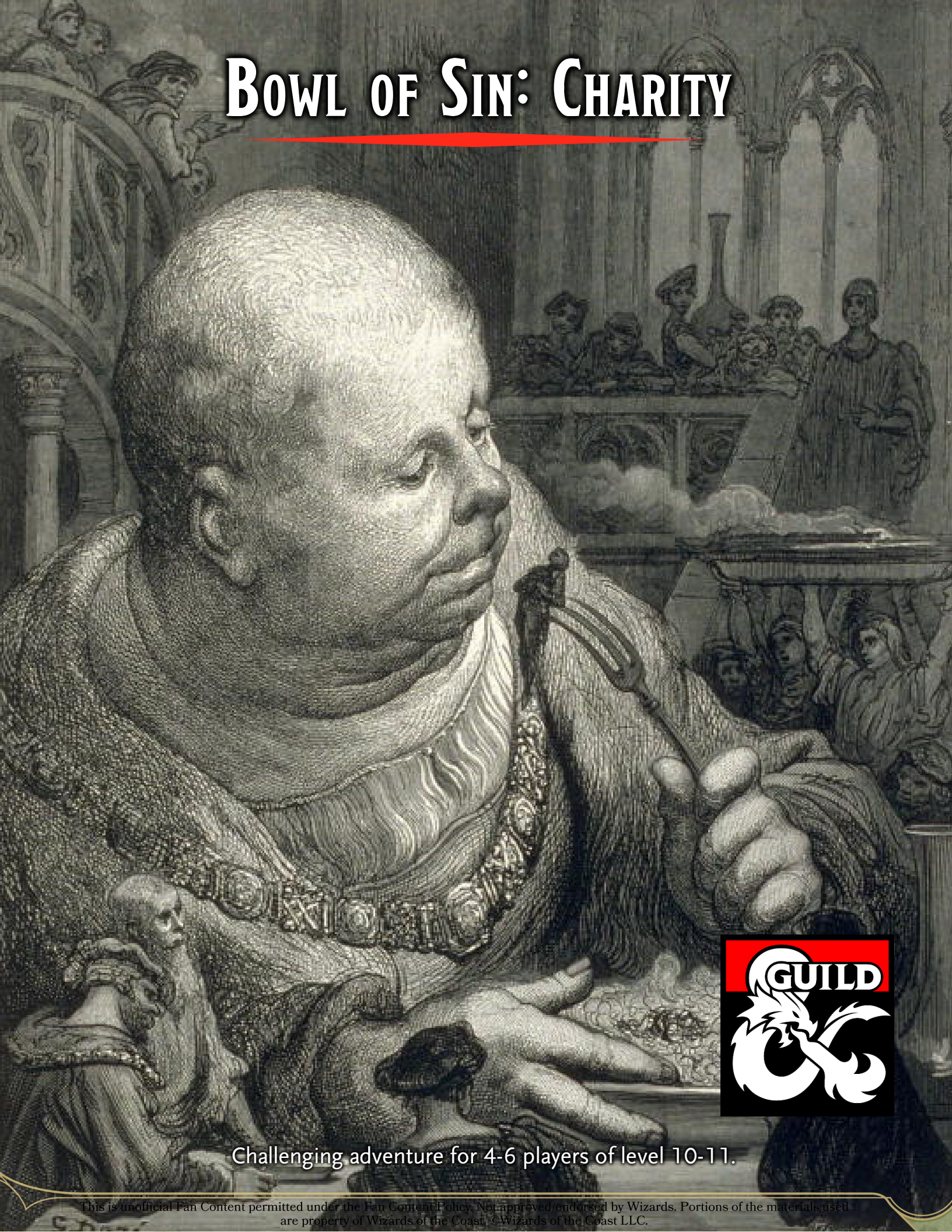


BOWL OF SIN: CHARITY



Challenging adventure for 4-6 players of level 10-11.

1. OVERVIEW

Then. The Bowl of Sin is a massive volcano caldera, long since dormant. In ancient times, the goodly gods sent their angels to this caldera and prepare trials for their mortal champions. The trials were designed to help prepare heroes for the evils they'd face in the world. The trials were difficult, and as the years wore on the angels created increasingly more impossible tasks for the faithful to face. The caldera became a place of suffering, where men and women went to die in the name of their gods.

Now. Eventually the goodly gods realized the error of their ways and put a stop to the trials. The angels that oversaw the place had their divinity taken away, and the land was shrouded in shadow so the gods would not have to look upon their greatest failure. The Bowl of Sin now lies in perpetual night, roamed by the broken remnants of its caretakers. Legends swirl around the caldera, and every year the desperate, the faithful and the sinful make journeys to the Bowl of Sin. None ever return.

WHY WOULD ANYONE GO HERE?

Absolution. Legends say that those seeking absolution for past crimes could find it in the caldera by overcoming a trial. Perhaps the heroes have a deed that needs atoning for, or a sin from their past that hounds them. Perhaps they're being paid handsomely to escort the elderly Grand-Priest Varonius, a rich elven priest, who wishes to atone for his many sins before old age claims him.

Divine ingredients. The horrors that lurk in the bowl of sin were once divine. Fundamental components from their body still contain magic essential for potions of youth, philosopher's stones, cure-all for magical disease or the like. Maybe the heroes need such an ingredient for their quests. Perhaps the archmage Shaol-Dun is hiring them to find such an ingredient.

Treasure. Legends say that emperors, dragons and heroes all made sojourns to the caldera and left their gold hoards there as tribute. Those greedy for gold and with a strong enough sword arm could claim a fortune for themselves, if they survive.



2. MOUTH OF SIN

The jagged, broken peaks that make up the slopes of the caldera are practically impossible to scale. There is only one commonly known entrance: a daunting mountain pass known as the mouth of sin.

When the heroes are approaching from the outside world, read the following:

The mountains have been visible for days – great gray monoliths rising out of the earth as though rejected by the world. Their black peaks are wreathed with storm clouds day and night, and as you approach the Mouth of Sin vegetation grows sparser until its only loose gravel crunches underfoot.

You spot a break in the jagged and impassable peaks - a mountain pass sloping downwards into the bowl of sin. The sun is unable to penetrate the thick mantles of cloud that cover the land before you. It becomes as twilight past this point.

A small squat hut rests along the side of the road, its interior lit by flickering firelight. Closer to you, a standing stone rests, tilted to one side. On the surface its scrawled some text, though its hard to make out at this distance.

Etched into the stone's surface with crude tools is the following:

*beyond are the black lands
hopeless realms where night holds sway
turn back now fools
to these dark gods you cannot pray*

THE HERMIT

A mad nameless hermit lives in the hut, a former adventurer broken in his attempts to raid the Bowl.

Purpose. He keeps a record of all who enter the Bowl and their reason for coming scrawled on the wooden walls of his hut. If the heroes enter his hut he will eagerly offer his fire, hoping to find out their names and reasons for coming. In truth, he is filled with the feeling that salvation waits for him in the bowl, but he too scared to venture forth and too filled with guilt to retreat. He doesn't remember why.

What happened to him. The hermit is afflicted by a permanent madness, and any probing questions about the contents of the bowl send him into a hysterics. A *greater restoration* will restore a measure of his sanity. If this happens, he can speak somewhat lucidly about his experience. Him and his friends were sell-swords, and decided to raid the Bowl hoping to find enough treasure to retire. They had a map to a place called Hope's Fall, and the djinn who sold them the map claimed there was a vault of treasure there. All the hermit can remember from those black days was endless nighttime, a forest of stone and tentacles in the mist. He fled, leaving his friends to die.

Hut's origin. Another hermit possessed the hut before the current occupant. The hut was empty when the current hermit managed to crawl out. In truth, the hut has passed hands, been destroyed and rebuilt several times.

Searching the hut. The hut contains a scant 3 days of food and water and near-useless odds and ends. Creatures making a DC15 investigation check can find some loose floorboards where a scroll tube was buried long ago. Inside is a *scroll of raise dead*, left long ago before the current occupant.



3. TRIAL ROAD

The lands between trials are known as the Trial Road. There are traces of a road, but the constant tectonic shifts have ruined any contiguous path. Markers left by past penitents can be found, pointing in confusing and misleading directions. The caldera itself is 24 miles in radius, meaning that it takes a week of marching on uneven, rough terrain to cross. Due to the constant and radical tectonic shifts, distances are always varying and adventure sites are in motion in the bowl. One never knows for sure where they will end up.

Look. Darkness, gravel, mist, decaying waymarkers, and cyclopean standing stones.

Sound. Distant thunder strikes, occasional earth rumbling.

Smell. Brimstone, cold sweat, chalky

Feel. Blowing, cold winds. Scalding patches of earth. Tremors.

Weather. Occasional freezing rainfall. Mist on still days. Blowing gravel that stings the eyes on windy days.

Read the following:

Darkness envelops you descend into the bowl. Soon the mountains on either side fade into twilight, and all you can see is the ring of light you've created in these nightlands.

The temperature dips until you can see your breath. The ground is loose gravel that slides in and shifts under your feet, making each step treacherous and tiring. You find no vegetation, no sign of game. The pools of water you come across are black and stink of brimstone. The land is hilly and uneven and occasionally you must go around cyclopean shards of stone that jut from the earth as though the ground heaved them forth.

It smells of cold sweat when the air is still. Sometimes the wind picks up fiercely, blowing shards of the gravel underfoot into your face and hands, stinging exposed flesh. The Bowl is a treacherous place, one that threatens to exhaust and destroy you.



JOURNEY IN THE BOWL

For each journey into the Bowl of Sin, have players take up journey roles and make a corresponding check: one navigator, one lookout, one forager. Then resolve an journey encounter. Then arrive at your destination.

One navigator: Make a Wisdom (survival) check to not get turned around. The outcome of this roll really determines how many supplies are consumed.

DC Result

1-14 Get lost, arrive at desired location in 2d6*10 days.

15-19 Arrive at desired location in 1d4*10 days.

20 Arrive at desired location in 10 days.

One lookout: Wisdom (perception) check to spot danger.

DC Result

1-14 Don't spot danger.

15-19 Spot danger at the same time it happens.

20 Spot danger up ahead, can choose to circumvent.

One forager: Can find supplies while traveling.

DC Results

1-14 Find nothing.

15-19 Find enough for 1 person for the journey.

20 Find enough for +Wis people for the journey.

Foraged rations are: scattered supplies amongst a ruined campsite, a dead flock of birds, emaciated game limping in the darkness or rotten smelling fruit that grows off thorny bushes.

JOURNEY ENCOUNTERS

The players always encounter something on their way into the bowl. Roll a d6 and have the heroes encounter one of the following, adjusting the introduction whether or not the lookout has spotted the encounter beforehand:

1. ANGELS IN THE OUTFIELD

Read the following:

You come upon what can only be a battlefield. Bones are scattered everywhere in the loose gravel, rusted and ruined swords, shields and armor lying in piles. Tattered banners flap from rotten pole sticking from the earth. Here and there, great craters mar the terrain. This place stinks of death, and the only sound is bones occasional rattling together when a strong wind blows through.

A DC15 Intelligence (Investigation) yields the narrative behind the battlefield: a force of a dozen mounted humans did battle with one or more giant-sized winged humanoids. Casting *Speak with Dead* gives nothing - the human remains have had their souls taken.

2. MIRROR DARKLY

Four adventurers, lost and starving.

If spotted, they are huddled around a pitiful fire of glowing coals bickering in the dark about what possessions to burn.

If spotted at the same time, they stumble wild eyed into the players firelight, cautious but hopeful of help.

If not spotted, they lie in ambush between two cyclopean stones to kill or capture the heroes.

The party consists of Celi and Deli the half-elf **archer** siblings, the human **gladiator** Pontius, and their halfling **enchanter** Zimer. They want: food and water, then to leave the bowl and have no desire to venture deeper. In their possession is a map to Hope's Fall. It is hopelessly incorrect.

If they travel with the party, after 1d4+1 days Pontius becomes convinced one of the party is trying to kill him.

TACTICS

Archers fall back and focus fire on the least armored held targets, using archer's eye to damage. Try and stay at 150ft feet. Flee if Gladiator dies.

Gladiator uses shield bash to prone someone then attacks with spear.

Enchanter If 2 or more heroes are being affected by hold person, cast fireball. If less, cast hold person at level 5 to affect as many targets as possible. If all allies dead, cast invisibility and flee.

3. TECTONIC ACTION

Read the following:

The earth around you starts to shift and crack, with great geysers of heated gas pouring out, blinding and choking. From the cracks, red-hot glowing magma starts to ooze forth as the ground shifts, quickly cutting off safe avenues of escape. What do you do?

Skill Challenge. Players must pass a DC15 skill check to overcome each danger. Spells can grant advantage or a free success (DM determines). Appropriately sacrificing gear grants advantage. The players get advantage on the first check if their lookout succeeded, and disadvantage if they failed.

- **Blinding and choking gas.** Failure incurs 4d10 poison damage and blindness for a minute.
- **Roiling magma** cutting off escape. Failure incurs 4d10 fire damage.
- **Thorn-covered cliff** blocking progress. Failure causes an important supply (rations, potions, scrolls) to become snagged and tumble back down the cliff into lava.
- **[Flyers only] Sprays of lava** lancing into air. Failure incurs 4d10 fire damage.

4. DUST BOWL

Read the following:

Over an hour period you notice the wind speed picking up. More and more dust and gravel is being picked up, stinging your lungs and slapping against exposed skin. A duststorm is coming.

Nearly hurricane speed winds and loose gravel form what is known as a razorstorm. One is coming. Have the heroes make a Wisdom (Survival) ability checks, to identify an incoming razorstorm, the result determining how far out it is when they notice it.

Roll Time to Razorstorm

25 20 minutes

20 5 minutes

15 2 minutes

1-14 Number of rounds equal to roll

Read the following:

The wind is howling, so strong you have to lean low and heavily against it to avoid being blown away. The nightlands around you are filled with loose dirt, reducing visibility down to 30ft. The loose gravel is picked up and flung at you like your being pelted by an angry mob, stinging any exposed flesh, irritating your eyes and filling your lungs with dust. Traveling any further while this storm is raging will be slow, dangerous business.

During the razorstorm. Winds reach 60 mph and visibility is reduced to 30ft. Gases immediately disperse and unprotected flames are extinguished. The storm will last 2d6 days.

Traveling. One day's march yields ½ days progress to their destination during the storm. For each hour that a character is exposed to a sandstorm it must make a DC 15 Constitution check and a DC 15 Dexterity check. (8 checks total per character for marching a full day.)

- If a creature fails the Constitution check it suffers 1d10 slashing damage, mostly to its respiratory system and lungs, and if it fails on a roll of 1 then it also acquires one level of exhaustion and must make another DC 15 saving throw to avoid contracting a random disease.
- If the creature fails its Dexterity check then it is blinded until such time as this condition is reversed by appropriate magic (e.g., Lesser Restoration) or it subjected to three successful daily DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) checks. If three of these daily checks are successful the creature will have its sight restored and if three fail before this happens then it will remain blinded until this condition can be reversed magically.

Combat. Within unsheltered areas, all ranged weapon attacks are at disadvantage. Anyone engaging in combat must make an DC15 Athletics check at the start of the round or be knocked prone. Small creatures are also blown 1d4x10 feet in the direction of prevailing wind. Flying creatures are also blown back 2d6x10 feet in the direction of prevailing wind.

Hunkering Down. Finding a suitable shelter, perhaps in a shallow cave or amongst some standing stones requires a DC20 Wisdom (Survival) check. Failure yields an hour of fruitless searching and another round of saves. Creating a shelter magically is the easiest option.

With the right materials the players may be able to build a shelter, such a shack would require 3 successful checks to build and there are scant resources in the Trial Road to do so.

5. MONUMENT

Read the following:

A giant sized winged humanoid figure slowly emerges from the darkness up ahead, still and waiting.

A passive perception 15 realizes that this is merely a 20 foot tall statue, otherwise have players roll initiative.

It soon becomes clear this is a finely carved statue of a regal angelic figure with broad chest, flowing hair. The angel has a greatbow on its back and a greatsword in one hand, planted into the earth.

Scattered around the base of the monument are offerings: 2d12 gold worth of coins, bone necklaces, bowls of food long turned to dust, withered and browned flowers. The inscription on the statue base is in an ancient language, but a DC15 Intelligence check reveals the following: "Mannion, angel of strength. Foremost of the trial builders. Only those of true heart and conviction should proceed past this point. All others, turn back."



6. MANNION'S BLACK FURY

The **solar** Mannion patrols the Trial Road from 500ft in the air, looking for light sources. He is regal and terrible to behold, his red skin flawless but his tunic dirt smeared, his wings black and tipped blood red. His equipment is rusted and dented.

If the lookout spots Mannion, it's because a glint of light reflects off the horn on his belt or they hear the faint flapping of his wings. The heroes can attempt a DC 24 Stealth check to avoid his notice.

If Mannion spots the heroes or the heroes are just unaware of the solar, he will engage.

If Mannion slays someone, he will produce his horn of dawn let loose a mournful, horrible blast that shakes the earth and is nearly deafening to those close to it. He then flees the area, tearfully wailing that he must be punished.

Mannion will not use his legendary/paragon actions

TACTICS

First Round. If the players are using light Mannion fires his slaying longbow from 500ft in the air. He attacks from 120ft in the air if they travel in darkness. A passive perception of 24 is required to not be surprised.

Second Round. Mannion lets loose another arrow before stowing his bow and landing before the group. His face is twisted in a wrathful snarl. He demands that the heroes tell him why they've come to his realm. He knows if he hears a lie, and any insolence from the party will make him demand a sacrifice to allow them to continue.

Third Round. If the heroes managed to placate Mannion with a DC20 Persuasion check, the solar will warn them that the trials are for the worthy, and the party is better of leaving his realm. He then will fly off. Otherwise he produces his rusted greatsword and wades into them, attacking whoever hit him last or has made him angry. If reduced to half hp, he will disengage and fly away, returning to his roost to recover.

4. TRIAL OF CHARITY

APPROACHING THE RUINS

Read the following:

You come upon a lake. Pitch black water stands against a shore of razor-sharp shale. The ruins of a village can be seen on the shores of the lake. A nearby wooden sign fallen on the loose gravel earth proclaims this place as 'Charity'. Moving into the village, the only intact structure appears to be a town hall or church of some kind.

RUINS ENTRANCE

Entering the structure, character's discover this is some kind of workshop. Read the following:

Workbenches sized for a giants line the walls. Drills, saws, hammers and lie scattered about. Piles of metal plates, hooks, cogs and gear are stacked against walls. Pulleys support strange plates of metal, some riveted together to form massive pieces

of overlapping plates similar to scale mail. The walls are papered with designs. Your eyes are drawn to glowing runes written in celestial that adorn one wall.

Anyone who can read celestial discover the runes say the following:

I wanted it all. To be the greatest fighter, to be the richest, to be the most respected inventor. I have succeeded, and I have failed. My greatest creation, my magnum opus, is finished too late. Already the sky has darkened and the divine no longer give me the power needed to bring my machine to life. The only option left is to power it with my own soul. Let it be so. To you who read this, I've already become greater than any being can. Look on mortal, and covet what I have become.

Investigating the drawings requires a DC20 Arcana check. Success reveals designs for a kind of war machine that self-repairs and adapts. The units are layered, one larger machine digs and is for large-scale battle. One smaller machine can be deployed for anti-personnel use.

PARAGON OF GREED

Read the following:

The ground begins to rumble and shake. Something big is coming.

Have players roll initiative. On the servant's turn, it will attack with Ruin in its Wake.

The building buckles and explodes upward as a gargantuan creature burrows from below, sending earth and stone flying into the air. You can see this creature is like a snake or worm, its body composed of segmented plates that overlap one after the other. In between the plates you see a fiery glow, and lightning races up and down the creature in great arcs. It has no eyes and its maw is a glowing red pit, lined with mechanical wheels that whirl and grind earth into rubble. A deep, core-wrenching horn blast emits from its mouth.

When the first form is defeated, read the following:

The worm thrashes and shakes as small explosions and lightning arc of its body. As it begins to grow still you see a metal dog-like creature emerge from the worms mouth, dripping fiery liquids and glowing red hot. The small dog-like creature opens its mouth and lets out the deep, core wrenching horn blast you heard earlier before pouncing to attack, its tail lashing too and fro.

SERVANT OF GREED: DEVOUR/TAKE

gargantuan / huge, lawful evil

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 150/150 (intake 100, stinger 100)

Speed 50ft, burrow 30ft / 40ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+9/+0	-3/+2	+5	-5	-1	-5

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +3 / Dex +6, Wis +4

Damage Resistances psychic, cold, bldg pier and slash from nonmagical attacks.

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, unconscious

Senses tremorsense 60ft, darkvision 120ft, passive perception 9

Languages Understands celestial but can't speak

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Immutable Form. The servant is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

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

Actions

Shake It Off. The servant can spend their action to end any conditions/spells affecting it, taking 5 damage per condition/spell.

Multiattack. [Devour Only] The servant makes two attacks: one with its intake and one with its stinger.

Intake. [Devour Only] *melee weapon attack*: +13, reach 10ft, one target. *Hit* 18 (2d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the servant. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the servant, and it takes 16 (2d6 + 9) split between lightning, poison and fire damage at the start of each of the servant's turns.

If the servant takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the servant must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the servant. If the servant dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Stinger. [Devour Only] *melee weapon attack*: +13, reach 10ft, one target. *Hit* 16 (2d6 + 9) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 30 (6d6 + 9) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Ruin in its Wake. The servant moves up to its speed in a straight line. During this move, it can enter creatures' spaces. A creature whose space the servant enters must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a successful save, the creature is pushed 5 feet to the nearest space out of the servant's path. On a failed save, the creature falls prone and takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage.

If the servant remains in the prone creature's space, the creature is also restrained until it's no longer in the same space as the servant. While restrained in this way, the creature, or another creature within 5 feet of it, can make a DC 16 Strength check. On a success, the creature is shunted to an unoccupied space of its choice within 5 feet of the servant and is no longer restrained.

Covetous Weapons. [Take Only] The servant chooses one of the following effects:

Intake Blast. The servant emits a 60ft cone of lightning and sound from its intake. Each creature in the cone must make a DC18 Constitution saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) lightning damage and 5 (1d10) thunder damage and are pushed back to the end of the cone on a failed save, or half damage on a success and are not moved.

Byproduct Exhaust. The servant spews flaming exhaust from its stinger. Each creature within 30ft of the servant must make a DC18 Dexterity saving throw or are coated in flaming poison exhaust. At the end of each of their turns, they take 5 (1d10) fire damage and 9 (2d8) poison damage. A creature can spend an action to remove the burning exhaust.

Jet Propulsion. *Melee slam attack*: +9, reach 10ft. *Hit*: 13 (3d8) bludgeoning damage and 18 (4d8) fire damage. The servant then emits a 30ft cone on the opposite side of itself from the target. Creatures within the cone must make a DC18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

Paragon Traits

Paragon Fortitude. The servant has multiple pools of hit points, each which is tracked separately. Damage and healing only applies to the current hit point pool. When a pool is depleted of all hit points, it becomes inactive. When this happens, the servant immediately saves against all ongoing conditions and effects. If all hit point pools are inactive, the servant dies.

Paragon Rage. The servant rolls initiative with advantage. The servant starts with 0 paragon actions. If a hit point pool is depleted, the servant gains a paragon action. Each paragon action grants the servant an additional turn on initiative count 10.

Multipart Monstrosity. The paragon has an intake and stinger, each of which has its own pool of hit points, as shown in the hit points entry above. When a creature makes a melee or ranged attack against the paragon that creature may choose to target a specific body part by suffering disadvantage on the attack roll. When a body part suffers damage, paragon suffers the same amount of damage. Conditions and effects inflicted on the body part apply to the whole creature. When a body part is reduced to 0 hit points, that body part is destroyed.

PARAGON OF GREED

History. Quel'Qo the angel of invention was the second in command of the Bowl. He was the strongest advocate for continual development and improvement of the trials, driven by an urge to be the best and supplant Mannion as master trial builder. When darkness fell on the bowl, many blamed Quel'Qo's greed for their punishment. He fled to a local village and finally perfected his machine, sacrificing his life in the process.

FIRST STAGE TACTICS

The servant will try and pin as many people as possible with ruin in its wake and follow-up with its multi-attack. If a character goes down inside its gullet it may spend its turn disengaging and simply burrowing away, waiting for its target to be slain before returning to the fight.

SECOND STAGE TACTICS

The servant should use ruin in its wake to pin some, then use coat everyone in byproduct exhaust, then use intake blast, then use jet propulsion.

MANNION'S WITNESS

When the second stage of the battle begins, Mannion will arrive on the scene and remain visible. If attacked, he will fly away. When the servant is defeated, he will let loose a mournful horn blast. He will then congratulate the players on their prowess and dedication. He invites them to meet him on his perch, saying he will leave a light on to guide their way. He will then fly off.

TREASURE

When the final form is slain, the servant melts into a molten pile of steel. A glowing crystal rises to the surface of the liquid, shining with a white light. This crystal is suffused with divine energy and can be used to craft any very rare item, completely supplying the gold cost and material component requirements of the item. Picking through the ruins of the forge, characters can find 34,000gp worth of schematics for machines of war, tools, blessed steel ingots, high-grade adamantine plates. These objects weigh in total 65,000lbs.

OTHER STUFF

LEGAL:

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THE BRIMMING BOWL

This adventure will only present one destination in the Bowl, Charity, but we only have one left now. See you next time! Taylor

