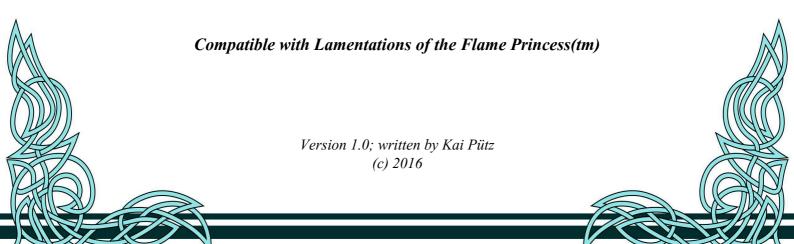




Inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's "At the Mountains of Madness"





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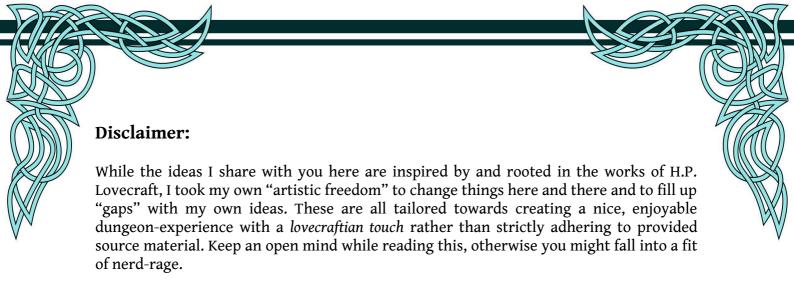
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### What this is all about:

After I finished H.P. Lovecraft's story "At the Mountains of Madness" the GM in me dreamed about an adventure that would be take place in some (other) subterranean ruins of the Elder Beings. Another city or outpost, perhaps smaller, or just the caverns that would lead to its entrance. An adventure about the strange creatures that could have developed there, based on some breeding stock the Elder Beings once kept. I thought about the Elder Beings attempting to slowly retake those places they left as they moved back into the oceans so long ago. I thought about a renewal of their conflict with the Mi-Go, one that is only at the beginning as Mi-Go recon parties try to locate and gauge the erstwhile settlements and strongholds of their rivals. And about what could happen when a party of (demi-)human adventurers would stumble upon all of this, on their search for riches or ancient wisdom.

As I was not able to create a full-blown adventure out of my ideas, I rather created a set of 20 structured encounters. The difference to (completely) random encounters is that some of them are preliminary encounters that will trigger certain other encounters as a follow-up (or will be triggered instead of their follow-ups). In addition, a simple frame was given for the encounters and stats for six creatures and two strange items [all of whom are compatible with Lamentations of the Flame Princess(tm)].

Enjoy!



### A world in a nutshell:

The encounters are supposed to happen underground, either directly in the abandoned ruins of a former city (or outpost) of the *Elder Beings* or in a series of caverns that lead to them. Any map with enough rooms and corridors (or caverns and tunnels) will do the trick. The place will have been abandoned centuries ago, and thereby not much will be left (aside from the odd relief or some other structures that were to large to remove). But some of the creatures they kept as pets life stock and workforce were left behind and now populate this subterranean realm.

On top of the food chain are the **Shoggoth**, so the term "food chain" is a misnomer here. The Shoggoth do not eat, at least not in the regular way. They sustain themselves through the absorption of cosmic energies, but they never the less attack and devour what comes into their way. They once were the main work force of the Elder Beings, but some of them later became rogue and turned onto their former masters. The Shoggoth are erratic and not of human intellect.

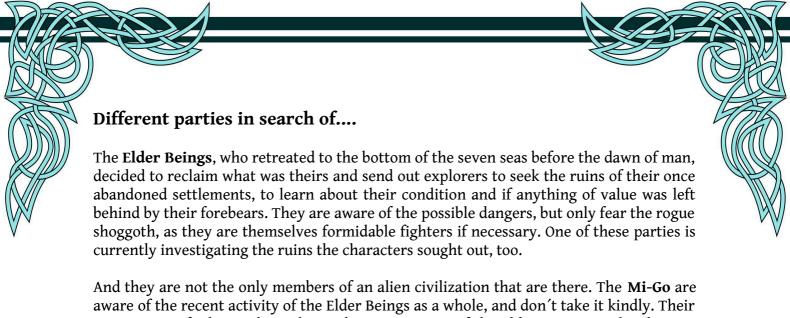
It is up to the GM if there is more than one Shoggoth in the area, but one should be more than enough. The encounters are structured into a way to turn the Shoggoth into a kind "final monster" that lurks in the dark.

Something of the quickly fading residue the Shoggoth leaves behind while moving around functions as a nutrient medium for a slimy **lichen** that can be found in some places (mostly in those where a Shoggoth has rested for couple of days in its erratic, semi-mindless travel before it moved on).

The lichen are the main food source for both a number of insects and the **Pale Slugs**. The later are a breed that the Elder Beings kept to clean the ground and to provide food for other animals, but the *Pale Slugs* became feral after the place was abandoned. They are omnivorous and can grow up to the size of a large dog.

Another now-feral species are the **Albino Cave Bats**. The Elder Beings were found of meat and Albion Cave Bats were kept as human keep poultry and were breed for size, with the added benefit of reducing the amount of vermin underground. The Albino Cave Bats prey on the insects and sometimes lick the slimy lichen.

One species of insects developed over the centuries that preys on the Albino Cave Bats: **the Albino Stinger.** These creatures are nearly translucent and the size of a small singing bird, and their venom is strong enough to kill an Albino Cave Bat (unless the Cave Bat kills it first).



And they are not the only members of an alien civilization that are there. The **Mi-Go** are aware of the recent activity of the Elder Beings as a whole, and don't take it kindly. Their scouts try to find out where the exploration parties of the Elder Beings are heading, to seize whatever they find for themselves in the end. Such a recon party found out about these ruins and now tries to beat the Elder Beings to... whatever they are after.

The "prize" both of these parties are after is the location of a certain **Passage** (encounter 20#). If the game takes place in a set of caverns and tunnels, this might very well be the entrance to the ruins of a city below. If the game takes place in the ruins, it leads to a special place: perhaps a sanctuary or it is a magic passage to a completely different world.

Whatever it is, a Shoggoth stays near it....

### How to use the encounters:

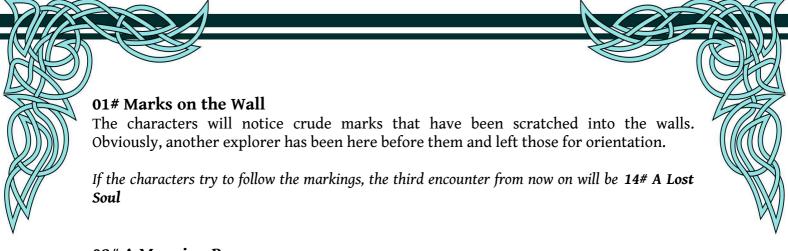
Roll a d20 and consult the entry that matches the result. If the GM wants a longer build-up phase for the game, she can make the first three rolls with a d10 instead of a d20.

A sentence like this tells the GM that a certain other encounter will happen instead of the entry, unless this very other encounter has happened already.

The stats for the different creatures and monsters and their special gear can be found in the appendix.

A sentence like this tells the GM that this encounter will have some special effect that carries over to the next encounter.





### 02# A Moaning Breeze

A gust of air moves through the subterranean place and blows into the faces of the PC.. It is accompanied by low, moaning noise. After about a minute the phenomena repeats itself, just like it would be the slow breath of chthonian titan. In truth, it is just a subterranean air-movement, but the very next turn there is 1 out of 6 chance that a torch a character wear is blown out (4 out of 6 in case of a candle, a lantern is not effected).

### 03# Slime Trail

The ground in front of the characters is coated by a thin layer of milky, translucent slime that forms a trail, about two feet wide.

If the characters don't head back where they came from, the next encounter is going to be 09# Pale Slugs

# 04# The Buzzing of Insects

As strange as it seems, the characters begin to hear the faint buzz of an insect in flight. Soon afterwards they will note tiny, pale mouth-like creatures that dance around them, seemingly attracted by their light source. After about a turn a small cloud of those will have gathered around them, and will follow them where-ever they go.

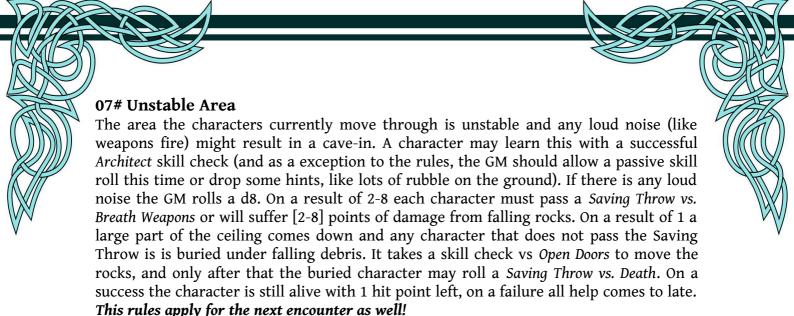
The next encounter is going to be **06# Albino Cave Bats.** 

### 05# A Patch of Lichen

The majority of the place the character enter is covered by a slimy lichen that grows in large patches. It makes the ground slippery and drops from the ceiling. Numerous small insects swirl about in the air and a multitude of small slugs crawl over the ground. In addition to that, the characters may encounter both *Pale Giant Slugs* and *Albino Cave Bats here* (1d6-3 slugs and 2d6-6 cave bats. Any result of zero or lower means that the creature type is not encountered).

#### 06# Albino Cave Bats

1d3 Albino Cave Bats have been attracted by the light source of the characters and the noise they make. The will flutter around them and get pretty close, but unless the characters strike after them they will not attack but fly away after a while.



#### 08# Chthonic Mist

A strange, thick white mist wafts through the area. It is moist, cold and reflects the light so that the characters will be unable to see further than 5' while in the mist. If the PC keep firearms at the ready there is a 1 out of 8 chance that the powder becomes damp. If so, the weapon will not fire until prepared again. This rules apply for the next encounter as well!

# 09# Pale Slugs

1d3 Pale Slug creatures, each the size of a rottweiler, crawl over the ground. They seem harmless enough with their seemingly eyeless stalks moving this way and that while they shove their slimy bodies over the ground. But they react to vibration, air movement around them and sense living beings by their warmth. If any character gets to close the creatures will attack (0 HD, 1d4 hit points and 1d4 damage).

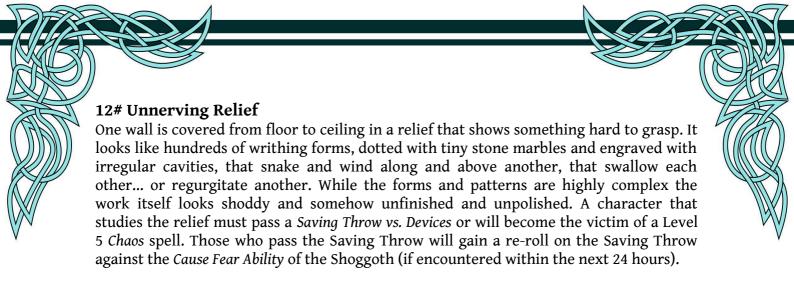
### 10# Albino Stinger

The characters will hear the buzzing of an insect. It will remind them of a hornet, but much louder. When they look around for its source they will not find it a first (see Albino Stinger).

# 11# A Colony of Albino Cave Bats

If encounter **06#** Ablino Cave Bats has not happened till now, run 06# now and 11# as the next encounter.

The ground the characters walk over is covered in guano and when they look up they will find a whole colony of Albino Cave Bats hanging from the ceiling high above them. There are dozens of these creatures and as the PC look up the first drop down from their resting places like dive bombers. Loud noises and the presence of light brighter than a candle will have a small swarm of the Cave Bats harass and even attack the characters till they leave the place. If a PC with a Dexterity below 12 tries to move quickly over the guano covered ground, there is a 1 out of 6 chance that the character will slip and fall prone.



### 13# Tekeli-li! Tekeli-li!

From ahead of them the characters perceive a strange sound, like a group of ghost pipers playing wailing tunes interrupted by sudden shrieks of their instruments.

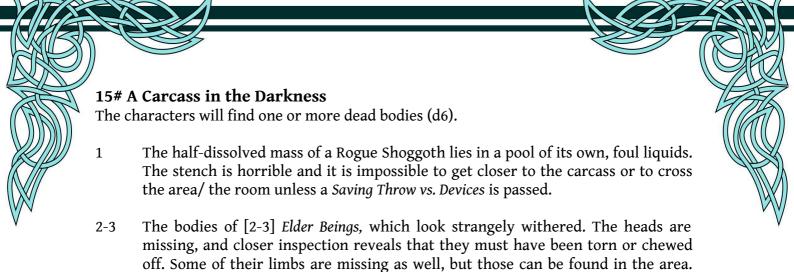
If the characters do not avoid the direction they were heading to (where the sound comes from), roll a d6: A result of 1-3 means that the next encounter is going to be 17# The Owners Returned, otherwise it is going to be 19# A Shoggoth

#### 14# A Lost Soul

Somebody or something runs towards the characters in the dark. After a moment a tall and lanky man comes into sight who wears dirty but sturdy clothes. His eyes are bloodshot and he storms towards the nearest character (no matter what) and tries to grab him with his huge hands. If the characters do not slay him outright the maddened adventurer, whose name is Henry, will grab the character with shaky hands and hoarsely yell "we must flee! WE MUST FLEEE!!" and try to drag him or her along. Henry is a Level 1 Fighter with 8 hit points, but unarmed and scared beyond reason. If he cannot convince the characters to flee with him (or drag one of them along) he will just run off into the darkness. He belonged to a small group of adventurers, not unlike that of the characters, who encountered a Rogue Shoggoth. He was the only one who was able to flee, and dropped everything he had with him while doing so. Everything he says is "all are dead!" and "we must flee!" and this behaviour will only change 2d6 hours after he left this place. If the characters search him (after they restrained killed him) they will find 2d6 sp, the empty scabbard of a saber, a length of rope slung around his torso, two metal keys and a small blade in his left boot.

If the character head into the direction Henry came from, use 15# A Carcass in the Darkness (The bodies of adventurers) as the overnext encounter.





The bodies of [4-5] adventurers, or what is left of them. They have literally been torn asunder, body parts and chunks of meat are strewn all over the place that is not only splattered with blood and gore but also with a strange, purple-black slime. If the characters look around for loot they will find a lot of adventurer gear (rope, torches, medium melee weapons, etc.) but most will be useless due to battle damage or the slime that covers it. It takes a successful *Search* skill check to find anything that is still of value (GM's choice).

around might find an Ether Scepter with a successful Search skill check.

Everything is splattered in a strange, purple-black slime. Characters that look

The rotting carcass of a Cave Bat. 1d6 Strange yellow, maggot-like larva eat away at the carcass (the larva of an Albino Stinger, which are harmless to the characters).

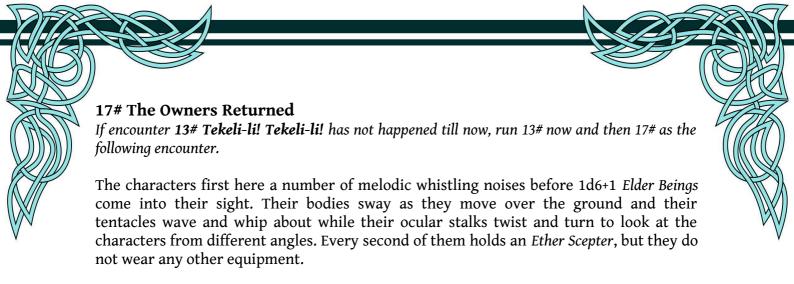
#### 16# Lurkers in the Dark

The characters gain the attention of a group of 1d3+2 *Mi-Go*, all of whom are armed with *Ray-Discs*. They were able to locate and spot the PC in the dark long before those had any chance to become aware of them. A *Reaction Roll* determines how the *Mi-Go* will respond to their presence. If the characters are accompanied by the *Elder Beings* any result of *Talkative/Helpful* is re-rolled.

**Hostile/Unfriendly:** the Mi-Go will ambush them out of the dark (check for *Surprise*) in order to get rid of them before they can interfere with their plans. If the reaction was *Hostile* they will chase them if they flee, if the reaction way *Unfriendly* they won't.

**Indifferent:** the Mi-Go will try to avoid and evade them. Allow the characters to check for *Surprise* to see if they note them before they retreat. If the characters note them (and their reaction shows it) or if the Mi-Go encounter them again a new reaction is determined and a new result of *Indifferent* means that the Mi-Go will tail them until they either encounter *the Passage* or the *Elder Beings*.

**Talkative/Helpful:** one of the *Mi-Go* reveals its presence and approaches the characters while the other try to stay out of sight (check for "Surprise" if the characters try to figure out if there are more of them in the dark). It will try to question the characters, but will reveal very little about itself or feed the PC some simple lies. If the characters answer its questions and seem cooperative it will offer to join them (while the others follow behind). If the characters are uncooperative the *Mi-Go* will order them to leave this place for "you don't belong here." If the characters don't, the other attack out of the dark (see above).



If the characters do not attack immediately a *Reaction Roll* determines the response of the *Elder Beings*. They consider themselves to be completely superior to the characters (and perhaps not without reason). If the PC put away their weapons and act calmly they receive a (+2) bonus to the *Reaction Roll*, but if they act threateningly they receive a (-2) penalty. If they are accompanied by a Mi-Go, they will receive a (further) (-2) penalty

Hostile: the Elder Beings attack the characters and try to chase them if they flee.

**Unfriendly:** the *Elder Beings* will act threateningly and try to scarce the characters off. If it does not work they will attack them, but will not give chase when they flee.

**Indifferent/Talkative:** the *Elder Beings* are just curious and will inspect the characters from afar. If they act in a calm way, the *Elder Beings* even might try to touch the PC and their gear or to take some of it away to have a look at it. At some point, they will just turn and leave. If the PC follow them they won't be bothered by it unless the characters try to attack or interact with them (in the latter case the Reaction is re-rolled and any result of Indifferent is ignored).

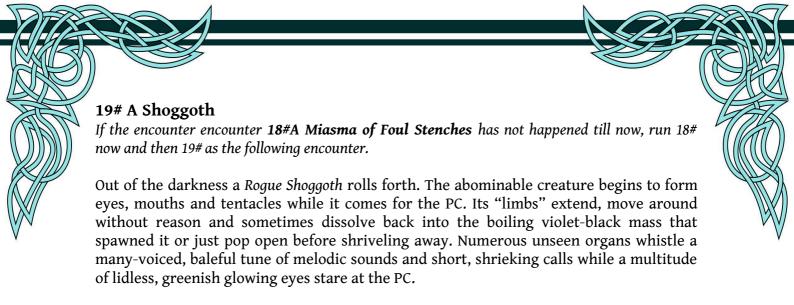
**Helpful:** see above, but the *Elder Beings* will signal the PC to follow them and will even tolerate it if the characters touch and inspect them as long as it is done carefully (just like a human would treat a seemingly friendly stray cat).

#### 18# A Miasma of Foul Stenches

A disgusting stench none of the PC have ever smelled before\* is noted by the characters, and it grows stronger the further the characters go (and will not leave them from now on).

\*(unless they have encountered a Shoggoth before).

If the characters do not avoid the direction they were heading to (where the smell comes from), roll a d6: A result of 1-3 means that the next encounter is going to be 15# A Carcass in the Darkness (with the dead Shoggoth), otherwise it is going to be 19# A Shoggoth



If the characters are accompanied by the *Mi-Go*, they will flee and leave the characters behind. If the characters are accompanied by the *Elder Beings*, they will stay and fight even if the characters flee.

# 20# The Passage

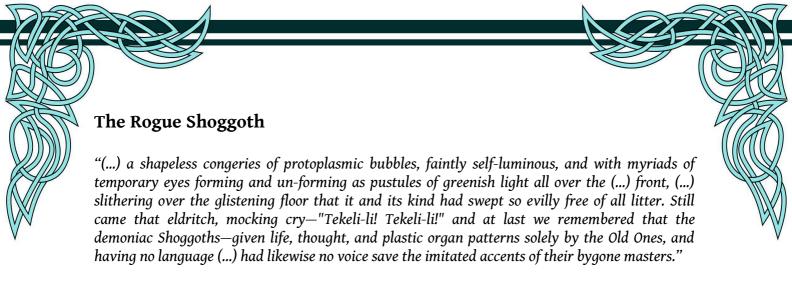
If encounter **19# A Shoggoth** has not happened till now, run 19# now and then 20# as the following encounter.

The ground ahead is smooth and actually paved with large stone slabs. In the center of the room is a pentagonal opening, about five meters from one side to the next. The corner of it is bordered by rectangular slabs of greenish soapstone that are engraved with a mysterious hole pattern. The masonry works on one of the soapstone indicates that there may once have been a set of stairs leading down, but no other trace of it can be seen. The opening leads into a shaft with walls covered in green soapstone slabl, but after a yard nothing can be seen but pitch black darkness.

The characters will be unable to gauge the depth of this duct as any item they drop down will simply disappear from view and no sound will be heard from below. No matter how long the rope the characters brought with them is, it will not reach the ground. If a character is roped down, this PC will still not be able to discern the ground below ...or if there is any.

If the characters are accompanied by the *Mi-Go* when they reach this place, the alien creatures will simply unfold their wings and fly back the way they came, without a discharge or a word. If the characters were tailed by the *Mi-Go*, they will launch a surprise attack and try to kill them all. If the characters are accompanied by the *Elder Beings*, they will turn to them and make a strange gesture with three of their five tentacle limbs and give a low series of whistles. Then, they will unfold their wings and glide down the duct and disappear in the darkness below.





[H.P. Lovecraft; "At the Mountains of Madness"]

The Rogue Shoggoth the characters face is in size roughly equal to a stage coach and of purple-black color. It will form teethed maws and whipping tentacles to attack the characters. If the characters are accompanied by *Elder Beings*, these will be attacked first.

Move: 80' Armor: AC 10 Hit Dice: 6 Attack:

Damage: 1d8 (Tentacle) or 1d10 (Bite)

The Shoggoth does not need to eat or breath and is immune against all poisons and diseases. The damage from all attacks made against it with mundane weapons is reduce by 4 (and possibly reduced to

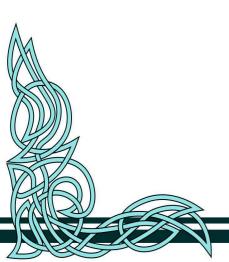
zero points).

It has a total of seven attacks, but cannot use more than three of them against one opponent at a time. If it is fighting less than three opponents it will start to flow around them so that it will begin to attack "from behind" after the third round of combat.

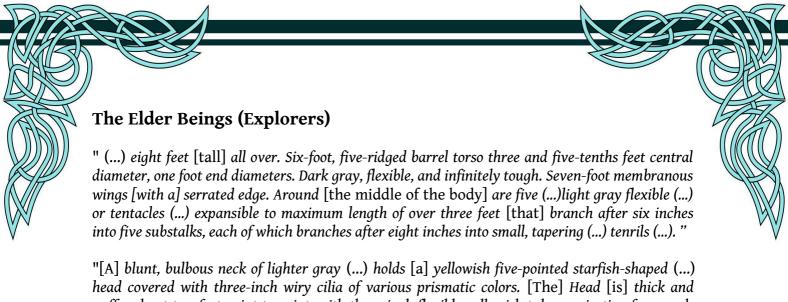
It can only use its bite attack on an opponent if it makes use of the *Press* option during an attack, and can only do so every other round.

It regenerates 1 hit each 1d6 rounds (roll after each regained hit point to see when the next one is regained).

All (demi-)humans that encounter the Shoggoth must pass a *Saving Throw vs. Devices* or will be under the effect of 6<sup>th</sup> Level *Cause Fear* spell (which is the reverse of the *Remove Fear* spell).







"[A] blunt, bulbous neck of lighter gray (...) holds [a] yellowish five-pointed starfish-shaped (...) head covered with three-inch wiry cilia of various prismatic colors. [The] Head [is] thick and puffy, about two feet point to point, with three-inch flexible yellowish tubes projecting from each point. (...) At end of each tube is [a] spherical expansion where yellowish membrane (...) reveal [a] glassy, red-irised (...) eye. Five slightly longer reddish tubes start from inner angles of starfish-shaped head and end in saclike swellings of same color which (...)open to bell-shaped orifices (...) lined with sharp, white tooth like projections (...)

"At [the] bottom [are] (...), rough but dissimilarly functioning counterparts of [the] head. [A] greenish five-pointed starfish arrangement. Tough, muscular arms four feet long and tapering from seven inches diameter at base to about two and five-tenths at point. (...) each point is attached [to a] small end of a greenish five-veined membranous triangle eight inches long and six wide at farther end. (...) From [the] inner angles of starfish-arrangement project two-foot reddish tubes tapering from three inches diameter at base to one at tip. (...) All these parts [are] infinitely tough and leathery, but extremely flexible. Four-foot arms with paddles [with] exaggerated muscularity.

[H.P. Lovecraft; "At the Mountains of Madness"]

Move: 80' (100 in flight) Armor: AC 16 Hit Dice: 5 Attack: 3/5\*

**Damage:** 1d6 (Tentacle) or 1d8 (Bite) or Weapon (Ether Scepter: 1d8).

**Special:** Elder Beings have up to five attacks, but can only use up to 3 onto the same "bearing" (front, left side, right side, rear).

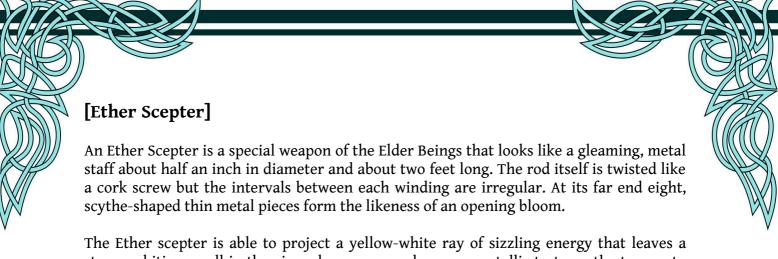
If an Eldar Being takes control of a human (or a monster with not more than 3 HD) in a grapple it may bite the victim at the beginning of its next turn as a free action.

They are completely unimpaired by darkness.

Their alien minds grants them a Special Saving Throw (9) against all attempts of (demi-)humans to control their minds or their feelings.

They are unable to speak or understand the human language.

They are able fly (when only Lightly Encumbered), but unfolding their wings and "taking off" takes them one combat round during which they are *helpless*.



The Ether scepter is able to project a yellow-white ray of sizzling energy that leaves a strange, biting smell in the air and causes goosebumps a metallic taste on the tongue to any (demi-)humans in the vicinity. It is a ranged attack doing 2d6 damage against Shoggoths (which it was designed against) and 1d8 damage against all other living beings. The attack ignores all mundane armor and has a range of < 50 / 600 / < 900. Any Ether Scepter the characters get their hands on will have 2d6 "charges" left, but figuring out how to activate it takes a PC with an Intelligence of 12+ about a turn and a successful test (1 out of 6).

# The Mi-Go (Scouts)

"They were pinkish things about five feet [tall] with crustaceous bodies bearing vast pairs of (...) membranous wings and several sets of articulated limbs, and with a sort of convoluted ellipsoid, covered with multitudes of very short antennae, where a head would ordinarily be."

[H.P. Lovecraft; "The Whisperer in the Darkness"]

Move: 120' (Flight: 180') Armor: AC 13 Hit Dice: 3 Attack: 1

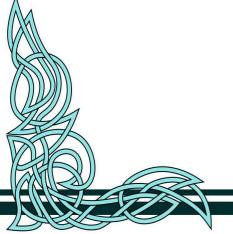
Damage: 1d4 (Unarmed) or Weapon (Ray-Stone: 1d8)

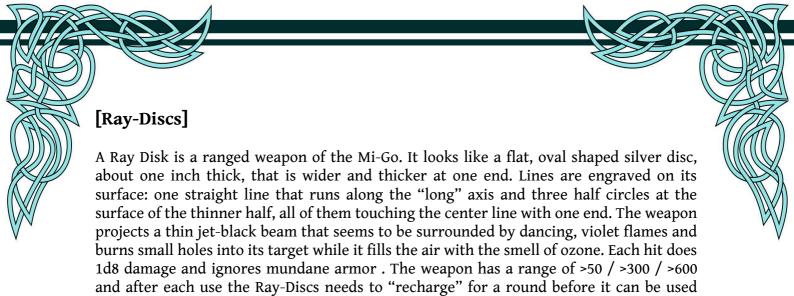
They are able to fly (when only Lightly Encumbered), but unfolding their wings and "taking off" takes them one combat round during which their AC drops to 10.

Their alien minds grants them a Special Saving Throw (9) against all attempts of (demi-)humans to control their minds or their feelings.

They are able to speak and understand the human language, but do so with a voice that is both hollow and droning.

They are completely unimpaired by darkness.





Any Ray-Disc the characters get their hands on will have 2d6 "charges" left, but figuring out how to activate it takes a PC a turn and a successful test (3 out of 6).

### **Albion Cave Bats**

again.

These are cave bats the size of crows, their fur is as white as their blind eyes are. They are nosy, but harmless unless they are attacked our their colony is disturbed.

Move: (Flight: 180') Armor: AC 14 Hit Dice: 0 (1d4 hp) Attack: 1

Damage: 1d4 (bite)

Suffers a (-2) penalty to all attacks against opponents with an

unmodified AC of 15+

### **Pale Slugs**

The slug creatures can be found all over the place, but only those stick out who have grown to the size of a rottweiler, crawl over the ground. They seem harmless enough with their seemingly eyeless stalks moving this way and that while they shove their slimy bodies over the ground, but they react to vibration, air movement around them and sense living beings by their warmth. If any character gets to close the creatures will attack if they sense them (3 out of 6 chance). They can be easily avoided in a large room or tunnel, but become a danger in narrow spaces.

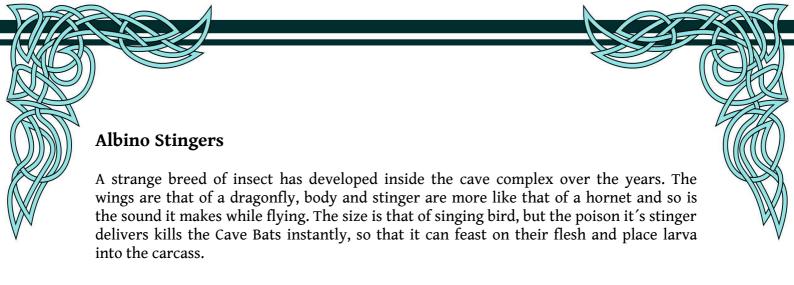
Move: 70' Armor: AC 10 Hit Dice: 0 (1d4 hp) Attack: 1

**Damage:** 1d4 (flesh-dissolving "bite")

Suffers a (-2) penalty to all attacks against opponents with a

Dexterity of 12+





Move: (Flight: 240') Armor: AC 16 Hit Dice: 2 (1d4 hp) Attack: 1

**Damage:** Poison (1 point per round for 1d10 rounds, half that much if a

Saving Throw vs. Poison is passed; round up).

Suffers a (-2) penalty to all attacks against opponents with an

unmodified AC of 15+

Due to their translucent bodies the creatures are hard to detect and

thereby all checks for Surprise against them are made with a d8

instead of a d6

### How to turn this into a mini-adventure:

Get yourself a map and make up some strange finds at some of the places (or turn some of the encounters into location-based encounters). In a semi-historical setting (like the "standard" game world for LotFP) xp could be granted for encounters with the strange:

50xp each for encounters with each of the minor species (*Pale Slugs, Albino Cave Bats, Pale Stinger*)

50xp for finding the *Unnerving Relief* and 100xp for the character who studies it (no matter what the outcome is).

200xp for an encounter with the *Mi-Go*, the *Elder Beings* and/or the *Shoggoth*. Any meaningful interaction (aside from combat) with the Mi-Go or the Elder Beings should be worth another 200xp. In case of the Shoggoth, beating one should be worth a lot of xp, too.

Finally it should be worth 200 - 500xp when the characters actually find the Passage.

The hook for such an adventure can be very simple: have the characters visit a remote village when two charcoal burners run screaming into it, yelling about "spawns of the devil" that descended down from the sky onto a clearing about an in the woods "near the mountain". If the characters investigate they will find some VERY strange tracks that start in the middle of the clearing and lead towards the mountain (and to the entrance of a cave system).