

FANTASTIC TERRAIN



CRIT ACADEMY PRESENTS...

A collection of environmental effects to help and hinder your heroes!



FANTASTIC TERRAIN

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A COLLECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS TO HELP OR HINDER YOUR HEROES IN
THE WORLD'S GREATEST ROLEPLAYING GAME!

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INTRODUCTION

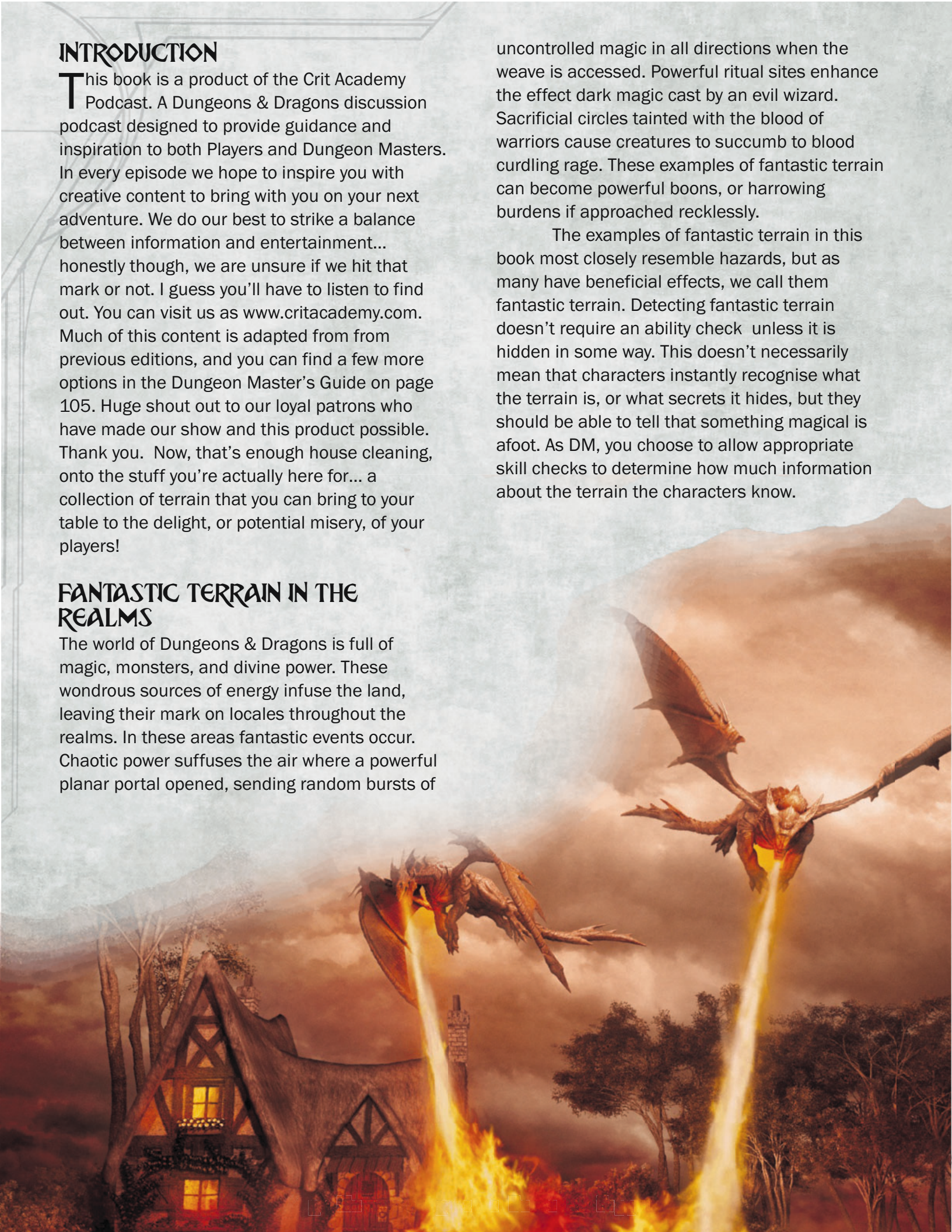
This book is a product of the Crit Academy Podcast. A Dungeons & Dragons discussion podcast designed to provide guidance and inspiration to both Players and Dungeon Masters. In every episode we hope to inspire you with creative content to bring with you on your next adventure. We do our best to strike a balance between information and entertainment... honestly though, we are unsure if we hit that mark or not. I guess you'll have to listen to find out. You can visit us as www.critacademy.com. Much of this content is adapted from from previous editions, and you can find a few more options in the Dungeon Master's Guide on page 105. Huge shout out to our loyal patrons who have made our show and this product possible. Thank you. Now, that's enough house cleaning, onto the stuff you're actually here for... a collection of terrain that you can bring to your table to the delight, or potential misery, of your players!

FANTASTIC TERRAIN IN THE REALMS

The world of Dungeons & Dragons is full of magic, monsters, and divine power. These wondrous sources of energy infuse the land, leaving their mark on locales throughout the realms. In these areas fantastic events occur. Chaotic power suffuses the air where a powerful planar portal opened, sending random bursts of

uncontrolled magic in all directions when the weave is accessed. Powerful ritual sites enhance the effect dark magic cast by an evil wizard. Sacrificial circles tainted with the blood of warriors cause creatures to succumb to blood curdling rage. These examples of fantastic terrain can become powerful boons, or harrowing burdens if approached recklessly.

The examples of fantastic terrain in this book most closely resemble hazards, but as many have beneficial effects, we call them fantastic terrain. Detecting fantastic terrain doesn't require an ability check unless it is hidden in some way. This doesn't necessarily mean that characters instantly recognise what the terrain is, or what secrets it hides, but they should be able to tell that something magical is afoot. As DM, you choose to allow appropriate skill checks to determine how much information about the terrain the characters know.



SCALING TERRAIN

The terrain within this book can be easily adjusted to challenge a party of any level. While in some cases the description of the terrain mentions a rough estimate of size, the terrain's area can vary depending on the DM's needs, from as little as a five-foot square, to the size of an entire cavern. You decide what best fits the situation. Smaller areas are great for terrain that generates a boon, such as an elemental font of power, as they become a powerful resource for both enemies and characters to fight over.

Larger areas are great for effects that hinder creatures, forcing movement, spells, and other resources to be expended in an

attempt to avoid the damaging effects of the terrain. An example of this would be an encounter in which monsters immune to cold damage grapple characters, and drag them through large areas of **choke frost**. If the area is very large, characters may struggle to find a safe place to engage in combat, disarm traps, or attempt ability checks. In cases like this, position becomes extremely important to the success of the encounter, or at the very least, punishes adventurers who don't respond to threats accordingly.

We have included DCs and Damage values from Xanathar's Guide to Everything for reference to allow easy scaling of the terrain for all party levels.

DC'S AND ATTACK BONUSES

DANGER	SAVE/CHECK DC	ATTACK BONUS
MODERATE	+ 10	+ 5
DANGEROUS	+ 12	+ 8
DEADLY	+ 12	+ 12

DAMAGE AND SEVERITY BY LEVEL

TIER	CHARACTER LEVEL	MODERATE	DANGEROUS	DEADLY
1	1-4	5 (1D10)	11 (2D10)	22 (4D10)
2	5-10	11 (2D10)	22 (4D10)	55 (10D10)
3	11-16	22 (4D10)	55 (10D10)	99 (18D10)
4	17-20	55 (10D10)	99 (18D10)	132 (24D10)

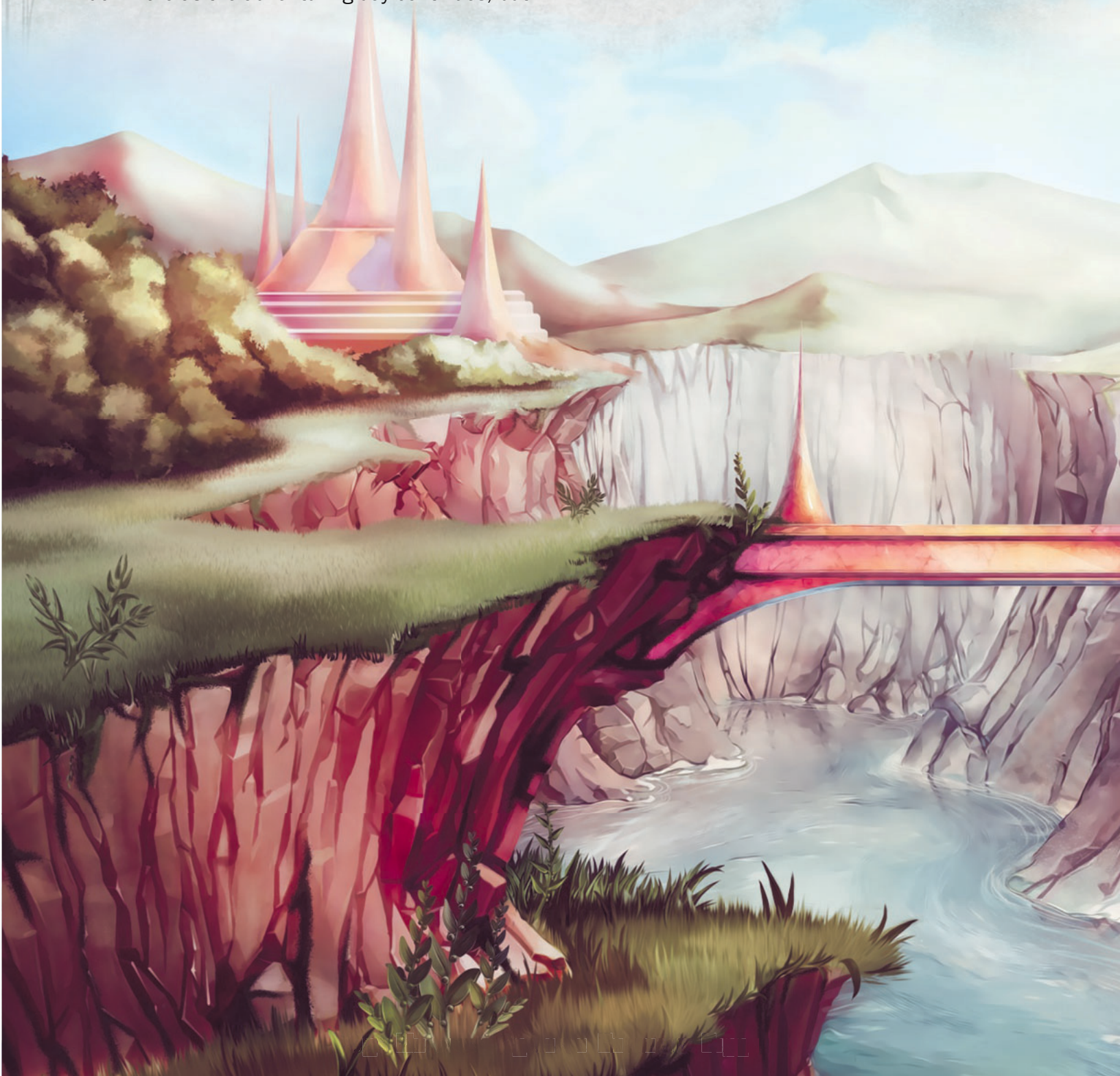
Why Hit Dice?

Hit Dice are an amazing resource to sap in your game. Players often don't realize how much they rely on short rests to recover from combat. While hit points represent a character's resilience in battle, their Hit Dice represent their vitality and ability to recover over time. Unlike taking damage, which directly affects how long a character can survive in single combat, removing Hit Dice affects the characters' ability to recover from those encounters. This begins to impact them much more as the adventuring day continues, but

doesn't necessarily immediately impact the encounter.

Remember, during a long rest, a PC only recovers half of their Hit Die. If a creature is forced to lose a Hit Die, but doesn't have any, they begin to suffer levels of exhaustion.

FANTASTIC TERRAIN





ANGELIC LANTERN

Angelic lanterns are small collections of pulsating orbs of golden light; a manifestation of divine will. It is said that these lanterns are found in locations where an angel has fallen and lost its connection to its deity, leaving behind a remnant of divine power on the material plane.

Three lights hover 5 feet from the ground and occupy a 5-foot square. They wander aimlessly in a 20-foot radius circle at a speed of 15 ft on initiative 10. They shed bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

Any creature in the area can use a bonus action to attempt to harness the divine light by making a **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check**. On a success, the next time the creature hits a target with a melee weapon attack, the weapon flares with a shimmering golden intensity, and the attack deals an extra 7 (2d6) radiant damage to the target, and causes the target to ignite in divine flames. At the start of each of its turns, the target must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**. On a failed save it takes 7 (2d6) radiant damage. On a successful save, the effect ends. If the target or a creature within 5 feet of it uses an

action to put out the flames, or if some other effect douses the flames (such as the target being submerged in water), the effect ends.

This effect can be used a total of three times before the power is completely depleted. With each use of the lantern's power, the radius of its light is reduced by 10 feet. A creature with an evil alignment cannot benefit from this terrain's effect.

Usage: Angelic lanterns are fantastic for incorporating in a battle against a powerful undead enemy, such as a lich, which might otherwise overpower the adventurers. Maybe consider having an angelic creature such as a deva join the party as an NPC and die during the battle, leaving behind their power for the PCs to harness. The beauty of terrains that provide boons are that they become a resource for players and enemies to fight over.

"He was sort of a dick at times, but we had no idea our group wizard Pordo Greyhat was evil. That is until he attempted to examine a divine charged lantern made from a lawful good angel and it exploded in his face. We called him Blackhat after that. I guess him talking about the strengths of necromancy and why it's actually a good thing should have been our first clue. Surprised our thief Shifty wasn't the one to trip it actually."

- Lars Larson

ALCHEMIC COMBUSTIBLES

Mixing reagents to create brews both foul and fair is a common practice throughout the Realms, undertaken by a range of folk from the lowly town herbalist, to the most powerful archmages. These practitioners work in rooms filled with shelf upon shelf of volatile concoctions. Battle in these sorts of environments can sometimes have explosive results... or worse.

When a creature in an area of alchemic combustibles misses on an attack roll by 5 or more, they accidentally smash or knock down a collection of combustibles in the area. Roll on the Alchemic Combustibles table below to determine the result.

Usage: This terrain is a great addition to any herbalist's shop, mage's quarters, or laboratory. Its uniqueness adds a bit of randomness to any

encounter, potentially granting either side of the battle with a tactical advantage. Consider allowing a PC trained with the herbalism kit or alchemist's supplies a bit of knowledge on some of the effects. This rewards characters with proficiency in those tools.

Wanted:

An assistant for a lab where chemical and magical experiments are frequently conducted. Must be willing to handle dangerous materials, creatures and have enough common sense to understand that mix carefully does NOT mean pour the two ingredients into a bottle and shake. The bottom half of the last apprentice was easily to find at least.

- Granblim Dakenstaff

COMBUSTIBLES

D6 Event

1 A large glass containers topples and breaks, freeing the **faerie dragon**(MM) trapped inside.

2 A rancid stench erupts from a broken jar containing the head of a troglodyte, and lingers for 1 minute. Each creature within 10 feet of the jar must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or be poisoned until the start of their next turn.

3 A box of black ashes is scattered across the room, creating a cloud of dust that fills a 10-foot radius sphere. The sphere spreads around corners, and its area is heavily obscured. The cloud lasts for 1 minute.

4 Two vials of unknown chemicals labelled with lightning bolts crack, causing their contents to mix, and starting a chain reaction. Each creature within 5 feet of the vials must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or take 1d8 lightning damage. A creature that takes this damage can't take reactions until the start of its next turn.

5 A vial filled with yellow and orange liquid is smashed, releasing tongues of flame. Each creature within 10 feet of the vials must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or take 2d8 fire damage. A flammable object in the area ignites if it isn't being worn or carried.

6 A wooden bowl filled with grasping weeds and vines shatters to the floor. Each creature in a 10-foot square around the bowl must succeed a **DC 12 Strength saving throw** or be restrained by the vines for 1 minute. A creature restrained by the plants can use its action to make a **DC 12 Strength check**, freeing itself on a success.

ANTIMAGIC ZONE

An antimagic zone is an area that has been severed from the magical energy that permeates the multiverse. While not confirmed, it is said that areas such as these are the result of a territory war between powerful beholders. In most cases, adventurers stumble upon the areas by accident, oftentimes not realizing it until they're already deep within the area. Antimagic zones vary in size, but are rarely larger than a 100-foot sphere. The only visual evidence is a slight distortion in the area much like the air above a burning campfire.

Within an anti-magic zone spells can't be cast, summoned creatures disappear, and even magic items become mundane. Spells and other magical effects, except those created by an artifact or a deity, are suppressed in the area and can't protrude into it. A slot expended to cast a suppressed spell is consumed. While an effect is suppressed, it doesn't function, but the time it spends suppressed counts against its duration. Spells and other magical effects, such as magic missile and charm person, that target a creature or an object in the area have no effect on that target.

While the antimagic zone can't be completely dispelled, it can be suppressed by the dispel magic spell. A creature that casts dispel magic must succeed on a **DC 19 ability check** using their spellcasting ability. On a success, a 15-foot cube area of the antimagic zone is suppressed for the spell's duration.

Usage. This is a great tool for forcing higher level characters to achieve their goals through more mundane methods. Scaling a towering cliff isn't much of a challenge for a wizard who can cast fly, but toss the cliff in an antimagic zone and instantly that trivial encounter becomes a greater challenge.

Also consider using an antimagic field as a trap. The villain could lay a trap, luring the PCs into an area full of foes who don't use magic, putting the PCs at a heavy disadvantage, all because they made no effort to hide their tactics from the villain.

ASTRAL SPIRAL

The astral sea contains numerous gateways that lead from the Astral Plane to other planes. They appear as dimensional pools of rippling colors. When two of these gateways collide, and an astral spiral is formed.

The spiral appears as two swirling orbs of colorful light that travel in a corkscrew, descending and ascending in a 15-foot square.

When a creature enters the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, that creature must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**. On a failed save, the creature's astral body is pushed into the Astral Plane. The material body that is left behind is unconscious and in a state of suspended animation; it doesn't need food or air and doesn't age. The creature's astral body resembles that of their mortal form in almost every way, including carried possessions. The principal difference is the addition of a silvery cord that extends from between the shoulder blades and trails behind the creature, fading to invisibility after 1 foot. This cord tethers the astral body to the material body, as long as the tether remains intact, the creature can find its way back to its body in 1d20 minutes.

If the cord is cut - something that can happen only when an effect specifically states that it does - the character's soul and body are separated. Creatures in this state have 24 hours to reconnect to their bodies before attracting beings of the Astral Plane that wish to devour their astral bodies. A creature that fails to return to their body dies.

Usage: Astral spirals are a great tool for lower level players to experience the astral sea. Introduction of the githzerai and githyanki would be a great tool to hook the players into traveling to the astral sea, and seeking out a rare astral spiral phenomena to chase them after they retreat into the Astral Plane.

Clever characters might use this as a tool to incapacitate a much stronger opponent temporarily, as the foe will be trapped until they can find their way back to their body.

BLAST CLOUD

Some flowers have a special affinity for magic in the weave. Much like sunlight, they end up absorbing some of the weave's power and releasing it in their pollen. The pollen drifts about and can end up filling an area, making it overly sensitive to magical effects and causing them to expand beyond their normal reach. This is known as a blast cloud.

The blast cloud covers a 30-foot cube that is filled with a scintillating cloud of pollen that **lightly obscures** the area. Each blast cloud is in tune with a different damage type; cold, fire, lightning, or poison. When an area of effect spell is cast in the blast cloud that deals damage of the matching type, the blast cloud amplifies the magic, doubling the dimensions of the spell's effect.

Usage: An area containing a blast cloud encourages creatures to spread out and keep from clustering up within the empowered spell areas, meaning that characters might become isolated, and easy to surround.. The blast cloud could also be used in conjunction with a trap to extend its range, such an explosive glyph of warding.

BLOOD MIDGE CLOUD

Blood midges are tiny insects, not dissimilar to mosquitos, that have a voracious appetite for humanoid blood. They group together in vast swarms that can drain the blood of an individual in minutes.

The massive, devouring swarm fills a 20-foot-radius sphere. The blood midge cloud spreads around corners, and its area is **heavily obscured** and is considered difficult terrain. On initiative 20, 15, 10 and 5, if no creature is in the cloud, it moves up to 15 feet and attempts to cover as many living creatures a possible. When a creature enters the area for the first time or ends its turn there, it must make a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw**. A creature takes 5 (1d10) piercing damage and loses a hit die on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one and doesn't lose a hit die.

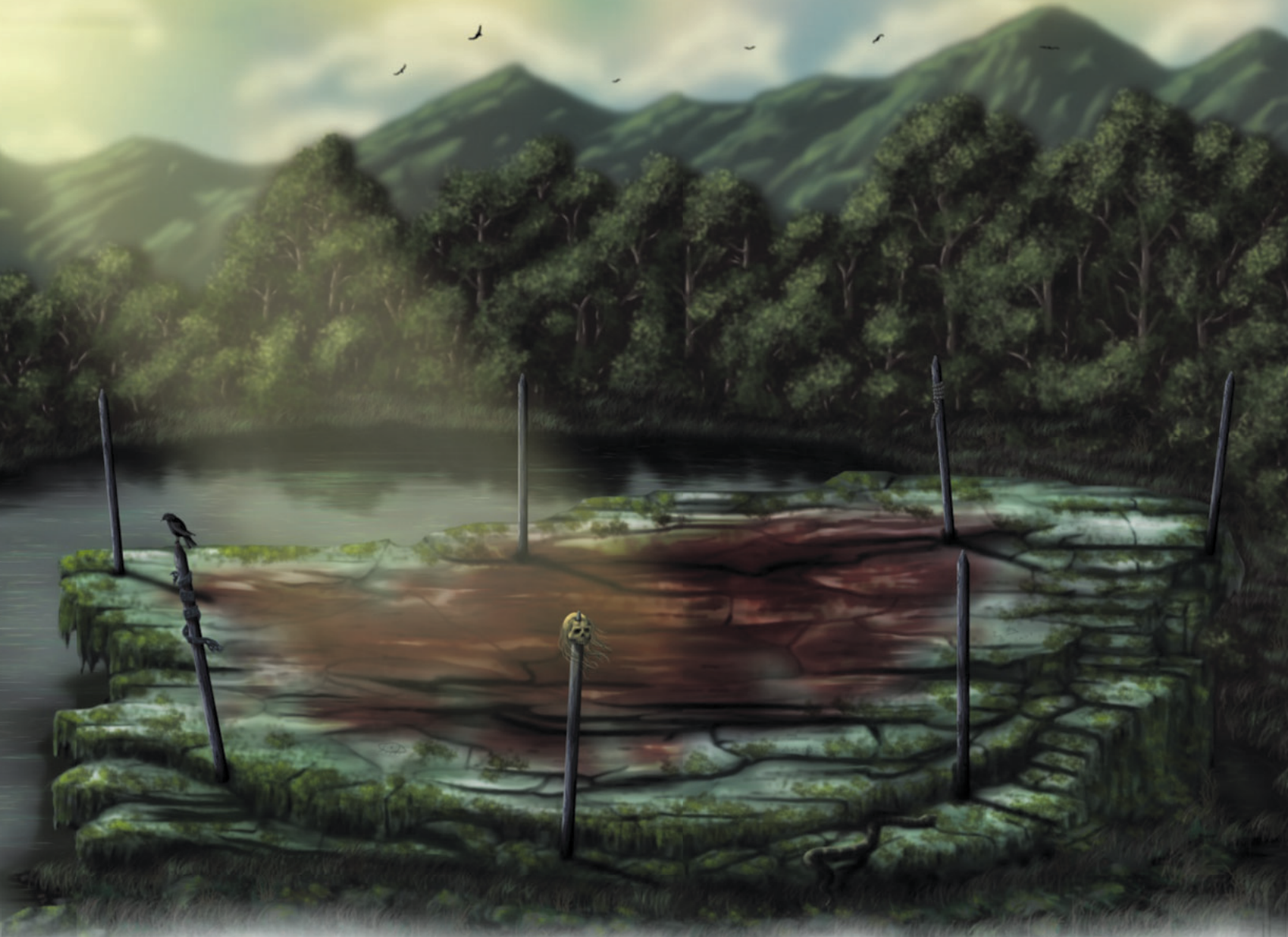
An area of blood midge exposed to any area effect that deals magical damage is instantly destroyed, shrinking the cloud's area by a minimum of 5-foot.

Usage:

This is a great terrain as it is a mobile hazard that seeks out creatures to devour. The cloud doesn't particularly care who the creatures are, thus if the players or enemies figure out they are attracted to large groups, they could use forced movement and tactics to their advantage. Destroying the area is also an option, but care needs to be taken. Some magical effects, such as those that cast in a line, could cause the cloud to split into two different areas that move independently of each other.



"If you think your day sucks you have not been stuck in a cloud of bloodsucking insects that suddenly appears, while you are in the middle of a fight. At least we managed to ditch the group of goblins in the swarm, including their shaman, who attempted to clear it by dropping a Fireball spell into it. To his credit he did clear the swarm but torched the entire group. What an idgit."
-Buford McGinny



BLOOD ROCK

This blood-covered rocky outcropping is the site of brutal ritualistic combat. Barbarians of different clans meet here to engage in ceremonial fights that soak the sands beneath their feet with rage-infused sweat and blood. The bloody area has an aura of power that seethes up from it causing those nearby to go mad with rage.

A creature who enters or starts its turn on an area of blood rock must succeed a **DC 14 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, the creature tosses aside all concern for defense to attack with fierce desperation. The creature must use its action to make a weapon attack. The creature has advantage on melee weapon attack rolls, but attack rolls against them have advantage while they are in an area of blood rock. At the

beginning of each of its turns, an affected creature in the area of blood rock can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature leaves the blood rock, the effect ends without having to make a save.

Usage: This a great option for head on battles with many combat brutes with high hit points. You needn't worry about the combatants falling quickly due to enemies having advantage against them as well. Consider using creatures who can dash or disengage as a bonus action such as spies(MM) or goblins(MM) who can get into the zone to attack, and out of it again before being attacked back. It can also be used to offset weaknesses such as sunlight sensitivity, or debuff spells such as bane.

BRAINSWELL NEBULA

Drifting through the Astral Sea are vast, village-sized blue-black cloud formations that resemble something akin to a pulsating brain.. These clouds appear most prominently in areas occupied by the Githyank, whose pirates are well aware of the brainswell nebula's power to interrupt and weaken spellcasting. The area within a brainswell nebula is lightly obscured.

Any creature that casts a spell of first level or higher while in an area of brainswell nebula must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or take 16 (3d10) psychic damage, and the caster must expend an additional spell slot of the same level or higher to finish casting the spell. If the caster is unable to, or chooses not to pay the cost, the spell fails and has no effect. On a success, the creature takes half as much damage and the spell is cast as normal.

Usage: Battles on the savage Astral Sea are few and far between. Thus, when they do happen you're going to want to make them as exciting as possible. An inclusion of a brainswell nebula is a great way to add terrain to an otherwise open space. This can greatly benefit any creature that understands the nebula's function. You can of course call for an arcana check for a PC to discover its purpose, but if they have not studied the astral sea or been there, it's likely they won't be able to leverage its use until after they have experienced it first hand. This terrain works very well in large battles with astral sea ships, draining caster's resources and forcing them to approach combat in a different way.

"We chased a Gith pirate's ship into this strange cloud of darkness. We attempted to press our advantage when our sorcerer and cleric suddenly found themselves having to not only exert more effort into their spells but were even hurting themselves in the process. The Gith attempted to counterattack at their new found advantage and nearly succeeded. It was a costly bounty."

- Capt. Barnabas Kane

CAVE SLIME

This thin blue slime is harmless but extremely slick, and has a nearly frictionless surface. Rumour has it that these slime patches are the remnants of the prey of gelatinous cubes.

A creature who enters or starts its turn on the cave slime must make a **DC 17 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. On a success, the creature's remaining movement is doubled while moving on the cave slime. On a failure the creature falls prone.

Usage: Cave slime is great for areas where large pits or canyons can be found. Traversing small walkways and steep inclines can usually become pretty trivial, especially for a dexterous characters such as rogues. Cave slime can add a new level

"We were travlin along der narrow ledge when we came across dis shiny liquid along the ground we codna step aroond. Steppin carefooly a good chunk o da party made it by save for that per sap that fell on his arse and slid into the chasm. We dent even ear em hit bottom".

- Barhilm Craggybeard

of danger to these non-combat encounters, as a failure could cause the characters to plummet into a spike-filled gorge or bottomless pit. Cave slime also works well in encounters where enemies don't use the ground, either those who can hover, fly, or walk on walls with spider climb. Alternatively, the addition of the speed boost can be a boon in combat where mobility is crucial.

CHOKÉ FROST

This deadly frost is found in icy caves upon the Spine of the World or in the lair of powerful creatures who shroud themselves in the chill of winter's breeze, such as yetis, ice devils, ice elementals or white dragons. This white mist hardens into an icy, crystal-like form and saps the strength of creatures who stand upon its surface, slowly turning their flesh icy blue as it drains away their warmth.

Each time a creature enters an area of choke frost, or ends its turn there, it must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or lose 1 Hit Die. The area is difficult terrain. A creature who has resistance to cold damage has advantage on the check. Creatures with immunity to cold damage ignore this effect.

Usage: Choke frost is a great tool to drain the character's resources over time without the use of combat. Putting choke frost throughout a dungeon can impact the characters in an unexpected way. Setting up combat challenges after they have traversed this terrain prevents them from recovering additional hit points from short rests between encounters. Going into a boss battle without full hit points can be a terrifying experience for any adventurer.

CLOUDSPORE

Often found in dark damp caves and littering the Underdark, these blue and purple mushrooms release a cloud of spores as a defense mechanism when a creature touches them.

The purple spores fill the air in a thick cloud in a 20-foot-radius sphere. The sphere spreads around corners and its area is **heavily obscured**. It lasts for 10 minutes or until a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it.

Usage: Cloudspore is a great tool for inhibiting the sight of characters, even those with darkvision in caves and subterranean environments. Combining this effect with monsters that have the keen senses feature, or some other sense like tremorsense or blindsight allows them to engage in combat without the negative effects of the cloudspore hampering their attacks.





CONFUSED GRAVITY

Gravity is one of nature's most powerful allies. It keeps everything grounded, not just in the material realm but others as well. It's one of the few constants in the multiverse. There are many wizards who have mastered many aspects of the weave when it comes to defying this powerful force. They learn the art of ignoring its effects with spells such as levitate or fly, but there are some wizards who wanted to control this force in its entirety. This was a difficult task filled with many failures. During the development and mastering of the reverse gravity spell many areas were tainted with chaotic magic that left gravity in complete disarray. Gravity constantly shifts directions in these areas, causing creatures and objects to fall in the wrong direction, and making for extremely treacherous territory.

An area of confused gravity is often a 150-foot-radius sphere, but can be as big or as small as needed. Its direction changes erratically and frequently; sometimes the force is in one direction for a few minutes, other times it changes in seconds. Use the tables below to determine the frequency of the gravity change and determine the direction the force is pulling randomly. All creatures and objects that aren't anchored to the ground in the area fall the determined direction. A creature can make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** to grab onto a fixed project it can reach, thus avoiding the fall.

If some solid object (such as a boulder, ceiling, or wall) is encountered in this fall, falling objects and creatures strike it just as they would during a normal downward fall. If an object or creature reaches the top of the area without striking anything, it remains there, oscillating slightly, for the duration.

D100	DURATION
90-100	5 Minutes
70-89	3 Minutes
60-69	1 Minute
10-59	30 Seconds or 5 Rounds
1-9	Initiative Count 10

D6	DIRECTION
1	North
2	East
3	South
4	West
5	Up
6	Down

Usage: Confused gravity can really throw the PCs for a loop. The constant shifting and changing of gravity can make normal travel difficult and dangerous. Introducing monsters that won't be affected by the change in gravity as much should further challenge the characters. Oozes are a great example, as a collection of these being tossed around right into PCs could make for sticky fun. Adding creatures with a flying speed and the ability to hover, such as the banshee, can also make for a fantastic encounter as they won't take fall damage at all, and damage from flying objects is reduced by half due to their resistances. Lastly, including an area full of boulders and debris could further torment the characters. When falling debris is included, have all creatures make a Dexterity saving throw to avoid them when the gravity changes.



CONJUROR'S BEMOAN

Conjurors' Bemoan is an area where once-powerful mages failed in casting the Gate spell. Rather than jumping to a new plane, the spell created a powerful arcane backlash, killing the caster and infusing the area with energy that enhances conjuration magic.

An area of conjurors' bemoan can be any size up to a 50-foot-radius sphere. When a creature casts a conjuration spell of first level or higher in the area, the effect is empowered as if the spell was cast one level higher than the spell slot used, up to 9th level, and increases the spell save DC by 1.

Usage: Conjurors' bemoan is a superb terrain to couple with a villain or character that loves to summon creatures, as it will empower those spells. You could paint the area as a place of pilgrimage for spellcasters who wish to master the art of summoning magic.

DESECRATED GROUND

Some cemeteries and catacombs are imbued with the unseen traces of ancient evil that defend and guide the undead. An area of desecrated

ground can be any size, and a detect evil and good spell cast within range reveals its presence. Undead standing on desecrated ground have advantage on all saving throws and attack rolls. A vial of holy water purifies a 10-foot-square area of desecrated ground when sprinkled on it, and the hallow spell purifies desecrated ground within its area.

-Dungeon Masters Guide-

Usage: Using desecrated ground is a great way to enhance encounters with the undead, including those raised as minions by the PCs. This creates an opportunity to delve into the Religion skill to learn its lore and discover how to apply that knowledge in a unique way, using tools and spells such as holy water, and the hallow spell. Simple terrain like this can also up the challenge of otherwise mundane skeletons or zombies, making their attacks more dangerous, and improving their undead fortitude feature.

"James said to take half the survivors and he would bring the other. Now James is dead along with those he wanted to save because the bloody son of an orc couldn't wait 2 seconds! And I have been arrested for causing all those people's deaths! No one now using transportation magic near the castle are in peril."

-Lance Campell

DIMENSIONAL TURBULENCE

Transportation magic is a powerful, and in most cases very reliable, source of transportation. However, in rare instances two wizards are caught casting two teleportation spells to the same location simultaneously, causing an instability in the fabric of a plane, and making teleportation in the area difficult and inaccurate. The resulting distortion is known as dimensional turbulence. An area of dimensional turbulence is visible as a faint rippling of space with flashes of twinkling of purple light.

Any creature who teleports while in dimensional turbulence is transported to a random space within 50 feet of the target location.

Usage: This is a great area for spellcasters and monks who find teleportation magic such as misty step to be a favorite ability as the effects become much for random. Surrounding the area with ravorvine, cliffs, lava, fire, or some other hazard can make a normally reliable ability unpredictably dangerous.

DOOMLIGHT CRYSTAL

These beautifully glowing intricate rock formations are most commonly found in clusters in the Underdark, but have been discovered in a few locations in surface caves. The light that emanates from these crystals is caused by a violet gas trapped within them. Characters can break the crystals from the ground and use them as light sources. Once broken from the ground, a crystal holds its light for 1d10 days. The smaller, fist-sized crystals can be used in place of torches as they spread dim violet light in a 10-foot radius. While the smaller doomlight crystals aren't too dangerous, as they grow in size their inherent risk becomes apparent. These rocks can be as big as boulders 5-foot-cube in size. At this size their dim light reaches out to a 50-foot radius.

If a doomlight crystal is hit with any attack that deals more than 5 points of damage, they explode instantly. Each creature in a 15-foot cube originating from the crystal must succeed a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** or take 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or half as much on a failed save. The area then becomes difficult terrain.

Usage: This terrain is great for a multitude of

reasons. First, it can create a chain reaction of explosions, depending on the size of the clusters. Keep this in mind when creating clusters, as to not accidentally TPK (total party kill) the PCs. Second, this terrain also gives the PCs or villains an opportunity to set a trap, allowing the conquering of more powerful foes. The area is extremely dangerous to those who carelessly use area of effect spells such as fireball, or who use the crystals for cover. If your PCs don't think through their combat strategy in an area of doomlight crystals, they may not make it out alive.

DRAGON'S FINAL REST

Dragon bodies and bones are often left behind by lazy adventurers who only seek glory, and fail to respect the strength of a dragon's will. When a dragon dies, its deteriorating body infuses the land with a combination of magic and rotting flesh. This is often due to a strong will to get revenge in some way for its demise.

When creatures take a long rest in within 1 mile of a dragon's corpse, they must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**. On a

failed save, the creature's blood begins to burn. Sweat beads and rolls down their body and they find it difficult to rest due to the pain. The creature gains one level of exhaustion and doesn't gain the benefit of a long rest while in an area affected by the dragon's final rest.

Usage: In a world full of dungeons and dragons, our heroes don't often actually engage with dragons, as they are powerful beasts. This doesn't mean they don't feel the effects of their presence. The Monster Manual gives many examples of regional effects for us to use as a tool to remind the players that the world is full of living dragons. This terrain reminds them of the ones that have been vanquished.

Dragon's Final Rest is an amazing plot hook for an adventuring party, as they must uncover the secret to a town's suffering under this plight. It could also be the result of the PCs themselves. After slaying a dragon they must return after a time to investigate the plague, only to learn that their deeds resulted in the suffering of innocents. In either case, PCs required to battle and investigate in an area where they get weaker after a long rest instead of stronger is a big motivator to finish quickly, and can lead to challenging encounters that they would otherwise find trivial.

"I had informed the priestess of the danger fighting near so many doomlights. She didn't care, for she thought if she stood near the edge she could avoid catastrophe herself. Little did she know the crystals wrap underneath. To her doom, she fell as the rock cracked and buckled after several crystals exploded. My squad is all that would return to Menzoberranzan."

-Colac of the fourth housen



ELDRITCH INFLUX

An area of eldritch influx is a tear in the weave where magical energy seeps into the air approximately the size of a caravan wheel. This effect resembles a small collection of stars. A creature that enters the 5-foot cube area of eldritch influx can feel the power flowing in and around them, causing a faint hum to ring in their ears. This magical pool is left behind by the expenditure of a powerful magical item's energy.

A creature can use their action to attempt to draw in some of the influx's energy into a magical item. The creature must make a **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. On a success the creature can choose a magic item with expended charges and restore up to its maximum charge capacity. On a failed check the magical item experiences a backlash from influx of eldritch energy. The character must roll a d20. On a 1 the item turns to ash and is destroyed. In either case, the power is expended and cannot be used again.

Usage: This terrain should appear in areas infused with magic, like a wizard's tower, or the bowels of a magical cult's lair. Eldritch influxes can be used to give characters a helping hand before extremely difficult encounters, as recharging a powerful magic item can be the difference between success and failure.

EMBER MOSS

This moss is found abundantly in the Underdark. Ember moss is extremely flammable, making it a favored material for creating torches as they will burn indefinitely. Its nature to burn hot and bright can make it treacherous terrain.

A creature who takes fire damage while standing in an area with ember moss takes an extra 5 (1d10) fire damage and has disadvantage on saving throws against fire damage. The fire ignites the area of ember moss and flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried. A creature who enters or starts its turn in the ember moss flame takes 5 (1d10) fire damage.

Usage: This is a devious little terrain; not only is it great for enhancing spells such as firebolt, but it is great for creatures without magic such as kobolds and goblins, who can just drop torches on the characters after luring them down a dark corridor full of ember moss, turning it into a potential death-trap.

ELEMENTAL FONT OF POWER

Sparks of lightning, tongues of flame, cracks of thunder, or flakes of snow, all can be found in areas where surges of powerful planar energies filter into the material world, empowering elemental effects.

Each font is attuned to either lightning, fire, thunder, or cold. If a creature casts a spell of first level or higher while standing in an area with the elemental font of power of a matching element, the effect is empowered by the planar energies, increasing the effect of the spell as if it was cast one level higher than the spell slot used, up to 9th level, and increasing the spell save DC by 1.

Usage: This is another great terrain to have in limited amounts, maybe 5-foot square, though it can be any size you want. The terrain will inevitably become a resource for both PCs and monsters to try and take advantage of. This can be a great way to encourage PCs to use spells of a variety that they don't generally use.

"We walked into an old temple of Lady Doom herself at the behest of the villagers. They indicated strange happenings lately. Strange noises, disappearing objects and shadows at the edge of our vision. Great horrors seemed to come out of nowhere to ambush us, then disappear as quickly as the Appeared..."
-Filgrad Branikow

EYE OF BESHABA

These large columns depict the Lady of Doom Beshaba in a seductive form with a hint of a mischievous smile. The marble columns are created by her most devoted followers, and some say that Beshaba herself blesses the massive idols. The square carved structure stands 20 feet tall and 5 feet wide.

A creature who stands within 30 feet of the Eye of Beshaba and casts an illusion spell of first level or higher has the effect empowered as if the spell was cast at one level higher than the spell slot used, up to 9th level, and increases the spell save DC by 1.

Usage: This is a powerful tool to enhance the PCs and monsters illusions, and could also allude to the fact that what they see may not be real. This should cause paranoia among the characters, putting them in a situation where they are constantly questioning everything that happens. Including this terrain in an area full of hallucinatory terrain and monsters who specialize in illusions and disorientation effects such as the faerie dragon's (MM) Euphoria Breath can help create an amazing encounter.

Fey Circle

Fey circles frequently appear as tangled vines and large toadstools twisted into the form of a beautiful round wreath in a 5-foot square area. The area is imbued with the extraordinary power of the Feywild.

A creature standing in the area can use a bonus action to harness the power of the fey circle. The creature makes a **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check**. On a success they cast the misty step spell as normal, on a failed save their destination is decided randomly by the DM.

Usage: Adding a few of these into your encounter area can really spotlight movement and positioning. Using the fey circles allows movement to different heights or across difficult terrain. To get the most out of them, consider adding hazards such as razorvine, quicksand, or cliffs to potentially punish those who fail the check and end up misty stepping into danger.



FEYWILD TRANSPOSE

Colors in the feywild are usually the purest that are ever seen; bright and lively beyond imagination. Yet in some locations, the practical jokes of pixies sometimes go a bit too far. Trees are blue and red, the grass is orange, the sky is even green.

Creatures that enter this area for the first time must make a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw**. On a success their equipment changes to various vibrant colors. On a failure, the creature's gender is switched. This effect lasts for 1d4 days and the creature is under the effects of the charm person spell as if cast by the first humanoid creature that they see. For one day the creature first seen by the charmed is viewed as that creature's true love.

This effect can end with the dispel magic spell.

Usage: This terrain is meant to fly on the pixies' playful nature. Something that can add interesting roleplay beyond the current encounters. While there isn't much in the way of combat effectiveness, the roleplay generated by the feywild transpose is absolutely hilarious.

GRAB GRASS

Grab grass is a thick, tough, tendril-like dark blue and green plant found in the forests of the Feywild or areas that are heavily influenced by the Feywild's magic.

A Large or smaller creature that is knocked prone while in the area is restrained until it is freed. The grab grass has no effect on creatures that are formless, or creatures that are Huge or larger. A creature can use its action to make a **DC 15 Strength check**, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. The area counts as difficult terrain.

Usage: Grab grass is great because it can be easily utilized as there are a number of ways to knock a target prone. The easiest way is using the Shove action. This can really affect the action economy of an encounter as it takes an action of a creature to break. Additionally, being prone grants advantage to melee attacks increasing hit chance as well as imposing disadvantage when attacking from prone. Creatures as simple as a boar(MM), elk(MM) or lions(MM) become much more of a challenge without any alterations while in this terrain. Likewise, PCs who utilize this terrain begins to quickly find that using the environment can be just as useful as swinging an axe.



GRASPING SLIME

This black, viscous goo feeds on small critters and insects by capturing them in its highly adhesive body when they wander too close, slowly digesting them while they're still alive. While deadly to smaller critters, this clinging substance is more bothersome to larger creatures as they can become stuck in it.

A creature who enters the area of grasping slime, or starts its turn there must succeed on a **DC 14 Strength saving throw** or their movement speed becomes 0. A creature can make the saving throw again at the start of its turn. This area is difficult terrain.

Usage: Unlike grab grass, the grasping slime brings movement to a halt. To get the most out of this terrain, consider using creatures who don't rely on contact with the ground to fight; spiders and flying creatures can make for a challenging encounter. This makes for a great trap from **kobolds**(MM) or **goblins**(MM) and other weaker creatures who can engage hit and run tactics. The barbarian who charges in is going to be in for a surprise when they are locked down and being turned into a pin cushion by arrows and spears.


HALLOWED GROUND

This is the site of a devout priests and powerful rituals, and ceremonies to a specific deity and has been infused with holy energy. The scent of oils and incense fills the area, attracting beautiful creatures such as butterflies, song birds and other adorable critters of nature.

A creature who stands in an area of hallowed ground and casts a spell of first level or higher that restores hit points to a creature, the effect is empowered as if the spell was cast at one level higher than the spell slot used, up to 9th level, and increases the spell save DC by 1.

Usage: The hallowed ground allows you to throw slightly more difficult encounters at your PCs as they have a way to boost their healing abilities. This terrain can make positioning and kill priority important to the encounter if the area is smaller, as it is likely that healers will place themselves within it.





HORRIFYING VISIONS

Oftentimes locations of scenes of horrible torture have their pain and suffering magically burned into the material world by making deals with monstrous fiends. Their prayers of anger, sorrow, and revenge lead them to pleading for their tormentors to suffer as they did. Devils and demons and other monstrous fiends agree to end their pain, so long as they agree to inflict pain on others in their place. Upon agreeing their souls are used to curse the area, tormenting all who enter with horrible nightmarish visions, leading some to go mad.

A creature who enters the area for the first time sees horrifying visions and must succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, the creature must roll on the short-term madness table (DMG pg 259). If they fail the check by 5 or more they instead roll on the long-term madness table and suffer one level of exhaustion. A creature that remains in the horrifying visions must make another check every 10 minutes. A creature that fails the check twice in a row must roll on the Indefinite madness table.

Madness effects can be suppressed by calm emotion or similar effects. Spells and effects such as lesser restoration can rid a creature of short-term or long-term madness. A greater restoration spell or more powerful magic is required to rid a character of indefinite madness.

Usage: Fighting through a horror-themed adventure or campaign can really allow this feature to shine. Generating new flaws for the

characters in and out of combat can lead to some fantastic roleplaying moments. What makes this interesting is the result is randomized, so different creatures will be affected in different ways. Tying the visions to events that have played out at the table previously, or the characters' backstories, will really enhance your players' experience.

ICE TWISTER

A funnel of rock-hard ice and wind spins in a violent vortex in a 10-foot-radius, 40-foot-high cylinder. The twister moves up to 20 feet in a random direction on initiative 10. Each creature that enters or starts its turn in the cylinder must make a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage, and 13 (4d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any ranged attacks that pass through the twister's area have disadvantage.

Usage: Another terrain feature that puts a priority on mobility, but also can alter the style of combat. Ranged attackers are going to have to take a different approach to combat than they normally would, while avoiding the moving hazard. This can really allow the barbarian to shine, as they can grapple enemies and simply stand in the twister. While raging they take significantly less damage compared to their enemies. Additionally, features, spells, and items that hinder movement play a much larger part in the combat.



Icicle Spears

Caves high in the arctic mountains are always chock full of large, frozen icicles that hang from the cavern ceiling like a frozen hangman's axe waiting to send creatures to the afterlife. With clever tactics and a good aim, the hazards can become a powerful weapon used against enemies.

A creature can make a ranged attack to hit an icicle spear. The icicle spear has an AC of 15, 10 hit points, and a damage threshold of 7. If the icicle spear's hit points reaches 0 it falls from the ceiling straight down. Each creature located in a 5-foot radius of where the spear lands must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or take 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Roll a d20, on a 10 or higher the icicle spear remains in place as a broken icy cone piercing the ground that is 5 feet high and 5 feet wide.

Usage: The icicle spears are an example of an effect that is not only a danger, but which also alters the terrain as the encounter progresses. It creates a tool for the characters and monsters to manipulate as well as potentially creating a plethora of places to take cover if they don't smash on impact.

Icy Gale

A strong icy gale imposes disadvantage on ranged weapon attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. An icy gale also extinguishes open flames, disperses fog, and makes flying by nonmagical means nearly impossible. A flying creature in icy wind must land at the end of its turn or fall. A creature that spends 1 minute in an area of icy gale must succeed a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or lose 1 Hit Die. The creature must make this saving throw again every hour they spend in the icy gale. A creature that has no Hit Die remaining suffers a level of exhaustion.

Icy Wind in an area covered in snow can create a snowstorm that imposes disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight and causes creatures to lose two hit die instead of one on a failed save.

Usage: The icy gale is a take on the high winds with a bit of cold temperature added. This not only prevents flying and ranged attacks from being effective, but also taxes the PCs ability to recover the longer they spend in the frigid wind. This can weaken the PCs when they do finally arrive at their destination, leading them to enter a scenario at less than full capacity. It's possible that if no action is taken while engulfed in an icy gale, a PC may die from exhaustion. This puts a priority on preparation and utility, either through preparing the appropriate spells and features, or succeeding on skill checks to get through and survive the gale.

INFERNAL FUMES

While infernal fumes are most common in the Nine Hells, they can also be found on the material plane in areas of extreme heat, such as a volcanic mountain or caverns that lead deep into the core of the world. These massive clouds of gray smoke glow red with an inner heat. While these aren't sentient in the traditional sense, many that have come across them believe the fumes to be a living creature. This is due to the fact that they frequently drift about seeking creatures to choke and burn in their hellish cloud.

Infernal Fumes fill a 15-foot radius sphere, which is heavily obscured. The Infernal Fumes can move up to 30 feet in a round, acting on initiative 10. A creature that enters the infernal fumes, or starts its turn there must make a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw** taking 22 (5d8) fire damage on a failed save, and begins to suffocate (see Suffocating in PHB pg 183). On a success they take half damage and do not suffocate.

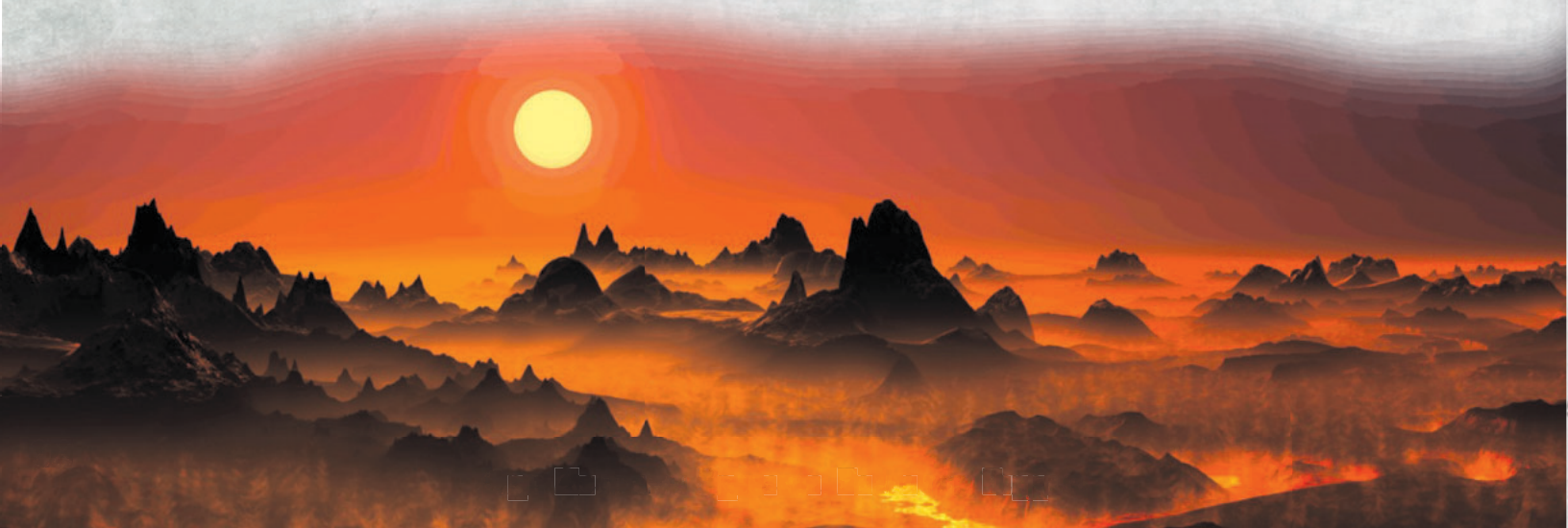
Usage: The infernal fumes is another terrain feature that can be used to encourage lots of movement during the encounter. While it presents a challenge to both monsters and PCs, it does come with some advantages. The area is heavily obscured, so it protects those inside from outside attackers, and allows them to easily hide during combat. Hopefully, this allows them to gain an edge in battle.

JADE FLAME

The jade flame is normally a small column that is 5-foot wide and 5-foot tall made of vibrant green flame that burns everything that comes in contact with it. The chaotic nature of the power is intriguing in many ways. While a creature or object burns under its green dancing flame, it cannot be harmed by other sources of heat. A creature that enters an area of jade flame for the first time or ends there is immune to fire damage while in the hazard and must make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** taking 8 (2d6) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failed save, the target also burns for 1 minute. The burning target sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. At the end of each of its turns, the creature repeats the saving throw. It takes 8 (2d6) radiant damage on a failed save, and the effect ends on a successful one. These magical flames can't be extinguished by non magical means.

If damage from this effect kills a target, the target is turned to ash.

Usage: This is a great terrain to include in an encounter with an enemy with a powerful fire based attack or an environmental effect such as crossing a lava chamber. In either case, the PCs must decide if taking a small amount of damage from the jade flame is worth gaining the fire immunity. This is great for encounters where the villain has a powerful effect on recharge as the attack won't come every turn, putting the PCs in a tough position to choose whether to stay in the jade flame or not.



"The dragon's breath had killed most of my companions. The few that had yet to perish, had slipped into unconsciousness. I had stumbled into a jade torrent of flames in my haste to escape, setting my soul alight. The beast breathed a deep breath to engulf me, but its heat did not reach me. Then I was able to slay the beast!"
- Sir Aladin

LEYLINE NODE

An leyline node is a natural formation that has a special affinity for magical power. The area can be seen shimmering with energy, and any creature who stands in an energy node instantly feels the touch of power. Those with spellcasting can attempt to draw that energy into themselves.

A creature can use an action to make a **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) Check**. On a success the creature can choose expended spell slots to recover. The spell slots can have a combined level that is equal to or less than four. On a failed save, the creature suffers the backlash from influx of eldritch energy and suffers a level of exhaustion.

Usage: During long adventuring days some of the PCs can end up running low on spell slots. Having a leyline node somewhere during the encounter can give the PCs an opportunity to recover some of those expended resources, but it comes with a level of risk. Exhaustion is a powerful incentive to not overuse the leyline nodes, but when the PCs are completely out of spell slots, and are closing in on the big bad, they may choose to take the risk, as entering a battle with a big bad with no power could spell certain doom.

LOADSTONE

This strange ivory colored stone drastically increases the weight of all objects within 20 feet. An area covered in loadstone counts as difficult terrain, which also applies to jumping or flying. Any ranged attacks that have line of sight through

the area have their normal and maximum range reduced by half and have disadvantage on attack rolls.

Usage: Loadstone is a great tool for defensive areas such as towers and castles. It can be used as a way to protect certain areas from ranged attackers, forcing them to move in close and engage in a melee brawl. Some caverns and mountains can be found with loadstone embedded into them making encounters against flying creatures significantly more challenging and forcing PCs to take a different approach. Loadstone can also be used to lure an enemy into a trap. If set as a barrier, the creature must move through the area to get away from its effects.

MEMORY LAPSE

On rare occasions the creation of a homunculus can go awry. During the ritual, powerful magic is used to sculpt and form not only the bodies, but also the memories and personality of the homunculus. When the ritual caster fails in its creation, the magic used to shift and modify the memory to fit the caster's desire often lashes out and affects the terrain around the ritual location. The only indication of this hazardous area is clay, ash, mandrake root, and blood; the remnants of components that were used in the ritual. The hazardous area is 50-foot sphere centered on the ritual area.

A creature that casts a spell of 1st level or higher while within area must succeed on a **DC 17 Intelligence saving throw**. On a failed save, the creature no longer has that spell prepared.

Usage: Using an area such as this has an interesting twist on the game. PCs generally aren't used to losing access to their resources. What happens when a spellcaster learns that if they use spells, they may lose the ability to cast them temporarily? It forces characters to put a lot more thought into the spells they choose to use. This is great for putting PCs in a situation where they need to think outside the box. This terrain is best used in combat with enemies that don't use magic, as they will be unaffected. It is also a powerful tool to let the PCs without magic shine.

"Very interesting. If my research is correct, which it is. It appears that on rare occasions, a beholder's sleeping mind drifts to places beyond its normal madness, imagining a reality in which it exists beyond death. It appears that when such dreams take hold, a beholder is transformed, its flesh sloughing away to leave a death tyrant behind. So it would seem that the entire area is effected by this transformation, raising any who die as undead. Absolutely fascinating! 'Tis a shame what happened to that group of adventurers though. While I appreciate their assistance in this complex study, there was no way to know how the area would be effected. I suppose that will teach adventurers to rely too much on magical recovery. Now what to do with their mindless forms?"

- Erkel Copplepot

NEGATIVE ENERGY ZONE

When a **death tyrant**(MM) is born, the negative energy that is released during its birth leaves behind a residual negative energy zone. The area is normally a 150-foot-radius sphere centered on the location where the death tyrant was birthed.

Any creature in the negative energy zone can't regain hit points. Any humanoid that dies there becomes a mindless **zombie**(MM) with the urge to feed. The dead humanoid retains its place in the initiative order and animates at the start of its next turn, provided that its body hasn't been completely destroyed.

Usage: The negative energy zone is an interesting terrain as it prevents healing. This creates an interesting challenge for any PC, as they are used to being able to charge into battle then recover after an encounter or two. By using a Negative Energy Zone, the characters will have to be more conscious of their hit points as a resource that cannot be so easily refreshed. The characters will have to think about every decision; set traps, lure out foes, sneak around, bribe or find some other way to deal with enemies. If they don't, they may not make it to their destination

PENDRAGON ENDOWMENT

The world is full of lore of great heroes of the past, many of which died in climactic battles, sacrificing themselves for the good of the world. Others go on to retire in secret away from the enemies they've made and the eyes of the public in order to live out their life in peace. When a great hero passes, the place of their burial sometimes becomes a focal point of power and a place of hope. Adventurers may make pilgrimages to these locations before or after overcoming a difficult challenge.

Small purple and pink flowers cover an entire grove, seeming to shine with an eternal light. These groves are commonly found deep in forests, where it is said that legendary kings and heroes had met their end, leaving a gift for those that take up their quests.

Each creature that takes a short or long rest in this 20-foot radius area gains temporary hit points equal to their level + their Constitution modifier. This effect also removes a level of exhaustion. The magical boon lasts for up to 24 hours. Creatures can not gain this benefit again until one year has passed.

Usage: To make best use of this terrain, you should tie it to the backstory of a PC. It could be

the barrow or tomb of an ancient ancestor, or the site of an historic triumph over evil. The terrain serves as a serious combat boost before fighting a big bad, where the odds might be stacked against the heroes. This is also a neat way to reward characters who roleplay devotion to a deity.

PHASE MIST

Phase mist is a hazy cloud of swirling colors not unlike those found on the Astral Sea. This phenomenon is an exceedingly rare occurrence. Phase mist often creates confusion among those who wander into it, transporting them to an area between dimensions. Those who have entered experience a fog-bound dimension overlapping with the material plane. The effect is sporadic even after the creature leaves the mist, causing them to bounce between the ethereal realm and the material plane randomly.

Phase mist is a 10-foot radius sphere. A creature who enters the area must succeed on a **DC 17 Charisma saving throw** or be under the effects of the blink spell.

Usage: This is a fantastic terrain that will add a lot of surprise and chaos to an encounter. Placing these in an area full of horror stories of **ghosts**(MM) and other ethereal creatures should allow the characters to chase the undead back to their native plane. Adding the terrain to any encounter can make for fantastic combat, even without the theming, especially if the PCs aren't aware of its existence, but the enemy is. This allows the foes to sneak around and monitor the characters.

PILLAR OF LIFE

This tall obelisk or tree is inscribed with deep glyphs and overflows with nature's life energy. The power seeps into an area within a 10 foot radius of the obelisk. Plants grow and bloom here year round, regardless of the weather.

A creature who starts its turn within 10 feet of the obelisk can use a bonus action to make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check**. On a success the creature can spend one Hit Die and gain a number of temporary hit points equal to the number rolled.

Usage: This life giving terrain is an interesting feature on any battlefield. Any creature can tap into its power, making for a difficult encounter on both sides of the battle. PCs or monsters who utilize this may have to fight over the territory, making use of features or spells that keep the enemy out of its area. Creatures attempting to use the area are likely to cluster together, making them ideal targets for area of effect spells, such as sleep or fireball.

QUICK SEAR

This metallic green ooze-like substance is a mixture of acid and quicksilver. Quick sear is usually found in small puddles no larger than a 5-foot radius circle.

A creature who enters an area of quick sear for the first time or ends their turn there gains resistance to lightning damage and makes a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** taking 11 (2d10) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Usage: Another terrain that, while hazardous, also grants a boon to those who stand in its area. While you could just have this substance laying around on a dungeon floor, tossing it into a jar that can be knocked over during combat can create environment interaction. Another interesting placement would be at the top of a ramp or staircase, where it could slowly run down toward the PCs.



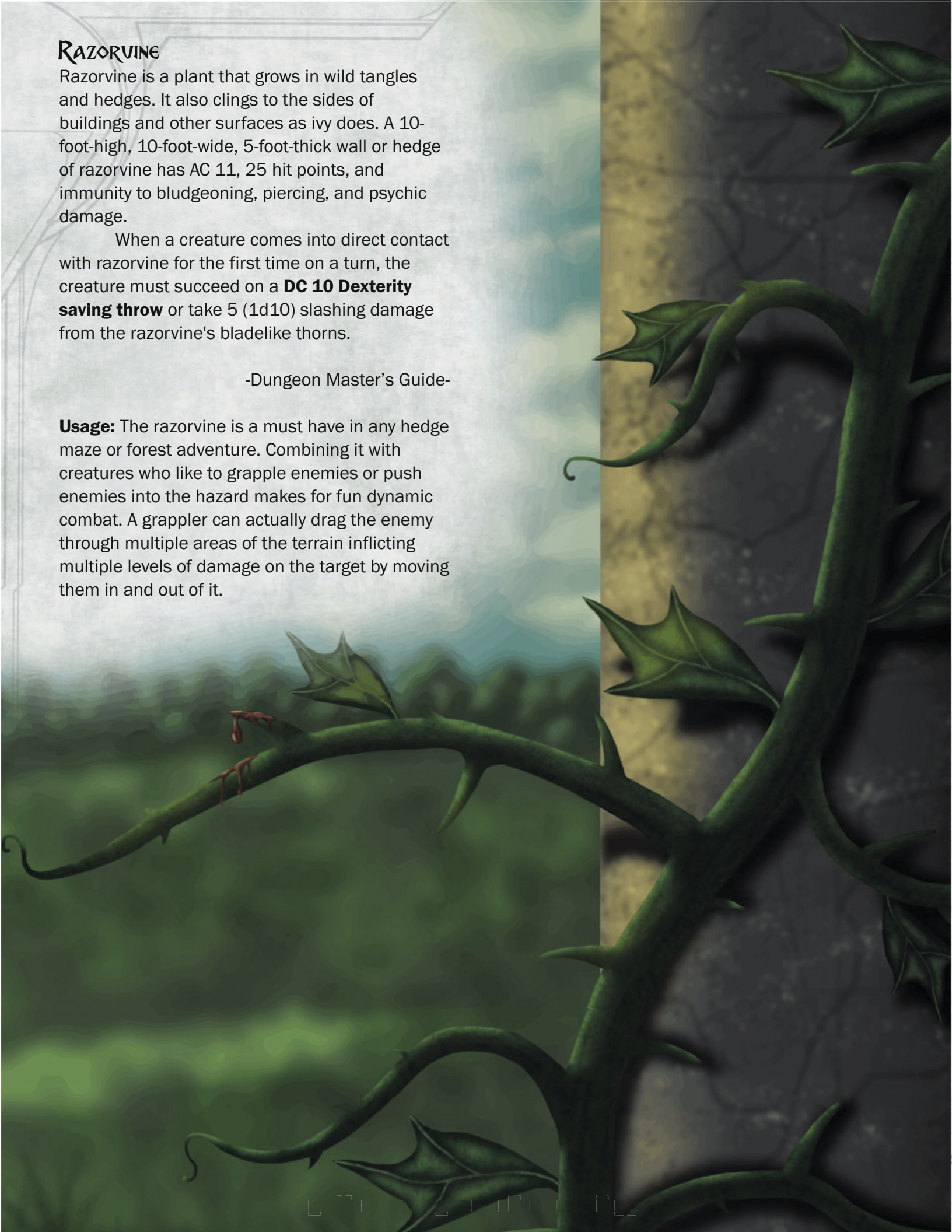
RAZORVINE

Razorvine is a plant that grows in wild tangles and hedges. It also clings to the sides of buildings and other surfaces as ivy does. A 10-foot-high, 10-foot-wide, 5-foot-thick wall or hedge of razorvine has AC 11, 25 hit points, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, and psychic damage.

When a creature comes into direct contact with razorvine for the first time on a turn, the creature must succeed on a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw** or take 5 (1d10) slashing damage from the razorvine's bladelike thorns.

-Dungeon Master's Guide-

Usage: The razorvine is a must have in any hedge maze or forest adventure. Combining it with creatures who like to grapple enemies or push enemies into the hazard makes for fun dynamic combat. A grappler can actually drag the enemy through multiple areas of the terrain inflicting multiple levels of damage on the target by moving them in and out of it.



traps, or other mechanisms. That being said, sometimes you want the battle to reach a climax with the PCs at full health and with all their abilities replenished. In order to get the players fully invested in the encounter you may need a way to allow them to regain some of their resources. Luckily the illithid got you covered; these little restoration pods from the amazing “Call from the Deep” are a good risk vs reward option for your characters, as well as their enemies.

RUST SWARM

Rust Swarms are groups of insects who, through magical means and selective breeding, have become a cross between locusts and rust monsters. The insects were originally created by a radical cult of druids who worship goddess of forests, Mielikki. The cultists believe that the creations of mortals are destroying her beautiful forests and, in order to protect them, they created these swarms that devour the metal machines of mortals. While individually it could take them weeks to devour a single dagger, in a swarm of tens of thousands, the weapon and armor upon a soldiers back will be gone in moments.

The massive devouring swarm fills a 20-foot-radius sphere. The rust swarm spreads around corners and its area is heavily obscured. The area within the rust swarm turns into difficult terrain. On initiative 20, 15, 10 and 5, if no creatures are in the swarm, it moves up to 15 feet and attempts to cover as many creatures wearing metal as possible.

When a creature enters the area for the first time or ends its turn there, metal objects inside begin to corrode. If the object isn't being worn or carried, the swarm destroys a 1-foot cube of it.

If the object is being worn or carried by a creature, the creature can make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** to try and avoid allowing the rust swarm to devour the metal. If the object touched by the swarm is either metal armor or a metal shield being worn or carried, it takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed. If the object touched by the swarm is a held



RESTORATION PODS

These large, egg-like pods are used to rest by mind flayers, and are commonly found in illithid lairs. They are formed of curved glass panes on the front, encased by burnished, iridescent metal. Opening one takes an action.

A creature can use an action to step into the pod close it. Needles pierce the flesh of the creature, pumping restoration fluid into them. The creature must make a Constitution saving throw. The **DC equals 10 + the number of times the creature has used a pod in the last 24 hours**. On a successful save, the creature gains the benefits of a Long Rest. On a failed save, the creature gains a level of exhaustion. Either way, the process takes 1 minute.

-Call from the Deep-

Usage: Some PCs frequently try to take long rests even in the middle of dungeons. Obviously, in some cases, this shouldn't be possible, and can be prevented by utilising random encounters,

nonmagical metal weapon, and hits a creature while in the rust swarm it begins to corrode. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits a creature in the swarm is destroyed after dealing damage.

An area of rust swarm exposed to any area of effect that deals magical damage is instantly destroyed, shrinking the swarm area by a minimum of 5-foot area.

Usage: The rust swarm is a fantastic encounter that can totally freak out the PCs. Having a moving hazard that chases them around wishing to devour their armor, weapons, and all things metal is bound to get them on the run. This is a great encounter to pair with enemies and monsters that are entirely natural and won't be hindered by the rust swarm.

SACRED CIRCLE

Sacred circles are formed when deities from the Upper Planes descend to the material plane to walk the earth. The touch of the divine body imbues the area with a trace of heavenly power and blesses the area. These locations often become the site of temples or monuments, such as the devout followers of the deity come to pay homage to their memory, or to ask that they visit the realm once more.

Any creature standing within the 5-foot radius sacred circle begins to glow faintly with a golden aura. Whenever the creature makes an attack roll or a saving throw, they can roll a d4 and add the number rolled to the attack roll or saving throw.

Usage: Sacred circles are likely to be harshly fought over within an encounter because of their magical boon. PCs and monsters will chop through one another to get this buff, making it a great terrain to add to your encounters. If you tie it to a specific deity, maybe consider giving a follower of that deity a slightly stronger buff, perhaps from a d4 to a d6. If you know the characters are going to encounter a foe with a high AC, this terrain should make it easier for them to hit.

"It was a dark day when a Nightwood Cult decided to attack our mountain home. We dwarves were ready to fight and confident in our defenses. However chaos ensued when they released insect swarms into our home that swarmed us and consumed anything metal, including our armor, weapons and other tools. The panic that day caused more deaths of our brothers and sisters than anything.

- Gromel Bronzebeard



SHADOWFELL DESPAIR

Similar to the Feywild, the Shadowfell overlaps the Material Plane, but unlike the colorful plane of the Feywild, the Shadowfell is entirely devoid of color and life. Aside from the bleak landscape it is a near replica of the Material Plane. The Shadowfell is filled with a melancholic atmosphere, and on occasion some of that darkness seeps into the Material Plane, stealing its color and sending creatures in the area into despair. It is said that the entire great city of Baldur's Gate was once captured under this effect. Some believe that the Shadowfell Despair is the reason the city has become a haven for criminal activity.

When you deem it appropriate, though usually not more than once per day, you can require a creature in this hazardous terrain to make a **DC 10 Wisdom saving throw**. On a success, increase the DC on the next save against this effect by 1. On a failure, the

character is affected by despair. Roll a d6 to determine the effects, using the Shadowfell Despair table. You can substitute different despair effects of your own creation.

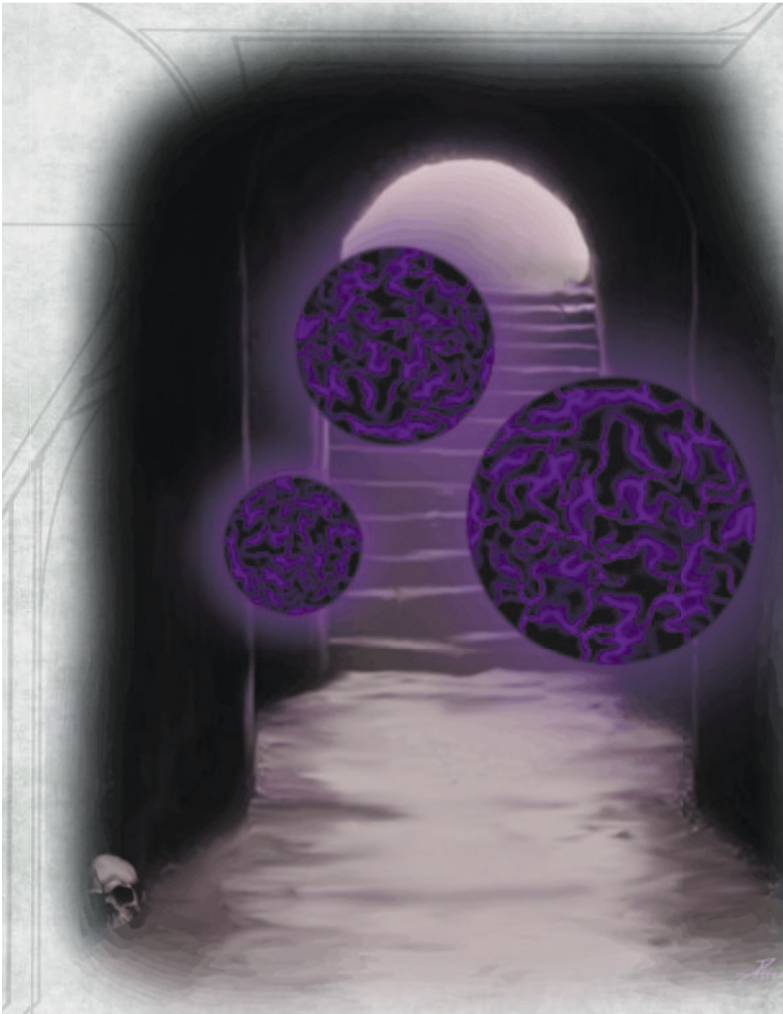
If a creature is already suffering a despair effect and fails the saving throw, the new despair effect replaces the old one. After finishing a long rest, a creature can attempt to overcome despair effect with a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**. On a successful save, the despair effect ends for that creature.

A *calm emotions* spell removes despair, as does any spell or other magical effect that removes a curse.



D6 EFFECT

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | Apathy. The creature has disadvantage on death saving throws and on Dexterity checks for initiative, and gains the following flaw: "I don't believe I can make a difference to anyone or anything." |
| 3 | Dread. The creature has disadvantage on all saving throws and gains the following flaw: "I am convinced that I am going to die in this place." |
| 4 | Hallucination. The creature has disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws that use Intelligence or Wisdom, and gains the following flaw: "I can't tell what's real anymore." |
| 5 | Paranoia. The creature has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks that use Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, and gains the following flaw: "I am convinced that powerful enemies are hunting me, and their agents are everywhere I go. I am sure they're watching me all the time." |
| 6 | Madness. The creature rolls on the Long-Term Madness table in the (DMG pg 260) and gains the following flaw: "There's only one person I can trust, and only I can see this special friend." |



SHADOW MOTES

These orbs of darkness are often mistaken for creatures such as ghosts or other spooks. However, they are in fact a manifestation of the aberrant necrotic energy that has bled over from the Far Realm. These small black and purple floating spheres dart around randomly as if carried upon invisible gusts of wind, sometimes converging on sleeping or incapacitated enemies.

The floating motes each occupy a 5-foot square area hovering just above the ground. Any creature standing in the area of a shadow mote must make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or take 16 (3d10) necrotic damage. A creature whose hit points drop to 0 while in the area becomes cursed, haunted by half-remembered nightmares of aberrant creatures from the Far Realm. The visions appear as phantasms in the creature's peripheral vision, causing paranoia and fear. All attacks against the creature have advantage and the creature moves at half speed until the effect is removed by the *remove curse* spell or a similar effect.

Usage: Aside from introducing a moving, damaging area of effect, Shadow Motes punish characters who are knocked unconscious. Not only does it trigger death saves, but it forces the other PCs to act in a protective manner, changing priority in combat to rescuing the ally. On top of that, once they are restored or protected, they are hindered by a curse that affects them until it can be removed, turning the PC into liability.

SULTAN'S DECREE

Somewhere, out in the harshest deserts of the Material Plane, is a place where the endless sands dissipate to reveal a throne room filled with thrumming crystals the size of wagons.. The crystals vary in color and texture, and their constant humming, which sounded intriguing from the outside, takes on a terrifying tone within the chamber..

A creature that enters the area for the first time, or ends their turn within 30 feet of the crystals must succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom saving throw**, or be under the effects of the command spell. They follow the next one-word command issued in a language they understand. On a success the creature becomes immune to the effect of the sultan's decree again for 24 hours.

Usage: Due to the nature of roleplay, we never know what is going to take place at a table, or what will be said. The sultan's decree is interesting for a number of different reasons. If you choose to include a villain in the encounter who understands the area's effect, they could give commands that could potentially affect the entire party all at once. If nobody else is present, there is no telling what command will come out of normal conversation between the PCs or NPCs, making this an absolutely disruptive terrain in any encounter.

TEMPORAL DISTORTION

Time is said to be relative to those who perceive it. Being a creation of mortals as a way to track their lives, there are some places in the world where time moves differently. In popular faiths it is said that these small pockets of temporal distortion are where a god was born into the world. These small areas of focused power are often no larger than 5-foot radius sphere. These areas provide a unique perspective of the world while under their influence.

Haste Distortion. In a haste distortion it seems as though the world slows down around the creature that stands in its area of effect. A creature who enters this area for the first time or starts their turn there gains the following benefits while they remain in the area; their speed is doubled, they gain a +2 bonus to AC, they have advantage on Dexterity saving throws, and they gain an additional action on each of its turns. That action can be used only to take the Attack (one weapon attack only), Dash, Disengage, Hide, or Use an object action.

Slow Distortion. In a slow distortion it seems as though the world speeds up around the creature that stands in its area of effect. A creature who enters this area for the first time, or starts their turn there gains the following effects;

their speed is halved, they take a -2 penalty to AC and Dexterity saving throws, and can't use reactions. On their turn, they can use either an action or a bonus action, not both. Regardless of the creature's abilities or magic items, they can't make more than one melee or ranged attack during their turn.

If the creature attempts to cast a spell with a casting time of 1 action, roll a d20. On an 11 or higher, the spell doesn't take effect until the creature's next turn, and the creature must use its action on that turn to complete the spell. If it can't, the spell is wasted.

Usage: This is one of the few terrains with different effects depending on the DM's needs. You can pick or choose whichever fits your encounter better, or even have it alternate every few rounds. In either case, the PCs can use this to their advantage, either speeding up their killing effectiveness or slowing down enemies to a crawl. Both sides of the fight will get a lot of tactical advantage out of this, and make it a resource worth battling for.



TOUCH OF THE FAR REALM

In areas where stray energies from the Far Realm touch the material plane, matter is warped and twisted into disgusting forms. These areas often contain a tear in the fabric of space that emanates sickly green colors. These 50-foot cube areas around the tear become far touched, and are mutated into disgusting visages.

A creature entering the area for the first time or that starts its turn there must succeed on a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw** or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage and suffer an effect on the mutation table (see below). A creature within 10 feet of the tear has disadvantage on the saving throw.

The mutation lasts 3d10 days. The effects are cumulative, meaning it is possible to have more than one effect at a time. While under the

D6 Mutation Effect

1 Boils and Sores. The creature's body is covered in painful and irritating boils and sores that leak fluids and are prone to infection. Whenever the creature takes damage they take an extra 3 (1d6) slashing damage and the creature has disadvantage against all saving throws against poison effects.

2 Tentacles. The creature's arms turn into slimy grey tentacles. As an action, the creature can use one of them to try to grapple a creature. Each one is also a natural weapon, which can be used to make an unarmed strike and has a reach of 10 feet. If the creature hits with it, the target takes bludgeoning damage equal to 1d6 + Strength modifier. Immediately after hitting, the creature can try to grapple the target as a bonus action. These appendages can't precisely manipulate anything and can't wield weapons, magic items, or other specialized equipment.

3 Barbed Carapace. The creature's body begins to harden and become disfigured, looking similar to a carapace. While not wearing armor their AC is increased by 1. At the start of each of their turns, the carapace deals 3 (1d6) piercing damage to any creature grappled by or grappling the creature.

4 One Eye. The creature's eyes move to the center of their forehead and merge into a single eye. This causes poor depth perception. The creature has disadvantage on any attack roll against a target more than 20 feet away.

5 Rubber Body. The creature's body becomes soft and rubbery, making it difficult to stand up straight and use its muscles properly. It's speed is halved, it has disadvantage on strength checks, and it doesn't add its strength or dexterity modifier to weapon damage. It gains immunity to bludgeoning damage and takes half damage from falls. The creature can also squeeze into tight spaces providing its equipment can fit.

6 Hemophilia. The creature's skin turns black and blue as if bruised. It's blood is altered and lacks coagulating agents, meaning that any cuts continue to bleed until the wound is closed. If the creature is hit with an attack that deals slashing or piercing damage, they must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, losing 1 Hit Die on a failure. They must make the save again every hour until the wound is healed completely by a magical effect, or a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check. If the creature doesn't have any Hit Die, it suffers one level of exhaustion.



mutation effect, the creature has disadvantage on all Charisma checks. The mutations can be removed with greater restoration or similar magical effects.

Usage: The Far Realm is an area full of mystery and the unknown; an alien power that few understand. Including this feature adds a new roleplaying aspect to encounters as it causes the PCs physical appearance to change in frightening ways.. As the effects are cumulative, a characters

might become a truly hideous aberration. Some of the effects do grant boons, but generally at a cost. This is a great way to introduce monster variants to your game. A group of monsters may already be under the effects of some or all of the effects, making for a terrifying encounter

THUNDER SHARDS

These light blue crystalline shards with white web-like veins are solidified thunder energy. They resonate with the sound of a distant thunderstorm, shuddering from the energy hidden within. Most creatures who have knowledge of these shards often do their best to avoid them. Others though, such as orcs and hobgoblins, are well aware of their danger, as well as their battlefield advantage. They sometimes place their camps or fortresses near them, using them as defensive fortifications or alarms.

An area of thunder shards is difficult terrain. If a creature makes a ranged or melee attack against a target standing near the shards and misses by 5 or more, the shards in the area explode with a thunderous wave of energy. Each creature in a 10-foot cube centered on the missed creature must make a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw**. On a failed save, a creature takes 9 (2d8) thunder damage per tier and is pushed 10 feet away from the creature. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed.

In addition, unsecured objects that are completely within the area of effect are automatically pushed 10 feet away from the centered origin by the shard's effect, and they emit a thunderous boom audible out to 300 feet.

Usage: Thunder shards make perfect traps set for PCs, or a useful alarm system to alert enemies. Since the thunder shards have a pushback effect, placing them at the sides of ravines or platforms can make for a surprisingly dangerous terrain feature.

UNHALLOWED GROUND

This is the site of a dark necromancer's powerful ritual, or an area of ceremonial sacrifice. The stench of death fills the bloody area, which can be any size, attracting spirits of the dead. Necromancy spells of first level or higher cast while within the area are empowered as if the spell was cast one level higher than the spell slot used, up to 9th level, and the spell save DC is increased by 1.

A vial of holy water purifies a 10-foot-square area of unhallowed ground when sprinkled on it, and a hallow spell purifies the unhallowed ground within its area.

Usage: Another terrain used to enhance the effect of a specific school of magic. This is a great addition when your villain is a necromancer, or you want to let your necromancer PC really shine. Including this area could also be the key to defeating an enemy. PCs with holy water or spells like hallow can enjoy the use of their niche skills.

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