

DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS HORROR

IT CONSUMES!

DCC HORROR #7:

A LEVEL 2 ADVENTURE

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INTRODUCTION



Remember the good old days when you had a chance of survival? Monsters had fathomable motivations, the darkness within could be channeled, and the darkness without could be held at bay? Do you remember thinking that a caring God could save you if you just prayed hard enough? *Fool!* Say good-bye to the light; those days are over forever and you shall tumble down throughout eternity, alone, hopeless, rent and ruined. Dungeon Crawl Classics Horror has such sights to show you. Each adventure is 666% evil, with monsters that know what scare you, traps that you create for yourself, and secret doors that lead straight to a hell beyond imagining.

It Consumes is an adventure intended for four to six 2nd-level PCs. The adventure begins as the PCs arrive at the mining settlement of Jhurn-Hokaz on behalf of their Duke's request to discover why shipments of iron have stopped, only to find the place mysteriously empty. As the adventure unfolds, the PCs will soon discover the entire town has been infected by a strange sentient entity known only as *The Stûf*. As they unravel the mystery, the party will soon be forced to choose sides: join the rising cult or stop their vile plan before the *Stûf* can consume the world!

BACKGROUND

A recently established mining settlement has been the main source of iron ore for the Southern Kingdoms. As of late, the shipments of ore have grown fewer, and soon enough stopped altogether. The Duke wants answers and has hired the party to investigate the matter personally.

Roughly a month ago, the dwarven miners, following a newly discovered vein of ore, stumbled upon a long-forgotten temple which connected to a massive underground lake, not of water, but consisting of a bubbling white creamy substance. As curiosity would have it, the dwarves tasted the liquid and found it to be exceptionally sweet and highly addictive. Word spread quickly in the settlement and soon the dwarves had abandoned their mining duties and were compulsively siphoning this new delicious substance from beneath the earth, not knowing that this is exactly what the sentient *Stûf* desired.

Whether this *Stûf* is a by-product of chaos-infused evolution, or an alien entity from outer space that slithered deep into these caves in the primordial age, none can truly say. Undisturbed for eons it has slumbered, but now that it has learned there are new and evolved bipedal creatures it is capable of controlling, it stirs. In only a few weeks, the *Stûf* has slowly taken control of the townspeople and is forcing them to work tirelessly day and night in order to siphon itself into hundreds of barrels with which it plans to disrupt to the Southern Kingdoms. And soon... Soon, all the realm, nay the world, will learn that enough is never enough when it comes to the *Stûf*!

TASTING THE STUF

Should any of the PCs taste even a spoonful of the *Stûf*, secretly roll a DC 13 Willpower save for them. Failing this save, the PC is delighted by the taste of the strange creamy mixture and wishes only for more, immediately gobbling up a bowl's worth! While seemingly harmless, eating the *Stûf* will result in a complete metamorphosis of the PC's body as their internal organs are slowly consumed by the ever-expanding *Stûf*.

Unless cured, from here on out, each time the PC encounters the *Stûf* (a barrel, a blob, *Stûf* laced bile, etc.) they must make a DC 13 Willpower save or immediately scarf down enough *Stûf* to gain 1d3 *Stûf* points. These points are tallied and kept secret by the judge (see **Judge's Aid A**, p. 18). Once a PC has accumulated *Stûf* points equal to or exceeding their Stamina score, they are transformed into a *Stûfi* and should be secretly handed a new *Stûfi* Contract Card (p. 17).

A cleric may reverse the metamorphosis with a successful *lay on hands* check resulting in 3 dice or more. Succeeding, the infected PC will retch up the *Stûf*. Accumulated *Stûf* points are reduced to 0, but the PC becomes nauseous, and suffers a -4 penalty to all rolls for the next hour.

Stûfi PCs gain the following abilities:

- **hollow body** (1d3 damage reduction)
- **hivemind shriek** (can call any other *Stûfies* from adjacent areas)
- **puking** (vomit *Stûf* onto target's face; DC 12 Reflex save or target swallows *Stûf*)
- **vulnerable to fire and electricity** (double damage)
- **flee husk** (in 1 round, transforms into a *Stûf* Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind)

Stûf Blob: Init -1; Atk wave bash +5 melee (1d4 plus suffocation); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 12; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP suffocation (DC 13 Ref save or trapped, 1d3 temporary Stamina loss per round, DC 13 Str check to escape); merge together (+1 action die per merged blob, hit points combine), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); low morale (attempts to flee if hp drops below 4); SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; AL C.

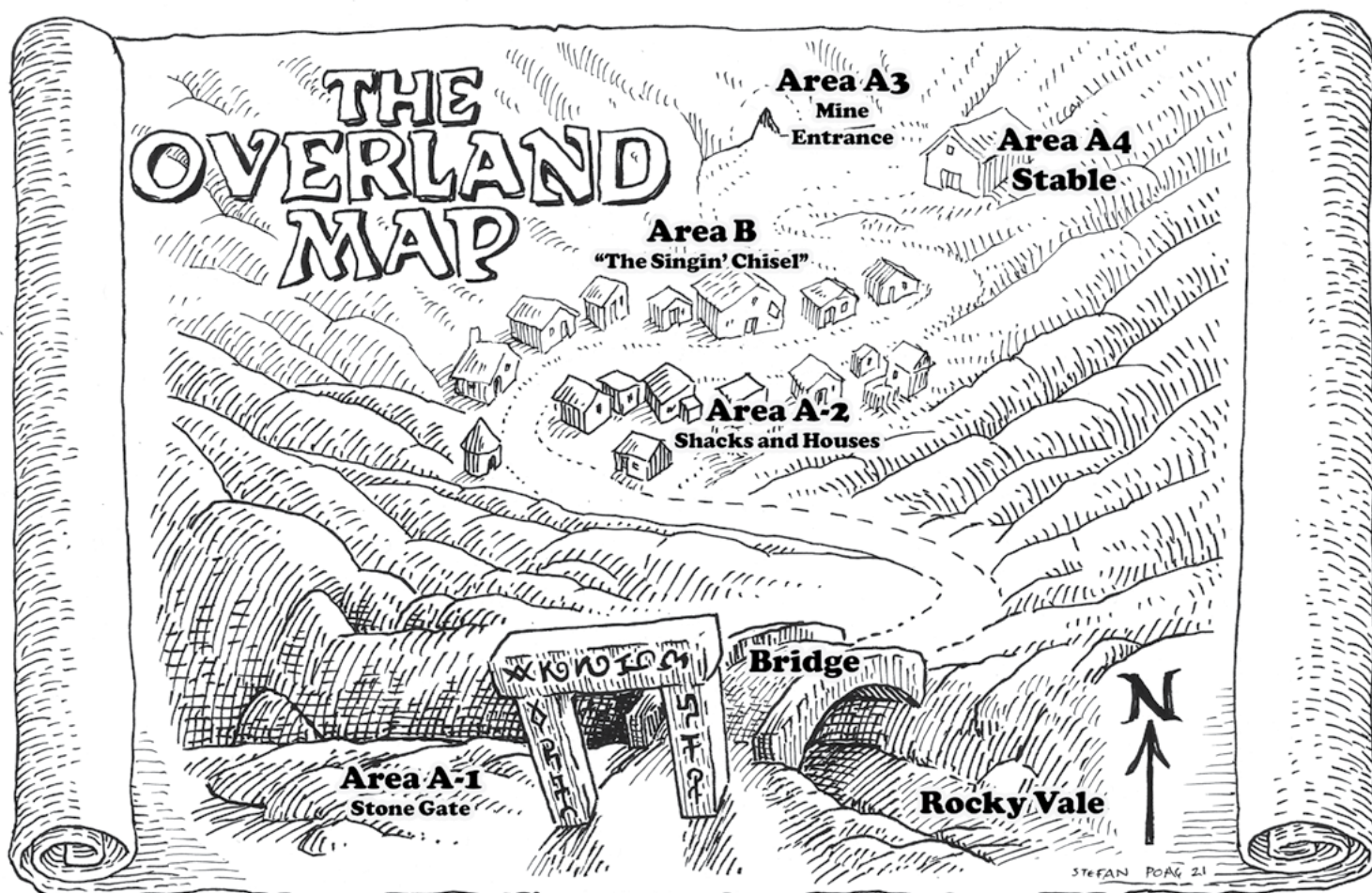
JUDGE'S NOTE:

The Stûf (pronounced SToo-Fa)

Stûfi (pronounced: SToo-Fee, plural form: *Stûfies*)

A STUFI AMONG US

If you're running this adventure as a one-shot and wish to add additional depth and chaos, print out a number of the Contract Cards (p. 17) equal to your playgroup with the majority being "Normal" cards and only one "*Stûfi*" card. Shuffle the cards and hand them out to the players at random, then sit back and watch the madness unravel!



The Settlement of Jhurn-Hokaz: To the north, on the frontier of the realm, lies a small mining settlement originally founded by dwarves. The hills of this desolate and snowy waste are rich with iron, a metal the Southern Kingdoms are sorely lacking. For many months, the dwarves prospered, selling the refined iron ingots to whichever Kingdom provided the best contracts. Being so far removed from the Southern Kingdoms, the settlement of Jhurn-Hokaz grew at a slow pace and is hardly more than a worn cluster of shanties that line either side of the winding horse path leading towards the mine's entrance.

PLAYER START

It will be dusk as the party approaches the settlement; already the sun is obscured by dark storm clouds threatening to snuff out the rays of ominous blood red sunlight glistening off the snow-covered region. A biting and lonesome wind howls through the trees of this desolate land.

Area A-1 – Gateway Sign: The muddy road leads to a stone bridge that spans across a rocky vale. At the threshold of the bridge is a stone-capped archway with dwarven runes carved into the weathered stone. Beyond the bridge, the road steadily winds up the craggy hills towards a settlement of weathered shacks and shanties. The last of the day's light wanes as the snow begins to fall.

The runes translate to Jhurn-Hokaz or simply "Iron Hills" in the Common tongue.

Area A-2 – The Settlement: An eerie silence hangs over the town and there's not a soul in sight. A muddy road, little more than a horse track, winds up the slope. Abandoned shanties line the road. Their shutters clatter in the bitter wind, their doors left open allowing the snow to blanket the interiors. As the light of the day grows dim, you perceive a single two-story building with lighted windows halfway up the winding road.

The one room shanties lining the road are poorly constructed and barely furnished. As the road winds up towards the mine, the shacks grow slightly better, having 2-3 rooms, but are still not meant for much more than shelter and sleep. There's nothing of interest inside, though mundane items such as iron rations, common clothing, and tools may be found with a simple Luck check.

Judge's Note: There are no random encounters within this area until *after* the PCs visit The Singin' Chisel (areas B).

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll	Encounter
1	Mo Rutherfordj
2	The Sad Dwarf
3	Empty Stûf Barrels
4	Rabid Stûfi Curs
5	Jason
6	The Biting Cold

1- Mo Rutherfordjord: A lanky fellow in thick furs steps out from between the shanties with his sword drawn. In a slow drawl, he states, "Well now, what do you have here hmm?" Mo is a sellsword who came to this town seeking work, but soon discovered something was amiss. He's been watching the party for a while now and is pretty sure they aren't Stûfies. Mo talks in a slow drawl and comes off as stupid, but is actually highly intelligent. He's willing to help the party out for the right price. (Alternatively, this character can be used as a replacement PC.)

Mo Rutherfordjord: Init +2; Atk sword +d4 melee (1d6+deed die); AC 12; HD 2d12; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP crit range (19-20), powerful punch (after rolling a crit or as a mighty deed, Mo can punch a foe as a free action (2d5 dam); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; AL N.



2 - The Sad Dwarf: A belch comes from one of the seemingly abandoned shanties, startling the PCs for a moment. If the PCs investigate, they will find a lonesome half-frozen dwarf huddled in the corner of the shack eating handfuls of the Stûf from a barrel. He peers up at the party through his bushy ice flecked brows, "Leave us -burp- alone..."

If the party persists in trying to help, the dwarf suddenly grabs his stomach and releases a monumental belch, spewing up a whole barrel's worth of creamy white Stûf which slowly begins to crawl up the wall to exit through a broken window, leaving behind the horrid husk of the dwarf.

3- Empty Stûf Barrels: A pile of empty wooden barrels has been haphazardly left on the side of the road. The busted barrels are stamped with dwarven runes (translation: "It's GOOD for you!").

The first PC to investigate the barrels must roll a Luck check. Succeeding, they find the barrels empty of their contents, and two silver spoons worth 10 sp each. Failing, they notice a bubbling white liquid that, if reached towards, will attempt to quickly slither up their arm and into their mouth (DC 13 Ref save to avoid, see **Tasting the Stûf** sidebar, p. 2). Should the morsel of the Stûf miss, it quickly disappears into the surrounding snow.

4 - Rabid Stûfi Curs: Chilling howls break the eerie silence, and you spot reflective eyes approaching from between the shacks and shanties as several growling mangy curs appear. Their eyes roll

with hunger and madness, and thick white foam drips from their ghastly jaws!

Rabid Stûfi Curs (2d3): Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4 plus Stûf infection) or Stûf barf +4 ranged (see below, range 20'); AC 12; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP Stûf infection (DC 13 Fort save or target gains 1d3 Stûf points), Stûf barf (Ref save vs Atk roll, or struck in the face with glob of Stûf); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

These hounds have been fed large quantities of the Stûf, transforming them into rabid curs that attack any non-Stûfies. These crazed beasts fight to the bitter end. As a last-ditch effort (perhaps forced by the sentient Stûf), a cur may barf a projectile of the Stûf at one target. The target must make a Reflex save equal to the attack roll or be struck in the face with a glob of white goop, which immediately begins to force itself down the target's throat (see **Tasting the Stûf** sidebar, p. 2 for more info).

5 - Jason: A boy comes running up from between two shanty houses, crying out for help, and collapses in the snow nearby. "Help, they're after me! I wouldn't eat it! Please!" If asked who is after him, the boy sobs, "MY FAMILY!" Just then, the boy's family—Mother, Father and Brother—come trotting through the snow. "Jason, you sure gave us a fright. Thanks for finding him. Come along Jason, it's time to go home. It's cold out here!"

Observant PCs may note that Jason's family doesn't appear to be affected by the cold despite their lack of cold weather attire, while the boy is visibly freezing. Jason will continue to plead with the PCs, quickly relaying how they've been eating this Stûf and it's changed them, they want to turn him into one of them! All the while, the family makes no sudden moves, trying to relax the PCs and telling them that their son has always had such an active imagination.

If the PCs side with the parents, they take the boy away. Jason may next be encountered in area D-2B.

If the PCs side with Jason, each family member points at the party while opening their mouths horrifically wide and releasing a shrill scream for 1 round. Afterwards they attack, and 1d3 rounds later, a group of 2d4 Stûfies arrive to join the fray. The PCs may escape by navigating the winding mountainside alleys of the shantytown and succeeding on 3 separate DC 12 Agility checks (any PC may roll). Should any check fail, they come to a dead end and must fight their way out.

Stûfies: Init +0; Atk strangle +3 melee (1d4, DC 13 Str check to break hold) or mining tools +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d6+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), hivemind shriek (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), puking (DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), flee husk (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N.

Stûfies are what living creatures become once they have consumed too much of the Stûf. Their insides have been

completely eaten away leaving behind only a hollowed-out husk filled with the creamy white liquid. Due to this change, they gain damage reduction, reducing the damage of any physical attack against them by 1d3 points as their bodies cave in from the blows, only to pop back into place on the following round. During combat, a Stûfí will attempt to strangle a target. Once strangled, the target must make a DC 13 Strength check to break free. On the following round, the Stûfí will begin vomiting onto the victim's face in an attempt to force the target to consume some of the Stûf (DC 12 Reflex save to avoid swallowing any).

6) The Biting Cold: A chilling wind sweeps down from the mountains, biting at your exposed flesh and stabbing through the chinks in your armor. The PCs must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or suffer 1d2 damage and a -1d penalty to all action rolls until they've warmed up by a fire for 1 turn.

Area A-3 – Mine Entrance: The blizzard intensifies as you ascend the switchback wagon trail towards the yawning maw of the mine. Broken mine carts, iron ore, and stone debris now covered in a layer of snow lie scattered around the clearing. Lanterns hanging from spikes driven into the stone, burning with a sickly yellow hue, lead into the mine. A mine cart track, barely visible now in the snow, leads out of the entrance and towards a wooden stable. Torchlight flickers through the cracks in the wall there.

There is a 1-in-6 chance of encountering two dwarven miners (now Stûfies), not clothed for the cold weather, stoically

pushing a cart out of the mine and up to the stable. The PCs will see the lantern affixed to the cart before seeing the miners. After knocking on the door, the miners are led inside and the doors are closed again. Should the PCs linger, this encounter will automatically happen. Continue to the mine entrance (area C-1) when the party enters the mine.

Area A-4 – The Stable: A pair of large wooden doors are barred from the inside against the storm. A window above leads into the loft. Once access is gained, read or paraphrase the following:

Several lanterns illuminate a small circle of the stable where barrels bearing stamped dwarven runes are being loaded in a horse-drawn cart. Another figure in dingy yellow robes barks, "Quickly now! The boss wants this lot on the road south as soon as the storm lets up!"

If the PCs did not encounter the Stûfies from area A-3, they will arrive here 1 turn later (bringing the total number of Stûfies to 5).

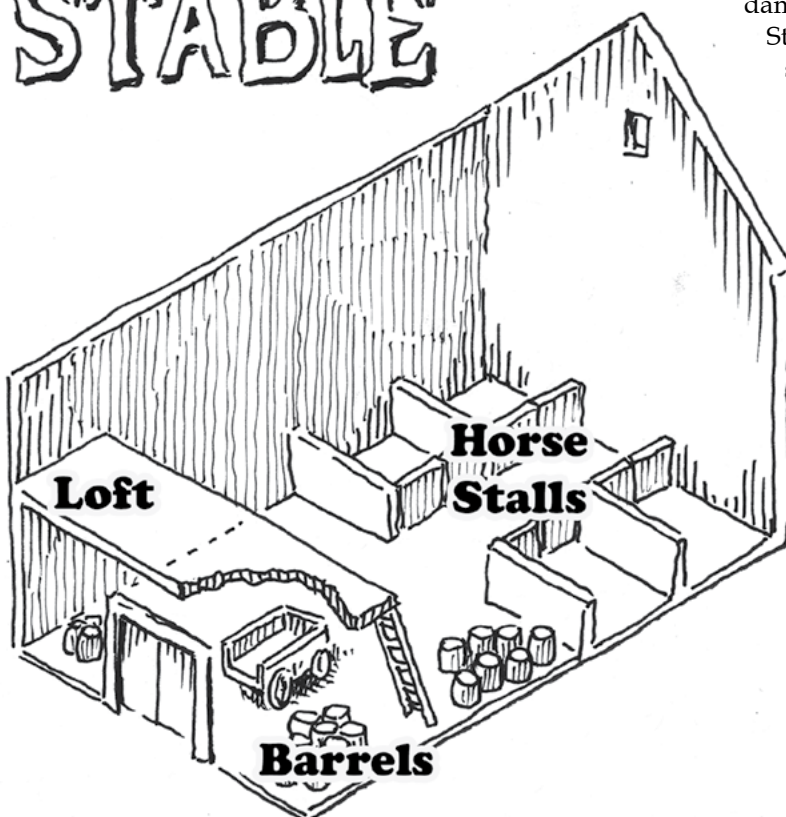
Should combat take place, the cultist (a human) will attempt to flee, grabbing a horse from the back and riding it straight through the crowd. If captured, the cultist immediately begins blubbing and crying. They can't tell the party any information as they are not a part of the inner circle. All they can relay is that the workers bring the Stûf out of the mine, and their job is to make sure the barrels get loaded properly into the carts. The cultist has never tried the Stûf, claiming "it changes people... from the inside..." and that they're just in it for the money.

Stûfies (5): Init +0; Atk strangle +3 melee (1d4, DC 13 Str check to break hold) or mining tools +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d6+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), hivemind shriek (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), puking (DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), flee husk (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N.

Cultist of Commerce: Init +1; Atk cudgel +2 melee (1d4) or short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 2d8; hp 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP cowardly (low morale, DC 13 Will save at judge's discretion or attempt to flee); SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will +1; AL N.

The Cultists of Commerce are nothing more than brigands and outsiders who came to this town looking for easy coin. They've been promised a share of the profits and don't care one way or another what happens to the town, the people, or the world, so long as their hides are covered. They know little of the overall operation and are told to wear the yellow robes in order to signify their position and order the Stûfies around. They are a cowardly lot and will attempt to flee (or perhaps grovel) should the tide turn against them.

AREA A4 THE STABLE



AREA B: THE SINGIN' CHISEL

Despite the foreboding nature of the settlement, a cozy and inviting light filters out from the panes of the two-story inn, which is strangely the only building you've seen that's lit. A wooden sign swinging in the chilly breeze bears the image of a chisel painted in gold varnish that reads "The Singin' Chisel."

Area B-1 – Common Room: A gust of wind blows open the door as you enter, dimming the candles and forcing the chandeliers to sway. Inside, barring a small halfling warming herself by the fire, the tavern is deserted. A rotund dwarf tending the bar shouts, "Well don't just stand there lettin' in the night's chill! Shut the door, and welcome to The Singin' Chisel! All travelers are welcome! Yes indeed! Warm yourselves by the hearth there, and I'll be right with ye!"

Barkeep: Dikzun is the proprietor of the tavern. A robust short fellow (even for a dwarf) with ruddy cheeks, a short-cropped beard, and a hearty laugh that shakes his enormous belly. After a moment, he'll approach the PCs where they sit and ask if they'll be needing food and a room for the night. He apologizes and mentions that due to the persistent storms, their supply has run thin, and he's only got a little ale and a few bowls of a tasty, creamy gruel left. The ale is drugged with a sleeping agent. Any suspicious thieves may attempt a DC 13 handle poison check to detect the drug. Drugged PCs will begin to feel sleepy; whenever a drugged PC enters a new area, either inside or outside the tavern, they must make a DC 13 Willpower save to stay awake or fall into a deep sleep for 1 hour.

Should the PCs mention anything pertaining to the mine and the lack of iron coming south as of late, Dikzun will mention that there's been some complications (accidental deaths, some believe the place haunted, etc.) and many of the miners have left town. The mine's closed up for the night as the storm's sure to get worse and they'd best hole up in a room and wait till morning. In truth, many of the miners, now Stúfies, are still actively siphoning the liquid from the underground lake. Dikzun plays ignorant, but knows all too well what is really going on.

Chocolate Chip Carol: Sitting alone and sulking by the hearth is an older halfling. Silver streaks run through her frazzled hair tied up in a loose bun, and her attire marks her as a traveling merchant of some variety. Though obviously dour, should the PCs approach her, she smiles and introduces herself with a bit of fanfare, "Chocolate Chip Carol, maker of the finest chocolate chip cookies in this realm or the next!" The halfling grows rather excitable as

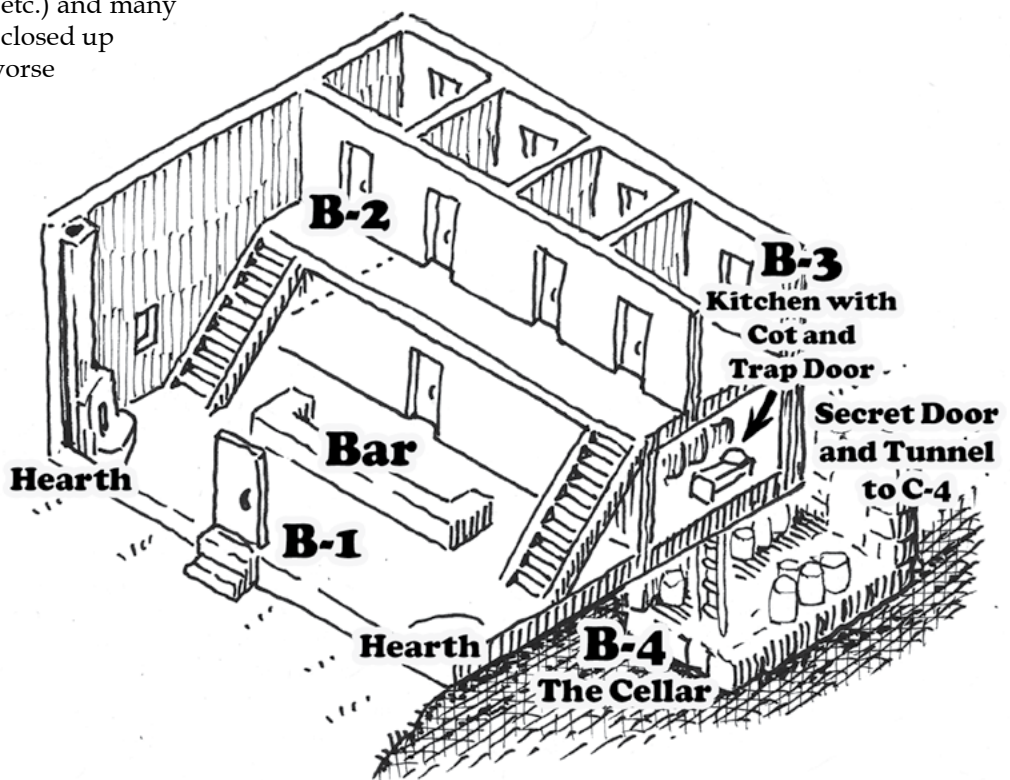
she talks, but tries to keep her voice low as if the walls have ears. Carol left her cozy hole to establish a bakery in what was sure to become a thriving mining settlement. "HA," she scoffs!

Carol brags about making the best chocolate chip cookies they've ever tasted and even has a few samples tucked away in her jacket pockets (they are quite delicious, even if a little crumbled). Yet despite this fact nobody's buying! "Day and night they're down in that mine! Nobody comes home and no one comes out I can tell you that! Only a butt load of barrels." Looking around to see if anyone is watching, she then turns back and whispers, "They found something down there in the deep don't y'know! And I for one am determined to figure out what it was!"

Closing Time: As the hours wane and the storm outside grows fiercer, Dikzun will attempt to convince (if they need convincing) the PCs to take a room for the night. Carol will also be staying at the tavern and even she thinks it's best to start their investigation in the morning.

Area B-2 – Guest Rooms: A steep narrow stair leads to a landing above the common room where four guest rooms await weary travelers, one of which Carol is occupying. The rooms are simple affairs with a single bed. A small mirror hangs on the wall next to a basin of water. A sliding piece of wood connected to the door serves as a lock. Each room has a small window that would showcase a scenic view of the land were it not night.

Stúf Suffocation: Any PC that partook of ale must make a DC 13 Willpower save to stay awake, otherwise the storm and the strangely comfy mattress lull them immediately into a deep sleep. Dreams of floating on snow clouds fill their minds, but soon they begin sinking into the clouds, gasping for breath; all the while, some malevolent force attempts to keep them subdued. It is at this moment that their mattresses attack!



Anyone not asleep will suddenly find a white creamy blob has seeped out of the mattress and covered the sleeper. Anyone sleeping must make a DC 13 Willpower save to awaken from the drug-laced dream or suffer 1d3 temporary Stamina loss each round from suffocation.

Stûf Blobs (4): Init -1; Atk wave bash +5 melee (1d4 plus suffocation); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 12; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP suffocation (DC 13 Ref save or trapped, 1d3 temporary Stamina loss per round, DC 13 Str check to escape); merge together (+1 action die per merged blob, hit points combine), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); low morale (attempts to flee if hp drops below 4); SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; AL C.

The Stûf Blobs lurch towards enemies like a tidal wave of creamy white goo, attempting to bash their foe against the walls and furniture. There is one blob in each of the four rooms. The blobs can merge together (gaining 1 extra action die per merged blob, and the sum of their combined hit points is their new total). Any temporary Stamina lost is gained back at a rate of 1 point per hour.

What about Carol? The halfling is also attacked by the Stûf, and in order to save her, the PCs must rescue her within the first 5 rounds of combat. The door to her room is barred (DC 12 Str check to break). Once inside, they'll find her completely encased in a blob of Stûf (DC 13 Str check to pull her out). Once the battle ends, she wakes, grateful to the party, and will join them to solve the mystery. If the party failed to check on the halfling in time, they'll find she has disappeared. The room is trashed and the window broken. There is no sign of her or the Stûf.

Chocolate Chip Carol: Init +0; Atk dueling whisks +2 melee (1d4); AC 11; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 25'; Act 2d16; SP fresh cookies (see below), +5 sneak; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; AL L.

Carol's fresh cookies heal the soul. Each time a batch is eaten, make a cookie die roll; the result can be split up among party members to heal hit points or ability scores alike. The cookie die starts at a d12, and each batch lowers this by -1d until she runs out of cookies.

Area B-3 – Kitchen: *The door behind the bar leads to a small kitchen, but despite what you've been told, there are plenty of dried meats, fresh cheeses, bread and most importantly barrels of fine dwarven ale. Cupboards line one side of the kitchen. A barrel close to the door is stamped with white dwarven runes that read: "It's GOOD for you!"*

All the food and ale are edible. PCs inspecting the Stûf barrel will find its contents depleted, but a little of the Stûf can be scraped from the bottom (see **Tasting the Stûf** sidebar, p. 2). PCs investigating the cupboards will discover the moist flesh husks that once belonged to several dwarves as they tumble out to the stone floor. A closer inspection of the ale barrels easily uncovers a much-used cot that belongs to the barkeep, who is mysteriously absent. Further investigation reveals a bottle of dwale, an anesthetic procured from the mixing of many substances (1d2 uses, DC 13 Fort save or target falls into a deep sleep for 1 hour). Should the PCs turn

over the cot, or succeed at a DC 10 Intelligence check, they will discover a trap door hidden beneath.

Area B-4 – Cellar: *A cold, stale air rises from the trap door and a chill runs down the length of your spine. A rickety wooden ladder descends into the darkened space below.*

The ladder descends 20' and has been rigged to fall (2d6 damage) should any weight be set on it. This can only be discovered and disabled from the bottom of the ladder, by replacing the lock attached to hinged legs. It is up to the judge to determine the proper DC for this, but roleplaying is encouraged first and foremost.

Hewed from the rocky foundation, the cellar is roughly 10' wide and 20' long. Barrels of ale and wine set in racks line the walls on either side, while a few unopened barrels of the Stûf are stacked towards the ladder.

If the wall at the end of the cellar is investigated, tapping the stone or a DC 13 Intelligence check will discern that a door lies behind the faux stone wall. A nearby hollow barrel hides a lever that releases the secret door's latch. This secret path leads to area C-4.

AREA C: THE MINE OF JHURN-HOKAZ

Unless otherwise noted, the mine is sparsely lit with torches or hanging oil lanterns. Most of the mine shafts are roughly hewn, spanning 8'-10' across. The vast deposits of iron in the mine will sicken any elves in the party. Every 3 turns, an elf PC must make a DC 15 Fortitude save, or reduce their action die by -1d. Once out of the mines (areas C), the PC regains their action die at a rate of +1d every 3 turns.

Concerning Mine Carts: PCs may wish to utilize the mine carts. The PC "driving" must make a DC 12 Agility check at every sharp turn in order to apply the handbrake correctly or run off the tracks and fly out of the cart (2d5 damage per PC, DC 13 Ref save for half). There is also a 2-in-6 chance of running into another cart being pushed by a group of Stûfies, with a crash causing 2d8 damage (DC 15 Ref save for half).

Area C-1 – Down the Shaft: *A long winding shaft descends steeply into the mine. Lanterns, attached to pegs driven into the stone, sway in the cold breeze that howls down from the entrance. A mine cart track runs down the center of this 15' wide tunnel.*

There is a 2-in-6 chance the PCs will encounter 2d3 Stûfies hauling up a cart from the drainage chamber (area C-3). The howling winds obscure any noise the party may make, and there are plenty of shadowy pitted areas or random debris the party may utilize if they choose to hide.

Area C-2 – Dead Ends: Following the many veins of iron has created a maze of dead ends. Roll 1d6 to determine the nature of the dead end.

DEAD ENDS

Roll Encounter

- 1 *Mangy curs ravage the fresh corpse of a miner that oozes with white creamy fluid.*

Rabid Stûfi Curs (2d3): Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4 plus Stûf infection) or Stûf barf +4 ranged (see below, range 20'); AC 12; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP Stûf infection (DC 13 Fort save or target gains 1d3 Stûf points), Stûf barf (Ref save vs Atk roll, or struck in the face with glob of Stûf); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.
- 2 *A pile of bones in the middle of a bubbling puddle of Stûf springs to life! The dripping skeletons cackle with delight as they dance around the party singing, "One taste is never enough, never enough, never enough for the Stûf!" Scooping the dripping Stûf from their own bones onto large wooden spoons, the skeletons attempt to feed the PCs.*

Dancing Skeletons (3): Init +1, Atk spoonfuls of Stûf +2 melee (Stûf addiction); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP Stûf addiction (DC 13 Will save or begin dancing with skeletons and consuming the Stûf, gain 1d3 Stûf points per round, PC may attempt another DC 13 Will save each round to stop dancing/consuming), un-dead traits, half damage from slashing weapons; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.
- 3 *Cries of help echo down this narrow mine shaft. Investigating, the PCs will find an extremely obese dwarf wedged between the stones, a small cask of the Stûf just out of reach of his chubby fingers. The dwarf pleads for help – not to be unstuck however, but just that his barrel be placed back within his reach. If done so, the dwarf thanks the party and continues to greedily stuff his face. If refused, he becomes so angry that he explodes, causing a torrent of Stûf to sweep down the mine shaft (DC 13 Ref save to outrun the wave or take 2d7 bashing damage).*
- 4 *Fresh water trickles down the wall forming a pool at the end of the shaft. Drinking the fresh mountain water revitalizes the PC, healing 1d4 hp or Stamina points lost.*
- 5-6 *The shaft grows more narrow until it eventually ends before an unmovable pile of rubble.*

Area C-3 – The Drainage Chamber: *A winding shaft eventually opens into a large well-lit cavern where the smell of coal and brimstone hangs heavy in the air. Large stone smelters occupy the southeastern side of the chamber, with piles of coal, shovels, and carts lying near them. Towards the northern end stand four large*

wooden cisterns. Above the cisterns are a series of wide metal pipes coming out from two separate tunnels, and from which a thick sluggish cream slowly pours out. Dwarven workers shuffle to-and-fro, building and filling barrels that are then loaded into the mine carts and hauled up top. Four yellow-robed figures are seated by a rickety table with several bottles of wine, surveying the drone-like workers, and occasionally barking orders. Three mangy curs sit next to them, chewing on scraps of meat.

Here is where the Stûf is collected into barrels. Once a few barrels are filled, they are stacked into a minecart and taken up to the stable (area A-4). The four cultists are drunk, hindering their attack rolls (-1d), but improving their morale (no checks). The three Stûfi Curs fight to the bitter end. There are 4d4 Stûfies in this area upon the party's arrival, with 2d3 leaving to haul carts up to the surface.

Investigation of the smelters reveals they haven't been lit in a month or more; unless magic is used, it would take a great deal of time to relight them. A DC 13 sneak silently or Personality check (to mimic the "Stûfi shuffle") is required to circumvent this area without drawing attention.

Drunk Cultists of Commerce (4): Init -1; Atk cudgel +2 melee (1d4) or short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 2d8; hp 6; MV 30'; Act 1d16; SP None; SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will +1; AL N.

Rabid Stûfi Curs (3): Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4 plus Stûf infection) or Stûf barf +4 ranged (see below, range 20'); AC 12; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP Stûf infection (DC 13 Fort save or target gains 1d3 Stûf points), Stûf barf (Ref save vs Atk roll, or struck in the face with glob of Stûf); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

Stûfies (4d4): Init +0; Atk strangle +3 melee (1d4, DC 13 Str check to break hold) or mining tools +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d6+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), hivemind shriek (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), puking (DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), flee husk (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N.

Area C-4 – Workshop Room: *A track leads into a well hewn cavern dimly lit by a few hanging lanterns. Workbenches with a scattered assortment of tools and bric-a-brac line the walls.*

PCs searching this area may find any number of tools, iron spikes, etc. Any PC specifically looking for something must succeed a DC 12 Intelligence check. Any PC rolling 15+ on the check will find what they are looking for and may roll on the table on the facing page.

Area C-5 – A Forgotten Relic: *A wooden barricade with painted dwarven runes blocks the path to the passage beyond.*

The barricade reads: *DANGER! DO NOT ENTER!* Should they venture beyond, read or paraphrase the following: *The shaft grows more and more narrow as you press forward until you're forced to squeeze through sideways. Further down you think you spy a faint golden light and hear a high-pitched humming.*

WORKSHOP FINDS

Roll Encounter

- 1 The secret door leading to the tavern (area B-4).
- 2 A mining helmet edged with strange runes, and fitted with an opal that glows with a scintillating inner light. Placing the helmet on one's head, the user instantly knows how to control the opal, commanding it to shine a 60' beam of light or a 20' radius of light. Any checks that result in a fumble cause the opal to explode, blinding anyone within a 20' radius that fails a DC 15 Reflex save, and causing 2d6 damage to the wearer. The power in the opal lasts for 3 hours before burning out and turning into coal.
- 3 Heavy gauntlets with pickaxe tips at the knuckles. Allows the wearer to punch into hard material (stone, metal, etc.) with a DC 13 Strength check, causing 3d3+Strength modifier damage. The gauntlets deal 2 additional points of damage for every point by which the Strength check exceeds the DC.
- 4 1d3 quarter casks of black powder with a 20' long rope fuse (3d4 damage per cask, 15' blast radius).
- 5-6 A very strong dwarven mixture of coffee and ale. Provides a +1d bonus to all checks (attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks) for 3 turns, but then hinders the consumer's actions (-2 penalty to all checks) for 6 turns unless another draught is swallowed. Contains 3 uses.

Any plate armor worn must be doffed to continue. The shaft eventually leads into a small cavern: *This small cavern is illuminated by a glowing golden chisel still within the cold grasp of a skeletal hand that protrudes through the rubble and debris sealing off the rest of the passage. A high-pitched hum resounds from the tool.*

This is the *Singin' Chisel* of yore, a golden chisel edged with hieroglyphs of laughing bearded faces, and whose "singing" vibrations break stone like a knife through butter. Any dwarf will have heard of the legendary chisel and know of its power, while other classes require a DC 12 Intelligence check. Anyone other than a dwarf who attempts to take the chisel must succeed on a Luck check. Failing, the cavern begins to cave in (1d6 damage from falling debris each round, DC 12 Reflex save for half). After 3 rounds, the passage is sealed off and anyone left in the cavern is trapped.

The spells woven on the chisel have lost some of their luster throughout the long-forgotten years, thus the chisel has only a limited number of charges left (2d4 + Luck modifier of the PC who first takes it). A hammer must be used in coordina-

tion with the chisel for any effect to work. Using a charge is akin to casting a wizard's spell. Spellcasters may attempt to use the relic by rolling 1d20 + Intelligence/Personality modifier + level. Dwarves roll 1d24 + Intelligence modifier + level, while all other classes roll 1d16 + Intelligence modifier + level.

Magic Item Result: (Lower magical results than those rolled may be chosen.)

- 1-11 No effect.
- 12-13 Knocking the chisel against a stone will cause it to sing, causing all enemies in a 15' radius to falter for 1 round (-2 to all checks).
- 14-15 Same as above, radius is increased to 25', enemies falter for 1d3 rounds (-4 to all checks).
- 16-17 The singing of the chisel stuns all enemies within a 25' radius for 1d3 + level rounds.
- 18-19 Knocking the chisel against a hard surface will cause the surface to crack in half. Used against enemies, the chisel deals 2d12 damage. Should this kill the target, their bodies explode!
- 20+ The singing of the chisel rings out! The skulls of all enemies within a 30' radius will immediately crack open. Used on a hard surface, that surface will instantly break into a thousand pieces.

Area C-6 – The Chasm: This area is completely dark.

The tunnel terminates before a dark chasm. The metal pipes continue to extend across the gap, but it is too dark to tell exactly where they lead.

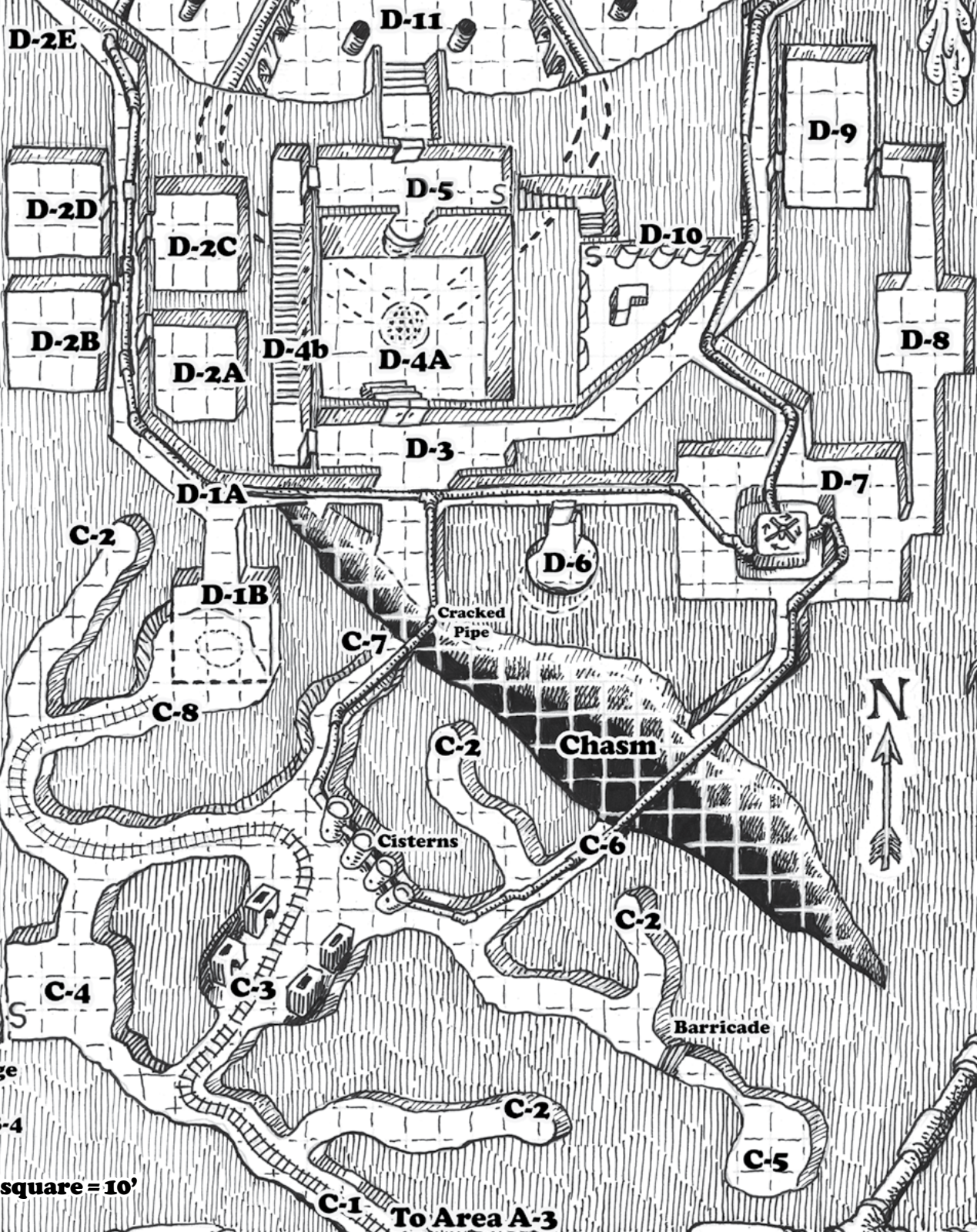
The pipes extend across the width of the chasm (40' across, 200' drop) and PCs traveling at half their movement rate can easily walk atop the pipes to cross the gap. At the halfway point, the pipe descends 35 degrees. Should the PCs bring a light source into this area, it will attract an eclipse (3d4) of giant moths (AC 11, hp 7) which swoop around the PCs, possibly throwing them off balance (DC 12 Ref save or fall from the pipe). This save must be rolled each round unless the moths are distracted or dissuaded (judge's discretion). Any PCs falling off the pipe get a one-time Luck check to grasp the edge. Successfully running across the pipe requires a DC 15 Agility check.

Area C-7 – Cracked Pipe: This area is completely dark.

The mine shaft abruptly ends, falling away into a deep chasm. A metal pipe spans the chasm leading into what appears to be a well carved corridor. White goop drips out of cracks in the poorly constructed pipe.

This section of pipe was quickly and poorly constructed and will break in half with the weight of two PCs or one PC wearing full plate mail. Furthermore, the Stûf leaking from the pipe may attempt to attack a PC as they pass (Luck check). If attacked, a strand of Stûf whips up to wrap around the target's ankle and drag them off the pipe (DC 12 Reflex save to avoid). Any PCs dragged off the pipe receive a one-

THE MINE OF JHURN-HOKAZ



1 square = 10'

time Luck check to grasp the edge or fall to their death. Successfully running across the pipe requires a DC 15 Agility check, but may break the pipe in the process (Luck check).

Area C-8 – Temple Entrance: *The tunnel leads to a newly-excavated cave lit by a few well-placed lanterns. Wooden scaffolding surrounds a hole in the floor with a ladder that descends into the chamber below. Crates and what appears to be other mining supplies are stacked around the edges of the cave.*

Any PC searching the supplies will find any assortment of mundane mining tools. A successful Luck check will discover 1d3 quarter casks of black powder with a 20' long rope fuse (3d4 dam, 15' blast radius).

AREA D: TEMPLE OF THE STUF

Unless otherwise noted, the temple is dimly lit with torches secured in wall sconces carved like bizarre limbs. The corridors (10' wide with 8' ceilings) and rooms were carved out of the living stone eons ago. In juxtaposition of this craftsmanship, piecemeal metal pipes run throughout the complex, moving the Stûf from the lake below to the mine above.

Area D-1A – Meditation Chamber: *Stone debris from the excavation covers the floor of this well-hewn chamber. Bas reliefs worked into the walls depict a world covered in what appears to be an ocean. Faces, both jovial and terrified, protrude from the ocean waves, as an assortment of limbs, both animalistic and human in nature, reach towards the heavens. Broken stone slabs set against the wall once served as benches. A passageway of similarly worked stone, lit by torches, leads away from this chamber.*

Any PC taking the time to study the bas reliefs must make a DC 12 Willpower save or become overwhelmed with a sense of dread as they slowly come to the realization that mankind is nothing more than a fledgling insect compared to the complex entities of eons passed. From this point on, anytime the PC fails an attack roll, their chance to fumble increases by 1 point. Once a fumble happens, the penalty is reset and only when the temple is destroyed, or they flee the area entirely, will the penalty be lifted. Should they succeed on the Will save, they have come to the same realization, but instead of dread they have chosen to fight the unknown no matter the cost, and all action dice are rolled with a +1d bonus, however, the PC's fumble die is also increased by +1d.

Area D-1B – Makeshift Bridge: *A bridge, barely more than a 3' wide plank, spans a gap in the hallway created by a large crevice. More metal piping runs down the length of the hall in either direction.*

Area D-2A – Cultists Chamber: *This 30' by 30' chamber has been recently furnished with 4 cots. Dingy yellow robes hang from pegs in the wall. Three barrels are stacked against the wall.*

The robes hanging on the pegs are of different sizes (dwarf or human) and any PC taking one must roll a Luck check to determine if it'll fit. The confiscated barrels are filled to the brim with the Stûf.

Area D-2B – “It’s Good for You”: *Garbled noises and gurgled cries come from the chamber beyond the stout wooden door.*

The wooden door is bolted shut from the inside (DC 13 Str to break). Inside the room is similar to the previous chamber. Three Stûfies are restraining someone and attempting to force feed them spoonfuls of the Stûf. With each mouthful, the Stûfies, between fits of laughter, dementedly cry out, “It’s good for you!”

Stûfies (former cultists) (3): Init +1; Atk strangle +3 melee (1d4, DC 13 Str check to break hold) or weapon +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), hivemind shriek (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), puking (DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), flee husk (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N.

If the party previously encountered Jason and his parents (see area A-2, **Random Encounter 5**) and let him go, then he is the victim and the Stûfies are his parents, otherwise it is a random villager. Once rescued Jason/villager may reveal the following information:

The Stûf comes from a lake below (area D-11).

A ceremony is soon to take place in the Central Chamber (area D-4A). They have never seen the ritual take place, but they’ve heard the commotion. People addicted to Stûf are brought there and never seen again.

There is a mysterious figure—7' tall, garbed in gray mottled robes—who presides over the ceremony.

Slaves are shackled to, and forced to turn, the wheel that pumps up the Stûf through the mine (area D-7).

Area D-2C – Wave of Stûf: *The door to this chamber is swollen and bulging within the frame.*

The door requires a DC 12 Strength check to open. Once opened, the door flies off the hinges as a wave of Stûf rushes out of the room into the corridor. Anyone standing in the corridor must make a DC 13 Reflex save to stay above the thick creamy liquid or be pushed south towards the crevice (area D-1B). Should any PC fail three saves, they find themselves plummeting to their deaths.

Once the wave has passed, the PCs find the room to be empty save for a heavy iron chest. A 3' wide crack in the wall reveals a large pipe that connects to the Ceremonial Chamber (area D-4A), and over the past several weeks, this room has been filling with the Stûf.

The iron chest is locked (DC 13 pick locks check) and there is no key. Inside are three palm-sized chunks of an ancient meteorite. Glowing green veins flow through the rock and appear to pulsate when handled. Any PC carrying a meteorite will soon discover that the Stûf (and anything affected by it) is repelled, forcing all attacks against the bearer to be rolled with a -1d. The meteorites are too small to affect the Lake of Stûf (area D-11).

Area D-2D – Cultists' Chamber: This room is similar to area D-2A.

Area D-2E – Bricked up Passage: The corridor dead ends. A large metal pipe passes through a hole in the wall which has been reinforced with brick and mortar.

Any attempts to destroy the wall (hp 25) will break the pipe and unless the pumping has ceased in area D-7 gallons of the Stûf will pour into the corridor. After 2 rounds it forms in a Stûf Blob which continues to grow every 2 rounds (gaining +1 HD) unless defeated, the pipe is fixed, or the pumping has ceased.

Stûf Blob: Init -1; Atk wave bash +5 melee (1d4 plus suffocation); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 12; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP suffocation (DC 13 Ref save or trapped, 1d3 temporary Stamina loss per round, DC 13 Str check to escape); merge together (+1 action die per merged blob, hit points combine), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); low morale (attempts to flee if hp drops below 4); SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; AL C.

Area D-3 – Antechamber: Torches held in sconces, each sculpted to represent strange limbs, light the antechamber. Standing vigil before a set of large stone doors are two humanoid shaped guardsmen in rusted plate mail. White goop leaks out from between the plates of armor, splattering around the pile of creamy curdled sludge where the sentinels' feet should be.

Two Armored Stûf Sentinels stand guard before the temple entrance and will ignore anyone wearing a yellow robe or attempting the "Stûfi shuffle" (DC 13 Personality check).

Armored Stûf Sentinels (2): Init +2; Atk ancient weapons +2 melee (1d8+1); AC 16; HD 3d6; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP liquid movement (roll 1d6, on a result of 1-2, the sentinel gains an extra attack this round), half damage from slashing weapons, vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), death throes (melts into steaming pile of Stûf, returns to life after 2 turns unless completely burned away); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

The large stone doors are surprisingly easy to push open. Muffled chanting can be heard from the room beyond. The wooden door to the left that leads to area D-4B is locked (DC 13 pick locks or DC 15 Str check to break).

Area D-4A – The Consuming: Stairs hewn from the living stone descend into a large chamber filled with filthy soot-covered worshippers; each holds a dripping black candle, creating a swaying sea of pinpoint flames. Their chanting hum ominously drifts through the air. The crowd stands around a large grate embedded in the floor. Carved on the farthest wall is a great featureless face, and above it stands a balcony where several cultists, one oddly tall in mottled gray robes and the rest garbed in yellow, stand. A squat cultist steps forward and cries out, "YOU'VE TASTED THE STÛF, BUT IS IT ENOUGH???"

In unison the sweaty hoard cries, "NO! NO! IT IS NEVER ENOUGH!"

"NO, NEVER! NOW IS THE TIME WE REVEAL THE GRAND SCHEME-er-STRATAGEM TO YOU MOST LOYAL OF PA-

TRONS! TAKE YOUR FILL AND BE ONE AND WHOLE!"

At this point, one of the cultists pulls a lever, causing a muffled grinding noise to resound from deep below. The featureless face opens its mouth wide, allowing a river of the creamy white Stûf to pour forth. The Stûf surges down the wall and into carved furrows in the floor. Instantly the hoard goes wild, scooping up handfuls of the Stûf, or sucking it up from the ground.

After a few moments, they all begin to convulse wildly, spewing up white foaming liquid from every orifice as their skin slowly sags away, falling to the floor like wrinkled and discarded garments. In a matter of minutes, the hoard is no more than a steaming, bubbling pool of creamy white liquid.

After the liquefaction is complete, the cultists file into a doorway towards the back of the balcony. It takes 10 minutes for the liquefied Stûfies to flow down into the grate. Should any PC attempt to cross the room before this happens, they will be attacked with slimy outstretched limbs (+5 melee). The liquified Stûfies will attempt to drag the party through the holes in the grate (1d4 dam, DC 15 Str check to break free). Fire or electrical attacks will instantly burn up the remains and cause it to flee down the grate. Any PC sucked into the grate will be swept down the tunnel and must make a DC 13 Reflex save in order to stay above the surface or be forcefully submerged and swallow some of the Stûf (see **Tasting the Stûf** sidebar, p. 2). After 3 rounds, the tunnel dumps out into the Lake of Stûf (area D-11).

Area D-4B – The Stair: The southernmost door is locked (DC 13 pick locks check, or DC 15 Str check to break). Beyond, a set of stairs leads up to area D-5. Windows cut into the stone look out into the Ceremonial Chamber. The PCs may spy the ritual from this vantage point.

Area D-5 – The Grand Scheme: The description below assumes a sneaky party; read or paraphrase the following:

A small, well-lit room is furnished with rugs and decorative hangings. Just as you arrive, you spy a 7' tall, gray-robed figure step through the double doors to the north, leaving behind the yellow-robed cultists, one of which is very short and rotund. The remaining cultists each exhale a sigh and sit at a wooden table laden with wine and cheese to begin counting the pile of gold stacked there. A couple of wooden chests overflowing with riches sit against the opposite wall.

The following encounter depends entirely upon how the party proceeds. The goal of the cultists, one of which is the "friendly" barkeep Dikzun (peasant stats, DCC RPG p. 434), is to talk down the PCs, convincing them their interests lie not in stopping the flow of the Stûf, but in joining them in this new wealthy enterprise.

The Cult of Commerce, as they have aptly named themselves, would like to hire the PCs to guard their caravan down to the Southern Kingdoms, and since they will be "getting in on the ground level," they are willing to give them a 10% share of the profit. Dikzun is secretly fearful of the gray-robed priests simply known as *They*, and believes he has opened up a can of worms he can no longer control. The other four cultists are brigands and will turn on the dwarf

the moment he is convinced to help the PCs. Should a fight break out, Dikzun will attempt to flee down the stairs leading to area D-4A and raise the alarm.

The Grand Scheme: As far as the Cultists of Commerce are concerned, the scheme is simple: bottle and transport the Stûf, get people to eat it, and once they're addicted, sell them more and more and more! In actuality, the Stûf and its avatars, the Priests known as *They*, are utilizing the cultists' greed to spread itself as far and wide as it can until it is the only sentient being left on the planet. It knows that once it can get itself into a higher populated area, its domination will be swift.

Examples of Dikzun attempting to convince the PCs to join them:

"We're toiling away day after day up here! And for what? To provide iron for the Southern Kingdoms to continue their endless crusades! Bah! Now we have something better! We have the Stûf and the people love it. One taste and they're hooked for life! Think of the potential, think of all the gold we could rake in once this Stûf hits the streets of a city like Punjar! And you, my friends, could get in on the ground floor! Whadda say friends?"

If the PCs mention the harm the Stûf has caused:

"I can't help it if the people get a little stir crazy because they want more of the Stûf. That's just good business!"

Ultimately, it is up to the judge to determine the final outcome of the situation.

Each chest holds 150 gp worth of mixed treasure (coins, gems, jewelry), and there is another 1d5x10 gp on the table. A secret door to the east can easily be found with a DC 12 Intelligence check and by pushing in a marked stone in the ceiling.

Cultists of Commerce (4): Init +1; Atk cudgel +2 melee (1d4) or short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 2d8; hp 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP cowardly (low morale, DC 13 Will save at judge's discretion or attempt to flee); SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will +1; AL N.

Area D-6 – Fountain of Evocation: A short corridor leads to a circular chamber where a well of bubbling Stûf awaits. A moldy rug lies on the floor before the well. A lanky figure in ragged gray robes kneels on the rug.

Here is where the Ancient Priests known as *They* commune with the Stûf. One of the Priests will be in this room upon the party's arrival unless they have made quite the commotion beforehand. When communing with the Stûf, it bubbles up out of the well, forming a stalk with a pair of wide lips. No known words are uttered from the lips, only a spewing gurgling noise which the Priests can understand. If the party is being stealthy, they may overhear the Priest discussing how the usefulness of Dikzun and the Cult of Commerce has almost run its course. Once the barrels have reached the Southern Kingdoms, the cultists will either join with the Stûf or perish.

Should anyone attempt to attack the well, a Stûf Blob will rise out and attack.

Ancient Priest: Init +3; choking grip +2 melee (1d6) or piercing ribcage +3 melee (1d3+1 plus Stûf injection); AC 14; HD 2d8+4; hp 16; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP deathly stench (DC 12 Fort save or -2 to all attack rolls), Stûf injection (target gains 1d3 Stûf points), half-damage from piercing weapons, undead traits, vulnerability (blackened heart exposed during ribcage attack [AC 8, hp 5]), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.

Primordial beings from eons past, the Priests—who refer to themselves as *They*—are all that is left of the first cult that worshipped the Stûf. Preserved in their crystal sarcophagi, they were awakened by the dwarven miners that first stumbled into the temple. Each of the Priests are roughly 7' in height. Their bodies, having decayed yet preserved throughout the eons, are nothing more than a grayish-yellow skeletal form consisting of hardened mucus. They garb themselves in their mottled gray rags that may have once been robes. Within the body of this priest is the key that will open the iron door leading to area D-10.

In combat, they use their height to their advantage, scooping up victims in a deathly grip. On the following round, if the victim has not escaped (DC 13 Str check), they attack using their rib cage, which unfurls like so many serpents to pierce the victim's body and inject them with the Stûf, PC gains 1d3 Stûf points each round. When the Priest's rib cage is opened, if their exposed heart is dealt more than 5 points of damage, the Priest is instantly slain. The Priests can speak the Common tongue in a most disturbing gurgling fashion.

Stûf Blob: Init -1; Atk wave bash +5 melee (1d4 plus suffocation); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 12; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP suffocation (DC 13 Ref save or trapped, 1d3 temporary Stamina loss per round, DC 13 Str check to escape); merge together (+1 action die per merged blob, hit points combine), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); low morale (attempts to flee if hp drops below 4); SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; AL C.

Area D-7 – Pump Room: The sounds of grinding metal, muffled moans, and the crack of a whip precede from the next chamber. An assortment of large metal pipes, entering through several connecting passageways, intersect around a large wooden spinning contraption in the center of the bowl-shaped room. Slaves shackled to posts slowly rotate the wooden device, which appears to aid in pumping something through the pipes. Yellow-robed figures bark commands and insults as they crack their whips behind the backs of the slaves.

Due to all the twisting metal pipes and inadequate lighting, it is possible for the party to skirt around the edges of the chamber and sneak past (DC 12 sneak silently check).

The Wheel of Woe: Set in the middle of this room is a wooden contraption used to pump the Stûf out of the lake (area D-11), through the pipes, and into the cisterns in the drainage chamber (area C-3). The eight slaves (use the Peasant stats, DCC RPG, p. 434) are former villagers who have thus far refused to consume the Stûf. The cult, deciding they were a liability to the Grand Scheme, chained them to the wheel where they have since toiled endlessly.



Should combat arise here, the sentient Stûf churning through the pipes will realize something is amiss and begin breaking through the poorly constructed pipeline. Rivets popping out of the pipes (Luck checks to notice during combat) will be the party's only warning. At the start of the third round of combat, the pipes burst and begin flooding the lower section of the chamber, which is 20' below any of the entrances. After 5 rounds, this area will be flooded with the Stûf, and any slaves still bound to the wheel will drown.

As the chamber floods, 5 tendrils of Stûf will emerge to randomly drag friend and foe alike into the lower section of the chamber. The target must make a DC 13 Reflex save in order to avoid being dragged and submerged into the Stûf. If submerged, the target must roll a DC 13 Agility check each round in order to escape or suffer a 1d4 temporary Stamina loss.

Any attempt to rescue the slaves from the flood of Stûf requires a DC 13 Strength check, with a failure resulting in the rescuer falling into the Stûf.

The Ancient Priest in area D-6 will come to investigate the commotion 1d3 rounds after the pipes have burst.

If freed, the former slaves will thank the party, but they are too worn out to aid the PCs physically and can only tell them that the Stûf comes from an underground lake that was recently discovered and that soon after the whole town turned into mindless Stûfies.

Slave Driver Cultists (5): Init +1; Atk whip +d4 melee (1d4+whip die); AC 12; HD 1d8+2; hp 7; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP whip die (d4); whip tactics (see below); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C.

Much like the warrior class, the slave drivers roll their whip die in addition to their action die. On a successful hit, and whenever a 3 or 4 is rolled on the whip die, they may execute one of the following tactics: 1) choke hold: whip wraps around the target's neck (1d3 temporary Stamina loss per round, DC 12 Str check to break free), and target may be dragged into a prone position; 2) weapon snatch: whip snatches weapon from target's grip, Ref save vs Atk roll to avoid, or weapon lands 1d3x10' away; 3) snap back: whip deals extra 1d4 damage to target.

Area D-8 – Mad Experiments: *The bleating of goats emanates from the chamber ahead. The goats appear malnourished except for their grotesquely bloated bellies. In a makeshift coop, you spy sickly, nearly featherless chickens clucking hoarsely. A group of cultists are feeding or injecting the restrained animals with the Stûf, while others are attempting to milk the goats or inspecting what foul treasures the hens have laid.*

Three Cultists, now turned Stûfies, are attempting to turn these animals into by-products of the Stûf with the hopes of selling a different commodity to the unsuspecting public. Horrifically, these experiments are working, and the animals are producing foul parodies of their natural gifts. The chicken's eggs are constantly slimy, and when cracked, the yolk slides about of its own accord. The goat's milk is foul smelling, curdled, and chunky. What's even more sickening is that these Stûfies can't get enough of it. Describe how they jam rotten eggs in their mouths or chew on the curdled milk with dead pan smiles. Any PCs consuming the contaminated milk or eggs gains a double exposure to the Stûf and risks becoming addicted (see **Tasting the Stûf**, p. 2).

There are plenty of wooden crates stacked around the edges of the chamber should the PCs decide to circumvent the area. Should combat take place here, the animals, now addicted to the Stûf, will begin going wild after 2 rounds, attacking everyone in the area.

Stûfies (former cultists) (3): Init +1; Atk strangle +3 melee (1d4, DC 13 Str check to break hold) or weapon +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), hivemind shriek (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), puking (DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), flee husk (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N.

Sick Chickens (as swarm): Init -1; Atk vicious pecking +1 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 4d4; hp 8; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP swarm (peck all targets within a 10'x10' space); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

Stûfi Goats (4): Init +1; Atk ram +2 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV 30' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP vertical climb (can easily scale the cavern walls, any attack from above is made at +1d and deals double damage); exploding udders

(if struck with a critical attack, udder explodes covering anyone in a 10' radius with Stûf, DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

Area D-9 – Husk Chamber: *As you open the door, a foul stench of rot wafts through the air. Your torch light falls upon a horrid scene! Husks of whole bodies are heaped in a pile in the center of this room. The beady black eyes of giant rats glint in the light as they rummage through the deflated remains, hissing and ripping apart the flesh with their gnarled fangs.*

The rats have not only acquired a taste for flesh, but they have become addicted to the Stûf as well. Maddened and wanting more, they instantly attack the party. If presented with a fresh barrel of the Stûf, the rats must make a DC 13 Willpower save or immediately cease their actions and begin fighting each other over the fresh Stûf.

Giant Rats (6): Init +4; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+1 plus disease); AC 13; HD 2d6; hp 6; MV 30' or climb 20'; Act 2d16; SP disease (DC 10 Fort save or become sickened, -2 to all action rolls for 2d3 turns), Stûf addiction (DC 13 Will save, or stops fighting to eat the Stûf), frenzy (if reduced to 2 hp or less, action die is raised +1d); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -1; AL C.

Area D-10 – Ancient Preserved Priests: Two Armored Stûf Sentinels stand guard before the doorway. The iron door is locked (DC 12 pick locks check, or DC 18 Str check to break) the key rests within the body of the Priest in area D-6. Read or paraphrase the following: *The reek of curdled expired milk fills the air of this trapezoid-shaped chamber. At its center is a strange contraption, an altar with six levers. Along the northern and western walls of this room are crystal sarcophagi. Two of the six sarcophagi, roughly 7' in height, have already been opened and thick crusts of something can be seen clinging to the surface.*

The air in this chamber reeks so badly that each PC entering must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or begin retching uncontrollably and suffering a -2 penalty to any physical rolls for the next hour.

The Console: PC's inspecting the console will find that 2 of the 6 levers have been pushed down. Should they foolishly push one of the remaining levers down, a corresponding closed sarcophagus will be drained of its contents, revealing a slimy emancipated humanoid, roughly 7' tall, with pale, gray skin. As soon as the chamber is drained (2 rounds), the crystal door slides up and the creature opens its pale white eyes with menacing intent. Pulling a lever upwards will have the opposite effect, as the corresponding sarcophagus slowly fills with the Stûf (3 rounds to complete). Once a lever is moved, the cycle must be completed before it can be moved again.

The secret door to the north can be discovered with a DC 12 Intelligence check, and by pushing down on a marked stone in the floor.

Ancient Preserved Priests (4): Init +3; choking grip +2 melee (1d6) or piercing ribcage +3 melee (1d3+1 plus Stûf injection); AC 14; HD 2d8+4; hp 16; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP deathly stench (DC 12 Fort save or -2 to all attack rolls), Stûf injection (target gains 1d3 Stûf points), half-damage from pierc-

THE DECEPTION OF CHOCOLATE CHIP CAROL

If the PCs neglected to save Chocolate Chip Carol during the ambush at the tavern, she will be found chained to the wheel in area D-7. There's a 50% chance of Chocolate Chip Carol being a Stûfi. If so, she will explain how she was ambushed in her room and the next thing she remembers is being dragged through the mine and chained to the wheel. Once freed, she quickly explains her false story and attempts to lead them "the back way" to the Lake through area D-8 to area D-9. Once inside area D-9, she bolts the doors and grabbing hold of the PC with the lowest Luck score begins to transform; read or paraphrase the following:

With surprising strength, the halfling places a vice-like grip upon you. Gagging and spitting, her face begins to elongate absurdly and her mouth rips open as gurgling white liquid bubbles out of the open hole that once was her face!

The PC in Carol's grasp has one chance to break free (DC 13 Str check) before being attacked. Afterwards, roll initiative as usual.

Stûfi Chip Carol: Init +0; Atk gaping bite +4 melee (2d3), spew acidic Stûf +3 ranged (1d5, range 15'); AC 13; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 25'; Act 2d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), acidic Stûf bile (see below), death throes (see below); SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; AL C.

From her elongated neck, Stûfi Chip Carol will spew globs of acidic white bile up to 15' away. Any target hit with this bile suffers 1d5 damage each round until the target takes a round to wipe it off. When defeated, Carol's body convulses wildly before exploding and showering acidic white Stûf up to 15' in all directions (3d5 damage per PC, DC 13 Ref save for half).

ing weapons, un-dead traits, vulnerability (blackened heart exposed during ribcage attack [AC 8, hp 5]), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +5; AL C.

Armored Stûf Sentinels (2): Init +2; Atk ancient weapons +2 melee (1d8+1); AC 16; HD 3d6; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP liquid movement (roll 1d6, on a result of 1-2, the sentinel gains an extra attack this round), half damage from slashing weapons, vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), death throes (melts into steaming pile of Stûf, returns to life after 2 turns unless completely burned away); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

Area D-11 – Lake of Stûf: There are several ways into this area; read or paraphrase the following:

A vast glittering cavern stretches out before your eyes. Slowly churning waves of creamy Stûf lap at the thin stone shore where gleaming columns of naturally smooth stone rise up to the cavern's ceiling. Despite being deep under the mountain there is an

ambient glow that radiates from the depths of this mysterious milky lake, a bubbling pure white radiance that awakens within you a primordial dread. A stone aqueduct emerges from a tunnel in the cavern wall and ends 10 feet into the lake. Two metal pipes with flexible joints, manned by three Stûfies each, are submerged into the lake.

The Lake of Stûf is a vast cavern that stretches into the shadows and beyond. It has innumerable hit points and cannot be defeated by simply attempting to fight it. There are two Cultists with lanterns overseeing each trio of Stûfies handling the pipes. One Ancient Priest walks between the three sets of stairs, overseeing the entire operation (1d3 to randomly determine where they are when the party arrives).

While there is ambient light within the cavern, it is still dim enough to sneak about (DC 12 sneak silently check). Should the party be disguised as cultists, their chances of discovery are lessened (DC 8 sneak silently check). If the party has stopped the flow from the pump room (area D-7), then the Stûfies will be dragging the pipes out of the lake to determine if there is a blockage.

STOPPING THE SPREAD OF THE STUF

Though your players are sure to come up with their own wild schemes, the most obvious course of action is to destroy the cavern's columns by whatever means they have available (black powder, magic, the *Singin' Chisel*, etc.). One round after an attack begins on any of the columns, the Stûf begins to take shape and attack. On the following round, any Cultists or Stûfies join the fray. The Stûfies, using their hivemind shrieks, begin calling any brethren from nearby rooms. The Ancient Priest will rush and attack any PC attempting to tear down a column.

At least 3 columns must be destroyed and each column requires 20 points of damage to begin cracking under the weight of the ceiling. As the entire area begins to cave in, massive boulders fall from the ceiling, splashing into the lake. The PCs have 3 rounds to escape through one of the side passages before they are forever trapped.

Once the PCs have been discovered, The Stûf will begin to act, forming itself into a gigantic hand with a thousand silently screaming faces rippling throughout. As this happens, the lake is drawn away from the shore momentarily, before crashing down and covering a 20'x20' space. Anyone caught in the impact zone must make a DC 13 Reflex save or be swept into the lake. In order to stay afloat within the Stûf, a PC must make a DC 13 Agility check each round. Stalagmites protruding from the lake's surface will provide a short reprieve until slithering arms and tendrils crawl up the rock to pull the PC back into the lake (DC 13 Ref save).

The thick coagulated Stûf is very slow. Each time it performs an action it loses an action die until a 5-6 is rolled on 1d6 on the following rounds. The Stûf can also temporarily reduce its action dice by 1 to instantly resurrect 3 Armored Stûf Sentinels that rise up out of the lake as well as release a ghastly wail that stuns all targets within area D11.

The Stûf: Init -2; Atk wave of doom +6 melee (2d8 plus DC 13 Ref or swept into the lake), bashing tendrils +5 melee (1d6); AC 5; HD ∞; hp ∞; MV 0'; Act 5d30; SP slow (each spent action die must be recharged each round by rolling a 5-6 on 1d6), spawn sentinels (temporarily reduce # of action dice by 1 to instantly resurrect 3 Armored Stûf Sentinels, regain action dice when all sentinels have been slain), screams of the damned (reduce # of action dice by 1 to use, Will save vs Atk roll or stunned for 1 round), vulnerable to fire and electricity (damage exceeding 10 points reduces # of action dice by 1); SV Fort +3, Ref -3; Will +6; AL N.

Ancient Preserved Priest: Init +3; choking grip +2 melee (1d6) or piercing ribcage +3 melee (1d3+1 plus Stûf injection); AC 14; HD 2d8+4; hp 16; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP deathly stench (DC 12 Fort save or -2 to all attack rolls), Stûf injection (target gains 1d3 Stûf points), half-damage from piercing weapons, un-dead traits, vulnerability (blackened heart exposed during ribcage attack [AC 8, hp 5]), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage); SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +5; AL C.

Armored Stûf Sentinels (3): Init +2; Atk ancient weapons +2 melee (1d8+1); AC 16; HD 3d6; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP liquid movement (roll 1d6, on a result of 1-2, the sentinel gains an extra attack this round), half damage from slashing weapons, vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), death throes (melts into steaming pile of Stûf, returns to life after 2 turns unless completely burned away); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

Stûfies (6): Init +0; Atk strangle +3 melee (1d4, DC 13 Str check to break hold) or mining tools +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d6+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP hollow body (1d3 damage reduction), hivemind shriek (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), puking (DC 12 Ref save or swallow Stûf), vulnerable to fire and electricity (double damage), flee husk (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; AL N.

THE END?

If the party did not perish or transform into Stûfies, and succeeded in collapsing the cavern, it could be said that they won, but is it a hollow victory? How deep does the underground lake go? Will the Stûf, now stirred up and angry, find its own way to escape through long forgotten tunnels? And what about all the Stûf that was pumped out into the barrels? Have any of these escaped the party's eye? Will they head home only to find their town has been infected with the Stûf? Or is there still a Stûfi among the party? Only time will tell!



CONTRACT OF HIRE FOR NORMAL PC:

To Whom It May Concern,

You have been contracted by the Duke to investigate the lack of iron ore traveling from the Settlement of Jhurn-Hokaz. Should in your investigation you discover there are sordid actions behind this halt of supplies you are obliged to remedy the situation by whatever means necessary. Furthermore, a hastening of the process and delivery of this much valued and needed material, while also concluding and remedying the problem will be rewarded by doubling the service fee of 100 gold pieces.

CONTRACT OF HIRE FOR STUFI PC:

To Whom It May Concern,

You have been contracted by the Duke to investigate the lack of iron ore traveling from the Settlement of Jhurn-Hokaz. Should in your investigation you discover there are sordid actions behind this halt of supplies you are obliged to remedy the situation by whatever means necessary. Furthermore, a hastening of the process and delivery of this much valued and needed material, while also concluding and remedying the problem will be rewarded by doubling the service fee of 100 gold pieces.

You are a Stûfi. You have infiltrated yourself into this group of miscreants in order to keep them from disrupting the extraction of the Stûf. Get them to eat the Stûf, make them one of you. Show them how great life can be when you consume the Stûf! Or if you have to... KILL THEM!

You gain the following abilities: **hollow body** (-1d3 damage reduction), **hivemind shriek** (can call any other Stûfies from adjacent areas), **puking** (vomit Stûf onto target's face; DC 12 Ref save or target swallows Stûf), **vulnerable to fire and electricity** (double damage), **flee husk** (in 1 round, transforms into a Stûf Blob that slithers away, leaving flesh husk behind).

STEFAN POAG

JUDGE'S AID A: STUFI TRACKER

Track the amount of Stûf Points each PC attains throughout the adventure. Once their Stûf Points equal or exceed their Stamina score, they have turned into a full-fledged Stûfi! See **Tasting the Stûf** on p. 2 for more information

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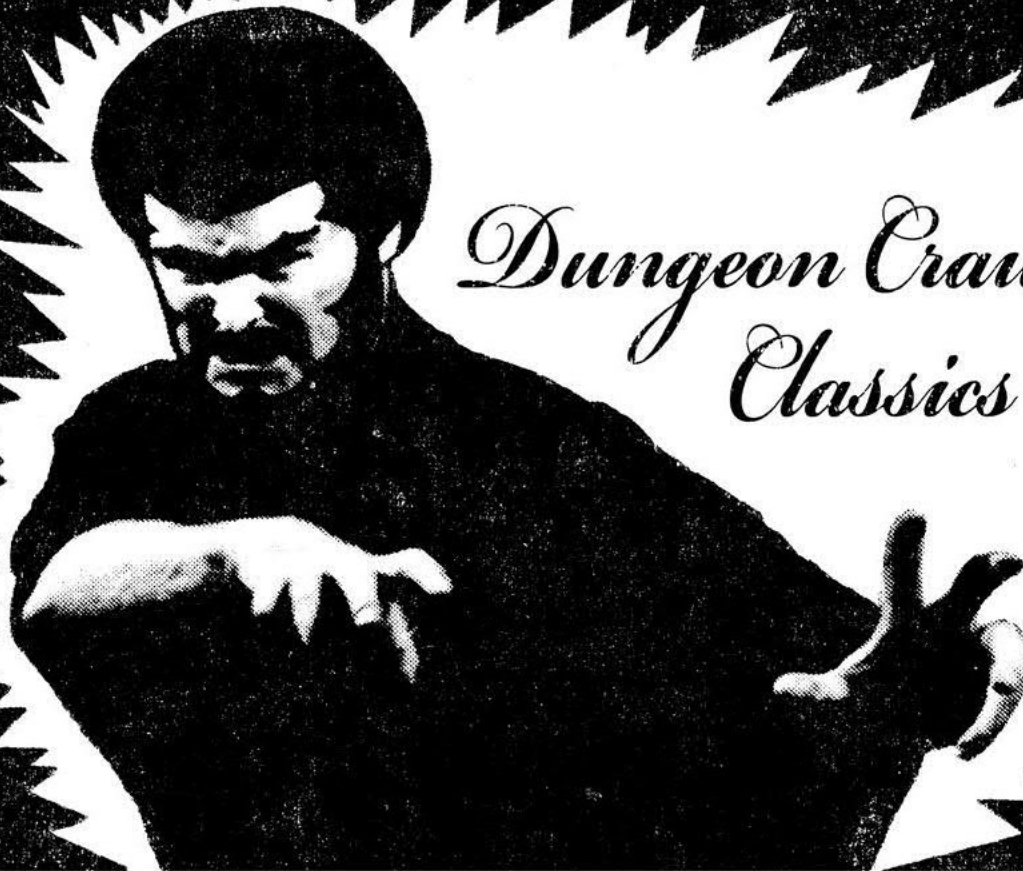
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IT CONSUMES!

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A LEVEL 2 ADVENTURE

BY TERRIFYING THORIN THOMPSON

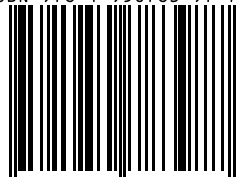
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