

RAVEN CROWKING'S NEST PRESENTS

SEEBY-BY-THE-WATER

**DANIEL J. BISHOP'S
BIRTHDAY MATHOM 2014**

**THE RUINED KEEP
&
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

RAVEN

LITTLE ELIDYK

HOOTH MARSHES

The Ruined Keep

By Daniel J. Bishop

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This is one of two scenarios originally written for *Raven Crowking's Fantasy Game (RCFG)*, the “fantasy heartbreaker” I was writing before I switched to *Dungeon Crawl Classics*. I have converted this adventure to the *DCC* rules, to be used as a funnel for 12-18 0-level characters or 1st level adventure for 4-6 PCs. *RCFG* was already moving away from *D&D* tropes; conversion to *DCC* increases the distance, but this was an early scenario, so it has big spiders, giant frogs, and goblins. All of the new creatures are direct conversions from the earlier version of the adventure. I have tried to make them interesting.

Should you actually run this either way, please email me (ravencrowking@hotmail.com) with any comments and a list of the people involved with the game, so that I may list you as playtesters for a final published version.

Introduction

Somewhere beneath the ruined keep lies the Oracle of the Crystal Grotto. The judge need only allow the PCs to learn this, and give the PCs some question that they need to answer, to hook them into the scenario.

If running a 0-level funnel, the PCs' village may be suffering from an incurable plague, with the Oracle being the only hope of succor. If the PCs are in the early stages of the plague themselves, it will lend a certain piquancy to their mission.

If running a 1st level adventure, the judge may let slip that the Oracle can answer questions about some treasure that the PCs discovered, or that the Oracle can lead them to spell knowledge or put them on the right track to obtain something else that they desire.

Wandering Monsters

There is a 1 in 5 chance of a wandering monster encounter every hour, or after any loud noises (such as combat lasting over three rounds). If an encounter is indicated where there are no creatures remaining in the area for that encounter type, instead no encounter occurs. The judge must use common sense when adjudicating these encounters – the giant bat or great horned owl, for instance, are never encountered underground.

Outdoor Encounter Areas

A. Moldering Bridge: A stone archway spans the stream here, with the water flowing beneath it in three culverts. Sod has grown over the stones of the bridge, so that the old stones can now barely be seen.

A **lurk** has dug up under the eastern culvert, creating a burrow for itself and its treasures. It is usually active only after nightfall. It is a fey creature, appearing as a thin, almost skeletally emaciated humanoid with bright green eyes. Its arms and legs are unnaturally long, and can extend to greater lengths than would seem possible. It can squeeze into cracks even six inches wide, and lurks often lair in places that are impossible to reach by human-sized creatures.

They collect shiny things in their burrows, which they steal from travelers. A lurk loves nothing more than creeping up behind a lonely traveler, throttling him from behind, and then taking all the shiny objects the traveler had. Sometimes a lurk will be seen pawing through its treasures in some lonely place under the light of a bright moon.

Lurks are very stealthy, usually gaining surprise on a 1-2 on 1d3. If a lurk's initial attack is successful, it has gotten hold of its victim's throat, and can strangle for automatic damage each round. Victims being strangled cannot call out, and it requires a DC 15 Strength check (using an Action Die) to break free from the lurk's grasp. A lurk can move at half speed while dragging along a victim; the victim can resist with a DC 10 Strength check, but this also uses an Action Die.

Reaching this lurk's burrow is difficult, but can be done by tearing up the sod-covered stones that once paved the roadway. Within the burrow is a collection of colored river pebbles, buttons (including a dozen brass buttons worth 2 cp each, and three silver buttons worth 1 sp each), shards of glass that have been polished smooth by the water, and a silver ring with a garnet worth 75 gp.

Lurk: Init +6; Atk claws +3 melee (1d6); AC 15; HD 3d8; hp 19; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP stealthy, squeeze into small spaces, strangle, drag; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +4; AL C.

B. Castle Stream: The stream is about 10-15 feet wide, shallow (hip deep at its deepest place), and very slow moving. It is covered with duckweed and water lilies. Reeds and cattails grow along its damp banks.

Goblins

The goblins encountered in this adventure are orange-skinned with large, curving rams horns and eyes with double-pupils (like those of goats). They chant when they work or fight, saying over and over again (in the goblin tongue):

*Mab-you-get! Mab-you-get!
In my blood and bone and arm
Goddess of rams-horn, bright born
Tooth to foes, shield from harm
Mab-you-get! Mab-you-get!
Thou art my only love!
Thou art my true companion!
Thou art the keeper of my soul!*

These goblins worship Mabuget (pronounced phonetically above), a goddess of goats, darkness, and the bright-born goblin people of the Undercroft. “Bright-born” in this context means orange-skinned. They are on a rite of passage, demonstrating fitness by seeking slaves and meat-of-two-legs – while they will talk to PCs who approach them respectfully from a position of strength, they will always be thinking about how to turn the tables.

They recently arrived from the north, and know little about the ruined keep. Their tribe is called the Seeping Eye.

The stream bottom is thick and sticky muck (Strength DC 10 to make forward progress at ¼ speed; 1 in 6 chance of losing each boot; three failed checks in a row means the character is stuck and requires aid to get free). Worse, the bones of the lurk’s previous victims lie buried in the mud, ready to resurface if disturbed. This is not dangerous, but it may be disturbing.

The tadpoles that live in this stream are about as long as large trout. They feed on the duckweed. Some 4 in 6 have growing hind legs that indicate what they are. Giant tadpoles are edible, tasting something like rubbery chicken.

C. Frog Pool: This scum and weed-covered pool is the home of three **giant frogs**. They hide among the weeds and beneath lily pads, instinctively attacking any creature that comes within range of their tongues.

On a natural “20”, instead of the normal critical effect, a giant frog can swallow a halfling (or similar creature) whole, doing 1d6 damage per round to the swallowed creature. A swallowed creature can do nothing that requires movement. Against other creatures, use normal critical effects.

A giant frog can pull in a creature with its tongue at a speed of 5 feet per round unless it makes an opposed Strength check (+2 bonus for the frog). Attacking the tongue doesn’t affect a frog’s hit points, but the tongue is AC 13, and can be severed with 6 hp damage from a slashing weapon or by a successful Mighty Deed. Any frog whose tongue is severed hides at the bottom of the pond and is out of the fight.

Roll (1d8)	Encounter
1	Big ants (1d3): Init +0; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 1d8+1; hp 6 each; MV 40’; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; AL L. These ants are about 2 feet long; a maximum of 20 can be encountered.
2*	Wolves (1d2): Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4 each; MV 40’; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3; AL L. A total of 6 can be encountered.
3*	Giant bat (1): Init +5; Atk bite +3 melee (1d5 + disease); AC 15; HD 3d6; hp 11; MV 10’ or fly 60’; Act 1d20; SP disease (Fort DC 12 or <i>permanently</i> lose 1 Strength after 1 hour), blindsight 240’; SV Fort –2, Ref +8, Will –2; AL N. There is a single giant bat. It has an approximate wingspan of 15’ and weighs 200 pounds.
4*	Great horned owl: Init +0; Atk beak or talons +0 melee (1d3-1); AC 12; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 5’, fly 140’; Act 1d20; SP excellent night-vision and hearing; SV Fort –4, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N. There is only one great horned owl, which is a non-combatant unless compelled by magic. It is possible for a successful hit to do 0 damage.
5	Rats (2d6): Init +4; Atk bite +0 melee (1d2-1 + disease); AC 14; HD 1d2; hp 1 each; MV 40’ or climb 20’; Act 1d16; SP disease (DC 5 Fort save or 1d3 Strength and Agility damage after 1d5 hours with an additional DC 10 Fort save or added damage each hour thereafter until three saves succeed or the character dies); SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will –4; AL N. There are an unlimited number of rats. They are generally non-combatants, unless they outnumber PCs 5-to-1 or more. It is possible for a successful hit to do 0 damage, but disease still applies.
6	Goblins (1d3): Init –1; Atk spear –1 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 1d6-1; hp 3 each; MV 20’; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60’; SV Fort –2, Ref +1, Will –2; AL L. These goblins wear leather armor and are armed with spears. Each carries a number of teeth, bat wings, and fang-sharpening rocks in a belt pouch, along with 1d5-1 sp. There are 9 total. See sidebar on this page.
7*	Ghoul: Init +1; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4+4 plus paralyzation) or claw +1 melee (1d3+4); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 9; MV 30’; Act 1d20; SP paralyzation (DC 14 Will negates, 1d6 hours), infravision 100’; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C. There is only a single ghoul. Although it looks like it is barely held together by strings of sinew and threads of muscle, it is extraordinarily powerful, gaining a +4 bonus to all opposed Strength checks.
8	Giant rats (1d3): Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d3 plus disease); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 5 each; MV 30’ or climb 10’; Act 1d20; SP disease (DC 12 Fort save or 1d5 Strength and Agility damage after 1d3 hours with an additional DC 12 Fort save or added damage each hour thereafter until three saves succeed or the character dies); SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will –6; AL N. Only 10 of these creatures haunt this region, each the size of a dog.
* Indicates an encounter that only occurs during nocturnal hours. During daylight hours, no encounter occurs.	

These frogs are approximately 5' long and weigh 350 pounds.

Giant frogs (3): Init +4; Atk tongue strike (0 plus entrap) or bite +2 melee (1d4+1); AC 13; HD 2d8; hp 9, 12, 14; MV 30' or swim 30' or jump 50'; Act 1d20; SP tongue, swallow whole; SV Fort -2, Ref +4, Will +0; AL N.

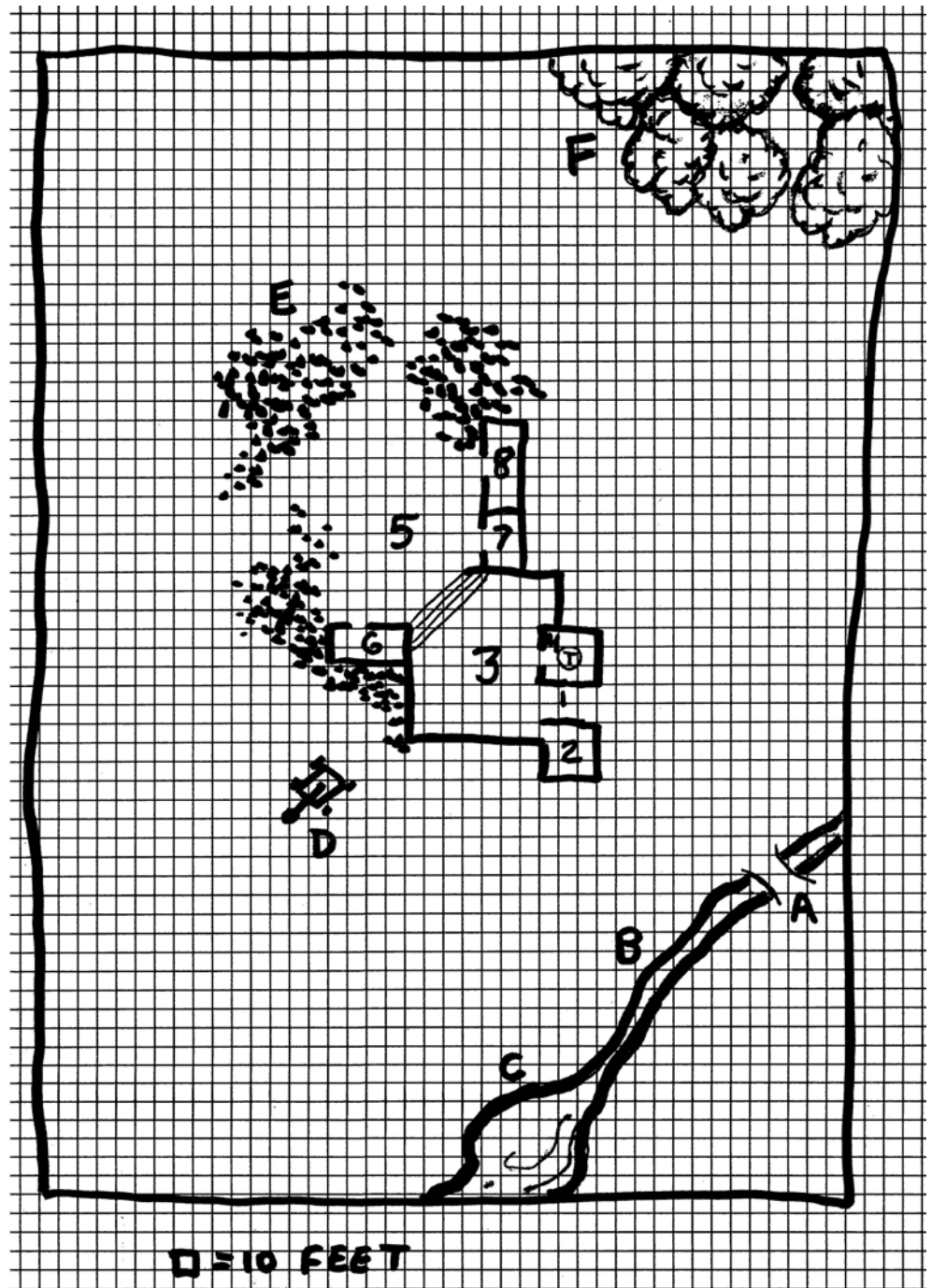
D. Ruined Catapult: This ruined catapult is a leftover from the assault on the keep, and is of no value. The ropes that held it together have long since rotted – though not rotted through – and the wood is riddled with rot, holes from insects and worms, and soft spots where mushrooms grow. The rear axle is broken, and the right front wheel is missing. A rotting leather sack hidden under the catapult contains 50 sp.

Three **giant centipedes** lair under the catapult as well, though, and attack anything that disturbs them. These are smaller than the centipedes in the *core rulebook*, being merely as long as a human arm, and are of black hue shot with streaks of red. Their poison requires a DC 10 Fort save, or the victim suffers an additional 1d3 damage each round for 1d5 rounds. Like the centipedes in the *core rulebook*, they can detect thoughts within 500' and hunt by following psychic emanations.

Giant Centipede (3): Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (1d3 plus poison); AC 14; HD 1d6; hp 1, 6, 4; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP poison, detect thoughts 500'; SV Fort -2, Ref +4, Will +0; AL C.

E. Castle Rubble: The rubble where the keep had fallen is stone, tile, brick, and bits of wood. The area has been tunneled through by rats, and is capable of shifting if climbed on (1 in 6 chance; a dwarf, miner, or similar character will recognize the danger). Shifting rubble causes 1d3 damage, has a 1 in 6 chance of being loud enough to trigger a wandering encounter, and has a 1 in 6 chance of trapping a leg (Strength DC 25 to free, with up to 4 characters aiding; no movement possible; -4 to AC and attack rolls).

F. Spider Trees: These mixed maple and oak trees extend off the map as a form of light scrub. The whole wood is infested with **large spiders** (each about the size of a large cat). They are light brown and yellow with a mark on their abdomens similar to a reddish-orange skull.



Strands of web crisscross the areas between the trees. These are difficult to see (Luck DC 15) before encountering them directly. There is a 1 in 6 chance of encountering a web each minute spent in this area.

Deer, boar, and similar woodland animals are wrapped in dried bundles high among the trees. A typical encounter here is with 2d4 large spiders.

These spiders have an evil form of intelligence and can speak with those who understand the language of their kind. If the judge has a wizard of elf seeing to learn *spider climb* or *spider web*, the PC may be required to seek a needed part of that spell from these spiders.

Large spiders: Init +4; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4 plus poison); AC 15; HD 1d8+1; hp 6 each; MV 20' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP poison (Fort DC 10 or an additional 1d5 damage for 3 rounds), webs (entangle, DC 10 Strength check to break free); SV Fort -2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Ruined Keep Encounters Upper Levels

1. Archway: This is a crumbling archway between two towers, both of which contain arrow slits covering this way. The archway is 10 feet wide, rising to a height of 10 feet. The doors are long gone, but pieces of the iron hinges remain, showing that there were once double doors opening outward from the keep. These hinges are very rusty.

2. South Tower: This is a 30-foot square tower. The main floor still survives, as does part of the second floor. Within the main floor, cobwebs crisscross the rafter beams, and the floor is thick with dirt and bits of stone. An iron ladder is bolted to the center of the south wall, leading upwards to a trapdoor to the second floor. Arrow slits look toward the gateway, to the south, and to the east. A **large spider** (originally from **Area F**) hides in the rafters, waiting for prey. The first person in this area may make a DC 15 Luck check to avoid surprise.

The upper floor has no ceiling, and the walls are fallen to uneven heights. The remains of the wall are as low as 4 feet and as high as 12 feet. In one of the highest points near the southwest corner, a socket from the now-lost second floor provides a nesting spot for a mated pair of **great horned owls**. One of these owls is in the nest; the other is a wandering encounter. There are three eggs in the nest.

Large spider: Init +4; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4 plus poison); AC 15; HD 1d8+1; hp 9; MV 20' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP poison (Fort DC 10 or an additional 1d5 damage for 3 rounds), webs (entangle, DC 10 Strength check to break free); SV Fort -2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Great horned owl: Init +0; Atk beak or talons +0 melee (1d3-1); AC 12; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 5', fly 140'; Act 1d20; SP excellent night-vision and hearing; SV Fort -4, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N. It is possible for a successful hit to do 0 damage.

3. Lower Courtyard: Bits of tile can still be seen through the soil and grass here. There was once a decorative pattern in bright blue, rich browns, and subtle shades of green – a map of the lands all around the keep. To the northwest, a wide broken stairway leads to the upper courtyard.

4. North Tower: Only the walls of this tower still remain, standing some 12 to 15 feet high. Sockets where the roof-beams divided the second floor from the ground floor are still visible, but the wooden beams and flooring are long gone. Arrow slits look south to the gateway and eastward. An iron ladder is bolted to the north wall, but it leads nothing. A trapdoor hidden beneath dirt and soil leads to **Area 9**. It is locked (DC 15), but the key can be found in **Area 6**.

5. Upper Courtyard: This area is occupied by six **goblins** (two spearmen, three archers, and an animal trainer armed with a whip) and their two trained **tiger-sized rats**. They will attack any creature that they become aware of.

The animal trainer must give up either a move or an attack to direct the dire rats, which otherwise attack the nearest creature – including the goblins. The rats wish to slay a creature then carry it off to eat; without their trainer they do not continue the fight beyond that point. See sidebar on page 3.

Goblin spearmen (2): Init -1; Atk spear -1 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 1d6-1; hp 3, 4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort -2, Ref +1, Will -2; AL L. These goblins wear leather armor and are armed with spears. Each carries has 1d5-1 sp.

Goblin archers (3): Init -1; Atk short sword -1 melee (1d6) or short bow +1 ranged (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d6-1; hp 3, 6, 7; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort -2, Ref +1, Will -2; AL L. These goblins wear leather armor and are armed with short swords, short bows, and a quiver of 1d6+6 arrows each. Each also has 2d5 sp.

Goblin animal trainer (1): Init -1; Atk whip -1 melee (1d4 plus entangle); AC 12; HD 1d6-1; hp 7; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', whip entangles on 18-20 (DC 10 Ref to avoid or DC 10 Strength or Agility to escape); SV Fort -2, Ref +1, Will -2; AL L. The animal trainer wears leather armor and two copper bracelets worth 5 sp each. He is armed with a whip. He has 15 sp and 18 cp in a dirty belt pouch. Characters in medium or heavy armor take no damage from the whip unless entangled.

Tiger-sized rats (2): Init +4; Atk bite +4 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 4d8; hp 16, 14; MV 40' or swim 20'; Act 1d20; SP disease (Fort DC 12 or suffer muscle cramps for 1d5 days, reducing Strength and Agility by 1d5 each); SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +0; AL C.

6. Ruined Kennel: This area is 20 feet deep and 50 feet across, being a ruined kennel. It still smells faintly of wet fur and dog. The ceiling beams are a mere 8 feet overhead. Old gnawed bones litter the floor. There is the collapsed wooden frame of a cot near the southeast corner.

In the days when this was still used, the dogs would be kept here, and their trainer would sleep in this room on the cot. The bones are mostly those of sheep, cattle, and deer, tossed to the dogs, but there are also the bones of a human soldier wearing chainmail – a chain around his neck still holds the rusted iron key to the trapdoor in **Area 4**.

Under the cot is a small unlocked chest containing a moldy cloth bag with 35 cp in it, a **potion of haste** (reddish tint, cinnamon smell, spicy but metallic taste, grants a +4 bonus to initiative that lasts 10 rounds and an extra 1d12 Action Die during this period), and two **potions of healing** (light green, fragrant smoke rolls out of bottle when opened, no odor, minty taste, each healing 1 Hit Die). All of the potions are in glass bottles.

7. Ruined Chamber: This chamber is 20 feet deep by 30 feet wide, with a ceiling 8 feet high. What it was used for is no longer obvious – apart from cobwebs and fallen stone, there is nothing here. Anyone who searches this area will find a slip of paper that reads “...lies beneath the north tower in the Crystal Grotto....”

8. Ruined Kitchen: This area is a ruined kitchen, some 50 feet wide by 20 feet deep and 12 feet high. The eastern wall is dominated by a large fireplace, its blackened stones long since gone cold. The scarred remains of several oaken trestle tables are here, all fallen into ruin. Rusted iron pots, pans, and kitchen utensils are scattered on the floor or hanging from the walls.

A **poisonous adder** is beneath some of this rubble. Anyone bit by this snake must succeed in a DC 22 Fort save or take 2d4 points of permanent Stamina damage (1d3 normal Stamina damage on a successful save). It is fast enough to strike twice in the same round (as indicated by its Action Dice).

Poisonous adder: Init +6; Atk bite +3 melee (1d2 plus poison); AC 14; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV 20'; Act 1d20 + 1d16; SP poison; SV Fort –2, Ref +8, Will +0; AL N.

Lower Level

9. Stairway Down: The trapdoor opens to a stone shaft, some 10 feet deep, with an iron ladder bolted to the north wall. At the end, there’s a stairway going south for 20 feet, a landing, and then stairs going west 20 feet. Apart from dust, cobwebs, and small rubble, the stairway is empty.

10. Dungeon Entrance: This is a 30-foot square room vaulted to a height of 12 feet. There is an arched doorway in the center of the north, south, and west walls. The area smells of damp stone, and water seeps down the south wall to collect in stagnant puddles on the floor.

11. Storeroom: The door to this room is stuck from the damp, requiring a Strength check (DC 12) to open. Beyond the door is a 30 foot by 60 foot room, with a ceiling vaulted to a height of 10 feet. It smells of rot. The room is filled with various crates, bags, and barrels, all of which are rotting, damaged, or sprouting pale violet mushrooms, yellowish mold, and the like.

Cursed Longsword

This longsword is not magical, but is cursed by the spirit of its former owner. Each time it is drawn in combat, the wielder must make a DC 10 Will save to prevent the spirit from possessing him. The character then attacks with a 1d3 Deed Die, but will continue to attack indiscriminately until nothing living remains within 100’ of him. Only then does the possession end.

This curse can be ended by divine magic, or by seeing that the remains of the jailor’s assistant in **Area 13** receive a proper burial.

Water has oozed through cracks in ceiling and walls, so that all of the walls are damp to the touch.

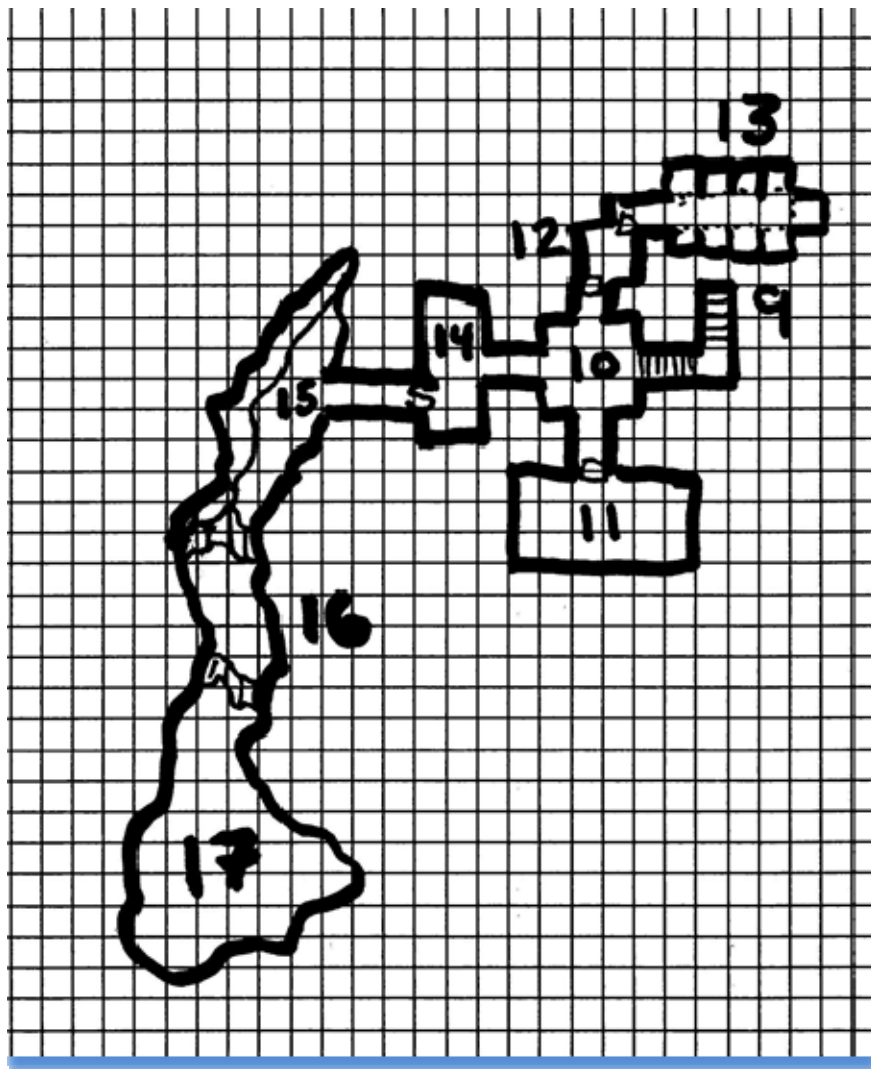
For each turn of searching, roll on the following table. If an item has already been found, instead nothing is found that turn. If all the items are found, then nothing further is found of any significance (although the judge should continue to roll as long as the characters are willing to search; remember to check for wandering monsters every hour).

12. Jailor’s Office: The stout wooden door that leads to this room has a window with iron bars looking in. The bars are rusted, but strong at their core (Strength DC 25 to bend or pull out). The door creaks as it is opened.

Beyond the door is a 20-foot square room with a similar door in the far wall. The room is 10 feet tall. This room was once an office for the keep’s jailor. Pegs on one wall once held keys and gear. There is still a light patch on the floor where the jailor’s desk once stood. An empty sconce near each door once held torches to light the room – the soot on the ceiling makes it obvious that the sconces were once used.

The far door is locked with a sliding bolt, which can easily be unlocked from within the room. It creaks open on rusty hinges. Unless the hinges are oiled, the **skeletons** in **Area 13** are automatically aware that the door has been opened.

D8 Roll	Item Found	Notes
1-3	Yellow Mold Patch	Spores in 10-foot cloud, Fort save DC 12 or Reflex save DC 15, 1d6 Stamina damage. Destroyed by fire (not a good idea here!) Three patches can be found.
4	Barrel of Oil	A sealed barrel containing 20 gallons of lamp oil (160 pints).
5	Barrel of Rusty Swords	Apparently 20 rusty longswords in scabbards, worth 5 gp each; #20 is not rusty, but is a <i>cursed longsword</i> (see sidebar, above).
6	Crate of Copper Plates	This crate contains 50 copper plates, each worth 5 sp.
7	Sack of Coins	This large burlap sack is rotting apart. It contains 25 gp, 125 sp, and 476 cp.
8	Metal Shield	This small metal shield is in good condition, with only a little rust, but is non-magical.



13. Dungeon Cells: Beyond the door is a long, low hallway (arched to about 7 feet high), with iron-barred doors hanging open on either side. The hall is 50 feet long, with four 10-foot square cells to the north, 10 to the south, and one to the far east. The area smells of old rot and corruption.

Each cell holds three animated **skeletons**, for a total of 27. These are primarily the remains of prisoners left here to die by the jailor, although one is the assistant jailor who began to release the prisoners from their cells before the jailor locked him in. The jailor's assistant wears chainmail.

These un-dead are animated by their hatred and despair. Given the chance, they will not stop to slay the fallen, but rather exit this area, locking the door behind them (Strength DC 30 to open; a chopping weapon can cut the door open by doing 60 hp damage). The skeletons cease to be animated once this is accomplished, falling to pieces in **Area 12**.

Prisoner skeletons (26): Init +0; Atk claw +0 melee (1d3); AC 9; HD 1d6; hp 4 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

Jailor's Assistant: Init +0; Atk claw +0 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 3d6; hp 15; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons, regenerate 2d5 points of damage at the start of each round until it leaves this area; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C. Chainmail, key ring for cells.

14. The Room of Reliefs: This room is some 20 feet deep by 50 feet wide. Sconces for torches (now empty) are bracketed to the wall on either side of the door. The room is vaulted to a height of 12 feet. The far wall is carved with several images of knights cut into relief on the wall. That wall seems to be damp – water seeps through the ceiling and across the reliefs to puddle on the floor. The room otherwise seems to be empty.

There is a secret door (DC 15) on the western wall – one of the relief knights can swing outward when the catch is released (pulling the sconce to the south of the doorway). The secret door opens into a passage only 5 feet wide and 6 feet high, running at a slightly downward slant 30 feet to **Area 15**.

Once the door is opened, the plink-plunk of dripping water, and the murmur of running water, can easily be heard.

15. Cavern Stream: The passage enters into a natural cavern some 15 feet high, its ceiling thick with straw-like pipe stalactites and dripping water. The walls glitter in the

torchlight due to water and chips of mica. A stream enters the cavern from the north, moving placidly in a series of tiers to the south.

The floor is fairly uneven, but it is clear that frequent passage had long ago worn a clear route along the river. The stream pours into a chasm to the south (**Area 16**).

The remains of a rope bridge that once crossed the chasm are clearly visible, but the wooden mooring posts are rotted, and easily crumble when any strain is placed upon them. The bits of rope still wrapped around the mooring posts are in even worse condition.

A rope tied to one of these mooring posts has a 4 in 6 chance of causing the post to give way per round that weight is placed upon it. It is a 20 foot drop to the chasm pool (2d6 damage; broken bone on any natural "6").

16. Chasm Pool: Climbing down to the chasm pool from the north is a DC 15 climb walls or Strength check – the way is not steep, but the walls are slick with water. Climbing back out to the south is a DC 20 check, as the way is still slippery, but even steeper.

The water of the pool is dark and oily. The average depth is about 2 feet, but there is a 1 in 6 chance per round of stumbling into a pocket 1d6 feet deeper (for multiple characters, the chance applies to a random character each round).

This pool is the lair of a **tentacled beast**. The beast can squeeze through the holes in the pool walls and floor to get to deeper, darker waters (both to feed and to escape if need be). The tentacled beast looks something like an oily black squid with pulsing red veins and only three tentacles. Its eyes glow with a pale lavender light. It can attack opponents up to 10' away with its tentacles, grasping opponents to draw to its beaked maw on the next round (Strength DC 10 to escape). Graped opponents take tentacle damage automatically each round.

The thing is intelligent enough to flee if it loses more than half its hit points, and has no treasure.

Tentacled beast: Init +4; Atk tentacle +4 melee (1d6) or bite +4 melee (1d8); AC 19; HD 4d8; hp 20; MV swim 30'; Act 3d20; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +10; AL C.

17. The Crystal Grotto: The entry to this cavern has rotting mooring posts like Area 15. The cavern proper is 60 to 70 feet across. It is a wonder of stalactites, stalagmites, and columns, up to 45 feet high. Everything glistens with mica, water droplets, and gypsum crystals.

In the rough center of the grotto is a natural pool containing pure, cold water. Around its rim, runes are carved which read "Behold the Oracle of the Grotto. Drink and Be Answered." If a character drinks from the pool, the water turns deep blue and a female voice rings out "Ask boldly, but not overbold, lest answers make your blood run cold".

Once an answer is given, the water returns to its former state, and another being can petition the Oracle. The Oracle will answer three questions during each period from new moon to new moon. If asked to show herself, the Oracle will advise against this. Her beauty is such that any creature that sees her is stricken blind (no save – simply determine from the players which characters look).

A low alcove to the east, roughly 20 feet across and only 5 feet high, contains a large, locked (DC 15) chest that can be forced open with a DC 20 Strength check. Alternatively, its leather straps can be cut to open it. The key to this chest is on the key ring in **Area 13**. Within the chest are:

- A large leather sack containing 60 gp and 120 sp.
- A small teak box with a catch holding it shut. Inside, what appears to be about 12 gp are actually 250 gp – the box is an extradimensional space capable of holding up to this amount. The space does not change the weight of the box; the contents weigh as much as they would if carried otherwise.
- A normal dagger whose pommel is made of a polished weasel's skull.).
- A silver chalice studded with small garnets worth 250 gp.
- A pearl necklace with a golden clasp, worth 75 gp.
- A silver salt cellar (empty) worth 15 gp.
- A finely made short sword (which does 1d7 damage due to the skill of its craftsmanship) in an ivory sheath worth 20 gp.

- Here ends The Ruined Keep -

Bonus Material from Appendix N Authors

Compiled and given DCC statistics by Daniel J. Bishop

One of the best places to gain ideas for *Dungeon Crawl Classics* adventures is the Appendix N fiction from which inspired the game itself. Below are some features from less well-known works by Appendix N authors, given DCC game statistics by myself.

No attempt to contest existing copyrights is intended.

Chu-Bu

An ancient polished mahogany idol, placed upon a diorite pedestal, which had been worshipped for ages prior to the advent of Sheemish (see page 8). Chu-Bu was a minor god, with fat fingers and toes being the only specific features noted. Holy birds were kept in his temple.

Chu-Bu had been worshipped for a century or more by burning spices in braziers and fat on flat gold plates, by offerings of honey and maize, and by the words "There is none but Chu-Bu" on Tuesdays. Although a minor god, he was believed by the people of his city to have created everything.

In actual fact, the only service he can offer those who pray to him is to grant +1d3 Luck as a bonus to a single check within any given seven day period.

The rivalry between Chu-Bu and Sheemish ended with a minor earthquake, wrought by both gods working in opposition, that destroyed the Temple of Chu-Bu.

Source: Lord Dunsany ("Chu-Bu and Sheemish": Saturday Review, 30 December 1911)

Sheemish

A palpably modern wooden idol stained with a dark red dye to hide his recent carving, Sheemish was worshipped in the Temple of Chu-Bu, who became his rival. Sheemish was a minor god whose worship consisted of offerings of honey and maize, and the words “There is also Sheemish” appended to the ritual of Chu-Bu on Tuesdays. Sheemish is a minor god who can offer those who pray to him is to grant +1d3 Luck as a bonus to a single check within any given seven day period.

The rivalry between Chu-Bu and Sheemish ended with a minor earthquake, wrought by both gods working in opposition, that destroyed the Temple of Chu-Bu and broke the idol of Sheemish.

Source: Lord Dunsany (“Chu-Bu and Sheemish”: *Saturday Review*, 30 December 1911)

Tree Spirits of the Vosges

On the eastern shores of a high, lonely lake in the Vosges, the trees are sentient and have been at war with the peasantry for hundreds of years. To eyes that can see, the trees are only the outward manifestations of the tree spirits, which dwell in an adjacent plane, which can be glimpsed through the aether by those they desire to converse with.

When viewed in this way, the female tree spirits are humanoid, and beautiful, with golden hair and large pupil-less green eyes, akin to those of deer, that dance with moonbeam motes. Their lips appear to be notably thirsty. The male tree spirits wear dark green kilts, and have blue or brown eyes. They are darker of skin and hair, and are very muscular.

The tree spirits can compel a creature to a copse where they can communicate with him (Will DC 10 resists), and are able to charm mortal men (as *charm person* with a +3 to the spell check) with their kisses. They desire to use mortal men to slay their enemies in this fashion, for they cannot act directly on the world.

However, they can cause the most hideous of accidents to befall those who cut wood within their forests - they are able to make a retaliatory attack whenever a tree is felled. This attack has a +4 attack bonus, and does 1d4 damage. This attack achieves a critical hit on a 18-20, using 1d8 on Crit Table I. These strikes occur from seeming-chance: as one tree falls, it bends the branch of another, which is whipped back; a branch gouges out an eye; a tree is felled upon the hapless woodcutter.

Their plane appears as a vast, silent world with opalescent palaces, great hills and mountains, circling plains, and where the leaping trout of this world appear as leviathans. The golden moss on the ground is spangled with tiny blue flowers. The only sound is the singing or speech of the tree spirits. Their lives are bound to the trees, which appear as the ghosts of trees on their plane.

While they can share this life to some degree, by tapping a ghost tree and giving a tree spirit the golden sap to drink, if the spirit's tree has been felled, this is but a short respite before withering.

Source: A. Merritt (“The Woman of the Wood”; *Weird Tales*, August 1926)

Wind Whale

A huge aerial creature from the far future, wind whales eat the reddish brit which plants on the great mesa walls (which were once sea shelves) spew out after the rains. The whales are in turn hunted by air sharks and future men. They are larger than sperm whales, with their heads being almost as large as the rest of their bodies. Their bodies are cigar-shaped, and their tails have vertical and horizontal fins that act as rudders to steer by. Their eyes are red, round, and large - as much as 3 feet across - but seem small against their enormous bodies.

Each wind whale carries a ballast of water within it, which can be released in a silvery sheet should the creature wish to rise suddenly. It also generates a lighter-than-air gas, which it can expel to dive.

There are two main groups of wind whales.

The first is a filter-feeder that subsists mainly on brit. This type of whale has a huge mouth with an immovable jaw. It is almost constantly feeding when food is available, but can close its mouth with a film of thin skin. This type of wind whale is hunted by future men for meat, for bone and skin from which to make aerial ships, and for the occasional find of *vrishkaw*, from which the gods of the future men are carved.

When a wind whale is harpooned, it dives, with the intention to pull up at the last possible instant, slamming the harpooner's ship into the land or sea. Avoiding being smashed requires a Luck check (DC 10); if this is failed, an Intelligence check (DC 10) allows the harpooner to cut the line in time to prevent striking land or sea. If the Luck check succeeds, the wind whale will exhaust itself towing the harpoon boat, and becomes helpless in 1d8+2 minutes.

The second type of wind whale has a movable jaw, and hunts both the first type of wind whale and men.

When wind whales die of natural causes, their flesh feeds their own gas-generating bladders, until they rise very high, where the atmosphere is too thin to breathe. Their corpses drift with the eastward wind, until corruption causes them to release the lighter-than-air gas that makes them float. Somewhere to the east, it is said, there is a great mound of wind whale bones, and with it a great treasure of *vrishkaw*. It was believed that the burial grounds were somewhere near the eastern cliffs where the Purple Beasts of the Stinging Death were most numerous.

Wind Whale, Baleen: Init -10; Atk slam +0 melee (4d6); AC 6; HD 20d8; hp 80; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP Dive when harpooned; SV Fort +4, Ref -6, Will +2; AL N.

Wind Whale, Toothed: Init +0; Atk bite +6 melee (4d8) or slam +8 melee (4d6); AC 8; HD 10d10; hp 50; MV fly 50'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Aerial Brit

In the far future, reddish clouds of aerial brit are released by plants growing on what were formerly submarine shelves. Brit is released only after rain. These clouds contain both the seed pods of the plants and animalcules that travel with them when the plants release their seeds with explosive force. The aerial brit forms the backbone of the food chain in its future world.

The brit is consumed by wind whales, and also by future men. The future men harvest it with nets, and then cook it into a form of soup. Aerial brit can be eaten raw, but it is hard on the teeth.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Namalee

Namalee is the daughter of Sennertaa, the former Grand Admiral of Zalarapamtra.

As an unmarried daughter of the Grand Admiral, her person was sacred, and she travelled aboard an aerial ship to bless it, and to perform the rites of the ship's god.

When the *Rachel* (see *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville) appeared from the far past, and fell from the sky, it struck Namalee's aerial ship, destroying it. Only Namalee survived. She encountered the *Rachel*'s sole survivor, Ishmael, on an island in the salt sea, and together they managed to survive until they were rescued by an aerial whaling ship.

When Ishmael led a raiding party on Booragangah to recover the stolen gods of Zalarapamtra, Namalee went along and assisted him, even though Ishmael had wished her to remain safe at home. After that adventure, Namalee wedded Ishmael, who became the new Grand Admiral of Zalarapamtra and Booragangah.

Although Namalee was trained as an acolyte of Zoomashmarta and the lesser gods, as befits being the daughter of the Grand Admiral, her primary ability seems to be being lucky, and of spreading the blessings of Zoomashmarta.

She has "Stealth" and "Good Luck Charm" abilities akin to those of a 1st level halfling. She can use a simple *charm* ability to turn any humanoid friendly to her cause for 1d4 hours (Will DC 11 resists). Because of her training and association with her gods, she gains a +6 bonus to saves to resist becoming drunk from their divine perspiration (see **Zoomashmarta** on page 10).

Namalee (Acolyte of Zoomashmarta and the lesser gods): Init +3; Atk spear +1 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 9; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP +3 Stealth, good luck charm, charm 1/day, +6 to saves to resist divine drunkenness); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 10, Agl 16, Sta 13, Per 16, Int 12, Luck 14, AL L.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

The Purple Beast of the Stinging Death

The Purple Beast of the Stinging Death, or *kahamwoodoo*, is perhaps the most feared creature of the future earth of the wind whalers. Luckily, it is also extremely rare.

The Purple Beast appears as a vast, purplish mass a mile and a half in diameter and 300 feet thick. Its surface is inconstant, as depressions form in some areas and others billow outwards as gas is exchanged internally. The creature's blood-red tentacles can reach 100 feet, and are both above and below the central mass, and grip with a strength too great for mortal men to resist.

They are strong enough, in fact, that if they latch onto an aerial ship, the ship is pulled toward the Beast with no chance of escape unless the tentacles themselves are severed (requiring 5d10 points of damage each).

Although the Beast has thousands of mouths, prey is usually dead long before it is brought to these mouths by the tentacles. Still, each mouth is capable of biting helpless prey for 3d10 points of damage.

The Purple Beast's tentacles also contain a powerful toxin, with which it stings its prey. Creatures stung by the Purple Beast must succeed on a DC 20 Fort save or be immediately paralyzed and die in 1d5 rounds.

The Purple Beast can modify parts of its body to act as sails, moving relatively slowly. It can propel itself far more swiftly by releasing discharges of explosive gas. The explosive gas in its bladders makes it vulnerable, however, so that it takes four times the normal damage from any fire-related attacks. These explosions allow it to move in any direction with an increased speed of +2d5 x 10' once every 1d5 rounds.

The Purple Beast is said to be accompanied by lesser beasts of various types, which feed off the scraps of its kills and which sometimes rob the Beast of its prey.

In reality, the Purple Beast is a colonial life form, and when dying, or in order to reach difficult locations, it can release parts of itself as bodies capable of independent action. These can form their own crude sails and rudders, and often descend to the ground to seek prey there. They bite with lipless mouths filled with thousands of sharp triangular teeth.

When a city of the future earth is attacked by the Purple Beast, these creatures seek out those who the Beast failed to find, to kill and consume them.

Although the lesser beasts lack the strength and toxin of the *kahamwoodoo*, very few survive such attacks. Each has up to a dozen tentacles, which require a minimum of 6 points of damage to sever.

In the case of both the Purple Beast and its lesser spawn, severing a tentacle does not affect the main creature's hit points.

Purple Beast of the Stinging Death: Init +0; Atk tentacle +6 melee (3d10+5 plus constriction and poison); AC 4; HD 100d20; hp 1,000; MV fly 20'; Act 10d24; SP Reach, constriction (automatic damage each round), poison (Fort DC 20, paralysis, death in 1d5 rounds), burst of speed, mouths (3d10), fire vulnerability; SV Fort +20, Ref -10, Will +10; AL N.

Lesser beast: Init +4; Atk tentacle +4 melee (1d6 + constriction) or bite +2 melee (2d6); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV fly 40'; Act 3d20; SP Constriction (automatic damage, DC 13 Strength check to break free); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Zoomashmarta

Zoomashmarta was the major god of Zalarapamtra. His idol was carved from a large piece of *vrishkaw*, a foot and a half high, with a fat head with two faces. He was seated cross-legged, with one hand in his lap, and the other upraised, holding a bent stick that was symbolic of lightning. Zoomashmarta was consumed by the **stone tortoise** (see below).

As with all the gods carved from *vrishkaw*, Zoomashmarta exuded an overpoweringly sweet, intoxicating perfume, known as the divine perspiration. The first time one inhales the divine perspiration, a Fort save must be made each round. The second time, a Fort save must be made each minute. Someone who has become accustomed to the divine perspiration need only make the save every ten minutes, but that individual must be a priest or acolyte to gain this level of ability to resist the divine perspiration.

Merely inhaling the divine perspiration makes one feel happy and a little dizzy, without any save.

The first time a save is failed from the divine perspiration, the character feels drunk, taking 1d3 points of temporary damage to both Agility and Intelligence.

The second time a save is failed, the character feels very drunk, taking 1d3 points of temporary damage to Agility, Intelligence, and Personality.

The third time a save is failed, the character passes out, and remains comatose for 1d6 x 5 minutes. The character is helpless during this time.

The save DC for Zoomashmarta was 15.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Bloodsucker Creeper

The plant life of the far future operates in a strange symbiosis with the animals. The bloodsucker creeper is a case in point.

This plant is a sort of tree which creates large leaves that can be used as hammocks for shelter, and has light green pods. These pods have a darker green spot upon them that can be easily pierced by a finger, allowing the liquid contents to be drained by an animal, such as a human or a *kwishchangas* (a bipedal monkey-like creature, about 2' high, with pink fur).

The pod also contains a form of *lotos*, a paralyzing narcotic that requires a DC 10 Fort save to avoid paralysis for 1d6 minutes. Drinking a second pod increases this save to DC 15. A third pod increases the save to DC 20, and so on.

When a creature is sleeping within the leaves, or paralyzed by the *lotos* of the pod, the plant sends a pale green creeper with a sharp tip, to pierce the jugular (or another major vein) and draw enough blood to cause 1 point of Stamina damage. The creeper then flushes red and withdraws.

The plant somehow knows when a creature is still suffering from this blood loss, and will not drain nutrients from a creature still suffering from Stamina damage.

It is also relatively easy to prevent the single tendrils from feeding off one unless one is paralyzed. However, the future men warn that it is better to simply submit. If a creature becomes marked as being recalcitrant, the bloodsucker creepers have the ability to continue sucking blood while he is paralyzed from the pods, until he is slain, and the pods provide the only ready source of drinking water on the islands of the salt sea.

These plants also have vines that will take away and consume the remains of any meal, or dead bodies left within the undergrowth.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Stone Tortoise

Also known as the *stone beast*, this creature might be impossible to slay. It is shaped like a grey tortoise with a badger's legs and a frog's head, the peak of its shell reaching 4 feet from the ground. Its eyes are also grey, and it can easily be mistaken for a statue. In the future earth in which it dwells, the ground constantly shakes, which can make it appear as though its first movements are an illusion of life rather than life itself, but it is very much alive. It hibernates for long periods, and requires 1d6 rounds to become fully active when first encountered.

The thing may well be made of stone. It creaks when it moves, and the jaws clang when they shut, as though made of iron. Where the shell does not cover it, it is armored with thousands of tiny silicon plates, which slide over each other when it moves, creating the creaking sound. Even its eyes cannot be damaged - only by attacking the inside of the creature's mouth can it be harmed.

The creature's dual AC reflects this dichotomy; the outer shell is easily hit, but causes no damage, while the inside of the creature's mouth is difficult to hit but vulnerable. A weapon that hits the outer surface for maximum damage, unless magical, breaks.

Within the creature's mouth, a huge, pulsing red eye-like organ can be seen at the back of its throat. If pierced, it exudes a yellowish fluid. Damaging this organ is the only way to harm the stone tortoise, and even if the creature seems to have died, it has not.

When the creature is "slain", the organ stops pulsing, but it soon begins pulsing again. Weapons and objects that strike the organ are lost forever, as the organ holds them fast and absorbs them into itself. There is no save, and even magic items and objects are affected. Once "slain", it will take 1d6 rounds to absorb the weapon or objects in its throat, then begin to animate. It will not be hostile again for another 2d6 rounds.

The stone tortoise is enormously heavy, but if flipped onto its back, it has a hard time righting itself, requiring 2d6 minutes to do so. It cannot effectively attack from this position. Because of the creature's weight, it must be in a precarious position, such as climbing stairs, for even a Mighty Deed to be able to flip it over.

The stone tortoise can extend its head up to 10 feet from its body to attack.

Stone tortoise: Init -4; Atk bite +4 melee (1d6+4) or claw +0 melee (1d8+4); AC 4/18; HD 3d10; hp 15; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP Shell, consume weapons, return to life, 10' reach, vulnerability to being flipped over; SV Fort +30, Ref +2, Will +8; AL N.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Air Shark

The air shark, which comes in various sizes, is an aerial predator from the far future. The smallest is about 2 feet long, the largest can reach 10 feet. There are several distinct species of air sharks, but they are all built along the same lines. All of them are scarlet in hue.

Like the shark, an air shark has rough, sand-papery skin that can cause serious abrasions. This skin is nonetheless extremely thin, so that if it passes before a strong light, organs and bones can clearly be seen through it. They are torpedo-shaped, not unlike a shark, with extremely large mouths filled with rows of triangular teeth.

A bladder filled with a lighter-than-air gas is located atop the head, making it bulge out, as though the air shark's brain were ready to explode. Another of these bladders forms a hump just behind the head, creating a sinister dromedary effect.

They have a double pair of very long wings, like those of a dragonfly, extending from just behind the head. The end of the tail has two huge diaphanous vertical fins.

Although an air shark is naturally aerial throughout its lifetime, and a grounded air shark has some difficulty regaining the air - it relies mainly upon the wind for its motion, using wings and tail fins to tack.

Any creature that comes into direct contact with an air shark's skin must make a Luck check or take 1 point of damage per level from abrasion.

Air shark, small (2-4'): Init +2; Atk bite +0 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP Abrasion; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Air shark, medium (4-6'): Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (1d6); AC 10; HD 2d6+2; hp 8; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP Abrasion; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Air shark, large (6-8'): Init +1; Atk bite +2 melee (1d8) or tail thrash +4 melee (1d3 + abrasion); AC 9; HD 3d6+3; hp 11; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP Abrasion; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

Air shark, very large (8-10'): Init +0; Atk bite +4 melee (1d12) or tail thrash +8 melee (1d6 + abrasion); AC 8; HD 5d6+10; hp 25; MV fly 30'; Act 2d20; SP Abrasion; SV Fort +8, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

Source: Philip José Farmer: *The Wind Whales of Ishmael* (Ace Books, 1971)

Additional Monsters

Compiled and given DCC statistics by Daniel J. Bishop

Behir

Behir: Init +4; Atk bite +8 melee (1d8+4) or claw +4 melee (2d6+4); AC 17; HD 8d8+32; MV 40' or burrow 20'; Act 4d20; SP breath lightning, grapple, constrict, immunity to electricity and poison; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +8; AL C.

A behir is a huge, snake-like creature with dozens of pairs of (relatively) short legs. Its body is a pale bluish-white, streaked with jagged stripes of darkest blue and palest yellow. Males sport two massive, backswept horns, used for display rather than fighting, atop their crocodilian heads. The maw of a behir is lined with razor-sharp teeth. Its claws are as tough as stone, allowing the creature to burrow in all but the hardest rock.

A behir can breathe lightning in a 120-foot line, doing 6d6 damage (Reflex DC 20 for half). If the lightning drops an opponent, the effect continues along the line until all damage is taken or no more targets remain. The behir itself is immune to all forms of electricity and poison. A behir can use this attack once every 1d4 rounds.

If a behir successfully attacks with three claws, it can automatically grapple, wrapping its target within its body's coils. Thereafter, it can automatically constrict for 2d10 damage each round (using one of its Action Dice). A victim can escape the behir's constriction using an opposed Strength or Agility check vs. a bonus of +8.

Behirs tunnel beneath deserts and broken lands, where they have been known to consume both the living and the dead. They are especially fond of dragon eggs and young dragons, so that adult dragons will often attack a behir on sight.

Adventurers sometimes explore behir tunnels, hoping to locate buried cities and hidden caverns by so doing. Behir have no interest in treasure, taking only carrion and living creatures, so that whatever valuables were there before the behir's passage usually remain. Few adventurers, however, are as happy encountering the tunnels' maker itself.

A behir can consume and digest even bones, scales, and hair. It can survive a very long time on very little food, and is able to enter a dormant state in times of scarcity. A dormant behir takes 2d6 rounds to fully awaken, during which time it can take no actions but is not helpless. Like some dragons, behirs sleep with one eye open, and are always at least a little bit aware of their surroundings.

Blindheim

Blindheim: Init +0; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4) or by weapon +1 melee or eye beams +4 ranged (3d6 or less); AC 10; HD 4d8; MV 30' or swim 40' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP eye beams; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0; AL C.

A blindheim is a humanoid amphibian whose large, froglike eyes reflect even the smallest amount of light to devastating effect. They dwell deep underground, in damp caverns where blind fish and crustaceans provide them food.

Blindheims live in small family groups, gathering together semi-annually only to spawn. How these groups know when to gather for spawning is a mystery, but is probably tied into the creature's biology. Skin coloration and pattern varies widely by family group.

When a blindheim is exposed to light – even as little as candlelight – its eyes can absorb, focus, and transmit that light to deadly effect. Three rounds after exposure, the blindheim can attack with a beam of cohesive light from each eye. Each beam light ignores armor (but not shields) when attacking within a 40-foot range, and does 3d6 damage. The beams begin to lose focus after this distance, doing only 2d6 damage up to a range of 50 feet, and 1d6 damage to a range of 60 feet.

A blindheim can focus both beams on a single target, or choose different targets within a 180-degree arc using the same Action Die (and attack roll result). The blindheim has a nictitating membrane that allows it to withhold its eye beams if it desires to. When not emitting eye beams, a blindheim's eyes glitter with a golden-yellow hue.

Young blindheims are born from a gelatinous mass of 4d20 eggs. The strongest and first born eat the weakest until only 1d6+2 blindheims remain; at this time they become a new family group. Newborn blindheims look rather like pale yellow fish with large, goggling, eyes. They grow rapidly, attaining adulthood over a period of six months. They gain the ability to use their eye beams when they develop limbs, at about 4 months of growth – these juveniles have only 2d8+2 Hit Dice and bite for 1 point of damage, but their eye beams are fully developed.

Blindheims may take up to three class levels in the Thief class. If optional psionics rules are used, some blindheims may have psionic powers.

Only 30% of blindheim family groups are advanced enough to use weapons. Of these, 50% will be armed with spears, and 50% with clubs.

Blindheims speak their own language.

Tactics

Blindheims need to survive until their eye beams charge, after which they are still best off attacking from range. As a result, blindheims are likely to first be seen from a distance, their eyes shining in the dark. Once a blindheim's eye beams are charged, they are likely to remain charged so long as the blindheim remains in combat with light-bearing creatures.

Blindheims will therefore use their ability to climb to stay away from opponents. They aren't clever enough to recognize missile weapons more complex than spears on sight, but once they have been used, the creatures are able to target them with their eye beams. A character can oppose such an attack with a Reflex save with a DC equal to the attack roll. Non-magical weapons are destroyed outright, and magical weapons are so heated that they must be dropped for 10 minutes (or else the user takes 1d3 damage each round the weapon is held).

Blindheims seldom fight to the death. They will have areas to climb to and hide in the face of overwhelming force. The only exception is in their spawning grounds, where blindheims gain a +4 bonus to Will saves.

Hippocampus

Hippocampus: Init +0; Atk bite +0 melee (1d3) or tail slap +2 melee (1d6); AC 15; HD 4d6; MV 10' or swim 60'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; AL N.

A hippocampus is a cross between a horse and a fish, being the equine counterpart to a merman or mermaid. Its forelegs end in webbed and clawed fingers rather than hooves, and it sometimes has a fin-like crest rather than a mane.

Hippocampi feed on seaweed, and are therefore usually found in coastal waters or around large mats of floating kelp in deeper areas. They are amphibious, breathing air and water with equal ease, but do not often come ashore (and, even then, seldom farther than the incoming tide can reach). They are typically colored in patterns similar to those of surface horses, but with shades of blue and green where they are fish-like (or sometimes overall). Some tropical hippocampi may be brightly colored, not unlike certain tropical fish.

Hippocampi are often kept by tritons, which use them as surface people do horses. Tritons have even found a way to harness hippocampi to pull carriages made of gigantic shells, both along the surface and under the sea.

They are somewhat territorial, and can be trained to fight. When faced with superior foes, either in terms of numbers or prowess, hippocampi are smart enough to swim away, and generally do so as a herd.

Wyvern

Crimson Wyvern: Init +4; Atk bite +8 melee (1d8+4) or claw +6 melee (1d6+4); AC 18; HD 4-6d8+4 hp/HD; MV 20' or fly 50'; Act 1d20; SP breath weapon; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +4; AL C.

Grey Wyvern: Init +2; Atk bite +6 melee (1d8+4) or claw +4 melee (1d6+4) or stinger +4 melee (1d4+4 plus poison); AC 16; HD 6-10d8+4 hp/HD; MV 20' or fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP poison; SV Fort +14, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

A wyvern is a type of lesser dragon without forelegs. They have hind legs and wings where forelegs attach to quadrupeds (thus being rather like the wings of birds). As with all lesser dragons, there is much speculation among sages as to their relationship with true dragons.

All wyverns have greenish or brown scales. Crimson wyverns have a reddish tint to their wings and the scales along their heads and necks. They are able to breathe fire. Grey wyverns have duller scales, often muted to olive drab tones, and are equipped with a venomous sting on their tails. They are typically larger, but less aggressive, than crimson wyverns.

A crimson wyvern's breath weapon takes the form of a 30-foot cone, and does a number of d6 in fire damage equal to the wyvern's Hit Dice (Reflex save DC 10 + wyvern's HD for half). A crimson wyvern has a 1 in 6 chance of being able to breathe fire on any of its actions.

The venom in a grey wyvern's sting does 2d6 points of damage on the first round and 1d6 points of damage per round thereafter, for a total number of rounds equal to the wyvern's Hit Dice. Each round, a free Fortitude save (DC 10 + wyvern's Hit Dice) may negate that round's damage.

Wyverns are not particularly intelligent creatures. Their attacks are often motivated by hunger, or in defense of the area immediately around their lair. Wyverns are more likely to attack larger creatures, such as horses, than they are to attack humanoids. Thus, a wyvern attack might mean the loss of a pack mule or two rather than the animals' handlers, if the attack is uncontested. Unfortunately, not contesting such an attack might mean the wyvern returns night after night, picking off a horse here and a mule there so long as the travelers remain in its territory.

As with all dragons, wyverns are attracted to shiny things. They don't go out of their way to collect them, but will line their lairs with incidental treasures. Wyverns prefer to lair in shallow caves overlooking their territory. When lairing in ruins, they prefer high places (such as towers or the upper stories of tall buildings). They are seldom found deep within ruins, or deep underground, as they become nervous when denied easy access to the sky.

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