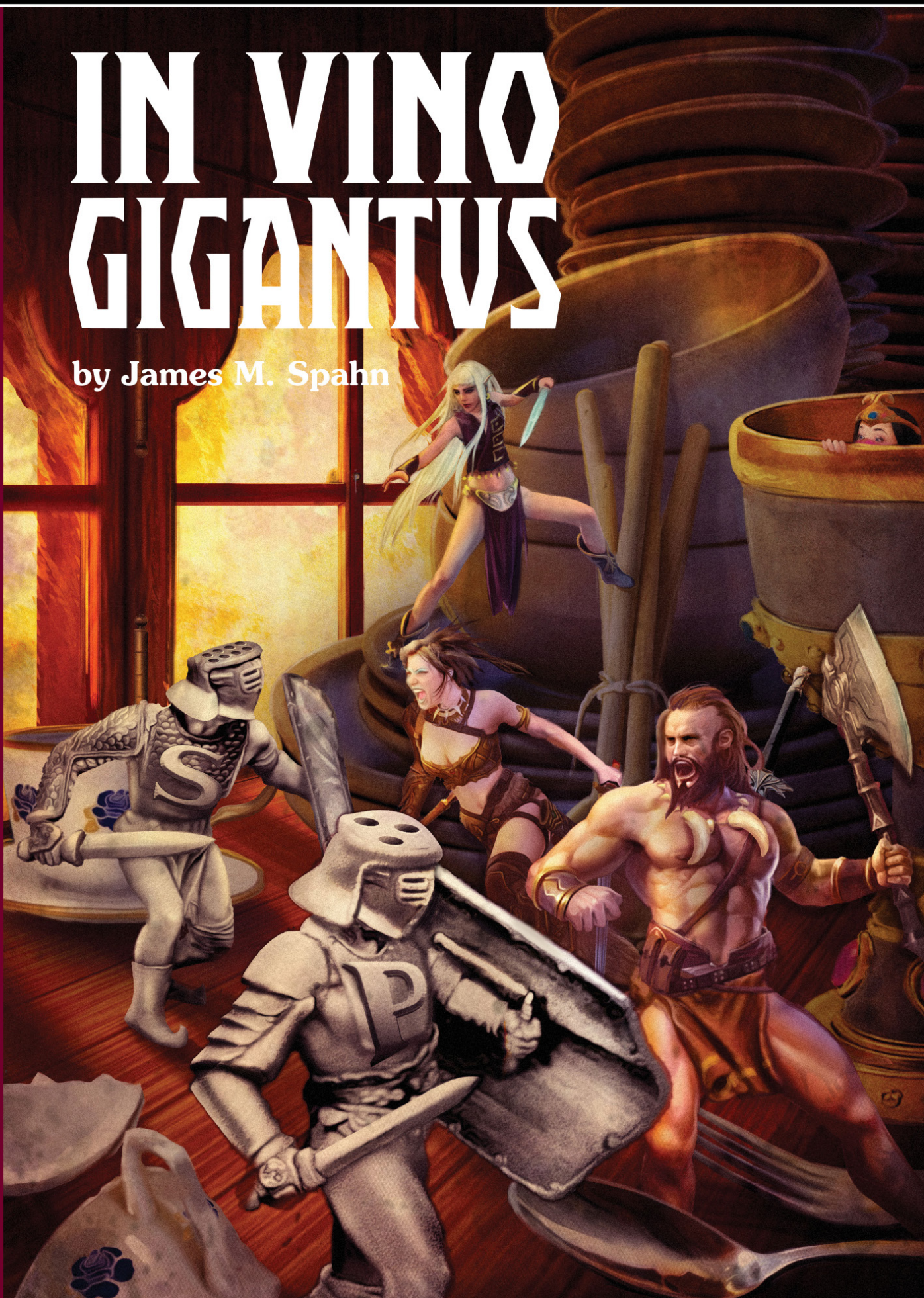




FROG GOD GAMES ADVENTURES

IN VINO GIGANTUS

by James M. Spahn



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IN VINO GIGANTVS

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In Vino Gigantus

By James M. Spahn

In Vino Gigantus is a short Fifth Edition adventure for 4-6 Tier 1 characters. It takes place in the magnificent floating castle of a foppish storm giant sorcerer named Lord Clovis Tempestas IV.

Adventure Background

In ages past Stormridge Sanctum was the familial estate of the Tempestas Clan of storm giants. Floating across the sky on a massive and fertile field of clouds, it seemed that the bounty of four winds knew no bounds. That was before the arrival of the dragons. They came in the night under a blood red moon, and Lord Clovis Tempestas II, a grand sorcerer, would not lower himself to parlay with what he called “winged snakes.”

His pride would be the downfall of his bloodline, his people, and his beloved Stormridge Sanctum. Great storms of fire and lightning tore across the sky on and off for years and by the time the Tempestas Clan had defeated their foes, the only thing that survived was the Sanctum itself, Clovis II’s grandson, and a handful of servants and the beloved family dog — Donner.

This tragic history didn’t deter the spoiled young Clovis IV from enjoying excess. He was convinced that the pleasure and indulgence were his noble responsibility. He lives with a handful of lingering servants in the grandiose Stormridge Sanctum in decadence. He forces enchanted harps to play for his pleasure, he sculpts gaudy statues, and he drinks wine — lots and lots of wine.

It is Clovis IV’s love of wine and the slow degeneration of his castle that have driven him to finally take action. His wine cellar has become

fouled and flooded and this will not stand. Though he is not as skilled an arcanist as his ancestors, he knows a few tricks. Like any good nobleman, he has decided to hire peasants to solve his problems.

By weaving an ancient spell of summoning and binding, he has drawn an unwitting party of adventurers into his great sky castle to take care of his dirty work. Whether they want to or not is of little concern to the foppish Clovis. After all, who would deny the honor that comes in serving the magnificent Tempestas Clan?

Adventure Summary

Suddenly summoned into the great sky castle of Stormridge Sanctum by the magical incantations of Clovis Tempestas IV, the characters are tasked by the foppish storm giant with finding the source of the infestation plaguing his wine cellar and purging it before he loses any more of his precious libations. With them quite literally clutched in the palm of such a powerful creature, it is a deal they cannot refuse. Under the watchful eye of Clovis IV’s steward, Wamp the Ogre Magi, they are given a fine meal before being banished to the lower storage of Stormridge Sanctum. After being set down in the flooded cellar, they must contend with environmental hazards in a domain built for a creature ten times their size. In their dangerous investigations they discover that a second adventuring party is also struggling to survive in this monster-infested basement, though their purposes and even their presence is unknown to Clovis. The truth is that he simply forgot they were here even there after he hired



them several weeks ago. Their investigation eventually leads the player characters to discover that it is Clovis's beloved Thunder Terrier, Donner, that is inadvertently responsible for the flooded basement and if the dog is not stopped, Stormridge Sanctum may be at risk of falling from the sky, killing both its residents and any beings unfortunate enough to be under it.

Beginning the Adventure

This adventure can begin at literally any point in time. From downtime where the player characters are idly passing the evening at an inn between adventures to the middle of a pitched combat, Clovis IV has cast a summoning spell that draws the player characters from whatever location where they presently reside into Stormridge Sanctum – in fact, into the palm of his hand! It is recommended that regardless of the location from which the player characters find themselves swept, Stormridge Sanctum itself, and thus the location of the adventure, take place miles above a village, city, or other heavily populated area in order to provide as much tension as possible during the climactic rescue of Donner.

Part One: An Unexpected Audience

As previously mentioned in the Beginning the Adventure section above, the characters find themselves suddenly and unexpectedly summoned into the clutches of Clovis Tempestas IV and held prisoner in his ancestral home, Stormridge Sanctum. You are encouraged to read or paraphrase the text below at whatever point you feel is appropriate to begin the adventure.

There is the distinct crackle of powerful arcane energies around you and your companions, distracting you from the task at hand. Magical energy leaps between members of your party in wide, azure arcs until it is as though you are at the very heart of a lightning storm. A buzz rings through your body and your hair stands up on end before a sudden white flash leaves you blinded and disoriented for a few seconds.

A sudden sense of what can only be described as otherness comes over you as your senses return. The ground beneath your feet is firm but soft, and as your vision clears you discover that you and your allies are standing, quite literally, in the palm of a fifty-foot tall giant! As grandiose as only a giant can be, the man clutching you and your companions has well-kept teal hair streaming down his back, blazing sapphire eyes, and flawless azure skin. His fingers, wrists, neck, and head are adorned with perfectly polished gold jewelry sized to his stature — each piece worth a king's ransom. A long flowing white toga hangs to his ankles and is met by a pair of massive sandals.

A booming, jovial laugh very nearly blows you from your precipice as his entire body shakes with mirth and the wind of his wine-soaked breath reminds you of the strongest summer storms you've ever seen. "Hahahaha! Not what I expected, but I am glad to see my incantation worked from such a distance! Greetings, little masters! I am Lord Clovis Tempestas IV and welcome to my humble home, Stormridge Sanctum! The noble house Tempestas has summoned you here for a purpose most befitting your stature and skill. Pray tell, won't you sup with me while I recount my plight to you?"

Without waiting for a response, Clovis kneels and releases you from his grasp, setting you gingerly upon the massive stone floor of his seemingly endless hall. He claps his hands and it is as if thunder itself rings from within the hall. A moment later, a cadre of ogres enters the room from a door far to the east, bearing a long wooden table, matching chairs, and the trappings of a feast like you had only heard of in songs and story.

Clovis's servants, a dozen remarkably hygienic and well-dressed ogres, set a fine table filled with fowl, bread, fruit, and

the finest wine. The table is set with solid gold dinnerware of the highest quality. After the ogres set the table, they take positions near the table and follow Clovis's bidding. This primarily consists of his requests that more wine and food be brought around following the slightest sign that these provisions may be running low.

The storm giant nobleman is eager for the characters to eat at his table and remains jovial unless they refuse his hospitality, at which point he insists they eat at his table and accept his hospitality. If they adamantly refuse, then he tells them that those who refuse his generosity are forced to accept his servants' justice and motion to the ogres and the massive swords at their belts. The instant they partake, his demeanor returns to one of an exuberant host.

Clovis informs the characters that something foul has taken hold of his beloved wine cellar in the bowels of his estate, and that if they will be of service in rooting out this trouble and saving what remains of his beloved wine collection he will reward them handsomely. He explains that while he could handle this task himself, he believes members of the Tempestas Household are beneath such menial tasks. At this point roll a few twenty-sided dice behind a screen and ignore the results. Clovis informs the players that since they have eaten at his table, they are magically bound to his service. This is, of course, a complete fabrication. But don't tell the players that. Let them assume the worst. A successful DC 22 Wisdom (Insight) check clues the characters in to Clovis's deception.

If the characters continue to refuse Clovis's service, he tells them that they are not worthy of death at the hands of even his servants and has them escorted from Stormridge Sanctum, though how they are to return to the ground hundreds of miles below is beyond his concern as it is beyond the borders of his domain.

Once the players have accepted Clovis's "offer" of service, he informs them that he will pay them each 500 gold pieces for their service as well as provide them with three *potions of healing* to aid them in their task. After the meal, he pays them each 100 gold pieces as proof of good faith, and merrily orders the ogres to lead the party to the cellar door.

Clovis speaks the following words as the party departs for the cellar:

"Oh, mind the dog. Donner can be a bit feisty..."

Fighting Clovis and his Servants

If the characters are foolish enough to attempt to fight Clovis, it's a suicidal endeavor. Clovis first orders his ogre guards to kill the characters and only engages in combat if attacked directly. If at any point during the battle the players withdraw, Clovis repeats his offer of service, though this time he provides no rewards or potions. Clovis has the statistics of a **storm giant** and is accompanied by six **ogres** armed with two-handed swords, along with Wamp — his chief servant and an ogre magus (an **oni**).

Part Two: The Wine Cellar

After enjoying Clovis's hospitality, the characters are led by six of his **ogre** servants to the lower levels of Stormridge Sanctum, where the ogres lock and magically seal the door to the wine cellar with the characters on the other side. With a thrum of magical wards, they are left to explore the depths of Stormridge Sanctum and find out just what has been destroying the precious wine of Lord Tempestas. The door cannot be opened or destroyed via mundane means from within the wine cellar.



The walls of the wine cellar are 10 feet thick and made of carved stone. The ceilings are clearly sized for to gigantic proportions and rise to a height of 60 feet. The doors are made of solid wood and are 8 feet thick and are of remarkable craftsmanship and easily open for a being with a giant's strength. The characters will have a more difficult time and must succeed on a DC 17 Strength check to push them open. Oddly enough, if the door is locked, a character succeeding on a DC 12 Dexterity check with thieves' tools will have an easy time picking the massive mechanisms, provided they can climb 20 feet up (requires a successful DC 12 Strength [Athletics] check) to the keyhole and find a way to secure themselves (e.g. by using a climber's kit) while attempting to do so. Alternatively, Small characters (such as gnomes or halflings), can squeeze through these massive keyholes with a successful DC 10 Dexterity check, though they will still need to find a way down once they've reached the other side.

Unless otherwise stated in a location's description, there is no illumination. The characters need to rely on torches, lanterns, or magical sources of light in most cases.

Random Encounters

Clovis's basement is filled with all manner of nasty creatures that have taken up residence since he has all but abandoned the wine cellar. For every hour the player characters spend investigating the dungeon, roll a d8. On a roll of 1, either pick from the chart below or roll another d8 to determine a creature that they encounter.

If an 8 is rolled then no monster is encountered. Instead the characters hear the shrill, yet booming and thunderous, bark of a dog echo through the wine cellar as if coming from some distant location.

The statistics for all creatures and NPCs can be found in the **5E SRD** or in the **Appendix** at the end of this adventure.

1d8 Monster

1	2d6 giant centipedes
2	2d4 giant rats
3	2d4 giant frogs
4	1d10 giant leeches
5	Yellow mold
6	1 ogre
7	1d3+1 feral undead cats
8	Noise: strange thundering bark

Area 1-1: The Stairwell

With a heavy thud the door to the wine cellar slams closed behind you. There is the sound of a massive lock being set into place and suddenly the only exit from Lord Clovis's wine cellar thrums with a pulse of magical energy and glows with a faint blue light. In the thin illumination you can see the giant-sized stone stairwell descending down into the depths of the cellar. The path down is massive, dropping five feet per massive stone step. The faint trickle of water can be heard below, as if a stream of a tiny waterfall was spilling into a basin somewhere in the dark.

The door back into Clovis's castle is warded and cannot be opened unless the characters have a *knock* spell available, though alternate means back to the ground floor could be attempted if characters in the **Stove Pipe** area of the dungeon (Areas 2-1, 2-2, 2-3) are somehow able to dig up through 10 feet of solid rock. Attempts to climb up to the key hole and

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pick the lock result in the offending thief suffering a nasty jolt, suffering 3 (1d6) lightning damage, that throws them 20 feet to the hard stone below unless they make a successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. This fall inflicts an additional 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.

Descending the steps is easy enough, though their size can present minor problems for smaller character who may need to hang from the edge of each step and drop down. The circular staircase winds 90 degrees before emptying into **Area 1-3**. Halfway down a large chamber can be seen off to one side, its door hanging open and leading to **Area 1-2**.

Area 1-2: The Sideboard

The door to this chamber hangs open, revealing a large sideboard. The surface of a massive wooden table towers thirty feet above you along the far wall, with a pair of stools half as high set against it. You can see a few beer barrels and cupboards sitting atop the table, though smaller items that might be sitting on the table's surface can't be viewed from your current vantage point on the ground below. The pungent odor of cheese fills the room, mixing with the scent of stagnant water rising from below.

There is nothing of interest on the floor, but characters that succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check can climb up onto the table and reach the table's surface. Against the back wall are two corked barrels. If the characters fail their DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check and are not quiet in their exploration of this room they alert the three very aggressive **giant rats** that are nibbling on some very old and very moldy cheese that has rotted in the cupboard. Unless the characters actively indicated a cautious approach or are naturally alert (passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher), these rats surprise the party.

The two barrels in the room are resting on their side and can be opened by removing a cork set into the top of each one. Removing one of these giant-sized corks requires a successful DC 18 Strength check. The barrels immediately gush countless gallons of old, foul beer on half of the table and any character caught in the blast must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw or lose their footing and be cast onto the stone floor below, suffering 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage while being knocked prone. Removing a cork automatically disturbs the rats lurking in the cupboard, who move to attack immediately.

Inside the cupboard the characters find a very large wheel of moldy cheese that smells terrible. Any character that eats the cheese must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw versus poison or be poisoned for 4 hours and suffer an explosive gastrointestinal reaction within 1d6 minutes. The cupboard is not without its valuables, however. On the upper shelf of the cupboard are a few pieces of giant-sized silverware, most of which has degenerated due to age. However, one particularly fine giant-sized steak knife is enchanted and functions as *+1 greatsword*.

Area 1-3: The Wine Cellar

You and your companions reach the bottom of the stairwell to reveal a massive chamber that is undoubtedly Clovis's primary wine cellar. The ceiling of the chamber rises far beyond your meager sources of light. The far wall is covered by a latticework wooden wine rack that may have once housed massive bottles of wine and spirits. Now only a handful of bottles remain, and water pours out from within the shadows of these nooks onto the cellar's floor, creating a massive pool of brackish, grey water that is almost 3 feet deep and is contained in the room by the last step of the stairs.

At first glance this room appear to be the source of Lord Clovis's flooding problems, but characters need to undertake a detailed investigation of the chamber to discover the truth. The floor-to-ceiling wine rack set into the wall opposite the chamber's entryway contains a meager four bottles of wine, though the shattered remains of several broken bottles is mixed into

the mire that has flooded the floor. Water pours from several of the storage slots, cascading to the floor.

The water that has flooded this chamber has risen to nearly 3 feet and acts as difficult terrain for Medium and smaller creatures. In addition, equipment can easily become saturated and rendered useless (such as scrolls, maps, ink, torches) if it is not somehow protected from becoming soaked. Characters trying to root through the grey water run the risk of cutting themselves on shards of broken glass obscured by the muck. A character that blindly paws through the water must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check or cut themselves, taking 1 (1d2) slashing damage. A character runs the same risk of suffering damage for every three rounds spent wading through the water with an extensive amount of exposed flesh.

While climbing the latticework that once stored a fine collection of giant-sized wine bottles would normally be easy, with everything soaking wet in the chamber, the characters have to take extra precautions if they attempt to make an ascent. The lattice work runs in a grid that is four slots wide by ten slots high. Each slot is 5 feet square and is set against the stone wall. Any character that attempts to climb the wine rack must succeed on a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check with disadvantage. Employing a climber's kit negates the disadvantage.

The source of the flooding seems to be coming from a thin separation along the wall behind the latticework, where the wall meets the ceiling. It is running down the back wall and pouring out onto the floor at several locations. The separation is too small for the player characters to squeeze into.

The uppermost wine bottle is false and can actually be pulled to reveal a secret door along the southern wall. Characters who climb up to it and succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check can see a rod running from the bottom of the wine bottle into the back wall. Attempting to pull the wine bottle requires some ingenuity and feat of great strength (along with combined DC 25 Strength check — allow multiple characters to add their Strength checks together) by the party, such as tying a rope around its neck and having several members pull on the rope. Attempts to push on the bottom from within the slot at its bottom requires a successful Strength check with disadvantage.

Once the bottle has been moved, a secret door in the southern wall opens up, leading to Clovis's secret larder. The pooled water immediately floods into **Area 1-4** and any character still standing in that water must make a successful DC 14 Strength saving throw or be swept along in the current. Small characters have disadvantage on the saving throw.

Area 1-4: Dinnerware Storage

Like the wine cellar, the floor of this room is pooled over with the same murky, disgusting water. A large china cabinet rests against the wall opposite the newly revealed secret entrance into this room. It towers almost fifty feet in height and is made of a dark hardwood. A pair of large doors are set into the top half of it. Crystalline glass is set into these doors, revealing stacks of golden inlaid dishes, crystalline goblets, and etched silver flatware resting on the shelves inside in a fine display. There are even a pair of human-sized statues of knights, cast in pewter, flanking the dinnerware. A giant-sized heavy wooden door bound in iron can be seen along the eastern wall.

The dishware stored in the massive china cabinet is Lord Clovis's finest tableware and sized appropriately. While the bottom of the cabinet is warped from moisture, the rest of the structure (and the dishes within) appear to have survived in good condition. Like **Area 1-3**, the characters need to wade through muck and water to get to anything.

The doors to the china cabinet can be opened easily enough, if the characters climb up to them. However, if the characters disturb any of Clovis's Sunday best, the two man-sized pewter knights (which serve as salt and pepper shakers) animate and attack the intruders, attempting to slay them or shove them onto the stone floor below. Each of the **pewter knights** (see **Appendix**) attempts to use its stored spice as a weapon.

Once defeated, the characters can freely take the dinnerware. It is easily worth a modest hoard of gold pieces, though given that the goblets are 8



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doubles the chances of a wandering monster taking notice. The door to this room is closed (but not locked or trapped), and the only telltale sign of the problematic ice is the fact that the water surrounding the door is bone-chillingly cold. In fact, every ten minutes a character spends standing in this water they suffer 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Alternatively, Small characters can attempt to climb (requiring a successful DC 12 Strength [Athletics] check) the door and slip in through the keyhole into the chamber, though they are still unable to open the door from inside until the ice is dealt with.

Though dry, this chamber is permeated by a bone-chilling cold that is undoubtedly magical in nature. A hard, blue light radiates from the walls of the room, providing a surprising level of illumination. A thick sheet of ice covers the floor and several large, wicked looking hooks hang from chains far above your head. The chamber narrows along its western side, turning into a long hall and against the southern portion of this you can see a frosted wooden table beneath a pegboard where hooks, giant-sized meat cleavers, and massive butcher knives hang — some with massive hunks of flesh still hanging from their blades.

This area was used to prepare and store meat and other perishables for Lord Clovis, though it has not been used for a very long time. A massive cookbook, still open and encased in ice, rests on the table — though it is not visible from the floor. Only when characters climb up onto the surface of the long table along the southwestern wall do they see the book. Careful examination of the book and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveal that its exposed page, if removed, functions as a *spell scroll* of *purify food and drink* and *protection from energy*. However, removing the page from the ice is difficult and using flame to melt requires a successful DC 16 Dexterity check to void damaging the page.

An additional complication is the fact that it is near the pegboard containing the meat carving tools which are still soiled by rotted meat. If any character with a torch stands within 20 feet of these, the heat thaws the 3 **giant leeches** (see **Appendix**) that have been slumbering in the foul meat in 1d6 rounds.

The door leading into **Area 1-7** can be opened with a successful DC 15 Strength check and is not locked or trapped.

Area 1-7: Basement Kitchen

This walls in this room are covered with cabinets, cupboards, and pantries while the center of the chamber is dominated by a massive wooden table surrounded by giant stools. It too is flooded with over two feet of grey, brackish water and the darkness that normally fills the long halls of Clovis's cellars is broken by a faint orange light coming from atop the table far above your head.

Primarily used for food prep and storage, this is the kitchen of Clovis's castle. The characters arrive to find the room has been repurposed. A company of adventurers is taking refuge on the tabletop, hiding from 2 **giant weasels** that have driven them to such desperate measure. The weasels once made their nest in one of the room's pantries before being driven away by Clovis's dog, the Thunder Terrier Donner. They returned only to stumble upon these adventurers, and promptly attacked.

Roll a Dexterity (Stealth) check for the weasels when the characters first enter the room. If the Dexterity (Stealth) check is higher than any of the party's passive Wisdom (Perception) they do not notice the weasels concealed by both shadows and water. The weasels ambush them at the first opportunity, obsessed with defending their home. The adventurers hiding on the table are not particularly heroic and remain concealed during the battle unless victory seems imminent for the characters. If such is the case,

feet tall and the plates are the size of a tapestry, such an endeavor may prove nigh impossible. If the dinnerware were somehow recovered intact it would sell for well over 5000 gold pieces.

Area 1-5: Main Hall

A gargantuan stone hall runs into darkness in all directions, well beyond the illumination of your torches and lanterns. The chamber is flooded, almost to the knees of any humans or elves and is even more difficult for those of smaller stature. The sound of running water can be heard far into the distance, buried in the dark to the east.

The main hall of Clovis's wine cellar is flooded like the rest of the rooms, though not filled with dangerous broken glass or other hazards. Though movement speed is reduced, the characters simply need to be mindful when it comes to keeping certain objects dry. The doors leading to various locations in the cellar are difficult to open, requiring a successful DC 15 Strength check because of the resistance created by standing water throughout the dungeon. The chamber itself is over 150 feet in length and is 30 feet wide. It can take some time to cross, and you should keep this in mind when checking for wandering monsters.

Area 1-6: Cold Storage

The door to this room cannot be opened, even with a successful Strength check as described in **Area 1-5**. The water that has flooded into the Cold Storage chamber has frozen, creating a layer of ice that presses against the door and must be broken before the characters can enter the room. Breaking the ice can be done by spending 1d6 x 10 minutes hacking away at the frozen mess with a large axe or blunt weapon in order to knock the door free from its frozen binding. However, the noise created in doing so

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they aid by attacking from their elevated position using ranged weapons.

Once the giant weasels have been defeated, the leader of the adventuring company, Casthor, calls down to the party. They are wary, with their weapons still at the ready. Only three remain and the corpse of a fourth member that died from its wounds is floating in the southeastern corner of the room, showing evidence of having been gnawed on by one of the weasels.

Casthor (N male human **guard**), Ernesto (LN male human **scout**), and Emilia (LN female half-elf **apprentice mage** [see **Appendix**]) are willing to aid the characters but are primarily concerned with self-preservation. Their primary interests lie in escaping the estate with their lives intact. They won't actively betray the party, but they aren't afraid to do whatever is necessary to ensure their own survival. The characters can enlist their aid in return for an equal share of any treasure discovered and an equal cut of Clovis's promised payment.

Treasure. The tables in this room are surprisingly clean, though the pantries and cupboards are filled with giant-sized pots, pans, and other cooking implements. If the characters take their time and succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check while rooting through these cabinets, they discover the cook left behind a small (for a giant) pouch buried behind some dishes on one of the shelves. It contains 134 gold pieces, 54 silver pieces, and three small rubies each worth 50 gold pieces.

The body of the dead cleric (named Liam, as told by his still living compatriots) is carrying or wearing the following gear: a set of chain mail armor, a metal shield, a mace, a small silver holy symbol of Mithras, as well as a waterlogged backpack containing a small prayer book, a waterskin, three torches, a tinderbox, a bedroll and a money pouch containing 14 gold pieces. Liam's allies lay claim to these items unless the player characters threaten violence.

Finally, the weasels have a small nest that is half submerged in the mire. Composed primarily of cloth rags, straw, and mud, a character that succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a silver ring with a tiny row of diamonds set into the band that serves as a *ring of protection*.



Area 1-8: Stove

Stacks of soaking firewood rise from the grey murk covering the floor of this chamber and a thin layer of soot seems to cover everything, even the surface of the water. Dominating the eastern half of the chamber is a huge cast iron stove with an equally large metal stovepipe rising from its apex and disappearing into the highest points of the far wall. A gentle but constant stream of water dribbles from the stove's open hatch onto the floor.

At first glance there are no threats or dangers in this room. However, appearances are deceiving. A **gray ooze** is floating through the water in this room, almost invisible in the muck. It slithers towards the player characters, surprising each character whose passive Wisdom (Perception) is lower than the Dexterity (Stealth) check of the ooze. Christhor, Ernesto, Lado, and the now-dead Liam have previously encountered the gray ooze and warn the players of its presence if they have joined the party, thus negating its chance of surprise.

Taking at least ten minutes to extensively explore the stack of soaked firewood reveals an enchanted giant-sized hatchet that functions as a +1 *battleaxe*.

The stove is large enough that a human-sized character can easily walk inside, which may create disturbing implications to more paranoid characters. Water is running down the stove pipe, pooling in the thick layer of ash on its interior. Extensive exploration of the stove beneath the layer of caked, soaking ash reveals a grate which can be lifted to reveal the ash can below (see **Area 1-8B**), and a thick, wet fog pooling in the upper portion of the stove pipe (see **Area 1-8A**).

Area 1-8A: Stove Pipe

A dense, wet fog is pooling in the upper half of the stove pipe before condensing into water which is running down the edges of the stove pipe. The pipe is wide enough for a single human being to climb up to its top and a cool breeze can be felt coming down from the fog-wrapped darkness.

Characters can make their way up the sheer surface of stove pipe with a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. Employing a climber's kit provides advantage on the check. Unfortunately, hiding in the fog far above is a single **giant spider**, waiting to ambush any creature that dares to disturb its rest. Unless player characters take appropriate precautions, it automatically surprises them and drops down on the first party member ascending the stove pipe, attacking with advantage on its initial attack. If its attack is successful, the victim must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or plummet to the ground below and suffer 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Area 1-8B: Ash Can

Lifting the grate in the bottom of the stove, after pulling away the wet muck of caked ash, you see an ash can as large as a closet set into the bottom of the stove. It is easily five square feet and twice as deep. It is half filled with a mixture of dry ash and clumps of wet ash, with scorched iron sides from decades of flaming cook fires.

Hopping down into the ash kicks up a cloud of dust — characters that fail a DC 13 Constitution saving throw are poisoned for 1 minute and begin to cough loudly during this time — that covers them in a thick layer of grey soot. Pawing through this mess takes a long time, but a character

that succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers any one of the following valuables: a scorched iron shield previously used as a serving dish (+1 *shield*), a large fire opal (worth 350 gold pieces), or a pristine golden *ring of resistance* (fire).

Area 1-9: Cook's Lounge

Two cots sized for creatures three or four times the size of a human sit against the western wall of this flooded room. They are little more than wooden frames with long sheets of cloth stretched over them, though at their height you cannot see over the edge. A desk of equal scale with a matching stool runs against the northern wall, but whatever contents rest atop it are beyond your vantage from the ground. Finally, and disgustingly, a huge ceramic chamber pot floats through the morass of water that fills the room to a height of almost three feet. A large arch without a door leads into a long eastern chamber.

This room once served as quarters for a pair of Clovis's servant-cooks. Since the flooding, they have abandoned the chamber. It has become a place of refuse and filth since their departure. Offal and bodily waste float about in the muck and the room is filled with the scent of excrement. Close examination of one of the cots reveals a depression in its center, as if something is sitting in the center of it, well above the waterline. This is the long-corrupted corpse of the ogre-cook's pet Patches, a now **feral undead cat** (see **Appendix**). It takes no notice of the player characters unless they make excessive noise, or it is disturbed directly, at which point it attempts to ambush them from its vantage point. Two more **feral undead cats** are sleeping on the desk, and if they hear the party they will yowl loudly and attack.

Characters examining the desk closely discover that the top drawer is locked. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools is sufficient to pick the lock, allowing players to recover the ogre's personal hoard of 245 gold pieces in a large sack and, buried in the far corner of the drawer, a silver normal-sized ring set with a cat's eye gem: a *ring of feline friendship* (see **Appendix**).



Area 1-10: Dry Storage

Bloated grains, oats, threshed wheat, and corn saturated by the flooding fill the surface of this chamber, pouring out from an alcove to the east. The normally brackish water takes on an almost viscous quality and trudging through such a mess takes time and strength from you and your companions. The room reeks of fouled beer and mold.

This room has no visible threats, other than wading through the disgusting paste of saturated grains and other dry goods — until the player characters cross into the threshold along the western side of the room into the giant-sized closet where barrels are stored. The archway leading into this closet is flanked on the southern side by a 5-foot square patch of **brown mold** (see **Appendix**). Because the chamber is saturated with a paste of oats and grains, this mold is likely to go unnoticed. The only hint of its presence is a mysterious growing cold as the characters draw near it.

The barrel closet itself is filled with four massive casks that store long-rotted grain. As characters draw near to the chamber, they see a light coming from atop the barrel in the northeastern corner.

The soft glow of torchlight rises from the top of the thirty-foot tall barrel in the northeastern corner of the room and you are surprised to see a narrow-faced human with sharp eyes peering down at you and your companions. He holds a torch in one hand, a rapier in the other, and wears a suit of boiled leather armor. His greasy black hair is pulled into a tight pony tail. "Hail," he calls in an almost reluctant greeting.

The stranger politely, but obviously fearfully, introduces himself as Franach. He asks the players for their help, telling them that he was hired by Clovis to deal with the flooding in the wine cellar before he became trapped in his current predicament. He is eager to join the party and gladly aids them, offering his services to their cause. Franach is, in truth, a **wererat**. Though evil, he is not a fool. He wants, more than anything, to survive. He serves the party loyally until he can escape Clovis's wine cellar and once he earns their trust he will secretly turn into a rat while the party sleeps and bite the player character he judges to be the most powerful party member each night in hopes of infecting them with lycanthropy and drawing them into his service. Franach and the adventurers in **Area 1-7** have not encountered each other before.

Area 1-11: Nest

Rising from the grey water filling the hall is a hedge of straw, half-rotted cloth, and other detritus. It stands six feet high and is almost as wide. Even from this distance you can see several sets of beady red eyes gazing at you and your companions from the darkness.

This collection of garbage from around the cellar was constructed by the 10 **giant rats** and 2 **diseased giant rats** that call this wall of trash home. They defend it fiercely, as they are cornered with few places to flee. If the player characters approach, and most certainly if they disturb the nest, the rats swarm them. Fortunately, if the characters slay the rats and investigate the nest, they find a plethora of riches — though it takes almost an hour of pawing through a rat-dropping-riddled pile of garbage.

Treasure. A bag of 11 small jewels each worth 5 gold pieces, 32 gold pieces in loose change, a water-tight scroll case (which contains *spell scrolls of protection from poison*, *phantasmal killer*, and *cure wounds*), a *wand of enemy detection*, and a single *boot of elvenkind* (left foot, doesn't function without the right boot).

Area 2-1: Stove Exhaust

Reaching the top of the stove pipe, you see the exhaust is wide enough and tall enough for you and your companions to stand — just barely. The pipe is almost 8 feet wide and equally tall, though walking through a rounded cast iron tunnel can be difficult at times. A steady stream of water, only ankle deep and remarkably clean, runs down the length of this hall and cloud-like fog pools above it to the knee. You feel a cool breeze coming from the north with surprising strength.

Though no monsters await the characters as they make their way down the passage, a hollow metallic echo accompanies every step or movement they make as they travel in the bowels of the wine cellar. Dexterity (Stealth) attempts are made with disadvantage while in **Area 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3**. In addition, it is all but impossible to ambush or surprise foes.

As the characters begin to make their way down the stove exhaust they hear the booming, shrill bark of a dog echo that shakes the very hall. This bark occurs once every 1d6 + 1 minutes for as long as the characters linger here. Because the sound bounces through the chamber at a deafening level, all characters must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be deafened for 1 minute.

Area 2-2: Pipe Break

You and your companions make a sharp eastern turn in the long pipe and see that the far end of the stove pipe is torn open, revealing thick white clouds pouring into the chamber that are quickly condensing and forming the steady stream of water in which you now stand. The tear in both the pipe and the stone wall behind it is wide enough to serve as a door for a human and a powerful wind buffets you and your companions. For a brief instant, the clouds part revealing endless blue skies beyond. The stove pipe turns south just before the rend and continues its path in a southerly direction.

Closely examining the area obscured by the thick fog bank reveals disgusting, slimy egg sacks that have been planted by giant spiders in this moist area. In addition, characters daring to peer over the edge can see that the very cloud upon which Clovis's estate floats has been torn and is slowly pouring into the basement — this is the source of the flooding. Unfortunately, this discovery comes with the danger of drawing precariously close to the edge and falling to the ground thousands of feet below, ending in certain death. Making such a close examination requires a successful DC 13 Dexterity check to avoid slipping in the water or losing orientation in the fog and tumbling to the unforgiving ground below. Stumbling blindly into the fog also risks bursting the spider-egg sacks and drawing the attention of two **giant spiders**, who attack instinctively.

Those who bravely attempt this examination discover that the hole looks like it was torn from the inside by some kind of beast attempting to claw its way to freedom through patience and tenacity. In truth, it was Clovis's Thunder Terrier, Donner, who inadvertently caused this potentially cataclysmic damage to the castle. Unless the characters are particularly clever, repairing the damage is beyond their ability. Fortunately, once this news is given to Clovis, he can easily order his servants to make the necessary repairs.

Characters that make sufficient noise automatically cause Donner to bark in a whimpering cry for aid from his precarious position in **Area 2-3**.

Area 2-3: Spider's Nest

The stove pipe comes to a sudden end, opening into a natural gap in the castle's stonework foundation. The chamber is easily 30 feet wide and 40 feet long, though its roof is barely 10 feet high. Half of the chamber is covered in the thick, sticky webbing of giant spiders. Tangled in these vine-like tendrils you see a teal-furred terrier of gigantic proportions with lightning blue eyes. It is a massive beast and is hopelessly caught. It sees you enter and lets out a deafening bark, its mouth crackling with lightning. In addition to its pleading gaze, you see five sets of arachnid eyes turn your way as several giant spiders move towards you and your companions with the intent of punishing you for disturbing their feast.

The spiders long ago took up residence in the hollow of the castle foundation and when Clovis's wandering pet, Donner the Thunder Terrier, managed to wiggle his way up the stove pipe in an effort to escape being trapped in the wine cellar, he became entangled in the webbing. The 5 **giant spiders** fight to the death, backed into the corner of their own lair and fighting to defend their meal.

Characters moving into or through squares 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, and 12 must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or become entangled in a manner similar to the *web* spell. Donner is webbed in this fashion on square 5. Because of the moisture and fog in the room, these webs cannot be destroyed through the simple application of fire. Fortunately, the webbing in a single square can be cut away if 10 slashing damage is inflicted on it. The webbing has an AC of 10.

Unfortunately, Donner has been driven to sheer panic and will bark every round during the battle. Each time he barks the unstable foundation crumbles and a 10-foot x 10-foot section of the floor upon which the battle occurs tumbles into the blue sky below. You can either roll 1d12 and consult the map to determine which section falls away, or simply have them fall away in sequence. Any character standing in a square where the floor falls away must make a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or plummet to a painful, messy death on the ground thousands of feet below. A character standing in any of the webbed areas can choose to intentionally entangle themselves in the web. Doing so grants them advantage on their save, though they are also automatically caught in the web. Donner's yelp also risks the characters taking thunder damage, being pushed back, and being deafened unless they succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw each time he barks.

Once the spiders have been defeated, the characters must find a way to calm Donner. Rangers and Druids have advantage on attempts to calm him down using Wisdom (Animal Handling), while other characters must make a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check without advantage. If any character is wearing the *ring of feline friendship*, Donner is automatically hostile and is likely to attack.

Depending on the condition of the floor and how the battle went, the characters may have a difficult time freeing and retrieving the Thunder Terrier. Once freed, the poor canine makes every effort to flee back down the stove pipe and towards **Area 1-1**. Upon hearing the familiar bark of Donner, Clovis's ogre magi servant Wamp releases the wards on the door, freeing the dog and the characters.

Part Three: Wine Before It's Time

With Donner recovered (or possibly slain), the player characters return to Clovis with the discovery that his beloved dog is the source of the flooded wine cellar. The Lord of House Tempestas immediately orders Wamp send several of his servants to deal with the problem and offers the characters their promised reward of 500 gold pieces. He has no interest in the treasure the players have recovered, dismissing it with a wave of his

hand as “mere trinkets that he will allow them to keep.”

If Donner has been slain and Clovis learns of this he is overcome with sorrow and barely contains his tears. In fact, over the next few weeks the characters hear of small, freakishly powerful thunderstorms breaking out in the region — an extension of his sadness pouring forth from the foundation of Stormridge Sanctum onto the ground below.

If the players return his beloved Donner to him uninjured, Clovis is overjoyed. He provides the players with their promised reward and agrees to drop them off anywhere they choose — you could use this as an opportunity to allow the characters to avoid a long overland journey or to transport the campaign to new or previously unexplored region.

In the unlikely event that the players refuse Clovis’s money and fawn over what an honor it has been to serve him, the storm giant offers them a unique reward. This reward is only available if Donner is alive. He provides them with a Thunder Terrier pup. The Gamemaster can determine the abilities of the pup using the Thunder Terrier description (see **Appendix**). Training and rearing the animal is no easy task and requires constant efforts on the part of the player characters, but after one year the pup grows into an adult Thunder Terrier.

Whether or not the player characters ever encounter Clovis, Wamp, Donner, or any of the other denizens of Stormridge Sanctum again is up to you. Casthor, Ernesto, and Lato go their own way once the adventure ends — though the players may have earned a potential ally to be utilized in the future. Faranach, on the other hand, attempts to stay with the party under the guise of an ally and slowly turn them into wererats in his service.

As suddenly as they arrived in Stormridge Sanctum, the characters find themselves returned to the earth.



Appendix

New Magic Items

Ring of Feline Friendship

Ring, rare

This delicate silver ring is set with a pair of cat’s eye gems and has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. While wearing this ring, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges to cast one of the following spells:

- *Animal friendship* (save DC 13) (felines only)
- *Fear* (save DC 13), targeting only canines that have an Intelligence of 3 or lower
- *Speak with animals* (felines only)

Unfortunately, all canines within 60 feet of the wearer of the ring regard that character with distrust or even open hostility. This includes mundane dogs, wolves, werewolves, blink dogs, and even gnolls. Hell hounds have a particularly acute hostility to the wearer.

New Creatures, Hazards, and NPCs

Apprentice Mage

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 10 (13 with mage armor)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spellcasting. The apprentice mage is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): fire bolt, mending, prestidigitation
1st level (2 slots): burning hands, mage armor, shield

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Brown Mold

Brown mold is an ectotherm and feeds on the warmth of the environment surrounding it. When within 30 feet of brown mold, the temperature is noticeably colder, often to the point of freezing depending on the size of the brown mold patch. It is common for brown mold to cover a 10-foot square, but it isn’t unusual for patches to be much larger.

Creatures that come within 10 feet of brown mold or start their turn within 10 feet of the mold must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. A failed save results in 22 (4d10) cold damage, or half as much on a successful saving throw.

Exposure to fire causes the brown mold to rapidly expand and grow in the direction of the fire. Exposure to cold instantly destroys brown mold.



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Cat, Feral Undead

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Smell. The cat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Leech, Giant

Medium beast (aquatic), unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 5 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Saving Throws Con +4

Skills Stealth +5

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10

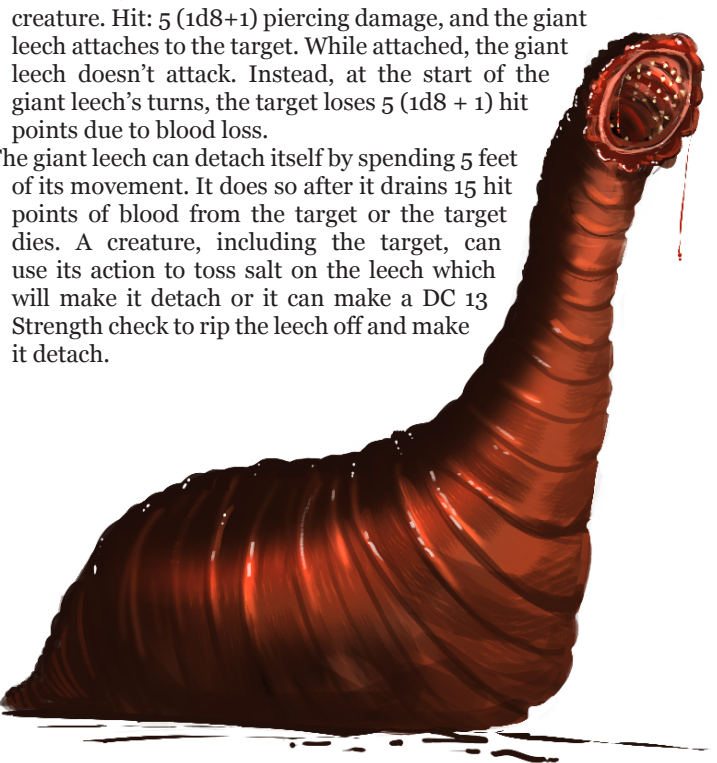
Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Vulnerability to Salt. A handful of salt burns a giant leech as if it were a flask of acid, causing 1d6 points of damage per use.

Actions

Blood Drain. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. one



creature. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage, and the giant leech attaches to the target. While attached, the giant leech doesn't attack. Instead, at the start of the giant leech's turns, the target loses 5 (1d8 + 1) hit points due to blood loss.

The giant leech can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. It does so after it drains 15 hit points of blood from the target or the target dies. A creature, including the target, can use its action to toss salt on the leech which will make it detach or it can make a DC 13 Strength check to rip the leech off and make it detach.

Pewter Knight

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic



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Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The construct is incapacitated while in the area of an antimagic field. If targeted by dispel magic, the construct must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While the construct remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal giant-sized spice shaker.

Actions

Multiattack. The construct makes two melee attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Spice Cloud (recharge 5–6). The construct exhales a cloud of spices in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be incapacitated for 1 minute as they inhale a large amount of salt, pepper, sugar, or cinnamon (depending on which the pewter knight houses within). An incapacitated creature can attempt the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on itself on a success. The area of the cone is lightly obscured for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it.

Thunder Terrier

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	7 (–2)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities thunder

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages —

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The thunder terrier has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Thundering Bark (recharge 5–6). The thunder terrier emits a thundering bark in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in this area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 9 (2d8) thunder damage, is pushed 10 feet away from the terrier, and is deafened for 1 minute. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed or deafened.

In addition, unsecured objects completely within the area of effect are automatically pushed 10 feet away from the terrier by the bark's effect, and the bark emits a thunderous boom audible out to 300 feet.

Yellow Mold

Patches of yellow mold are most commonly encountered in dark, damp locations, and grow in 5-foot square and larger patches. If disturbed, the yellow mold releases a cloud of spores in a 10-foot radius around itself. Creatures caught in the spore cloud take 11 (2d10) poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature takes an additional 5 (1d10) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on itself on a successful save.

Yellow mold is instantly destroyed by fire damage or sunlight.





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IN VINO GIGANTVS

by James M. Spahn

Suddenly summoned into the great sky castle of Stormridge Sanctum by the magical incantations of Clovis Tempestas IV, the characters are tasked by the foppish storm giant with finding the source of the infestation plaguing his wine cellar and purge it before he loses any more of his precious libations. With them quite literally clutched in the palm of such a powerful creature, it is a deal they cannot refuse. Under the watchful eye of Clovis IV's steward the Ogre Magi, they are given a fine meal before being banished to the lower storage of Stormridge Sanctum.

After being set down in the flooded cellar, they must contend with environmental hazards in a domain built for a creature ten times their size. And then their problems loom larger still.



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