

Nerdicted presents

20 DISTURBING DUNGEON ENCOUNTERS



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TWENTY FUN, SCARY AND DISTURBING ENCOUNTERS YOU CAN THROW AT YOUR PARTY.

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What lurks in the deep and dark dungeons? What horrors wait for you? Will you ever get out from under the mountain again? Below you will find 20 fun encounters you can use at any time your party ventures underground.

ENCOUNTER 1

You are asked to enter an old cave in the nearby mountain. It is known that the cave houses an ancient cloister. Pilgrims have gone there and have never returned. You are asked to investigate the recent disappearance of a group of acolytes. A local rumor tells that the cloister is cursed. The curse actually exists and is that all spells you cast will become literal versions.

For example: the spell burning hands causes your hands to grow so hot you get burn wounds.

ENCOUNTER 2

You are deep, deep inside a dungeon. The party is either lost or seeking something. You come upon a large room at the end of a tunnel with a lot of stalagmites. One seems curious. In the rock you see a strange tiny creature that appears melted into the stalagmite. It is an odd scary devilish creature. You make out it is an Imp.

The party needs to move past the imp to move to the exit of the room. If they do so the first PC that passes it hears a voice in its head:

“Please help me escape this trap. I can help you find what you seek. I don’t want to be stuck here forever. My name is Brimward and I am an Imp. I would serve you for two years if you free me.”

ENCOUNTER 3

The party rogue uncovers a trap in the hallway. In the floor just in front of them is a revolving trapdoor. If stepped on it will flip with no more pressure than a soft push. The floor parts will reach up to the ceiling if sprung and there is no way to jump past the pit.

The other side is trapped with a secondary trap (invisible force wall). If jumped before the trap is sprung the PC doing so is flung back onto the revolving trap door, triggering it. The PC then falls down 30 feet in a pit filled with acid..

ENCOUNTER 4

Needing to move on in a cavernous dungeon the party enters a cave. On one side the cave is filled with a seemingly shallow five feet deep pool of water. This water takes up about 80-85% of the cavern. There are nearly 100 stalactites and stalagmites all over the room, water drips down and you hear it echo as it hits the pool or a stone surface.

Unbeknown by the party, hidden among these stalactites is a sizeable colony of Darkmantles. In the pool of fairly clear water lay the remains of former adventures that fell prey to this colony. The party must be very silent to pass unnoticed. A single loud sound and the colony wakes up and will descent upon the party to devour them. In the pool lies among others the remains of a dwarf (rogue) still wearing an intact leather armor.

ENCOUNTER 5

Entering an underground tomb the party moves forward through cobwebs and swirling dust. Reaching the end of the tunnel the floor just gives way (a trap). The party slides down, landing chin deep in dark, smelly and thick muddy water. Trying to wade through the deep dirt toward a rocky ledge one of the PC’s feels something touching his leg. And then the party notices movement. Hardly able to move the party needs to escape the clutches of the Otyugh in its lair.

ENCOUNTER 6

Miners from a nearby community discover a preexisting passage that leads deep underground. The PCs are hired to explore the cavern and see where it leads. Strange plants cover the path before you. They glow with an eerie phosphorescence.

Nature skill check (DC 20) A trained PC can identify the plants. You know that they are indigenous to caverns like this and that touching them, or walking over them, will result in spores being ejected into the air. Inhaling the spores will make the PCs sick.

With this knowledge the party can safely navigate (perception check) the plants. If not they will get the chance to be poisoned. A successful Medicine check lets poisoned characters make one save to regain the lost hp. If your Medicine check succeed by 5 or more you provide a +2 bonus to the save.

Next up a sinkhole 15 feet wide has formed in the path before you. There is no way around. Skill with rope is needed to be able to swing across it. After one makes it across a safety line can be realized and the journey can continue.

The party comes upon an area where rocks sharp as knives jut out from the walls, floor and ceiling. Careful navigation is needed to avoid wicked scratches to move across this part of the tunnel as the party moves further and further underground.

A collapsed part of the tunnel blocks progress. A dwarf or skilled adventurer is able to discern that with moving a few larger boulders passage could continue needing skilled magic or just plain manual strength to move the stones (Athletics)

From the main passage many side passages now run. It is getting harder not to lose direction, but tracks of recent passage by unknown creatures keeps the party on the right track. With stealth (DC15) the creatures can be avoided and at the end of the tunnel lies a treasure horde. Without stealth the creatures might stir and the party is in for a fight before reaching the treasure.

ENCOUNTER 7

You are sent on a diplomatic mission to a local band of dwarves in the nearby mountains. The dwarven chieftain is old, grumpy and very impatient. And he only talks in whispers. You have a hard time understanding what he says anyway through his thick dwarven accent.

If you somehow do not anger him, he agrees to do what you have requested. If you do him one favor. Part of the mining complex was recently destroyed by a mysterious earthquake and he asks you to investigate this first.

ENCOUNTER 8

You are deep in the dark tunnels under the mountain. In the distance you hear the faint murmur of a waterfall. Through the echoing noise of the waterfall, you hear a magical melody. One voice begins, then another chimes in. Then another. Soon there is what seems like a choir chanting.

DC11 saving throw or be charmed. Charmed: a charmed creature can't attack the charmer or target the charmer with harmful abilities or magical effects. The charmer has advantage on any ability check to interact socially with the creature.

If the adventurers walk into the room proper they see an area that appears open somewhere high above their heads. A waterfall is falling into a pool of clean and cold water. Within the pool (D20) harpies are taking a bath and singing. Upon seeing the heroes come in they scream and attack.

ENCOUNTER 9

You are sent to investigate the disappearance of a lot of people (about 200) from a large mining town. They have been captured at least 6 months ago. As you make your way through the maze you find several corpses strewn across the many rooms. These [insert monster] have been battered to death and torn asunder. All doors of the cells are open. Every room is a mess. There are scribbles on the walls in feces and blood. Here and there you also find a corpse of a human. They look mangled and starved.

It appears all the monsters that ruled this complex have been killed. You hear the echoes of cries and howls, unintelligent gibbering coming from the distance.

That is when the first attack comes. You are assaulted by (D20) humans. They have all clearly gone quite insane from being stuck in the darkness so long. The deeper inside you venture the more scenes of depravity attack your senses.

ENCOUNTER 10

All these hours underground you have heard a dripping sound echoing through the tunnel and have followed it. The constant dripping nearly drove you mad. There also is a strong metallic smell in the air.

Coming from the dark tunnels you stumble into a large open cavern. The cavern is a perfect circle and its walls are pitch black, hard obsidian stone. In the middle of the room stands a perfect round pool also made of black stone. Intricate signs adorn it. The light of your torches does not reach the highest points of the caverns disappearing into the shadows.

If the players decide to walk towards the pool they walk through a slight drizzle of drops. Upon investigation, they discover the drops are red. That is when they hear a low deep moan coming from the darkness above. Then another. Bringing a light source higher up unveils about 20 hill giants hung up head down from the ceiling and bleeding from many small puncture wounds. Who would do this?

ENCOUNTER 11

As you walk through the tunnels deep in the earth you hear a low rumble. The whole place around you shakes. Nothing comes down from the ceiling, only some dust. You do see cracks appearing here and there. But the structure appears to be safe.

What the earthquake did do, was release a combination of natural gasses, which are spreading through the tunnel system. Although the mix of gasses is not harmful, it does cause hallucinations. DC15 Wisdom Save to keep your wits together. On a failed save roll a D20 for hallucination effects.

HALLUCINATION EFFECTS

Roll Effect

- 1 - Hear voices. You may sense that sounds are coming
- 4 from inside or outside your mind. You might hear voices talking to each other or feel like they're telling you to do something.
- 5 - See things. For example, you might see insects
- 9 crawling on your hand or on the face of someone you know.
- 10 Smell things. You may think an odor is coming from
- 14 something around you, or that it's coming from your own body.
- 15- Feel things. It might seem to you that you're being
- 19 tickled even when no one else is around, or you may have a sense that insects are crawling on or under your skin.
- 20: Extreme Paranoia and Hysteria. You run in fear to the nearest exit.

ENCOUNTER 12

You come across a large hallway in the dungeon. It ends in a large domed structure. Almost like a temple was built inside the mountain. The temple feels ancient. Like it has been here for ages. On each wall of this temple are several painted scenes. As you make your way around you begin to notice that these paintings look awfully familiar. They speak of your past endeavors. Only you are shown as the antagonists. As devils. You are slaughtering the innocents and stealing all their treasure.

In every picture, there is a heroic figure looking on in disdain. On the final panel, you see an underground temple with you inside it. The 'hero' is depicted as an angel. You are depicted as dead at his feet. That is when a door behind you opens.

ENCOUNTER 13

While entering a dungeon after about half a mile following the one long passage slightly down you come upon a crossroad, stepping forward to take either of the 3 passages, you feel a slight feeling of vertigo. After continuing your way you notice light in the distance only to discover that you are right back where you started. DC15 Perception to find a hidden door that takes the party out of this loop.

ENCOUNTER 14

The party is exploring an abandoned mine, while they move deeper and deeper in the mine they come upon a side passage that's been bolted closed with thick wooden boards. If the PC's decide to remove the boards they unleash a (horde) of (D20) undead skeletons that have been captured behind the wooden planking.

ENCOUNTER 15

The section of the dungeon the party stumbles upon is an area that amplifies sound 20 fold. The player sneaking in first hears footsteps from the room, and whispers almost seem like normal speech echoing through the cavernous space. Lookouts lie in wait for adventurers entering this cave of echoes. They get an early warning to spring the ambush they have planned. Any normal to loud noises cause the PC's to be deafened. Safe DC 12 or be deafened. A deafened creature can't hear and automatically fails any ability check that requires hearing.

ENCOUNTER 16

As you move forward the temperature drops every five miles. It becomes chilly and then cold. As you round the corner you enter the first of a complex of ice caves. Snow covers the ground here and the walls are blue with ice. There are myriad chambers that all interconnect and cold air flows through them. At the end, you find a large cavern. In it are large tombs. You have found the burial grounds of Ice Giants.

Variant: Salt crystals forming, ending in a huge salt cave, filled with spiders made of crystalline / salt.

ENCOUNTER 17

You enter a huge cavern. The cavern has been hewn from the stone of the mountain. After looking around you find you are inside an underground temple. Everything here is giant sized. The symbol of the stalactite adorns the walls and seats. The room is beautifully decorated.

Religion check (DC10) shows you are in the temple of Skoreaus Stonebones - God of stone giants and crafts. At the far left of the temple you find a huge statue of Skoreaus. The room is adorned with stone statues. If the adventurers take anything a stone giant statue comes alive and attack.

ENCOUNTER 18

You are walking through a tunnel with the sound of rushing water coming ever closer. At the end of the tunnel you arrive at a small landing. The road splits. One path going left, one right. The path is several feet above a wild rushing underground river. The path is five feet wide forcing you to walk single file. The right path goes on several miles but ends against a wall, the water rushing on through a small opening. The left path leads to an underground lake. Both paths force the party to walk single file. The path is slippery and requires a (DC10) Dexterity check. Random creatures can attack from above.

ENCOUNTER 19

Your journey ends in a cave. There does not appear to be any way out. On the wall are ancient texts in a script resembling common but in an older form. Deciphering it requires a Wisdom check (DC15). Upon speaking the right words a ghostly figure appears. A spectral Dragonborn Wizard who acts as guardian of the Room of Truth beyond. Only those of good alignment may pass, one at a time. Inside the room each adventurer receives a vision of their true nature. DM can insert personalized plot hooks here. Those who try to trick the Dragonborn Guardian will receive horrible visions.

ENCOUNTER 20

You find a large steel plate in the floor. It appears locked. Opening it is easy. Below the plate you find a large round shaft with metal bars offering you stairs downward. You descent down the shaft for 100 feet. At the bottom you enter a large cavern. Inside it you find a huge stone cloister. The doors are open. When entering the cloister you find a hall with 30 monks sitting perfectly still. Upon further inspection you find they are mummified monks. As you walk past them you discover some are still breathing. They have been sitting like this for the last 100 years. 25 are completely mummified. Five however are still alive.