



HEROIC

1-10

# FIST OF MOURNING

An adventure for 10th-level characters



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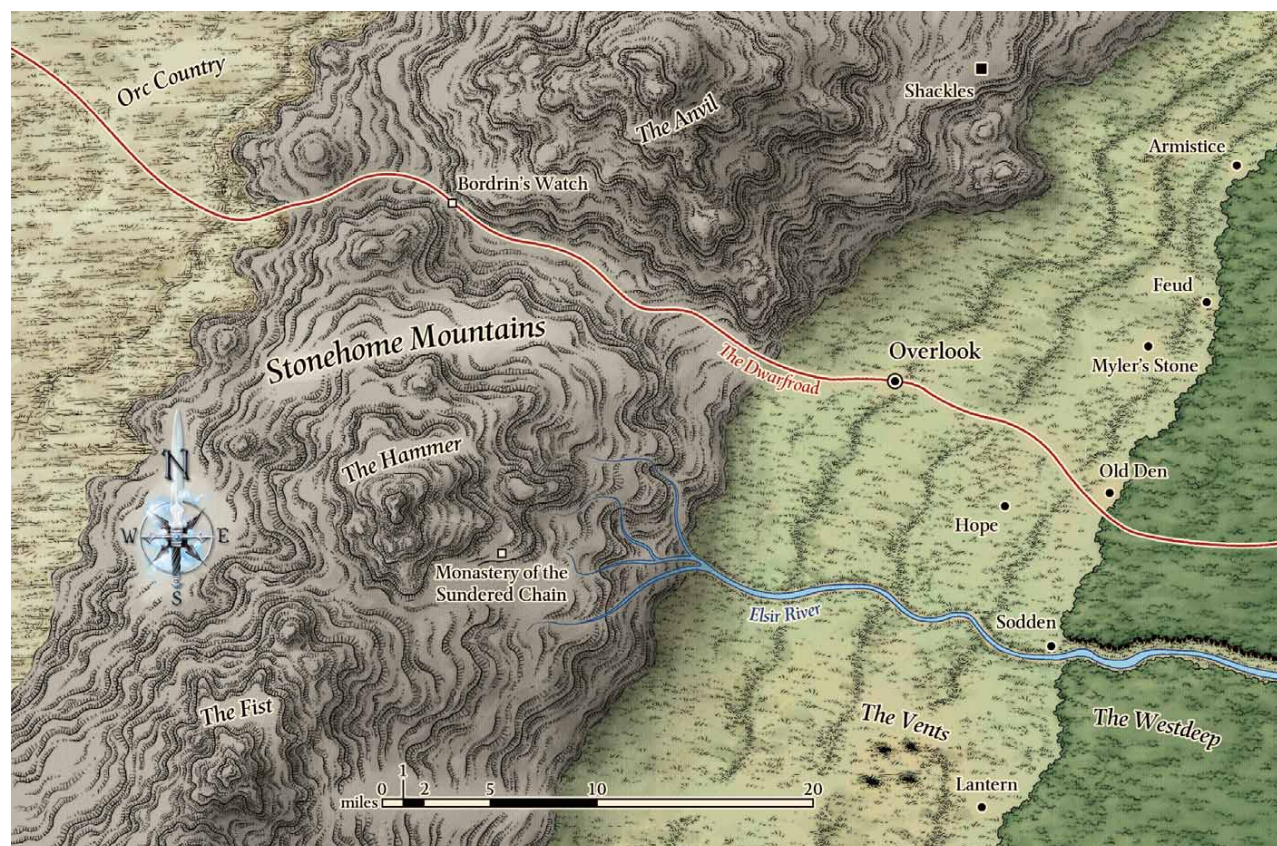
While lords and heroes alike look to the brimming war spilling across the lands, evil blossoms in places unexpected. With the realm, and possibly the world, teetering on destruction's precipice, new factions rise to work their wickedness. One such menace is the Cult of Exquisite Agony, a disturbed cabal dedicated to perfecting mortal flesh by infusing it with the essence of chaos to make it more adaptable, stronger, faster, and better. Gathering in a fallen hero's tomb high in the Stonehome Mountains, this cult commits horrific acts hidden from those who cannot comprehend their effort's magnificent end. Though careful to avoid attention, success's proximity has made them sloppy, and their deeds leave traces those with courage and resolve can follow.

"Fist of Mourning" is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure for five 10th-level characters. Although designed as a short scenario for adventuring parties participating in the "Scales of War" adventure path, you can adapt it for use in any mountainous region of any game world and for any campaign.

## BACKGROUND

The Cult of Exquisite Agony blossomed and withered many times over the centuries, rising in power, but falling when madness and treachery consumed its greatest leaders. Each time the cult rose, it sought to improve on what the gods themselves had done: remake mortal flesh into something better and attain the full potential they believed was buried within all.

The last time the cult stirred was over a century ago, many miles to the south in the ruins of Zannad. Believing the secrets to their evolution was within the fabled yuan-ti city, they scoured the wreckage with little luck and they, like others before them,



succumbed to insanity and malice, turning against each other in an orgy of violence. Not all perished, and at least one escaped to carry the filthy message of transformation to other lands.

One such refugee made it to Overlook, and before her death, she passed on her cult's tenets to loyal followers recruited from local folk. Over the generations, the cult grew, but its leaders did not follow in their founder's steps until one named Obsen came to power 10 years ago. A disturbed man with a taste for the exotic, he believed he gained the power and qualities of everything he ate provided the meal was alive

while he consumed it. So he ate plenty and often. It wasn't until he devoured a slaad tadpole, purchased at a high price in Nine Bells—the poor and crime-ridden district in Overlook—that he realized he had the means to attain perfection all along.

For the next 10 years, Obsen and his cronies quietly amassed slaad tadpoles, performed hideous experiments on themselves in dank cellars, stole *residuum* to power their rituals, and made unconscionable pacts with otherworldly beings until they perfected the process. When Tusk's armies marched on Bordrin's Watch, Obsen and the cultists quit the city and marched to an

old tomb under the Fist, a blunted peak in the nearby Stonehome Mountains, where they murdered the witch living there, and recruited heavily from the mountain's denizens until they were strong enough to gather victims for the glorious transformation they would create.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

As close as they are to their goal, the cultists' depraved acts are bound to draw attention. Someone they crossed hires the adventurers to root out the deviants. The player characters climb the mountains and track the cultists to their lair. Once inside, the characters must navigate its perils, learn what the cultists intend, and stop them before their corruption spreads too far.

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The adventurers might come to the Fist of Mourning for a variety of reasons. Consider using either one of the following adventure hooks or come up with one of your own.

### HOOK: BEREFT NECROMANCER

Rufus Crumley might not be popular in Shantytown, but he is still a powerful and feared figure whose influence cannot be overstated. Because he is protected by his dire reputation and his undead thralls, no one has ever dared steal from him in his long years in the city. So when someone breaks into his tower, destroys his zombies, and makes off with his *residuum* stores, the necromancer is quite put out.

Familiar with the adventurers' recent escapades, the necromancer turns to them for help. He offers

the characters 2,800 gp (parcel 5) if they recover his *residuum* (worth 1,000 gp). It's not that the necromancer can't purchase more *residuum*; he has a reputation to protect. Characters who stamp out the cult and return the stolen property also earn 2,500 XP for completing a major quest.

### HOOK: MISSING ADVENTURER

While adventuring in Overlook and in its surrounding lands, the player characters have met and might have rivalries with other adventuring groups. When one such group comes under attack by these cultists, most are slain and at least one is abducted. The lone survivor begs the PCs for help in recovering his missing friends.

The characters must rescue the cult's prisoners from the Fist of Mourning and return them to Overlook. Doing so allows the PCs to earn a reward of

2,800 gp, plus a useful contact in a future adventure if they need it. Also, PCs who destroy the cult in the process earn 2,500 XP for completing a major quest.

## TREASURE PREPARATION

Since this adventure should help 10th-level adventurers make up any shortfalls to reaching 11th level, stock the dungeon with treasure parcels you have yet to give out for this level. "Fist of Mourning" assumes the characters are already halfway to their next level, so the adventure supplies five treasure parcels. Adjust this as needed to make sure the characters receive the proper treasure for their levels. Magic items, coins, goods, and other valuables are described in the room summaries and the parcels they represented are included for your convenience. As always, where the text specifies a magic item, you should feel free to swap it out with an item from your players' wish lists.

## THE POSSIBLE QUESTS

"Fist of Mourning" offers PCs an opportunity to earn quest XP. Provided here is a list of possible quests, and their rewards, from the hooks in the adventure.

### Major Quest—Bereft Necromancer

Rufus Crumley wants his *residuum* back, plus he has a reputation to protect.

**Reward:** 2,500 XP and 2,800 gp (parcel 5).

### Major Quest—Missing Adventurer

Rescue the cult's prisoners from the Fist of Mourning and return them to Overlook.

**Reward:** 2,500 XP for the cult's destruction and 2,800 gp (plus a useful contact in a future adventure if they need it).

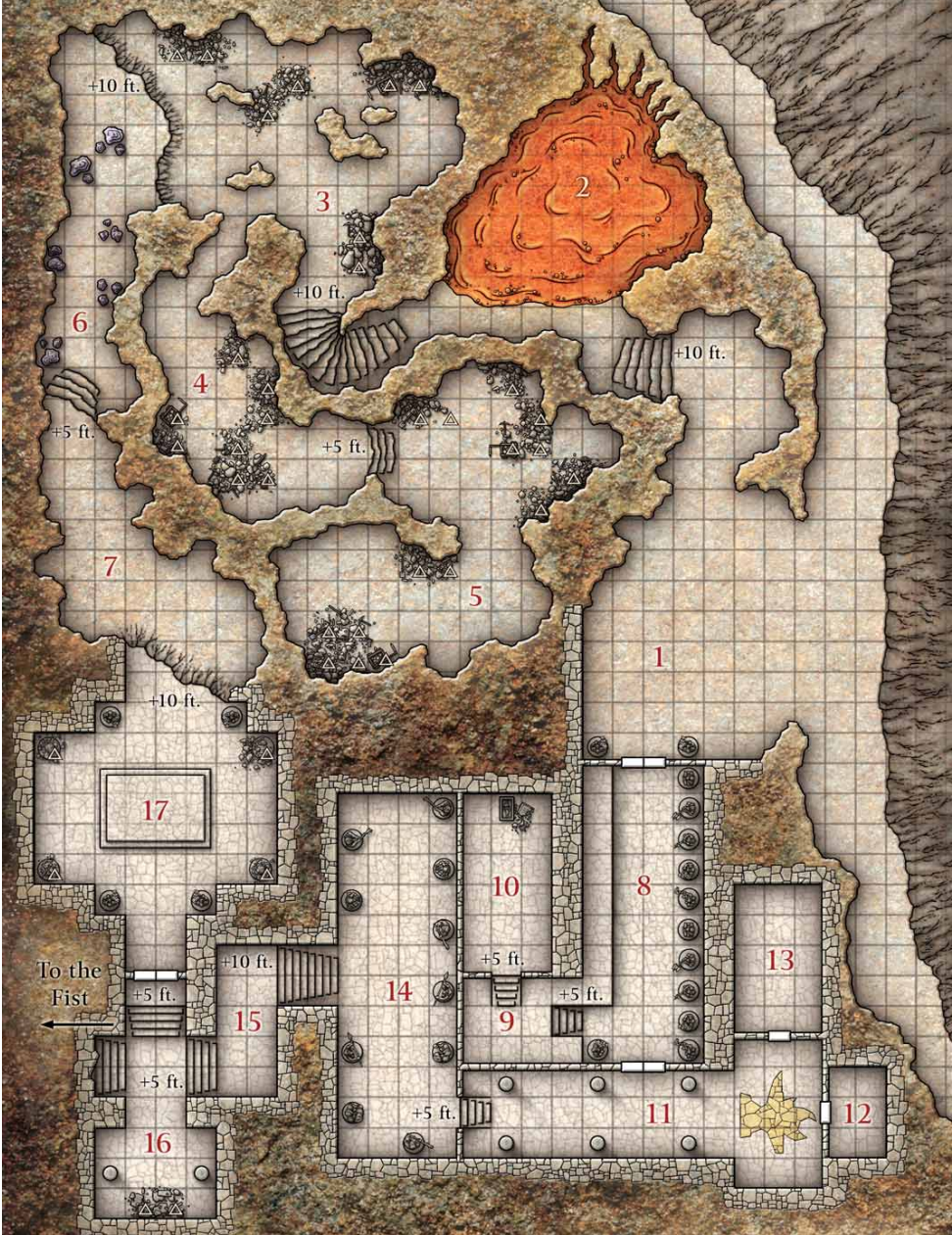
## PART ONE: ON EVIL'S TRAIL

Once the characters are engaged in the adventure, you might start at the entrance to the Fist and proceed with the adventure as written. Or you can develop the story more slowly by roleplaying through the process by which the heroes are hired, learn about the cult, and track the cultists to their lair. What follows are tools to help you develop the adventure more slowly. If you choose to use these skill challenges, consider removing the Outraged Dead encounter on page 19 to keep the XP in line.

**Skill Challenge:** SC1 Investigating the Cult (page 11).

**Skill Challenge:** SC2 Travel to the Fist (page 12).

# FIST OF MOURNING



One square = 5 feet

## PART TWO: THE FIST

The Fist stabs out from a high peak in the Stonehome Mountains. Named for its uncanny resemblance to a closed fist, it marks Murat's grave, a hero who fell in the dwarf uprising against the giants. The dwarves abandoned the tomb centuries ago when cruel winter storms, orcs, and other mountain-dwelling horrors became too great to maintain it safely. In recent years, a filthy hag claimed squatter's rights and made the place her home. However, even her gruesome appearance and sinister appetites weren't enough to deter the cult from taking it for themselves, and she met a terrible end in the bottom of a ravine when she tried to resist.

The tomb consists of the dungeon's western tunnels and chambers. They exhibit fine dwarven architecture still in good repair even after long neglect. The eastern chambers are crude since they were hand and tool-excavated. Orc miners, who serve the cult much as they served the mountain witch before, chip away at the granite for silver, gems, and anything else they might extract from the unyielding rock.

### GENERAL FEATURES

**Illumination:** Rooms are all dark unless otherwise mentioned in the encounter text.

**Ceiling:** Ceilings in the complex are as tall as their widest dimension.

**Doors:** Constructed from stone, the doors all bear intricate carvings featuring dwarves battling orcs, ogres, and giants. The doors are all unlocked, but such is their weight that it requires a standard action and a successful DC 10 Strength check to open them.

**Stairs:** Whether crude or fine, stairs all count as difficult terrain.



## 1. CAVE OF THE MOUNTAIN WITCH

This room housed the mountain witch, the cruel hag who claimed the tomb as her lair. The cult murdered her and enslaved her minions.

**When the PCs can see into the room, read:**

*An opening in the mountain extends into a wide cave. To the west, two statues carved to depict armored dwarves flank old, weathered stone doors. To the east, a tunnel opens into a deeper chamber. What at first looks to be a*

*mound of furs rises, revealing a wrinkled crone complete with a jutting chin, milky white eyes, and one black tooth in the center of her mouth. She cackles as she hobbles toward you.*

The crone is an oni mage in service to the cult. It assumes the hag's appearance in case any mountain folk come to trade or seek a remedy from the now-dead wizened monster. The oni plays the part well, pretending to be an unhinged and repellent creature, offering to cure the party's ills, trade for information, and so on, using Bluff to maintain the deception (+15 check modifier). The oni mage denies the Cult's presence here, but if the characters are insistent, it drops the disguise and attacks.

**Tactical Encounter:** F1 False Witch (page 13).

**Treasure (Parcel 9):** The cultists left the hag's personal treasures alone when they took over the place, though they tucked them away in a niche in the center of the north wall. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Perception check locates a sodden sack containing a rotting human hand, 90 gp, a garnet (worth 100 gp), a ritual scroll of Detect Lies (worth 360 gp), a *potion of healing*, and a *caustic whetstone* (AV 190).

## 2. THE FURNACE

Early excavations exposed a pocket of hot gasses fed by a pool of molten rock. The liquid stone has cooled somewhat to form a thin crust over the fiery substance.

**When the PCs enter this room, read:**

*Dim light shines up from a cavity filling the room's eastern extent. The ceiling is smooth stone. A path winds around the cavity and it exits through a fissure in the north wall.*

**Tactical Encounter:** F1 False Witch (page 13).

Characters who succeed on a DC 11 Perception check can hear the sound of metal striking stone coming from room 3.

## 3. EXCAVATION

The orc miners work this room to extract precious metals and gemstones.

**Tactical Encounter:** F2 Infested Mine (page 15).

## 4. DEEPER CHAMBER

While the orcs served the hag, they dug out this chamber searching for gold and silver. When they found nothing, they changed direction. Now, aside from a few broken tools, this room is empty.

When the characters enter this room, they can hear chanting echoing from the chamber ahead with a successful DC 10 Perception check.

## 5. DEEP MINE

The orc miners abandoned this room when they found nothing of value. Once the cultists moved in, they erected an idol to embody their perverse vision and awakened it with elemental power and foul rituals. Now, at all times, cultists gather to pay their respects.

**Tactical Encounter:** F3 Entropic Thralls (page 17).

**Treasure (Parcel 7):** Piled around the suppurating idolon are 1,000 gp, a topaz (worth 500 gp), and two peridots (worth 100 gp each).

## 6. GAUNTLET

Stalagmites cover the floor, rising up between pools of mineral-rich water formed from dripping stalactites overhead. The characters can take an extended rest in this room since the undead do not emerge from room 7 and no other denizens are likely to come here due to the undead's proximity.

## 7. THE DEAD ROOM

The undead here were once dwarves, but they have awoken in death from their tomb's violation—an act not even the hag would have dared. The undead creature's efforts to oust the cultists have failed and thus they have gathered here to plan their next move. Their undead states make them completely unreasonable, and under most circumstances, they attack living creatures entering this room.

**Tactical Encounter:** F4 Outraged Dead (page 19).

If the PCs spoke with Murat in room 10 and reveal this fact to the undead, proving it by showing the item they gained from the ghost, the undead break off the attack because they now see the adventurers as allies. The undead offer to help the PCs take on the remaining cultists in the complex, but they do not wait for the PCs to take short or extended rests; they continue if the PCs tarry.

## 8. HALL OF THE FALLEN

This room once honored Murat, the dwarf champion whose remains are interred here, by celebrating his mortal achievements and capturing them in stone carvings adorning the walls.

When the PCs can see this room, read:

*Stone statues depicting dwarf warriors stand in a row against this room's southern wall. Opposite, a ledge rises 10 feet off the floor. The ceiling and walls feature runic inscriptions. Double doors stand at the end of the chamber.*

Once the characters enter this room, the cultists spill out to attack.

**Tactical Encounter:** F5 Hideous Cultists (page 20).

**Runic Inscriptions:** Chiseled in Davek script, the inscriptions tell of Murat's mortal deeds, each more fantastic than the last. Characters who spend at least 5 minutes reading the inscriptions gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks made against Murat's ghost in room 10.

## 9. STAINED LANDING

Old blood stains the flagstones covering the landing. Several cultists met grisly ends here before their allies drove off the undead now lurking in room 7.

**Tactical Encounter:** F5 Hideous Cultists (page 20).

## 10. TOMB OF THE DWARF LORD

The dwarves interred Murat here. Although dead, his spirit lingers on and rises if the room is disturbed.

**Skill Challenge:** SC3 Congress with the Dead (page 22).

## 11. HALL OF THE GOLDEN ANVIL

This hall honors those who fell during their service to Murat. Aside from a massive golden hammer inscribed on the floor and walls covered with accounts of ancient battles chiseled in the Davek script, this room is empty.

## 12. SERVANTS' TOMBS

Murat's favored servants were interred in this chamber when they died. A dozen openings, each big enough for a corpse, pierce the eastern, southern, and western walls. Most contain bones, but a few are suspiciously empty.

## 13. WARRIORS' TOMBS

This room holds the remains of Murat's favored cohorts. Twenty or so openings pierce the southern, eastern, and northern walls. As with the Servants' Tombs, most hold bones, but a few have been emptied.

## 14. HALL OF VICTORIES

Honoring Murat's greatest victories, stone statues depicting the monsters the dwarf defeated in battle stand in rows across the center of the room.

When the PCs can see into this room, read:

*A wide hall contains statues that depict a bestiary of terrible monsters, and these statues run across the center of the room. Beyond them, a flight of stairs leads up into darkness.*

**Tactical Encounter:** F6 Living Statues? (page 23).

## 15. DARK LANDING

Aside from the unnatural darkness shrouding this landing, this area connects the upper level to the lower chambers.

## 16. DEFILED CHAPEL

When pilgrims came to the Fist of Mourning, they attended services in this small chapel dedicated to Moradin. Its sanctity made it the cult's first targets and they defiled the room.

**When the PCs can see into this room, read:**

*This room was clearly once a chapel, because an altar bearing Moradin's hammer and anvil stands at the end, but blood, bloated corpses, and buzzing flies testify to the atrocity committed here.*

The corpses belong to humans, dwarves, and other humanoid prisoners. Each has been savagely hacked apart and left to rot. Entrails cover the altar in an act of defilement.

If the characters clean up the mess by removing the corpses and removing the offal and blood, they each regain 1 healing surge for their efforts.

## 17. HALL OF HORROR

The hall of horror is the final room in the complex, and it serves as the location where the cult performs its most wicked acts.

**When the PCs enter this room, read:**

*In the dim light cast by glowing gelatinous curtains shrouding a raised platform in the center of the room, you can take in the full horror of what the cult intends. Suspended in the jellied mass are dark shapes, struggling against the foul tendrils pumping corruption into their bloated bodies. In the center, arms raised, stands a swollen mass, dark shapes blooming and writhing on the silhouette's body. Chanting sounds from within, presumably from the figure you see.*

**Tactical Encounter:** F7 Beyond the Pale (page 25).

**Survivors:** If you used the "Missing Adventurer" hook, the characters might be able to rescue a few of the survivors. Each is infected with chaos phage and must be treated if they are to survive.

**Treasure (Parcels 3 and 5):** The cult's treasures include a +3 *orb of indisputable gravity*, a chest filled with 1,800 gp, and a fat fire opal (worth 1,000 gp). If the PCs were sent to recover the *residuum*, it's held here too in a silver chalice with the opening sealed with black wax. In addition, a few old tomes, scrolls, and manuscripts contain mad ravings from dead predecessors. The writings are worthless to anyone outside the cult and characters who destroy them might prevent another group from rising in this group's place.

## CONCLUSION

Defeating the cultists, freeing the prisoners, or recovering the stolen *residuum* brings the adventure to its end. Although wiped out due to the heroes' efforts, the Cult of Exquisite Agony doesn't need to vanish entirely from your campaign if you don't wish it to. Their profane writings might escape the PCs' torches, and might be found later by an enterprising adventurer with dubious morals. Or, some might still hide in Overlook, working their wickedness within the city. Whatever you decide, these twisted villains might yet have a part to play in the heroes' uncertain future.

## SCI: INVESTIGATING THE CULT

Level 11 (1,200 XP)

### SETUP

Begin by reading the following:

*So, you have your task. Now you've chosen to investigate elements of it.*

At this point, find out what the PCs are researching and how, and then begin the skill challenge.

#### Investigating the Cult Skill Challenge

Level 11  
XP 1,200

*Overlook harbors many secrets, hidden designs, and obscene stratagems. Sifting through the lies and prowling the streets might reveal the information you seek.*

The adventurers gather information, research dusty tomes, or tap contacts for more information about the villains in this adventure.

#### Complexity

2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures).

#### Primary Skills

History or Religion, Stealth, Streetwise.

#### Other Skills

Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate.

#### Victory

The adventurers learn about the Cult of Exquisite Agony and the information described under "Background" on page 5. In addition, the PCs learn where these insane people hide.

#### Defeat

The adventurers attracted unwanted attention and the cult sends a red slaad (see page 25 for statistics) after them to encourage them to give up their line of questioning.

#### History or Religion DC 21 (1 success, 1 maximum)

A success allows the characters to make Arcana checks. A failed check also opens up the Arcana skill, but the DC is 21.

The PC recalls the more prominent cults known to have worked in this area.

#### Stealth DC 16 (1 success, 2 maximum)

During the skill challenge, at least one character must make a Stealth check until 2 successes are achieved. A failed check counts as 2 failures.

The PC skulks through the shadows to avoid attracting unwanted attention.

#### Streetwise DC 16 (1 success, no maximum)

A success makes available the Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate skills.

The PC snoops around, greases some palms, and questions locals about recent cult activities.

#### Arcana DC 16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

A success grants the characters the cult's name.

The PC recalls a useful fact about one of the cults mentioned.

#### Bluff DC 16 (1 success, no maximum)

A failed check increases the DC of Diplomacy checks by 2.

The PC makes false promises to find the information required.

#### Diplomacy DC 16 (1 success, no maximum)

The PC bargains with an informant to learn more about the cult and its lair.

#### Intimidate DC 16 (1 success, no maximum)

A failed check counts as 2 failures.

The PC roughs up some locals to find the information sought.





## SC2: TRAVEL TO THE FIST

Encounter Level 11 (1,800 XP)

### SETUP

Begin by reading the following:

*You have started your journey to the Fist of Mourning. What dangers lie before you during this trip?*

At this point, begin the skill challenge.

#### Travel to the Fist Skill Challenge

Level 11  
XP 1,800

*You navigate mountain trails, avoiding obstacles and hidden perils to reach the Fist of Mourning.*

To reach the cult's lair, the adventurers must navigate the mountains' perils.

#### Complexity

3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

#### Primary Skills

Endurance, Nature, Perception, Stealth

#### Victory

The characters reach the Fist of Mourning without attracting attention.

#### Defeat

The characters are spotted during their ascent and 2 warped cultists and 4 wretched and unclean attack the PCs while on the mountain path (see pages 15 and 18 respectively for statistics). The battlefield should feature a 3-square wide trail running west to east. The north side of the trail is the mountain's face, while the south side drops 80 feet to another trail below.

#### Endurance DC 16 (1 success, no maximum)

Each turn in the challenge, at least two characters must make Endurance checks. A failed check results in 2 failures and each PC loses one healing surge.

The PC resists the hardships of traveling through the mountains.

#### Nature DC 16 (1 success, 4 maximum)

At least one character must make a Nature check each turn. A failed check indicates each PC loses 1 healing surge in addition to counting as a failure.

Using superior survival skills, the PC helps navigate around deadfalls, locate shortcuts, and identify hidden dangers.

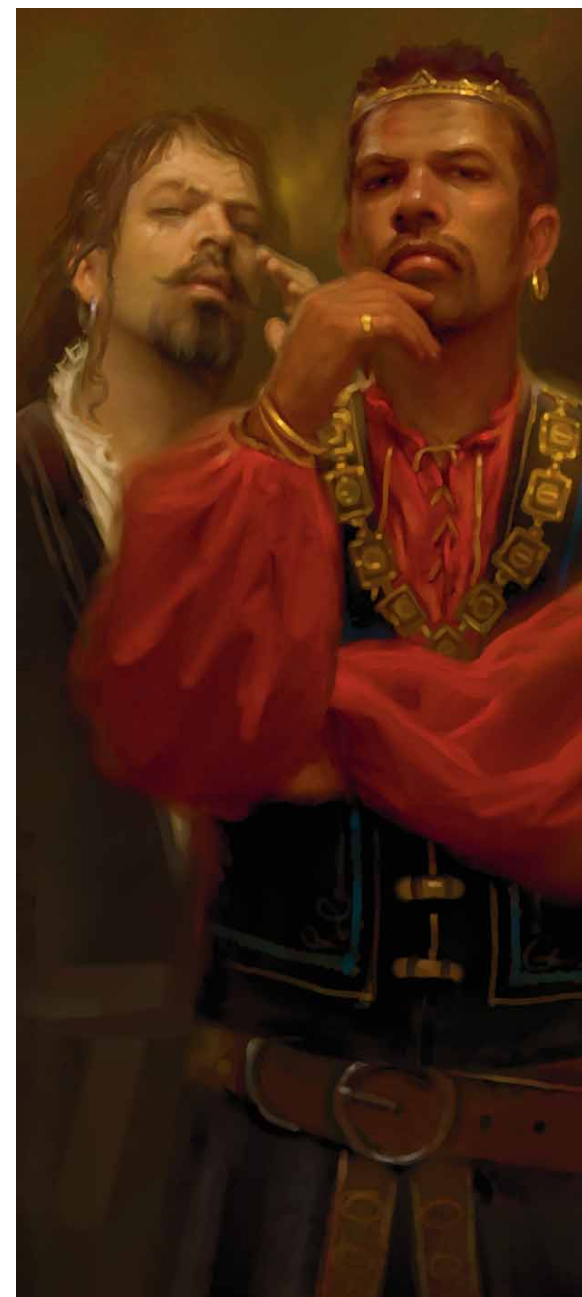
#### Perception DC 10 (0 successes)

Using this skill doesn't count as a success or failure for the challenge. Instead, it grants a +2 bonus or a -2 penalty to the next character's Endurance or Nature check.

The PC's keen eyes find a way to ease the trek.

#### Stealth DC 21 (1 success, no maximum)

At least two characters must make a Stealth check each turn. The PC conceals his or her movements to avoid being detected.



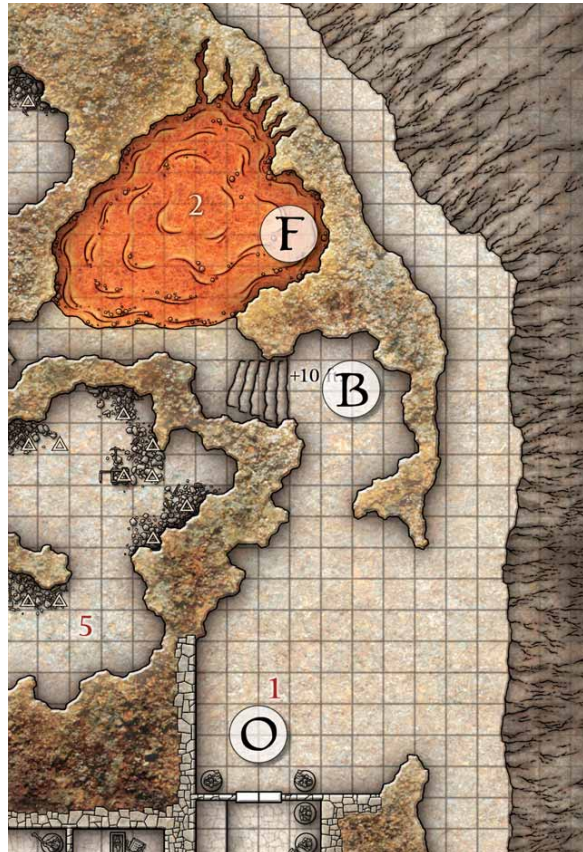
## F1: FALSE WITCH

Encounter Level 9 (2,400 XP)

### SETUP

- 1 bulette (B)
- 1 firelasher (F)
- 1 oni mage (O)

The oni mage pretends to be the hag said to dwell here. It drops the façade if adventurers press it with too many questions or if they see through its disguise.



Don't place the bulette or the firelasher on the tactical map. The bulette joins the battle at the start of the second round, and the firelasher joins the fight in the third round.

When the oni mage drops its disguise, read:

*The hag's form melts away to reveal a mail-clad blue humanoid easily 9 feet tall. Horns sprout from its head and its baleful red eyes glow. It spits a curse your way as it reaches for the greatsword strapped to its back.*

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** If it's day, the western portion of room 1 has dim light. Otherwise, room 1 is dark. Room 2 is dark regardless. Once the firelasher joins the fight, it sheds bright light in a 20-square radius.

**Ceiling:** The ceilings throughout the encounter area are 20-feet tall.

**Molten Pit:** A molten pit takes up much of room 2. It descends 30 feet to a thin crust covering magma. A fall from the ledge deals 3d10 damage, and characters starting their turns in the pit take 10 fire damage. If a character starts three consecutive turns in the pit, he or she breaks through the crust, plunges into the lava, and is slain instantly.

**Statues:** Flanking the double doors in the western wall are two identical statues. Each depicts a dwarf wearing plate armor and holding a greataxe in both hands, the blades between their stone feet. Dwarf characters in spaces adjacent to the statue gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls.

When the bulette appears, read:

*The ground erupts as an armored beast breaks through the rock, its predator's eyes glinting with hunger.*

When the firelasher joins the fight, read:

*A swirling ball of fire spins out of the darkness, and you can just make out monstrous features in its elemental form.*

Oni Mage (O)	Level 10 Elite Lurker
Large natural humanoid	XP 1,000
<b>Initiative</b> +10	<b>Senses</b> Perception +7; darkvision
<b>HP</b> 172; <b>Bloodied</b> 86	<b>AC</b> 26; <b>Fortitude</b> 25, <b>Reflex</b> 24, <b>Will</b> 24
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	<b>Speed</b> 7, fly 8 (clumsy)
<b>Action Points</b> 1	
⬇ <b>Greatsword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.
⬅ <b>Freezing Blast</b> (standard; recharge [1]) ♦ <b>Cold</b>	Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 6 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).
⚡ <b>Lightning Storm</b> (standard; recharge [2][1]) ♦ <b>Lightning</b>	Area burst 2 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 lightning damage.
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	An oni mage deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.
<b>Deceptive Veil</b> (minor; at-will) ♦ <b>Illusion</b>	The oni mage can disguise itself to appear as any Medium or Large humanoid. A successful Insight check (opposed by the oni's Bluff check) pierces the disguise.
<b>Invisibility</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Illusion</b>	The oni turns invisible until it attacks.
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Giant
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +14, Bluff +15, Insight +12	
<b>Str</b> 22 (+11)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 20 (+10)	<b>Int</b> 18 (+9) <b>Cha</b> 21 (+10)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, greatsword	

<b>Bulette (B)</b> Large natural beast	<b>Level 9 Elite Skirmisher</b> XP 800
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5; darkvision, tremorsense 20	
<b>HP</b> 204; <b>Bloodied</b> 102; see also <i>second wind</i>	
<b>AC</b> 27; <b>Fortitude</b> 26, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 21	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> 6, burrow 6; see also <i>earth furrow</i>	
<b>Action Points</b> 1	
⊕ <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will)	
Before it bites, the bulette can make a standing long jump (as a free action) without provoking opportunity attacks: +14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, or 4d6 + 7 damage against a prone target.	
⚡ <b>Rising Burst</b> (standard; at-will)	
Close burst 2; the bulette sprays rock and dirt into the air when it rises out of the ground: +13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 7 damage.	
⚡ <b>Earth Furrow</b> (move; at-will)	
The bulette can move its burrow speed just below the surface of the ground, avoiding opportunity attacks as it passes underneath other creatures' squares. As it burrows beneath the space of a Medium or smaller creature on the ground, the bulette makes an attack against the creature: +8 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target is knocked prone.	
<b>Ground Eruption</b>	
The squares into which a bulette surfaces and the squares it leaves when it burrows underground become difficult terrain.	
⚡ <b>Second Wind</b> (standard; encounter) ◆ <b>Healing</b>	
The bulette spends a healing surge and regains 51 hit points. It gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the start of its next turn.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> –
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +16, Endurance +15	
<b>Str</b> 24 (+11)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 22 (+10)	<b>Int</b> 2 (+0) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+3)

<b>Firelasher (F)</b> Large elemental magical beast (air, fire)	<b>Level 11 Skirmisher</b> XP 600
<b>Initiative</b> +12 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5	
<b>HP</b> 108; <b>Bloodied</b> 54	
<b>AC</b> 25; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 25, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Immune</b> disease, poison; <b>Resist</b> 25 fire	
<b>Speed</b> fly 8 (hover)	
⊕ <b>Fire Lash</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b>	
Reach 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 fire damage.	
⚡ <b>Wildfire Cyclone</b> (standard; recharge ☼ ☼) ◆ <b>Fire</b>	
Close burst 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and the target is neither pushed nor knocked prone.	
🌀 <b>Whirlwind Dash</b> (standard; recharge ☼) ◆ <b>Fire</b>	
The firelasher can move twice its speed. It can move through spaces occupied by other creatures without provoking opportunity attacks. It must end its move in an unoccupied space. Any creature whose space the firelasher enters takes 10 fire damage.	
<b>Mutable Shape</b>	
The firelasher can squeeze through spaces as though it was a Medium creature.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Primordial
<b>Str</b> 11 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+10) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 12 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 7 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+4)

## TACTICS

When the oni mage drops *deceptive veil*, it uses *freezing blast* to catch the largest group of characters and then spends an action point to use *invisibility*. It flies into the room where the bulette hides and waits to press the attack for when its reinforcements arrive. Once the bulette closes, the oni mage uses *lightning storm* against any controllers, thus ending its *invisibility*. While waiting for its area and close attacks to recharge, it uses *invisibility* and makes greatsword attacks every other round against strikers and controllers. The oni mage flees to room 3 to warn its allies if reduced to 40 hit points or fewer.

The bulette lacks subtlety. On its initiative during the second round, it burrows 3 squares (solid rock) and makes a *rising burst* attack when it surfaces in the eastern chamber. (Note the area where it surfaced; it counts as difficult terrain.) It then spends an action point to make a bite attack, making a standing long jump as a free action to reach the next closest enemy. Each round thereafter, the bulette uses *earth furrow* and surfaces to bite an enemy whenever its movement knocks an enemy prone. The bulette fights to the death.

The firelasher prefers to fight in room 2, but if it has no targets, it leaves the area to join the closest battle. It uses *whirlwind dash* to position itself where its *wildfire cyclone* would be most effective and uses it on its next turn. While waiting for its powers to recharge, the elemental uses *fire lash*. If it becomes bloodied, it retreats to room 2 where it makes its stand.

## F2: INFESTED MINE

Encounter Level 11 (3,000 XP)

### SETUP

- 1 destrachan far voice (D)
- 2 warped cultists (C)
- 4 orc miners (M)

A destrachan far voice works with the orc miners to expand this chamber. A warped cultist oversees the operation, commanding the orcs to work faster, while another cultist emerges from the side passage after checking with the other cultists in the deeper tunnels.

If the oni mage fled room 1, it traveled here to warn the creatures here, so the creatures are ready for the PCs. Otherwise, the adventurers automatically gain surprise due to the noise.

When the PCs enter this room, read:

*Green light shines from a medallion around the neck of a hideously malformed human, his flesh distended and shifting as if things crawled beneath its skin. Orcs swing picks at the walls, while a larger creature equipped with a strange tubelike snout, flapping ears, and a stubby tail, causes the stone to shatter with blasts issued from its maw. Beyond, a steep cliff rises to a chamber above, while a small tunnel in the western wall leads off into darkness.*

Destrachan Far Voice (D)		Level 15 Artillery	
Large aberrant magical beast (blind)		XP 1,200	
<b>Initiative</b> +12 <b>Senses</b> Perception +14; blindsight 20			
<b>HP</b> 122; <b>Bloodied</b> 61			
<b>AC</b> 28; <b>Fortitude</b> 32, <b>Reflex</b> 27, <b>Will</b> 25			
<b>Immune</b> gaze; <b>Resist</b> 15 thunder			
<b>Speed</b> 8, climb 4			
⊕ <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)			
+20 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.			
✂ <b>Sound Pulse</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Thunder</b>			
Ranged 10; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 8 thunder damage.			
⚡ <b>Bellowing Blast</b> (standard; recharge 4) ♦ <b>Thunder</b>			
Close blast 5; +19 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 8 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).			
⚡ <b>Reverberate</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Thunder</b>			
Close burst 2; +19 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 8 thunder damage, and the target is stunned (save ends). <b>Miss:</b> Half damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the destrachan far voice's next turn.			
<b>Alignment</b> Evil		<b>Languages</b> Deep Speech	
<b>Skills</b> Bluff +12, Stealth +17			
<b>Str</b> 23 (+13)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+12)	<b>Wis</b> 15 (+9)	
<b>Con</b> 26 (+15)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+7)	<b>Cha</b> 11 (+7)	

4 Orc Miners (M)		Level 9 Minion Brute	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 100 each	
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +4; low-light vision			
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 16			
<b>Speed</b> 6 (8 while charging)			
⊕ <b>War Pick</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic evil		<b>Languages</b> Common, Giant	
<b>Str</b> 17 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 11 (+4)	<b>Wis</b> 10 (+4)	
<b>Con</b> 15 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+3)	<b>Cha</b> 9 (+3)	
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, war pick			

2 Warped Cultists (C)		Level 12 Skirmisher	
Medium elemental humanoid, human, slaad		XP 700 each	
<b>Initiative</b> +10 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5			
<b>HP</b> 122; <b>Bloodied</b> 61; see also <i>bloodied transformation</i>			
<b>AC</b> 24; <b>Fortitude</b> 25, <b>Reflex</b> 22, <b>Will</b> 23			
<b>Immune</b> chaos phage (see below)			
<b>Speed</b> 5; see also <i>warp step</i>			
⊕ <b>Greatsword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.			
⚡ <b>Reckless Arc</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
Requires greatsword; close burst 1; +17 vs. AC; 4d6 + 5 damage. <b>Effect:</b> The warped cultist grants combat advantage to any enemy until the start of its next turn.			
<b>Bloodied Transformation</b> (when first bloodied) ♦ <b>Polymorph</b>			
A slaad abomination rips itself free from the cultist's body. Until the end of the encounter, the warped cultist gains a +2 to all defenses, low-light vision, and can use the <i>claws</i> , <i>warping flux</i> , and <i>warp step</i> powers. However, the warped cultist can no longer use its greatsword or <i>reckless arc</i> powers.			
⊕ <b>Claws</b> (standard; usable only while affected by <i>bloodied transformation</i> ; at-will) ♦ <b>Disease</b>			
+17 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the warped cultist makes a secondary attack against the same target. <b>Secondary Attack:</b> +15 vs. Fortitude; the target contracts <i>chaos phage</i> (see below).			
⚡ <b>Warping Flux</b> (standard; usable only while affected by <i>bloodied transformation</i> ; encounter) ♦ <b>Psychic, Teleportation</b>			
Close burst 3; +13 vs. Will; 1d6 + 3 psychic damage, the target teleports 3 squares, and the target is dazed (save ends). <b>Miss:</b> No damage, but the target teleports 3 squares and is dazed until the end of the warped cultist's next turn.			
<b>Warp Step</b> (move; usable only while affected by <i>bloodied transformation</i> ; at-will) ♦ <b>Teleportation</b>			
The warped cultist teleports 1d6 squares.			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic evil		<b>Languages</b> Common, Primordial	
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +15, Stealth +12			
<b>Str</b> 21 (+11)	<b>Dex</b> 15 (+8)	<b>Wis</b> 9 (+5)	
<b>Con</b> 18 (+10)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+5)	<b>Cha</b> 17 (+9)	
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, greatsword, shining medallion			

### Chaos Phage Level 16 Disease

**Endurance** improve DC 25, maintain DC 20, worsen DC 19 or lower

- The target is cured. ⊕ **Initial Effect:** A slaad embryo is implanted in the target. ⊕
- The target takes a -2 penalty to Will. While bloodied, the target succumbs to madness and attacks the nearest creature. ⊕
- The target dies, and a slaad tadpole burrows out of its skull (see MM 237). ⊕

## TACTICS

As near as the cultists are to creating a new breed of perfect specimens, the adventurers' arrival proves intensely frustrating. As a result, the cultists commit themselves to destroying the intruders. Each cultist draws its greatsword and charges the closest character, using *reckless sweep* when presented with two or more targets. Once the cultist becomes bloodied, a slaad abomination rips itself free from his body and immediately sets out to butcher the PCs where they stand. The new abomination uses *warping flux* to teleport behind the PCs' front ranks to worry controllers and ranged strikers with claw attacks. Thereafter, if the warped cultist becomes marked, it uses *warp step* to stay out of its enemy's reach, charging another enemy as they reappear. The warped cultists fight to the death.

The destrachan far voice helps with the cultists since their ambition is not far off from its own—creating death and madness. This said, it is not particularly loyal, and when it attacks, it freely catches the warped cultists in its attacks if they get in its way. The destrachan moves to use *bellowing blast* and then scuttles away, peppering the PCs with *sound pulse* until its blast attack recharges. If two or more enemies come within 2 squares of it, it uses *reverberate* and then slips away to blast the offending enemies once more. The destrachan fights to the death.

The orc miners want no part in the struggle, but as long as the warped cultists live, they fight the PCs. They work together, all four striking one character at a time. The orc miners surrender if the warped cultists are slain.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Each warped cultist carries a shining necklace, shedding bright light in a 5-square radius.

**Rubble:** Squares containing rubble count as difficult terrain.

**Precipice:** A sheer cliff rises 30 feet at the cavern's northern end, marking the end of room 6. Climbing the cliff requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

**Tools:** Scattered throughout the chamber are six picks, four shovels, a lantern, and two sunrods.

## CONCLUSION

If any of the orc miners live long enough to surrender, they might be convinced to help the adventurers. Getting their help requires a complexity 1 skill challenge (4 successes before 3 failures) with DC 10 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks. If any character failed a saving throw to avoid becoming infected by chaos phage, the PCs take a -5 penalty to all checks related to this skill challenge. A victory ensures the orc miners remain loyal enough to aid the PCs through one combat. A failure indicates the orcs won't hinder the PCs, but they won't help either and they try to escape at their first opportunity.

The orcs, if made friendly, also volunteer information about the happenings in the tunnels. They explain the cultists have brought prisoners into the tunnels and do terrible things to them. They know the cultists can be found beyond the cliff, but warn the heroes that restless dead guard that path. The orcs also tell the PCs that a queer idol lurks down the side passage and that many crazed cultists worship it.



## F3: ENTROPIC THRALLS

Encounter Level 10 (2,500 XP)

### SETUP

- 1 suppurating eidolon (E)
- 2 warped cultists (C)
- 4 wretched and unclean (U)

A warped cultist leaves the chamber containing the eidolon. The rest of the inhabitants gather around the idol, where they offer it prayers and sacrifices of their own flesh.

The warped cultist is bound for room 3 when the PCs come within his line of sight. If the characters succeed on a DC 15 Stealth check, they take the room's denizens by surprise. Furthermore, if the characters kill the warped cultist before the start of the next round, the PCs can also take a move action before the start of the next round since the other cultists are oblivious to anything but their agony.

When the PCs see a warped cultist, read:

*A heaving wretch wrapped in sodden rags surges forward, brandishing a greatsword. You see things moving beneath its skin.*

**Suppurating Eidolon (E) Level 12 Controller (Leader)**  
Large elemental animate (construct) XP 700

**Initiative** +8    **Senses Perception** +9  
**Fearless Followers** aura 5; allies within the aura are immune to fear.  
**HP** 123; **Bloodied** 61  
**AC** 27; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 23  
**Immune** disease, fear, sleep  
**Speed** 5

⊕ **Slam** (standard; at-will)  
Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

⚡ **Curse of Madness** (immediate reaction, when an enemy attacks the eidolon while *unspeakable stance* is active; at-will)  
♦ **Psychic**  
Tendrils of filthy darkness penetrate the creature that triggered the attack: close burst 10; targets the triggering enemy; +16 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is dominated until the end of the suppurating eidolon's next turn. **Miss:** Half damage, and the target is instead dazed until the end of the suppurating eidolon's next turn.

⚡ **Caustic Inundation** (immediate reaction, when an enemy kills one of the suppurating eidolon's allies in the eidolon's line of sight; at-will) ♦ **Acid**  
Close burst 3; targets enemies; +14 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 acid damage.

**Unspeakable Stance** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**  
The suppurating eidolon assumes a meditative stance. Until the end of its next turn, the eidolon gains resist 20 to all damage, and allies in its line of sight deal 1d6 extra psychic damage on their melee attacks. If the eidolon moves, the effect ends.

**Alignment** Chaotic evil    **Languages** –  
**Str** 21 (+11)    **Dex** 14 (+8)    **Wis** 16 (+9)  
**Con** 19 (+10)    **Int** 6 (+4)    **Cha** 11 (+6)

**2 Warped Cultists (C) Level 12 Skirmisher**  
Medium elemental humanoid, human, slaad XP 700 each

**Initiative** +10    **Senses Perception** +5  
**HP** 122; **Bloodied** 61; see also *bloodied transformation*  
**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 23  
**Immune** chaos phage (see below)  
**Speed** 5; see also *warp step*

⊕ **Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

⚡ **Reckless Arc** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**  
Requires greatsword; close burst 1; +17 vs. AC; 4d6 + 5 damage. **Effect:** The warped cultist grants combat advantage to any enemy until the start of its next turn.

**Bloodied Transformation** (when first bloodied) ♦ **Polymorph**  
A slaad abomination rips itself free from the cultist's body. Until the end of the encounter, the warped cultist gains a +2 to all defenses, low-light vision, and can use the *claws*, *warping flux*, and *warp step* powers. However, the warped cultist can no longer use its greatsword or *reckless arc* powers.

⊕ **Claws** (standard; usable only while affected by *bloodied transformation*; at-will) ♦ **Disease**  
+17 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the warped cultist makes a secondary attack against the same target. **Secondary Attack:** +15 vs. Fortitude; the target contracts *chaos phage* (see below).

⚡ **Warping Flux** (standard; usable only while affected by *bloodied transformation*; encounter) ♦ **Psychic, Teleportation**  
Close burst 3; +13 vs. Will; 1d6 + 3 psychic damage, the target teleports 3 squares, and the target is dazed (save ends). **Miss:** No damage, the target teleports 3 squares, and is dazed until the end of the warped cultist's next turn.

**Warp Step** (move; usable only while affected by *bloodied transformation*; at-will) ♦ **Teleportation**  
The warped cultist teleports 1d6 squares.

**Alignment** Chaotic evil    **Languages** Common, Primordial  
**Skills** Athletics +15, Stealth +12  
**Str** 21 (+11)    **Dex** 15 (+8)    **Wis** 9 (+5)  
**Con** 18 (+10)    **Int** 8 (+5)    **Cha** 17 (+9)

**Equipment** chainmail, greatsword, shining medallion

**Chaos Phage Level 16 Disease**

**Endurance** improve DC 25, maintain DC 20, worsen DC 19 or lower

The target **Initial Effect:** A slaad embryo is implanted in the target. The target takes a -2 penalty to Will. While bloodied, the target succumbs to madness and attacks the nearest creature. The target dies, and a slaad tadpole burrows out of its skull (see MM 237).

When the PCs see a wretched and unclean, read:

*Clearly once human, this vile creature is a mass of dripping flesh and exposed bones, yet somehow still alive.*

When the PCs see the suppurating eidolon, read:

*A grotesque statue, all its contorted faces wailing and vomiting ichors, comes to life and steps down from its pedestal to face you.*

**4 Wretched and Unclean (U) Level 9 Minion Brute**

Medium elemental humanoid, human XP 100 each

Initiative +9 Senses Perception +3

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion; see also *corrosive eruption*

AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 21, Will 20

Resist 5 acid

Speed 6

⊕ Claws (standard; at-will)

+14 vs. AC; 5 damage.

◀ Corrosive Eruption (when reduced to 0 hit points) ▶ Acid

Close burst 3; +10 vs. Reflex; 5 acid damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common

Str 19 (+8) Dex 17 (+7) Wis 8 (+3)

Con 14 (+6) Int 12 (+5) Cha 14 (+6)

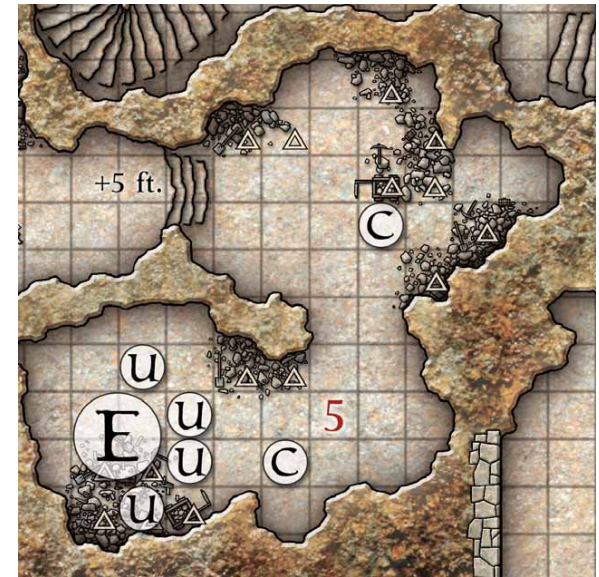
Equipment rags

**TACTICS**

The warped cultists throw themselves against the PCs, exposing themselves to danger to trigger their *bloodied transformation*. Once freed, the warped cultists attack one character and then use *warp step* so they can attack another character. They repeat this tactic until each character has been exposed to chaos phage. The warped cultists fight to the death.

The wretched and unclean support the warped cultists, each too far devolved to do much more than rend flesh with their claws. They sacrifice themselves gladly, moving into position where they can attack several enemies with *corrosive eruption* when they are inevitably cut down.

The most important combatant, though, is the suppurating eidolon. It steps down from its pedestal and moves so it can keep all its allies in its line of sight. This way they can benefit from its *unspeakable stance*. Once the wretched and unclean are destroyed, the suppurating eidolon exits its stance, joins the fight, and makes slam attacks each round.



**FEATURES OF THE AREA**

**Illumination:** Each cultist wears a shining medalion and sheds bright light in a 5-square radius.

**Rubble:** Squares containing rubble count as difficult terrain.

## F4: OUTRAGED DEAD

Encounter Level 11 (3,000 XP)

### SETUP

Kalan the Avenger (K)  
4 skeletal hammerer (H)

These animated remains of dwarf warriors were defeated by the cult and driven into the mines, where they plot their revenge.



**Kalan the Avenger (K) Level 14 Soldier (Leader)**  
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 1,000

**Initiative** +10 **Senses** Perception +12; darkvision  
**Flames of Vengeance (Fire) aura** 1; allies who start their turns within the aura deal 5 extra fire damage on melee attacks.  
**HP** 141; **Bloodied** 70  
**AC** 28; **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 27  
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant  
**Speed** 5

⊕ **Fiery Warhammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**  
+19 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage plus 1d6 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of Dalan's next turn.

✱ **Volcanic Burst** (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐) ♦ **Fire**  
Area burst 1 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 fire damage, and the target is pulled 5 squares.

**Back on Your Feet** (immediate reaction, when an ally within line of sight is reduced to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ **Healing**  
The ally regains 20 hit points, stands immediately, and makes a melee basic attack as a free action.

**Stand Your Ground**  
When an effect forces Dalan to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—Dalan moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock Dalan prone, he can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.

**Alignment** Unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven  
**Str** 23 (+13) **Dex** 13 (+8) **Wis** 20 (+12)  
**Con** 21 (+12) **Int** 9 (+6) **Cha** 14 (+9)

**Equipment** plate armor, warhammer

When the PCs can see this room, read:

*Rubble litters the floor. Rising from the debris, you see a number of dwarf-sized skeletons, their eyes burning with hatred. Purplish light shines from a higher opening at the top of the far wall.*

**4 Skeletal Hammerers (H) Level 10 Brute**  
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 500 each

**Initiative** +10 **Senses** Perception +12; darkvision  
**HP** 126; **Bloodied** 63  
**AC** 23; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 20  
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant  
**Speed** 7

⊕ **Pounding Hammers** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
The skeletal hammerer makes two warhammer attacks against the same target: +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage. If both attacks hit the same target, it is pushed 2 squares after the attack.

⊕ **Hammerfall** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
The skeletal hammerer makes two *pounding hammer* attacks (four attacks total).

⊕ **Sudden Strike** (immediate reaction, when an adjacent enemy shifts; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
The skeletal hammer makes a melee basic attack against the enemy that triggered the attack.

**Alignment** Unaligned **Languages** –  
**Str** 18 (+9) **Dex** 20 (+10) **Wis** 14 (+7)  
**Con** 16 (+8) **Int** 3 (+1) **Cha** 3 (+1)

**Equipment** 4 warhammers

### TACTICS

The skeletal hammerers engage the closest enemies. Kalan uses *volcanic burst* during the first round, targeting characters in the back, and then he closes to fight in melee where his presence boosts his allies' attacks.

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Light from room 17 fills this chamber with dim light.

**Precipice:** A sheer cliff rises 30 feet at the cavern's northern end, marking the end of room 6. Climbing the cliff requires a DC 15 Athletics check.



## F5: HIDEOUS CULTISTS

Encounter Level 12 (3,500 XP)

### SETUP

Anax the Foul (A)

1 gray slaad (G)

2 warped cultists (C)

3 mutated thralls (T)

The creatures do not appear until the PCs open the doors in room 1. The sound draws them from their hiding places.

When the creatures emerge, read:

*Three mobile tumors, bodies fat and glistening, waddle out onto the ledge. They have spindly arms ending in blackened hands clutching greasy filth. A whip-thin humanoid comes round the corner, greatsword in his hands. His face is a nightmare of scars, and worms wriggle beneath the shiny tissue.*

When the PCs see the gray slaad, read:

*An ungainly humanoid—a cross between a man and a toad—croaks at you. Reality rejects its presence, because light bends and wavers as it falls across its hideous form.*

Chaos Phage		Level 16 Disease	
Endurance improve DC 25, maintain DC 20, worsen DC 19 or lower			
The target is cured.	◀	Initial Effect: A slaad embryo is implanted in the target.	▶▶
		The target takes a -2 penalty to Will. While bloodied, the target succumbs to madness and attacks the nearest creature.	▶
			The target dies, and a slaad tadpole burrows out of its skull (see MM 237).

Anax the Foul		Level 13 Controller (Leader)	
Medium elemental humanoid, human		XP 800	
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +9; low-light vision			
Intoxicating Musk (Poison) aura 3; all creatures other than Anax who start their turns within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls and their melee attacks gain a +5 bonus to damage rolls.			
HP 128; Bloodied 64			
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 27			
Immune chaos phage (see below)			
Speed 6			
⊕ Bewildering Caress (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear			
+18 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage, and Anax makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +17 vs. Will; the target is dominated until the end of Anax's next turn.			
✦ Madness Blossoms (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic			
Ranged 20; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Anax's next turn.			
✦ Elemental Conflagration (standard; recharge 1/1)			
Area burst 1 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 6 damage, and the target slides 3 squares and grants combat advantage to any enemy (save ends).			
◀ Corrosive Vomit (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack; encounter) ♦ Acid			
Close blast 5; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 acid damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends).			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Common, Primordial	
Skills Arcana +15, Endurance +13, Insight +9			
Str 9 (+5) Dex 14 (+8)		Wis 6 (+4)	
Con 16 (+8)		Int 19 (+10) Cha 23 (+12)	
Equipment robes, fleshy orb			

Gray Slaad (G)		Level 13 Skirmisher	
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 800	
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision			
HP 128; Bloodied 64; see also planar flux			
AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 26, Will 24			
Immune chaos phage (see below)			
Speed 6, teleport 4			
⊕ Claws (standard; at-will) ♦ Disease			
+18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 2 damage, and the slaad makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +16 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target contracts chaos phage (see below).			
✦ Condition Transfer (immediate reaction, when hit by an attack that applies any condition; recharge 2/2)			
Ranged 5; +16 vs. Fortitude; conditions applied by the triggering attack affect the target instead of the slaad.			
◀ Induce Planar Instability (standard; encounter)			
Close burst 3; +16 vs. Will; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the target shifts 3 squares and is knocked prone.			
Planar Flux (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Teleportation			
The slaad teleports 8 squares and becomes insubstantial until the end of its next turn.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Primordial	
Skills Athletics +13, Stealth +15			
Str 15 (+8)		Dex 18 (+10) Wis 12 (+7)	
Con 16 (+9)		Int 9 (+5) Cha 14 (+8)	

4 Mutated Thralls (T)		Level 10 Minion	
Medium elemental humanoid, human		XP 125 each	
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +4			
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion			
AC 24; Fortitude 21, Reflex 24, Will 19			
Speed 7			
⊕ Tentacles (standard; at-will)			
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage, and slide the target 1 square.			
✦ Gobs of Filth (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison			
Ranged 5; +17 vs. AC; 6 poison damage.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Common	
Str 17 (+8) Dex 22 (+11) Wis 8 (+4)			
Con 12 (+6)		Int 6 (+3) Cha 13 (+6)	
Equipment rags			

**2 Warped Cultists (C)**      **Level 12 Skirmisher**  
 Medium elemental humanoid, human, slaad      XP 700 each

**Initiative** +10    **Senses Perception** +5  
**HP** 122; **Bloodied** 61; see also *bloodied transformation*  
**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 23  
**Immune** chaos phage (see below)  
**Speed** 5; see also *warp step*

⊕ **Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**  
 +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

↔ **Reckless Arc** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**  
 Requires greatsword; close burst 1; +17 vs. AC; 4d6 + 5 damage. *Effect:* The warped cultist grants combat advantage to any enemy until the start of its next turn.

**Bloodied Transformation** (when first bloodied) ♦ **Polymorph**  
 A slaad abomination rips itself free from the cultist's body. Until the end of the encounter, the warped cultist gains a +2 to all defenses, low-light vision, and can use the *claws*, *warping flux*, and *warp step* powers. However, the warped cultist can no longer use its greatsword or *reckless arc* powers.

⊕ **Claws** (standard; usable only while affected by *bloodied transformation*; at-will) ♦ **Disease**  
 +17 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the warped cultist makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +15 vs. Fortitude; the target contracts *chaos phage* (see below).

↔ **Warping Flux** (standard; usable only while affected by *bloodied transformation*; encounter) ♦ **Psychic, Teleportation**  
 Close burst 3; +13 vs. Will; 1d6 + 3 psychic damage, the target teleports 3 squares, and the target is dazed (save ends). *Miss:* No damage, the target teleports 3 squares, and is dazed until the end of the warped cultist's next turn.

**Warp Step** (move; usable only while affected by *bloodied transformation*; at-will) ♦ **Teleportation**  
 The warped cultist teleports 1d6 squares.

**Alignment** Chaotic evil      **Languages** Common, Primordial  
**Skills** Athletics +15, Stealth +12  
**Str** 21 (+11)      **Dex** 15 (+8)      **Wis** 9 (+5)  
**Con** 18 (+10)      **Int** 8 (+5)      **Cha** 17 (+9)  
**Equipment** chainmail, greatsword, shining medallion

When the PCs see Anax, read:

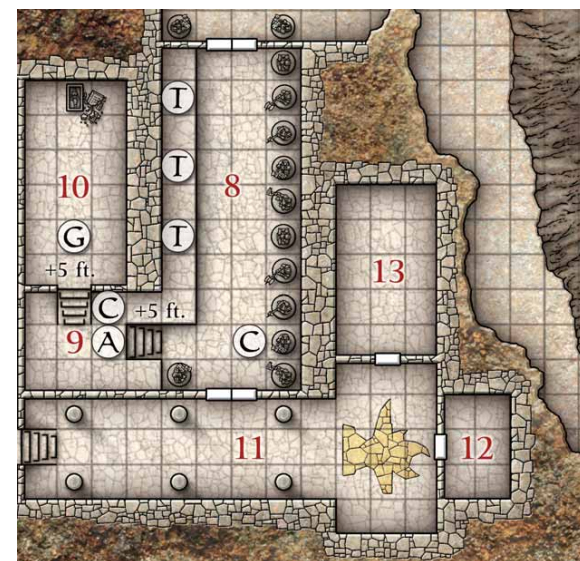
*You catch a faint, strangely pleasant odor when you first see this misshapen human dressed in lilac robes. With a thatch of greasy red hair pasted to his smooth skull, he seems perverse—wrong somehow. He pulls his hand up to reveal a shuddering tumor spilling foulness through his fingers and down his upraised arm. He cackles madly as the fleshy orb quivers in similar delight.*

### TACTICS

The mutated thralls hold their positions on the ledge and throw *gobs of filth* at the characters closest to them. As with the other warped cultists, the ones found here are reckless, and they expose themselves to attacks to trigger their *bloodied transformation*. The cultists and the mutated thralls fight to the death.

Anax and the gray slaad support their lackeys. Anax keeps the warped cultists inside the aura of his *intoxicating musk* and uses *elemental conflagration* at the encounter's start. While waiting for this power to recharge, he throws *madness blossoms* and gropes adjacent enemies with *bewildering caress*. Anax fights until the gray slaad is slain, at which point he retreats to the landing, where he shouts a warning to the enemies in room 14 and makes a stand there.

The gray slaad teleports around the battlefield, training its attacks against low-Fortitude enemies such as wizards, rogues, and the like. It uses *planar instability* only if faced with two or more foes at once. The slaad fights until slain.



### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** The warped cultists each wear medallions that shed bright light in a 5-square radius.

**Stairs:** Spaces containing stairs count as difficult terrain.

**Ledge:** The ledge stands 10 feet above the floor. Climbing the wall requires a DC 20 Athletics check. A fall from the ledge deals 1d10 damage.

**Statues and Pillars:** The statues in room 8 and the pillars in room 10 are stone. Each has an AC 4; Fortitude 10, Reflex 4, and 50 hit points. Reducing a statue to 0 hit points fills its square with rubble and the square counts as difficult terrain until cleared.

## SC3: CONGRESS WITH THE DEAD

Level 10 (500 XP)

### SETUP

When the PCs enter this room, read:

*Wide pillars featuring reliefs depicting axes and hammers march down to the chamber's end on either side. Centered between them, against the far wall, stands a stone sarcophagus, its lid shattered and lying on the floor.*

When a PC comes within 3 squares of the sarcophagus, read:

*The temperature plunges as a ghostly form rises from the tomb. A dwarf, with a long beard, hard eyes beneath bushy eyebrows, and wearing spectral plate armor with a great hammer slung over his back, examines you and speaks: "You! Why have you violated this sacred place?"*

Murat's ghost does not fight the PCs and vanishes if attacked. However, if the PCs speak with the ghost and treat it with respect, they might gain his aid in defeating the cultists. Begin the skill challenge.

**Treasure (Parcel 2):** If the characters succeeded on the skill challenge, Murat rewards them with a +3 *thundering warhammer*. A failed skilled challenge requires the characters to succeed on a DC 21 Perception check to find the hammer. It is within a secret compartment beneath the sarcophagus.

**Congress with the Dead** **Level 10**  
Skill Challenge XP 500

*The ghost regards you with suspicion, awaiting an explanation for why you disturbed his rest.*

To gain the ghost's aid, the PCs must convince it of their good intentions.

#### Complexity

1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

#### Primary Skills

Diplomacy, History, Insight

#### Other Skills

Bluff, Intimidate

#### Victory

Murat believes the adventurers and grants them a boon (see Treasure).

#### Defeat

The ghost disbelieves the characters and vanishes, but not before stealing a healing surge from each character within 5 squares.

#### Diplomacy DC 16 (1 success, no maximum)

Characters who spent at least 5 minutes reading the inscriptions in room 8 gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks. Paying the fallen hero proper respect, the PC explains the reason for being here.

#### History DC 16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

Characters who spent at least 5 minutes reading the inscriptions in room 8 gain a +2 bonus to History checks. The PC recounts some of the dwarf's great deeds.

#### Insight DC 16 (1 success, 2 maximum)

In addition to counting as a success, a character also gains a +2 bonus to its next Diplomacy check. A failed Insight check also results in a -2 penalty to the next Diplomacy check made, and closes off future uses of this skill.

The PC watches the ghost, trying to read its emotions though centuries stand between the PC's life and his.

#### Bluff DC 21 (1 success, no maximum)

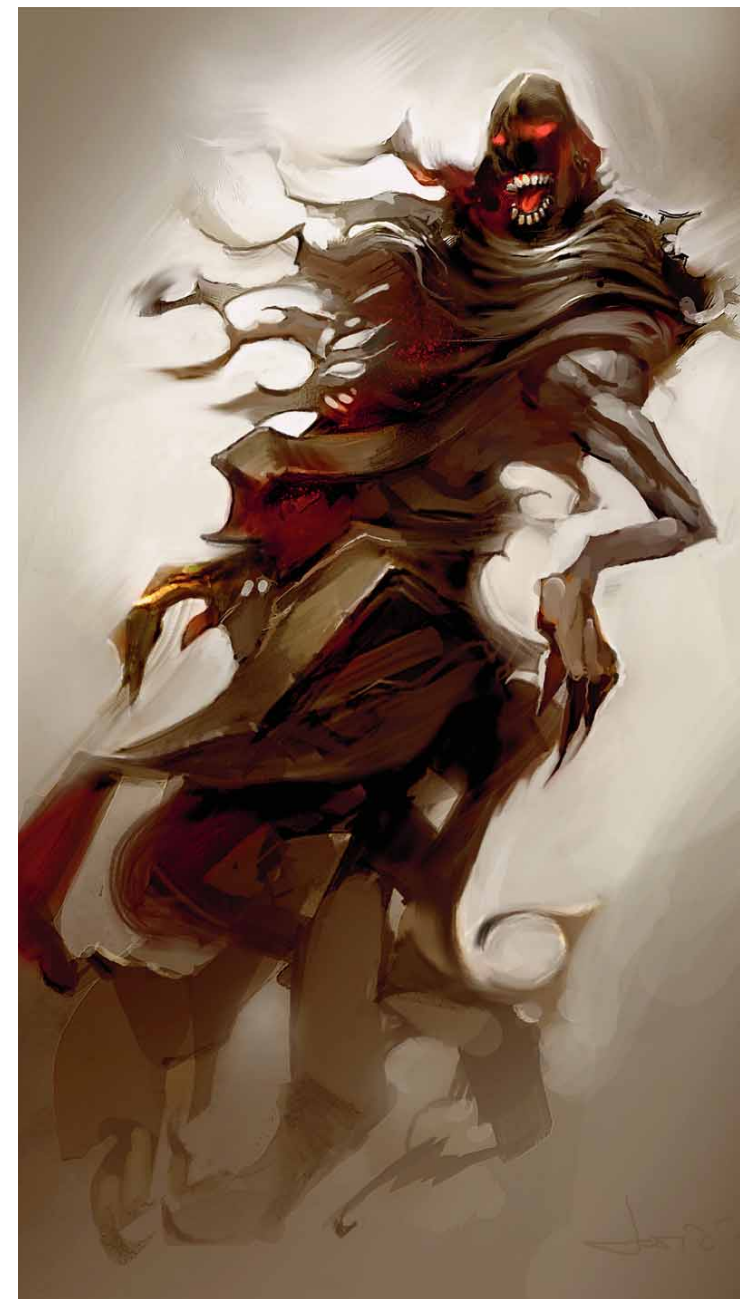
A failed check cancels all other successes and closes off future uses of the Bluff skill for this challenge.

The PC tries to deceive the dwarf, masking the PC's true intentions behind a lie.

#### Intimidate DC 21 (1 success, no maximum)

An Intimidate check results in an automatic failure. In addition to counting as a failure, the character making the Intimidate check loses 1 healing surge.

Bluster and threats are the PC's weapons against this old fool.



## F6: LIVING STATUES?

Encounter Level 11 (3,000 XP)

### SETUP

- Animating spirit (A)
- 1 beholder eye of flame (E)
- 3 shardsoul slayers (S)

What once captured Murat's greatest victories in stone is now a mustering place for the cult's greatest thralls. Awaiting the final preparations and emergence of the mutated host in the upper chambers beyond, they loiter here. The beholder passes the time scorching the occasional rat with its *fire ray* and hovers in the darkness near the ceiling. Three shardsoul slayers, each containing a fragment of a long dead primordial, linger near the statues, while a malevolent spirit flits about the room, too terrified of the creatures to attack them directly.

**When the PCs see the beholder, read:**

*A large ruddy red sphere floats near the ceiling, spinning and fixing you with its horrible eyes.*

**When the PCs see a shardsoul slayer, read:**

*The shadows coalesce into a strange, horned automaton. A fiery red eye burns in the center of its head.*

### TACTICS

The denizens attack when the PCs enter the room. The beholder stays out of melee reach but descends so the PCs are within 4 squares to keep them in its aura. While the constructs keep the strikers and defenders busy, the beholder targets ranged characters with

Beholder Eye of Flame (E) Level 13 Elite Artillery	
Large aberrant magical beast	XP 1,600
<b>Initiative</b> +11	<b>Senses</b> Perception +15; all-around vision, darkvision
<b>Eyes of the Beholder</b> aura 5; at the start of each enemy's turns, if that creature is within the aura and in the eye of flame's line of sight, the eye of flame uses one random <i>eye ray</i> power against that creature.	
<b>HP</b> 204; <b>Bloodied</b> 102; see also <i>fiery burst</i>	
<b>AC</b> 26; <b>Fortitude</b> 26, <b>Reflex</b> 27, <b>Will</b> 28	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> fly 6 (hover)	
<b>Action Points</b> 1	
⊕ <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will)	+18 vs. AC; 2d6 damage.
↗ <b>Central Eye</b> (minor; at-will)	Ranged 8; the target gains vulnerable 10 fire, and any attack that deals fire damage to the target also deals ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends both).
↗ <b>Eye Rays</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ see text	The eye of flame can use up to two <i>eye ray</i> powers (chosen from the list below), at least one of which must be a <i>fire ray</i> . Each power must target a different creature. Using <i>eye rays</i> does not provoke opportunity attacks.
	1— <b>Fire Ray (Fire)</b> : Ranged 8; +17 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 fire damage.
	2— <b>Telekinesis Ray</b> : Ranged 8; +17 vs. Fortitude; the target slides 4 squares.
	3— <b>Fear Ray (Fear)</b> : Ranged 8; +17 vs. Will; the target moves its speed away from the eye of flame by the safest route possible and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).
↶ <b>Fiery Burst</b> (when first bloodied and again when the eye of flame is reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Fire	Close burst 2; +17 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 fire damage.
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Deep Speech
<b>Str</b> 10 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+11) <b>Wis</b> 19 (+10)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+10)	<b>Int</b> 14 (+8) <b>Cha</b> 23 (+12)

its *central eye* followed by its *fire ray*. As long as the animating spirit is present, the beholder uses its *telekinesis ray* to slide an enemy into a space adjacent to a statue. It resorts to its *fear ray* only if an enemy comes too close.

3 Shardsoul Slayers (S) Level 8 Soldier	
Medium elemental animate (construct)	XP 350 each
<b>Initiative</b> +13	<b>Senses</b> Perception +5; darkvision
<b>Deranging Aura (Charm)</b> aura 5; any enemy who starts its turn within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls and gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls. Each enemy whose attack misses the shardsoul slayer must make a melee basic attack against the nearest ally within reach as a free action.	
<b>HP</b> 90; <b>Bloodied</b> 45; see also <i>shardsoul release</i>	
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Immune</b> disease, poison; <b>Resist</b> 5 radiant	
<b>Speed</b> 6, jump 4	
⊕ <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the shardsoul slayer's next turn.
⊕ <b>Slaying Frenzy</b> (standard; recharge ☞ ☞)	The shardsoul slayer makes two claw attacks. If either attack hits a target marked by the shardsoul slayer, or if both attacks hit the same target, that target is also dazed until the end of the slayer's next turn.
↗ <b>Shardsoul Release</b> (when reduced to 0 hit points)	Ranged 10; affects one other shardsoul of the shardsoul slayer's level or lower; the target can take one extra standard action on each of its next two turns.
<b>Focused Killer</b> (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent enemy marked by the shardsoul slayer shifts; at-will)	
The shardsoul slayer makes a claw attack against that enemy.	
<b>Skyfall Charge</b>	
When a shardsoul slayer charges, it deals 1d8 extra damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic evil	<b>Languages</b> understands Common, Primordial
<b>Str</b> 21 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 18 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 3 (+0)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 6 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 15 (+6)
<b>Equipment</b> greatsword	

The shardsoul slayers spring out of their hiding places, charging the closest PC and then following up on the next round with *slaying frenzy*. The slayers, knowing the animating spirit's tactics, pull back to lure the PCs into spaces adjacent to the statues while their *slaying frenzy* powers recharge.

The animating spirit flies to the nearest statue with a PC adjacent to it and then attacks. Each round, it flies to a new statue and attacks again. All creatures and the hazard fight to the death.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** This room is dark.

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 60 feet overhead.

**Statues:** There are eleven statues in all, each depicting a different kind of creature. They include the following creatures: dragon, beholder, minotaur, marilith, pit fiend, shadar-kai, a weird jellyfish creature with eyestalks, owlbear, an earth titan, an ice archon, and a carrion crawler. The statues are all scaled down or up so they are the same size. See below for statistics.

**Stairs:** A set of stairs leads up to room 15. Squares containing the stairs count as difficult terrain.

### Animating Spirit (A) Hazard

**Level 8 Lurker**  
XP 350

*A cruel spirit flits from statue to statue, animating the stone to deliver a nasty attack to the unprepared.*

**Hazard:** An invisible spirit moves into a statue's space and smashes intruders with the statue's animated appendages.

#### Perception

- ◆ DC 19: The character notices a disturbance in the animating spirit's space, thus revealing the hazard's position until it moves again.

#### Additional Skill: Arcana

- ◆ DC 14: The character recognizes the nature of the animating spirit, including its attack.

#### Trigger

When a living creature other than the beholder enters the room, the animating spirit rolls initiative and it moves on its turn. If it ends its movement in a space containing a statue, it attacks one adjacent enemy.

**Speed** fly 4

#### Attack

**Standard Action**    **Melee** 1

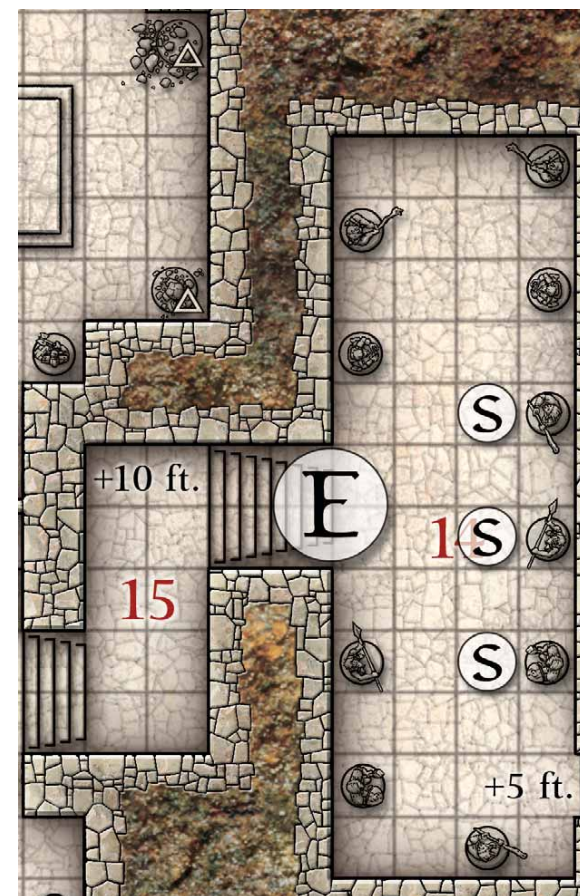
**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** +13 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone. If the target grants the animating spirit combat advantage, the hazard deals 2d8 extra damage.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character can attack a statue animated by a spirit. The statue has an AC 4; Fortitude 10, Reflex 4; 50 hit points. An attack that hits the statue also damages and pushes the animating spirit 1 square.
- ◆ A character can attack the spirit when it is not in a space containing the statue. The spirit is invisible and has an AC 23; all other defenses 19, 50 hit points; vulnerable 5 radiant. Destroying the animating spirit ends the hazard.



## F7: BEYOND THE PALE

Encounter Level 14 (5,200 XP)

### SETUP

Obsen (Z)

2 red slaads (R)

3 horrid spawn (H)

Obsen, the cult leader, performs the final incantations for the ritual to complete his victims' transformations into horrific abominations. It's best if he's nearing the end of his ritual when the PCs arrive, but if they took too many extended rests before getting here, you might consider altering the encounter, possibly adding additional horrid spawn or having the tunnels leading up to this encounter filled with these twisted wretches. In any event, two red slaad look on eagerly, while three "early adopters" step free from the gelatinous webbing to serve their new master at the start of the second round.

When the characters enter, have them make Stealth checks against the passive Perceptions of everyone in this room (20 for Obsen, 18 for the slaad, and 11 for the spawn) to see which opponents are surprised.

### Perception Check

DC 26: Two hulking humanoid figures loiter beyond the curtains.

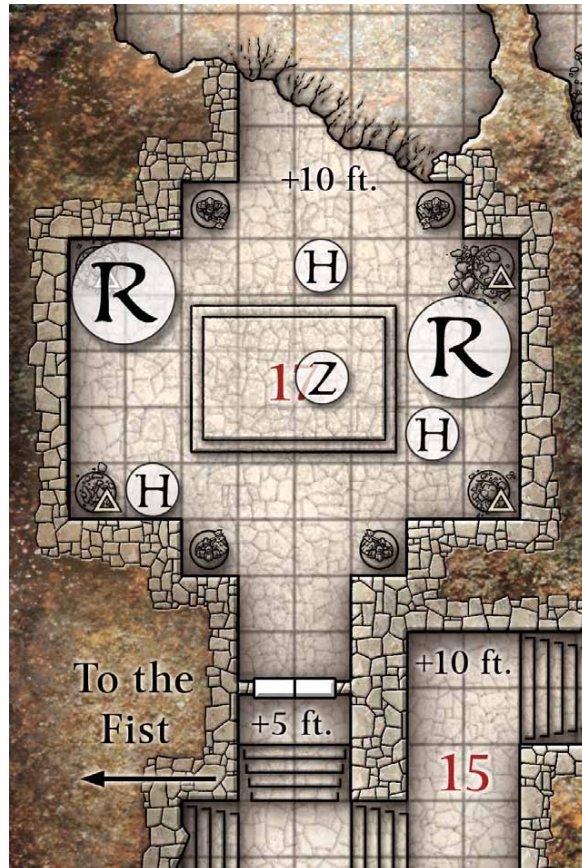
2 Red Slaad (R)		Level 15 Soldier
Large elemental humanoid		XP 1,200 each
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision		
HP 146; Bloodied 73		
AC 29; Fortitude 28, Reflex 29, Will 25		
Immune chaos phage (see below)		
Speed 8, teleport 4		
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will) ◆ Disease		
Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the slaad makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> +19 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target contracts chaos phage (see below).		
⊕ Leaping Pounce (standard; recharge ☼ ☼ ☼)		
The slaad shifts 4 squares and makes two claw attacks. If either claw attack hits, the target is marked until the end of the slaad's next turn.		
⚡ Horrid Croak (standard; encounter) ◆ Fear		
Close blast 5; +19 vs. Fortitude; the target is immobilized until the end of the slaad's next turn.		
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Primordial
Skills Athletics +15, Stealth +16		
Str 17 (+10)	Dex 19 (+11)	Wis 12 (+8)
Con 18 (+11)	Int 11 (+7)	Cha 15 (+9)

When the PCs can see Obsen clearly, read:

*A horrific figure emerges from the slimy tendrils. Nude, genderless, and sporting terrifying growths that inflate and release, its flesh bristles with grasping tentacles, slackened maws, and spurting blue flames from dimpled holes in its flesh. Its hands are black with old blood and it grips a fleshy knife in its left hand.*

Obsen (Z)		Level 13 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium elemental humanoid, human		XP 1,600
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +10		
Entropic Imperative aura 3; allies who start their turns within the aura gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls.		
HP 256; Bloodied 128		
AC 29; Fortitude 24, Reflex 27, Will 27		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6; see also <i>chaos stride</i>		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Chaos Blade (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+18 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of Obsen's next turn.		
✂ Tumescant Nodule (standard; at-will, usable 4/day) ◆ Acid, Poison		
Obsen rips a nodule from his body and hurls it at an enemy within range: Obsen takes 5 damage: Ranged 5/10; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 acid damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Each creature adjacent to the target takes 5 acid damage.		
✂ Chaos Seed (standard; sustain: minor; encounter) ◆ Zone		
Area burst 2 within 10; targets enemies; +15 vs. Will; on a hit, the target is dazed and makes a melee basic attack against one ally adjacent to it. <i>Miss:</i> The target is dazed and does not make an attack. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone that persists until the end of Obsen's next turn. Obsen can sustain the effect by spending a minor action, and can move the zone 3 squares by spending a move action. Any creature that starts its turn inside the zone is subject to another attack.		
⚡ Chaos Blast (standard; recharge ☼ ☼ ☼ ☼)		
Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target grants combat advantage to any enemy (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target takes 5 damage.		
✂ Writhing Chaos (standard; encounter) ◆ Teleportation		
Three ribbons of light appear in the air and attack: Ranged 10; three targets; +15 vs. Reflex, three attacks; 1d8 + 6 damage, and the target teleports to a square of Obsen's choosing within 5 squares of him.		
⚡ Chaos Stride (minor; recharge when first bloodied) ◆ Teleportation		
Close burst 1; +15 vs. Will; 1d8 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). After the attack, Obsen teleports 1 square for each enemy he hit with this attack.		
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Common, Primordial
Skills Arcana +17, Dungeoneering +10, History +17, Nature +10		
Str 11 (+6)	Dex 17 (+9)	Wis 8 (+5)
Con 16 (+9)	Int 23 (+12)	Cha 19 (+10)
Equipment chaos blade, 4 tumescant nodules		

Chaos Phage		Level 16 Disease
Endurance improve DC 25, maintain DC 20, worsen DC 19 or lower		
The target is cured. ☑	Initial Effect: A slaad embryo is implanted in the target. ☑	The target takes a -2 penalty to Will. While bloodied, the target succumbs to madness and attacks the nearest creature. ☑
		The target dies, and a slaad tadpole burrows out of its skull (see MM 237). ☑



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** The ghostly curtain fills the room with dim light.

**Gelatinous Curtains:** Characters moving through a space containing the gelatinous curtains are subject to an attack: +21 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the character is infected with chaos phage. Each square containing the curtain has an AC 10; Fortitude 12, Reflex 10, and 50 hit points. Reducing a square to 0 hit points destroys the curtain in that space.

<b>3 Horrid Spawn (H)</b>		<b>Level 9 Brute</b>
Medium elemental humanoid, human		XP 400 each
<b>Initiative</b> +7	<b>Senses</b> Perception +1	
<b>Sickening Stench</b> aura 2; any living enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.		
<b>HP</b> 120; <b>Bloodied</b> 60		
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 23, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 20		
<b>Immune</b> chaos phage (see below), fear		
<b>Speed</b> 5		
⊕ <b>Toothy Tentacle</b> (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and if the target moves, shifts, or is forcibly moved before the start of the horrid spawn's next turn, it takes 5 extra damage.		
⊕ <b>Mutilating Rend</b> (standard; recharge when a horrid spawn reduces an enemy to 0 hit points)		
Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 4d6 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target is dazed until the end of its next turn.		
<b>Shuddering Delight</b> (when a horrid spawn reduces an enemy to 0 hit points)		
The horrid spawn gains 20 temporary hit points, but grants combat advantage to any enemy until the start of its next turn.		
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic evil	<b>Languages</b> understands Common and Primordial	
<b>Str</b> 21 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+7)	<b>Wis</b> 4 (+1)
<b>Con</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 5 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Equipment</b> rags		

**When the PCs can see the slaad, read:**

*Nine-foot tall monstrosities, each resembling red-skinned humanoid frogs, stride with heavy steps and issue gurgling croaks.*

**At the start of the second round, read:**

*Three struggling shapes fall inside the curtain and unfold into maddening abominations—all claws, fangs, and slime.*

## TACTICS

Obsen starts the combat by using *chaos seed* to create a shimmering zone of madness to disrupt its enemies' actions and sow discord in their ranks. He then spends his action point to fling a *tumescient nodule* against a ranged striker, leader, or controller. On the subsequent rounds, he flings the rest of his nodules, switching to *chaos blast* when he gets a clear shot, or *chaos stride* if he's surrounded. He fights to the death.

The red slaads target defenders and melee strikers by using *leaping pounce* to infect them with *chaos phage*. Once an enemy is infected, it switches to bite attacks, abandoning the enemy once it's bloodied to attack an uninfected enemy. The tight confines makes maneuvering difficult, and so one fights from the north side, while the other fights from the south.

The horrid spawn attack the closest enemy each round until destroyed. ✕

### About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb contributed design to such books as the FORGOTTEN REALMS® *Player's Guide*, *Draconomicon™ I: Chromatic Dragons*, *Manual of the Planes®, P2: Demon Queen's Enclave*, *Martial Power™*, *Player's Handbook® 2*, *Eberron® Campaign Guide*, *Eberron Player's Guide*, *Adventurer's Vault™ 2*, *Divine Power™*, *Draconomicon II: Metallic Dragons*, and *Primal Power™* as well as numerous articles for D&D INSIDER®. Robert lives in Tennessee.