a Duergar, will begin to pulse with soft light. Faint can be used to cast the *daylight* spell once per dawn as a normal driftglobe.

If the characters do not discover the true threat to the nightworms, they instead earn the Story Award:
Dark Dreams of Light.

Jarko'tu'ta

Regardless of the success with the nightworms, as long as the lizardfolk dam is disabled and Cold River flow restored, this stabilizes the geothermal activity in the region and results in mission success in Jarko'tu'ta and with any involved factions. Each member of the party receives a finely crafted stone figurine.

Adventure Rewards

Advancement and Treasure Checkpoints

This is a 4 hour, Tier 1 adventure. As such, characters may receive up to 4 advancement and treasure checkpoints for completing this adventure. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information.

Magic Item Unlock

With their actions in this adventure, characters may be able to unlock this magic item:

Faint (Driftglobe)

Wondrous Item, uncommon

The nightworms of Jarko'tu'ta have imbued this driftglobe with some of their magic and fears. When used to emanate the light spell, ALL of the light generated is dim. If Faint is ON when the item is within 120ft of a Duergar, it goes out and can be reactivated again using the normal command word and will stay on regardless of continued Duergar presence. If it is OFF when the item is within 120ft of a Duergar, will begin to pulse with soft light. Faint can be used to cast the daylight spell once per dawn as a normal driftglobe.

A description of this item can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

Consumables

With their actions in this adventure, characters may be able to gain the following consumable:

Spell Scroll of Clairvoyance

Spell scroll, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Story Awards

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Dark Dreams of Light. Sometimes at night, when a star falls across an outdoor sky on a moonless night, or when a lantern's faint light can be seen through a foggy city morning, you remember the soft light of the nightworms. Yet, there is a worry there. Did you truly find the cause of their demise or will they perish to their unknown predator and be forever gone from anything but dreams? Your sleep after such thoughts is uneasy.

DM Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the other rewards listed above.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

Monster/NPC Statistics

Darkmantle

Small monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 22 (5d6+5)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (0)	5 (-3)

Skills Stealth +3

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Echolocation. The darkmantle can't use its blindsight while deafened.

False Appearance. While the darkmantle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a cave formation such as a stalactite or stalagmite.

Actions

Crush. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the darkmantle attaches to the target. If the target is Medium or smaller and the darkmantle has advantage on the attack roll, it attaches by engulfing the target's head, and the target is also blinded and unable to breathe while the darkmantle is attached in this way. While attached to the target, the darkmantle can attack no other creature except the target but has advantage on its attack rolls. The darkmantle's speed also becomes 0, it can't benefit from any bonus to its speed, and it moves with the target.

A creature can detach the darkmantle by making a successful DC 13 Strength check as an action. On its turn, the darkmantle can detach itself from the target by using 5 feet of movement.

Darkness Aura (1/day). A 15-foot radius of magical darkness extends out from the darkmantle, moves with it, and spreads around corners. The darkness lasts as long as the darkmantle maintains concentration, up to 10 minutes (as if concentrating on a spell). Darkvision can't penetrate this darkness, and no natural light can illuminate it. If any of the darkness overlaps with an area of light created by a spell of 2nd level or lower, the spell creating the light is dispelled.

Source: *monster manual*

Duergar

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail, shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8+4)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (0)	14 (+2)	11 (0)	10 (0)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Dwarvish, Undercommon

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Duergar Resilience. The duergar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

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

Actions

Enlarge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the duergar magically increases in size, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. While enlarged, the duergar is Large, doubles its damage dice on Strength-based weapon attacks (included in the attacks), and makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage. If the duergar lacks the room to become Large, it attains the maximum size possible in the space available.

War Pick. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, or 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

Invisibility (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The duergar magically turns invisible until it attacks, casts a spell, or uses its Enlarge, or until its concentration is broken, up to 1 hour (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the duergar wears or carries is invisible with it.

Source: *monster manual*

Faerie Dragon (Younger)

Tiny dragon, chaotic good

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 14 (4d4+4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +4, Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Draconic, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Superior Invisibility. As a bonus action, the dragon can magically turn invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the dragon wears or carries is invisible with it.

Limited Telepathy. Using telepathy, the dragon can magically communicate with any other faerie dragon within 60 feet of it.

Magic Resistance. The faerie dragon has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The dragon's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast a number of spells, requiring no material components. As the dragon ages and changes color, it gains additional spells as shown below.

1/day each: *dancing lights, mage hand, minor illusion*

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1 piercing damage.

Euphoria Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales a puff of euphoria gas at one creature within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, or for 1 minute, the target can't take reactions and must roll a d6 at the start of each of its turns to determine its behavior during the turn:

1-4. The target takes no action or bonus action and uses all of its movement to move in a random direction.

5-6. The target doesn't move, and the only thing it can do on its turn is make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Source: *monster manual*

Giant Constrictor Snake

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 60 (8d12+8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (0)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +2

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Constrict. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the snake can't constrict another target.

Source: *monster manual*

Giant Poisonous Snake

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (0)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +2

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Source: *monster manual*

Giant Spider

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d10+4)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (0)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +7

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft.,

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Web (Recharge 5-6). Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. Hit: The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

Source: *monster manual*

Giant Wolf Spider

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive

Perception 13

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Source: *monster manual*

Illusionist

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 38 (7d8+7)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (0)	12 (+1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +2

Skills Arcana +5, History +5

Languages any four languages

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. The illusionist is a 7th-level spellcaster. its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The illusionist has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*

1st level (4 slots): *color spray**, *disguise self**, *mage armor*, *magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility**, *mirror image**, *phantasmal force*

3rd level (3 slots): *major image**, *phantom steed**

4th level (1 slot): *phantasmal killer**

*Illusion spell of 1st level or higher

Displacement (Recharges after the Illusionist Casts an Illusion Spell of 1st Level or Higher). As a bonus action, the illusionist projects an illusion that makes the illusionist appear to be standing in a place a few inches from its actual location, causing any creature to have disadvantage on attack rolls against the illusionist. The effect ends if the illusionist takes damage, it is incapacitated, or its speed becomes 0.

Actions

Quarterstaff. Melee Weapon Attack: +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d6-1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8-1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Source: *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

Lizardfolk

Medium humanoid (lizardfolk), neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor, shield)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4, Survival +5

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Draconic

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Hold Breath. The lizardfolk can hold its breath for 15 minutes.

Actions

Multiattack. The lizardfolk makes two melee attacks, each one with a different weapon.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Heavy Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Spiked Shield. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Source: *monster manual*

Lizardfolk Shaman

Medium humanoid (lizardfolk), neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8+5)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	10 (0)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4, Survival +6

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Hold Breath. The lizardfolk can hold its breath for 15 minutes.

Spellcasting (Lizardfolk Form Only). The lizardfolk is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The lizardfolk has the following druid spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): druidcraft, produce flame, thorn whip
1st Level (4 slots): entangle, fog cloud
2nd Level (3 slots): heat metal, spike growth
3rd Level (2 slots): conjure animals (reptiles only), plant growth

Actions

Multiattack (Lizardfolk Form Only). The lizardfolk makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage in crocodile form. If the lizardfolk is in crocodile form and the target is a Large or smaller creature, the target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the lizardfolk can't bite another target. If the lizardfolk reverts to its true form, the grapple ends.

Claws (Lizardfolk Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Change Shape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The lizardfolk magically polymorphs into a crocodile, remaining in that form for up to 1 hour. It can revert to its true form as a bonus action. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Source: *monster manual*

Otyugh

Large aberration, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (0)	19 (+4)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +7

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Otyugh

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Limited Telepathy. The otyugh can magically transmit simple messages and images to any creature within 120 ft. of it that can understand a language. This form of telepathy doesn't allow the receiving creature to telepathically respond.

Actions

Multiattack. The otyugh makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its tentacles.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. The target dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0. This reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until the disease is cured.

Tentacle. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 13) and restrained until the grapple ends. The otyugh has two tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

Tentacle Slam. The otyugh slams creatures grappled by it into each other or a solid surface. Each creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and be stunned until the end of the otyugh's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't stunned.

Source: *monster manual*

Piercer

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (3d8+9)

Speed 5 ft., climb 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

Passive Perception 8

Skills Stealth +5

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

False Appearance. While the piercer remains motionless on the ceiling, it is indistinguishable from a normal stalactite.

Spider Climb. The piercer can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Drop. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, one creature directly underneath the piercer. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage per 10 feet fallen, up to 21 (6d6). Miss: The piercer takes half the normal falling damage for the distance fallen.

Source: *monster manual*

Swarm of Poisonous Snakes

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	11 (0)	1 (-5)	10 (0)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny snake. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Bites. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. Hit: 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. The target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Source: *monster manual*

Trapper

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d10+30)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (0)	17 (+3)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +2

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Fake Appearance. While the trapper is attached to a ceiling, floor, or wall and remains motionless, it is almost indistinguishable from an ordinary section of ceiling, floor, or wall. A creature that can see it and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (investigation) or Intelligence (Nature) check can discern its presence.

Spider Climb. The trapper can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

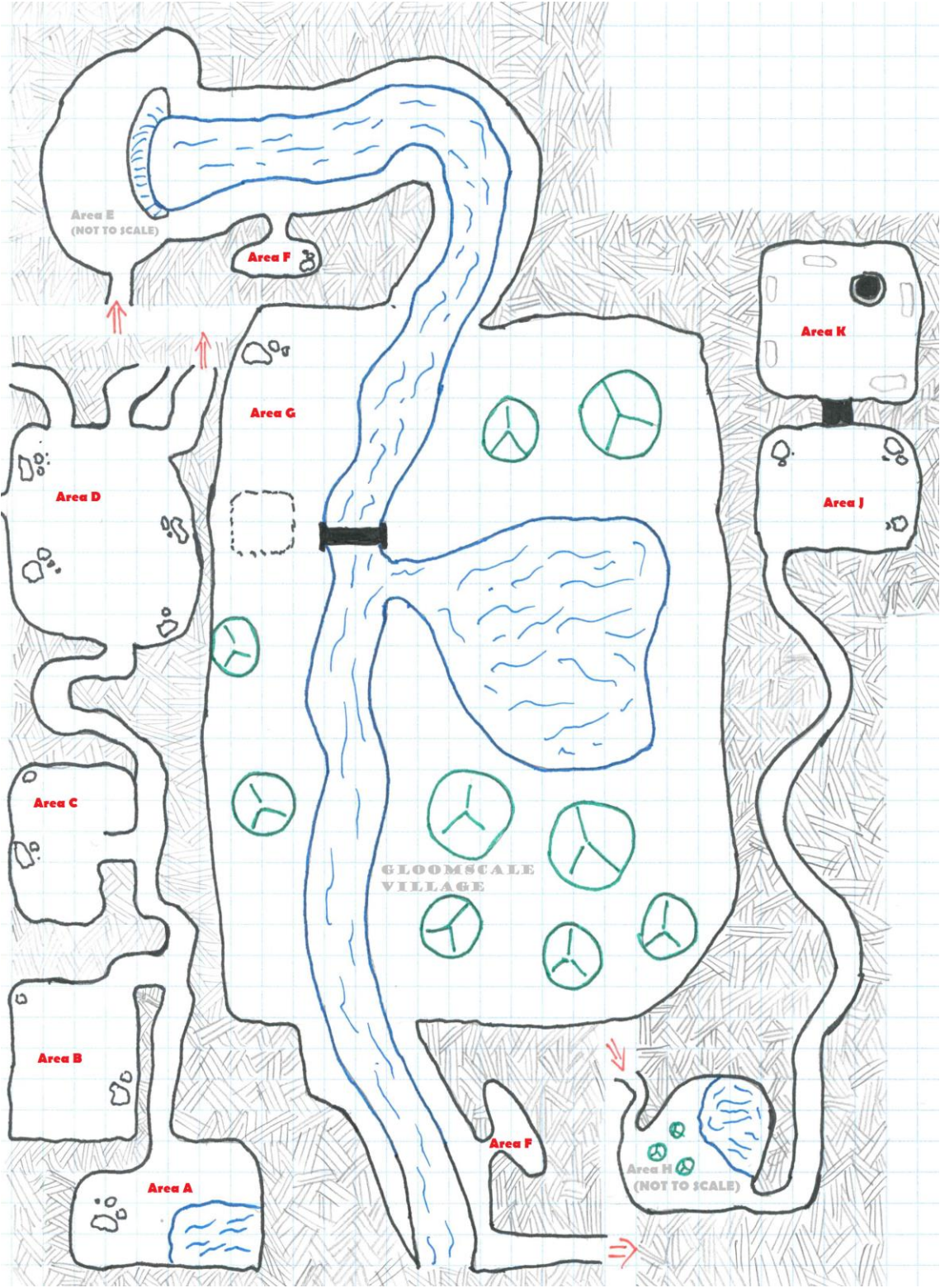
Smother. One Large or smaller creature within 5 feet of the trapper must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled (escape DC 14). Until the grapple ends, the target takes 17 (4d6+3) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage at the start of each of its turns. While grappled in this way, the target is restrained, blinded, and at risk of suffocating. The trapper can smother only one creature at a time.

Source: *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

Map 1: Jarko'tu'ta & Surrounding area.

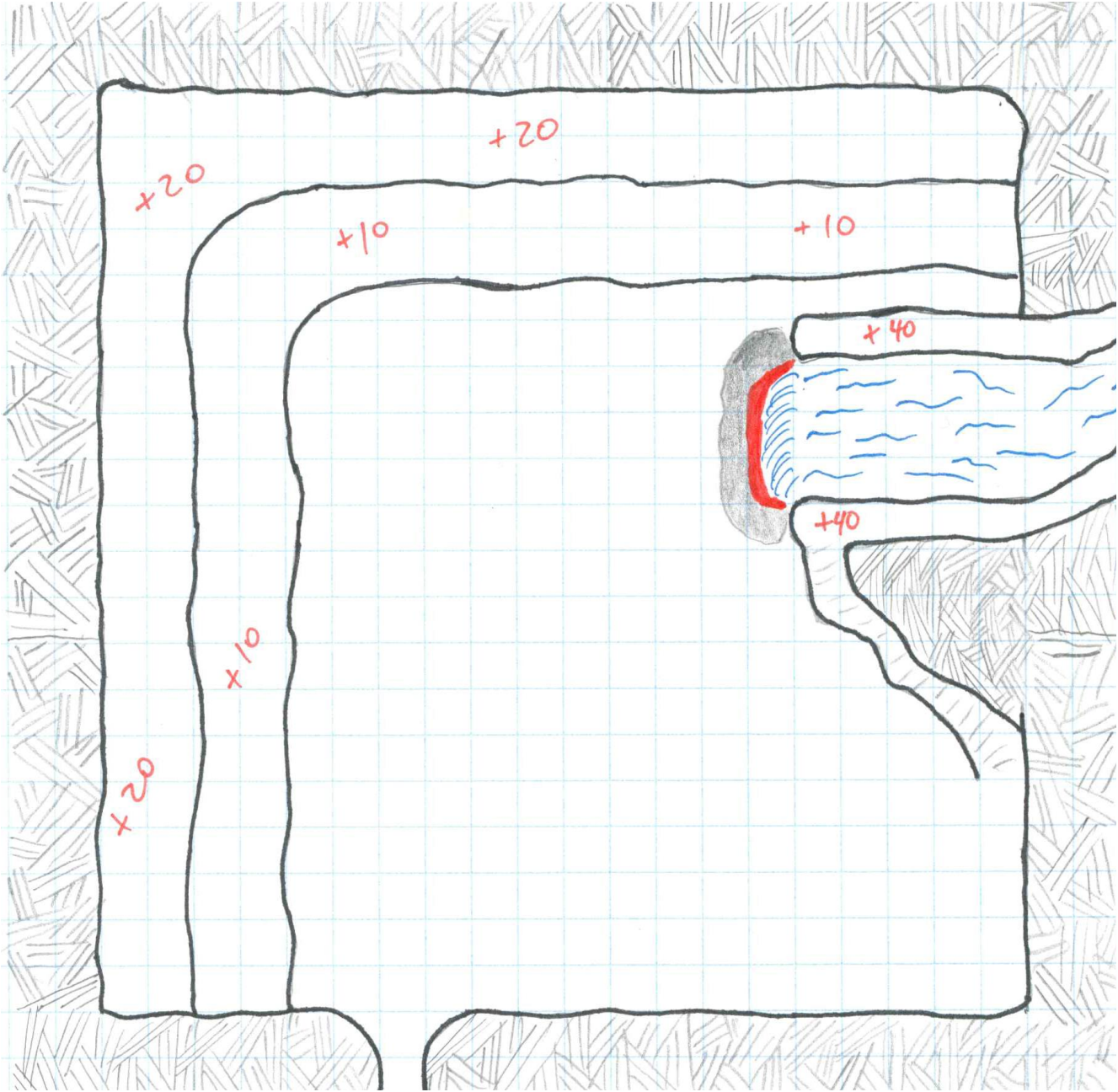


Map 2: Below Jarکو'tu'ta

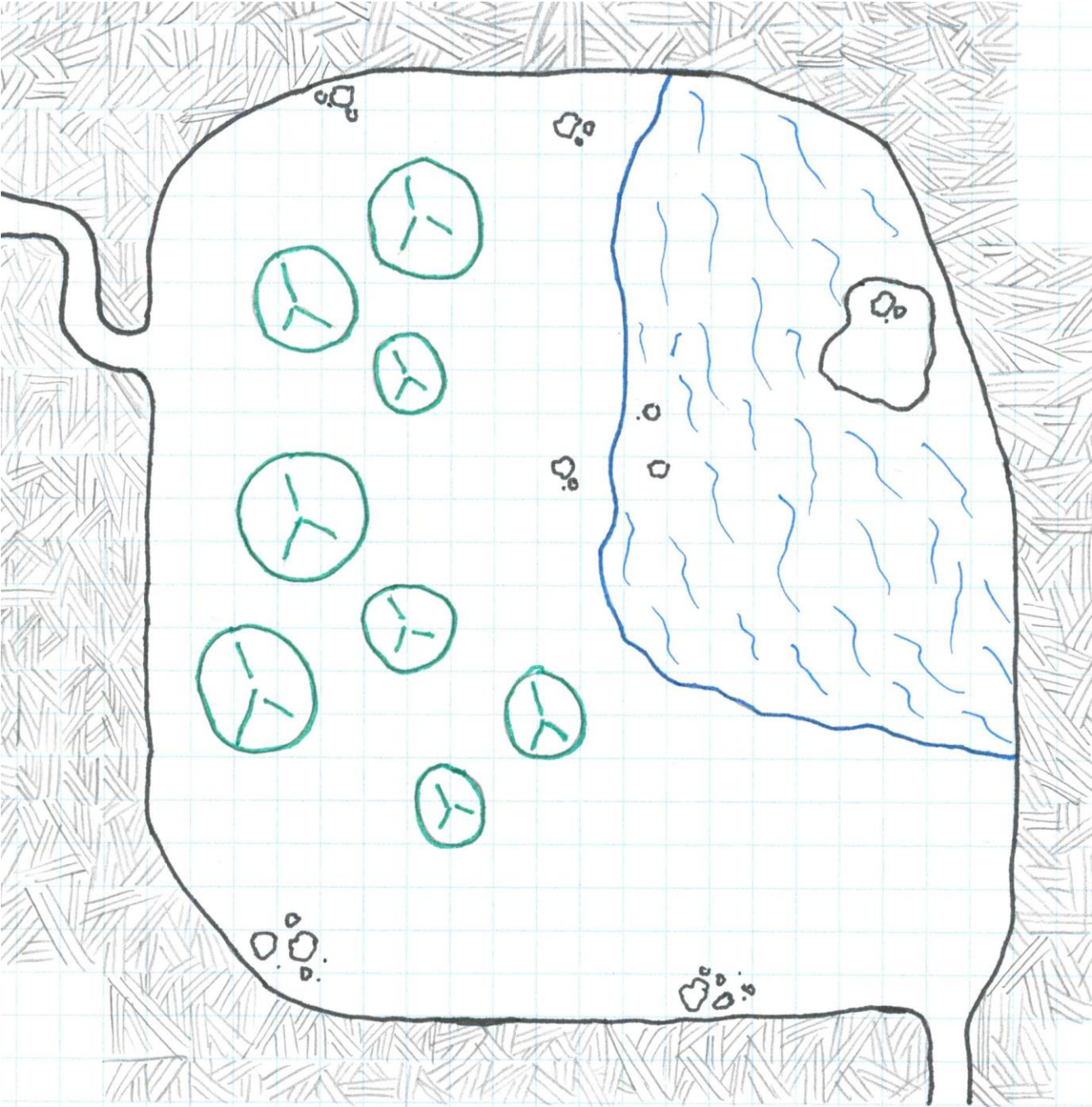


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Map 3: Nightworm Nursery



Map 4: Old Gloomscale Village



Appendix A

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs, locations and entities feature prominently in this adventure.

Residents or Friends of Jarko'tu'ta:

Halona Washanthi (hello-na). Female elder half-elf of Jarko'tu'ta.

Mella. Female child half-elf of Jarko'tu'ta.

Artao. Male guide and trader of Jarko'tu'ta. May have been saved by adventurers in the previous adventure. If he is asked about, he is "away on a trading run to Big Folk Island".

Osse'tinne. Awakened shark companion of the female firbolg Sharkfriend Who Left. Osse'tinne is only present if any characters had met him in a previous adventure.

The Nightworms

The nightworms have no given names. The party is encouraged to name them as they see fit based on interactions.

Gloomscale Lizardfolk:

Valtux (val-tux). Shaman, one of the leaders of the tribe.

Chusk. Male hunter. May be encountered teaching hatchlings to shoot or throw axes.

Xrishada (chri-shada) Older female hunter. May be encountered teaching hatchlings to fish.

Yelchi (yell-chi) Older male gatherer, may be encountered leading hatchlings to plant luminescent mushrooms.

The Deepaxe Delvers:

Gimtim Deepaxe Male duergar. Brother of Gimtin. Leader of expedition with his sister. Does not speak common.

Gimtin Deepaxe. Female duergar. Sister of Gimtim. Leader of expedition with her brother. Does not speak common. Does not appear if party is very weak.

Murghol (moor-goal). Male duergar illusionist and researcher. Only member of the Deepaxe Delvers to speak common. Will translate, but does not make decisions.

Appendix B

The Light Dictionary

The nightworms visually communicate using light and colour pattern. In addition to this, they can read surface thoughts of creatures, but are only able to discern visual thoughts. This “dictionary” is meant to provide some examples of how a nightworm may communicate. Note that the nightworm learns as it goes, so some of these may not be available right away if an appropriate situation has not come up or if a character hasn’t thought it. DMs are encouraged to make up their own patterns, phrases and words.

yes – *communicated by moving body up and down, simulating a nodding motion.*

no – *communicated by body side to side, simulating a head-shake motion.*

Dead/death/body – *motion of flying up and then falling to the ground and glow becoming dimmer.*

Warmth/heat – *changing glow colour to red-orange as required*

Cold – *changing glow colour to red-orange and then to blue-white*

Name – *nightworms have no concept of names. There is no set response to characters asking, though they are encouraged to name it! Will it be Blinky? Dotty? Swirl? Rainbow? The nightworm will understand that it’s being referred to by that name because the characters will likely be thinking of it when they say it.*

Violence – *sudden motions and colour changes, simulated splattering against wall + **death** motion.*

Contribute to the dictionary! Do you have light “words” that worked well in your session? If you wish to contribute them to this dictionary for other DMs to use, please contact the author via DMsGuild or Facebook messenger for details.

Player Handout 1.

Faint (Driftglobe)

Wondrous Item, uncommon

The nightworms of Jarko'tu'ta have imbued this driftglobe with some of their magic and fears. When used to emanate the light spell, ALL of the light generated is dim. If Faint is ON when the item is within 120ft of a Duergar, it goes out and can be reactivated again using the normal command word and will stay on regardless of continued Duergar presence. If it is OFF when the item is within 120ft of a Duergar, will begin to pulse with soft light. Faint can be used to cast the daylight spell once per dawn as a normal driftglobe.

Player Handout 2.

Story Award

Dark Dreams of Light. Sometimes at night, when a star falls across an outdoor sky on a moonless night, or when a lantern's faint light can be seen through a foggy city morning, you remember the soft light of the nightworms. Yet, there is a sense of unease. Did you truly find the cause of their demise or will they perish to their unknown predator and be forever gone from anything but dreams? Your sleep after such thoughts is uneasy.