

THE FORTRESS GOLEM

AN ADVENTUREAWEK.COM MINI-DUNGEON BY JAMES HOLLOWAY



The civilization that created the fortress golem is long dead; so was the golem, until ambitious Hester Vlack and her dark **priest** Morben discovered its command crown. Vlack and her gang have set out to collect tribute from nearby villages. Once she has enough gold and new followers, she will assault a larger settlement.

The golem's halls are strewn with corroded wreckage, all that remains of its ancient construct crew. A few maintenance drones continue to whirl around the corridors, ignoring the living.

THE GANG

Vlack's followers are small-timers who have discovered a prehistoric super-weapon and yet simply used it to extort money from farmers. The 16-member crew alternate between manning the upper deck (beyond the stairs in room 1), drinking and gambling in room 11, or sleeping in room 4. There are usually one group of four **thugs** in each of these areas plus an additional **thug** in location 11. Vlack's first mate, the **spy** Razors, oversees the crew, accompanied by two more thugs.

GETTING ONBOARD

Characters may enter the golem by climbing onto the upper deck and down the stairs at location 1, by climbing the crane cable through the hatch at location 6, or even by ascending the waste sluices at location 5.

1D6 RANDOM EVENT

- 1 Golem shifts direction. Standing creatures must make a **DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** or fall prone.
- 2 A mechanism clatters loudly for one minute; all creatures have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks based on hearing.
- 3 The golem comes to a halt and rests for a few minutes.
- 4 A part malfunctions, bringing a swarm of repair drones to its location.
- 5 Vlack activates a siren, sending the crew scrambling to the belly hatch (location 6) or upper deck (location 1).
- 6 Morben's research produces a magical reaction in the fountain chamber, causing him to cast a randomly-selected spell on the nearest character.

1. MARSHALLING HALL

A statue of the Maker, the golem's long-forgotten god, leans on an oversized wrench. The stairs lead to the upper deck on the golem's back.

2. ARMORY

Disused and rusty. Among the debris are 10 *crossbow bolts* +1 and a *hand axe* +1.

3. LABORATORY

This undiscovered room, hidden behind a bulkhead, was the sanctum of the golem's chief enchanter. Two **combat drones** stand dormant inside the room. They will activate in 30 seconds if no one gives the now-forgotten password. In the room is a manual outlining the golem's functions; understanding it requires weeks of research and a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. Most of the other items are rotted and useless except for a *driftglobe* and a *scroll of unseen servant*.

4. SLEEPING QUARTERS

The thugs have turned this chamber into a bunkhouse, with hammocks strung between pillars and bedrolls on the floor. A cache hidden in a bedroll contains 60 gp.

5. LAVATORY

A sliding metal grate divides the chamber in two. The waste system flushes out of a sluice on the belly of the golem, leaving a stream of filth.

6. STOREROOM AND HATCH

This hatch leads out of the golem's belly. A crane mounted in the ceiling allows the crew to lift and lower heavy loads.

7. REFECTORY

This small dining area was used by the few humans in the original crew, but the new crew cook on campfires on the upper deck and use this room for storage instead. Among the plunder are 65 gp in cash and 250 gp worth of gems. A pile of old debris at the rear serves as a nest for a pair of **giant wolf spiders**.

8. BRIG

Vlack keeps any hostages she takes in this abandoned storeroom. Currently imprisoned here is **Elan Jash**, the heir of a local landowner; the gang are waiting for his mother to pay their ransom. Elan is panicked and ineffective, but returning him to his family will earn a 500 gp reward. Razors has the key to the lock; a character who succeeds on a **DC 13 check with thieves' tools** can also pick it.

9. CHAPEL

This holy space venerates the Maker. The irreligious raiders use it as a storage area. Among the minor valuables here are 55 gp in cash and a further 250 gp worth of gems.

10. SANCTUM

The cog-shaped symbol of the Maker dominates this small space. Tattered tapestries in the god's praise cover the walls. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** can piece together the story of how the Maker chained a spirit into a magical fountain to animate the golem.

11. ANTECHAMBER

The gang use this as a lounge; maps are spread out here, and one thug is usually on duty at the door in the west wall to see that Vlack and Morben are not disturbed. If Razors and his henchmen are not patrolling the golem or on the upper deck, they are here.

12. FOUNTAIN CHAMBER

The bubbling liquid in this fountain is the physical form of the spirit bound into the golem. It wishes to return to its home plane, which would deactivate the golem. The priest Morben is here most of the time, studying the pool to determine its function. He is going increasingly mad as he does so.

13. COCKPIT

The throne here interfaces with the crown worn by Hester. She trusts no one else to use it. She even sleeps in a small cot beside the throne, only leaving if the golem stops to attack a village. Controlling the golem occupies Hester's mind, distracting her; she has disadvantage on all Wisdom and Intelligence checks relating to anything outside the cockpit.

