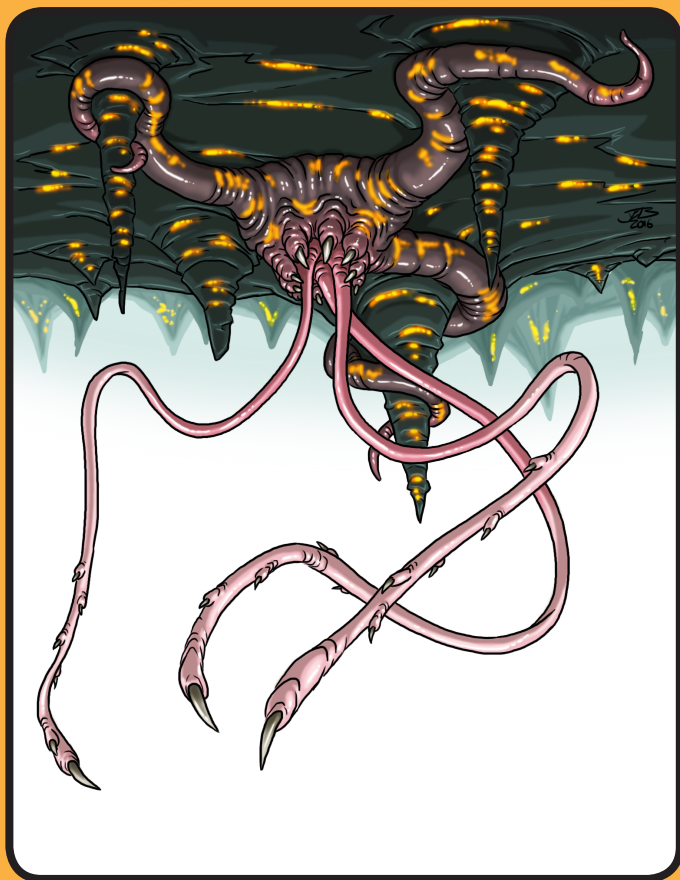


Campaign Elements



The Giggling Deep

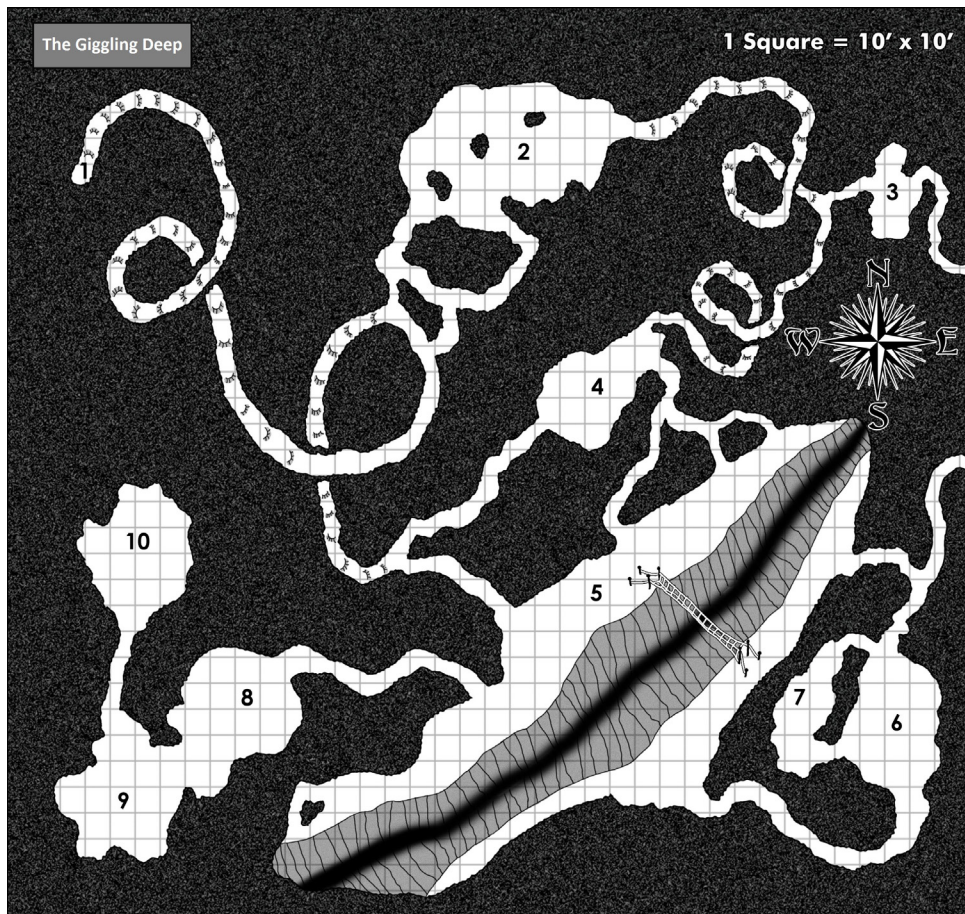


Daniel J. Bishop

COMPATIBLE WITH
**DCC
RPG**

The Giggling Deep

1 Square = 10' x 10'



The Giggling Deep

A campaign element to help you create a rich campaign environment for 4-6 PCs of level 4 or above.

By Daniel J. Bishop • **Cover Design by** Jacob Blackmon • **Cartography by** Paratime Design (Tim Hartin) • **Editing by** Perry Fehr • **Interior Art by** Jacob Blackmon • **Layout by** Mark Gedak

Playtesters: Heather Bishop, Morgan Clayton, John Clayton

Introduction

Any role-playing game session can take a left turn at Albuquerque, leaving the poor Game Master wondering what to do next. This is even truer for the dedicated *Dungeon Crawl Classics* judge, who discovers that patron quests, divine disapproval, and the requests of gods to pay back divine favor can make the game take incredible new turns with the roll of a few dice.

Add to this the advice urging players to “Quest For It” when they want something unusual for their characters, and you have a potent stew for gaming, but also a situation in which the judge may want a short adventure location with strong DCC elements and a minimum of preparation required.

In addition, for various reasons sometimes only a few players were available for a night’s gaming. Each of these areas is short enough to be played through by most groups in only a single session. That doesn’t mean that the value of the area is limited to a single session – each adventure includes notes on “squeezing it dry” ...effectively getting the maximum re-use from your investment.

The Giggling Deep describes an underground location with unique properties that will draw wizards and elves back again and again. Other character types may find things of interest to them. The Goremera offers a unique combat challenge, and warriors may be tracking the beast to avenge its victims. Thieves are given three potential prizes – the Goremera’s hoard, a shrine to loot, and a creature whose cooked flesh aids in combating poisons. Clerics of the Hidden Lord may need to reach His shrine to achieve some

quest. Clerics of opposed deities may be sending their minions to destroy it. Giving multiple PCs different (and sometimes contradictory!) purposes in entering the region results in the most fun.

Somewhere there is a stone cap, five feet in diameter and marked with strange runes. It may be found in some lost dungeon hall. It may be hidden by the filth in a back alley of a bustling city. It may be in a hidden shrine or in lost caverns, or even the stone floored stading of some giant chieftain. Beneath that stone cap is a short drop to a tunnel, which twists and turns its way into another dimensional plane. Once you have found the entrance, you can always locate it where you have seen it before. But it may also be located elsewhere. There are many places where that same stone can be found, and, in some strange way, they are all the same place once the cap is opened.

Opening the Cap

From the outside, opening the stone cap can be accomplished in four ways:

- A successful *read magic* spell, or a *comprehend languages* spell with a Spell Check result of 20+, allows the caster to read and invoke the mystic runes inscribed upon the stone cap. The cap immediately fades away, and does not return for 1 turn per caster level. Note that, once learned, anyone can attempt to invoke these runes with a DC 10 Spell Check. In the event of a natural “1” on this check, consult the table below. As normal, a Wizard may spend 1 point of Luck to avoid any corruption.
- An Open Locks result of 30+ allows a PC to uncover a series of hidden tumblers, which allow the cap to be rotated counter-clockwise and upward. The cap is remarkably light. It automatically reseals after 10 minutes, with the cap fading from wherever it is placed and reappearing in its proper place.
- A Strength check result of 25+ allows the cap to be twisted clockwise one quarter rotation. It collapses into sand, reforming after 4d6 minutes.
- A Spell Check made to channel divine power, with a result of 20+, drives the cap into the earth to reveal the passage described in Area 1. The cap returns to its proper place after 1 turn plus 1 turn per point by which the Spell Check exceeded 20.

No mortal magic can open the cap from within. Once it is sealed, there is no sign that the cap is a separate piece of stone from the surrounding shaft.

Opening the Cap Fumbles

1d7 + Luck Modifier	Result
0 or less	You are drawn into the stone cap, where you are held in suspended animation until the cap is opened by another. In addition, you must roll 1d10, modified by Luck, on the Greater Corruption table on page 119 of the core rulebook.
1-2	The magic rebounds, causing you 4d6 damage. In addition, roll 1d10, modified by Luck, and consult the Major Corruption table on page 118 of the core rulebook.
3-4	You are drawn beyond the cap, emerging in Area 1 , alone. You must succeed in a Luck check or your equipment is not transported with you. You must succeed in a second Luck check, or the judge should immediately present a random encounter.
5-6	Roll 1d10, modified by Luck, and consult the Minor Corruption table on page 116 of the core rulebook.
7+	Although the attempt fails, you gain some insight into the magic being used, gaining a +1d bonus to your next attempt.

General Features

The area beyond the stone cap appears to be a natural cave system. The air is damp, and there is often water on the walls or rivulets of water running along the floor. The whole area is hot and humid – uncomfortably so. For each hour of exploration, characters must succeed in a DC 5 Fort save (**NOTE: armor check penalties apply!**) or suffer a -1d penalty to all die rolls for the next hour (including the next save). PCs can gain a new save by resting for 10 minutes.

Bioluminescent life is common in this system, so that PCs need no light sources to see dimly as far as line of sight allows. Apart from specific encounters, this bioluminescence comes from:

- Trails of glistening slime, which glow with a faint orange light.
- Dancing motes of yellow-green airborne fungi that gently (and harmlessly) attach themselves to exposed flesh before drifting onwards.
- Blue-white phosphorescent millipedes, as long as a human arm, which

crawl over any surface.

- Glowing globs of violet jelly that quiver when approached, but seem to do nothing else. These globs of jelly may be up to 2 feet across, or as small as the period at the end of this sentence. These are sensory organs of Mycarnos, in **Area 3**.
- Flying insects, similar to fireflies, which flash with white, reddish-orange, or orangish-yellow light.

Some of the cave tunnels are narrow, and their floors are somewhat rounded, so that it is only safe for characters to walk single file. Two of these long tunnels descend steeply, and any character moving at more than half speed must succeed in a DC 15 Reflex save in these areas or fall prone. Once prone, a second DC 20 Reflex save is required to avoid sliding helplessly 2d6 x 5' down the tunnel. These characters will emerge coated in mud, glowing with a faint blue-white radiance themselves from bacteria in the mud. A character that falls must succeed in a Luck check to avoid dropping held items. A character who slides must make a second Luck check or lose a pack (straps give way), a sheathed weapon (slides out of sheath), or something similar, 1d10 x 10% of the way along their slide.

Running is dangerous within (DC 15 Reflex save to avoid falling; DC 25 if running in a sloped tunnel, with another DC 30 save to avoid sliding, as above). This damp slickness also makes it difficult for thieves (or others) to climb the cavern walls; treat as DC 20. Creatures native to this adventure do not suffer these problems.

The judge is encouraged to describe these bioluminescent sources, the heat, the slickness, and the humidity often as the PCs explore the cave system. The chasm in **Area 5** is in marked contrast to the rest of the complex, and this will be creepier for the players the better you describe the rest of the complex.

Passages Out

Two passages lead off the map towards the east. The first is just beyond **Area 3**, the second past **Area 5** and **Area 6**. These passages may lead to anywhere that the judge desires...to an expanded system of caves, another dungeon, or even a crack between buildings looking onto a rank alleyway. If the PCs backtrack, the passages no longer lead into the cave complex housing *The Giggling Deep*. Unlike the stone cap leading in, these passages never lead to the same place twice.

The one exception is that, until a character encounters Area 5, each tunnel leads directly to the other, preventing PCs from leaving the cavern complex unless they rely on extraordinary means, such as divine intervention or spells like planar step.

Random Encounters

There is a 1 in 5 chance of a random encounter during every 5 minutes of exploration. When a random encounter is indicated, roll 1d20 and consult the following table. Remember that **Dungeon Crawl Classics** rounds combats up to the nearest turn, so always roll one chance for a random encounter midway through combat, and another chance immediately thereafter. Making noise attracts attention!

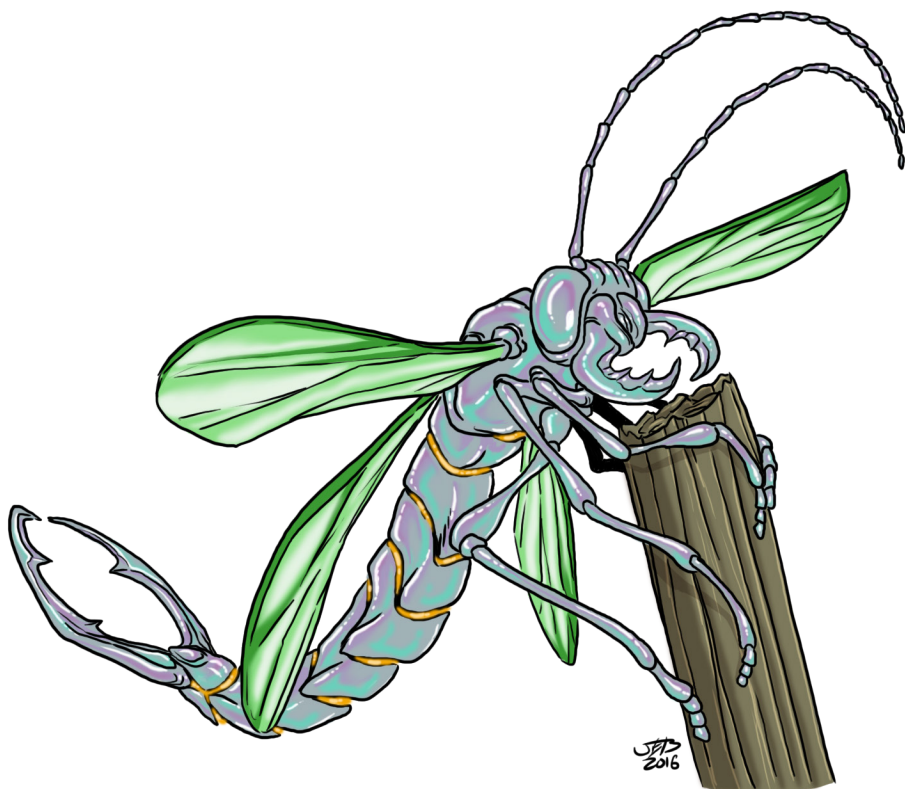
1d20	Encounter
1-3	Glitterjaws (1d3)
4	Goremera
5-6	Green-white Centipedes (1d4-1, minimum 1)
7-10	Jelly Ants (3d5)
11-14	Orange Slime (1)
15-18	Pink Jellyfish Swarm (1d3-1, minimum 1)
17	Pus Bears (1d3)
18-20	Spiked Tortoises (1d4+2)

Glitterjaw: Init +2; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4 plus pincers) or pincers +2 melee (1d5); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 7; MV 20' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP free pincer attack with bite, lay eggs; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -2; AL C.

These creatures appear to be a cross between skeletally thin dragonflies and enormous earwigs, with stunted phosphorescent green-white wings and jaws that glitter with an opalescent sheen of colors. Their wings are useless for flight, but they can climb on walls or ceiling with sticky pads. The gaps in their carapaces ooze with luminous orange slime. A glitterjaw is 2-3' long.

If a glitterjaw bites successfully, it gains a free attack with its tail pincers. If a victim is reduced to 0 hp, a clutch of eggs is laid on the next round. Should the victim survive, he takes 1d3 points of Stamina damage each day thereafter for 1d5 days. Survival means that the character has rejected the eggs; death means that the growing glitterjaw nymphs hatch, consuming internal organs,

Glitterjaw



and then emerging 2d4 days after death as 3d6 adult glitterjaws. The infestation can be cleared with 3 HD of healing via Lay on Hands or appropriate spell use, such as *neutralize poison* or *disease*.

Goremera: The PCs encounter the Goremera from **Area 2**. Depending upon where it is encountered, the Goremera may be in humanoid or bestial form.

Green-white Centipede: Init +3; Atk bite +6 melee (1d4 plus poison); AC 14; HD 3d7; hp 11; MV 50' or climb 50'; Act 1d20; SP poison; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will -1; AL N.

These giant centipedes glow with a pale green-white light. Although narrow, they are as long as an adult human. Their bite carries a virulent poison – the bitten character takes 1d3 points of temporary Agility damage immediately and must succeed in a DC 16 Fort save or fall paralyzed, dying 1d5 rounds later.

Jelly Ant: Init -1; Atk claw +3 melee (1d3) or psionic beam; AC 16; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV 40' or climb 40'; Act 1d20; SP surprise 1 in 3, psionic beam, hive mind, alien mind; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +15; AL C.

These creatures are similar to 2-foot long ants, with bodies made of flexible orange-red metal. Instead of heads, they have a glob of glowing orange jelly. These creatures can mask their approach with mental energy, surprising on a 1 in 3 chance as a result. They can also project a psionic beam up to 40', targeting a single living creature, who must succeed in a DC 15 Will save or suffer 1d6 damage from mental strain. Jelly ants are invaders from another world, which use this complex as a conduit to reach new planes of existence in which they may establish their nests. They have a hive mind, making each of them aware of everything that occurs to a single jelly ant, but their thought processes are so alien that any creature attempting to make mental contact with them requires a Will save (DC 20) or is stunned and unable to act for 1d5 minutes.

Orange Slime: Init (always last); Atk pseudopod +4 melee (1 plus 1d4 heat); AC 10; HD (1d3)d8; hp 5 per Hit Die; MV 5' or climb 5'; Act 1d20 per Hit Die; SP immune to fire and heat, takes double damage from cold, psionic reverb; SV Fort +6, Ref -8, Will -6; AL N.

The orange slime is a thick quivering primordial ooze that glows with a

yellow-orange light. When one is encountered, roll 1d3. This determines how many 5' squares the slime covers, the number of Hit Dice it has, and the number of Action Dice it can use to create pseudopodia. The orange slime is immensely hot, and the damage done by its pseudopods is primarily from heat. It is immune to fire and heat, but takes twice normal damage from cold.

Anyone who succeeds in a melee attack against an orange slime must succeed in a DC 10 Will save, or there is a psionic reverberation of the attack which causes attacker to take half the damage caused to the slime (rounded up).

Pink Jellyfish Swarm: Init +4; Atk swarming sting +2 melee (1d3+2 plus poison); AC 9; HD 4d8; hp 17; MV fly 30'; Act special; SP swarm, poison; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will -1; AL N.

These are swarms of thousands of tiny luminous pink jellyfish-like creatures which fly through the cavern complex. Each swarm takes up four 10' squares, and attacks all creatures therein. The jellyfish trail stinging filaments which are nearly invisible, but which can deliver a powerful sting. Any creature stung must make a successful DC 10 Fort save or suffer 1d3 temporary Strength damage from the neurotoxin.

Pus Bear: Init +0; Atk bite +3 melee (1d5 +3) or claw +5 melee (1d2+3) or tail knob +3 melee (1d7+3) or bone needle +6 melee (1 plus steaming pus); AC 17; HD 3d8;hp 13; MV 40'; Act 3d20; SP inject steaming pus with bone needle, body heat; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

These creatures appear to be albino koalas with very thick fur. Their bodies are covered with sores that ooze glowing yellow-white pus that steams in contact with the air. Unlike actual bears, pus bears have long tails ending in bony knobs, which they can also use to attack if circumstances permit. Their prehensile tongues reach opponents up to 5' away, and can inject steaming pus with a bone needle (1d3 damage plus DC 10 Fort save or suffer 1d5 damage each round for 1d5 rounds). Their bodies are hot enough that a creature hit with two attacks on the same round suffers an additional 1d3 damage.

Pus bears eat the luminescent fungi that grow in the caverns, but they are territorial, and may attack if threatened.

Spiked Tortoises: Init -4; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 21; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP glowing bacterial pouches, flesh gives bonus vs. poi-

sons, immune to poisons; SV Fort +10, Ref -8, Will +4; AL N.

These reptiles are about 2 feet long with necks outstretched. Their shells reach a maximum diameter of about 1 foot, but are covered with spikes and horny accretions. Pouches beneath their eyes contain glowing bacteria, that allow them to create a beam of softly glowing greenish-blue light as bright as candlelight. An item dipped in these bacteria retains its glow for 1d6 hours. Spiked tortoises smell strongly of coconut, which is noted at a distance of 1d10 x 10' (this determines initial encounter distance). Although these creatures can defend themselves with a strong bite and a stronger shell, they are delicious when cooked, and their consuming their flesh grants a +1d bonus on the dice chain to Fort saves against poison for the next 2d12 hours. Each tortoise contains enough flesh for four characters.

Encounter Areas

1 – The Long Passage Down: *Beyond the stone cap is a 10-foot drop into what appears to be a natural tunnel, sloping downward to the northeast. The cave surfaces are slick with moisture. A damp, hot draft comes up from below, saturated with the smells of fungal growth and decay.*

As soon as the characters enter the caverns, they become aware of the oppressive heat. Entering the tunnel, they become aware of the naturally phosphorescent life which characterizes this area. Characters that do not start by moving cautiously may fall (and possibly slide) as described under General Features on page 4. Incautious players should not be warned, but anyone who asks about the floor or the slickness mentioned in the area's descriptive text immediately understands the danger. If the PCs have a dwarf, that character may make a DC 10 Intelligence check to understand the danger just before any incautious PC experiences it firsthand.

Cautious characters with a base speed of 30' are moving at a rate of 90' per minute, characters with a base speed of 20' move cautiously at a rate of 60' per minute, etc. It should take approximately 10 minutes to reach the first junction (towards **Area 2**), or longer if the PCs are mapping (determine based upon how much effort they take to ensure the accuracy of their map). There should be at least two chances for a random encounter before this point.

2 – Lair of the Goremera: *The uneven passage leads into a large cavern, whose dripping ceiling would be lost in darkness were it not for the millions of deep blue glowworms twinkling like stars among the slender stalactites some 50 feet overhead. Old, cracked bones are scattered across the rough cave floor. Pieces of ancient armor, broken weapons, and the glitter of coins and gems are scattered among them.*

This is the lair of the monstrous **Goremera**, a creature which can either appear like a chimera (goat, dragon, and lion-headed) or an almost featureless humanoid creature. In either form, it is a red so dark as to be nearly black, with glowing opalescent eyes and teeth. Its body shimmers in any light, revealing sanguine highlights, for its flesh is composed entirely of liquid blood moved by its monstrous will. It can flow from one form to the other at will, requiring a full round to do so. Shifting between forms heals the Goremera 2d12 damage. The creature reeks of blood.

Most physical attacks pass through the Goremera without harming it. Only bludgeoning attacks or massive trauma (such as a collapsing ceiling) can harm it, and even then it takes only half damage. Its nature makes it immune to most Mighty Deeds and critical hit effects. It takes half damage from fire or cold, but can be affected normally by psychic effects, electrical attacks, force attacks, and channeled divine power. Only in this cavern can the Goremera be truly slain – when reduced to 0 hp the monster loses cohesion, becoming nothing more than an explosion of blood. After 24 hours, it reforms in its cave. It then seeks out its slayers, hoping for revenge, unless beaten so severely that it has learned to fear them. In this cavern alone, six large opals (100 gp each) remain within the blood and gore; if these are taken, the Goremera cannot reform.

In bestial form, the Goremera's draconic head can breathe a line of steaming blood 3 times per day (3d8 damage, Ref DC 18 for half). In either form, the Goremera can attempt to paralyze a foe with its gaze (Will DC 20 or be entranced by the monster's gaze, taking no action for 3d5 rounds or until the gaze is broken). The humanoid Goremera can only paralyze a single foe, but the bestial Goremera can attempt to paralyze up to three foes – one with each head.

Goremera: Init +1; Atk lion bite +5 melee (2d4) or goat gore +4 melee (2d4) or dragon bite +6 melee (1d10+2) or claw +4 melee (1d5) or breath weapon or paralyzing gaze; AC 18; HD 10d8+16; hp 66; MV 30' or fly 30' (bestial

form only); Act 3d24; SP immune to most attacks, breath weapon, paralyzing gaze, critical range 20-24, death throes, reform; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +8; AL C.

There is only a 20% chance that the Goremera is in its lair. The judge should check this chance every 10 minutes spent in the lair. Characters looting the premises without posting a guard stand a 50% chance of being surprised. Every 10 minutes, a searching character can discover coins and/or gems as described below. There is also cumulative 5% chance per round that each PC can roll on the Special Items table. Duplicate rolls mean nothing is found.

Copper Pieces: 3d30, to a maximum of 6,900.

Silver Pieces: 2d20, to a maximum of 2,400.

Gold Pieces: 1d16, to a maximum of 700.

Gems: 1d14-5, to a maximum of 60. Each gem found is worth 1d6 x 10 gp.

Special Items Table

1d12	Result
1	Jade Scorpion: This foot-long jade sculpture is partially damaged and missing one claw. It is still valued at 75 gp.
2	Horned Helmet: The long, twisted amber horns on this helmet come from a demon. The wearer is granted the ability to increase his AC by +2 for 1d6 hours, and to cast <i>word of command</i> using 1d16 + Personality modifier for the spell check, but each time he uses either power, he suffers a corruption. Roll 1d7: (1-4) minor, (5-6) major or (7) greater corruption.
3	Longbow: This longbow is finely made, but not magical, although the bowstring is. The string is made of the hair of elf maidens, and, until it snaps (a cumulative 1% chance per use, or as a result of a fumble) the wielder of this bow gains an extra attack with it, at a -1d shift from her lowest Action Die.
4	Jeweled Urn: Valued at 35 gp, this urn is somewhat fragile. The gems are worth a total of 20 gp, and may be taken whether the urn is intact or not.
5	Wizard's Hat: A battered sky-blue conical wizard's hat that has seen better days. It is stained with blood, and some form of small yellow mushroom is growing from it.
6	Holy Symbol of Gorhan: Crafted of silver, it is valued at 45 gp.

7	<p>Briar Wand: A two-foot length of twisted briar wood wound with green copper threads and tipped with an amethyst gem. It has 30 charges remaining. Upon using the proper command word, it can cast the following spells:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Animal summoning</i> (“Nortonos”): Spell Check result 14-17; summons two cats (one black and one white); AC 17, 3 hp, no effective attacks. Uses 1 charge. • <i>Shatter</i> (“Anderos”): Spell Check result 16-19, but touch is not required. An object within 60’ can be targeted. Uses 2 charges. • <i>Gust of wind</i> (“Olkeinos”): Spell Check result 22-23. Uses 3 charges. <p>When the last charge is used, the wand bursts into black and white flames and is consumed. An attempt to use a power without enough charges consumes the wand, but produces no effect.</p>
8	Battle Axe: Non-magical, but serviceable.
9	Pewter Tankard: A minor enchantment cools beverages poured into it, and keeps them cold for 1d5 hours. Ale never goes flat while in the tankard. It can hold 1 pint.
10	Cloak: This old, stained dark green travelling cloak is sized for a dwarf. The cloth is stiff, and it needs a good washing. There are three emeralds, each worth 50 gp, sewn into the hem.
11	Quiver: This quiver contains 10 arrows. It will always contain 10 arrows, no matter how many are used, until an arrow is given away or sold, which breaks the magic. The quiver may be given away or sold without harm.
12	Serpent Armlet: A gold armlet shaped like a serpent with two heads. The eyes are chips of turquoise. Value: 75 gp.

The Goremera uses the exit tunnels to hunt, and then returns via the stone cap in Area 1 when finished. The Goremera can open the stone cap at will.

3 – Mind of the Violet Jellies: *The passage ahead becomes a twisting vault where the walls and ceiling are comprised of a quivering violet mass, which glows with its own light. through the translucent material, you can see that it fills a small cavern, but you cannot tell exactly how large the place extends to either side – no more than 10 or 20 feet. The ceiling height of the cavern is about 15 feet, but the shuddering arch is only 8 feet high, and the passage through it a mere 5’*

wide.

This entire body is **Mycarnos**, a sentient fungus, scion of Ulibex, the Neutral fungous Lord of Mushrooms, Molds, Mildews, and Yeasts. Any violet jellies encountered (see General Features) are sensory organs psionically connected to the main mass, and Mycarnos knows everything that happens in their vicinity. If the PCs have gone out of their way to destroy these, Mycarnos will be displeased with them. Likewise, it considers the Goremera (**Area 2**) to be a friend, and often speaks with it, so that Mycarnos will be displeased by any who permanently slay the monster.

Otherwise, the creature is willing to speak telepathically (20' range) to any who pass this way. It knows the general features and layout of the cave complex, and knows of the creatures that can be encountered there, through its sensors. It does not understand the chasm in Area 5, but it knows that it is there, cold and dark. It does not know about the mad tittering that can be heard from the void.

If attacked, Mycarnos defends itself psychically. It can, in effect, cast the following spells using its Action Dice, without having to use any material components, speak, or gesture: *charm person*, *force manipulation*, *sleep*, *ventriloquism*, *forget*, *phantasm*, *ray of enfeeblement* (without a visible ray), *scare*, and *paralysis*. If a spell result requires touch, Mycarnos can instead use it on any target within 20'. If a spell result creates or "charges" a weapon with power, Mycarnos can use an Action Die to immediately make an attack with the weapon (or a psionic buffet in the case of a "charged" weapon, as with paralysis). It can only use each spell once per round, making a Spell Check with a +10 bonus. Mycarnos can cause spell misfire but never suffers corruption.

Mycarnos regenerates 1d12 hp each round, even after being slain. Cleansing the area with fire is not sufficient to bring about the violet jelly's ultimate end, as pieces of itself are everywhere throughout the complex, and they will converge to rebuild him. This will reduce his ability to regenerate to 1d3 hp per minute, however. Mycarnos is effectively immortal.

Every full 20 hp damage that Mycarnos takes removes 1 Action Die from his total. When it reaches 0 hp, it goes dark and still, until it has regained at least 20 hp.

Mycarnos, the Violet Jelly: Init +5; Atk psionic buffet +7 ranged (1d6) or spell-like psionic power; AC 5; HD 20d12+40; hp 200; MV 0'; Act 10d20; SP spell-like psionic powers (*charm person, force manipulation, sleep, ventriloquism, forget, phantasm, ray of enfeeblement, scare, and paralysis*; +10 Spell Check), regeneration (1d12 per round), telepathy, effectively immortal; SV Fort +6, Ref -15, Will +20; AL N.

4 – Top Predators: *The passage opens into a cavern whose ceiling stretches some 60 feet overhead, glittering with damp stalactites like a field of stone knives. The floor is uneven, with a definite tilt toward the northwest. Thin stalagmites grow up from the floor. Bits of broken rock from fallen stalactites lie among them. Motes of yellow-green fungi dance in the air, as do a few glowing soft pink jellyfish, which drift lazily here and there.*

The ceiling of this cavern is inhabited by three **tentacled things** that can shoot forth three long, sinuous tentacles each, while using another three to anchor themselves to the stalactites. Their tentacles are covered with spots of orange bioluminescence, but in this complex, that is almost camouflage. Unless the PCs take precautions, one tentacled thing will automatically gain a surprise round against the trailing character. If it is successful, that character will simply seem to disappear.

The tentacles of these beings contain many small needles, each of which secretes a paralyzing toxin (Fort DC 15 or paralysis for 1d5 rounds). A tentacled thing can draw a paralyzed opponent to the ceiling in the same round it attacked. Thereafter, it can make bite attacks against that opponent with a parrot-like beak. If the opponent resists, an opposed Strength check vs. +3 can prevent the character from being drawn all the way up, but the character is then released 1d3 x 10' from the floor. A Reflex save (DC 10 + 2 per 10' fallen) can negate normal falling damage (armor check penalties apply).

Tentacled Things (3): Init +3; Atk tentacle +5 melee (1d8 plus paralysis and draw to ceiling) or bite +8 melee (2d6); AC 17; HD 5d8+10; hp 45, 32, 27; MV climb 20'; Act 3d20; SP paralysis (Fort DC 15), draw to ceiling, drop; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4; AL C.

The tentacled things are intelligent enough to hide the bones of their victims (mostly pus bears, but an occasional jelly ant and one or two human skeletons). These can be found along the southeast edge of the cave. A serviceable, but non-magical, longsword and shield can also be found there.

5 – The Giggling Dark: *This immense cavern is long and wide, with a ceiling arching to a height of 200', its upper reaches glistening with moisture and living creatures that produce their own light. Red, green, orange, and blue stars twinkle above, and sinuous blue-white shapes glow as they crawl among the stalactites far above.*

The growths of the “Fungal Forest” cover the ground level, mushrooms of strange configurations – some as high as 12 feet tall – and glowing colors. Spores drift lazily through the hot air. The fungal growths limit vision to approximately 30', but even so you can make out an immense chasm that bisects the cave. It is at least 30' or more across, even at the narrowest point.

There is a strange, disturbing noise in the air, just at the range of perception. It sounds like the tittering of an insane man, or the giggling laughter of a being who is too sane – who sees the realities of our existence too clearly to remain silent.

Depending upon where the PCs enter this cavern, they may or may not be able to see the rope bridge spanning the chasm. Despite the heat of the cavern, ice has formed visibly on the rope. The rope bridge is well made, but any creature struck while on it must succeed in a Reflex save (DC = damage done) or fall into the abyss. A kind judge may allow a second save to catch the rope bridge, leaving the PC dangling from it rather than falling.

Anything that falls into the chasm is lost forever. Any creature that flies or climbs beyond the limit where light can reach is lost forever. If the judge is generous, a special quest may rescue the lost from the frozen pits of the deepest hell.

Unlike the rest of the cave complex, the depths of the chasm are completely dark. PCs looking downward can see for about 30' from the light generated above, but no light can exist beyond this boundary. Even a dropped torch disappears as it reaches the darkness. The chasm is also as cold as ice, and cold air wafts upward to a height of 30' above the chasm. A character stepping onto the bridge immediately moves from superheated air to extremely cold air, and must make a DC 12 Fort save or take 1d3 damage as his body adjusts.

The giggling, tittering laughter from the darkness in the chasm below is louder as one crosses the bridge. PCs can begin to almost hear words amid the laughter, cosmic secrets that are perhaps better left unknown. The giggling is

loudest at the center of the bridge, growing quieter as a creature comes closer to the edge. Standing on the bridge and listening to the voices and laughter can grant great knowledge, but potentially at a great price.

A Wizard or Elf who listens to the Giggling Dark can gain spell knowledge. If the character has an open spell slot, and concentrates on a spell she wishes to know, every turn the character may roll one die, starting with 1d30, and proceeding down the Dice Chain to 1d3. If the result is equal to the spell level or lower, and the character is otherwise able to learn the spell, she may make an Intelligence check to learn the spell as though she had studied it. If the Dice Chain goes to 1d3 without a successful roll, the Giggling Dark will not impart the spell to that character until she gains another level. Note that this makes it easier to learn higher level spells than lower.

Any character can stand on the bridge to attempt to learn the answer to a single question. The judge sets the “level” of the question from 1 to 5, with the simplest questions being the least likely to be answered. A level “5” question may be the secret name of a demon, or the means to Quest For some desired object. If the character seeks specific knowledge, such as learning an esoteric language or occupation, set the difficulty at “3”. Simple questions, such as the name of the best inn in a town the PCs are travelling to, are set at “1” – the Giggling Dark should not be trifled with.

Finally, a Wizard or Elf can attempt to reroll the Mercurial Magic result for a single spell by obtaining a result of “5”.

A character can listen to the Giggling Dark for a number of turns equal to his Will save modifier without harm (if this is +0, harm is immediate every round; a penalty indicates harm is immediate and without save to avoid). Thereafter, every time that period comes about, the PC must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or leap into the void. Other PCs may attempt to restrain the character, but the character will do all in his power to follow the summons, so long as he remains on the bridge, and for 1d6 rounds thereafter. A character that succeeds in the first save may remain on the bridge, but each subsequent save is made at a -1d penalty on the Dice Chain.

For example, a 5th level Wizard with a +3 Will save modifier wishes to learn the 3rd level spell, *demon summoning*. He may remain on the bridge three turns before making a save, attempting to roll a 3 or less on 1d30, 1d24, and 1d20. Assuming he fails to learn the spell, but makes the save, he then at-

tempt another three turns, trying to roll 3 or less on 1d16, 1d14, and 1d12. At this point, he must attempt another Will save using 1d16. He tries again, and manages to roll a “2” on 1d10. He then must succeed in a DC 13 Intelligence check to learn the spell, but can leave the bridge without needing a further Will save.

Random encounters still apply while characters are on the bridge. If a random encounter breaks a petitioner’s concentration, he must begin again (but his Will save to resist leaping does not reset). Wise characters will, therefore, have others to act as lookouts on either side of the chasm while they commune with the Giggling Dark.

Sidebar: The Fungal Forest

Players being who they are, someone is going to try to consume various mushrooms in the fungal forest. Roll 1d20, 1d16, 1d14, and 1d12 on the following chart to determine the qualities of unknown mushrooms. If more than one player eats the same type of mushroom, the results are identical 75% of the time. Otherwise, roll the d12 again to determine results.

Mushroom is...

d20	Shaped
1	Rounded cap with secondary cap below gills
2	Button-like
3	Thick stemmed
4	Narrow stem with wide cap
5	Shallow bowl-like cap
6	Flat cap
7	Tall shaggy cap
8	Trumpet-like
9	Cluster of many tall, thin mushrooms with tiny caps
10	Puffball-like
11	Mottled cap
12	Morel-like
13	Cluster of thick caps
14	Bracket-like
15	Thick, irregular shape

16	Sponge-like
17	Lichen-like growth
18	Mushroom grows beneath soil (+1d when searching)
19	Mushroom is mobile, moving on 1d6+1 stalks (+2d when searching)
20	Mushroom gives off very strong scent (-2d when searching)

d16	Color
1	White with glowing blue spots
2	Bioluminescent green
3	Orange
4	White and brown
5	Soft blue glow
6	Black with glowing orange stripes
7	Grayish-blue
8	Grayish-brown
9	Yellow and orange, faintly luminescent
10	Bright pink (-1d to search)
11	Nearly translucent white (+2d when searching)
12	Glowing yellow-green
13	Glowing blue-white
14	Pitch black (+1d when searching)
15	Yellow-white
16	Metallic silver (-2d when searching)

d14	Size
1	Less than an inch tall (search die d30)
2	1d6 inches tall (search die d24)
3	2d7 inches tall (search die d20)
4	3d8 inches tall (search die d16)
5	4d10 inches tall (search die d14)
6	1d3 feet tall (search die d12)
7	2d4 feet tall (search die d10)
8	3d5 feet tall (search die d8)
9	4d6 feet tall (search die d7)

10	4d7 feet tall (search die d6)
11	4d8 feet tall (search die d5)
12	4d10 feet tall (search die d4)
13	5d12 feet tall (search die d3)
14	6d12 feet tall (search die d3)

d12	Effect
1	Deadly poison (1d5 temporary Stamina damage and DC 15 Fort save or die immediately)
2	Poison (1d3 temporary Stamina damage and DC 12 Fort save or additional 1d3 temporary Stamina damage)
3	Poison (1d4 temporary Strength damage and DC 14 Fort save or 1 point is permanent)
4	Woody and non-edible, but not dangerous
5	Edible; tastes like roast chicken
6	Edible; tastes like lobster (value 1d3 gp per serving)
7	Edible; tastes beef-like
8	Edible and delicious with rich flavor (1d7 gp per serving)
9	Edible but completely bland
10	Foul-tasting (Fort DC 10 to consume), but -4 penalty to bite attacks against the eater for 1d4 hours
11	Eater is target of spell effect at lowest possible successful Spell Check result (saves apply as normal): 1d10: (1) <i>charm person</i> (treats all creatures as caster), (2) <i>enlarge</i> , (3) <i>sleep</i> , (4) <i>detect invisible</i> , (5) <i>ray of enfeeblement</i> , (6) <i>strength</i> , (7) <i>paralysis</i> (as though struck), (8) <i>second sight</i> , (9) <i>neutralize poison or disease</i> , or (10) <i>restore vitality</i>
12	Heals 1d3 dice damage (roll once to determine how many dice this mushroom heals)

Finding a similar mushroom to a type already consumed requires rolling a 1 on a die (determined by the mushroom's size) after 1 turn of searching. Each additional turn spent looking for the same type of mushroom decreases the die rolled by -1 on the Dice Chain. Each searcher rolls her own die.

Any fungi taken from this cavern retains its potency for 1d7 weeks.

6 – Tortoise Cavern: *There is a strong smell of coconuts coming from this roughly ovoid cavern. Moving here and there are a dozen or so turtle-like creatures with spiked shells. Their eyes appear to glow, shining a light in a steady greenish-blue beam wherever they look. They are consuming glowing fan-like fungus, which grows throughout the cavern. The fungus glows with a soft yellow-gold hue.*

There are 13 **spiked tortoises** in this cave when it is first entered, and 2d6+4 spiked tortoises at any time thereafter. These creatures are as described in Random Encounters, on page 6. Their flesh is delicious when cooked, and grants a +1d bonus on the dice chain to Fort saves against poison for the next 2d12 hours. Each tortoise contains enough flesh for four characters. They fight only to defend themselves.

Spiked Tortoises: Init –4; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 21; HD 1d8; hp 5 each; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP glowing bacterial pouches, flesh gives bonus vs. poisons, immune to poisons; SV Fort +10, Ref –8, Will +4; AL N.

The fungus here is also edible, and quite tasty, being something like cilantro wrapped in Japanese nori, but it represses spellcasting ability. Even the smallest taste reduces Spell Checks by 1d3 dice on the Dice Chain for 24 hours, and eating more than this eliminates all spellcasting ability for 1d5 days. There is no save against this effect. Any fungi taken from this cavern retains its potency for 1d7 days.

Searching this area only uncovers the cracked shells of other tortoises that were killed and eaten here. Some were cooked. Most were not.

7 – Remains of the Fallen: *This cavern is a small grotto of dripping water and motes of airborne fungus that dance like fairy lights. Luminous mauve toadstools grow from the remains of four corpses piled up against the western wall.*

These are the remains of four adventurers who sought the Giggling Dark, but succumbed to a combination of jelly ants and glitterjaw parasitism. They are a male elf, a male human, and two female humans.

The male elf shows marks where the glitterjaws came out of his flesh after consuming his internal organs. The fingers of his left hand are fused together due to an old magical mishap. He wears mithral chainmail which is still serviceable, and a mithral longsword is in a jeweled sheath (value 25 gp) by his side.

The male human's eyes, ears, nostrils, and mouth are caked with blood from internal bleeding when jelly ants caused his brain to hemorrhage. He is also wearing chainmail, but it is not in good condition (d16 fumble die). What weapons he once had are long lost, but he wears an iron holy symbol of the Hidden Lord on a chain about his neck.

The first female human is similar to the male, with dried blood indicating that she fell to the psionic attacks of jelly ants. She wore dark green robes, which hid goat-like legs and a serpentine tail. A dagger lies near her hand. Upon one finger is a golden ring with an unknown green gemstone; it grants its wearer a +2 bonus to Fort saves.

The other female human resisted better, but was clawed to death by the jelly ants. She wears ruined leather armor, and has the sheath for a short sword, which lies now near the northern part of the cave, ruined in the hot damp air. She still wears a rotting backpack, and any who search this will find an oiled leather sack containing 245 sp and 123 gp, a coil of rope that appears fine but must be checked each time used (starting with 1d24, and going down the Dice Chain, roll each time a person trusts weight to the rope; on a "1" it snaps), a set of thieves' tools wrapped in oilcloth, and a green-white centipede that is curled among the goods.

Green-white Centipede: Init +3; Atk bite +6 melee (1d4 plus poison); AC 14; HD 3d7; hp 11; MV 50' or climb 50'; Act 1d20; SP poison; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will -1; AL N.

These giant centipedes glow with a pale green-white light. Although narrow, they are as long as an adult human. Their bite carries a virulent poison – the bitten character takes 1d3 points of temporary Agility damage immediately and must succeed in a DC 16 Fort save or fall paralyzed, dying 1d5 rounds later.

8 – Outer Chamber of the Shrine: *The tunnel leads into a cavern which has been enlarged by the rough work of tools, many ages past. Upon the floor is carved the eight-pointed sigil of the Lords of Chaos, which has become filled with luminous red-orange slime molds. The luminous fungi and creatures which inhabit this chamber seem to somehow conceal as much as their light reveals. The place seems eerie, and you feel as though eyes watch you from beyond the threshold.*

Within this place, Clerics of the Hidden Lord cast spells with a +1d bonus on

the Dice Chain. Clerics of Neutral gods take a -1d penalty on the Dice Chain to Spell Checks, and clerics of Lawful gods take a -2d penalty.

As soon as any sentient creature crosses the threshold into this chamber, it must speak a secret using its normal speaking voice. This is a sacrifice to the Hidden Lord that cannot be denied (no save), but clerics of other gods are not penalized for making it. The player decides what secret to speak

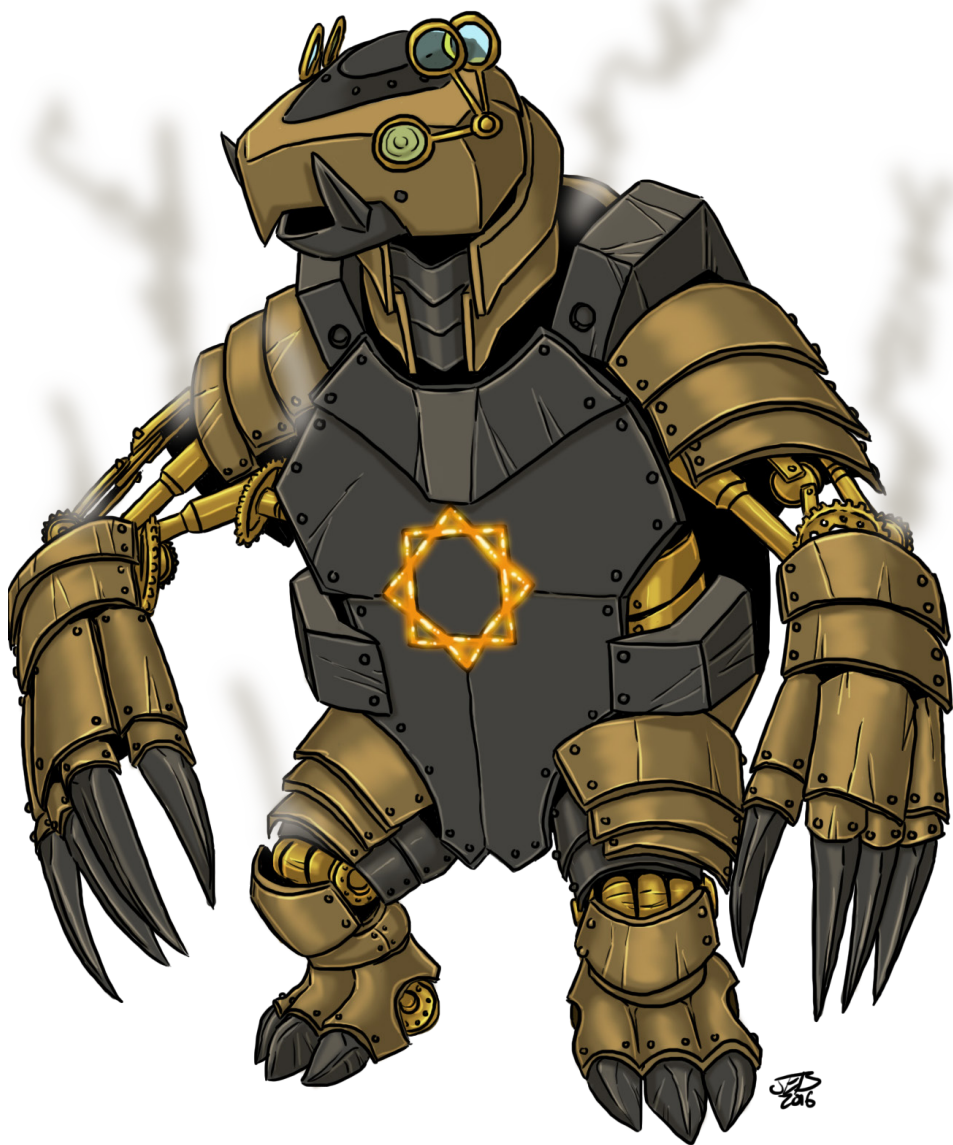
- If the secret uttered is banal, or not really a secret, the character immediately incurs a loss of 1 point of Luck.
- If the character attempts to conceal his speech, that character immediately incurs a loss of 1 point of Luck. This may be cumulative with other effects.
- If the character makes an effort, but the revelation isn't really that interesting, no change in Luck occurs.
- If the character reveals an important or interesting secret, the character is awarded between 1 and 3 points of Luck, depending upon what the secret is. The more entertaining, or the more revealing, the higher the bonus. The judge is the final arbiter as to this bonus.
- If the secret revealed is about another character, and the player agrees that it is true, the character uttering the secret gains 1 point of Luck. This can stack with other awards.

A secret need not be something that was revealed in play before, but it should not contradict known events. The judge should take careful note of these secrets, and find ways to use them in upcoming adventures. For instance, a character who reveals that he killed his childhood sweetheart can thereafter be haunted by her ghost.

9 – Guardians of the Hidden Lord: *The next chamber is an irregular cavern, roughly 40 to 50 feet in diameter and rising to a natural dome perhaps 70 feet overhead. Apart from the ever-present phosphorescent molds and creatures, which seem to thrive in the infernal heat of the caverns, there is nothing visible here. If there is another exit, you cannot see it without entering the cave.*

Within this place, Clerics of the Hidden Lord cast spells with a +1d bonus on the Dice Chain. Clerics of Neutral gods take a -1d penalty on the Dice Chain to Spell Checks, and clerics of Lawful gods take a -2d penalty.

No random encounters occur here.



Terrorpin

Five **terrorpins** guard this chamber. These are huge brown-and-black turtle-like creatures with sabre-like upward curving fangs. Their limbs are driven by mechanics hidden in their shells, so that they smoke, steam, and whistle like oversized teapots with every shambling motion. These half-steampunk humanoid turtles stand 12' tall each, and crit using Table G. They are silent when motionless, and invisible until they move due to the power of the Hidden Lord. Even when they move, they simply do not exist to any creature outside this chamber, which they never leave. Because of this, only creatures which have crossed the threshold can target the terrorpins with spells or attacks. Not even the strongest mortal detection spells can perceive them from outside Area 9. Each terrorpin has the eight-pointed Sign of Chaos burned upon its plastron. They almost always attack with surprise.

The guardians remain hidden and do not attack if a holy symbol of the Hidden Lord is held aloft when the threshold is crossed, or if beings crossing the threshold call a prayer to the Hidden Lord as they do so. Although they remain invisible, they can be perceived, and characters searching the room are likely to discover their unseen shapes. Obviously, the terrorpins will attack any creature that assails them.

Terrorpins (5): Init -2; Atk bite +3 melee (2d6+4) or slam +6 melee (2d4+4); AC 17; HD 4d12; hp 41, 32, 25, 20, 18; MV 20'; Act 1d24; SP surprise, can only be perceived from within this chamber, crit range 20-24; crit using 1d4 on Table G; SV Fort +10, Ref -4, Will +7; AL C.

From within the chamber, the narrow passage to **Area 10** is visible.

10 – Shrine of the Hidden Lord: *This natural grotto appears to be about 50 feet across. It is dim despite the abundant luminous creatures and fungi that are found herein. The sense of a great, and not altogether benign, intelligence watching you is more palpable even than the excessive heat and humidity, greater here than in any other part of the caverns. In the center of this chamber is a single black stone, 10 feet long, half as wide, and half again as tall. Its flat surface is engraved with the eight-pointed Sigil of Chaos.*

This place is strong with the power of the Hidden Lord. Clerics of the Hidden Lord cast spells with a +2d bonus on the Dice Chain. Clerics of other Chaotic deities take a -1d penalty on the Dice Chain to all Spell Checks. Clerics of Neutral gods take a -2d penalty, and clerics of Lawful gods take a -3d penalty. No random encounters occur here. However, any food brought

into this chamber rots instantly and becomes non-edible.

- A character can dedicate himself to the Hidden Lord here. If a non-Cleric, he can choose to gain levels as a Cleric hereafter, starting at 1st level of ability (the normal maximum of 10 total levels still applies). The character must sacrifice a sentient living being upon the black stone altar to do so.
- A character can dedicate himself to the Hidden Lord here. By spilling her blood on the black stone altar, equal to a minimum of 1 point of Spellburn, the character can create a bond similar to that of the *patron bond* spell (when cast on another). The character rolls 1d16 + Personality modifier to determine the result, but may Spellburn more, gaining +1 to the roll per 2 points of Spellburn (rounded up).
- Clerics of the Hidden Lord may sacrifice to remove disapproval, with each point of disapproval costing only 10 gp worth of sacrifices in this chamber.
- Clerics of the Hidden Lord can use their spellcasting bonus here to cast spells where a high result is needed, or a high result can offer benefits for a long period. For example: *divine symbol*, *restore vitality*, *animate dead*, *remove curse*, and *true name*.
- A cleric of another faith, and especially a Lawful cleric, may be sent to desecrate the shrine, requiring a Spell Check result of 36+. If **Area 10** is desecrated, then all of **Areas 8-10** become *desecrated*. A cleric may *desecrate* **Areas 8** and **9** first. *Desecrating* each of those areas reduces the penalties (and bonuses) for clerical magic in each of the remaining, un-desecrated areas by 1 step along the Dice Chain.

Vos the Spell-Thief

The Chaotic red-robed wizard known as **Vos the Spell-Thief** has considered the Giggling Deep her private domain. Eventually, she will discover that others have accessed the Deep, and will seek them out. Depending upon what she can learn of the PCs, she may attempt to feign friendship with them rather than assault them outright. She was once an outlaw in a desert land, and knows well that subtlety is often more powerful than outright force.

Vos possesses the *Ring of the Sand Djinn*, a plain brass band marked with cabalistic signs and sigils of the House of Domdaniel in the City of Brass. The ring commands three spirits: A Spirit of Protection, which grants the wearer a +2 bonus to AC and all saves at no cost; a Spirit of the Unseen, which can

grant 1 minute of invisibility per point of Spellburn applied (effectively, the invisibility is nourished by the user's own soul); and a Spirit of Unbinding which can once, and once only, serve the wearer powerfully, but at the cost of unmaking the Ring. The limits of what the Spirit of Unbinding can do have never been tested, as the *Ring of the Sand Djinn* still exists. This is a powerful item, and there are many others seeking it.

Vos the Spell-Thief: Init +0; Atk short sword +4 melee (1d6+3) or dagger +4 melee (1d4+3); AC 12; HD 7d4+2+6; hp 31; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP spells, Ring of the Sand Djinn, +2 to melee damage rolls, demonic familiar; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; AL C.

Str 14 (+1); Agl 9, Sta 9, Prs 12, Int 17 (+2), Luck 17 (+2).

Languages: Common, Chaotic, Elemental, Djinn, and Demonic.

Spells (Spell Check: d20+9): *Ekim's Mystical Mask, Feather Fall, Find Familiar, Flaming Hands, Ventriloquism, Ward Portal, Invisibility, Shatter, Dispel Magic, Emirikol's Entropic Maelstrom*, and *Wizard Sense*.

Vos' demonic familiar, Fakhreddin, is an alien-looking black-and-red python with a tendency towards introspection. *Why do I take such pleasure in minor cruelties? Is this form really so much better than that of a daemonic larvae? What will I become when I have collected enough souls to purchase a better form?*

Fakhreddin absorbs half of any corruption or debilitating effects Vos may fall victim to, and grants a +4 bonus to saves against these. If Vos dies while Fakhreddin yet lives, the familiar has a claim on her soul, and hauls it as a visible shade into the nethermost hells.

Fakhreddin: Init +2; Atk constrict +2 melee (1d4); AC 14; HD 1d4+2; hp 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP communicate telepathically with master, share corruption and debilitating effects, constrict for automatic +1d4 each round (1d4, 2d4, 3d4, etc); SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; AL C.

Vos has two ogre servants, **Azzam** and **Azzizza**, who obey her in all things.

Azzam and **Azzizza:** Init +2; Atk slam +5 melee (1d6+6 plus bear hug) or great mace +5 melee (1d8+6); AC 16; HD 4d8+4; hp 26, 21; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP bear hug (opposed Strength vs. +6 or suffer 1d6+6 damage); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.



Vos

Squeezing It Dry

Beyond the initial exploration of the area, the judge has several options for re-using the material herein:

- Wizards and elves may wish to return to the Giggling Deep.
- Clerics, particularly those of the Hidden Lord, may have reason to return to the shrine in Areas 8-10.
- The exits can be used to grant access to other adventure locations, including adventures set on other planets. Finding the stone cap on those worlds then allows the PCs to return home when the adventure is complete.
- Because of their otherworldly nature, jelly ants could easily be found in other adventure locations. Those encountered here are workers...what are the soldiers and queens like?
- The random mushroom generator in Area 5 can easily be adapted to additional areas where giant mushrooms are found.
- Vos the Spell-Thief can easily become a thorn in the PCs' side, especially if she avoids confronting them directly.

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