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Two Page Mini Delves

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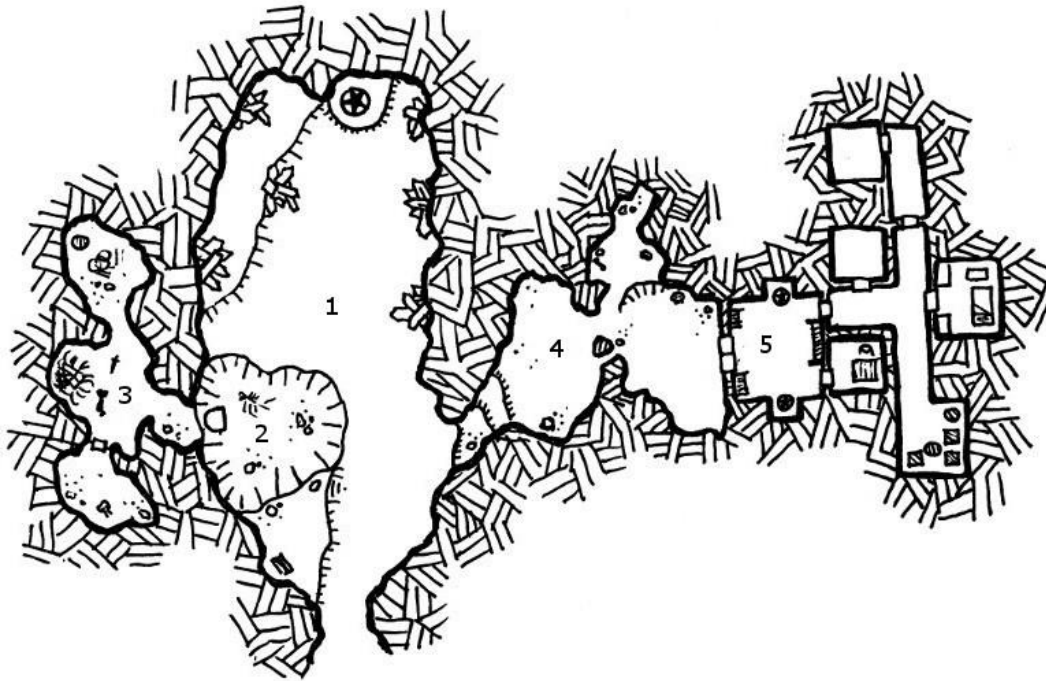
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The Cave of Crystals

The PCs find a cave full of valuable crystals that hold a dangerous secret



Hook:

A local wizard has found records that allude to a cave full of crystals that can be activated to trap souls. There is very little other information to be found, other than the cave's general location. The wizard sends the party to retrieve "as many of the crystals as possible," promising payment per crystal. What the wizard ultimately intends to do with the crystals (for good or evil) is up to the DM.

Alternatively, the party could stumble upon the cave in a larger cavern delve. With a successful Arcana or Nature check, the party realizes the potential of the crystals.

Background:

A millenia ago, the local village was overrun by a cadre of evil spirits. The spirits would possess citizens, and drive them to commit suicide. The humans had no defense against these attacks. It seemed as though all hope was lost when a strange humanoid creature made of crystal appeared in the local tavern. Her name was Kurisha, and she was the last surviving being of her strange race. She was first regarded with fear until she proposed a solution to their evil spirit problem. Deep within a nearby cave, she knew of a natural formation of crystals that had the power to trap spirits. She suggested they lure the evil spirits into the cave with the false promise of a child sacrifice. Grasping at any solution offered, the villagers went along with it – and her plan worked; in a blinding swirl of prismatic light, the entire ethereal army was trapped. Only if a crystal was broken could an evil spirit escape.

Kurisha volunteered to protect the cave, stating that she was at her journey's end, and intended to wander no more. For thousands of years, she has been doing just that, cut off from the outside world and the passage of time. In the past century or so, she has befriended some flumphs, and become a sort of caretaker for their small flock. She does not fully understand these gentle creatures, but does know of their special ability –

the gas that flumphs emit to propel themselves has an ethereal quality that is toxic to the evil spirits. Unfortunately, the toxic effect also causes the evil spirits to go into an unpredictable state, where flumphs are often killed. Despite the fact that the flumphs could mean the eradication of the evil spirits in the cave, Kurisha would never consider, even for a moment, allowing them to be used for such a purpose.

General Crystal Mechanics:

Breaking a crystal from their formations will release a ghostly evil spirit. When this happens, there will be one of several effects:

- If a flumph is present, the spirit will enter the flumph, and it will attack the PCs. A Moderate DC Religion check will reveal that the evil spirit was acting oddly.
- If no flumph is present, the spirit will attempt to possess the PC who broke the crystal. Treat this as a Dominate Person spell (PHB p. 235) with a Duration of "Until Dispellled." If the PC makes the Party Level Wisdom save, the spirit leaves the cave. While Dominated, the spirit will direct the PC to make attacks against the nearest crystal (Defenses 5, HP 15).
- If two PCs are possessed in this manner, use one to attack the other party members, and one to attack the crystals.
- When a possessed PC drops to 0 hp, the evil spirit will leave his body, and escape the cave. (At your discretion, other spells could also remove the evil spirit.) What happens next is beyond the scope of this mini adventure.

Area 1: Crystal Chamber

This is a huge chamber. Large cloudy crystals line the walls, and clusters jut up from the floor. An Arcana check (Easy DC) reveals that the crystals should be clear. At the far north end of the chamber, there is an ancient looking stone altar covered in

cobwebs. To the west is a large 20' deep pit, and to the east is a small tunnel opening. Characters succeeding at a Difficult DC Perception check will notice that there is a Spider Web trap that stretches in front of the altar. A giant spider lies in wait behind a stalagmite for a character to get stuck in the web. If a character gets stuck in the web, or if a character attacks the web, the spider attacks.

The altar was placed there by the townsfolk to lure the evil spirits into the cave; they had given the false promise of a child sacrifice, and therefore a close inspection and an Easy DC Religion check reveals that it bears all the markings of an altar made for that purpose.

Special (3): Trap (Spider Web); Combat (Giant Spider); Item (Crystals that contain trapped evil spirits)

Spider Web (Trap)

The more you struggle, the more trapped you become.

Perception DC: Hard **Disable DC:** AC 5, 10+2/level HP*

Effect: Creatures caught in the web are restrained

A spider web is unnaturally strong, and meant to trap struggling prey. A creature caught in the web must use an action to make a Moderate DC Strength check to escape. However, each failure adds +2 to the next Strength check DC.

**The Spider Web is immune to ranged attacks, and vulnerable to fire damage.*

Area 2: The Pit

This pit is the giant spider's feeding area. The PCs will find several carcasses of animals (deer, hawks, dogs) along with some odd looking carcasses (Nature Difficult DC – Flumphs). There is a human skeleton covered in spider web slumped to one side of a 10' opening that leads to another chamber. A Difficult DC Perception check reveals a Spider Web trap covering the entire opening. If a character is stuck in the trap, the combat from Area 3: The Spider's Lair is triggered.

Special: Trap (Spider Web)

Area 3: The Spider's Lair

The spider found in Area 1 has laid egg sacs in this area of the cave, several of which have hatched. There are more carcasses in this chamber that the swarms have been feeding on, as well as some human ones that have treasure items.

Special: Combat (4 swarms); Treasure (Jewelry, Weapons, Armor)

Area 4: Flumph Stable

The small chamber to the north is where the flock of Flumphs sleeps every night. They have been staying contained in Area 4 ever since the giant spider moved in. If the PCs begin attacking the flumphs, Kurisha will leave her living quarters (Area 5) and implore the PCs to stop.

Special: Optional Combat (9 flumphs)

Area 5: Kurisha's Quarters

The shardmind is currently in her living quarters, unless the PCs attacked the flumphs in Area 4. There are 3 vials of antitoxin in the storeroom that Kurisha will offer if the PCs decide to fight the spiders. How Kurisha treats the characters depends upon how they have acted up to this point.

- **If the PCs have not yet encountered the spiders**, the shardmind will implore the characters to get rid of them because the giant one has caught several flumphs. She will offer them 3 vials of antitoxin (PHB p. 151).
- **If the PCs have not attacked the flumphs**, she will be friendly, and will be willing to tell the story of how the crystals came to be cloudy.
- **If the PCs have attacked the flumphs**, she will be hostile, and ask them to leave. She will try to stop them from breaking crystals, merely stating that they are "useless" and will not work the way the PCs think they will.
- She will talk at length about the flumphs, stating that they are gentle and good creatures that are wiser than they seem, and deserve the protection of all good beings. She refers to them more like friends than pets or animals.
- A Moderate DC Insight check reveals that she is hiding something about the flumphs. (*That the gas they emit is toxic to the spirits*)
- If the PCs attack her, treat her as a Guard (Monster Manual 346). All the Flumphs from Area 4 will come and attack the PCs (Monster Manual p. 135).
With her dying breath, she will implore the PCs not to break the crystals, and say that they don't understand what they've done.

Conclusion

There are a lot of different directions this delve can go. Some parties might harvest the crystals despite the fact that they're releasing evil spirits. In this case, they must eventually deal with the fallout from that. Others may sacrifice the flumphs for their own gain, or try and figure out a way to use the flumphs without killing them. Any parties that manage to bring some crystals out of the cave are likely to attract the attention of the law, mage's guilds, and a criminal element, as the power of the crystals to trap souls is quite dangerous (and lucrative).

Note: Add this poison effect to the giant spider attacks. If you're using the stock Giant Spider from the Monster Manual, use this poison effect instead of the poison effect on its bite attack.

Spider Poison

Paralysis takes over... all you can do is breathe.

On Hit: Standard Damage (low) ____ Poison damage, and the target is Poisoned. In addition, the target must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target is Paralyzed for 2d4 hours. A successful Moderate DC Heal check can remove the paralysis.

After the paralysis is removed (or wears off), that character must make a Constitution check against Poison.

Difficult DC - 1 level of Exhaustion

Moderate DC - 2 levels of Exhaustion

Easy DC - 3 levels of Exhaustion

Easy DC failure – 4 levels of Exhaustion

For every action taken in combat, the character must succeed at a Moderate DC Constitution check against Poison, or the Exhaustion will progress one level.

Special: The use of antitoxin grants advantage on the Constitution checks as well as the saves mentioned above.

Appendix: How to use this document

This Two Page Mini Delve was designed to be used at any level of play. As such, you (the DM) will have to do a little bit of preparation work before the session to make it fit your group.

Party Size

This mini delve assumes that your party consists of 4-5 adventurers. If your party has more or less than that, you will have to adjust the adventure accordingly.

Party Level

Whenever you see the term “Party Level,” this is the average of all the character’s levels, rounded. It is assumed that the party consists of characters of approximately the same level.

Monsters

Inserting monsters will be the biggest piece of preparation that you will need to do. Fortunately, the combats in each Two Page Mini Delve are not usually meant to be the focus of the delve. This means that if a party handles the combat without too much trouble, that’s not a huge issue. These are mini delves – not campaign set pieces.

Each room or area that has a monster in it will have a note in the “special” entry, like this:

Special: Combat (Undead)

The information presented in the parenthesis is there to give you an idea about what type(s) of monster(s) should be involved in the combat. (The overall story behind the delve will also help you understand the type of monster you should insert.)

There are a few ways that you can “fill in the blank.”

You can use a tool like the excellent [Donjon Monster List](#) to find an appropriate monster. This tool lets you sort monsters by a variety of different factors to find something of the appropriate level that closely matches what you’d like to insert: <http://donjon.bin.sh/5e/monsters/>

You can also make use of “reskinning.” To reskin, you take an existing monster of the correct level, and change one or two things about it to make the monster you need. You can read more about this technique in the section titled “Modifying a Monster” on page 273 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*.

Difficulty Class

To make this delve usable by any level group, no set DC numbers are given. Instead, the words Easy, Moderate, and Difficult denote what a particular DC should be set as. Use the table below to find the correct DC for your party’s level.

Party Level	Easy	Moderate	Difficult	Save
1-4	10	15	20	13
5-8	10	15	20	14
9-12	15	20	25	16*
13-16	15	20	25	18*
17-20	15	20	25	20*

*For groups at the lower end of the band, you may subtract up to 2 from the Save DC, based upon how difficult you want an encounter to be.

Treasure

The easiest thing to insert into the delve is treasure. These entries will give a treasure type, but nothing more, like this:

Special: Treasure (Ring)

It is usually up to you whether the treasure is something magical or mundane (but worth gold), and whether those rewards will be level appropriate or not.

Scale

There is no grid on the map, and therefore no set scale to each dungeon. You can usually tell how big things should be, but feel free to scale things up and down as you see fit.

Damage

At times, a delve will use the words Standard Damage followed by the word low, moderate, or high in parenthesis, and then a space, like this:

Standard Damage (moderate) ____

This is in reference to the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, page 274. Simply use the Party Level to find the correct table entry, and use the Damage/Round column to pick a number from the given damage range. Then, write the standard damage amount in the space provided.

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