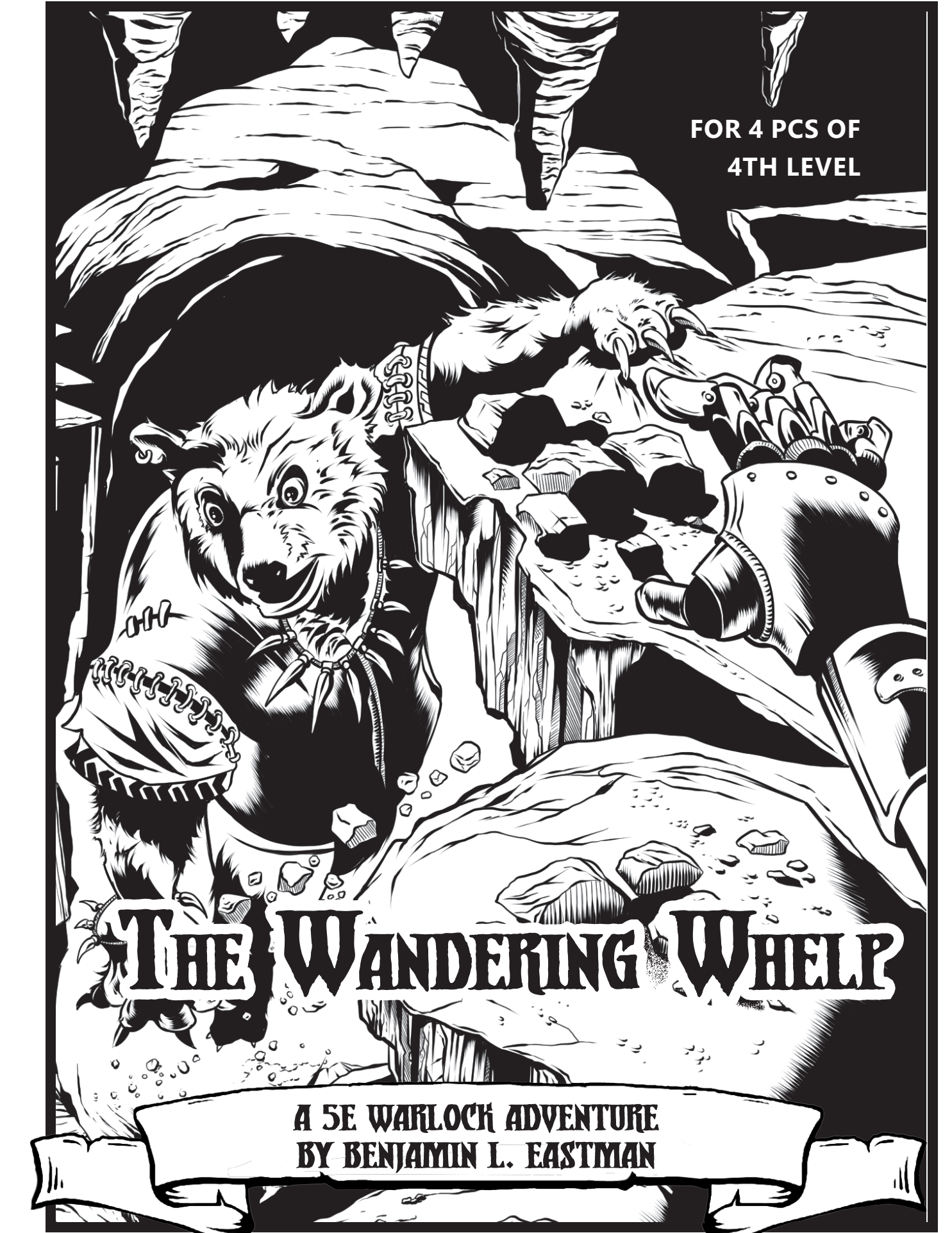




FOR 4 PCS OF
4TH LEVEL

THE WANDERING WHELP

A 5E WARLOCK ADVENTURE
BY BENJAMIN L. EASTMAN

THE WANDERING WHELP

Adventure Background

While traditionally an insular realm, the bearfolk Kingdom of Bjornrike has found itself drawn into political machinations well beyond its borders. Its king, Mesikammen, has sent bearfolk ambassadors to faraway lands such as Zobeck, Allain and the Grand Duchy of Dornig. These ambassadors serve as the eyes and ears of the kingdom, influencing foreign policy and identifying threats before they find their way to port in Bjeornheim. Mesikammen recently sent Teppen Berlatillat to serve as ambassador to the Dornitian city of Bad Solitz. Teppen brought his partner and three cubs to this posting.

Like many bearfolk cubs, Teppen's middle cub Khemma has a powerful urge to explore her new surroundings, often wandering for two or three days at a time.

Recent Events

Last week, Khemma disappeared and has not been seen since. In the nearby Tonder Alps, a vineyard was expanding its wine cellar. The sound of digging attracted a nearby group of derro, who dug in the opposite direction. Erupting from a breach to the Underworld, the derro captured the cellar master and his employees. The derro subsequently captured Khemma after she wandered into the cellar.

Adventure Summary

The PCs are summoned to the Bjornrike embassy in Bad Solitz by the Grand Baron Dymytros Howlik vann Rottsten. He tasks them to search the countryside around the Arbonesse Heights Vineyard for the ambassador's cub, Khemma.

While searching the countryside, the PCs come across an injured foxin. Its injury was created by a poison found primarily in the Underworld.

Reaching the vineyard, the PCs stumble across a volcanic vent that discharges superheated air onto nearby vines, risking the destruction of the whole property. After covering the vent, the PCs proceed to the chateau where they discover signs the workers mysteriously disappeared.

Descending into the wine cellar, the PCs encounter derro explorers who broke into the surface. After dispatching one such group of derro, the PCs discover the missing workers, who confirm Khemma descended deeper into the wine cellar. The PCs can squeeze their way through a narrow ventilation shaft or fight their way through derro and single-minded barrels of wine. Either way, the PCs must reach the wandering whelp before the ethereal lure of an angler worm means that Khemma is its next meal!

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Publisher: Wolfgang Baur

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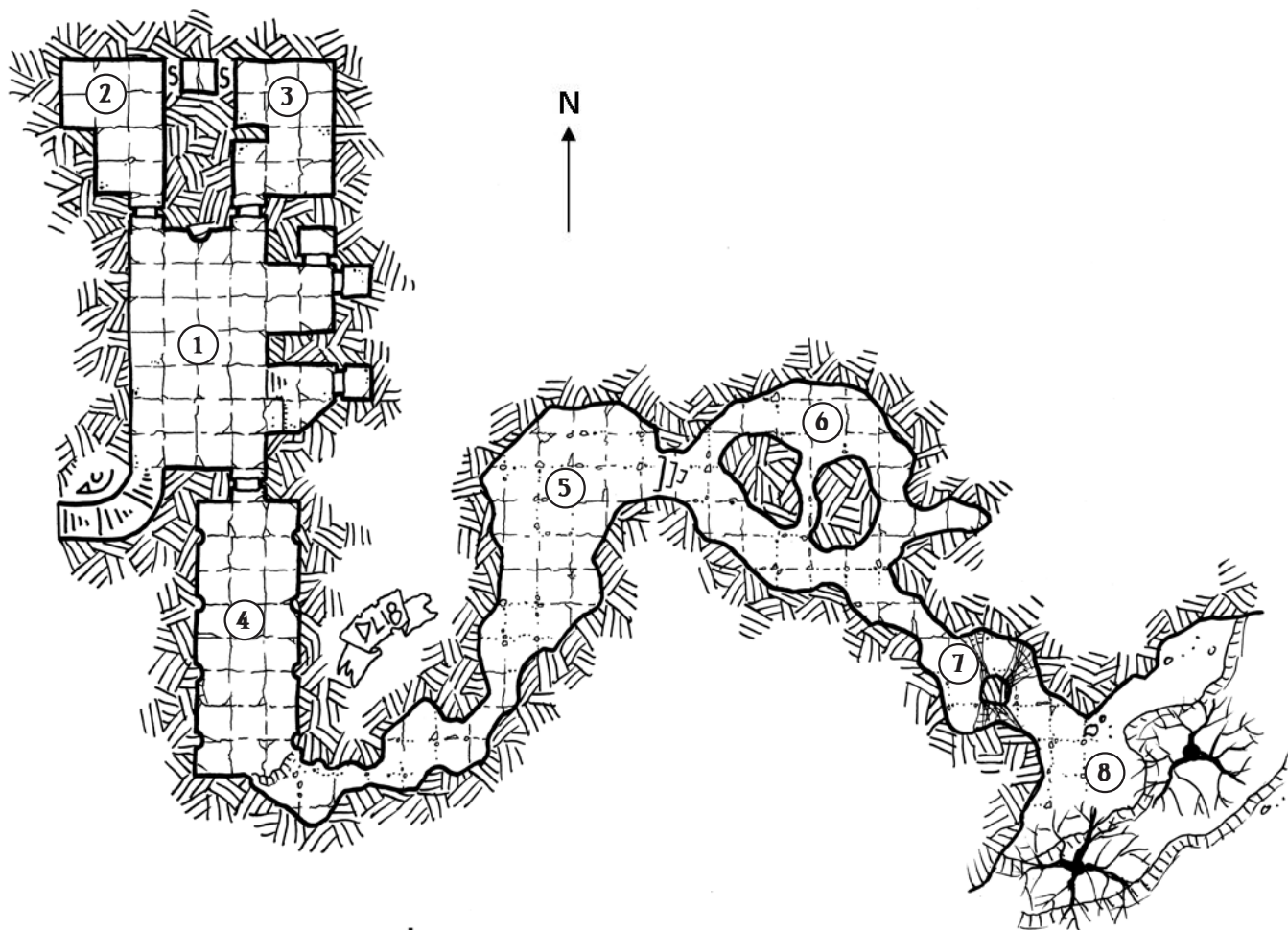
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Adventure Hooks

The Grand Baron Dymytros Howlik vann Rottsten has offered to find Khemma. To this end, he has solicited the assistance of locals to scour the countryside in search of the cub. The PCs are hired by the grand baron or some other power in the area who hopes to curry favor with the baron or his bearfolk guest or who hopes to gain influence in Dornig.

Hired by the Grand Baron. Despite his youth, Dymytros is perhaps the best-connected member of House vann Rottsten. He has offered to pay any adventurer a modest fee of 10 gp for the search, but he promises a handsome reward for the safe return of the cub. When the cub is returned, Dymytros ensures each PC receives a 150 gp lump sum payment, or he ensures lavish accommodations whenever the PCs visit Bad Solitz. As Grand Baron, Dymytros can also arrange for the PCs to meet other influential, powerful, or well-connected people, should the need arise.

Hired by Other Powerful Figures. The PCs might instead work for a benefactor to whom Dymytros has promised a reward. Queen Urzula of Krakova may have tasked the PCs to search for the cub to curry favor with House vann Rottsten, or the Lord Guildmaster of Salzbach may have arranged for the PCs to search for the cub as part of a trade arrangement in Bad Solitz. The PCs may even be working for another adventurer who wishes to acquire a Dornitian barony but needs the favor of a major house.

Introduction

The PCs are summoned to the Bjornrike embassy in accordance with their adventure hooks. They wait in the foyer with other groups of adventurers until they are approached by an elfmarked sentry donned in red armor. This guard, a member of House vann Rottsten's Drake Guard, brings the PCs into the embassy's library.

Half-filled bookshelves line the walls of the library, betraying the recent establishment of the embassy. A large table made of beech wood harvested from the lower slopes of the Tonder Alps sits at the center of the room, displaying a map of the Bad Solitz region. The map is broken up in hexagonal sections, each representing several square miles of the surrounding countryside. Copper pieces strategically sit in the center of several sections.

A well-dressed elfmarked man rises to greet the PCs. He wears fine noble vestments and his long, blond hair is tied in a functional braid. An ornate rapier hangs on his side, and he wears the black-shielded crest of House vann Rottsten on his chest. He is the Grand Baron Dymytros Howlik vann Rottsten (CG male elfmarked).

After thanking the PCs for coming, Dymytros introduces the PCs to the two bearfolk in the room – Teppen Berlatillat (NG male bearfolk **mage**) and his partner Kendhal (CG female bearfolk **veteran**).

Teppen is Bjornrike's ambassador to Bad Solitz. He has thick, black fur with a copper muzzle, and he wears a forest green cloak. His neck is adorned with a golden necklace bearing an open radiant eye in the open claw of a bear. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the necklace as bearing the holy symbol of the Bear Maiden Bengta, often believed to be a mask of Lada. He towers over most PCs at an imposing six feet eight inches, but he treats every PC with respect, regardless of the PC's Status (see page 25 of the *Midgard Worldbook* for more information on Status in Midgard). If you aren't using the Status optional rule, Dymytros directs his conversation to the person with the highest Charisma score, while Teppen addresses the PCs equally.

Teppen explains how he recently came to Bad Solitz to serve as ambassador. He brought his partner Kendhal and three cubs to this posting. The fate of his middle cub, Khemma, has brought the PCs to the embassy today.

Like many bearfolk cubs her age, Khemma possesses a strong urge to explore. In the past, she disappeared no more than a day or two, returning in time for supper. However, she was last seen a week ago, and Teppen fears that she has injured herself in the countryside. He approached Dymytros, seeking help in finding his only daughter.

Teppen's partner Kendhal sits on a long couch. She has strawberry blonde fur and wears a shaggy brown cloak. She scoffs when Teppen suggests Khemma is lost in the countryside, and she reminds him that his cousin is Ernalda Berlasdottir, the hierophant of the Moonlit Glades. Many shadow fey have sworn revenge against Ernalda, and Kendhal believes they kidnapped Khemma. She is so certain that she promises her magical cloak to any adventurer who returns with proof that shadow fey weren't involved.

Dymytros bids the PCs toward the map and points to a section. He says they have several other groups searching the areas around Bad Solitz, and he asks the PCs to search to the northwest, around the Arbonesse Heights Vineyard. His cub doesn't have a taste for wine, but he believes she might have sought shelter with the vintner if she was injured while exploring. He also tells the PCs about the mountain outpost near the vineyard (see Part 1), suggesting Khemma might have been spotted and taken in by the outpost's ranger. He can provide little more than a general description of Khemma, who is four feet tall and has blond fur like her mother.

Part 1: Searching for the Whelp

The road northwest of Bad Solitz twists and turns through the jagged landscape. Debris from the occasional landslides and mud slicks from the recent spring rains slow travel. The scent of sulfur and ash hangs in the air courtesy of the many foreboding peaks in the distance.

Tasked with searching for the wandering cub, the PCs explore the countryside northwest of Bad Solitz for any sign of Khemma. Once within a few miles of the vineyard, the PCs can make DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) checks to find a trail of bear-like footprints.

If they make three successful checks before three failures, the PCs locate Khemma's footprints. Go to "The Foxin" encounter. If they make three failed checks before three successes, they discover the footprints of a brown bear cub instead. Go to "Mountain Outpost" encounter.

If the PCs immediately seek out the mountain outpost, go directly to that encounter.

The Foxin

Scurrying from behind a pine tree is a small fox with a vibrant blue coat and a light pink beard. It pauses briefly, holding its front right paw in the air awkwardly, before continuing on its way.

The PCs see a **foxin** (*Creature Codex*, p. 163) walk into a clearing. Not long before the PCs arrived, the foxin was injured by a poisoned trap set by the derro. The poison interacts with the foxin's unique fey blood, nullifying its Neutral Presence trait and preventing its Illusory Calm action.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals the foxin is a fey creature, while a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine or Perception) check reveals the creature is injured and not feeling well. Closer inspection reveals the creature is poisoned. As it's more than an average beast, it can understand any PC who speaks Common and is willing to trust PCs who help it.

If they approach the foxin, the PCs must convince the creature they mean it no harm. A successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces the foxin to let the PCs approach. If the PCs offer to heal the injured foxin, they have advantage on the check. If the PCs fail the check by 5 or more, the foxin runs away.

If successful, the PCs are allowed to approach and inspect the foxin. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Medicine) check recognizes the poison infecting the foxin is from a mushroom that doesn't grow locally. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals the mushroom is native to the

Underworld and is commonly used by the derro. If healed, the foxin's body is able to fight off the poison after 1 hour of light activity. Alternatively, a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check is able to put together a poultice from the nearby plants with 10 minutes of work that gives the foxin's body just enough of a boost to fight off the poison. The foxin's Neutral Presence and Illusory Calm are restored after it recovers from the poison.

If the PCs befriend the foxin, it shows them the poisoned hunting trap that injured it. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (History) or Wisdom (Survival) check identifies the trap as one often used by derro. It looks big enough to hold the foot of a small bear, and it is clear the foxin managed to escape capture by the trap only with its supernatural fey reflexes. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check can follow the tracks of the derro hunters to the Arbonesse Heights Vineyards. Go to Part 2.

If the PCs try to fight the foxin at any point, it flees into the nearby countryside. Go to Part 2.

The Mountain Outpost

A small bear cub walks to its mother in a nearby clearing, and the two disappear deeper into the forest.

The PCs follow bear cub footprints through the woods and toward the clearing. They find a normal bear cub and not Khemma. Shortly after the bears leave, a ranger who runs a local mountain outpost steps from nearby foliage and indicates he wants the PCs to follow him down a deer path away from the bears.

Once the PCs are in the relative safety of the deer path, the ranger introduces himself as Yanis the Watcher (CG male human **scout**). He is assigned to the nearby mountain outpost and watches the main approaches to Bad Solitz. Having come across the PCs' trail, he tracked them down before something terrible happened.

Unfortunately, Yanis hasn't seen any sign of Khemma. From the way she's described, he thinks she might have gone up to explore the Arbonesse Heights Vineyard, a "far more interesting site than an old ranger's outpost." Upon closer reflection, he realizes he hasn't noticed the weekly wagon shipment trundle down to Bad Solitz. Yanis strongly encourages the PCs to check out the vineyard.

Part 2: The Abandoned Vineyard

The Arbonesse Heights Vineyard is built into one of the many lowland moors leading up the Tonder Alps. While the majority of the estate is covered with rows of grapevines, seemingly random acres are planted with subsistence grains like oats, spelt, and rye.

Not all is right at the vineyard, however. PCs who inspect the crop notice many grapes have begun to rot on the vine. A lone handcart is overturned in the rows, and its contents are spilled across the ground. The rotting corpse of a horse lies in the center of the path, its flesh covered in tiny bites. Small footprints appear intermittently throughout the vineyard. While the footprints of the bearfolk cub continue through the rows, the majority of the footprints don't look anything like those of humanoids common to Dornig.

The Volcanic Vent

As they walk past a large igneous stone sitting in front of an ancient oak tree, the PCs hear rumbling from deep in the earth, and a gout of superheated air erupts from a hole in the ground. Each PC must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

If more than half the PCs succeed, the superheated air blasts over a row of trellises, causing them to smolder. If nothing is done, the trellises catch fire and the fire spreads to the whole vineyard after 2 hours.

If the PCs wish to stop the spread of the fire, each PC can describe the actions they take to put out the smoldering trellises. The PC must make a corresponding DC 13 skill check that relates to the action attempted. For example, a PC who wishes to stamp out a smoldering bush might make a Strength (Athletics) check if stomping or a Strength (Performance) check if dancing. Alternatively, a PC who wishes to separate unharmed vines from the smoldering vines can make an Intelligence (Nature) or a Wisdom (Perception) check to determine which vines are so far unaffected.

If more than half the PCs succeed on their checks to stop the spread of the fire, they successfully quell the fire. A PC who fails a check takes 3 (1d6) fire damage. The PCs can repeat the checks until they get the required successes or are rendered unconscious. The vineyard catches fire only if the PCs fail or refuse to put out the smoldering trellises.

After the PCs bandage their burns and put out flames, they can inspect the volcanic vent where the superheated air erupted. While this vent was previously plugged up by the large igneous stone nearby, someone or something rolled the stone away from the cover of the vent. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check sees the charred and unrecognizable remains of three Small creatures deeper in the vent. The remains are of a group of derro who rolled the stone away in a desperate search for an alternate route back to the Underworld. They were burned alive when the volcanic vent flared.

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check realizes the vent will flare again at some point, putting the vineyard in danger of catching fire again. By rolling the igneous

rock back in place, the PCs can block up the volcanic vent and prevent the vineyard from burning. If they don't, the vineyard is ablaze when the PCs return from the wine cellar in Part 3.

The Chateau

After traversing the acreage of Arbonesse Heights, the PCs finally reach the vineyard's chateau as the sun begins to set behind the Tonder Alps.

To the north, their view is dominated by a vibrantly painted two-story chateau house. To the east, the front door of a weathered barn is propped halfway open. To the south, a haunting silence projects from a nearby stable. To the west, deep wheel ruts lead to wide earthen steps which descend to the mouth of a cave. In the center of it all, a wagon sits ominously empty.

The Chateau House

While PCs who explore the chateau house don't find any of its residents, they discover signs that people have recently lived on the property. Recently laundered sheets hang from clotheslines in the backyard, and stale bread sits in tins on the kitchen table. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the house was abandoned a few days ago.

A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check while inspecting the ground outside the chateau house locates Small footprints moving between the chateau house, barn, and cave. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the PCs determine the great majority of Medium footprints lead only toward the entrance of the cave.

The Stables

PCs who explore the stables find that the latch to its main door has been broken. The troughs are filled with stale oats and fermenting apples, and the manure is completely dried. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) reveals the stable was abandoned a few days ago.

The Barn

PCs who explore the barn enter through the cracked front door which makes a loud creak. The barn is dark, and PCs without darkvision can't see without a light source.

Several swarms of vampire bats accompanied the derro out of the Underworld and sleep during the day in the rafters of the barn. Their guano coats the barn floor, recognizable with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check.

Either a light source or the loud creaking of the front door awakens several swarms. Six swarms of vampire bats (use the statistics of a **swarm of bats**) swoop down from the rafters and attack the intruding PCs. These swarms don't fight to the death. A swarm flies out of the barn if reduced to half its hit points or fewer.

While searching the barn, the PCs can find a crowbar, a dozen torches, and several tools used in the vineyard, including picks, spades, and shovels. A large pile of broken rocks sits along the north wall of the barn, placed here after the vineyard's workers excavated more of the wine cellar.

Part 3: The Wine Cellar

Earthen steps lead to the mouth of a small cave. A cool breeze whistles out from unknown depths, and the day's light is swallowed by the cave's dark maw.

The cave serves as the wine cellar for the Arbonesse Heights Vineyard. The mouth of the cave is 10 feet wide and 8 feet tall, allowing for even the largest barrels of wine to be rolled in and out of the wine cellar.

Upon entering the cave, the PCs hear discordant humming and singing in the distance that sends shivers down their spines. Any PC who makes a successful DC 17 Intelligence (History) check recognizes the song is being sung in Deep Speech. A PC that knows Deep Speech automatically succeeds on this check. The song grows incrementally louder as the PCs descend further into the cave.

The cave is filled with darkness, and twin sconces at the entrance hold unlit torches. The floor of the cave descends straight at a gentle slope for approximately 50 feet. From there, the path softly curves, ending in Area 1.

1. THE FOYER

This room is the main entrance to the wine cellar. Ordinarily, the PCs would find barrels of wine stacked on the stone floor of this room, waiting to be loaded in a wagon. Instead, the floor is covered with wood from smashed wine barrels, and a group of derro stand near the north wall. They are entranced while singing a discordant hymn to Addrikah, the Mother of Madness and the goddess of the derro.

A choir of five derro **guards** face south, solely focused on their conductor, a derro **cult fanatic** of Addrikah. The priest has his back to the foyer, gesticulating wildly to his choir while using the skeletal backbone of a bat as a conductor's baton. The choir is approaching a cacophonous climax to their song sung in hopes of finding any knowledge of how to return to the Underworld. As derro, the guards and cult fanatic know Undercommon, have darkvision with a radius of 60 feet, and, while in sunlight, each has disadvantage on

attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight. The cult fanatic also knows Deep Speech.

Once the PCs enter this room, Addrikah alarms her worshippers of the coming danger. The song stops immediately as the derro raise their weapons while turning in unison to stare at the intruders.

The derro guards move to engage the PCs in melee combat, attacking with their spears. Meanwhile, the cult fanatic casts *spiritual weapon* and targets spellcasters and other ranged characters with his spectral battle axe. If forced into melee, the cult fanatic uses *inflict wounds* to devastating effect.

If four or more derro are slain, the remaining derro disengage from combat and head toward Areas 2 or 3. Here, they attempt to sacrifice one of the workers to the will of Addrikah in hopes of gaining the power necessary to defeat the PCs.

The derro don't surrender and stop fighting only if they're knocked unconscious. Once an unconscious derro regains consciousness, it babbles incoherently in Undercommon and provides no valuable information.

Three doors lead from the foyer to Areas 2, 3, and 4. Three closets sit along the eastern wall. One closet is filled with torches, a second with flasks of oil, and a third with a large metal bucket. Based on the scent, the third closet appears to be used as a latrine.

Treasure. One of the derro guards has a small sack filled with bronze bird statues (worth 25 gp total) taken from the chateau house. PCs who search this room also find a tarnished holy symbol of Baccho, the elven god of poetry and wine, discarded here. If any PC wears this holy symbol in Area 6, the cask golems don't attack the PC unless the PC attacks them first.

2. RED WINE FINISHING ROOM

This room is normally used as storage for barrels of wine that were prematurely removed from the cellar. Here, the barrels could rest and finish before traveling to market.

Now, this room is packed with prisoners—the captured workers from the vineyard. The derro placed their largest prisoners in this room. A mixture of elfmarked and human **commoners** shiver on the hard, stone floor, but they rise when the door opens, flinching at any sources of light as their eyes adapt. Due to the cold and the torment the derro have inflicted upon them, each worker has 1 hit point and one level of exhaustion.

The Wine Master. A ginger-haired elfmarked man rises to greet the PCs. Despite his battered appearance, a noble demeanor shines through in his speech and mannerisms. He first addresses any PCs who are elves, elfmarked, or who are obviously of noble birth. If you are using the Status optional rule (*Midgard Worldbook*, p. 25), he instead addresses the PC with the highest Status.

Hulyos Auckeneur (CG male elfmarked **priest**) has long been the cellar master at the Arbonesse Heights Vineyard and has owned the land for nearly a decade now. While he originally made wine for a small cadre of his fading faith, he expanded operations after his reds were well-received during Wine Week in Zigistad. Now, his wines are sold throughout the Grand Duchy of Dornig.

Business has been so good that Hulyos decided to expand his wine cellar by another room. As he and his employees were digging, the wall opened up from the Underworld. A group of derro erupted through the breach and captured all his workers. Hulyos cast all his spells during the fight and subsequently lost his holy symbol, which can be found in Area 1.

The Refugee. Mastin (NG female human **commoner**) also introduces herself to the PCs. She is dressed in common clothes and keeps her curly auburn hair out of her eyes with a mustard yellow handkerchief.

While she presents a brave face, she is secretly terrified. She is a refugee from Krakova and was one of the few survivors from the darakhul assault on the city of Tannenbirg. She didn't get a good look at the derro and assumes that her kidnappers are ghouls. She confesses that she doesn't know why their kidnappers haven't eaten them yet. If any derro from Area 1 flee into this room, however, the fear is readily apparent in her eyes.

Secret Door. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers a secret door to Area 3. If they inspect what's past the door, they discover the secret tunnel to Room 7 (see Area 3).

DEVELOPMENT

If asked, neither Hulyos nor Mastin admit to having seen Khemma. If the PCs haven't visited Area 3 yet, gnomish voices shout through the small secret door between the two finishing rooms, demanding the PCs come free them and the cub. Once freed, the prisoners head back to the surface to recuperate in the chateau house. Malnourished and exhausted, the prisoners are unable to help the PCs further explore the wine cellar, though Hulyos advises the PCs to tread lightly as they explore the rest of the cellar. He has heard all manner of horrific growls and chants coming from the darkness. If the PCs demand a reward for saving Hulyos and his workers, he promises he will send word of their deeds to Bad Solitz and, if that isn't enough, he promises them a barrel of his prized red wine, should any yet survive.

3. WHITE WINE FINISHING ROOM

The white wine finishing room sits immediately adjacent to its red wine counterpart. Here, the derro separated smaller prisoners from the larger ones. When the PCs open the door, they see a half-dozen gnome **commoners** playing Viper's Nest, a dice game from the Southlands.

Unlike the rest of Dornig, gnomes suffer no explicit discrimination in Bad Solitz and its surrounding countryside. Nevertheless, these gnomes are servants at the vineyard and mostly have a reserved demeanor.

Seasoned Worker. Hezzerd Meipelpopf (LN male gnome **commoner**) has no such reservations. He has long worked at the vineyard and has strong opinions about how the vineyard has been mismanaged. In his opinion, their present predicament is a perfect example of this. Had Hulyos hired a dwarf to oversee the expansion of the wine cellar, Hezzerd asserts, the dwarf would have recognized the signs of the derro before they attacked. Thus, he reasons, he wouldn't have spent the past few days trapped in a cave. If the PCs ask Hezzerd about Khemma, he confirms she is in this room. Like the prisoners in Area 2, the gnomes return to the chateau house once freed.

The Wandering Whelp. After her capture, the derro placed Khemma in this room. She slept for long hours of the day, and the gnomes joked that she was still hibernating. When Hezzerd brings the PCs to the tarp that Khemma had been sleeping under, they find that Khemma is missing. The gnomes are dumbfounded that the bearfolk cub has disappeared into thin air.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check notices dusty paw prints leading to the secret door that connects to Area 2. If the PCs inspect the secret door, they discover the secret tunnel to Area 7.

The Secret Tunnel. The secret tunnel can be found in the nook between the secret doors between Areas 2 and 3. It cuts and weaves its way through the rocky terrain before opening up in the center of the ceiling of Area 7.

The long-dead founder of the vineyard discovered this naturally occurring tunnel. It pumps colder air from deeper in the cave that helps keep the finishing rooms cool. The tunnel was hidden to ensure that no one accidentally falls into it.

While the mouth of the tunnel is initially wide, it narrows as it travels further below ground. The tunnel is large enough for Small PCs to navigate without any issues. It takes these PCs 10 minutes to traverse and exit the tunnel.

However, Medium PCs must squeeze their way through the tunnel. A Medium PC traversing the tunnel must make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check every 2 minutes, taking 9 (2d8) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one, as the PC's hands and knees are sliced by jagged rocks. A PC without darkvision has disadvantage on the check. However, a PC who uses a slippery substance, such as a flask of oil or the *grease* spell, has advantage on the check.

Reaching the exit of the tunnel, the PCs can easily descend down onto the stalagmite in the center of Area 7. Unless a PC has a climbing speed or a climber's kit with pitons anchored in the tunnel, the PCs can't climb back up into the tunnel—the incline is too steep to climb without extra assistance. Instead, they must return to the surface through Area 6.

4. UPPER STORAGE ROOM

The pinewood door to this room is unlocked, and it opens into a long, dark room with a smooth stone floor. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (History) check indicates that this room was crafted by dwarves within the last century. Large casks line the east and west walls of this room, each of which can hold a hogshead of wine. If the PCs inspect the barrels, they find that all but one are completely full. If they unseal the lid of the partially filled cask, they find three small flasks of wine floating inside it.

A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check or a DC 10 Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies recognizes the two flasks of pink wine as *potions of healing*. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check or DC 15 Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies recognizes the bubbly white wine as a *potion of levitation*. Hulyos made these wines himself and takes pride in their flavor and potency.

The opening at the southeast end of this room marks the end of the worked stone. From here, the wine cellar has rough, uneven walls. The tunnel bends to the northeast before reaching Area 5.

5. EMPTY CAVERN

Vineyard workers use this room to move casks of wine between the upper and lower storage rooms. It is now occupied by the remaining derro who have taken up a defensive posture, facing Area 6.

After the derro erupted through the breach and captured all the vineyard's workers, they found themselves trapped by the cask golems now patrolling Area 6. Blocked off from the Underworld, the derro splintered into three groups. The first group explored the surface in search of another entrance to the Underworld and were burned to death while exploring the volcanic vent. The second group protected the prisoners while in Area 1 and sought the maddening guidance of Addrikah. The third group remained in this room, searching for a way to bypass the cask golem defenders. Over the last week, this group has scrapped with the cask golems, damaging one and destroying another. With their food supply running desperately low, the derro are planning a last-ditch assault on Area 6 so at least some of their number can return to the Underworld.

Ixdeerka (CE male **derro explorer** [see page 11]), the wild-eyed leader of the derro, is slightly taller than the barrel of wine next to him. A small, cloth doll with button eyes sits atop the cask. One hand rests on the hilt of his axe while the other strokes his beard as though the doll just said something profound. He issues orders to seven derro **guards** whose white beards are stained with

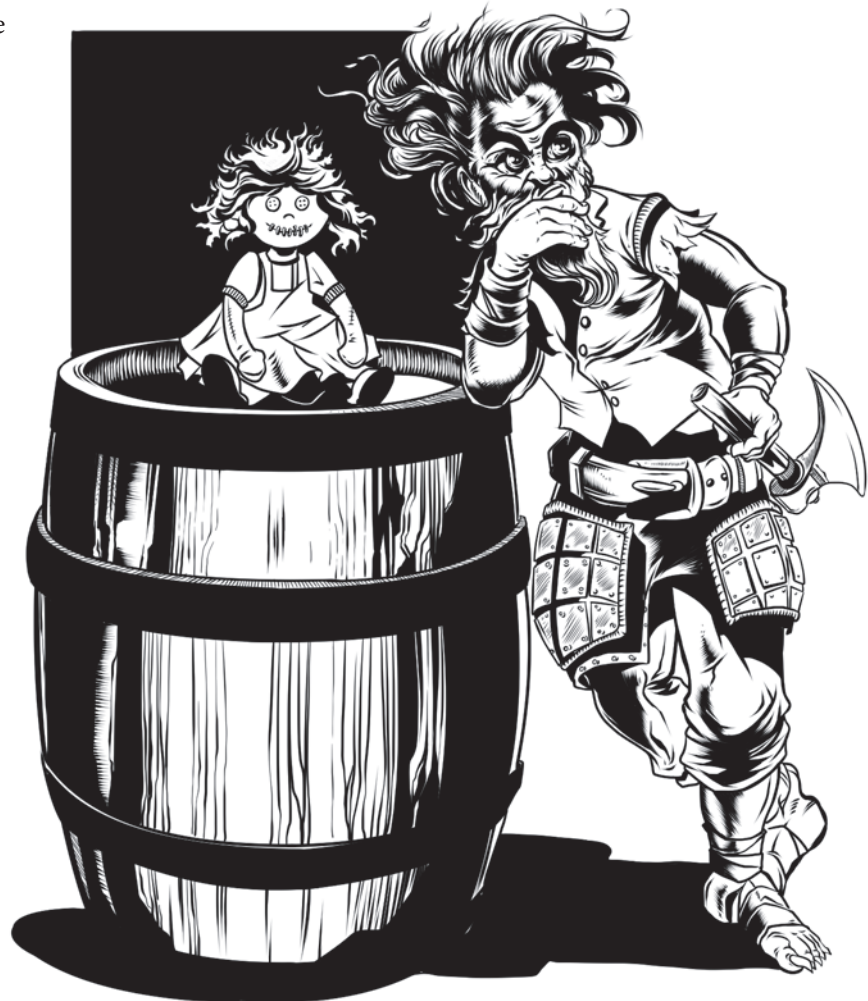
wine. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check discerns that Ixdeerka is not as insane as most derro and might be open to talking.

If the PCs enter from Area 4, they come upon Ixdeerka and the other derro planning a final assault. If the PCs attack the derro, the derro fight to the death.

If the PCs approach the derro without drawing weapons, Ixdeerka asks in Common if the PCs are capable of fighting the bad wine in the next room. If questioned, Ixdeerka says he wants to go home and the bad wine is in the way. If the PCs agree to fight the golems or propose a plan, they must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check to convince the derro to let them help or follow their directions. The PCs have advantage on the check if they speak in Undercommon or appeal to the small cloth doll. On a failure, Ixdeerka is unconvinced and orders the other derro to kill the PCs.

If the PCs enter from Area 6, the derro are afraid the cask golems have sent an army to kill them. With nothing to live for, the derro fight to the death.

Treasure. The derro have 75 gp of assorted coins and gems in their pouches and pockets.



6. LOWER STORAGE ROOM

The richest red wines are first placed in the largest wooden casks (called butts) that line the walls of this room so they may age before being bottled.

Cellar Guardians. Amidst the butts are two smaller, specially crafted casks Hulyos ordered in Reywald. These casks are **keg golems** (*Creature Codex*, p. 199) that defend the finest of Arbonesse Heights' wines from thieves. They were awakened by the invading derro. One golem guards the northern hallway and the other guards the southern hallway. After spending several days skirmishing with the derro, one cask is damaged. It has 21 hit points and can't use its Rolling Charge trait. A third golem was destroyed by the derro yesterday and lies in pieces near the tunnel to Area 5.

If the PCs enter from Area 5 with the derro, the cask golems fight the PCs to the death. The derro fight the damaged cask golem while the PCs fight the undamaged one. The damaged cask kills three derro before it is destroyed. Once the PCs destroy the other cask golem, the derro rush into Areas 7 and 8.

If the PCs enter from Area 5 without the derro (or if the PCs enter from Area 7), the cask golems attack them unless the holy symbol of Baccho is prominently displayed. One cask golem starts the battle in one hallway, and the other cask golem joins the fight 1 round later.

7. EXPANDED STORAGE ROOM

Hulyos began digging this new storage room for his rapidly expanding operations from the northwest entrance while the derro dug from the other direction. They met and fought in this room. During the fight, Hulyos and his workers were pushed back to Area 1 and eventually captured. The southeast exit to this room leads to the Underworld. A large stalagmite in the middle of the room points toward a hole in the ceiling (the secret tunnel), and the walls and floor are scarred with marks from pick axes and spades. A thin film of finely broken rock coats the ground. A small pair of bearfolk footprints lead from the stalagmite to the entrance of Area 8.

If the PCs follow the derro into this room, five derro rush headlong into Area 8, their minds filled with thoughts of returning home. After a loud shriek, only three derro flee back into this room. If asked what happened, Ixdeerka is speechless for a moment before uttering, "big grub." They are unwilling to reenter Area 8.

8. THE CREVASSE

A young bearfolk walks toward a brilliant light at the edge of a nearby crevasse, brimming with curiosity. She is suddenly clotheslined by a taut cord and cries out in pain. Stuck in an invisible snare, she calls for help. A huge worm descends from the ceiling.

If the derro entered Area 8 before the PCs, also read or paraphrase the following:

Two derro struggle to escape their own bonds. The worm plunges from the ceiling twice, snapping off their heads with a satisfying crack.

Khemma entered the cavern shortly before the PCs entered Area 7. Falling prey to an **angler worm's** (*Tome of Beasts*, p. 22) *Ethereal Lure* action, she followed the lure to the edge of the crevasse. She is now trapped by the worm's snare lines which are strung up along the edge of the crevasse.

The angler worm lashes down from the ceiling and uses its Bite attack against the PCs. Whenever available, it uses its *Ethereal Lure* to bait the PCs toward the crevasse. Whenever a PC becomes stuck in a snare line, the angler worm moves to use its Coil attack.

The angler worm doesn't fight to the death. When reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, it flees down the crevasse in search of easier meals.

If the PCs start losing the fight against the angler worm and derro are waiting in Area 7, the derro might grow brave after seeing the angler worm wounded and join the fight. Alternatively, the angler worm flees when reduced to half its hit point maximum or fewer.

Conclusion

If they save Khemma, the cub and the workers insist on spending the night in the chateau house to recuperate. The next morning, they return to Bad Solitz and return the wandering whelp to her grateful parents. The Grand Baron Dymytros provides them with their promised reward, and Kendhal gives one of the PCs her *cloak of the grizzlehide* (see page 12) in gratitude.

If the PCs failed to close up the volcanic vent, the estate is in flames when they return to the surface. A cool, light rain falls that night, extinguishing the fire, but the fire destroys most of the vineyard. Hulyos then travels with the PCs back to Bad Solitz to petition the Grand Baron for assistance in rebuilding the historic vineyard. When the PCs return to Bad Solitz, they receive their promised reward and Kendhal's cloak.

If the PCs helped the foxin, they each receive a small gift from the foxin. This gift can be gems, a potion, an exotic ingredient, or other items small enough to be wrapped in a large leaf and totaling no more than 50 gp. A tuft of the foxin's blue fur accompanies the gift.

ANGLER WORM

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 133 (14d12 + 42)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, poisoned, prone

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages –

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Spider Climb. The worm can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings and along its snare lines, without needing an ability check. The angler worm is never restrained by its own or other angler worms' snare lines.

Keen Touch. The angler worm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on vibrations.

Transparent Trap. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check must be made to spot angler worm snare lines, and the check is always made with disadvantage unless the searcher has some means of overcoming the snares' invisibility. A creature that enters a space containing angler worm snare lines must make a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the sticky snares (escape DC 14). This saving throw is made with disadvantage if the creature was unaware of the snare lines' presence.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. An angler worm makes one bite attack. It also makes one coils attack against every enemy creature restrained by its threads and within reach of its coils - once it has coiled around one creature it stops coil attacks against others.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Coils. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) acid damage, and the target creature must make a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be pulled adjacent to the angler worm (if it wasn't already) and grappled in the angler worm's coils (escape DC 12). While grappled this way, the creature is restrained by the angler worm (but not by its snare lines), it can't breathe, and it takes 22 (5d8) acid damage at the start of each of the angler worm's turns. A creature that escapes from the angler worm's coils

may need to make an immediate DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to avoid being restrained again, if it escapes into a space occupied by more snare lines.

Ethereal Lure (Recharge 4-6). The angler worm selects a spot within 20 feet of itself; that spot glows with a faint, blue light until the start of the worm's next turn. All other creatures that can see the light at the start of their turn must make a successful DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the start of their next turn. A creature charmed this way must Dash toward the light by the most direct route, automatically fails saving throws against being restrained by snare lines, and treats the angler worm as invisible.

DERRO EXPLORER

Small humanoid (derro), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 44 (8d6 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +3, Perception +3, Stealth +5, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Undercommon

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Cavern Traveler. Difficult terrain composed of stalagmites, tight spaces, and other rocky terrain underground doesn't cost it extra movement. In addition, the derro explorer has advantage on ability checks to climb underground rocky terrain.

Humanoid Hunter. When the derro explorer hits a humanoid with a weapon attack, the weapon deals an extra 1d6 damage of its type.

Insanity. The derro has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

KEG GOLEM

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (–1)	7 (–2)	3 (–4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Empty Keg. A keg golem holds 20 gallons of ale. If it runs out of ale or empties itself from ale blast, the golem's speed is reduced to 0 and it has disadvantage on all attack rolls until it is refilled with at least 1 gallon of ale.

Immutable Form. The keg golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The keg golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Rolling Charge. If the keg golem moves at least 15 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a slam attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the keg golem can make one slam attack against it as a bonus action.

Construct Nature. A golem doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Ale Blast (Recharge 5–6). The keg golem shoots a 1 gallon jet of ale in a 15-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 9 (2d8) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a success, a target takes half the damage and isn't poisoned. A poisoned creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

CLOAK OF THE GRIZZLEHIDE

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

While wearing this cloak, your Constitution score is 15, and you have proficiency in the Athletics skill. The cloak has no effect if you already have proficiency in this skill or if your Constitution score is already 15 or higher.

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