



## ROTTING ROOTS

The sudden appearance of the undead within Port Nyanzaru doesn't appear to be the only thing on the horizon. A vast horde of skeletons and zombies is moving towards the city and while those of means are safe within the city's walls, those in the Old City and Malar's Throat are forced to contend with the problem. Where did they come from? More importantly, what are you going to do to find out? Part Two of *The Rot from Within* Trilogy.

*A 2-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters*



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**Adventure Code:** DDAL07-07

**Optimized For:** APL 8

**Version:** 1.0

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Rotting Roots*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

In the wilds of Chult, the characters track the undead horde assaulting Port Nyanzaru to their source. The investigation leads them to the Mistcliff Mountains, where the local aarakocra tribes are dealing with an undead menace of their own.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. 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

*Humanity has advanced, when it has advanced, not because it has been sober, responsible, and cautious, but because it has been playful, rebellious, and immature.*

-Tom Robbins

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Deep beneath the ruins of Matolo lies buried the Cyst—a mass of necrotic tissue and black energy—corrupting what’s left of the temple of Ubtao atop the Mistcliff Mountains at the northwestern edge of Chult. While the undead flock to the Cyst like a moth to a flame, someone has scattered pieces of this throbbing mass across Chult, causing strife for all.

Following the events of DDAL07-06 *Fester and Burn* which revealed one piece of the Cyst, Port Nyanzaru is under siege by an undead army, and the characters must find out why. Little do they know that deep in the jungle, at the foot of the Mistcliff Mountains, is a zombie-vomiting tyrannosaurus who regrets snacking on the Cyst.

### LOCATION AND NPC SUMMARY

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

**Hawkdriver Mazugulak (HOCK-dry-ver Mah-ZOO-goo-lack).** This orc represents the five factions and briefs the characters on their special task force mission.

**Ikki (EE-kee).** A member of the Tribe of the Fallen Feather, this aarakocra rescues the characters and invites them to rest safely along the Mistcliffs.

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The adventure is broken down into four parts:

**Part 1.** With Port Nyanzaru sieged by undead, the characters join a special task force to find the root of the undead problem.

**Part 2.** The characters track the undead army backwards through the jungle, facing a number of different possible encounters including a swarm of undead monkeys; zombie beholders arguing over quicksand; a skeleton army chasing them across a rope bridge; and a trapped turtle altar that unleashes a flood. Near the end of their journey, characters are overwhelmed by bone naga but ultimately rescued by a friendly tribe of aarakocra.

**Part 3.** Seeking refuge at the aarakocra’s home along the Mistcliffs, the characters learn that the natives of Chult recently lost their protector against undead: a zombie-eating tyrannosaurus that suddenly developed a taste for the living instead.

**Part 4.** Following this lead, the characters tread into the tyrannosaurus’ lair, which turns out to be the tyrannosaurus’ stomach instead. The characters race out of the undead beast before facing it in a final battle and revealing the Cyst that empowered him.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

This adventure follows DDAL07-06 *Fester and Burn* in which characters rescue a beloved figure of the city, but if players did not participate in that adventure, their characters are assumed to be in Port Nyanzaru when the undead army attacks.

**Your Reputation Precedes You.** Their heroic deeds in DDAL07-06 *Fester and Burn* or elsewhere have spread far and wide since characters stepped foot on the Port Nyanzaru docks. The characters’ factions send them atop the walls of Port Nyanzaru to be briefed on a special task force suitable for only top-notch adventurers.

**Harpers (Secret Mission).** The threat of the death curse trumps all differences among the living. The Harpers would like to establish connections with the native tribes of Chult’s jungles. If you encounter a native people, your mission is to facilitate discussions with their leader to meet with Harpers leadership.

### SECRET MISSION: HARPERS

The aarakocra are the Chultan natives the Harpers seek. Members can persuade the Tribe to meet with Harper leadership by helping Ikka find the remains of her husband in Part 4. Unbeknownst to Ikka and the characters, her husband is wounded but alive, and Harper characters must protect him while battling an undead tyrannosaurus and its zombies.

**Emerald Enclave (Secret Mission).** The Emerald Enclave has discovered that the bile of undead dinosaurs can be used in creating a cure for undead diseases such as mummy rot. With the city under siege, more of this experimental cure is needed. As a member of the task force, you are likely to encounter undead dinosaurs in the jungle and should collect at least three samples.

### SECRET MISSION: EMERALD ENCLAVE

In part 4, characters encounter an undead tyrannosaurus. Emerald Enclave members that succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check while within 5 feet of an undead dinosaur can harvest a sample of bile using a syringe provided at the beginning of the adventure. Shrewd adventurers might realize they are inside the dinosaur in Part 4; the Emerald Enclave can touch the acid to harvest a sample of bile.

## PART 1. A CITY BARREL-Y ABOVE WATER

**Estimated Duration:** 15 minutes

Whether the characters are renowned already as Port Nyanzaru saviors or are just landing on its cursed shores, tales of their adventures precede them.

### STORY BEAT

As an army of undead swarms the outer reaches of the city, the characters have been summoned by their factions to join a special task force to cut the horde off at its source. The curtains open atop Port Nyanzaru's city walls, where the characters wait for instruction.

## PORT NYANZARU UNDER SIEGE

### GENERAL FEATURES

Port Nyanzaru currently has the following features.

**Weather.** Torrential rain falls down in sheets, making dreary circumstances even more miserable.

**Light.** Blackened clouds block the sun above casting shadows across the city.

**Smells and Sounds.** The stink of rotten flesh wafts through the city usually cleansed by fresh rainwater. The air is filled with wails and moans of the undead and the injured, and the clamor of battle rages on the south side of the city walls.

Standing at the zenith of Port Nyanzaru's city walls, you see between curtains of heavy rainfall a tale of two cities. To the north, inside the walls, Nyanzaru's merchant wards sit still in an eerie quiet. To the south, in the Old City and Malar's Throat, a sea of grey-skinned, bony zombies teems below, rising and falling in waves of stinking, rotten, moist flesh.

Hobbling toward you atop the wall is a clearly disgruntled orc. Arms full of rain-beaten scrolls, some of which slip from his grasp and tumble down the wall, and numerous barrels strapped to his back, the orc is a jingling, jangling parade of insignias. A leaf clasp on his cloak. A harp pin on his shirt. A sword and gauntlet pendant swinging around his neck.

Realizing their crucial strength in numbers, the factions are more united than ever before in response to this new threat on the city. With the faction heads busy commanding the defense of the Old City and Malar's Throat, they've sent Hawkdriver Mazugulak, an orc and member of the Emerald Enclave, as a representative to brief the characters on their special task. Hawkdriver can share the following information:

- United together, the factions believe they are able to stave off the undead hordes for now. They've

recruited their best adventurers – the characters – for a special task force. The characters must track the seemingly endless horde back to its source and destroy it before Port Nyanzaru's forces buckle.

- The characters will be compensated 500gp each when they return from their mission.
- The task force must get passed the zombie swarm swiftly and safely to begin their mission, and Hawkdriver—master strategist—has come up with the perfect plan to help characters BARREL through as quickly as possible.

Hawkdriver supplies the characters with one barrel each from the stash strapped to his back. He has prepared for them a plan to either (a) launch themselves, in barrels, over the horde via trebuchets atop the city walls or (b) sneak through the horde wearing barrels ingeniously modified with eye holes.

Almost as an afterthought, Hawkdriver sorts through the few scrolls still in his possession, that did not fall down the wall, and hands special orders to members of the Harpers and the Emerald Enclave. Inform these characters of their secret missions. He apologizes to those whose messages he dropped: "Probably nothing important."

Hawkdriver hands three syringes to Emerald Enclave members as well.

### ROLEPLAYING HAWKDRIVER MAZUGULAK

So civilized that he drinks his kobold blood with pinkies out, this scrawny, hunched orc joined the Emerald Enclave, because "they were one of the few reputable gentfolk who could overlook a fella's green skin." When trouble in Port Nyanzaru had him relaying orders on behalf of all the factions, Hawkdriver wasted no time in collecting faction-themed trinkets and insignias from tourist shops to give him an air of authority. Aside from his baubles, Hawkdriver also loves a good pun.

**Quote:** "This undead situation certainly seems... grave."

## PLAN A: BARREL OVER THE HORDE

If the characters decide to launch themselves in the trebuchets, they must succeed a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage as they land in the jungles beyond the horde. Allow characters to roleplay their preparations and grant advantage on this roll for clever thinking (for example, padding the inside of a barrel).

## PLAN B: BARREL THROUGH THE HORDE

If the characters decide to sneak through the horde in cleverly modified barrels, they must succeed a DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check or take 14 (4d6)

slashing damage as zombies claw at them as they pass.

If a character fails this check by 5 or more, their barrel smashes to pieces in the middle of the horde. Characters must sprint through the crowd and make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take one level of exhaustion.

### **DEVELOPMENT**

If all of the characters maneuver through the zombies without arousing suspicion, award each character 250 XP.

## PART 2. TRACKING ROOTS

**Estimated Duration:** 45 minutes

Choose one or two of the following encounters as the characters trace the undead to their source.

Encounters A and B are combat-focused, and Encounters C and D are skill check- or puzzle-focused. If choosing two encounters, consider picking one of each category for a varied player experience.

End this section with the last encounter: “Tribe of the Fallen Feather.”

If you are running this adventure at a convention or in another time-sensitive situation, consider shortening this section by choosing one encounter.

This part takes place over the course of seven days of exploration, but the timing of the encounters is at your discretion. You can allow for short or long rests between encounters or group them into one day without rests in between.

### STORY BEAT

The characters easily track the destruction of the zombie horde’s march southwest deeper into the jungle, where they encounter the next waves of undead on their way to devastate Port Nyanzaru... as well as all the dangers Chult’s jungles have to offer.

## A. BAD BANANAS

Have the character leading the march make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, falling prone on a failure and simply sliding precariously on a success.

Looking down at your feet, you see a mashed and discarded banana peel. In fact, as you look forward, the jungle path is littered with rotten peels. You look up in the trees, and clinging to a hanging bunch of fresh bananas is a tiny winged monkey wrapped in swathes of cloth. He sees you eyeing his bananas and begins screeching loudly. Suddenly, the jungle erupts with angry animal gibbers as everywhere you look more and more cloth-wrapped monkeys appear.

Six **swarms of flying monkey mummies** attack the party.

To traverse a square with a banana peel, characters must succeed a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and stop moving.

### ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove three **swarms of flying monkey mummies**
- **Weak:** Remove two **swarms of flying monkey mummies**
- **Strong:** The **swarms of flying monkey mummies** hit points are increased to 50.
- **Very Strong:** The **swarms of flying monkey mummies** hit points are increased to 50 and their bite damage is increased to 29 (12d4 - 1) piercing damage, or 14 (6d4 - 1) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## B. YOU GOT QUICKSAND IN MY ZOMBIES

You pause at the edge of a clearing and peer through the brush at the oddest sight. Two floating orbs – each with one horrible central eye and writhing stalks topped with smaller eyes – hover in circles around the clearing, scratching at the ground with sticks they hold in their maws of blackened, rotting teeth. One stops to jab the other with a stalk, its eyeball promptly falling off and rolling into the shrubs, and the two creatures begin wailing at each other incoherently.

The two **beholder zombies** are hovering above a clearing of quicksand and are arguing over which of them is responsible for their minions—three **ogre zombies** – who have sunken into the quicksand. The ogre zombies currently are not visible, having been submerged completely, and have the following changes:

- The ogre zombies begin with 45 hit points when they emerge.
- Ogre zombies can use their reaction to grab ahold of any creature that sinks in the quicksand. Checks to escape the quicksand or pull another creature out of the quicksand are contested against the Ogre Zombie’s Strength (Athletics) check instead of the usual DC.
- If any creature has sunken in the quicksand, ogre zombies can use their action to use the creature as leverage to climb out, rolling their Strength check to escape with advantage.

If characters do not attack the beholder zombies and the beholder zombies notice them, they attempt to lure characters onto the quicksand to help the ogre zombies escape.

**Quicksand.** The quicksand pit covers the ground in a 20-foot diameter area and is 15-foot deep. When a creature enters the area, it sinks 1d4 + 1 feet in the quicksand and becomes restrained. At the start of each of the creature’s turns, it sinks another 1d4 feet. As long as the creature isn’t completely

submerged in the quicksand, it can escape by using its action and succeeding on a Strength check. The DC is 10 plus the number of feet the creature has sunk into the quicksand. A creature that is completely submerged in quicksand can't breathe. A creature can pull another creature within its reach out of the quicksand pit by using its action and succeeding on a Strength check. The DC is 5 plus the number of feet the target creature has sunk into the quicksand.

#### ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak or Weak: Ogre zombies** can grab creatures but can't climb out of the quicksand
- **Strong or Very Strong: Ogre zombies** start with 85 hit points

### C. UNDEADLY BRIDGE

The jungle trees end abruptly at the edge of a towering cliff, continuing across a 100-foot chasm spanned by a bridge of woven vines. Rapid white waters roar loudly 200-feet below, but just above the roar you hear a rustle in the bushes to your left... and to your right...

Before characters can debate too deeply trusting their lives to the aged bridge, the tree line trembles as a clattering army of **skeletons** emerges from 60-feet away in both directions. Characters are surrounded. The bridge must be crossed.

**The Bridge Snaps.** Once all characters are on the bridge (excluding those able to bypass this challenge via flight or other means), the bridge is in danger of snapping at any moment. If any of the below conditions happen, have a player roll 1d20. If the roll is below a 10, the bridge snaps.

- A creature moves within 15 feet of another creature while both are on the bridge, adding extra strain to the weak construction.
- A creature attacks while on the bridge, jostling the entire structure.
- A creature dashes while on the bridge AND fails a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw that would allow them to do so carefully in their haste.

If the bridge snaps, characters take 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet of bridge they have yet to cross. Characters must succeed a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, they lose grasp of the bridge as they are slammed into the opposite cliff

and fall onto a ledge below, taking an additional 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.

It is possible that the characters might choose to cut the bridge on purpose, to stop the army from following them. If they do so while on the bridge themselves, they take half the damage listed above and make the Strength saving throw with advantage as they brace themselves for impact.

#### TREASURE

Any characters that fall on the ledge on the opposite side find the skeletal remains of another fallen adventurer and her pack dangling precariously off the edge of the ledge. In the pack, they find a leather pouch with 25gp, a large rough diamond worth 200gp, 50 feet of hempen rope and three wooden masks carved to look like grung and painted in different colors: green, blue and purple.

### D. TURTLE TREASURE

You've been traveling through a lush jungle valley all day when suddenly you stumble upon a long, paved path marked with carved stone archways, covered in moss and weathered by time. At the end of the path, you see a circular clearing marked by tiles and a 5-foot by 10-foot dais raised in its center.

The sides of the dais are covered in bas-relief carvings of turtle-like humanoid warriors facing various sea creatures, including:

- A merfolk battling an upside down turtle warrior
- A bloated pufferfish launching spikes at a turtle brandishing a trident
- A group of mourning turtles carrying a turtle receded into his shell

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that these three turtle warriors (one upside down, one brandishing a trident and one receded into its shell) can be removed; these carvings have triangular pegs on the back that slot into matching holes where they were removed. The correct positions of these carvings are:

- A merfolk battling a turtle brandishing a trident
- A bloated pufferfish launching spikes at a turtle receded into its shell
- A group of mourning turtles carrying an upside down turtle warrior

When placed in the correct slots, the top of the dais can be removed to reveal a turtle treasure horde

(see “Treasure” section below) and – on a pedestal within the dais – a crown carved from gleaming red coral.

### YES, LOOT THE BIG RED BUTTON

*Simple trap, dangerous threat*

A successful DC 13 Investigation (Intelligence) check reveals that removing the crown sets off a trap, but it is possible to swap the crown on the pedestal with something of equal weight with a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.

If the characters remove the crown without successfully swapping it with another object, the pedestal rises slightly as they remove the crown. A few moments later, they feel the ground begin to rumble and, in the distance, spot the tops of trees falling aside. Soon they hear the sound of rushing, crashing water growing nearer and nearer.

A flood is filling the valley! Characters must succeed a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to scramble up the sides of the valley or outrun the flood. On a failure, they escape but take 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage from the torrent.

### TREASURE

The turtle hoard includes a large black pearl worth 100gp, piles of coral and shell beads worth 25gp total, a tarnished silver horn with stamped with starfish imagery worth 100gp and 200gp in various coins. The coral crown is worth 500gp.

## E. TRIBE OF THE FALLEN FEATHER

The trail of undead destruction leads you to the northwestern edge of Chult where the Mistcliff Mountains rise up in the sky. As you reach the foot of the mountains, the path of zombie tracks turns to a strange pattern of crisscrossing lines that drag through the dirt.

A successful DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals these to be the slithering tracks of a large snake. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, it reveals these as bone naga tracks.

As the characters climb the mountain, they suddenly see through the trees slithering swarms of **bone nagas** approaching from all sides. Lightning bolts crack through the jungle, causing trees to snap and fall. Before the situation can turn truly dire, the Tribe of the Fallen Feather swoops in.

You hear the beating of many wings. With a thump and a crash, a boulder suddenly drops atop one of the bone nagas from the sky. Birdfolk with colorful feathered plumes and beaded dress land on the mountainside surrounding you, all their spears turned toward your skeletal attackers. One of the birdfolk, lunges toward you, her sharp beak clicking and chirping softly inches from your face. She whistles suddenly to her tribe and then turns back to you, “Trust us, death hunter. We can get you out of here.”

### DEVELOPMENT

Prioritizing any injured or fallen characters, aarakocra fly the characters out of the battle and over the mountain while other aarakocra stay behind to hold off the bone nagas. Heavier characters, such as turtles, can be carried by two aarakocra.



## PART 3. TALE OF THE BIG ONE

**Estimated Duration:** 15 minutes

The Tribe of the Fallen Feather flies to the edge of the Mistcliffs, where they offer characters safety and tell stories of their own troubles with the undead.

### STORY BEAT

The characters first must figure out how to scale the Mistcliffs. Once they do, they meet the aarakocra of the Tribe of the Fallen Feather, learn that the aarakocra also have had undead problems and reveal clues toward the undead source they seek.

The ocean wind whips violently along the Mistcliffs that mark the edge of Chult and a sheer thousand-foot drop into the sea below. Landing you atop this wall of volcanic rock, the aarakocra woman shouts over the wail of the wind: "I am..." She clicks twice and then whistles a series of trills. "...But you can call me Ikki. From the soaring skies, we spotted death hunters, like ourselves, in need, and we answered the call. Tell me... Were we wrong to do so? What brings you to our mountains, death hunters?"

When the characters explain their business, continue:

"Ah, we are all death hunters or death hunted in these times, it seems," says Ikki, punctuating her thoughts with a chirp as she walks backward toward the cliff's edge. "Very well. You must recover your strength with us. Welcome to our home. Follow me."

With that, Ikki steps off the cliff and disappears as she plummets downward.

The other aarakocra follow suit, jumping off the cliff. Crawling to the edge of the cliff, characters spot through the mists the soaring birdfolk and large nests that dot the cliff face on narrow ledges. The face of the cliff is carved with a larger-than-life image of a tyrannosaurus surrounded by bowing aarakocra.

The aarakocra initially will not offer the characters any assistance, curious to see what the adventurers do. The characters can descend in several ways, including but not limited to:

- Characters scale the cliff with the natural rocky handholds by succeeding on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. This check is made with advantage if the characters have and use climbing

gear. On a failure, the characters plummet downward but are caught by an aarakocra.

- Characters take a running leap off the edge, mirroring the aarakocra's boldness. The characters plummet downward but are caught by an aarakocra.
- Characters use magic items or spells that allow flight.

Whether through strength, borderline-foolish courage or cleverness, the aarakocra are impressed by successful characters, and Charisma checks with them are made with advantage.

The characters are able to wander the face of the Mistcliffs, which here primarily consist of steeply sloped narrow walkways that connect nest-filled ledges. Aarakocra warriors nod respectfully at the characters as they pass through the village, children eye the outsiders curiously (the braver ones approaching and asking for trinkets from faraway) and a wizened aarakocra elder rants about the end days.

If the characters stop to talk to the elder, Ullal the Shaman:

- Ikki will explain that Ullal was once a powerful shaman, but time has muddled this elder's brain. Best not to take him too seriously, although the characters are kind to humor him.
- Ullal is eager to have new listeners as the other aarakocra have long since dismissed his ravings. He will ramble at length about the end times and that "he" has returned, his words eventually devolving into garbled nonsense and repeated, "The Big One, the Big One, the Big One..."

Once the characters have joined Ikki in her nest, she offers them food, drink and a place to rest and heal. She can share the following information with the characters.

- The Tribe of the Fallen Feather and other mountain denizens also have had problems with undead.
- The undead were not always a threat thanks to the Big One. The birdfolk paid tribute to the Big One, sacrificing members of their own tribe to the gargantuan tyrannosaurus that roamed the mountainside. In return, the dinosaur did not bother the aarakocra and fed on the undead in the area instead. He was worshipped as a protector of the aarakocra and was even carved into the side of the Mistcliffs above this settlement.
- Months ago, something happened that changed the Big One. Instead of attacking the undead, the

Big One attacked the aarakocra who worshipped him, and a flood of new undead swarmed the Mistcliffs, including many of the formerly sacrificed aarakocra.

- The bravest of the aarakocra banded together to challenge the Big One, killing the terrible beast, but the aarakocra suffered many casualties.
- A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Ikki's nest seems too big for a solo bird. Her husband was one of the warriors that fell in that battle.
- Ikki and her tribe do not know what turned the Big One, but since the undead grew in strength afterward, his change might be related to the characters' search. Ikki can point them in the direction of the Big One's lair.
- One of the aarakocra warriors carried on him a tribal artifact – a coil of rope – when he was eaten by the Big One. If the characters can find it, it is theirs.
- “May it give you strength as you hunt death.”

#### **ROLEPLAYING IKKI**

With brilliant blue feathers streaked with golden yellow, Ikki is typical of the colorful and majestic aarakocra that populate the Mistcliffs of Chult. Ikki carries with her a sadness from the recent loss of her husband, but she disguises this beneath a serious and grim attitude that death is inevitable. But that doesn't mean she'll let death take her without a fight. Ikki speaks with ferocious disdain about all things evil from the death curse to the undead plague on the land.

**Quote:** “Death comes for us all, which is why we must hunt Death!”

#### **SECRET MISSION: HARPERS**

Harpers seeking a native tribe to recruit will find that in the Tribe of the Fallen Feather. Ikki is willing to speak to her tribe leaders about meeting with the Harpers if characters can find her husband's remains for her at the Big One's lair.

#### **DEVELOPMENT**

Characters are able to take a long rest at the aarakocra village. If all characters impress the tribe award each character 250 XP.

## PART 4. THIS IS NO CAVE

**Estimated Duration:** 45 minutes

With Ikki's directions, the characters travel across the Mistcliff Mountains in search of the Big One's lair. After discovering the lair, an underground swamp and an aarakocra artifact, the characters discover this is no cave and race out to face the Big One back from the dead.

### YOUR BODY IS A LAIR

Ikki's directions lead you to the base of the Mistcliff Mountains. You spot a cave entrance hidden near the foot of the mountain. Although the entrance itself is shrouded heavily by a curtain of vines, the fern-covered undergrowth of the jungle ends abruptly within 10 feet of the entrance, giving way to smooth sand.

A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals this is quicksand. The quicksand is immediately recognizable, with no check required, if characters have encountered quicksand already in this adventure. Once spotted, the quicksand is easily bypassed, with a running leap.

No matter how deep the characters travel, they find the tunnels are similarly blanketed with a thick covering of vines. If characters attempt to cut the vines, they find the vines grow back more rapidly than the surface underneath can be revealed. A DC 11 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that vines growing without sunlight inside a cave definitely are strange. The vine-covered tunnel ends in a cavern akin to an underground swamp.

The air grows thick and hot with humidity as you delve deeper down into the vine-covered tunnel until it opens suddenly into a swamp-filled cavern. Green-tinged sludgy water fills this cave with acrid fumes that burn your eyes. Limbs in various forms of decay float in the sludge. In the middle of the swamp floats a small island covered in thorny shrubs. A skeletal arm sticks out of the ground there, holding a coil of rope.

Ten **zombies** erupt from the "swamp" and attack.

Any creature, except undead, that enters the swamp or starts its turn in the swamp takes 10 (3d6) acid damage.

The rope on the island can be removed from the skeletal hand with a DC 11 Strength (Athletics)

check. Once removed, the greenery and vines abruptly disappear from the characters' surroundings. If any zombies are still alive, they stop attacking and fall over as the entire cave begins to shake.

As soon as the rope pops out of the skeleton hand's grasp, the greenery and vines abruptly disappear from your surroundings. What once seemed like a dense marshy wild suddenly seems to be made of a pink fleshy material that begins to pulse, to pump, to breathe. The ground beneath you shakes, shifts, tilts, moves... This is no cave!

### SECRET MISSION: HARPERS

If Harper characters are present, then they find a severely wounded but alive aarakocra with blue, yellow-striped feathers. This is Ikki's husband. Their new mission is to return him safely to Ikki to encourage the aarakocra's meeting with Harper leadership.

This is not easy. The zombies sense Ikki's husband's weak state. They focus their attacks on characters protecting him.

### SECRET MISSION: EMERALD ENCLAVE

If Emerald Enclave characters realize they are inside an undead tyrannosaurus, they can use an action voluntarily touch the acid in the tyrannosaurus's stomach to collect one sample. They must succeed a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to avoid the acid damage. This can be repeated.

Characters escaping the dinosaur (see below) can still attempt to harvest bile but make any saving throws or checks associated with escape at disadvantage.

Once outside the dinosaur, characters must be within 5 feet of the dinosaur and use an action to perform a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check, harvesting one sample on a success. Samples must be harvested while the dinosaur is alive or else the bile loses its potency.

### ESCAPE OR BE A SNACK

The characters find themselves in the stomach of the Big One rather than his lair. They must race to escape as the undead tyrannosaurus wakes. Characters face each of these complications.

## ROUND 1

Half-digested arms covered with mottled feathers reach from the swamp of the Big One's bile and try to claw at you with bony talons. Make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 6 (1d10) slashing damage.

## ROUND 2

The tunnel tilts steeply as the creature you are inside begins to stand. A wave of bile washes up the throat as you attempt to climb. Make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become poisoned as you stare agog with your mouth open... and let some of the bile in. Gross!

## ROUND 3

The throat constricts as you climb upward. Make a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to push your way through or take 4 (1d6) acid damage as the acid burns at your heels.

## ROUND 4

The desiccated tongue springs to life free from the vines that held it in place. Roll a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

## ROUND 5

No longer shrouded by vines, you see every single jagged tooth in the Big One's mouth as it closes shut to trap you inside. Make a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to leap out of the mouth or take 17 (2d12 + 3) piercing damage. Characters prone after the last round make this check with disadvantage as they scramble to their feet. On a success, characters jump through unscathed.

## THE BIG BATTLE

You tumble out of the tyrannosaurus' jaws just as they clamp shut with a sharp echoing crack. One giant claw emerges from the quicksand, then another, as the Big One tears himself out of his grave with a roar that shakes the entire mountain and covers you in a spray of sand and spittle.

The characters face the **Big One**, a legendary tyrannosaurus zombie of gargantuan proportions.

### ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak: The Big One** has no legendary actions
- **Weak: The Big One** has one legendary action per round

- **Strong: The Big One's** AC is increased to 15
- **Very Strong: The Big One's** AC is increased to 15 and it has four legendary actions per round

### TREASURE

The rope taken from the Big One's stomach is a *rope of entanglement*. In the Big One's remains, the characters also can find trinkets and mundane weapons worth a total of 200 gp.

### DEVELOPMENT

As the Big One dies, it writhes one more time, vomiting up any remaining corpses in its stomach, the equipment and treasure on those bodies (see above) and a clump of stone rubble with a throbbing, pulsing black mass of necrotic energy stuck to it.

If characters return to the Tribe of the Fallen Feather with the rubble, all of the aarakocra are startled and unnerved by this discovery which radiates an aura of evil but only Ullal the Shaman is able to identify the rubble's source. The aarakocra elder snaps out of his rambling trance in a moment of clarity and can share the following information:

- The rubble belongs to Matolo, a town atop the Mistcliff Mountains that once housed a great temple of Ubtao but now lies in ruin overgrown by the jungle.
- In Matolo's prime, the tribe mummified and buried its own as offering to Ubtao, before the god abandoned Chult.
- The pulsing black mass can only mean something terrible is afoot in Matolo, perhaps the ultimate source of the recent undead threat itself.

Upon returning to Port Nyanzaru with this information, the characters are rewarded 500 gp each as promised. The hordes assaulting Nyanzaru dwindle, but the characters know a greater threat lies waiting in Matolo's depths and should report their findings to their faction leaders. DDAL07-08 *Putting the Dead to Rest* follows these leads.

It is possible characters do not defeat the Big One, run away or perish fighting it. In that case, you can insert other appropriate leads toward Matolo, such as gargantuan tyrannosaurus tracks leading toward the ruins. If characters do defeat the Big One but bring the necrotic rubble to Port Nyanzaru instead of the Tribe of the Fallen Feather, archeologists in their factions are able to identify the rubble and provide the same information above.

## REWARDS

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

### EXPERIENCE (MIN/MAX XP: 2,250/3,000 EA.)

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

#### COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Swarm of Flying Monkey Mummies	450
Beholder Zombie	1,800
Ogre Zombie	450
Skeleton	50
Bone Naga	1,100
Zombie	50
The Big One	5,000

#### NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Barrell Experts	250
Impress the Tribe	250

## TREASURE

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

#### TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Fallen Adventurer's Gold	25
Large Rough Diamond	200
Large Black Pearl	100
Coral/Shell Beads	25
Silver Horn	100
Turtle Gold	200
Coral Crown	500
The Big Ones Gold	200
Secret Task Force Payment	500 per player

**Consumable magic items** should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

**Permanent magic items** are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

### ROPE OF ENTANGLEMENT

*Wondrous Item, rare*

This rope is fashioned from a 30-foot length of wilted, thorny vine. Upon entangling a creature that isn't undead or a construct, the thorns dig into its target's flesh and appear to feed—the vine grows green, its leaves become full and vibrant, and colorful, aromatic flowers blossom along its length. This item can be found in **Player Handout 3**.

### RENOUN

The characters earn downtime and renown as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG)*.

**Members of the Harpers (rank 2 or higher)** that convinced aarakocra to meet with Harpers leadership earn **one additional renown point** and mark the completion of a secret mission on their adventure logsheet.

**Members of the Emerald Enclave (rank 2 or higher)** that collected at least five samples of undead bile earn **one additional renown point** and mark the completion of a secret mission on their adventure logsheet.

### DM REWARD

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG)*.

## APPENDIX. MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

### BIG ONE, THE

*Gargantuan undead, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 11 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (13d12 + 52)

**Speed** 40 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	6 (-2)	19 (+4)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	5 (-3)

---

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 6

**Languages** --

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Disgorge Zombie.** As a bonus action, the tyrannosaurus zombie can disgorge a normal **zombie**, which appears in an unoccupied space within 10 feet of it. The disgorged zombie acts on its own initiative count. After a zombie is disgorged, roll a d6. On a roll of 1, the tyrannosaurus zombie runs out of zombies to disgorge and loses this trait. If the tyrannosaurus zombie still has this trait when it dies, 1d4 normal **zombies** erupt from its corpse at the start of its next turn. These zombies act on their own initiative count.

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the tyrannosaurus zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the tyrannosaurus zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the tyrannosaurus fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

### ACTIONS

---

**Multiattack.** The tyrannosaurus zombie makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail. It can't make both attacks against the same target.

**Bite. Melee Weapon Attack:** +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., on target. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the tyrannosaurus zombie can't bite another target or disgorge zombies.

**Tail. Melee Weapon Attack:** +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

- **Trembling Roar.** The entire jungle trembles as the tyrannosaurus zombie roars. All creatures within 60 feet of the tyrannosaurus zombie must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened. At the end of their turn, characters repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. This action still functions if the tyrannosaurus has a creature grappled.
- **Zombie Barf Breath.** The tyrannosaurus zombie burps. Any creature within 10 feet of the tyrannosaurus zombie must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn. This action still functions if the tyrannosaurus has a creature grappled.
- **Trample (2 actions).** The tyrannosaurus zombie moves up to its speed in a straight line without provoking opportunity attacks. Any creatures whose space it moves through must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or take 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

## BONE NAGA

*Large undead, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d10 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

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

---

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, paralyzed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common plus one other language

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The naga is a 5th-level spellcaster (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks) that needs only verbal components to cast its spells.

If the naga was a guardian naga in life, its spellcasting ability is Wisdom, and it has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, hold person*

3rd level (2 slots): *bestow curse*

If the naga was a spirit naga in life, its spellcasting ability is Intelligence, and it has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand, ray of frost, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur, hold person*

3rd level (2 slots): *lightning bolt*

### ACTIONS

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**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

## SKELETON

*Medium undead, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (armor scraps)

**Hit Points** 13 (2d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

---

**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

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

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

## SWARM OF FLYING MONKEY MUMMIES (SWARM OF SNAKES)

Large swarm of Small undead, unaligned

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 35 (10d6)

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

---

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** --

**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 Small creature. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Pack Tactics Swarm.** The swarm has advantage on an attack roll if the swarm has more than half of its hit points.

### ACTIONS

---

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (6d4 - 1) piercing damage or 7 (3d4 - 1) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 8 (3d4) for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the *remove curse* spell or other magic.

## ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 22 (3d8 + 9)

**Speed** 20 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

---

**Saving Throws** Wis +0

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

### ACTIONS

---

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.



## BEHOLDER ZOMBIE

*Large undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d10+33)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

---

**Saving Throws** Wis +2

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** understands Deep Speech and

Undercommon but can't speak

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

### ACTIONS

---

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

**Eye Ray.** The zombie uses a random magical eye ray, choosing a target that it can see within 60 feet of it

1. *Paralyzing Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success

2. *Fear Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

3. *Enervation Ray.* The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

4. *Disintegration Ray.* If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 45 (10d8) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, its body becomes a pile of fine gray dust.

If the target is a Large or smaller nonmagical object or creation of magical force, it is disintegrated without a saving throw. If the target is a Huge or larger

nonmagical object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

## OGRE ZOMBIE

*Large undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 85 (9d10+36)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

---

**Saving Throws** Wis +0

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands Giant and Common but can't speak

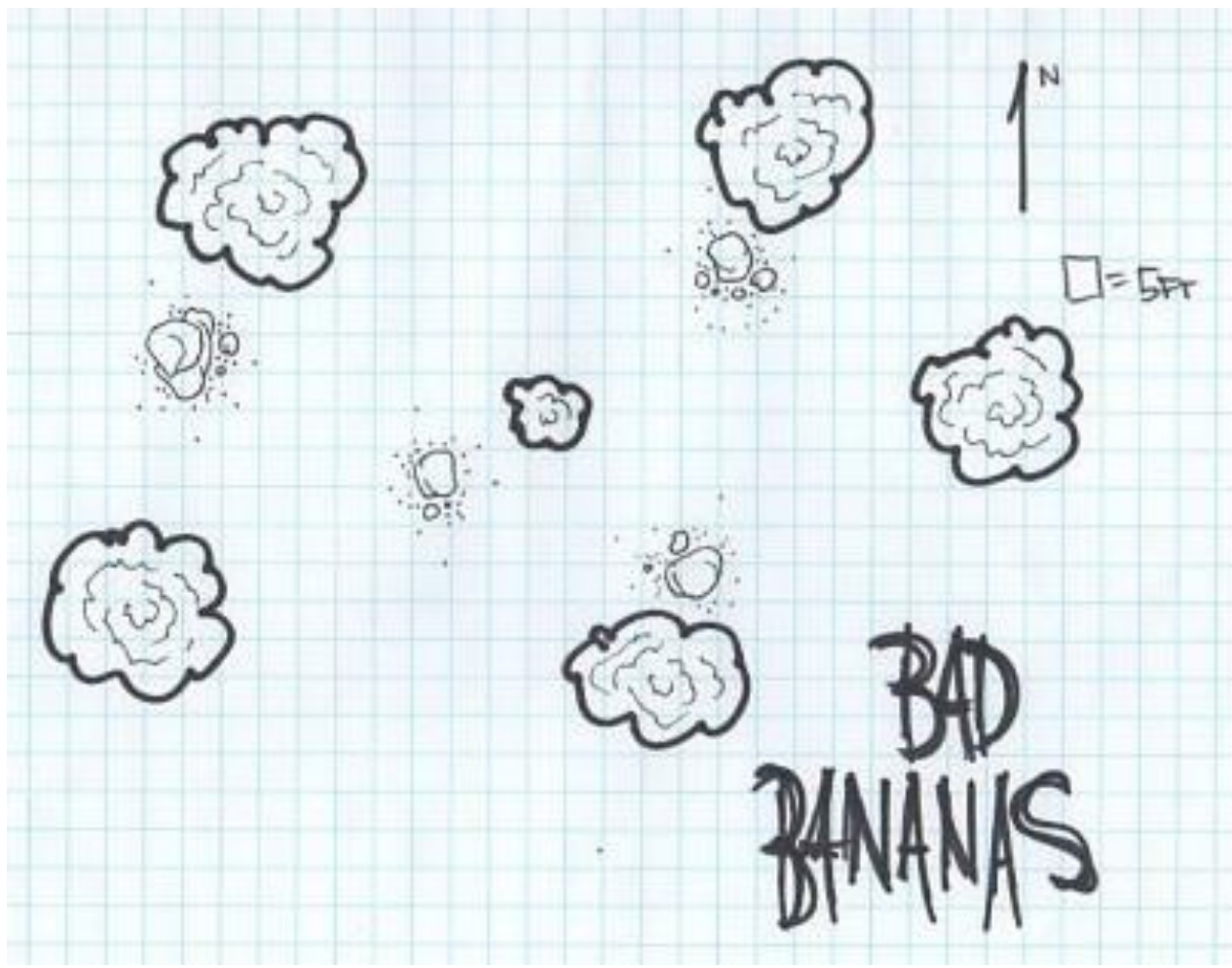
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

### ACTIONS

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**Morningstar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

## APPENDIX. BAD BANANAS MAP



## APPENDIX. THIS IS NO CAVE MAP A



## APPENDIX. THIS IS NO CAVE MAP B



## PLAYER HANDOUT 1. HARPERS SECRET MISSION

A clumsy orc hands you this rain-beaten scroll. The paper is slightly sticky and smells of strawberry. The seal is broken. He probably snooped.

If this scroll finds its way to your hands, you are Port Nyanzaru's only hope. But this is just a battle. On your journey, you might find peoples in the jungle who can help us in the war against the Death Curse. Convince any native tribes you encounter to meet with our leaders. We must band together. The threat of the Death Curse trumps all differences among the living. Best of luck. If you return, we will need to share a drink.

Soggy Wren

PS - Destroy this note after reading it. It can be crumpled and eaten.

## PLAYER HANDOUT 2. EMERALD ENCLAVE SECRET MISSION

A clumsy orc hands you this rain-beaten scroll. The seal is broken. He probably snooped.

The Enclave has discovered good news in bad times. The bile of undead dinosaurs can be used to make a cure for the undead diseases they spread. Methinks we will need more of this cure if the city survives. Bring back three samples with the syringes provided. I hope your hunt is fruitful.

Screaming Wind.

## PLAYER HANDOUT 3. MAGIC ITEM

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

### ROPE OF ENTANGLEMENT

---

*Wondrous Item, rare*

This rope is 30 feet long and weighs 3 pounds. If you hold one end of the rope and use an action to speak its command word, the other end darts forward to entangle a creature you can see within 20 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained.

You can release the creature by using a bonus action to speak a second command word. A target restrained by the rope can use an action to make a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity check (target's choice). On a success, the creature is no longer restrained by the rope. The rope has AC 20 and 20 hit points. It regains 1 hit point every 5 minutes as long as it has at least 1 hit point. If the rope drops to 0 hit points, it is destroyed.

This rope is fashioned from a 30-foot length of wilted, thorny vine. Upon entangling a creature that isn't undead or a construct, the thorns dig into its target's flesh and appear to feed—the vine grows green, its leaves become full and vibrant, and colorful, aromatic flowers blossom along its length. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.