



# INTO THE UNDERWORLD

PART 1

A 1<sup>ST</sup> LEVEL 13<sup>TH</sup> AGE ADVENTURE IN FOUR TWO-HOUR SESSIONS

BY ASH LAW



# INTO THE UNDERWORLD

## PART 1



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## CONTENTS

### INTO THE UNDERWORLD.....2

#### PART 1 .....2

#### SESSION 1: THE RUINS OF ELDWOLD .....5

BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW.....5

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE.....5

ABOUT THE NPCs.....5

NPC—JAKOB ARLWOOD .....6

TO ELDWOLD.....6

NAVIGATING THE RUINS.....6

Icon Option: The Priestess .....6

Icon Option: The Crusader or the Orc Lord7

INJURED OWLBEARS .....7

Icon Option: The High Druid .....7

Icon Option: The Archmage .....7

INTO THE DARK.....10

Icon Option: The Dwarf King .....10

Icon Option: The Lich King .....10

STAR-MASK CULTISTS .....10

Icon Option: The Priestess .....10

Icon Option: The Dwarf King .....10

END OF SESSION.....11

#### SESSION 2: THE DEEPENING DARK.....13

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE.....13

ABOUT THE NPCs.....13

NEW CHARACTERS .....13

NPC—ARAGATHA STONEBEARD.....13

SUBTERRANEAN NAVIGATION.....14

COLLAPSING TUNNELS .....14

Icon Option: Diabolist .....14

Icon Option: Elf Queen.....14

THE SHARK-BAT .....14

Icon Option: Crusader..... 15

Icon Option: Emperor ..... 15

Icon Option: High Druid ..... 15

#### LET SLEEPING BULLETTES LIE..... 18

Icon Option: Great Gold Wurm or the  
Three..... 18

Icon Option: Lich King..... 18

Icon Option: Prince of Shadows..... 18

#### THE WINDING STAIR..... 20

Icon Option: Emperor ..... 20

Icon Option: Dwarf King..... 20

#### STAR-MASKS..... 20

Icon Option: Archmage..... 20

Icon Option: Orc Lord ..... 20

#### END OF SESSION ..... 21

#### SESSION 3: THE INK MINES OF IX..... 23

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE..... 23

ABOUT THE NPCs ..... 23

NEW CHARACTERS ..... 23

NPC—DURDEN DRADOUR ..... 23

TO SEARCH IN DARKNESS..... 24

IXIAN PRIESTS..... 24

Icon Option: Priestess..... 25

Icon Option: Crusader..... 25

#### DEEP SQUID ..... 25

Icon Option: Priestess or Crusader ..... 25

Icon Option: Dwarf King or Elf Queen ..... 25

#### THE LAKE OF INK ..... 28

Icon Option: Archmage..... 28

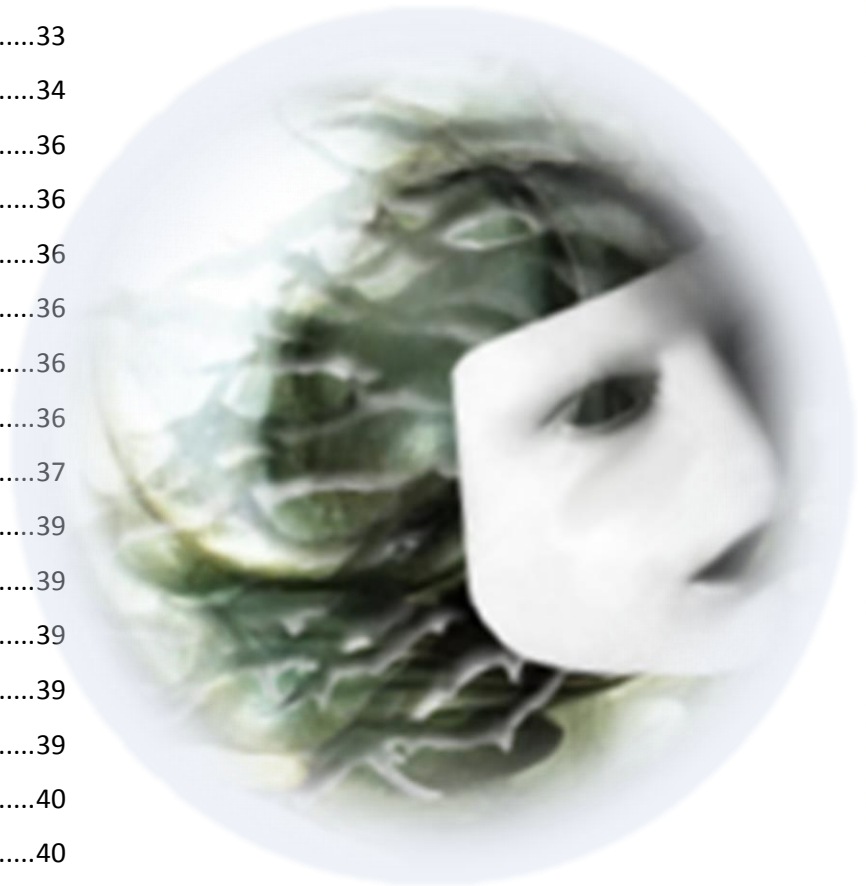
Icon Option: Diabolist..... 28

#### THE HAND OF IX ..... 28

Icon Option: Archmage or the Priestess.. 29

Icon Option: Archmage or Diabolist.....	29
END OF SESSION.....	30
SESSION 4: THE WEB OF FEAR.....	32
RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE.....	32
ABOUT THE NPCs.....	32
NEW CHARACTERS.....	32
NPC—AG-BAG THE DEEP ONE.....	32
THE DROW TUNNELS.....	33
DROW TRAPS.....	33
Icon Option: Dwarf King.....	33
Icon Option: Elf Queen.....	33
DRIDERS.....	33
Icon Option: Dwarf King.....	33
Icon Option: Elf Queen.....	34
THE WEB BRIDGES.....	36
Icon Option: High Druid.....	36
Icon Option: Lich King.....	36
STAR-MASK SPIDERS.....	36
Icon Option: Archmage or Elf Queen.....	36
Icon Option: Prince of Shadows.....	36
END OF SESSION.....	37
RANDOM ENCOUNTERS.....	39
ADVENTURER'S CORPSE.....	39
BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS.....	39
COLLAPSED MINE.....	39
DEAD BULETTE.....	39
DEAD DWARVES.....	40
DEEP MOTHS.....	40
INJURED CITIZEN.....	40
LOST TOMB.....	40
METEORITE FRAGMENTS.....	40
SHARK-BAT EGGS.....	40

BATS.....	41
DUNGEON-ABOMINATION.....	42
DROW PATROL.....	43
FUNGALOID.....	44
KHAVLINGS.....	46
STAR-MASK BULETTE.....	47
STAR-MASK DROW.....	47
STAR-MASK CULTISTS.....	49
STAR-MASK DWARVES.....	50
STAR-MASKS.....	51





# SESSION I: THE RUINS OF ELDWOLD

## BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

*GMs: relay to the players the following information:*

The adventurers are told by an icon that they are associated with that a magical meteorite has fallen near the city of Eldwold. *Eldwold doesn't appear on the maps of the Dragon Empire. The Dragon Empire is slightly larger than Western Europe, so only the biggest cities are shown on the map, the so-called Seven Cities. Eldwold is a relatively unimportant city right on the edge of the empire.*

The adventurers are tasked by their icon to locate a gem in the heart of the meteorite and bring it back to the icon. According to the icon's divinations, prophecies, or magical sources, the gem is named the 'Heart of the Sky' and may have the power to banish living dungeons to the void beyond the stars.

What the adventurers won't know until they arrive on the scene is that the meteorite holding the Heart of the Sky didn't just fall *near* the city of Eldwold, it scored a direct hit on the now-ruined city and has penetrated deep into the underworld.

If the party members are working for different icons, then the icons are aware of that. Each involved icon has sent a trusted agent (the adventurers) to see that their interests are looked after. Even normally antagonistic icons are working together (for now at least). Of course, once the Heart of the Sky is back in civilization, the icons will doubtless fight against each other, form alliances, and engage in intrigue... but that isn't the adventurers' problem.

## RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. At the end of the session, each character should gain an incremental advance.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's Icon relationships. Generally speaking, a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit while a 5 can be traded-in to benefit the adventurer or party but with an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

Each session should take approximately two hours to run. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end, you can pick from the following encounters or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a longer game I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure, I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Collapsed mine
2. Dead dwarves
3. Injured citizen
4. Star-mask dwarves
5. Star-masks
6. Roll twice and combine the results

## ABOUT THE NPCs

Each session includes an NPC you can add to the story if your players appreciate interactions with people who need or can provide help. None of the NPCs have full stats because they're not the type of people who could provide opposition or serious long-term support to an adventuring party, they're characters who can appear briefly to help motivate PCs who are temporarily at a loss. If the PCs take a liking to an NPC, feel free to expand their role.



## NPC—JAKOB ARLWOOD

The following NPC can be introduced at any point in this session of the adventure:

Jakob is one of the citizens of Eldwold who survived the meteorite strike. He is searching for other survivors among the ruins. His floppy hat is covered in dust, and his beard is streaked with blood from when his eardrums burst during the explosion. As a result of his injury, he shouts instead of speaks, and needs others to do the same so he can hear them.

Jakob has found nearly a dozen other survivors, but still hasn't found his family. Jakob wants the adventurers to help with the search.

This NPC can meet the adventurers in the following ways:

- While they are navigating the ruins.
- Jakob can show up to throw rocks at the owlbears to scare them off (he does 1d4 damage each round to the toughest owlbear in the fight).
- Jakob can appear as the adventurers are descending onto the crater itself.
- ...or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

## TO ELDWOLD

To get to Eldwold, the adventurers must cross the Owl Barrens, a mountainous region known for its monstrous humanoids and owlbears.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to cooperatively tell the story of the party's journey through the wilds. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced on their journey, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem they faced in the wilds and everybody has had a chance to have their character heroically solve a problem. Begin foreshadowing upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table ( mention owlbears or a sighting of strange masked creatures for example).



With a montage scene, you don't need to roll any dice—this is purely narrative play. A montage scene serves 3 distinct purposes. The first is to skip over parts of the story that are less exciting than what comes later, but still acknowledge that an event happened or a location has been established (just like in a movie where a long journey is shown as a series of brief images, or a location is introduced in a few seconds by showing its most flavorful parts). The second point is to introduce new characters by having them join the party's adventures in an exciting way rather than a flat 'you meet in a tavern'. The third purpose of the montage is to re-introduce existing characters, reminding everybody of their abilities, personalities, and relationships.

## NAVIGATING THE RUINS

Eldwold is a smoking ruin! The meteorite didn't just crash near Eldwold, it crashed into the city!

The adventurers must cross the burning ruins of the outer city to discover exactly where the meteorite fell.

Navigating the burning ruins: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Out of control fire +5 vs PD—2d6 fire damage**

OR

**Falling rubble +5 vs AC—1d6 damage** and the player nominates another adventurer to be the target of a secondary attack:

**More rubble +5 vs AC—1d4 damage**

## ICON OPTION: THE PRIESTESS

If the Priestess is an important icon in this campaign, then there are survivors of the meteorite crash that wiped Eldwold off the map.



If an adventurer wants to rescue survivors, the difficulty of navigating the ruins is DC 20 instead of DC 15. If the skill check is passed then the difficulty of all further skill rolls this session are lowered by 5 due to the help the grateful survivors give the adventurers.

The player of the heroic Priestess-aligned adventurer is free to (and encouraged to) invent any details about those they have rescued that they like.

### ICON OPTION: THE CRUSADER OR THE ORC LORD

If the Crusader or Orc Lord are important icons in your game, then the ruins of Eldwold make easy pickings for a looter.

If an adventurer wants to loot the ruins, roll a d6. On a 1-3, they find a mundane item that gives them a +4 bonus to their next skill roll—they get to reveal what the item that they found was and how it comes in useful when they make the skill roll with the bonus. On a 4, the adventurer finds jewelry worth 500 gp. On a 5-6, the adventurer discovers a magic item.



## INJURED OWLBears

The Owl Barrens are known for their owlbears, and some have wandered into the shattered remains of Eldwold; it has been a lean winter, and the owlbears are desperate enough to head into the still-smoking ruins of the city looking for carrion to eat.

Unfortunately for the party, these owlbears have been injured by the fires that swept through the city and are looking for a fight.

Number of PCs	Owlbear (cub)	Owlbear (injured)
3	3	0
4	1	1
5	2	1
6	0	2

### ICON OPTION: THE HIGH DRUID

If the High Druid is important in your game then the owlbears can be reasoned with, (if the adventurer is a druid or has the ability to speak to animals), bargained with, or scared away.

Adventurers with a relationship with the High Druid can attempt a DC 25 skill check before the fight starts: if successful, one owlbear leaves the fight. The player in question may describe their interaction with the beast and the ensuing negotiation, bargaining, or intimidation however they like.

### ICON OPTION: THE ARCHMAGE

If the Archmage is an important icon in your campaign then those who are allied with him know of a secret weakness that this breed of owlbears has. The secret weakness isn't enough to turn a fight, but can give a minor benefit in this particular situation.

Adventurers with a relationship with the Archmage may attempt a DC 25 skill check before the fight starts: if successful, the adventurer gets +4 to initiative.



Exactly what the secret weakness is we leave up to you: maybe they are afraid of mirrors or hate a certain food-stuff or are lulled by music. This is one time that trivia comes in handy.

OWLBEAR (CUB)

1<sup>st</sup> level spoiler [BEAST]

Initiative: +8

**Scratch and peck +6 vs. AC**—5 damage

*Natural even hit:* Until the end of the owlbear's next turn, the target is hampered (makes only basic attacks) while engaged with the owlbear

*Protect the cubs:* When an owlbear cub is attacked any nearby unengaged owlbears may immediately move into engagement with the attacker. If no owlbears are unengaged an adult owlbear pops free and moves.

**AC 17**

**PD 15 HP 30**

**MD 11**



OWLBEAR (INJURED)

Large 2<sup>nd</sup> level wrecker [BEAST]

Initiative: +8

**Rip and peck +7 vs. AC**—8 damage, and until the end of the owlbear's next turn, the target is hampered (makes only basic attacks) while engaged with the owlbear

*Vicious hybrid:* If the escalation die is even, make another rip and peck attack.

*Feed the cubs:* An owlbear that scores a critical hit against a hampered enemy tears a piece of the creature off (GM chooses a limb) and will subsequently attempt to retreat with the prize to feed its cubs. The torn-up enemy is stunned until the end of its next turn.

*Silent hunter:* Owlbears are nearly silent until they strike. Checks to hear them approaching take a -5 penalty.

Nastier Specials:

*Surge of vitality:* For one round treat the owlbear's attacks and defenses as though it were the 4th level version.

**AC 17**

**PD 15 HP 70**

**MD 11**







## INTO THE DARK

The meteorite has punched a hole through the center of Eldwold and down into the earth below.

The adventurers must lower themselves into the hole in order to follow the meteorite and potentially recover the gem known as the Heart of the Sky.

Descent into the dark: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Falling (automatic hit)**—1d6 damage

OR

**Rubble falls from above +5 vs AC**—2d6 damage

### ICON OPTION: THE DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is important in your game then dwarves gain a +4 bonus to this climb, as dwarves are naturally adept at stonemasonry and climbing rocky walls.

If the dwarf king is not important in your game then maybe any dwarves in the party never learned the inner secrets of stonemasonry.

### ICON OPTION: THE LICH KING

If the Lich King is important in your game then any agents of the Lich King in the party gain aid from the undead to the tune of a +4 bonus to this skill check.

The player(s) of the Lich King's agents can describe this aid in any way that they like, but personally I like the idea of the dead of Eldwold reaching out of the shaft's walls and providing gruesome perches for the adventurer's hands and feet.

## STAR-MASK CULTISTS

The adventurers follow the shaft down into the yawning darkness and into a honeycomb of tunnels a hundred yards beneath the surface. The meteorite crashed through here for certain, but a cave-in in the tunnels means that a direct

path down is blocked. Fortunately, many of these tunnels lead downwards.

Unfortunately, the adventurers are not alone...

The meteorite that crashed through Eldwold and into the darkness below contained Star-Masks, strange parasitic organisms that possess the living and the dead alike. Rumors have been circulating the Dragon Empire for months about these strange entities and now the adventurers are going to get a chance to see if the rumors are true.

Number of PCs	Meteorite Xombie	Star-Mask Cultist	Star-Mask Cult Leader
3	7	2	0
4	7	0	1
5	7	1	1
6	7	2	1

### ICON OPTION: THE PRIESTESS

If the Priestess is important in your game then these cultists were originally inhabitants of Eldwold above and may yet be rescued and returned to the surface if they are defeated and the star-masks removed from their faces. Of course, this means that the party must choose to knock out the cultists instead of killing them.

### ICON OPTION: THE DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in your game then these possessed individuals are dwarves. Characters with a relationship of 6 with the Dwarf King can spend that here to appeal to the dwarves' inner dwarvishness and encourage the possessed individuals to fight the Star-Masks for control. If the player of the adventurer chooses to spend a 6 like this, then the cultist's defenses are lowered by 1 while they are not staggered.

## METEORITE XOMBIE

1st level mook [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +8

**Decaying fists +6 vs. AC—3 damage**

*Natural 16+ hit:* The attack does double damage, but the xombie takes 1d6 damage.

[Group ability] **C: Vomit tentacles +6 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies in a group)—4 damage**

*Group ability:* For every four meteorite xombies in the battle (round up), one of them can use vomit tentacles once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 11 HP 7 (mook)**

**MD 15**

*Mook:* Kill one meteorite xombie mook for every 7 damage you do to the mob.

## STAR-MASK CULTIST

*This hapless humanoid has become host to a mask, and is in thrall to the group mind.*

1st level archer [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +6

**Club +5 vs. AC—4 damage**

**R: Bow +5 vs. AC—5 damage**

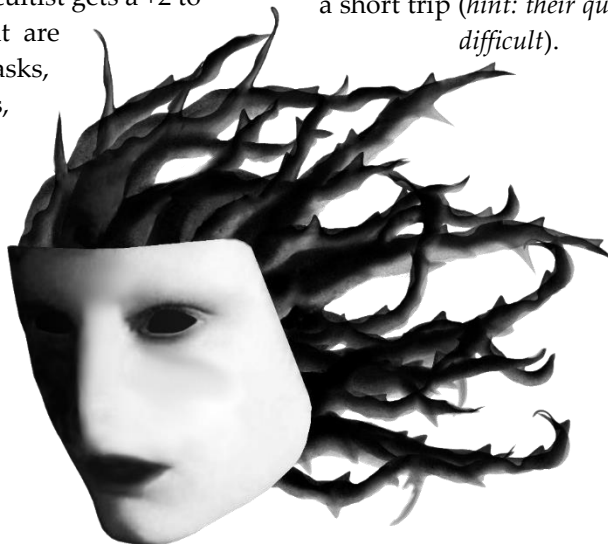
[Group ability] *Coordinated attack:* Until the start of its next turn the star-mask cultist gets a +2 to bonus to attack enemies that are engaged with allied star masks, star mask cultists, xombies, etc.

*Group ability:* For every two star-mask cultists in the battle (round up), one of them can use *coordinated attack* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 13 HP 27**

**MD 15**



## STAR-MASK CULT LEADER

*This cultist is more in tune with the group mind than others, and issues orders to its underlings.*

Double-strength 2nd level leader [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +7

**Iron-shod staff +7 vs. AC—14 damage**

[Group ability] **R: Psychic domination +7 vs. MD—7 damage and 7 ongoing damage**

*Natural even hit or miss:* One dead (or unconscious or otherwise out of the fight) star-mask cultist, dead star-mask cult leader, or dead star-mask brute becomes a living star-mask.

*Group ability:* For every two star mask-cult leaders in the battle (round up), one of them can use *psychic dominion* once during the battle as a quick action.

**AC 18**

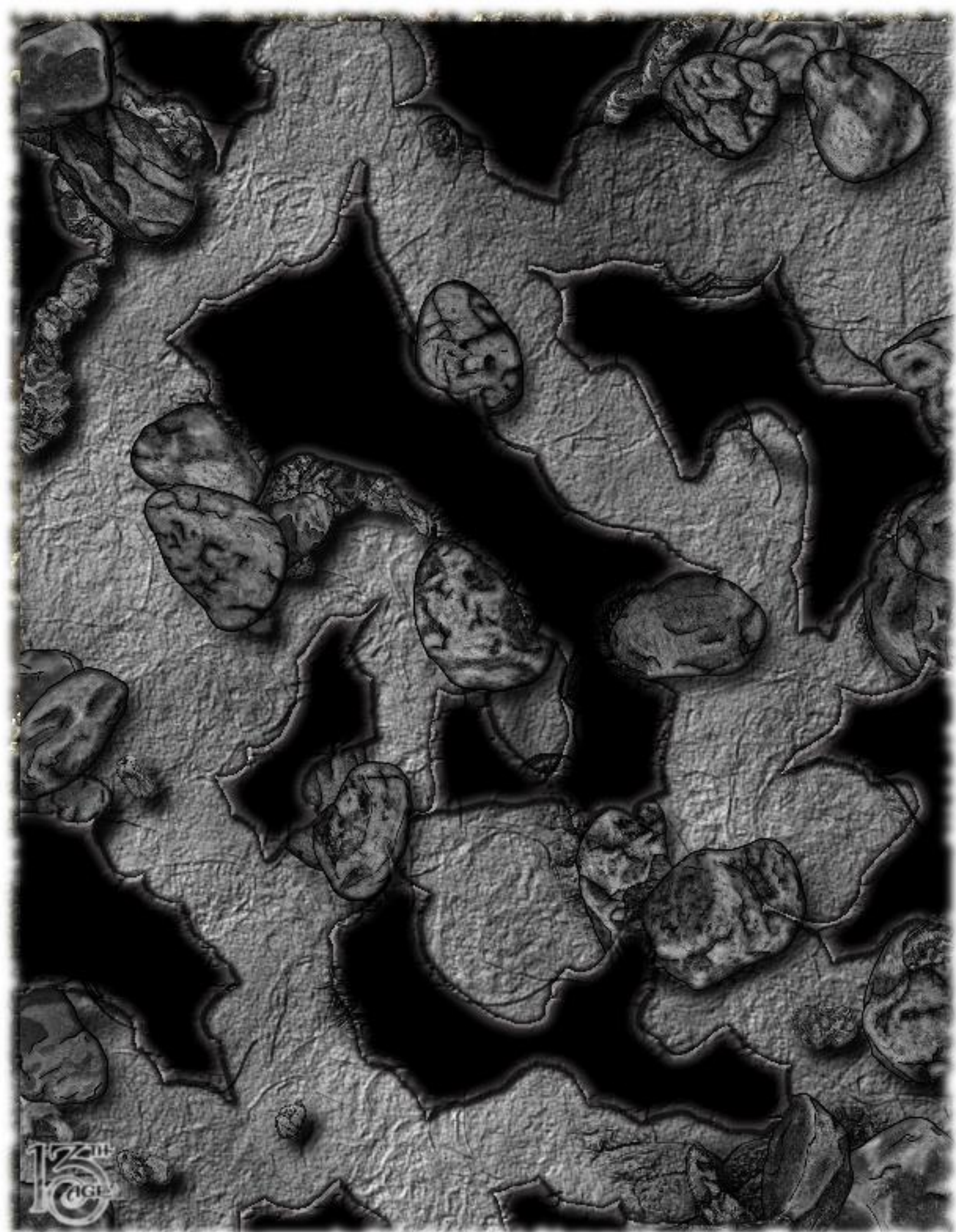
**PD 13 HP 72**

**MD 15**

## END OF SESSION

Having defeated the Star-Masks, the adventurers have a chance to rest in the natural tunnels under Eldwold before proceeding further. The meteorite's path downwards is obvious (for now) so it is just a case of resting before what should be a short trip (*hint: their quest will be both long and difficult*).





# SESSION 2: THE DEEPENING DARK

## RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. At the end of the session each character should gain an incremental advance.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end, you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game, I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure. For a longer hour game, I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Dead bulette
2. Meteorite fragments
3. Shark-bat eggs
4. Star-mask bulette
5. Star-mask cultists
6. Roll twice and combine the results

## ABOUT THE NPCs

Each session includes an NPC you can add to the story if your players appreciate interactions with people who need or can provide help. None of the NPCs have full stats because they're not the type of people who could provide opposition or serious long-term support to an adventuring

party, they're characters who can appear briefly to help motivate PCs who are temporarily at a loss. If the PCs take a liking to an NPCs, feel free to expand their role.

## NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

- The party is not the only group looking for the Heart of the Sky. The icons sent several groups of adventurers into the underworld. The new character is the lone survivor of another adventuring group.
- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark, it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow, it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through, it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

## NPC—ARAGATHA

### STONEBEARD

The following NPC can be introduced at any point in this session of the adventure:

Aragatha is a dwarf from Eldwold, who awoke to find herself down in the underworld. She is injured (a broken collar bone and concussion among other things) and disoriented. Aragatha is still dressed in her nightclothes and has a bedsheet with her. She is looking for a way out—unfortunately with her injuries, she can't climb.

Aragatha has no idea what happened to Eldwold since she was asleep at the time of the crash. Wounded and in shock, she won't be much use in a fight, but she's no coward.

This NPC can meet the adventurers as they navigate the tunnels, as she wanders dazed and in shock into a monster lair, as a prisoner of the



star-masks, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

## SUBTERRANEAN NAVIGATION

The adventurers have followed the meteorite down into the tunnels deep under the ruins of Eldwold. These tunnels appear to have been dug out of the rock, though not by any humanoid hand. This is Bulette territory.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to cooperatively tell the story of the party's initial delve into the underworld. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced in descending into the dark, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem encountered in their first tentative cave-delve and everybody has had a chance to have their character solve a problem in a heroic way. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example, mention evidence of bulettes: shed body-plating and half-eaten corpses).

## COLLAPSING TUNNELS

The tunnels that the adventurers have been moving down are unstable at best. Carved out of the earth by bulettes, the meteorite crashing through has disturbed the compacted rock and dirt that comprises the tunnel walls.

The adventurers' downward exploration has taken them into an unstable section of the tunnels.

**Spelunking: DC 15.** If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Falling rocks +5 vs AC—2d6 damage**  
OR

**Sudden drop +5 vs PD—3d4 damage**

### ICON OPTION: DIABOLIST

If the Diabolist is an important icon in your game, then the bulettes that made these tunnels were the mounts of chthonic demons. The demons have left

magical sigils burned into the walls that reinforce the tunnels. The party no longer needs to make spelunking rolls and avoid the potential dangers of falling rocks—these tunnels are much more secure.

Unfortunately some of the sigils are traps; those without a positive or conflicted relationship with the Diabolist are attacked by some of the sigils:

**Mind-burning eye +10 vs MD—3d6 psychic damage**

### ICON OPTION: ELF QUEEN

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in your game, then this section of tunnels is, in fact, going through the ruins of a drow city. The rocks are carved, and among the compacted dirt of the tunnel walls there is evidence of mosaic tiles.

A player with a 6 with the Elf Queen on their relationship dice can spend it here to find an alternate passage that bypasses the underground dangers. Spending a 5 means that the shortcut merely lowers the skill check DC to 10 instead of 15.

## THE SHARK-BAT

The party reaches a partially submerged chamber, where a roaring cataract fed by water from the surface plunges into a deep lake. The tunnel continues on the far side of the chamber, which is lit from far above by the distant sun. Ferns and mosses grow on the slick rocks, and insects buzz lazily in the dank confines of the cave.

The waters of the lake stir, as something large lives here. This is obviously a monster's lair. To continue onward, the party must pass near (or perhaps wade through) the shallower parts of the water.

Number of PCs	Shark-Bat Hatchling	Shark-Bat
3	0	1
4	2	1
5	5	1
6	8	1

### ICON OPTION: CRUSADER

If the Crusader is an important icon in your game then he sometimes uses 'tame' shark-bats as 'trained' guardians of his camps.

If the party has at least one person with a relationship with the Crusader, they can try distracting this shark-bat, for it is an escaped 'tame' shark-bat. Exactly how the party attempts to distract the shark-bat is down to the party: singing soothing songs to the beast, throwing meat into the water, drugging it... whatever they try it is a DC 25 skill check.

If an adventurer succeeds at the skill check they can sneak past the shark-bat. However, if the party fails then the shark-bat flies up out of the water and gets a free attack on the adventurer who failed the roll!

### ICON OPTION: EMPEROR

If the Emperor is an important icon in this game, then under the mosses are bones. These are the remains of a party of explorers sent down here a century ago. Their gear is rotted and rusted away, but a few pieces still glint in the light.

Any player with a 6 with the Emperor on their icon dice can trade that in for a magic item.

### ICON OPTION: HIGH DRUID

Shark-bats are natural creatures, unrelated to either sharks or bats. If the High Druid is an important icon in your game, then the existence of shark-bats is well known to the party, as are some of their habits and tactics of this particular breed of shark-bats.

Any player with a 6 with the High Druid on their icon dice can trade that in for a free attack against the beast before the fight proper begins. A 5 can be traded in for a +4 bonus to initiative.

*Shark-bats sound like the sort of thing a wizard would breed for fun, but the truth is that they have no common heritage with either animal—they came to this world from another realm.*

#### For all shark-bats

All shark-bats have the following two abilities.

*Supreme senses:* Shark-bats have echolocation, can sense tremors in the ground and walls, can smell blood, sense electrical fields... in short *if you are there they know you are there.* They can spot you long before you spot them!

*Ambush predator:* Shark-bats are experts at surprise attacks and ambushes. When you fight them, two shark-bats get to act before initiative is rolled. Unless the adventurers take extraordinary measures; even if the party ambushes the shark-bats, two of the monsters get to counter-ambush the party.



**GMs:** Shark-bats are nasty! With their expanding crit range and extra crit effects on top of double damage they can decimate a party if the dice go against the players. Shark-bats don't get nastier specials, they *are* nastier specials. Remind the players that the adventurers can *flee*. Fleeing from shark-bats is one of the few times you might want to waive the campaign loss for fleeing—if you choose to waive the campaign loss let the players know.



## SHARK-BAT HATCHLING

Also known as spider-sharks. The reason should be obvious.

2<sup>nd</sup> level mook [BEAST]

Initiative: +8

Vulnerable: thunder

**Savage bite +7 vs. AC—5 damage**

*Group attack:* Instead of each hatchling engaged with an enemy making a separate attack they can make a single *wave of teeth* attack as a group.

**Wave of teeth +7+X vs. AC (X = number of engaged hatchlings)—5+X damage**

*Miss:* Half damage.

*Wall-crawler:* The hatchling uses its long segmented legs (actually the phalanges of its not yet developed wings) to skitter up walls and over rocks.

**AC 18**

**PD 15 HP 9 (mook)**

**MD 12**

*Mook:* Kill one shark-bat hatchling mook for every 9 damage you deal to the mob.

## SHARK-BAT

The shark-bat is strictly speaking neither, yet has attributes of both. If you are imagining a huge winged shark you are not far off.

Large 3<sup>rd</sup> level blocker [BEAST]

Initiative: +9

Vulnerable: thunder

**Bite and sever +8 vs. AC—21 damage**

*Crit:* The target is either stuck and must move with the shark-bat and takes 5 ongoing damage (hard save ends all) OR loses a limb (target's choice). This is in addition to the normal crit double damage.

*Scent of blood:* The crit range for shark-bats expands by 1 for every nearby enemy that is stuck or staggered OR every nearby or far away staggered ally (whichever is higher).

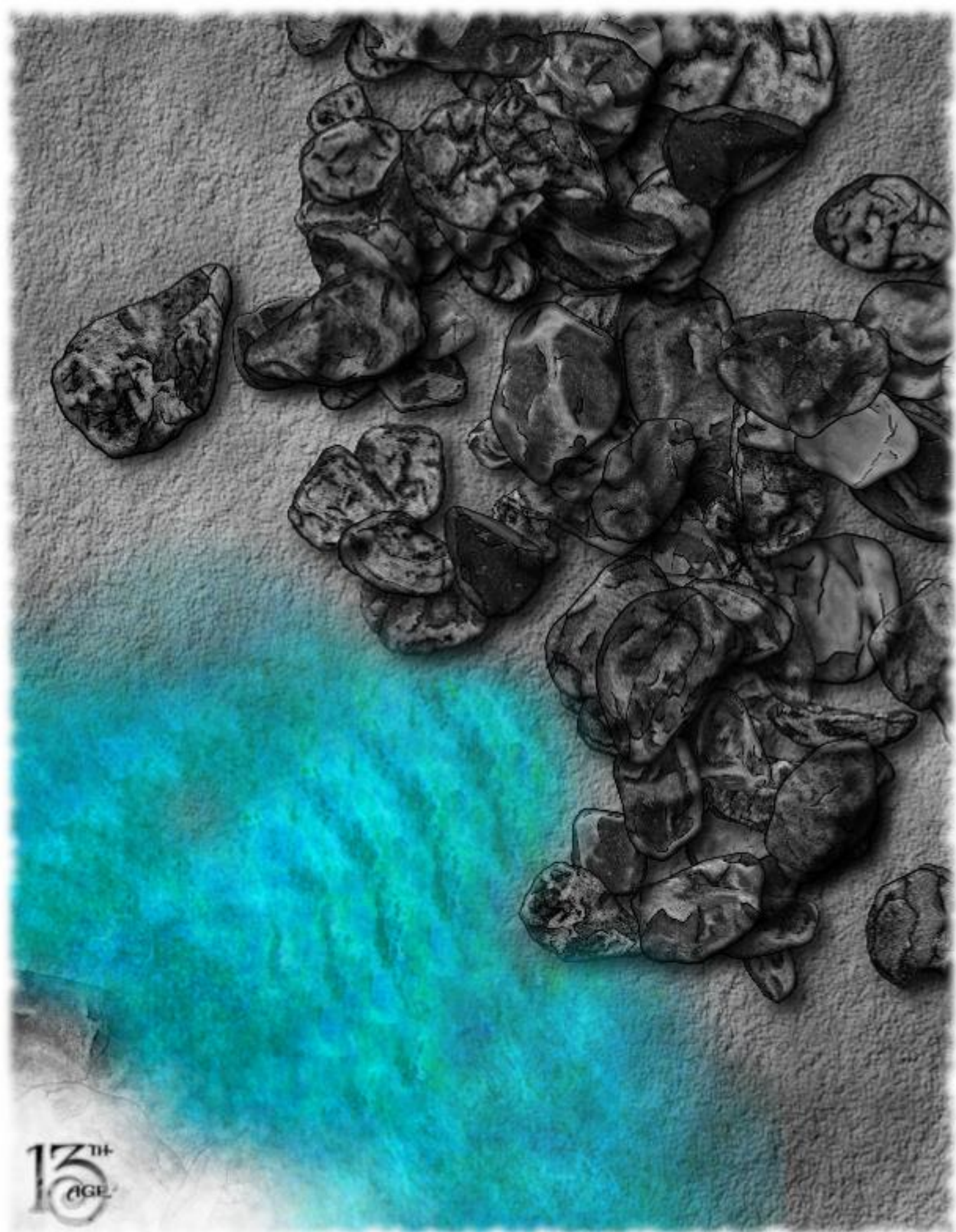
*Swim/Fly:* Shark-bats can fly and swim with equal grace and speed, but are clumsy when forced to land.

**AC 19**

**PD 17 HP 99**

**MD 13**





13<sup>TH</sup>  
AGE



## LET SLEEPING BULETTES

### LIE

The adventurers press onwards and downwards into a series of rock tunnels obviously made by bulettes. As the adventurers move cautiously down the tunnels, they start to see large rounded rock-like forms.

The rock-like forms are sleeping bulettes. Let the players know that it is obvious to the adventurers that they can't take on all these monsters by themselves—waking the bulettes would be foolish.

Creeping past sleeping monsters: DC 20.

If any adventurer fails the skill roll it becomes a chase, but if all the adventurers succeed they exit the tunnels into the Winding Stair

Getting away from the awoken bulettes is a DC 15 skill check (the bulettes are still sleepy). If all the adventurers succeed the skill check then they outrun the bulettes and exit to the Winding Stair. However, if at least one adventurer fails the roll, a few of the bulettes corner the adventurers in a tunnel, and get a free attack on the adventurer(s) who failed the running away roll before combat proper begins.

Number of PCs	Baby Bulette	Red Bulette	Red Bulette Pride Leader
3	0	0	1
4	1	1	0
5	1	0	1
6	0	2	0

### ICON OPTION: GREAT GOLD WYRM OR THE THREE

If the Great Gold Wyrms or the Three are important icons in this game then these bulettes are afraid of dragons, one of their few natural predators.

Spending a 6 with one of the above icons when initiative is rolled allows the adventurer to scare a bulette, weakening

that monster (save ends). Exactly how the character scares the beast is up to the player: imitating a dragon call, clever shadow-puppetry, or maybe even a draconic aura that briefly envelops the adventurer.

### ICON OPTION: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then there are bones down in these tunnels—dwarves and drow who have fallen victim to the bulettes.

Spending a 6 with the Lich King lets the adventurer turn a failure in this skill challenge into a success (or allowing somebody else to reroll their failed skill check). Maybe a skeleton animates to point the way to run, or puts its finger to its (non-existent) lips as a warning to be quiet.

### ICON OPTION: PRINCE OF SHADOWS

If the Prince of Shadows is an important icon in this game, then there magic items among the coprolite droppings of the bulettes, just about the only thing that survives their digestive process.

Spending a 6 with the Prince of Shadows lets the adventurer *quietly* dig around and find a magic item. Others can try to dig—a DC 25 skill check: success means that the adventurer finds a magic item, failure means that they nominate *somebody else* to be attacked by a sleeping bulette:

**Sleepy bite +5 vs AC—3d4 damage**

## BABY BULETTE

2<sup>nd</sup> level troop [BEAST]

Initiative: +7

**Hungry little mouth +6 vs. AC (two attacks against the same target) –4 damage**

*Once per battle, when both attacks hit and one was a critical hit: the bulette has bitten off one of the adventurer's limbs.*

*Baby:* All bulettes have their crit range expanded by 4 (usually to 16-20) against enemies engaged with the baby.

*Follower burrower:* The baby bulette can only burrow when an adult is leading the way.

**AC 18**

**PD 16 HP 72**

**MD 12**

## RED BULETTE

*Quick underworld hunters, these bulettes hunt in packs.*

Large 2<sup>nd</sup> level troop [BEAST]

Initiative: +7

**Chomp +6 vs. AC (two attacks against the same target) –7 damage**

*Once per battle, when both attacks hit and one was a critical hit: the bulette has bitten off one of the adventurer's limbs.*

*Pack hunter:* For each bulette also engaged with the target the red bulette gains a +1 attack bonus (max +4).

### Nastier Specials

*Earth surge:* Whenever the red bulette takes damage from an attack, it rolls a save; on a 16+ it can immediately dive beneath the ground, preventing further attacks against it until it surfaces at the start of its next turn. Force attacks and opportunity attacks don't trigger this ability.

*Serious burrower:* The red bulette can burrow incredibly quickly for short distances.

**AC 18**

**PD 16 HP 72**

**MD 12**

## RED BULETTE PRIDE LEADER

Huge 2<sup>nd</sup> level leader [BEAST]

Initiative: +7

**Chomp +6 vs. AC (two attacks against the same target) –11 damage**

*Once per battle, when both attacks hit and one was a critical hit: the bulette has bitten off one of the adventurer's limbs.*

*Pack leader:* Other bulettes have their crit range expanded by 1 (to 19+) against enemies engaged with the pack leader.

### Nastier Specials

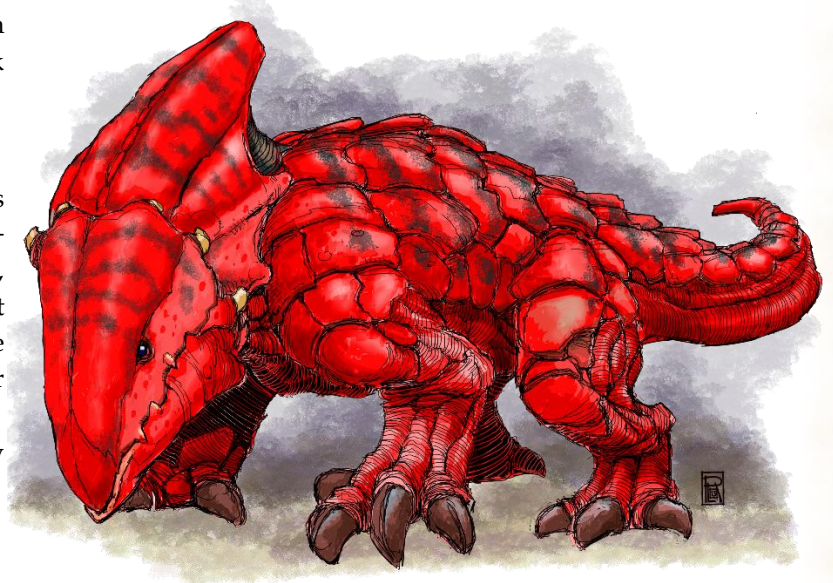
*Earth surge:* Whenever the red bulette takes damage from an attack, it rolls a save; on a 16+ it can immediately dive beneath the ground, preventing further attacks against it until it surfaces at the start of its next turn. Force attacks and opportunity attacks don't trigger this ability.

*Serious burrower:* The red bulette can burrow incredibly quickly for short distances.

**AC 18**

**PD 16 HP 110**

**MD 12**





## THE WINDING STAIR

The adventurers exit the bulette tunnels and enter a natural vertical shaft in the rock; iron pitons have been hammered into the edge of the shaft to form a crude stairway.

### ICON OPTION: EMPEROR

If the Emperor is important to this game, then these spikes were set in the walls by an exploratory party sent down here centuries ago. The party finds an old camp, a safe place to rest.

Each adventurer may spend a recovery and maximize the recovery value, or may regain a spent recovery.

### ICON OPTION: DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is important in this game, then this vertical shaft merely looks natural, in reality it is an old air shaft for a mine.

In the next combat the escalation die starts at 1 due to the adventurers having a good idea of the lay of the land.

## STAR-MASKS

The adventurers arrive at the bottom of the shaft to discover that they are in an old dwarven mine. It looks as if there have been people here recently, there are footprints in the dust.

Star-mask possessed townsfolk from Eldwold crawled down into the earth, following the meteorite. The good news is that the adventurers are on the right track to find the meteorite. The bad news is that the adventurers are not alone...

Number of PCs	Fast Xombie	Meteorite Xombie	Star-Mask Cultist
3	1	4	2
4	3	2	2
5	3	8	2
6	6	4	2

*GM Note—If there have already been two combats this game then skip this combat if you are running short on time: the party instead discovers the bodies of the dead star-masks who have been eaten by a shark-bat.*

### ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE

If the Archmage is an important icon in this game, then this mine was for mana stones. While the mine is all played out, there remains just enough residual power to provide a temporary boost to a magic user.

Players who spend a 6 with the Archmage can roll to recharge one expended recharge spell during the fight. If there is to be no fight here, then they can gather up enough sparkling mana dust to allow them to roll to recharge at some point in the future:

#### Mana Dust

*Expendable magic item*

When initiative is rolled use this item to roll to recharge an expended recharge magic power or spell.

### ICON OPTION: ORC LORD

If the Orc Lord is an important icon in this game, then the dwarves were driven from this place by an orc attack. Dwarven bodies lie strewn about the place.

Spending a 6 with the Orc Lord allows the adventurer to find a magic weapon still embedded in a dwarven skull. Spending a 5 means that the magic weapon is still recovered, but add a haunted skull to the fight if there is due to be a fight in this location.

## FAST XOMBIE

*One of the xombie eggs inside this xombie has matured into a star-mask and is directing the others like a troupe of killer corpse-puppets.*

*0 level spoiler [ABERRATION]*

*Initiative: +8*

**Xombie rush +5 vs. AC—4 damage** and the xombie pops free and moves into engagement with a nearby or far away enemy.

*Natural even miss:* the xombie pops free and moves into engagement with a nearby or far away enemy.

*Natural odd miss:* the xombie pops free.

*Strange leap:* When the escalation die is 0 or 1, as a move action the xombie moves into engagement with a nearby or far away enemy.

**AC 16**

**PD 10    HP 20**

**MD 14**

## METEORITE XOMBIE

*This barely coordinated xombie is falling apart, its limbs barely held on by the black tendrils of the xombie eggs within.*

*1st level mook [ABERRATION]*

*Initiative: +8*

**Decaying fists +6 vs. AC—3 damage**

*Natural 16+ hit:* The attack does double damage, but the xombie takes 1d6 damage.

[Group ability] **C: Vomit tentacles +6 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies in a group)—4 damage**

*Group ability:* For every four meteorite xombies in the battle (round up), one of them can use vomit tentacles once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 11    HP 7 (mook)**

**MD 15**

*Mook:* Kill one meteorite xombie mook for every 7 damage you do to the mob.

## STAR-MASK CULTIST

*This hapless humanoid has become host to a mask, and is in thrall to the group mind.*

*1st level archer [ABERRATION]*

*Initiative: +6*

**Club +5 vs. AC—4 damage**

**R: Bow +5 vs. AC—5 damage**

[Group ability] *Coordinated attack:* Until the start of its next turn the star-mask cultist gets a +2 to bonus to attack enemies that are engaged with allied star masks, star mask cultists, xombies, etc.

*Group ability:* For every two star-mask cultists in the battle (round up), one of them can use *coordinated attack* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 13    HP 27**

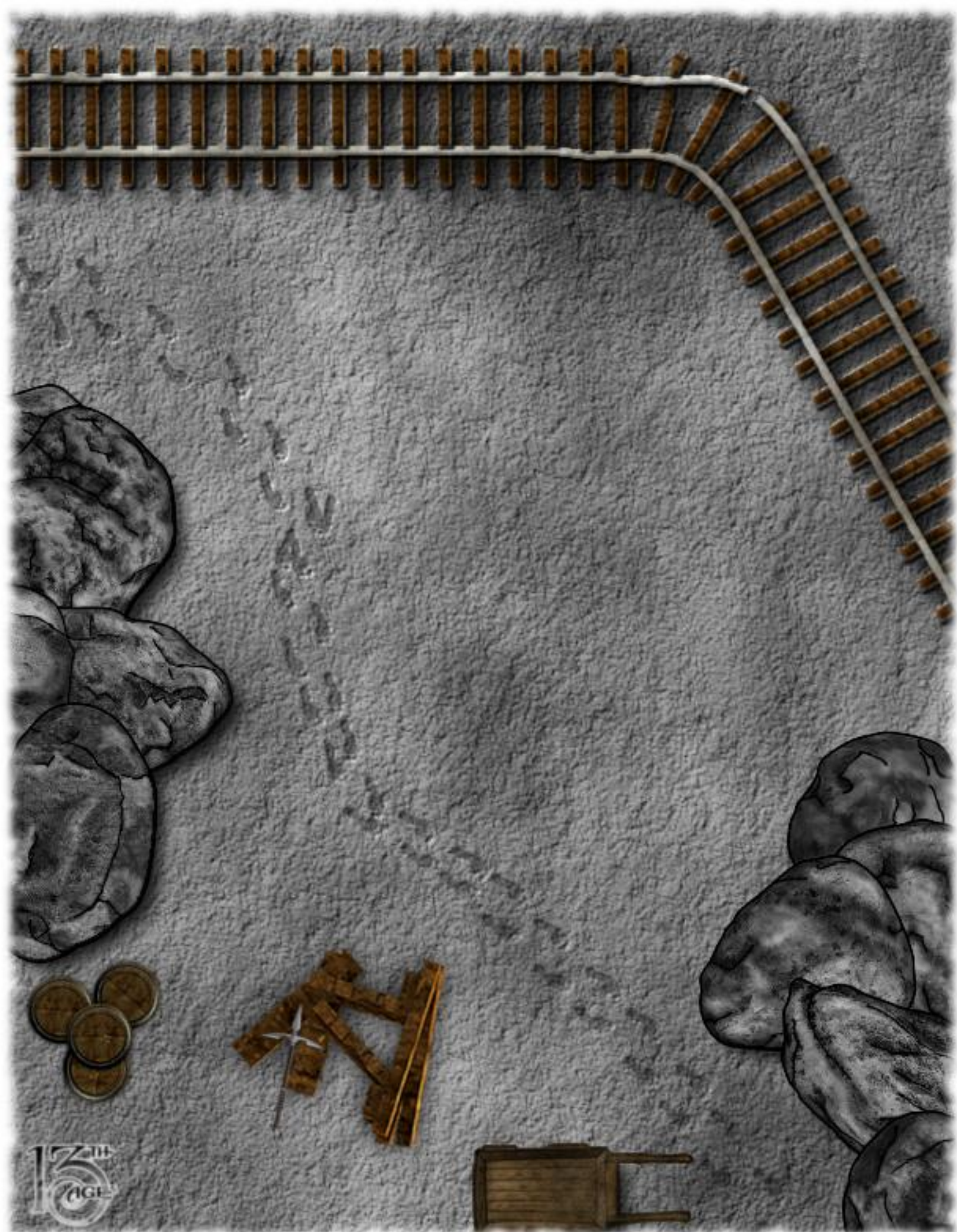
**MD 15**

## END OF SESSION

The adventurers stumble into a primitive dwelling, a cave that has been expanded out into rooms with benches or beds carved into the walls. Whoever once lived here is long gone, but it makes for a great resting place for the adventurers as they steel themselves for delving still deeper.







# SESSION 3: THE INK MINES OF IX

## RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. At the end of the session, each character should gain an incremental advance.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end, you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game, I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure. For a longer hour game, I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Adventurer's corpse
2. Bat attack
3. Deep moths
4. Khavlings
5. Star-mask drow
6. Roll twice and combine the results

## ABOUT THE NPCs

Each session includes an NPC you can add to the story if your players appreciate interactions with people who need or can provide help. None of the NPCs have full stats because they're not the type of people who could provide opposition or serious long-term support to an adventuring

party, they're characters who can appear briefly to help motivate PCs who are temporarily at a loss. If the PCs take a liking to an NPCs, feel free to expand their role.

## NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

- The party is not the only group looking for the Heart of the Sky. The icons sent several groups of adventurers into the underworld. The new character is the lone survivor of another adventuring group.
- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark, it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow, it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through, it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

## NPC—DURDEN DRADOUR

*The following NPC can be introduced at any point in this session of the adventure:*

This dark elf mystic is seeking the obscure knowledge that the Ixian priests are said to safeguard. Dressed in a simple linen robe, the barefoot dark elf carries a lantern with glowing spiders inside it to light his way.

Durden is interested in the strange outsiders (the adventurers) and has a lot of questions for them about the surface world. He doesn't know much about the surface and has some incorrect assumptions (*If the adventurers live under the burning sun, how are they not burned to a blackened crisp? How does water get back into the sky after rain has happened? If the stars guide everybody's destiny do surface dwellers who can see the stars have free will?*), probably as incorrect as the adventurer's assumptions about the underworld are.



This NPC can meet the adventurers as they enter the temple of Ix, as they row across the lake of ink (his boat sank and he's stranded on a rock), as the adventurers reach the great book, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

## TO SEARCH IN DARKNESS

Following the trail of the meteorite down into the earth has led to a full-on subterranean delve. The adventurers are now deep in the underworld, where the normal rules of the surface world no longer hold.

The party now has to side-track. The route of the meteorite has taken it deep into the underworld, but the vertical tunnel that the meteorite created has now collapsed and is impassable. The adventurers must look for a different way downwards.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to tell the story of the adventurers searching for an alternate path downwards. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced looking for a downwards path, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a danger of the underworld, and everybody has had a chance to have their character overcome a danger. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example mention seeing the symbol of Ix carved into a cavern wall, or a puddle of fresh ink spilled on a set of carved steps leading downwards).

## IXIAN PRIESTS

The adventurers, after a fitful rest in a side-passage, crawl up a narrow tunnel towards a light. They hear voices ahead.

There are cracks in the tunnel's stone, the meteorite's passage has affected this area as it crashed into the underworld. Dead star-mask creatures fall out of some of the cracks as the party passes by.

The tunnel opens out into a carved cavern, each mighty stalagmite and stalactite has been hollowed out and turned into ornate dwelling

places. Robed dwarves move about the place, under the light of glowing mosses. This place is the size of a small city.

It is impossible to avoid the dwarven priests, there are simply too many of them. Fortunately the priests are friendly. Initially, the priests assume that the party members are pilgrims that have come to seek self-knowledge in the sacred book of Ix that lies in the god's inner sanctum.

The party learns that these dwarves are the priests of Ix, a god of knowledge. Ix's priests are ordinarily pacifists, preferring to run from fights than stand and be slaughtered. Ix's titles includes *"She who writes reality into existence"*, *"He who swims in the dark"*, and *"The many-tentacled one"*. The priests use phrases like *"May Ix's beak caress you"* and *"May Ix's love drag you down into deeper self-awareness"*.

The priests let the adventurers know that beyond the inner sanctum is a pathway down deeper into the underworld. The priests are willing to let the party into their inner sanctum, as they do with all pilgrims.

The priests warn that the inner sanctum is 'protected' by a giant squid; normally the giant squid is peaceable, but a star mask creature has possessed the guardian and it has become aggressive to pilgrim and priest alike.

Since Ix is associated with tentacled things the priests are loathe to attack the giant squid or the star masks (the priests say that Ix is unlikely to smile upon those that harm its 'children'), but are more than willing to let the adventurers dispatch the beast.

The priests warn that the inner sanctum of Ix is partly in the realm of the gods, and is different for each group that visits it: some report meeting Ix in the form of a telepathic squid, others say that they communed with a heavily-tattooed scribe who possessed divine wisdom and powers, others that they visited a celestial library in a crystal dome deep under an ocean. The priests of Ix are not sure exactly what the party will encounter, but warn that sometimes Ix tests those that seek its knowledge or that use its inner sanctum as a shortcut into the deeper underworld.

The priests tell the party that their high priestess awaits pilgrims on the far side of the inner sanctum, to give aid to those who need it after encountering Ix, and to record their experiences with their god.

### ICON OPTION: PRIESTESS

If the Priestess is an important icon in this game, then the adventurers know that Ix is indeed a god, though not one much worshiped. On the surface world Ix is a god of librarians, scribes, and others who deal in ink. Ix is sometimes depicted as a squid, but most often is depicted as a robed figure wielding a quill. Obviously, the squid depiction has some basis in reality.

Spending a 6 with the Priestess allows the party to gain a small boon from the priests of Ix—maybe a healing potion, or a *stonelung potion*.

#### Stonelung Potion

*Expendable magic item*

You can hold your breath for up to an hour; though this does not make you immune to poison gasses, you can stay underwater for a long time.

### ICON OPTION: CRUSADER

If the Crusader is an important icon in this game, then the party knows that Ix straddles the line between the gods of light and the gods of darkness.

Spending a 6 with the Crusader allows the party to convince the priests (perhaps through threats) to give them something useful—perhaps a healing potion, or a *magic oil*.

## DEEP SQUID

At the far end of the cavernous temple is a set of pillars, beyond which are deep pools of inky black water. At the other side of the largest pool is a set of large doors. It is in the largest pool that the giant squid lives. The bottoms of the pools cannot be seen through the inky-black water, though the presence of a large creature in the water is obvious due to the ominous ripples on its surface.

If the party decides to avoid fighting the guardian entirely, then opening the massive doors to the inner sanctum requires 5 successful DC 20 skill checks (or DC 15 if the one making the roll has help from an ally), each of which takes one round and is a standard action for the characters involved. The first failed skill check causes the guardian to rear out of the pool to attack. If the party persists in opening the door (a task that will take 5 rounds minimum) they can run away from the guardian and slam the doors shut behind them, ending the fight.

Number of PCs	Star-Masks	Deep Squid
3	1	1
4	5	1
5	8	1
6	12	1

### ICON OPTION: PRIESTESS OR CRUSADER

If the Priestess or the Crusader are important icons in this game, then this is a divine creature, so replace its poison damage with holy damage.

Spending a 6 with either of the above icons means that Ix empowers the adventurer to defeat the guardian, expanding their crit range by 2 for this fight.

### ICON OPTION: DWARF KING OR ELF QUEEN

If the Dwarf King or Elf Queen are important icons in this game, then these aquatic monsters are well known to subterranean dwellers.

Spending a 6 with either of the above icons allows the adventurer to anticipate attacks and the guardian must reroll its first successful hit against the adventurer.



## STAR-MASK

The white mask scuttles along the ground on barbed tentacles, looking for a host to 'wear' it.

2nd level mook [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +8

**Strangling tentacles +7 vs. PD**—3 damage and 3 ongoing damage, ongoing damage ends if the target is no longer engaged with the star-mask

[Group ability] **Suffocating thoughts +7 vs. MD**—Until the end of the battle, if the target drops to 0 hp; the target rejoins the fight as a star-mask cultist. Converted player character star-mask cultists can be freed from their masks as a standard action by a character next to them.

*Group ability:* For every four star-masks in the battle (round up), one of them can use *suffocating thoughts* once during the battle.

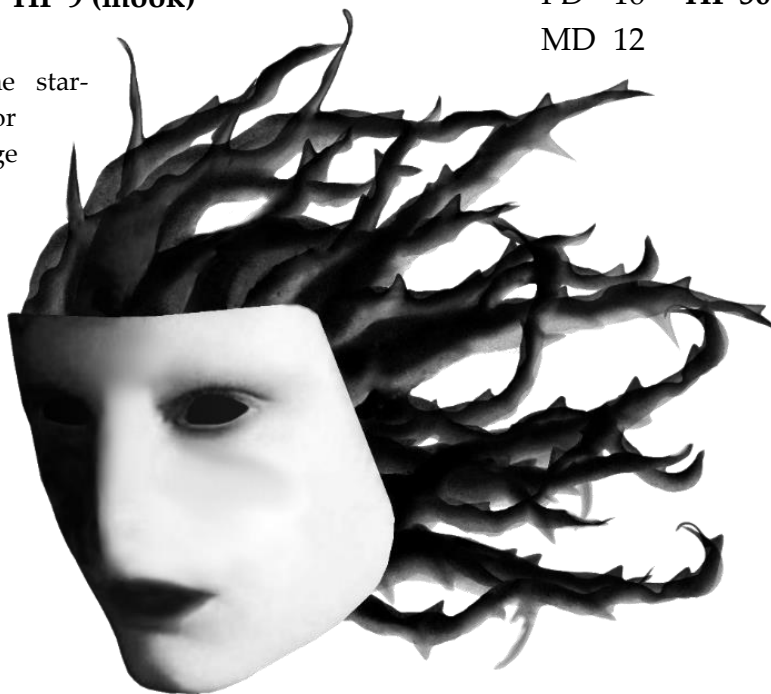
*Leap:* On turns when the escalation die is odd the star-mask can leap into engagement with a nearby enemy as a quick action.

**AC 18**

**PD 12 HP 9 (mook)**

**MD 16**

*Mook:* Kill one star-mask mook for every 9 damage you do to the mob.



## DEEP SQUID

The bulk of the creature is hidden within the deep pool that forms its home. Venture too close and it will pull you into the inky deep where it has the advantage.

Large 2nd level blocker [BEAST]

Initiative: +8

**C: Tentacle grab +7 vs. AC (one nearby or far away enemy)**—14 damage and the target is pulled into engagement with the monster

*Home ground advantage:* Enemies engaged with the squid are weakened (-4 to attack and defenses), until they are no longer engaged or the deep squid is staggered.

*Hidden body:* When the deep squid is crit its body rears above the surface, making it vulnerable to attacks until the start of its next turn.

### A bigger foe...

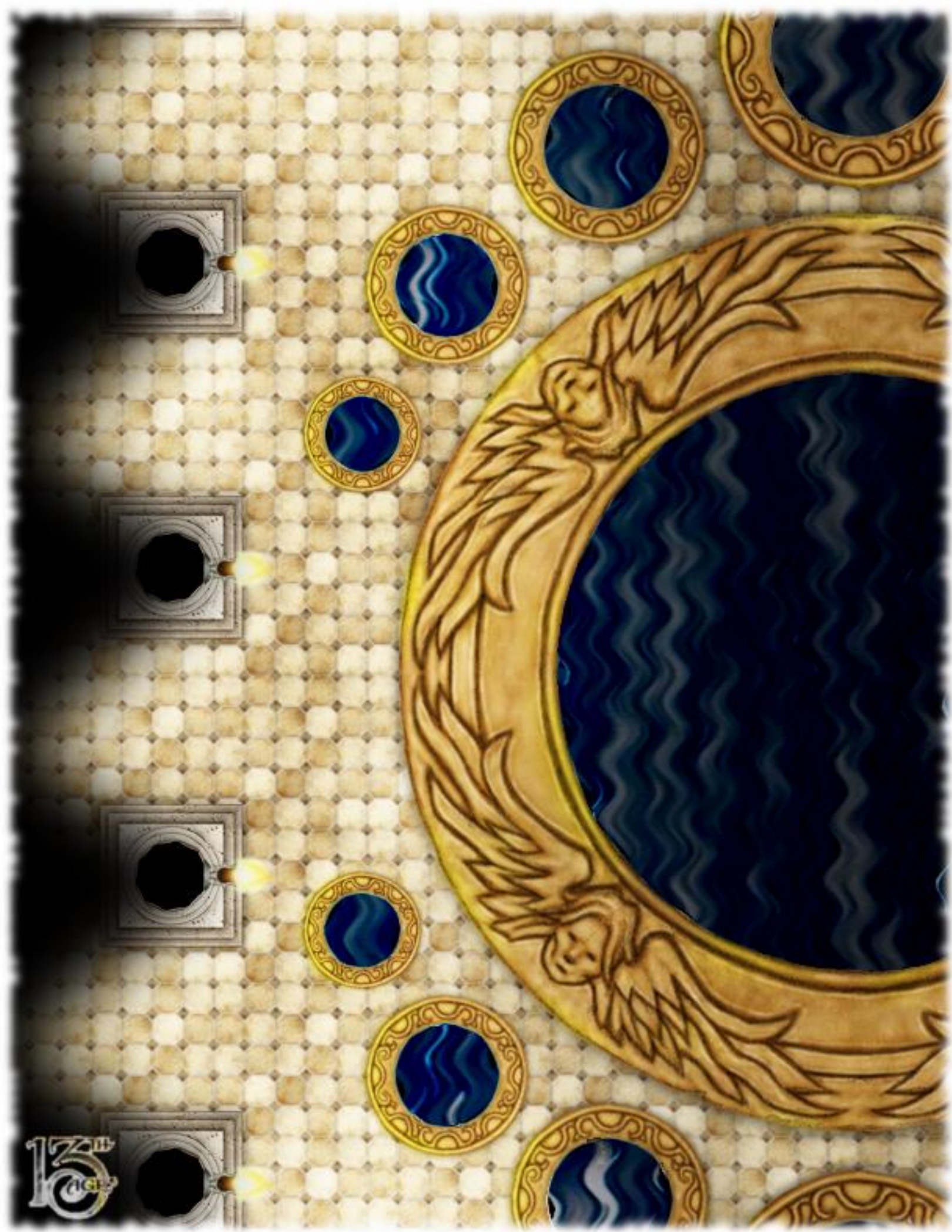
If you want a bigger deep squid use multiples of this monster, with each 'individual' representing a single tentacle.

**AC 18**

**PD 16 HP 50**

**MD 12**







## THE LAKE OF INK

Beyond the doors is a short landing and then a wide staircase that leads down into the darkness. At the bottom of the stairs is a massive cavern which contains a lake of black liquid. In the distance is a light, what looks like a doorway. At the very bottom of the steps is a boat tied up, sitting in the still 'water'.

As the adventurers approach the bottom of the steps, they realize that the water is not water at all, but is black ink. When the characters speak or make a sound the ink ripples and words drift upwards. The words are thin, and cut like razors where they touch flesh. Worse, some of the adventurer's own words attempt to tattoo themselves onto their brains!

**Silent rowing:** DC 20. Each adventurer must roll, even if they aren't rowing they still need to stay perfectly silent. Once every player has rolled the adventurers reach the other end of the lake of ink. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Sharp words +5 vs PD**—2d6 damage  
OR

**Brain tattoo +5 vs MD**—4 ongoing psychic damage (save ends, as does everybody passing or failing their skill checks).

### ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE

If the Archmage is an important icon in this game, then this inky substance is known to wizards, a component in many legendary spells.

Spending a 6 with the Archmage allows the adventurer to capture some of this ink.

#### **Ink of Creation**

*Expendable magic item*

Add +5 to a skill check involving ritual magic.

### ICON OPTION: DIABOLIST

If the Diabolist is an important icon in this game, then this ink is used to seal

contracts in hell (*and here you thought it was blood*).

The next time any adventurer rolls icon dice, add one extra icon die with the Diabolist. Each player gets to choose the nature of the temporary relationship with the Diabolist.

## THE HAND OF IX

The adventurers arrive at the far side of the lake, where another stairway leads further downwards. The ink of the lake doesn't spill over the top step, instead frothing upwards in a wave of floating punctuation marks.

The stairs downward lead miles under the earth. As the party descends, they see a white plain with black marks on it. As the adventurers get closer, they discover that they are descending onto a book, a huge book that fills the entire cavern! The words in the book are written in an obscure language, the language of creation itself.

As the adventurers reach the book, they notice a crack in the cavern wall on the far side of the cave, but getting to it will require crossing the book.

As they begin to cross the book a huge glowing hand descends, holding a quill...

Number of PCs	Hand of Ix
3	1
4	1
5	1
6	1



*Wait... really? Yes. Strange things happen in the underworld, especially when it intersects the realm of a god. To avoid this fight being a TPK if the dice are against the players, have the Hand of Ix withdraw once one character has died.*

## ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE OR THE PRIESTESS

If the Archmage or the Priestess is an important icon in this game, then the words in this book are in a language that some magic users and clerics know.

Any wizard, cleric, paladin, or character with a suitable background can make a DC 20 skill check to decipher the writing as they run across the page. Only fragments can be made out, but it appears that the book is foretelling (or creating) the future. If any adventurer succeeds at the skill check, then their next death save automatically succeeds as they have read that they will not yet die.

## ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE OR DIABOLIST

If the Archmage or the Diabolist is an important icon in this game, then it is possible to use the still wet ink in the book to write on the page by smearing it around by hand. Only followers of the Archmage or Diabolist would be arrogant enough to attempt this or encourage others to do so.

Any character can attempt to rewrite reality (a DC 20 skill check). A success indicates that something about the character can be changed: an icon die can be permanently shifted from one icon to another, a spent recovery can be recovered, a power can be instantly recharged or a daily spell used again. A failure results in a random rewriting of the character and everybody else's memories of their history (roll d8):

1. Age. The character's age gets rewritten, making them barely out of childhood. Parents might discover that they are now younger than their own kids, professionals might find that they hold qualifications that they are too young to possess: but everybody shrugs it off with vague explanations that they seem to find

satisfactory. Nobody else in the party finds it strange that they are adventuring with a tween.

2. Appearance. The character's appearance is now different. Maybe their hair color or skin color is different, or they are shorter or taller, or maybe they have had some qualities switched about (blonde eyes and blue hair for example).
3. Background. The character now has an unusual background that they did not have before—though everybody else remembers them always being that way. The player must switch around some points and put them into the new background. Everybody at the table gets to suggest a new background for the character and the GM picks the most amusing one.
4. Dead (new) sibling. The character is now one of a pair of twins. The party is carrying the corpse of the dead twin which died in a previous battle, and are mourning them. Of course the 'surviving twin' has no memories of their now-extant extinct twin, which might cause the rest of the party to question why the adventurer is not mourning their dead sibling.
5. Expended power. The character discovers that they have somehow expended their most powerful unexpended power; everybody else remembers them using it ineffectively in the last battle.
6. Gender. The character's gender is now different, and has always been as far as everybody else is concerned. Characters who hail from single-sex religious sects find that they are still accepted, but are somehow an exception to the usual social rules that govern their sorority or brotherhood. People come up with explanations that fit the new



facts to their satisfaction (even if the explanations don't actually make sense).

7. Icon relationships. One of the character's icon dice switch around randomly. Roll d12 to discover which icon it switches to. Everybody else remembers the character affected always having a link to the icon in question.
8. Unexpectedly wounded. The character has no recoveries left and appears more beaten and battered than they remember—though everybody else agrees that they got pretty beaten up earlier.

#### HAND OF IX

*A cloud forms, and a gigantic hand with a quill descends out of it.*

*Huge 4<sup>th</sup> level spoiler [SPIRIT]*

Initiative: +X

**Rewrite +9 vs. MD**—Target becomes confused until the end of their next turn.

**AC 17**

**PD 14**            **HP 200 (see *dead?*)**

**MD 20**

*Dead?:* Well, maybe not. Maybe the adventurers just chase the hand away when it reaches 0 hp. Maybe it was never *really* there to begin with.

## END OF SESSION

Once out of the realm of the hand of Ix, the adventurers find themselves in one of a series of interconnected circular chambers. The high priestess of Ix waits with food and water for them, and acolytes and scribes are ready to record their recounted experiences.

The high priestess of Ix allows the adventurers to sleep and take care of their other needs before they pass onwards. If the adventurers attack the priestess and acolytes, the pacifist dwarves will simply run away as fast as they can.









# SESSION 4: THE WEB OF FEAR

## RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

This session is designed for 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. At the end of the session each character should level up to 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

At the start of the session, remember to ask each player to roll their adventurer's icon relationships. Generally speaking a 6 can be traded in for a clear benefit, a 5 when traded in will benefit the adventurer or party but there will be an associated complication, obligation, or drawback.

The session, as written, should take approximately two hours. If you have time for other encounters in the session before its end you can pick from the following or roll a d6 for a random encounter (you can find these encounters at the back of the adventure). For a three to four hour game I'd suggest adding between one and three random encounters scattered throughout the adventure. For a longer hour game, I'd suggest adding between two and six random encounters (with half coming from the d20 table in the random encounters section at the back of the adventure).

1. Bridge over troubled waters
2. Dungeon-Abomination
3. Drow patrol
4. Fungaloids
5. Lost tomb
6. Roll twice and combine the results

## ABOUT THE NPCs

Each session includes an NPC you can add to the story if your players appreciate interactions with people who need or can provide help. None of the NPCs have full stats because they're not the type of people who could provide opposition or serious long-term support to an adventuring party, they're characters who can appear briefly to help motivate PCs who are temporarily at a

loss. If the PCs take a liking to an NPCs, feel free to expand their role.

## NEW CHARACTERS

Here are some ideas for introducing new characters:

- The party is not the only group looking for the Heart of the Sky. The icons sent several groups of adventurers into the underworld. The new character is the lone survivor of another adventuring group.
- When the meteorite crashed down into the dark it destroyed underworld settlements. If the new character is a dwarf or a drow, it is conceivable that they are the lone survivor of such a settlement, or are looking for others who were dragged off by star-masks into the deeper underworld.
- The new adventurer was on a different quest in the underworld, unrelated to the meteorite. When the meteorite crashed through, it destroyed the location the adventurer was heading to, and the quest object fell down into the deeper underworld with the meteorite.

## NPC—AG-BAG THE DEEP

### ONE

*The following NPC can be introduced at any point in this session of the adventure:*

The pale Ag-Bag is of a race that the adventurers have not before now encountered, a long-limbed humanoid with massive eyes that are all pupil. The deep one has bound his eyes with spider-web gauze because the dim glow of the crystals that illuminate drow cities hurt his dark-adapted eyes, and he often squints while talking to others.

Ag-Bag has is travelling to the City of Silver Webs to negotiate passage for his people through the territory that the drow control. The deep ones (Ag-Bag's people) have been forced out of their home caverns by the expansion of a nearby fungaloid kingdom.

Ag-Bag has never seen the sun, and his people regard the surface world as a myth, a legend without substance—adventurers claiming to be

from the surface will be met with skepticism by Ag-Bag.

This NPC can meet the adventurers as they try to make their way past the traps, as they cross the web bridges, or as a prisoner of the star-mask driders, or wherever you as the GM deem dramatically appropriate.

## THE DROW TUNNELS

The adventurers are attempting to reach a meteorite that crashed down into the underworld. After many days of tracking through the layers of the underworld, they are out of food and need a place to rest. Compounding their problems, the shaft that the meteorite punched down into the underworld has collapsed and become impassible, requiring the adventurers to find an alternate route down—and finding a drow city is the most likely way to locate a new route down and pick up the trail of the meteorite again.

Fortunately, the adventurers start to see signs of civilization: torch sconces on tunnel walls, discarded detritus, and directions scratched into the rock.

This is a montage scene. The point of this montage is to cooperatively describe the journey through the dark. Turn to the first player and ask them to describe a problem that the party faced as they get closer to the outskirts of a drow city, then turn to the player to their right and ask them how their character solved the problem. Go around the group until everybody has had a chance to describe a problem and everybody has had a chance to have their character overcome a problem. Introduce foreshadowing of upcoming parts of the adventure as you go around the table (for example mention the presence of large webs).

## DROW TRAPS

The adventurers have found signs of a subterranean civilization. Tunnels with worked stone, recent humanoid tracks, sconces for torches, wells... all this points to the presence of somebody who can be traded with or who might have some food.

Unfortunately, nothing is ever that simple. This far down in the underworld, there are monsters and strange terrors that must be defended against. The way ahead is trapped...

Trap finding: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Spiked pit trap +5 vs AC—2d6 damage**  
OR

**Poison dart trap +5 vs PD—3d4 poison damage**

### ICON OPTION: DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in this game, then the perfidy and cruelty of the dark elves is well known among the dwarves.

Dwarves in the party gain +2 to their defenses against the drow traps.

### ICON OPTION: ELF QUEEN

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in this game, then the drow have left a series of warning signs that can be seen only by elves.

Elves in the party gain a +5 bonus to their roll for the trap finding skill check.

## DRIDERS

Roaming the tunnels around the drow city are driders, monstrous part-spider, part-elf creatures that are blessed (or cursed, depending on your point of view) by a dark goddess of spiders. The drider patrols know that with strangers it is better to attack first and ask questions later. *Of course if the party numbers fewer than six adventurers the driders will just scuttle overhead and drop spiders onto the party then continue with their patrol.*

Number of PCs	Weaver Swarm	Drider
3	9	0
4	11	0
5	14	0
6	0	1

### ICON OPTION: DWARF KING

If the Dwarf King is an important icon in this game, then any dwarves in the party



know about the wicked dwarf-hating driders.

Any dwarf who launches themselves without warning into battle gets +1 to attack with their first attack. If another character is negotiating with the driders at the time the bonus is +2.

### ICON OPTION: ELF QUEEN

If the Elf Queen is an important icon in this game, then the driders might still be bargained and reasoned with.

Spending a 6 on an icon roll allows the adventurer to attempt to parlay with the driders before they attack the party. Of course, the adventurer will still need to convince the driders that the party should be let past.

The difficulty of convincing the driders to let the elves in the party past is DC 20, and a second DC 20 roll is needed to convince the driders not to attack the non-elves in the party. The interference of other party members might increase or decrease the difficulties.

### WEAVER SWARM

3rd level mook [BEAST]

Initiative: +9

**A thousand needle wounds +8 vs. AC—5 damage**

*Natural 16+:* The target is hampered until the end of its next turn.

*Natural 18+:* As above, and the target is also stuck until the end of its next turn.

*Clinging:* Enemies take a -5 penalty to disengage checks against the swarm.

*Wall-crawler:* The swarm can climb on ceilings and walls as easily as it moves on the ground.

**AC 19**

**PD 17 HP 10 (mook)**

**MD 13**

*Mook:* Kill one weaver swarm mook for every 10 damage you deal to the mob.

### DRIDER

A drider is a drow transformed into a centaur-like combination of elf and giant spider.

Large 6th level caster [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +10

**Sword or mace +9 vs. AC—20 damage**

*Natural even hit:* The drider can make a poison bite attack as a free action.

**[Special trigger] Poison bite +9 vs. PD—10 poison damage, and 10 ongoing poison damage**

**R: Lightning bolt spell +11 vs. PD—30 lightning damage**

*Natural even hit:* The drider can make a lightning bolt spell attack against a second nearby enemy, followed by a third and final different nearby enemy if the second attack is also a natural even hit.

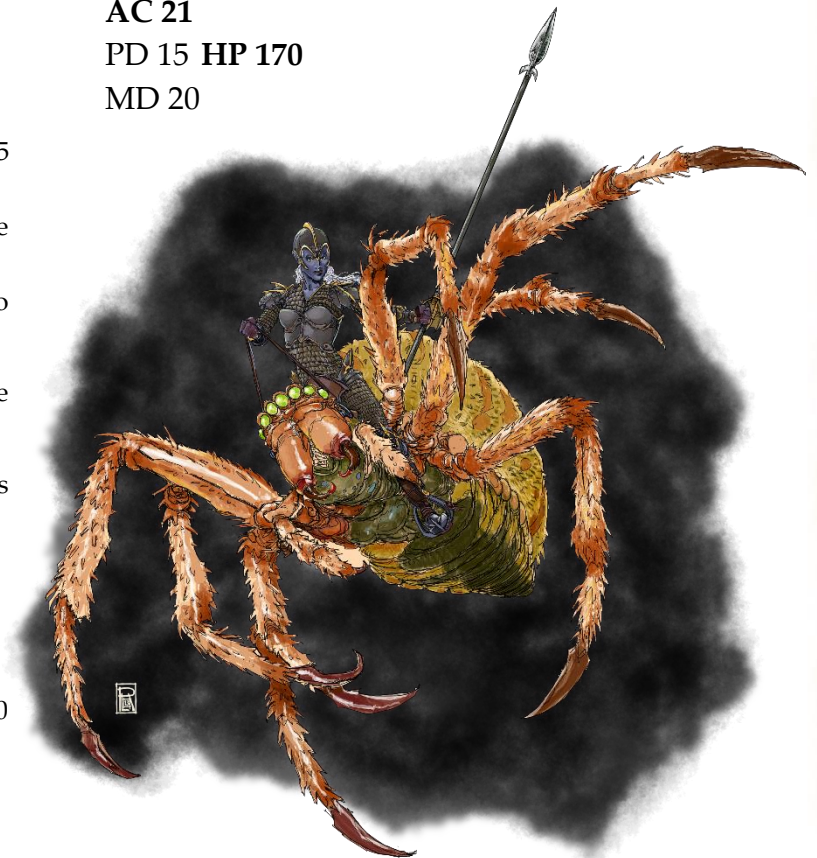
**C: Web attack +11 vs. PD (up to 2 nearby enemies in a group)—the target is hampered (save ends)**

*Limited use:* 1/round as a quick action, if the escalation die is even.

**AC 21**

**PD 15 HP 170**

**MD 20**







## THE WEB BRIDGES

Past the tunnels patrolled by the driders is a series of canyon-like caverns that protect the city from invasion.

Across each cavern stretches many bridges made of webs. Thousands of large spiders live in the webs, chittering and squalling to each other.

Travelling across the web (and not getting bitten): DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Spider bites +5 vs PD—2d6** poison damage

OR

**Hallucinogenic spider bites +5 vs MD—** the target makes a basic attack against an ally.

### ICON OPTION: HIGH DRUID

If the High Druid is an important icon in this game, then the adventurer knows how to treat spider bites.

Anybody bitten by a spider who starts to hallucinate can roll a save to avoid attacking an ally.

### ICON OPTION: LICH KING

If the Lich King is an important icon in this game, then it is well known that spiders do not usually attack the undead.

Spending a 6 with the Lich King allows the adventurer to briefly feign undeath, turning a failed skill roll to avoid the spiders into a success. A 5 allows the skill roll to be rerolled.



## STAR-MASK SPIDERS

The adventurers are past the outer caverns, almost within sight of the mighty city gates of the underworld city.

The party is now crossing over web-strewn caverns. Strangely, no spiders are to be seen.

It looks like the adventurers are getting closer to the final resting place of the meteorite. The party notices dead star-masks littering the webs. It is then that the star-mask possessed spiders attack the party!

Number of PCs	Star-Mask Spiders	Star-Masks
3	2	5
4	3	5
5	4	5
6	5	5

### ICON OPTION: ARCHMAGE OR ELF QUEEN

If the Archmage or the Elf Queen are important icons in this game, then the final line of defenses of the city includes runes spun into the web bridges.

During this combat any enemy who rolls a 1 on a d20 takes 4 force damage; unfortunately this goes for adventurers too. Adventurers with a relationship with the Archmage or Elf Queen do not take the damage on a 1—they know enough to avoid the web runes.

### ICON OPTION: PRINCE OF SHADOWS

If the Prince of Shadows is an important icon in this game, then the environment may be used to the advantage of roguish types. In this fight, rogues can really shine, especially those who are allied with the Prince.

Rogues with shadow walk may start the combat shadow walking. Any character with a positive or conflicted relationship with the Prince of Shadows may trade in a 6 to do maximum damage on their first attack.

## STAR-MASK SPIDERS

*These star-mask eggs have merged with spiders to produce something truly horrible.*

*1<sup>st</sup> level blocker [ABERRATION]*

*Initiative: +10*

**Claws that burrow under your skin +6 vs. PD—5 damage**

*Natural 16+ hit:* The star-mask spider is under the target's skin. Disengaging from the spider causes the target 5 damage.

[quick action] **C: Chittering call +5 vs. MD (1 nearby or far away enemy)**—The target cannot willingly move into engagement with a star-mask spider or any other spider (save 11+ ends). Creatures immune to fear are immune to this effect.

*Limited use:* Once a target has saved against the effect they cannot be targeted by it again.

[Group ability] **Tendrils web +5 vs. PD (1d3 engaged enemies)**—The target is stuck. While stuck (save ends) the star-mask spider has a +1 bonus to attack the target.

*Group ability:* For every three star-mask spiders in the battle (round up), one of them can use *tendrils web* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 11 HP 30**

**MD 15**



## STAR-MASK

*The white mask scuttles along the ground on barbed tentacles, looking for a host to 'wear' it.*

*2nd level mook [ABERRATION]*

*Initiative: +8*

**Strangling tentacles +7 vs. PD—3 damage and 3 ongoing damage, ongoing damage ends if the target is no longer engaged with the star-mask**

[Group ability] **Suffocating thoughts +7 vs. MD**—Until the end of the battle, if the target drops to 0 hp; the target rejoins the fight as a star-mask cultist. Converted player character star-mask cultists can be freed from their masks as a standard action by a character next to them.

*Group ability:* For every four star-masks in the battle (round up), one of them can use *suffocating thoughts* once during the battle.

*Leap:* On turns when the escalation die is odd the star-mask can leap into engagement with a nearby enemy as a quick action.

**AC 18**

**PD 12 HP 9 (mook)**

**MD 16**

*Mook:* Kill one star-mask mook for every 9 damage you do to the mob.

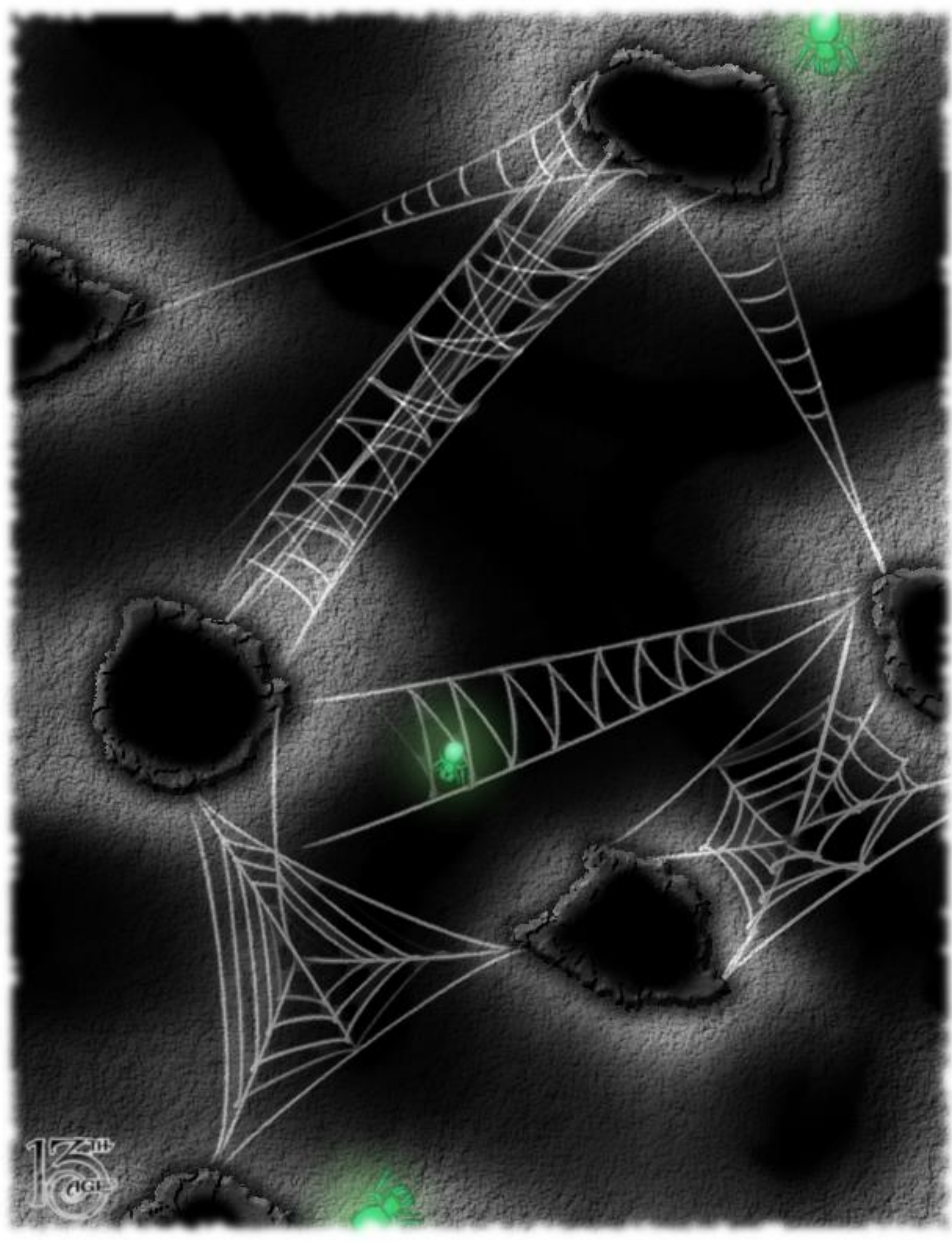
## END OF SESSION

The adventurers arrive outside the drow city, at a camp of underworld traders waiting for the city gates to be opened.

The traders' temporary camp is a place of truce between different races, and the adventurers can easily find a place to sleep and somebody who has food and water to share.

The next session (in part 2 of INTO THE UNDERWORLD) features an adventure in the drow city as the player characters try to get back onto the trail of the meteorite.





# RANDOM

## ENCOUNTERS

Each session of this adventure has optional random encounters available to the GM. If the adventurers have wandered off the beaten path into the unknown and you need to create more adventure, or they have cleverly circumvented the enemies and challenges of the adventure as written then I've got your back.

There are 5 random encounters per session, making 20 random encounter in total—hey, that fits with a d20 roll too!

1. Adventurer's corpse
2. Bridge over troubled waters
3. Collapsed mine
4. Dead bulette
5. Dead dwarves
6. Deep moths
7. Injured citizen
8. Lost tomb
9. Meteorite fragments
10. Shark-bat eggs
11. Bats
12. Dungeon-Abomination
13. Drow patrol
14. Fungaloids
15. Khavlings
16. Star-mask bulette
17. Star-mask cultists
18. Star-mask drow
19. Star-mask dwarves
20. Star-masks

### ADVENTURER'S CORPSE

The adventurers were not the only group to head into the underworld, nor are they the only group that is searching for the Heart of the Sky. Roll a d3 for the gender of adventurer (1= Female, 2= Male, 3= Other or too badly eaten/decomposed to tell) and a d12 for the adventurer's race:

1. Human
2. Human
3. Dwarf
4. Dark elf
5. High elf
6. Wood elf
7. Gnome
8. Half-elf
9. Half-orc

10. Halfling
11. One of the rarer races (roll d4)
  1. Dragonic
  2. Holy one
  3. Forgeborn
  4. Tiefling
12. Roll again, and if you reroll a 12 then the corpse is of a really rare race (roll d4)
  1. Azer
  2. Oozefolk
  3. Ophidian
  4. Twygzog

The dead adventurer has a magic item on him or her. The magic item is under the corpse, and the corpse has been nibbled on by scavengers.

Oh, did we not mention scavengers? They are lurking at the edge of the adventurer's lantern light, chittering and scraping their claws against the rock. If you have the inclination this could turn into a bat attack.

### BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS

The adventurers must cross a natural rock bridge over a torrent of water. The torrent disappears into a crack in the wall, but adventurers who fall in still risk serious harm from being buffeted about.

Slippery bridge: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Bashed and half-drowned +5 vs PD—2d6 damage**

### COLLAPSED MINE

This area was a dwarven mine, until a meteorite came crashing through. Now the tunnels are unstable, and impassable in many locations. The dwarves will doubtless return in a year or two.

Stepping carefully: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check make the following attack against each adventurer:

**Rocks fall +5 vs AC—1d4 damage**

### DEAD BULETTE

This bulette is dead, killed by a larger bulette in a territorial dispute. Roll d4:

1. The bulette is half in and half out of the wall
2. The bulette is a mere shell, its meat has been eaten by scavenging carnivorous bats.
3. The bulette is lying out in the open, scavengers nearby watch from just beyond the party's light (perhaps this will actually be a bat attack).



- The bulette had recently eaten an adventurer. 50% chance that there is a magic item jammed in the bulette's mouth.

## DEAD DWARVES

There are dwarves here, killed by the meteorite that came crashing through. Roll d4:

- The dwarves were crushed by a collapsing tunnel ceiling.
- The dwarves were killed by a shockwave as the meteorite flattened a series of tunnels nearby.
- The dwarves were killed by strange radiation from the meteorite. Maybe it's a good idea not to linger in this area.
- The dwarves were killed by star-masks that the meteorite shed as it crashed through here.

## DEEP MOTHS

These strange creatures can phase through solid matter, and enjoy eating calcium deposits (or bones!). Fortunately the moths can be warded off by light.

Warding off moths: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check they take 3 damage from sudden onset osteoporosis.

## INJURED CITIZEN

A citizen of Eldwold who fell into the underworld when their city was wrecked by the meteorite. They are lost, injured, hungry, and frightened.

## LOST TOMB

This tomb belonged to a past hero. Roll a d4:

- A dwarven tomb, beautifully carved out of the living rock.
- A wizard's tomb, a clear crystal grown up over and around the body.
- An adventurer's tomb, a corpse under a pile of their enemies: some adventurers make their own tombs.
- An adventurer's tomb, just a simple pile of stones over a body.

If nobody has found a magic item this session there is one in the tomb, but it is trapped.

Tomb trap: DC 15. If an adventurer who is opening the tomb fails the skill check make the following attack against that adventurer:

**Blades +5 vs AC—2d6 damage**

OR

**Magic rune +5 vs PD—7 force damage**

OR

**Vengeful spirit +5 vs MD—3d4 psychic damage**

## METEORITE FRAGMENTS

The meteorite crashed down into the underworld near to here, parts of it blasting off into the tunnels and caverns that its passage bisected.

The glittering volcanic rock is embedded in the walls might be benign, or might not. Roll d6:

- It's just rock, sparkly in the torch light but it is just coal and scattered diamond dust. There is a 50% chance that a good search of the area will turn up a small uncut diamond worth 2d20x10 gp.
- The sparkling rock glows with a dull red light, the heat from its violent incorporation into the tunnel's walls still not fully dissipated.
- The rock is absorbing heat, glistening frost spreading from it along the walls and ice forming on the wet tunnel floor. If a fight occurs here, anybody rolling a natural 1 on an attack falls and takes 1d4 damage.
- Along with the glittering black rock star-mask eggs were ejected. Fortunately the force of their ejection killed the tiny monsters.
- A light emanates from the rock, illuminating the tunnel. The meteorite's rock glitters and shines like stars in the night.
- The magic of the meteorite's rock is causing the adventurers to become ill:

**Warping contamination +5 vs PD—2d6 negative energy damage**

## SHARK-BAT EGGS

A shark-bat is roosting nearby, as the egg casings hanging from this passage's roof attest to. Strong spirits made from fermented shark-bat egg is considered by some to be a delicacy (and by most others to be disgusting). Each of these eggs is worth 100 gp to the dwarves of Forge. Gathering them intact requires a steady hand. There are 10 eggs present.

Gathering shark-bat eggs: DC 15. If an adventurer fails the skill check they ruin the egg that they were trying to harvest.



## BATS

The bats of the underworld grow large and bold down in the dark...

Number of PCs	Swarm of Bats	Dire Bat
3	2	1
4	3	1
5	4	1
6	5	1

### SWARM OF BATS

*What is at first a slightly painful distraction could turn lethal as the bats shift and flow to evade your attacks.*

1st level spoiler [BEAST]

Initiative: +5

Vulnerability: thunder

**C: Swarming bites +7 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**— 2 damage, and after the attack, the swarm of bats engages one of the targets

*Natural even hit:* The target is hampered until the end of its next turn. It can end the effect by attacking the swarm, or if the swarm drops to 0 hp.

*No opportunities:* The swarm of bats can't make opportunity attacks, and enemies can't make opportunity attacks against it.

*Swarming resistance:* Each turn, the swarm of bats gains resist damage 18+ to all damage from attacks by enemies that the swarm did NOT attack that turn.

**AC 16**

**PD 16 HP 30**

**MD 11**

### DIRE BAT

*Some people call them dire vampire bats, but that gets confusing when people expect them to function like scary vampires instead of just overgrown flying rodents with rabid tendencies.*

2nd level troop [BEAST]

Initiative: +8

Vulnerability: thunder

Fangs and wings +6 vs. AC—5 damage, and 5 ongoing damage

*Natural 2–5:* The dire bat pops free from the target and can move as a free action.

**Resist ranged damage 16+:** When a ranged attack targets this creature while it's flying, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it only deals half damage. (Shifty spinning bats are hard to hit unless they're grounded or stuck.)

**Skittish:** A dire bat engaged with a conscious enemy after attacking it will attempt to disengage and fly into the air if it has a move action remaining that turn.

#### Nastier Specials

*Blood drinker:* When the dire bat drops an enemy to 0 hp or below, it continues to attack that enemy (until it dies) instead of attacking other enemies.

*Dire feature:* Most dire bats don't have a dire feature (13th Age core book, page 206). But this one does.

**AC 18**

**PD 17 HP 32**

**MD 14**





## DUNGEON-ABOMINATION

These strange creatures come from *somewhere else*. Somewhere that doesn't obey the same laws of physics as our world.

Number of PCs	Dungeon Abomination	Broken Dungeon Abomination
3	1	5
4	1	8
5	2	5
6	2	8

### ΔΥΝΓΕΟΠ-ΑΒΟΜΙΝΑΤΙΟΠ

*Hurriedly created by a newborn living dungeon to defend it, these horrors know only pain and rage.*

3<sup>rd</sup> level wrecker [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +8

Each round roll 1d6 twice to discover what attacks dungeon-abominations have available:

1. Antlers & hooves
2. Tentacles
3. Acid spit
4. Beak
5. Pick one of the above, but it is a quick action instead of a standard action
6. Pick one of the above and the abomination takes 1d6 damage.

**Antlers and hooves +6 vs. AC**—8 damage

*Natural even hit:* 2 damage to each engaged enemy.

**C: Tentacles +6 vs. AC (1d3 nearby enemies)**—7 damage

*Natural roll above target's Strength:* Target is pulled into engagement with the abomination.

**C: Acid spit +6 vs. PD (one nearby or far away enemy)**—5 ongoing acid damage

**Beak +6 vs. AC**—10 damage

*Natural even hit:* Make a fire breath attack as a quick action.

[quick action, special trigger] **C: Fire breath +8 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—3 fire damage

*Natural even hit:* the fire damage is ongoing.

#### Nastier Specials

*Sporadic flight:* On rounds where the abomination rolls under the escalation die with one of its d6 rolls it can fly, though clumsily.

**AC 19**

**PD 17 HP 50**

**MD 13**

### ΒΡΟΚΕΠ ΔΥΝΓΕΟΠ-ΑΒΟΜΙΝΑΤΙΟΠ

2<sup>nd</sup> level mook [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +6

Each round roll 1d6 twice to discover what attacks broken dungeon-abominations have available:

1. Too many teeth
2. Billows breath
3. Lightning horn
4. Gnashing maw
5. Pick one of the above, but it is a quick action instead of a standard action
6. Pick one of the above and the abomination takes 1d6 damage.

**Too many teeth +6 vs. AC**—4 damage

*Natural even hit:* 1 damage to each engaged enemy.

**C: Billows breath +6 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—3 damage

*Natural roll above target's Strength:* Target pops free.

**R: Lightning horn +6 vs. PD**—2 ongoing lightning damage

**Gnashing maw +6 vs. AC**—5 damage

*Natural even hit:* Make a fire breath attack as a quick action.

[quick action, special trigger] **C: Fire breath +8 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—2 fire damage

*Natural even hit:* the fire damage is ongoing.

#### Nastier Specials

*Exploding biology:* When the dungeon abomination dies each creature engaged with it takes 10 damage. Yes, this can set off a chain reaction of exploding dungeon abominations.

**AC 18**

**PD 16 HP 9 (see exploding biology)**

**MD 12**

*Mook:* Kill one broken dungeon abomination mook for every 9 damage you deal to the mob.

## DROW PATROL

The drow are patrolling this section of the underworld, concerned that the recent cataclysmic piercing of the layers of the underworld will cause normally separated dark dwellers to come into conflict.

The drow don't actually care about spreading peace, they just want to keep the balance of power in their favor.

The adventurers might be able to trade with the drow, might end up sharing a meal with them, or could end up in a fight.

Number of PCs	Drow Spider-Mage	Drow Soldier
3	1	2
4	1	4
5	1	6
6	1	8

### DROW SPIDER-MAGE

*She stalks silently toward you, her sharpened wand pointed at your heart. A spider the size of a cat hisses malevolently at you from her shoulder. Why is she smiling?*

3rd level caster [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +8

**Sharpened wand +8 vs. AC**—10 damage

**R: Shadowfire +8 vs. PD (one nearby or far away enemy)**—8 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends)

*Limited use: Once the spider-mage hits with shadowfire, she can't use it again until the target saves against it.*

**C: Malediction of webs +8 vs. PD (up to 2 nearby enemies in a group)**—The target is stuck (save ends), and takes 5 damage each time it fails the save

*Dark orison: Each time the spider-mage misses with an attack, the crit range of attacks by drow and spiders in the battle expands by 1.*

*Spider speaker: The first time each battle an enemy hits the spider-mage with a melee attack, that attacker takes 8 ongoing poison damage from her familiar.*

**AC 19**

**PD 13 HP 40**

**MD 17**

### DROW SOLDIER

*It's easy to ignore them so you can concentrate on more dangerous enemies. And then three crossbow quarrels sprout from your shoulder and you shift your priorities.*

4th level mook [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +9

**Paired swords +9 vs. AC**—6 damage

**R: Crossbow +9 vs. AC (one nearby enemy, or a far away enemy at -2 atk)**—7 damage

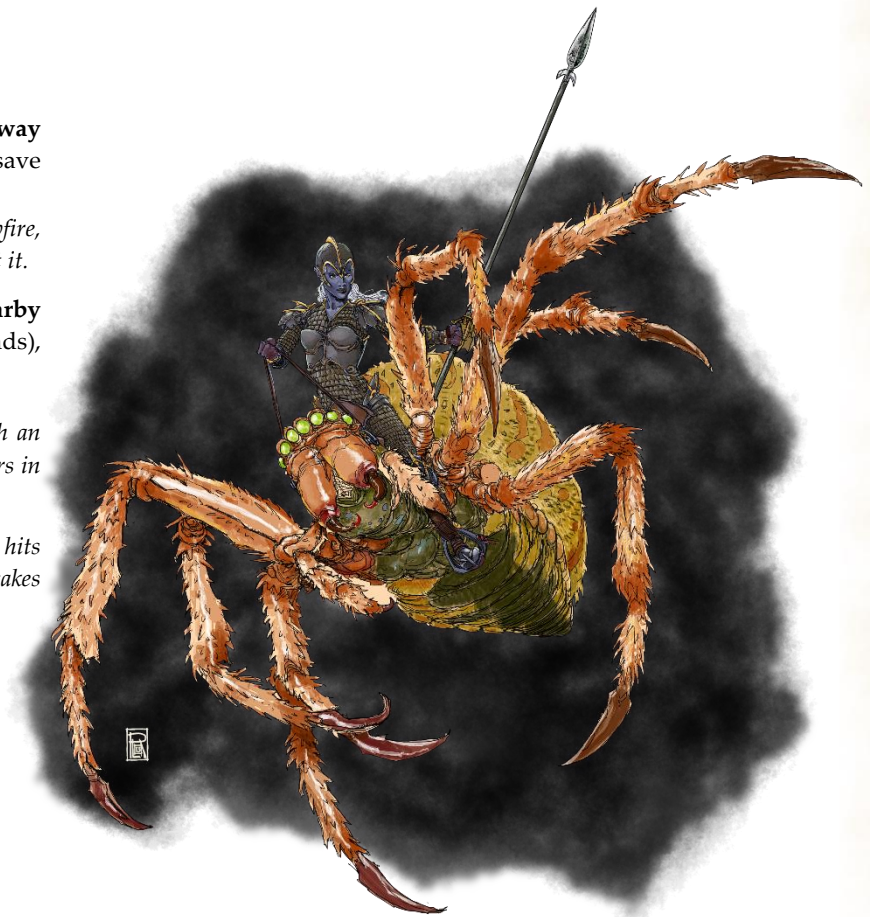
*With my dying breath I curse at thee: When the drow soldier drops to 0 hp, one enemy engaged with it takes 2 poison damage before the drow soldier dies.*

**AC 20**

**PD 19 HP 18 (mook)**

**MD 14**

*Mook: Kill one drow soldier mook for every 18 damage you deal to the mob.*





## FUNGALOIDS

The strange fungus people of the underworld are using the meteorite as an opportunity to expand their fungal kingdom.

These fungaloids are not immediately hostile, and if the adventurers prove to be friendly to the fungaloids then they will summon a twygzog (fungaloid 'prince' or 'princess') to speak verbally to the adventurers—the fungaloids initially encountered can only communicate via spores.

Of course if the adventurers are unfriendly then the fungaloids will choose to attack.

Number of PCs	Aerial Spore	Sporrior
3	2	2
4	5	2
5	3	3
6	6	3

### Fungal Attacks

Some fungaloids can make special attacks, usually triggered with a natural 16+ attack roll, though the attacks can be used as a standard action too in some cases. When building fungaloid battles, decide what sort of attack or attacks these fungaloids have. The monster entries will tell you how many attacks to pick. Add the fungaloid creature's level to attacks and damage, as indicated.

**C: Poison tentacles 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—3 + level poison damage, and the target is vulnerable to fungal attacks (save ends)

**C: Brown noise 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—3 + level ongoing thunder damage

**C: Hallucinogenia 3 + level vs. MD (one nearby enemy)**—The target is confused (easy save ends, 6+)

**C: Infectious spores 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—3 + level ongoing poison damage

**C: Piercing shriek 5 + level vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—4 + level psychic damage

## AERIAL SPORE

*It floats serene, red and deadly. The long tendrils push it spasmodically as it crawl-drifts closer, flickers of bioluminescence pulsing through its small, languid body.*

2nd level mook [PLANT]

Initiative: +1

**C: Stinging tendrils +6 vs. PD (one nearby enemy)**—4 poison damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn

*Puffball exploder:* The first time each round an aerial spore in the battle drops to 0 hp, it explodes and 1d3 nearby non-fungus non-construct creatures are covered in spores and begin to choke. Until the end of the battle, when a choking creature rolls a natural 1–5 on an attack roll, it takes damage equal to the natural roll. If a creature is affected twice by this attack, the damage it takes on a natural 1–5 doubles; if affected three times, it triples, etc.

*Spores:* A creature choking from puffball exploder can use a standard action to wash the spores off itself and/or cough them up, preventing further choking effects until it's affected by puffball exploder again.

*Weightless:* The aerial spore floats upon air currents, but it prefers to stay within 5 to 7 feet of the ground so it can use its tendrils to keep it in place or propel it. A free-floating spore too far away from the ground to use its tendrils can easily be blown about from strong winds or similar magical effects.

**AC 15**

**PD 9 HP 7 (mook; puffball exploder)**

**MD 13**

*Mook:* Kill one aerial spore mook for every 7 damage you deal to the mob.

## SPORRIOR

Fungi are not known for being fast, but this one is. A strange pale ape-dog thing, with a head that hinges open to unleash a high-speed spore attack. Clouds of choking fungus accompany chitinous darts launched by compressed air.

2nd level wrecker [PLANT]

Initiative: +10

**Chitinous bite +7 vs. AC—5 damage**

*Natural even hit or miss:* The sporrior can make a spore cloud attack this turn as a quick action.

**R: Parasitic darts +6 vs. AC (1d3 nearby or far away enemies in a group)—5 poison damage**

*Natural even hit or miss:* The sporrior can make a spore cloud attack this turn as a quick action.

**C: Spore cloud +6 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)—4 poison damage**

*Sprinter:* A sporrior gains an extra move action when the escalation die is odd.

*Wall-crawler:* A sporrior can climb on ceilings and walls as easily as it moves on the ground.

**AC 18**

**PD 16    HP 36**

**MD 12**





## KHAVLINGS

These creatures are hunch-backed scrawny menaces that can be found lurking in small gangs in sewers and back alleys of large cities, and sometimes in large semi-nomadic tribes in the underworld.

Khavlings have a low animal cunning, an ability to use language (though they prefer to use insults), and a predilection for violence and vandalism.

When encountering khavlings it is important to dissuade them from attacking, as they love picking on those they perceive as being weaker than themselves.

**Show of strength: DC 15.** If more than half the party fails the skill check the khavlings demand tribute or they'll attack.

Number of PCs	Khavling Shiv	Khavling Filth-Speakers
3	5	2
4	7	2
5	8	3
6	10	3

### Nastier specials for all khavlings

**Touch of khav:** Enemies that roll a natural 1 or 2 with a melee attack against the khavling take poison damage equal to the escalation die value.

**Violent mind:** Enemies that make an attack vs MD against the khavling and miss take psychic damage equal to the escalation die value.

### KHAVLING SHIV

*Khavlings can pass as halflings or short humans when in dark alleys or with their hoods up. They lurk near the dwelling places of more successful humanoids, stealing and committing petty acts of vandalism and violence.*

**3<sup>rd</sup> level mook** [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +3

### Rusty shiv +8 vs. AC—4 damage

**Escalating violence:** Provided the target was hit by a khavling last round add the escalation die to the khavling's damage.

### R: Thrown rubble +8 vs. AC—6 damage

**Parting shot:** If the khavlings run away from the battle each can make this attack as they leave.

**AC 18**

**PD 16 HP 6**

**MD 10**

**Mook:** Kill one khavling shiv mook for every 6 damage you deal to the mob.

### KHAVLING FILTH-SPEAKER

*The khavlings can only use the simplest and foulest of magics—or perhaps they prefer it that way as it suits their predilections.*

**Double-strength 3<sup>rd</sup> level mook** [HUMANOID]

Initiative: +3

### Diseased touch +8 vs. PD—12 poison damage

**C: Debased magical chant +8 vs. MD (1 nearby or far away enemy)—6 ongoing psychic damage**

**C: Filth hose +8 vs. PD (1d3 nearby or far away enemies)—4 ongoing poison damage and the target pops free and is pushed backwards and covered in vomit and other filth**

**Natural even miss:** The target still gets covered in foulness as it splashes around the battle. No damage, but *yuck!*

### Nastier Specials

**Disease aura:** Creatures engaged with the khavling filth-wizard take poison damage equal to the escalation die value at the start of its turn. Creatures that live in filthy conditions (khavlings, certain orcs) are immune to this aura.

**AC 18**

**PD 18 HP 12**

**MD 8**

**Mook:** Kill one khavling filth-wizard mook for every 12 damage you deal to the mob.



## STAR-MASK BULETTE

This bulette has been infested by star-masks, and the white mask-like monsters cover its body like armored plates.

Number of PCs	Star-Mask Bulette
3	1
4	1
5	1
6	1

### STAR-MASK BULETTE

The bulette has a white mask stretched across its face, giving it the appearance of a leering skull. More masks form a living armor over the bulette's swollen body.

Huge 3<sup>rd</sup> level troop [BEAST]

Initiative: +6

**Chomp +6 vs. AC (two attacks against the same target)—7 damage**

Once per battle, when both attacks hit and one was a critical hit: the bulette has bitten off one of the adventurer's limbs.

*Tendrils:* Disengaging from the star-mask bulette has a -5 penalty.

*Group mind:* Though the star-mask bulette has no group ability, it can count as any other type of star-mask when calculating the number of star-masks needed to use group abilities.

*Slow burrower:* The star-mask bulette can burrow, but only slowly. It might enter a battle by coming out of the ground or a tunnel wall, but it won't flee that way.

AC 21  
PD 16 **HP 72**  
MD 12

## STAR-MASK DROW

This drow patrol were caught unawares by star-masks and are now possessed.

Drow cruelty combined with the star-masks' desire to infect others has led these possessed drow to set up an ambush for the adventurers.

Number of PCs	Star-Mask (elf) Cultist	Star-Mask (elf) Brute	Star-Mask Spiders
3	2	0	1
4	2	0	2
5	2	1	1
6	2	1	2

### STAR-MASK DROW

For these monsters use star-mask cultists, star-mask brutes, and star-mask spiders but swap out clubs and staves for swords in attack descriptions and add the following ability:

*The cruelest cut:* Drow are known for their cruelty. Once per battle only, the first time any drow in the battle crits the damage is ongoing OR (if that would be too cruel) the attack also imposes a condition on the target (roll d4: 1= stuck, 2= dazed, 3= stuck and dazed, 4= weakened) save ends.





### STAR-MASK (ELF) CULTIST

*This hapless humanoid has become host to a mask, and is in thrall to the group mind.*

*1st level archer* [ABERRATION]

*Initiative:* +6

**Club +5 vs. AC—4 damage**

**R: Bow +5 vs. AC—5 damage**

[Group ability] *Coordinated attack:* Until the start of its next turn the star-mask cultist gets a +2 to bonus to attack enemies that are engaged with allied star masks, star mask cultists, zombies, etc.

*Group ability:* For every two star-mask cultists in the battle (round up), one of them can use *coordinated attack* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 13     HP 27**

**MD 15**

### STAR-MASK (ELF) BRUTE

*3rd level wrecker* [ABERRATION]

*Initiative:* +9

**Fist smash +8 vs. AC—10 damage**

**Crush +8 vs. AC—5 damage** and 5 ongoing damage and once per battle the star-mask brute throws the target as a free action

[special trigger] **Throw +12 vs. PD**—Target is thrown far away, takes 10 damage, and is weakened (easy save ends)

*Miss:* Target pops free.

**AC 19**

**PD 14     HP 45**

**MD 16**

### STAR-MASK SPIDERS

*These star-mask eggs have merged with spiders to produce something truly horrible.*

*1st level blocker* [ABERRATION]

*Initiative:* +10

**Claws that burrow under your skin +6 vs. PD—5 damage**

*Natural 16+ hit:* The star-mask spider is under the target's skin. Disengaging from the spider causes the target 5 damage.

[quick action] **C: Chittering call +5 vs. MD (1 nearby or far away enemy)**—The target cannot willingly move into engagement with a star-mask spider or any other spider (save 11+ ends). Creatures immune to fear are immune to this effect.

*Limited use:* Once a target has saved against the effect they cannot be targeted by it again.

[Group ability] **Tendril web +5 vs. PD (1d3 engaged enemies)**—The target is stuck. While stuck (save ends) the star-mask spider has a +1 bonus to attack the target.

*Group ability:* For every three star-mask spiders in the battle (round up), one of them can use *tendril web* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 11     HP 30**

**MD 15**

## STAR-MASK CULTISTS

These humanoids have been possessed by star-masks and made to serve their nefarious purposes. The cultists are migrating down into the deeper underworld in search of more hosts or a living dungeon to serve.

The cultists think that the adventurers will make fine hosts for the star-masks.

Number of PCs	Star-Mask Cultist	Star-Mask Cult Leader
3	3	0
4	1	1
5	2	1
6	3	1

### STAR-MASK CULTIST

*This hapless humanoid has become host to a mask, and is in thrall to the group mind.*

*1st level archer* [ABERRATION]

*Initiative: +6*

**Club +5 vs. AC—4 damage**

**R: Bow +5 vs. AC—5 damage**

[Group ability] *Coordinated attack*: Until the start of its next turn the star-mask cultist gets a +2 to bonus to attack enemies that are engaged with allied star masks, star mask cultists, zombies, etc.

*Group ability*: For every two star-mask cultists in the battle (round up), one of them can use *coordinated attack* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 13    HP 27**

**MD 15**

### STAR-MASK CULT LEADER

*This cultist is more in tune with the group mind than others, and issues orders to its underlings.*

*Double-strength 2nd level leader* [ABERRATION]

*Initiative: +7*

**Iron-shod staff +7 vs. AC—14 damage**

[Group ability] **R: Psychic domination +7 vs. MD—7 damage and 7 ongoing damage**

*Natural even hit or miss*: One dead (or unconscious or otherwise out of the fight) star-mask cultist, dead star-mask cult leader, or dead star-mask brute becomes a living star-mask.

*Group ability*: For every two star mask-cult leaders in the battle (round up), one of them can use *psychic domination* once during the battle as a quick action.

**AC 18**

**PD 13    HP 72**

**MD 15**





## STAR-MASK DWARVES

A group of dwarven miners has been possessed by star-masks and are busy tunneling and building—directed by the star-masks to create a trap for others so that more humanoid can be captured and possessed.

Number of PCs	Star-Mask (dwarf) Cultist	Star-Mask (dwarf) Brute
3	1	1
4	0	2
5	1	2
6	0	3

### STAR-MASK DWARVES

For these monsters use star-mask cultists and star-mask brutes but swap out clubs and staves for axes and hammers in attack descriptions and add the following ability:

**Stronger than stone:** Dwarves are known for their resilience. Once per battle only, a staggered dwarf heals to full hp as a free action.

### STAR-MASK (DWARF) CULTIST

*This hapless humanoid has become host to a mask, and is in thrall to the group mind.*

1st level archer [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +6

**Club +5 vs. AC—4 damage**

**R: Bow +5 vs. AC—5 damage**

[Group ability] *Coordinated attack:* Until the start of its next turn the star-mask cultist gets a +2 to bonus to attack enemies that are engaged with allied star masks, star mask cultists, zombies, etc.

*Group ability:* For every two star-mask cultists in the battle (round up), one of them can use *coordinated attack* once during the battle.

**AC 17**

**PD 13    HP 27**

**MD 15**

### STAR-MASK (DWARF) BRUTE

3rd level wrecker [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +9

**Fist smash +8 vs. AC—10 damage**

**Crush +8 vs. AC—5 damage** and 5 ongoing damage and once per battle the star-mask brute throws the target as a free action

[special trigger] **Throw +12 vs. PD—**Target is thrown far away, takes 10 damage, and is weakened (easy save ends)

*Miss:* Target pops free.

**AC 19**

**PD 14    HP 45**

**MD 16**



## STAR-MASKS

When the meteorite crashed down into the underworld it shed thousands of star-masks. Most of the star-masks died, some found hosts, and some like these are still in search of hosts. Hosts just like the adventurers...

Number of PCs	Star-Mask	Xombie Egg Swarm
3	8	4
4	7	8
5	6	12
6	6	16

### STAR-MASK

The white mask scuttles along the ground on barbed tentacles, looking for a host to 'wear' it.

2nd level mook [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +8

**Strangling tentacles +7 vs. PD**—3 damage and 3 ongoing damage, ongoing damage ends if the target is no longer engaged with the star-mask

[Group ability] **Suffocating thoughts +7 vs. MD**—Until the end of the battle, if the target drops to 0 hp; the target rejoins the fight as a star-mask cultist. Converted player character star-mask cultists can be freed from their masks as a standard action by a character next to them.

*Group ability:* For every four star-masks in the battle (round up), one of them can use *suffocating thoughts* once during the battle.

*Leap:* On turns when the escalation die is odd the star-mask can leap into engagement with a nearby enemy as a quick action.

**AC 18**

**PD 12    HP 9 (mook)**

**MD 16**

*Mook:* Kill one star-mask mook for every 9 damage you do to the mob.

## XOMBIE EGG SWARM

These tentacled white spheres roll and hop around looking for a corpse to inhabit.

2nd level mook [ABERRATION]

Initiative: +5

**Swarm +7 vs. AC**—5 damage

[Group ability] **C: Puppeteer tentacles +7 vs. MD (one nearby enemy)**—the target makes a basic ranged or melee attack against a target of the xombie egg swarm's choice

*Miss:* The target is immune to puppeteer abilities for the rest of this fight and the fight after.

[Once per battle] *Swarm rush:* As a move action the swarm pops free and moves twice, but must finish its move engaged with an enemy.

*Group ability:* For every four xombie swarms in the battle (round up), one of them can use *puppeteer tentacles* once during the battle.

### Nastier specials

*Corpse puppet:* If there are intact corpses in the battle (say a star-mask cultist died) then part of the xombie egg swarm burrows into it and it rises as a xombie.

**AC 18**

**PD 12    HP 9 (mook)**

**MD 16**

*Mook:* Kill one xombie egg swarm mook for every 9 damage you do to the mob.



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