

A ONE NIGHT STAND ADVENTURE

FOR 6TH - 8TH LEVEL!

Warren of the Death Spider



AN ADVENTURE, STANDEES, AND FULL-SCALE MAP TILES SUITABLE
FOR USE WITH THE PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

You've never seen anything like it! The whole forest—every tree and every rock—completely covered in spider webs! They even wove them from tree to tree, so you can't see the sun or the sky. It's the damndest thing I've ever seen!

The whole place is silent, too—quiet as the grave. Not a bird or cricket chirping. Not a howl from a far off wolf. It's like another world entirely.

You start to wonder how many spiders it takes to spin that many webs? Then you realize that the answer depends a lot on how big the spiders are. And the whole place seems that much smaller, like the webbed walls are closing in on you.

I knew that place was trouble, but I had no idea how much. They took our children. Swallowed them up like they were never there. And they'll be coming for us next!

WARREN OF THE DEATH SPIDER

Like all *One Night Stand* adventures, *Warren of the Death Spider* contains everything you'll need for an evening of fun using the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*.

Inside you will find:

- **Adventure:** The following pages detail the background and action that constitute the adventure itself. Stat blocks are included for new monsters, but you will want to have the *Pathfinder Bestiary* at hand for detailed references.
- **GM Map:** With the adventure is a single-sheet version of the map bearing notations for the GM's use. Marked on the map are room numbers, the monster and NPC starting positions for each encounter, and areas of difficult or noticeably different terrain.
- **Map Tiles:** Following the GM Map are a collection of map tiles that, when cut out and assembled, create a battlemat with a one-inch square grid.
- **Standeers:** After the map tiles are a collection of cut-and-tape standees representing all the creatures and monsters in this adventure. Together with these are enlarged versions of the encounter areas and summaries of the action that takes place in each.

USING YOUR OWN MATERIALS

It is certainly possible to run *Warren of the Death Spider* without printing out and assembling the materials presented here. Any standard battlemat or miniatures terrain will do. If you want to present the entire complex in one piece (as you can assemble using our map tiles), you will need either a grid that is at least 32 squares wide by 40 squares tall or enough terrain pieces to cover that same amount of space.

If you wish to use miniatures or figures other than the standees, you should prepare for the heroes to encounter:

- 6 Trapdoor Spiders
- 3 Ettercaps
- 1 Ettercap Cleric
- 6 Spider Thralls
- 6 Swarms of Spiders
- 1 Death Spider

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Warren of the Death Spider begins as the heroes approach the section of the woods known as the Silken Glen, the place where some missing children had been headed when last they were seen. They've been told that this is a grove where many silk-spinning spiders live, and that farming the grove is one of the nearby hamlet's few sources of income. The locals say it's completely safe—nothing untoward has ever happened there in the past.

As the heroes round a bend in the forest road, they see the Silken Glen is literally covered by spider webs—every tree completely ensconced in a cocoon and tiny spiders crawling everywhere. As the group explores (or just tries to pass through) they are attacked by a pack of trapdoor spiders that try to pull them behind the curtain of webs and underground to their lair.

In the lair, the heroes find the remnants of previous victims, none of whom are the missing children. Before long, they are set upon by a group of ettercaps. Eventually, the series of caverns exits to the surface, deep in the woods and far from the road. There the heroes discover a long-abandoned temple.

In the courtyard, they are attacked by spider thralls—small, strange creatures who seem to be made of (or at least covered in) a mass of

thousands of spiders. These turn out to be the missing children under the control of some unknown force. The temple is dedicated to some long-forgotten spider god, and inside they find the tremendous arachnid that is behind all of these incidents—the death spider! If the heroes can beat her before she turns them into spider thralls, or simply wraps them in cocoons and drains their blood, they will have triumphed!

BACKGROUND

The following details are for those GMs who want a more fleshed-out backstory for the events in this the adventure. With just a little extra work, the GM can use this material to create an opening act for *Warren of the Death Spider*, roleplaying through the heroes' arrival in the hamlet of Villago and the events that lead up to their arrival at the Silken Glen.

Game Masters who do not want this level of detail should skip ahead to the "Getting Started" section below.

THE HAMLET OF VILLAGO

Villago is a tiny hamlet located in a remote stretch of the Crimson Plains—nearly a week's journey away from anything even that even passingly resembles a town. It sprang up as a rest stop along the Great Western Trade Road, and thrived for years. But these days only three or four caravans a year come this way, and Villago has no amenities to offer, so even they do not always stop for more than a brief hour or two to engage in some trading.

Only about half a dozen families live in Villago—no more than forty people at most (and that's counting the hermits and rangers who only come to town once or twice per year). They are fiercely independent people, having come here to seek a life away from the cities, where they could farm without having to be peasants

on some nobleman's manor. But for all their pluck, they are still just ordinary folk living in a part of the world that is wild and untamed.

THREADS OF COMMERCE

One reason the original settlers chose this spot for Villago was that it sits just at the edge of the forest that marks the eastern boundary of the Crimson Plains—a perfect conjunction of flat, fertile, farmable land, a nearly inexhaustible source of wood for building, and fresh water. In the first years of the hamlet's existence, they sold or traded their crops to the merchants (who took them into the city of Roughwater for sale or used them to feed themselves during their trip across Dragons Teeth Pass.

It was only a few years later that the citizens of Villago discovered what was to be their

greatest resource. The forests surrounding the town were home to a type of spider that spins incredibly soft silk and is still strong enough to be harvested. The silk could be dyed and woven into cloth of outstanding quality—comfortable, fashionable, and surprisingly durable. The villagers called their cloth “spiderdown” and every caravan that passed through bought as much of it as was available.

But Villago having such a small population for harvesting and weaving, and the spiders only producing the silk for a few months in the spring and summer each year, meant there was never enough of the material to do more than trade for the necessities the people couldn't make or grow for themselves. As the frequency of the caravans decreased, this became even truer. Even in the rare instances when the locals had an excess of

spiderdown, there was hardly anyone to trade with and each individual caravan only carried a limited amount and variety of goods.

Still, demand for spiderdown remained high among the nobles and merchants in the cities to the east, so it was always possible to work out some kind of deal.

A TANGLED WEB

Things turned bad for the people of Villago about ten years ago. For some unknown reason, at that time the population of silk-spinning spiders began to dwindle. Each year the available spider silk dropped by half, so that soon the locals were only able to harvest enough to weave one or two bolts of spiderdown.

Luckily for them, the scarcity raised the value of the cloth they did make, allowing the town to still trade for its absolute necessities. But given the fact that they had no idea why the spiders were disappearing, it seemed frighteningly possible that one day soon there would be no more silk, no more spiderdown, and soon after no more Villago.

Try as they might, though, the people could not figure out why the spiders were disappearing. If they had, they would have packed up and left Villago immediately.

UNHOLY RITES

The disappearance of the silk-spinning spiders is tied directly to the arrival in the woods of a group of ettercaps. The creatures were simply migrating through the woods, when they came upon the ruins of an ancient temple dedicated to a forgotten arachnid deity. They began to worship at the long disused altar, offering prayers and blood sacrifices.

In reward for their devotion, the spider god spoke to the ettercaps, promising power and wealth if they would help return it to the mortal world. It anointed one of the creatures as its high priest and the group as protectors of the temple. It set them



a series of tasks—a pilgrimage that took them to various sites of arachnid power and culminated with a ritual at this temple on the night of the vernal equinox. This pilgrimage had to be performed every year for a decade and after that time would, the spider god promised, result in the birth of its new avatar.

The ettercaps followed the instructions to the letter. And on the vernal equinox, when they returned to the Temple of the Spider God to perform the culminating rite, they found a collection of the silk-spinning spiders in the temple creating a great egg out of their webs. Each year the egg grew in size and more of the local spiders were at work on its majestic proportions.

This year the ettercaps found the egg nearly filled the temple. At the stroke of midday on the equinox, it burst open and out crawled the promised avatar—a death spider, not seen on this world in ages.

But the spider was not yet at the peak of its power. It ordered the ettercaps and all the spiders of the forest to gather sacrifices so that it could feed.

A SUDDEN SURFEIT OF SPIDERS

No one in the hamlet of Villago knew anything about the ettercaps and the death spider—all they knew was that after years of inactivity, all of the missing spiders seemed to have simultaneously returned to the Silken Glen (as they call the area where the spider silk is harvested). Everywhere they looked were webs, more than the citizens could gather, with more appearing every day.

Before long, the trees were literally covered in spider webs. The Silken Grove now seemed like a silken cavern, with gauzy strands creating a canopy over the trade road. And no matter how much of it they gathered (or even simply cut away and discarded), the next day there was more.

Visions of riches danced in the weavers' eyes as they created more bolts of spiderdown in a month than they had in the previous three years combined,

and still there was more silk than they would be able to use over the course of the entire summer ahead. Some said this was their reward for having remained dedicated to their craft during the long lean years. Others worried that this was a bad omen, and that some price would need to be paid for this apparent boon.

THE PRICE IS PAID

The people of Villago began working practically around the clock after the vernal equinox. Every able-bodied citizen pitched in to the point where they even began to ignore the other work and chores they needed to do. Crops went untended, cows went unmilked, people slept as few hours as they could manage, and a palpable sense of tension grew in town. Happily married couples began harping at each another relentlessly. Fights began to break out in the street over the smallest provocation. The town seemed on the verge of collapse.

Then, just two days ago, a group of children on their way to harvest silk (in hopes of relieving some of the stress their parents were under) went into the woods and never returned.

The adults put aside their differences and went searching for the missing children but found nothing. Indeed, when they went into the Silken Glen, they found nothing—not a single trace of the children—just a darker and more menacing stretch of woods than they'd ever seen before.

The children were simply gone!

SACRIFICES TO THE SPIDER GOD

The children were collecting strands of web in the Silken Gen when they were attacked by the trapdoor spiders. After being dragged to the lair below, they were saved from becoming meals for the beasts when the ettercap cleric decided the children would make fine offerings to the death spider.

Rather than eating the young humans, as the ettercap presumed the avatar would, it used its create thrall power to turn all the children into spider thralls. It then gave them the task of guarding the temple complex, and told the ettercaps to simply go out and forage for food.

The group did as they were told, but this demotion in the eyes of their god has hit them hard—particularly the cleric. The ettercaps are too frightened of the death spider to openly act against it, but they no longer wish to serve as its minions.

ALONG CAME THE HEROES

As fate would have it, the heroes arrived in the hamlet of Villago just as the locals were arguing over what to do next. The parents of the missing children were ready to use their farming implements to slice through the webs, thinking that the kids must have somehow found a way beyond the silky wall and now were trapped in the woods. Others suggested that maybe the spiders had wrapped the children up in cocoons, making them part of the wall itself. Still others think the kids just got tired of all the adults fighting and ran away up the Great Western Trade Road.

Relieved to have heroes on hand, who certainly were better equipped to deal with any of the possible problems than mere farmers were, the people of Villago asked for—and presumably got—their aid. If the GM prefers, the adventure could begin with the PCs coming into Villago and negotiating terms with the citizens. As a group, they are so poor it borders on destitute, but they own various items of value, and certainly have as much spiderdown as the heroes are likely to be able to use.

GETTING STARTED

Warren of the Death Spider is a self-contained stand-alone adventure, designed to only require a brief “how you got here” description before diving right into the action. The heroes need only know that a group of local children have gone missing is a section of the woods known as the Silken Glen.

Alternatively, the adventure could be modified so that the heroes know nothing about the children and the eerily cocooned Silken Glen is just a chance encounter the heroes stumble into as they travel down a lonely stretch of forest road toward some campaign-related goal. As the Game Master, you know the best way to get your players involved in this scenario.

THE SILKEN GLEN

Warren of the Death Spider begins as the heroes approach the section of the woods known as the Silken Glen. Based on what happened previously, they may have some idea of what has happened here recently. If so, allow them to make whatever preparations you deem appropriate. If they are completely unaware of what lies ahead, simply have them round the bend in the road in whatever marching order and state of preparedness they usually use while traveling.

The GM may want to start the heroes further down the road, not quite at the bend of the road shown on the map. Once the group steps into the Silken Glen, events will begin to happen quickly.

1. THE GREAT WESTERN TRADE ROAD

The Great Western Trade Road was once a busy commercial trail, with dozens of caravans plying its length every year. Now, however it is

a shadow of its former self, with uneven ground and weeds and grass growing along its path. The only real clue to its past importance is the width of the road—at least fifteen feet along its entire length—wide enough to accommodate any wagon, carriage, or even elephants and other tremendous riding beasts.

Although only the last few feet are included on the map, this encounter is meant to encompass the whole of the trip from the hamlet of Villago to the Silken Glen (a journey of about 5 miles). It is an opportunity for the GM to include any story points, random encounters, or other roleplaying opportunities he wishes to get in before the adventure proper begins.

This section of the road passes through a forest, with dense underbrush and centuries-old trees lining the path on either side. Although no events of importance happen here, it is possible that the heroes may want to explore the woods off the path (searching for signs of the missing children, perhaps). If so, the GM should improvise an uneventful investigation, or an encounter with ordinary woodland creatures (wolves, bears, owlbeats, etc.).

The encounter ends when the heroes round the bend in the road and arrive at the Silken Glen.

2. THE SILKEN GLEN (EL 8)

There can be no question that this is the area where the people of Villago go to harvest spider silk—every inch of the surrounding trees are covered in webs so thick that they look like they’re wrapped in cocoons. A canopy of webs connects the treetops, creating a hazy ceiling over this entire area and giving it an almost subterranean feeling. The air is still and close, and not a sound can be heard.

Take a moment or two to describe the area in detail, with an eye toward making it seem as

eerie and foreboding as possible. Tell the heroes that they have the feeling of being watched. Have them make DC 30 Perception checks to notice the sound of clattering mandibles coming from somewhere behind one of the walls. The noise is being made by the four (4) trapdoor spiders lurking in their burrows and waiting to spring out to attack the group.

Once the mood is set, have the spiders strike. Those PCs who succeeded at the Perception check can act normally, those who failed are surprised.

Each spider’s goal will be to grab one of the heroes and drag him into their underground lair. They want to isolate their victim from his friends then make a group meal of him. As soon as one of the spiders succeeds, those who are not currently grappling will use their next action to also return to the lair. Those who are grappling will continue to try to drag their prey underground, too. Any spider that takes more than half its hit points in damage will flee back to the lair, too.

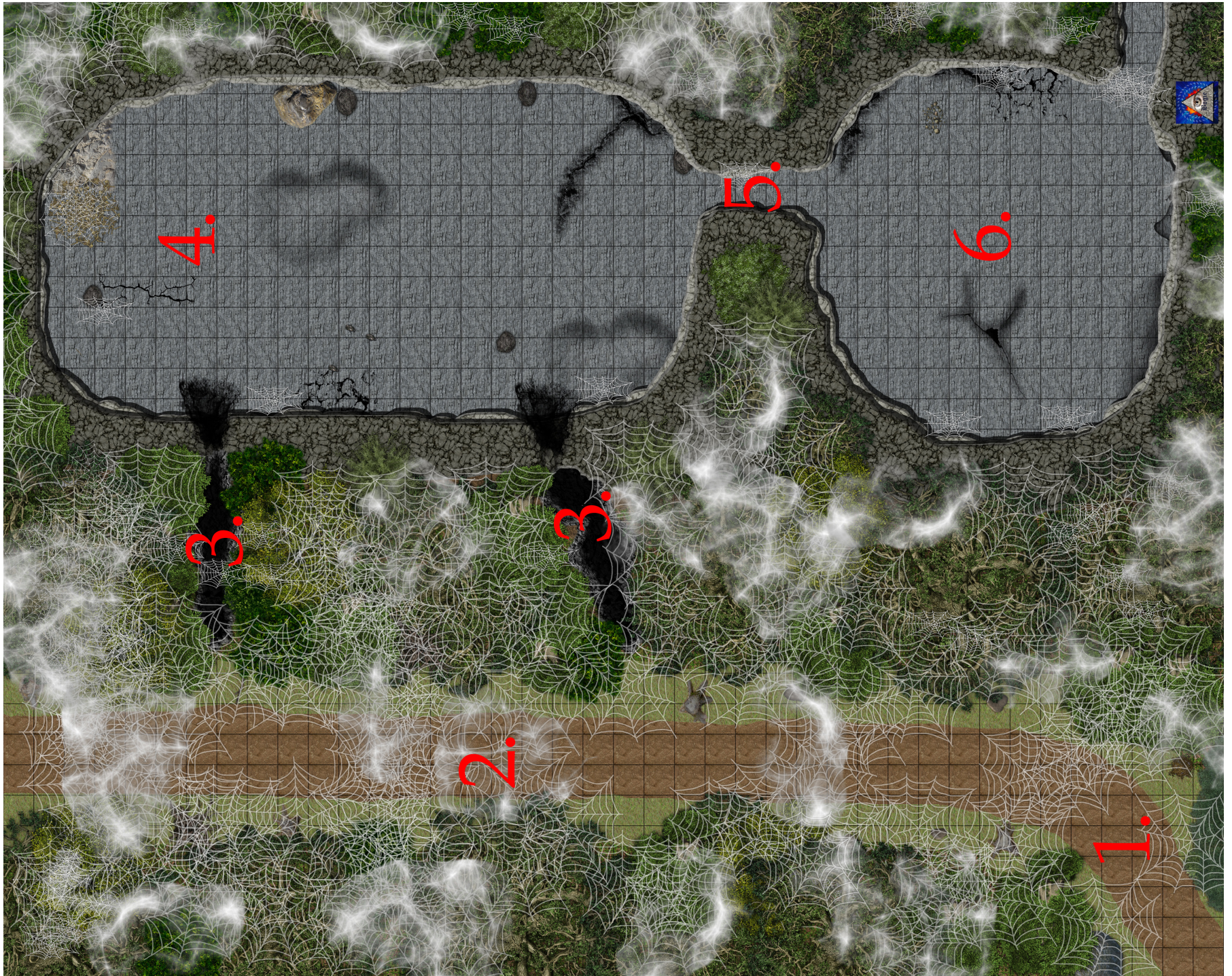
Once back in the lair, the spiders will attack as a group against the victims they’ve dragged there. They are not intelligent creatures, but they fight with natural teamwork that lets them employ what seems to be advanced strategy. In particular, one spider may grapple and attempt to pin an opponent so the other spiders may more easily attack him.

Once the heroes see the spiders leap from their tunnels, it is a relatively easy matter for them to locate the burrows they use to travel to and from their underground lair. There are eight such burrows hidden in the webs covering the Silken Glen, and a DC 8 Perception check will allow the heroes to locate one. For every 2 points by which they exceed that number, they notice an additional burrow (so anyone beating DC 24 will see them all).

From the glen, the heroes can faintly but clearly hear any words shouted in the spiders’ lair. But to get there, they must crawl down the burrows.

If the heroes manage to chase the trapdoor spiders away without anyone being dragged below,

GM Map #1



they may not have an immediate incentive to follow. However, allow them to attempt DC 5 Intelligence checks to realize that one reasonable explanation for the children's complete disappearance would be if the spiders grabbed them.

3. BURROWS

The burrows are barely holes dug in the dirt of the forest floor that connect the Silken Glen with the trapdoor spiders' lair. Although the spiders are Large creatures, their arachnid bodies allow them to squeeze through very small spaces. As a result, these burrows are barely wide enough for most humanoid creatures to crawl through.

The burrows are 30 feet long and count as difficult terrain. Medium size creatures must squeeze through a burrow (moving at one-quarter speed—the difficult terrain and squeezing penalties stack), but creatures that are no bigger than Small may move normally (incurring only the difficult terrain movement penalty). Creatures that are Large or bigger cannot pass through the burrows unless they have segmented, insectoid, or snake-like bodies (or some other way to make their forms fit through such a small space).

4. THE SPIDERS' LAIR

This underground cavern is the lair for the trapdoor spiders that ambushed the heroes in the Silken Glen. Their goal is to drag one or more of the heroes back here, separating them from their compatriots, and then to team up to make a meal of them. (See "The Silken Glen" for more details on the spiders and their strategy.)

Unlike above, the spiders will fight to the death to protect their lair.

The cavern is a natural formation, with all the rough ground, stalagmites, and stalactites that implies. The whole of this cavern is considered difficult terrain. The ceiling is only eight-feet tall, so it is difficult for the heroes to move and fight

normally. Aside from the penalties for terrain, anyone using a melee weapon with reach takes a -2 penalty on all attacks.

Besides the spider burrows, there is only one passageway out of this chamber—a narrow, steep crevasse that leads upward.

In this close environment, sound echoes and carries a long way. Any words spoken in a shout can be heard in the Silken Glen, but also carry throughout the underground complex. Each time a hero shouts in this chamber and every round that combat happens, there is a cumulative 5% chance that the ettercaps will hear and come to investigate. It takes the creatures two minutes to reach the top of the crevasse.

If the heroes examine the cavern after the fight, they will find signs that the children were here—a child-sized boot or cap and a couple of sacks the kids used to gather silk strands—all made of spiderdown.

5. CREVASSE

This very thin, steep passage is the only connection between the trapdoor spiders' lair and the rest of the underground complex. It counts as difficult terrain.

Going down the crevasse may be done using normal movement. Going up, though, must be done using Climb. The check itself is not difficult (DC 5), but the movement restrictions are cumulative with the difficult terrain penalty.

Creatures that are Medium size or smaller may pass through normally. Large creatures must squeeze in order to use the crevasse. Anything Huge or larger cannot pass through this area.

6. ADDITIONAL CAVERNS (EL 8)

Although the map shows just one additional cavern, there are a series of small chambers leading upward toward the surface. Each

cavern is connected to the next by a passage that functions identically to the way the Crevasse does.

These are naturally formed chambers, but not as rough as the ground in the trapdoor spiders' lair, so characters are able to move within them normally. They are empty, with the exception of the final chamber that leads to the surface—that cavern is where the ettercap cleric and her three (3) minions have set up camp now that they have been ejected from the temple.

If the heroes make it that far without giving away their presence, they may be able to surprise the ettercaps. Certainly, though, once the creatures are aware of the heroes, they will attempt to kill them.

It is possible, though, that the ettercaps may have come down further into the complex—they would do so if they heard sounds of combat or the heroes shouting in the spiders' lair. In that case, the GM should decide at what point in the complex the two groups meet. In any case, unless the heroes are invisible or otherwise completely obscured, it will not be possible for them to surprise the ettercaps.

While the ettercaps were once fanatically devoted to their spider god, the fact that the death spider recently spurned them as the guardians of the temple has shaken their faith. Although they are not ready to simply turn on their former master, they are not quite as willing to lay down their lives in its defense.

They will attack the humans on sight, but once the ettercap cleric is killed, the remaining creatures will offer to surrender and give information to the heroes in exchange for their lives.

Once the heroes have dealt with the ettercaps (one way or another) there are no more obstacles between them and the surface.

TEMPLE OF THE SPIDER GOD

After exiting the underground complex, the heroes find themselves in a section of the woods that has not been trod by non-arachnid feet in centuries.

7. ARCADE

The underground complex leads to the surface world through a roughly circular cave mouth. If the heroes turn around to look at the entrance they see that is a mere outcropping of rock, no more than ten feet tall. It is not, however, what one would call “ordinary.”

Though weathered by centuries, perhaps millennia of exposure to the elements, the rock was clearly carved to resemble the head of a spider. Multi-faceted eyes perch above the cave mouth, and the sides still hold the rough shape of pincers or mandibles.

The forest floor at first appears to be worn down like a game trail—as though a great many animals travel along this way on a regular basis. A DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that as unlikely. There is nothing in the cave complex that would draw animals there, with the possible exception of bears looking for somewhere to hibernate. A closer look at the path, and a DC 15 Perception check, however, reveal that this is not a game trail but a long disused roadway set with paving stones.

Each of the stones each bears a sigil that resembles a spider with a skeletal skull in place of a head. A successful DC 22 Knowledge (religion) check informs the heroes that this emblem is associated with a long defunct cult that worshipped a spider god. Little is known about the religion or their deity, other than that the cult performed blood sacrifices and believed their god’s web tied together all the various afterlives from other religions—making their god the ultimate authority over death and undeath.

8. GRAND PLAZA (EL 9)

The arcade leads up to an open plaza. Even after centuries of disuse, it still radiates a palpable evil, and even the woods seem to have been scared of trespassing. Unlike everything else in the area, the plaza is not overgrown with vines and brush. Indeed, except for thorny, sickly looking weeds sprouting here and there, no plants grow on the plaza or the temple.

The entire temple complex is an *unhallowed* site. The most trying part of that effect is that the plaza and temple function as if under the effects of a *magic circle against good* spell. (See spell descriptions for other details.)

The plaza itself is a tremendous courtyard paved with stones (each marked with the same spider god sigil) laid out in a mosaic that creates an arachnid-shaped design. Along each side of the plaza is a row of four pillars that may have once held aloft a roof or awning, but now are purely decorative.

At the far side of the plaza sits a low, square building that, despite its angular form, bears a striking resemblance to a spider web. Set in the center of the structure is a tremendous set of double doors that appear to be decorated with a tremendous image of a spider.

Like in the Silken Glen, the heroes will note that no sounds of wildlife can be heard here. The whole complex is eerily silent. Nothing moves or makes a sound until the heroes make their way halfway across the plaza (it doesn’t matter from which side they start—just that they are halfway across its length or width). At that point, have all the heroes attempt Perception checks opposed by the spider thralls’ Stealth.

Those who succeed at the check notice that small figures have been lurking atop some of the pillars. These creatures now stand up to

reveal themselves—they are spider thralls (and, although the heroes may not realize it yet, they are the missing children from Villago)!

Each spider thrall stands about three to four feet tall, is humanoid in shape, and is either covered by or made entirely of a mass of mundane spiders. The spiders crawl and writhe about, and there are so many of them that a thrall’s silhouette seems lumpy and undulating. Every time a thrall is hit in melee combat, allow anyone in an adjacent square to attempt a DC 15 Perception check. Success indicates that the character was briefly able to see the skin or clothes of the child underneath the swarming mass.

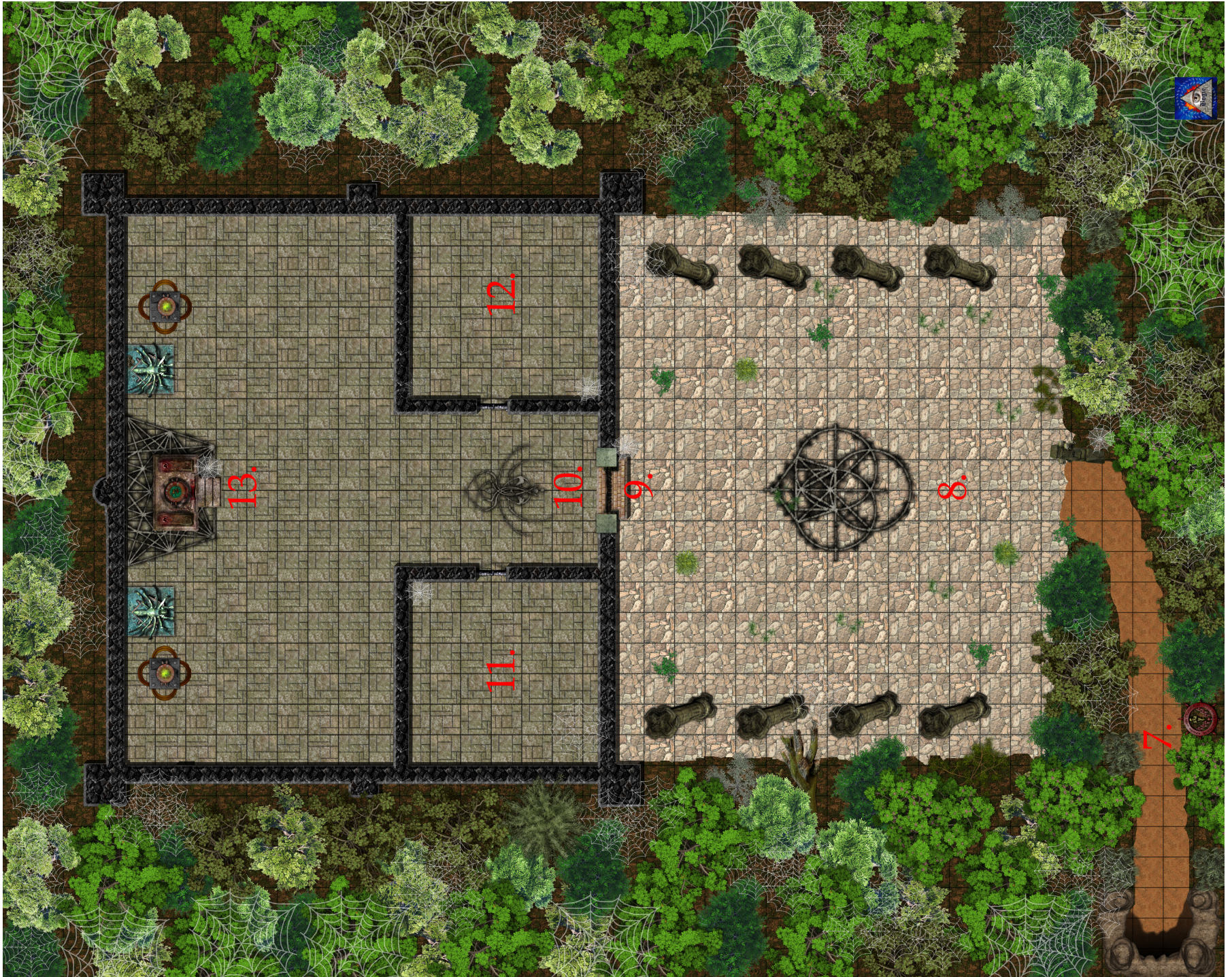
If the heroes do not yet know that the thralls are the children from Villago, allow them to attempt DC 12 Intelligence checks to figure it out. The clues are there—the creatures have childlike bodies, there are the same number as there are missing children, and in the fight it may be possible to see beneath the spidery skin.

The spider thralls have been ordered to prevent anyone from approaching the temple door, and so wait until it is clear that the heroes are moving in that direction before they attack. Their goal is not necessarily to kill the heroes, but rather to chase them off. However, they will press on in their assault until they fall, with no chance they can be scared off or forced to make morale checks.

If the heroes manage to open the temple door (see “Temple Door” on page 10 for more details) and enter the temple, the spider thralls will not follow them in. Their goal was to keep the heroes out and, having failed at that, their fear of their master is greater than their desire to correct their error.

There are two ways for the heroes to free the children from their servitude as spider thralls. In order to discover one of these methods, a hero must succeed at a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering, nature, or planes)—if the check beats DC 25, the hero learns both methods. One way is to beat a spider

GM Map #2



thrall in combat which, if done right, should leave the victim alive and whole (though in need of some healing). The other way is to kill the death spider, which will free all thralls created by the spider or any of its spider thralls.

9. TEMPLE DOOR

The temple door is actually a tremendous sculpture formed of separate parts. It is in the shape of a spider, with each leg and body segment able to be moved independently. Indeed, the whole thing is a gigantic movable puzzle more than it is a mere door.

A DC 10 Perception check will reveal that the spider on the door is very similar to the mosaic on the plaza floor. If the check beats DC 20, the character notices subtle but important differences between the two and gains a +2 bonus to any Disable Device or Intelligence checks the group makes in attempting to open the door.

One person alone cannot solve the puzzle—it requires the combined efforts of at least three people working together in order to open the door. They must move different segments of the sculpture in a specific order and hold them in place in order to trigger the mechanism. Figuring this out requires a DC 10 Disable Device check or a DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check.

One person must take the lead for this endeavor, and that person must have at least one rank in Disable Device. Opening the door requires a minimum of three people (if there are fewer than that, the door cannot be opened no matter DC is achieved with the Disable Device check). A maximum of ten people can work together in this effort, each taking hold of one of the moving parts. The leader makes a Disable Device check while the others assist (using the “aid another” rules) by making either a Disable Device or Intelligence check. The DC for the group effort is 40.

Any unsuccessful attempt to open the door causes the mechanism to stutter, inflicting

bludgeoning damage on everyone involved in the effort. This damage is equal to 1d4 for every 5 points (or portion thereof) by which the check failed.

If the group is unable to solve the puzzle, the door can be broken through brute force. It has AC 8, hardness 15, and 40 hit points.

10. NARTHEX

Inside the temple there is no source of light other than what streams in through the open door. There are no windows or other doors to open. Lighting conditions are dim here in the entryway, but dark throughout the rest of the building.

The floor of this vestibule is covered in centuries worth of dust, but that only makes it easier to see the footprints that track only from the door to the large room at the back of the temple (the Dark Chantry). None of the tracks approach either of the doors along the narthex walls.

It's clear that the path has been trod many times. A successful DC 15 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check will reveal that the most recent of these tracks are only a few days old and were made by at least three different types of creatures.

If the check beats DC 20, the hero realizes that some of the tracks were made by human children and others by ettercaps (though it is impossible to determine how many of each kind). The third type of tracks remains a mystery, though the hero knows this is because he has never encountered this type of creature before.

If the check beats DC 25, the hero realizes that the human tracks only lead into the building and the mysterious tracks only lead out. It also reveals that, based on the size and irregular shape, they could very well belong to the spider thralls.

11. VESTRY

The door to the vestry is unlocked. Inside are three wooden benches, a wooden table, and a lacquered wooden chest.

After all the centuries, the furniture is rotted through and each piece will break if anyone sits or rests a heavy object on it. The chest, on the other hand, is still in very good condition. It is closed, but not locked.

The outside of the chest is decorated with images of spiders and web motifs. It is a very beautiful piece of craftsmanship (though somewhat disturbing in its imagery) and can be sold as a piece of artwork for 50 gp.

Inside the chest is a stack of six neatly folded, black, hooded robes. They appear to be made from spiderdown, but in truth the cloth is of even higher quality, woven from silk spun by a death spider many centuries ago. These were robes for worshippers to wear during ceremonies. They are decorated with a web pattern and on the back of each is a large embroidered image of a spider with poison dripping from its mandibles.

One of the cloaks is a *gossamer shielding mantle* (see the “Treasure” section on page 12 for details).

Underneath the robes is a *sacrificial blade*—a magical dagger that was used in the dark rites practiced in this building long ago. The dagger is curved and covered with images of spiders. (See the “Treasure” section on page 12 for details.)

12. ABATTOIR

Four stone slabs rise seamlessly from the floor in this room, one parallel to each wall. The floor itself slopes almost imperceptibly toward the center, where there is a drain built into the ground. All the stones in the room are discolored with dark, ancient bloodstains, though the deepest discoloration is in the center where the blood apparently pooled.

This is the abattoir where the ancient worshippers killed their sacrifices and gathered the blood for presentation to their dark spider god. Nothing of any value can be found in here.

13. DARK CHANTRY (EL 8)

The back half of the spider temple is taken up by a single large room. This is where the ancient worshippers performed their dark rites, and where the ettercaps found the web egg from which the death spider hatched. It is also where the death spider currently lurks.

Like other sections of the temple, there is no light here. Though, if the GM prefers, the center area might be in dim lighting conditions from light streaming through the open door. Both wings of the room, however, should remain in darkness unless the heroes do something to alter that situation.

At the rear of the chamber is a stone altar carved in a likeness of the death spider. Flanking it is a pair of large statues of vicious but ordinary spiders. At either end sits an iron brazier whose bowl is shaped like a spider's bulbous abdomen. Nothing burns in the braziers now, but they are filled with incense and coals that, if lit, each illuminates half the area so that it is in dim lighting conditions.

Strewn about the floor are the remains of the web egg through which the death spider came into the world. When it was in one piece, it was clearly at least six feet tall and twice as long—now the pieces of the silken "shell" are scattered around the room, with the biggest pieces remaining directly in front of the altar.

The death spider will lurk in the shadows for as long as it can, trying to gain information about intruders. It is a highly intelligent creature that at least claims to be the earthly avatar of an ancient spider god, so it is not prone to rash

decisions or ill-advised actions. At the death spider's command the two statues will come to life and attack the heroes (use trapdoor spiders). In addition, it will use its telepathic abilities to call any spiders or spider-like creatures in range to assist it (including swarms of ordinary spiders and any remaining spider thralls and ettercaps).

Since several of the death spider's ability require dark conditions to function at peak efficiently, it will first work to extinguish any light source the heroes are carrying and then attack any spellcasters it deems likely to be able to cast spells that create light. It will focus its attack on those characters, hoping to turn them into spider thralls and then unleash their magical abilities against their former allies.

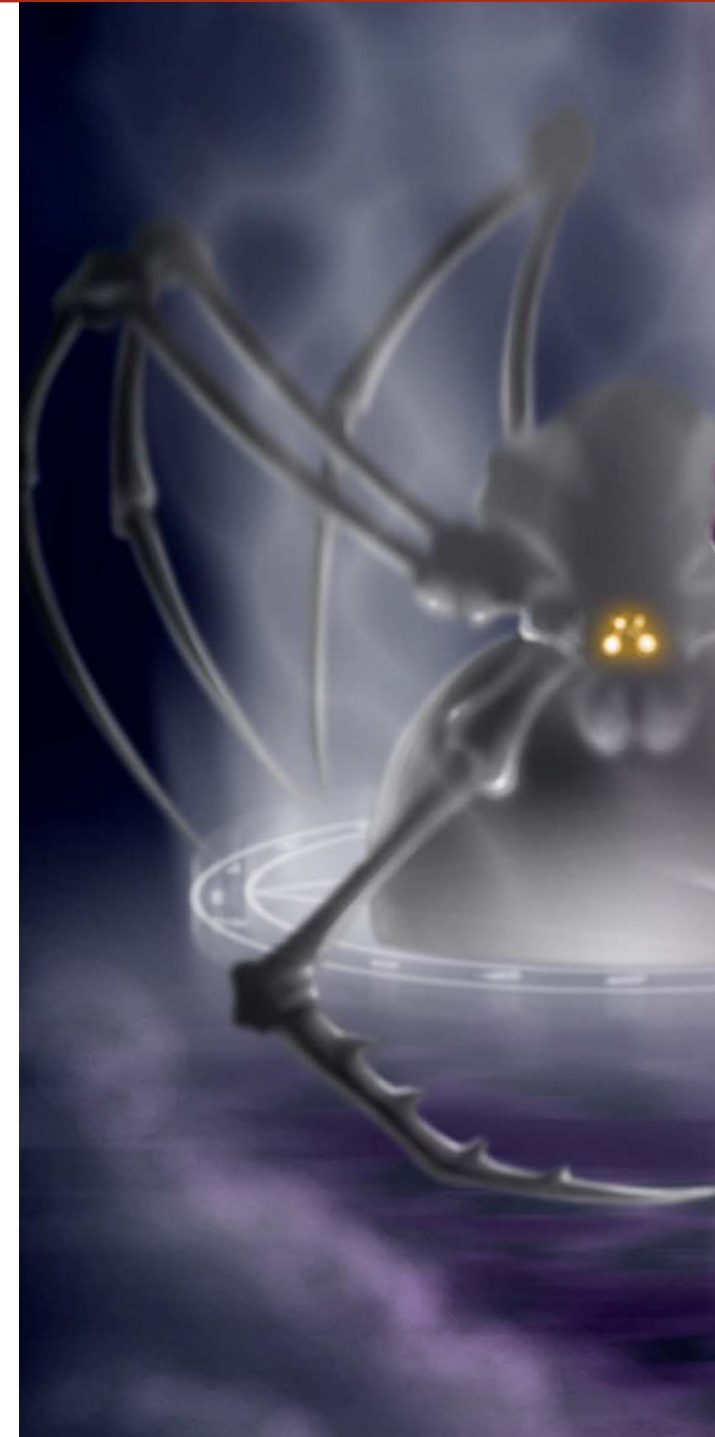
The death spider would love to increase its growing army with these powerful heroes as thralls, but in the end it is more interested in survival and will sacrifice any of its minions to save its own life.

Sunlight is anathema to the death spider, so it will only leave the temple if it thinks it can get safely to a dark hiding place (like the underground cave complex) before the heroes catch it.

CONCLUSION

Once the heroes have rescued the missing children, they can reasonably call their mission a success. However, if they do not deal with the death spider now, it will continue to grow in power—drawing more ettercaps and other arachnid creatures to the temple and turning any powerful creatures it can find into spider thralls.

If the death spider is defeated, life will return to normal in the hamlet of Villago. The silk spiders will go back to their normal levels of web production (from before the ettercaps



set them on the task of weaving the web egg). That by no means will make Villago a rich town—there are still too few caravans using the Great Western Road. But it no longer will be in danger of complete collapse.

The people of Villago will be thankful for all the heroes have done and reward them in as much as they can. The GM may want to use this to place certain campaign-specific treasure in the heroes' hands, or simply give them clothing woven from spiderdown (or a few bolts of the cloth that the heroes can sell or trade when they reach a larger town).

TREASURE

There is not a lot of traditional treasure in the Temple of the Spider God, but the GM is free to seed the location with any additional items that seem appropriate.

Two of the items mentioned in the text—the *gossamer shielding mantle* and the *sacrificial blade*—are from the Super Genius Games product *Loot 4 Less*, vol. 6: *Cloaks and Daggers*. They are reprinted here for your convenience. If you like them, please consider buying that product, or any other book in our *Loot 4 Less* line.

GOSSAMER SHIELDING MANTLE

Aura: Faint abjuration CL 1st

Slot: shoulders; **Price:** 2,500 gp, **Weight:** —

The *Gossamer shielding mantle* is made of silvery silk that flutters and waves in an invisible breeze as if it's made of pieces of endless waterfall. It grants a +1 shield bonus to AC, does not count as armor of any kind, and has no weight.

+1 SACRIFICIAL BLADE

Aura: Faint necromancy CL 1st

Slot: None; **Price:** 4,000 gp, **Weight:** 1 lb.

A *sacrificial blade* is an ornate dagger with a +1 enhancement bonus.

Once you deal 10 or more hp of damage to a target with your *sacrificial blade* in a single 24-hour period (not including damage dealt by afflictions, spells, or special abilities that happen to occur when you strike with a weapon, but counting critical hits and sneak attacks or similar extraordinary abilities), the target suffers a –1 penalty to all its saving throws against your spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities for the next 24 hours. This penalty does not increase, even if you deal another 10 hp of damage to the target.

SPIDERDOWN

Spiderdown is cloth woven from spider silk. It is exceptionally light, weighing half of what an equal amount of normal cloth would. It also is highly durable. Any clothing made from spiderdown provides a +1 armor bonus to AC, but does not count as armor of any kind. It also suppresses the wearer's scent, imposing a –2 penalty to anyone attempting to locate or track the wearer by sense of smell.

The only disadvantage to spiderdown is that it is vulnerable to fire. It automatically catches on fire any time normal or magical fire that comes in contact with it. In addition, the wearer suffers an additional 1d4 of fire damage on top of the normal damage the fire inflicts.

A bolt of spiderdown costs 400 gp, and provides enough cloth to produce 4 suits of clothing for Medium sized creatures (or 8 suits for Small creatures, or 2 suits for Large creatures).

NEW MONSTERS

Warren of the Death Spider introduces new monsters to the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. GMs are encouraged to make further use of them as they see fit.

DEATH SPIDER

This shadowy spider demon is lost in darkness, with only its teeth and claws remotely visible.

DEATH SPIDER

CR 7

XP 3,200

CE Huge outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +20

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+4 deflection, +4 Dex, –2 size)

hp 73 (7d10+35)

Fort +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities incorporeal; **DR** 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** cold, electricity, poison;

Resist acid 10, fire 10; **SR** 17

Weaknesses sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 50 ft.

Melee 2 claws +9 touch (1d6 plus 1d6 cold), bite +9 touch (1d8 plus 1d6 cold plus poison)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks pounce, prodigious leap, deadly charge, shadow blend

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 30

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes,

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +14, Fly +22,

Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +20, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +6; Racial Modifiers +8 Perception
Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)
Organization solitary
Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex): Bite—injury; save Fort DC 17; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d2 Con; cure 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Prodigious Leap (Ex): The death spider gains a +5-foot bonus to the distance of all jump checks it makes. It also makes all long jumps as if it had a running start.

Deadly Charge (Ex): When the death spider charges, it deals an additional 1d6 damage on any successful attack. It can also immediately follow a charge attack with a CMB check against the target's CMD. On a successful check, the target is knocked prone.

Shadow Blend (Su): During any conditions other than bright light, a death spider can disappear into the shadows as a move-equivalent action, effectively becoming invisible. Artificial illumination or light spells of 2nd level or lower do not negate this ability.

Create spawn (Su): Creatures struck by a death spider have a chance to become spider thralls. Each time a character is struck by a death spider and suffers any Constitution damage, they must make a DC 10 Will save or become a spider thrall in 1d4 rounds. For every point of Constitution damage a character has suffered he is at a cumulative -1 to the Will save. In addition, a

death spider can create spawn out of those it slays. A humanoid slain by a death spider becomes a spider thrall in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the death spider that created them until its death, at which point they cease to be spider thralls.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): A death spider is utterly powerless in bright light or natural sunlight and flees from it. A death spider caught in such light cannot attack and can take only a single move or attack action.

SPIDER, TRAPDOOR

A large spider springs from the depths of its funnel-shaped web.

TRAPDOOR SPIDER

CR 4

XP 1,200

N Large vermin

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 40 (5d8+13)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., **climb** 30 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+2 plus poison)

Special Attack grab, prodigious leap, deadly charge

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 19 (31 vs. trip)

Skills Acrobatics +13 Climb +18, Perception

+6 (+10 in webs), Stealth +9 (+13 in webs); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Stealth (+8 in webs), +16 Climb

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary, pair, or colony (3–8)
Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex): Bite—injury; save Fort DC 16; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Prodigious Leap (Ex): The trapdoor spider gains a +5-foot bonus to the distance of all jump checks it makes. It also makes all long jumps as if it had a running start.

Deadly Charge (Ex): When the trapdoor spider charges, it deals an additional 1d6 damage on any successful attack. It can also immediately follow a charge attack with a CMB check against the target's CMD. On a successful check, the target is knocked prone.

SPIDER THRALLS

A small creature covered in webs reaches out with its spider encrusted hand.

SPIDER THRALL

CR 2

XP 600

Male Human Commoner 3

CE Small Humanoid (Augmented)

Init +9; Perception +14; Darkvision 60'

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +1 size, +1 dodge, Natural +6)

hp 39 (3d10+6)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +1

Special: DR 5/holy, immunity to poison, mind

effecting, bleed, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning.
Resistance: cold 10, electricity 10
Weakness: vulnerability (fire), at 10 or fewer hit points, -3 to all attacks. At 0, spider swarm leaves, and attacks nearest foe as a normal spider swarm, child is left behind dying

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee Slam +6 (1d3+2; blood drain)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 20, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 18
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 18

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +9, Climb +16, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +8, Fly +7, Handle Animal +8, Perception +14, Ride +9, Sense Motive +2, Stealth +17, Survival +1, Swim +8
Feats Alertness, Athletic, Combat Expertise +/-1, Deceitful, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Simple Weapon Proficiency - One: Club, Toughness +3
Languages Common, Other Language

ECOLOGY

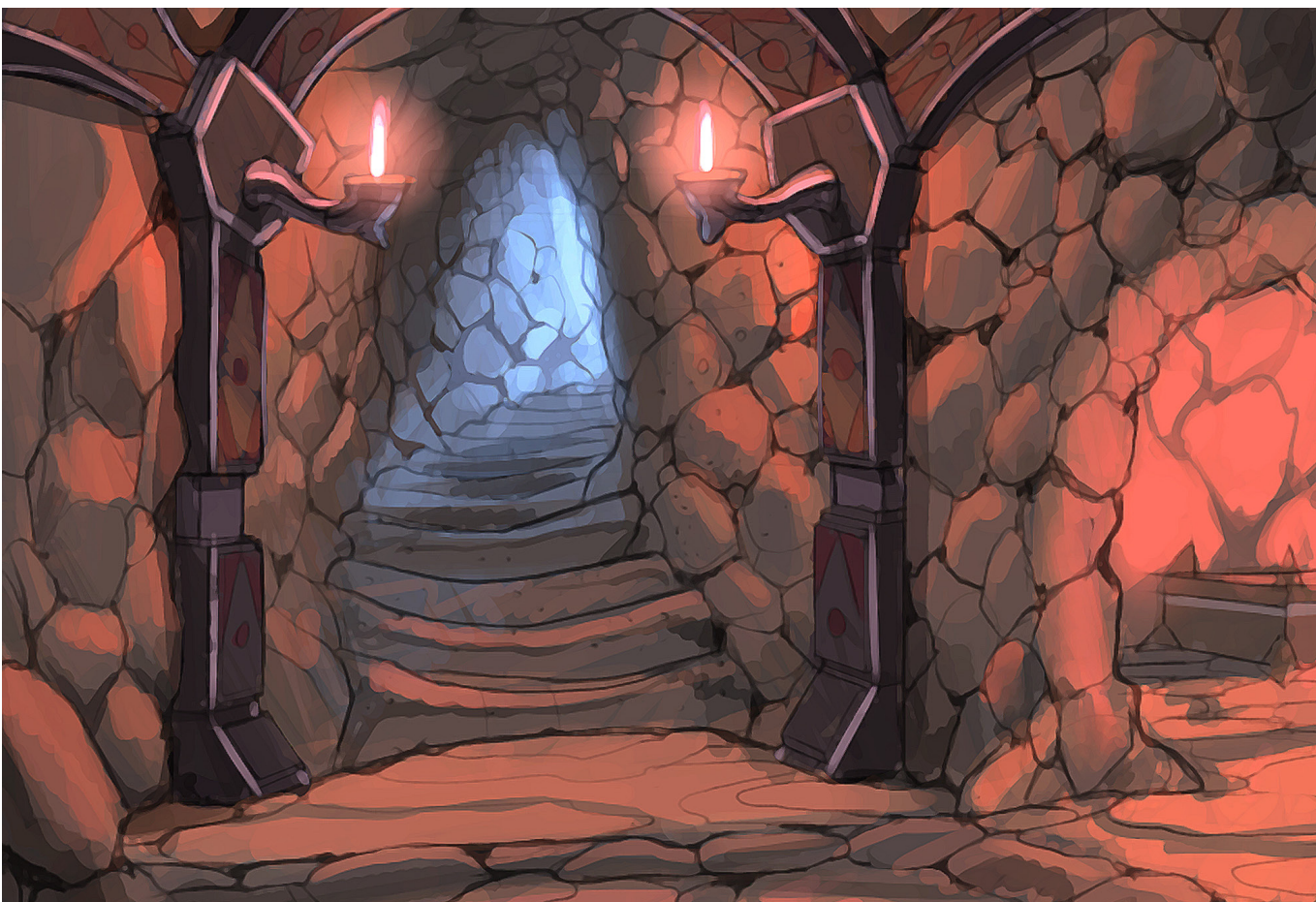
Environment any
Organization solitary, pair, or colony (3–8)
Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Combat Expertise: +/-1 Bonus to AC in exchange for an equal penalty to attack.

Blood Drain (Su): A spider thrall sucks blood when it hits with its slam attack, dealing 1d2 points of Constitution damage. The spider thrall heals 2 hit points or gains 2 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points) each time it drains blood.

Create spawn (Su): Creatures struck by a spider thrall have a chance to become spider thralls themselves. Each time a character is struck by a spider thrall and suffers any Constitution damage, they must make a DC 10 Will save or become a spider thrall in 1d4 rounds. For every point of Constitution damage a character has suffered he is at a cumulative -1 to the Will save. In addition, a spider thrall can create spawn out of those it slays. A humanoid slain by a spider thrall becomes a spider thrall in 1d4 rounds. These spawn are less powerful than typical spider thralls, and suffer a -2 penalty on all d20 rolls and checks, receive -2 hp per HD, and only drain 1 points of Constitution on a successful slam attack. Spawn are under the command of the death spider that created them until its death, at which point they cease to be spider thralls. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.



SPIDER THRALL (TEMPLATE)

“Spider Thrall” is an acquired template that can be added to any living, corporeal creature with an Intelligence score of 4 or more. A spider thrall retains the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

SPIDER THRALL TEMPLATE CR +3

AL: chaotic evil.

Type: The creature’s type changes to monstrous humanoid (augmented). Do not recalculate class Hit Dice, BAB, or saves.

Senses: A spider thrall gains darkvision 60 ft.

Armor Class: Natural armor improves by +6.

Hit Dice: Change all racial Hit Dice to d10s. Class Hit Dice are unaffected.

Defensive Abilities: A spider thrall gains DR 5/holy, immunity to poison, and resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, in addition to immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), immunity to bleed, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning, is not subject to nonlethal damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to damage to its physical ability scores (Constitution, Dexterity, and Strength), as well as to exhaustion and fatigue effects. A spider thrall also gains fast healing 5.

Weaknesses: Spider thralls gain a vulnerability to fire. In addition, when a spider thrall 10 or fewer hit points remaining, the animating influence begins to wane, giving the spider thrall a -3 to all rolls. When a spider thrall is brought to 0 or fewer hit points, the swarm of spiders covering the base creature dissolves, leaving the base creature behind, dying.

Speed: 40 ft., Climb 60 ft.

Melee: A spider thrall gains a slam attack if the base creature didn’t have one. Damage for the slam depends on the spider thrall’s size (see Natural Attacks). Its slam also causes blood drain (see below). Its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Special Attacks: A spider thrall gains several special attacks. Save DCs are equal to 10 + 1/2 spider thrall’s HD + spider thrall’s Cha modifier unless otherwise noted.

Blood Drain (Su): A spider thrall sucks blood when it hits with its slam attack, dealing 1d2 points of Constitution damage. The spider thrall heals 2 hit points or gains 2 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to its full normal hit points) each time it drains blood.

Create spawn (Su): Creatures struck by a spider thrall have a chance to become spider thralls themselves. Each time a character is struck by a spider thrall and suffers any Constitution damage, they must make a DC 10 Will save or become a spider thrall in 1d4 rounds. For every point of Constitution damage a character has suffered he is at a cumulative -1 to the Will save. In addition, a spider thrall can create spawn out of those it slays. A humanoid slain by a spider thrall becomes a spider thrall in 1d4 rounds. These spawn are less powerful than typical spider thralls, and suffer a -2 penalty on all d20 rolls and checks, receive -2 hp per HD, and only drain 1 points of Constitution on a successful slam attack. Spawn are under the command of the death spider that created them until its death, at which point they cease to be spider thralls. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Special Qualities: A spider thrall gains the following.

Spider Climb (Ex): A spider thrall can climb sheer surfaces as though under the effects of a spider climb spell, using its normal climb movement.

Ability Scores Str +6, Dex +4, Con +4, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +4.

Skills Spider thralls gain a +8 racial bonus on Climb, Perception, and Stealth checks.

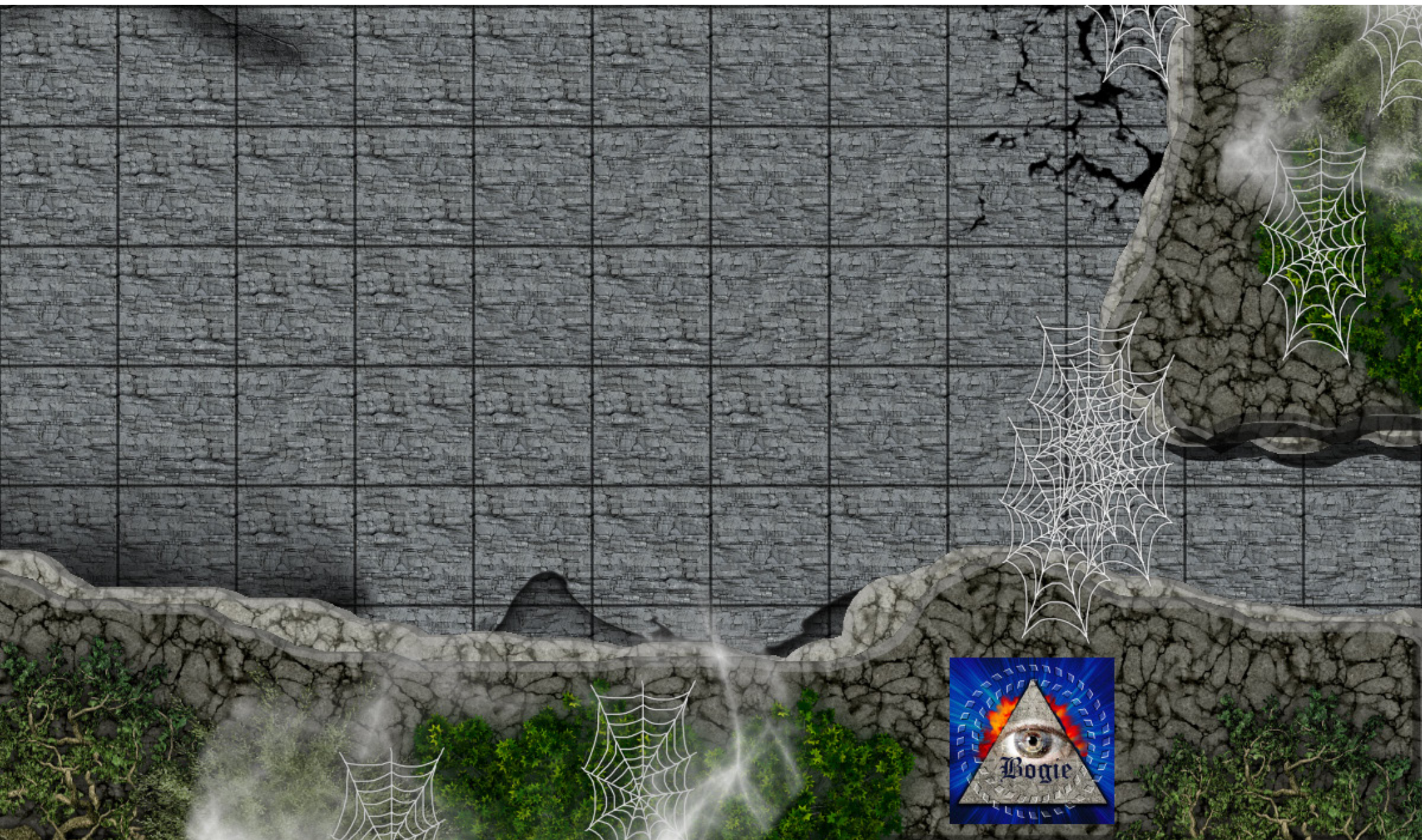
Feats Spider thralls gain Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, and Toughness as bonus feats.

Tile #1 - A1

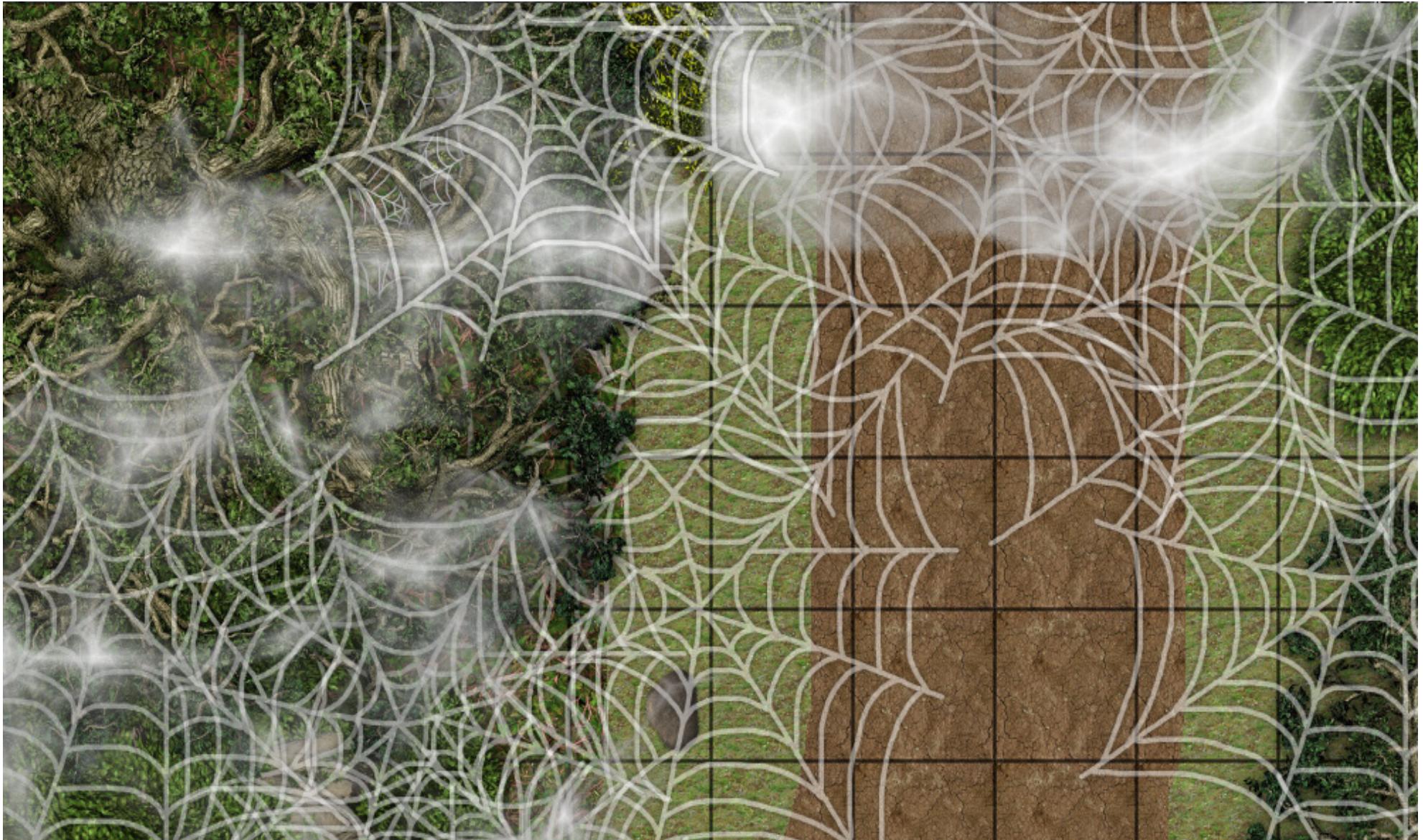


Tile #2 - B1

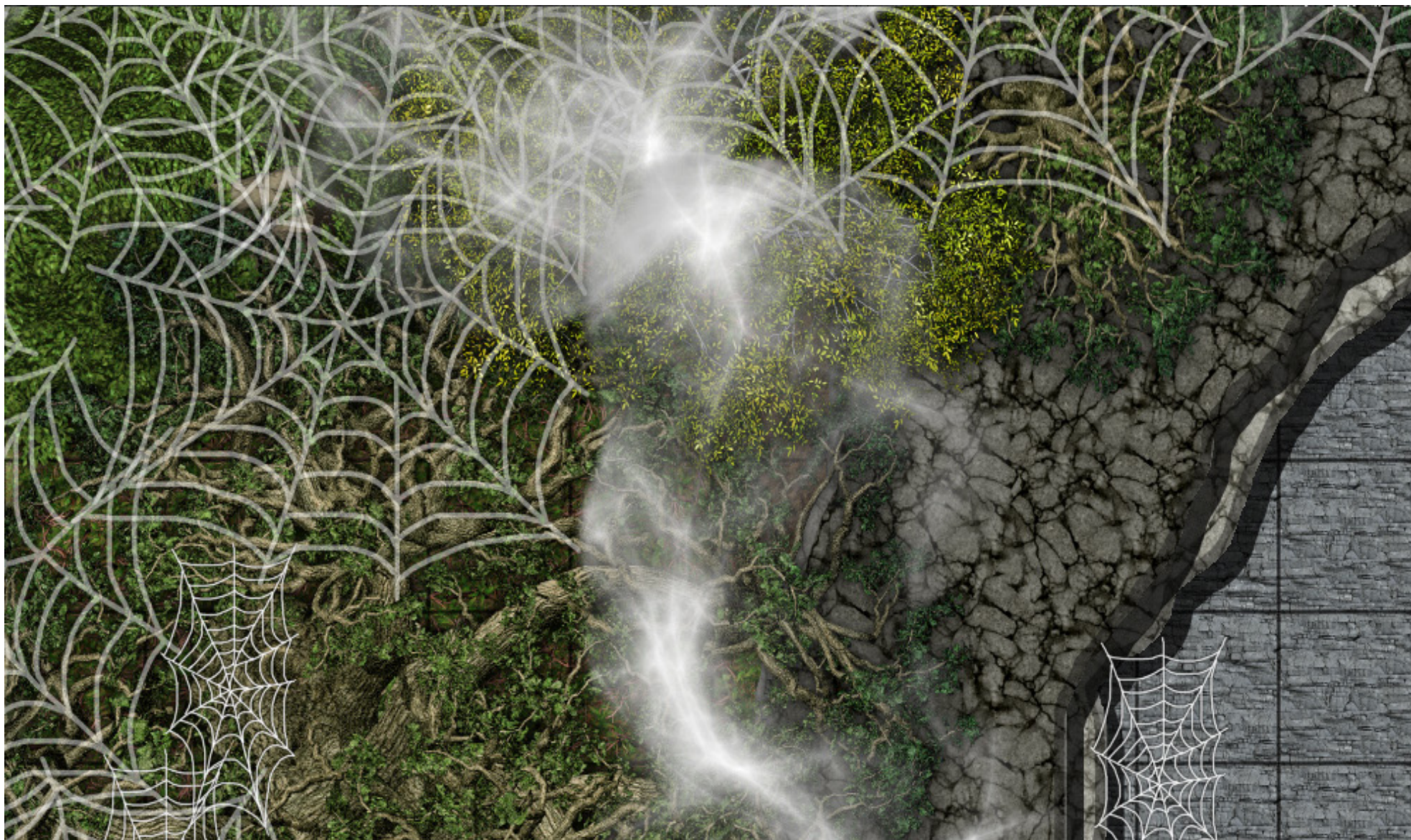




Tile #4 - A2



Tile #5 - B2



Tile #6 - C2

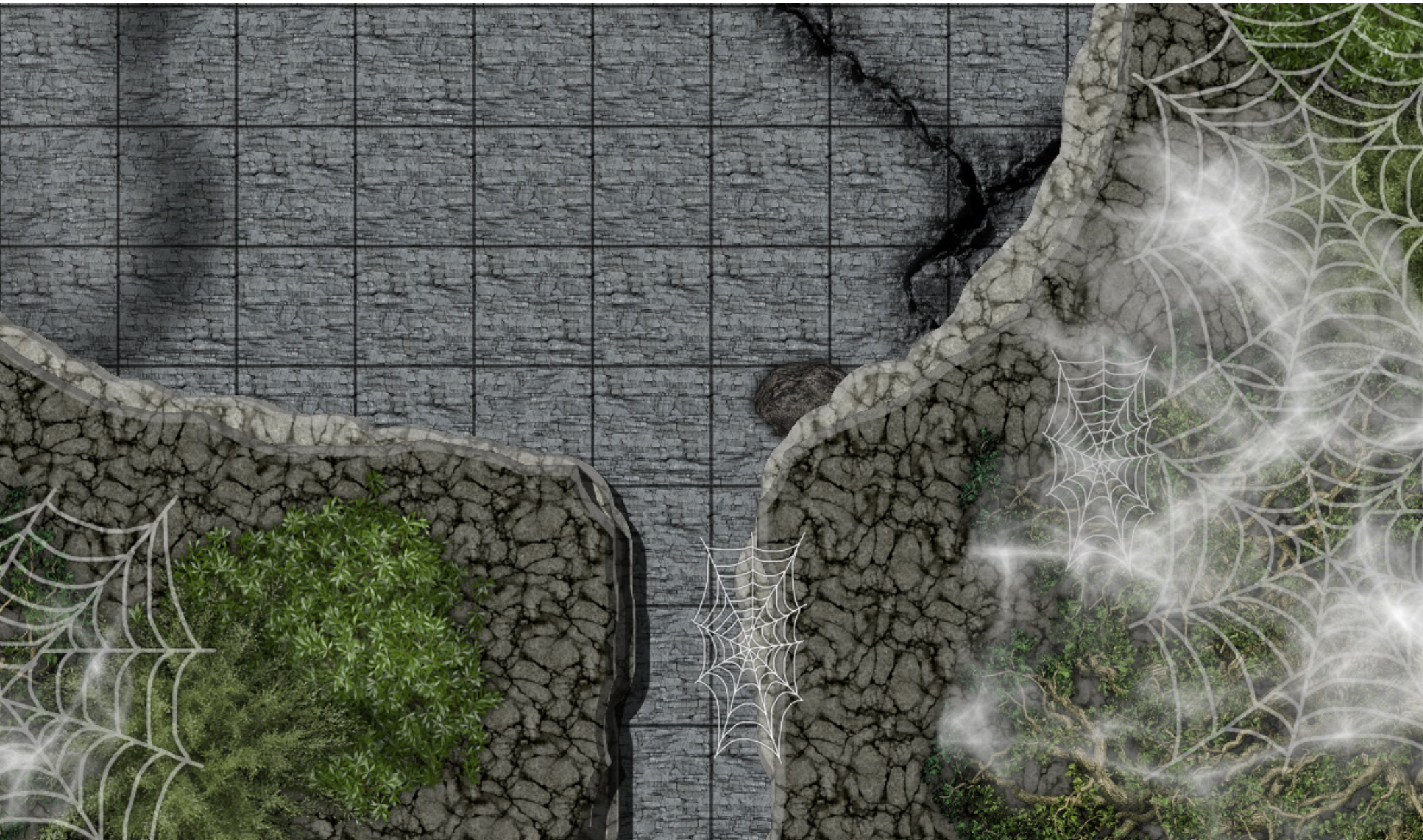


Tile #7 - A3

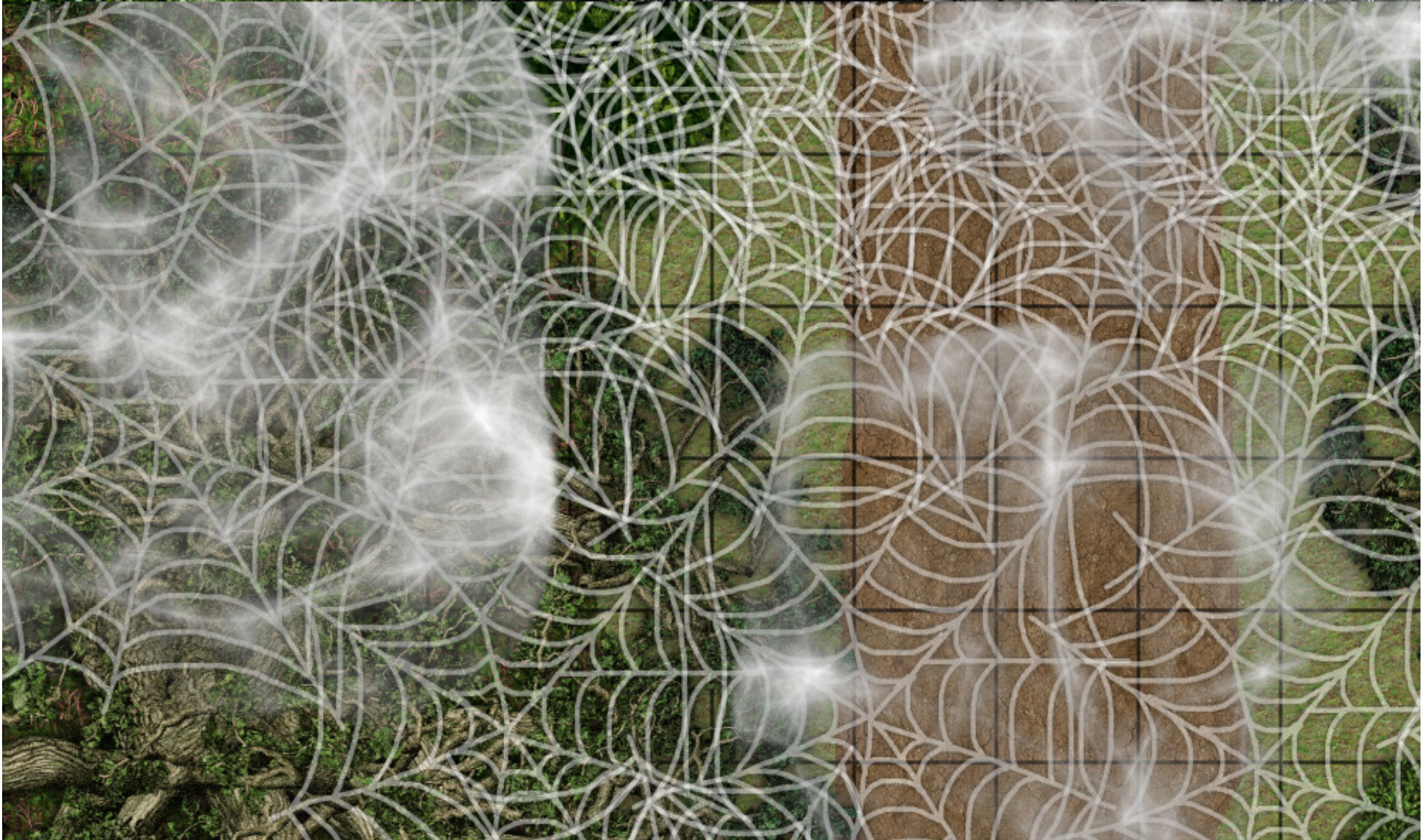


Tile #8 - B3





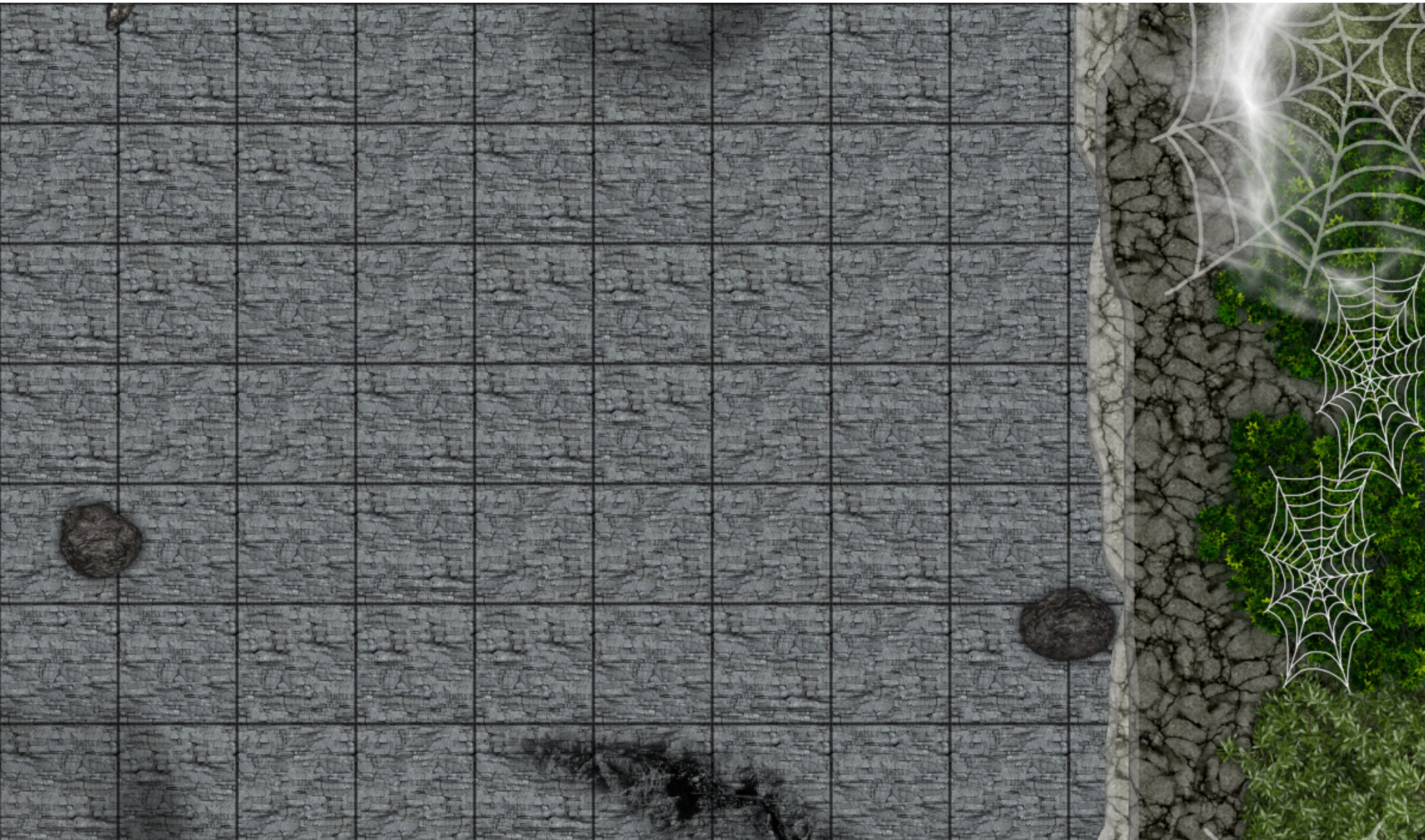
Tile #10 - A4



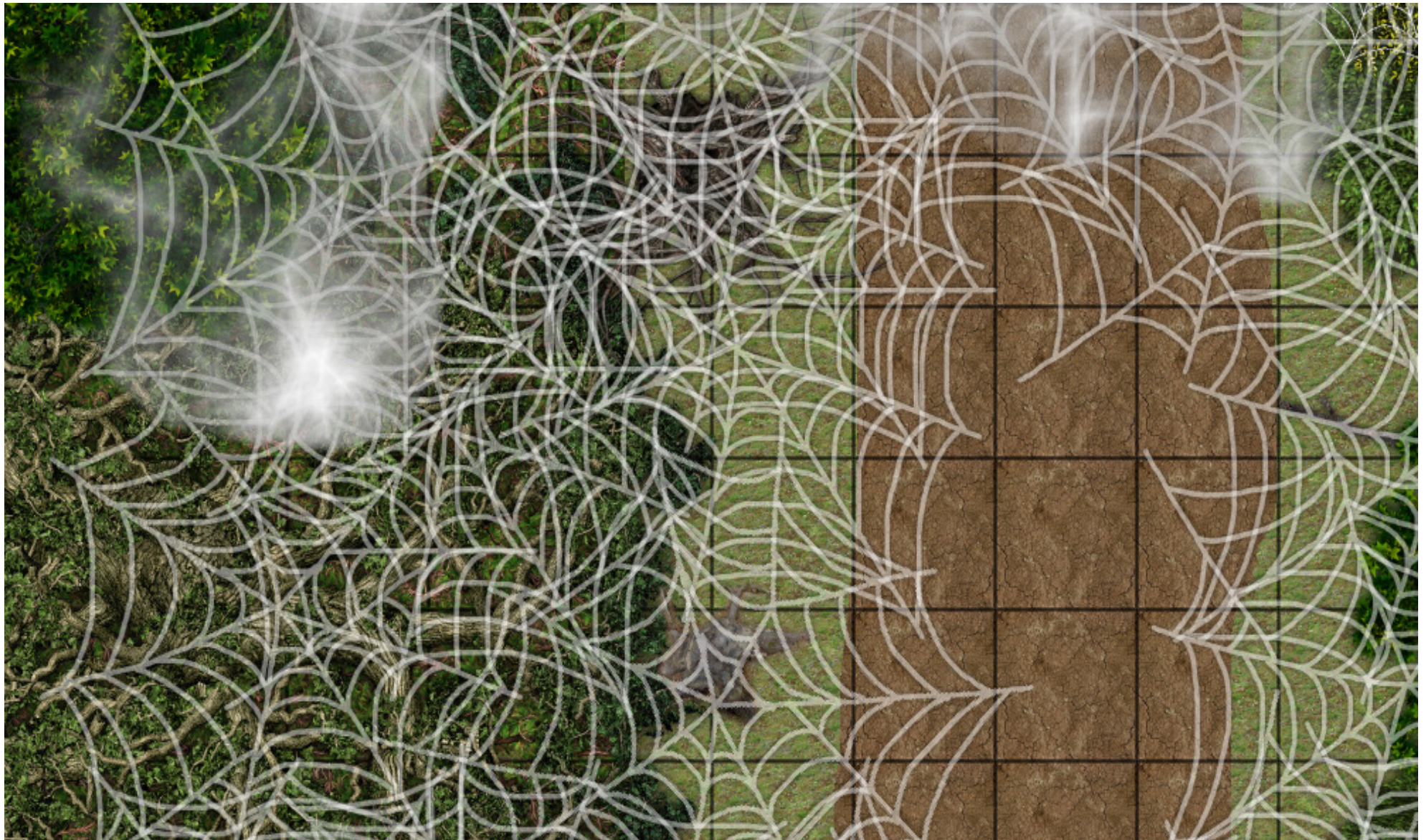
Tile #11 - B4



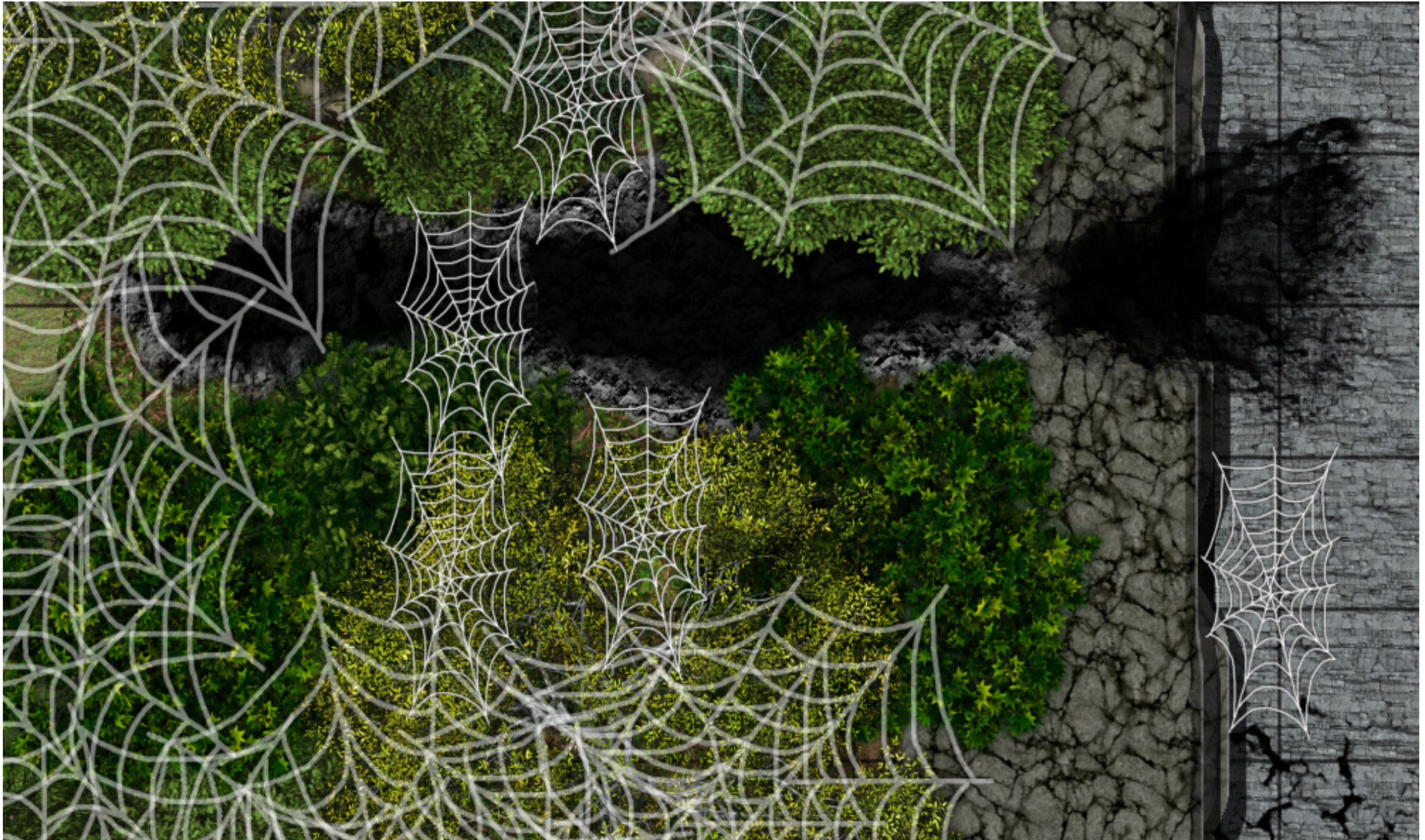
Tile #12 - C4

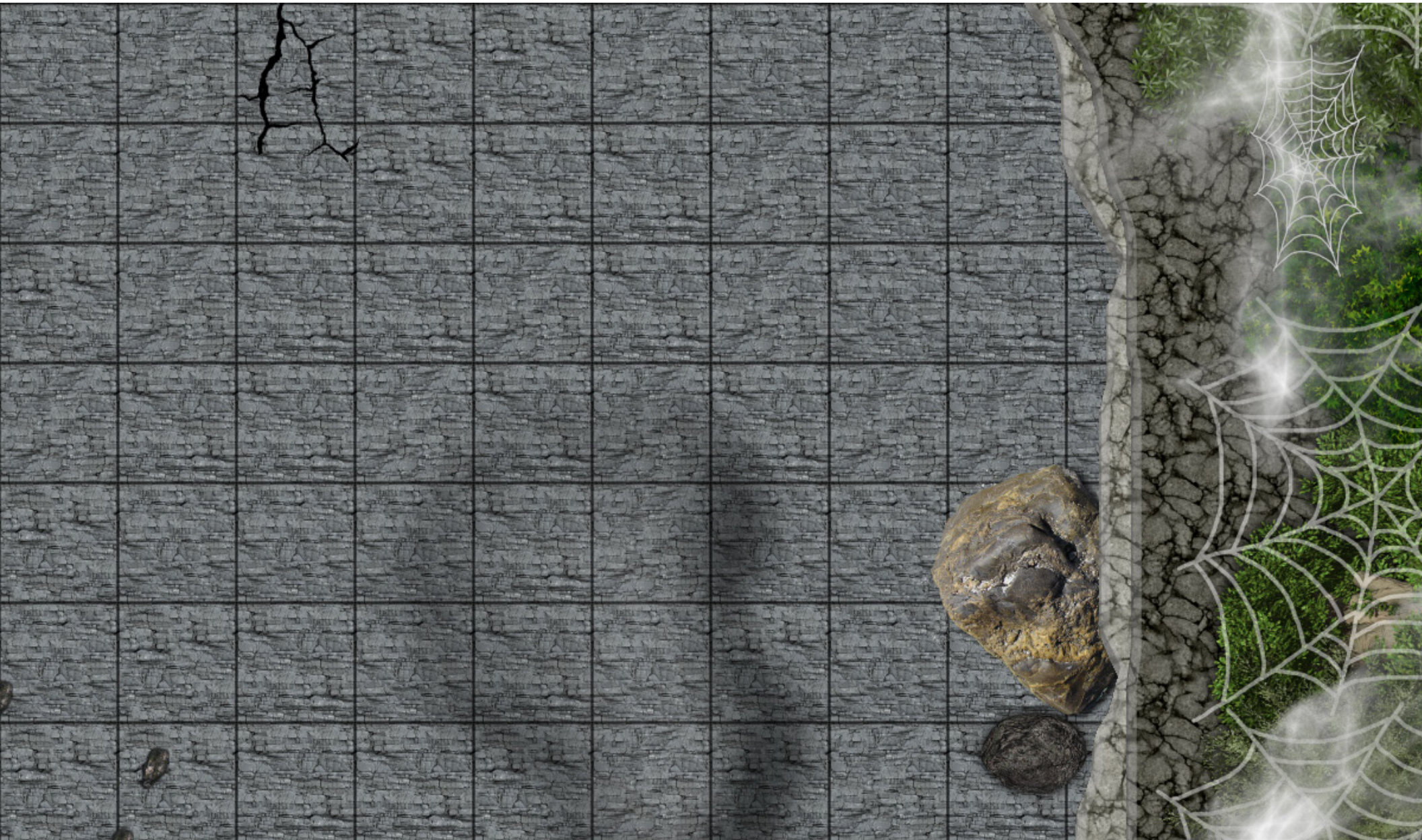


Tile #13 - A5

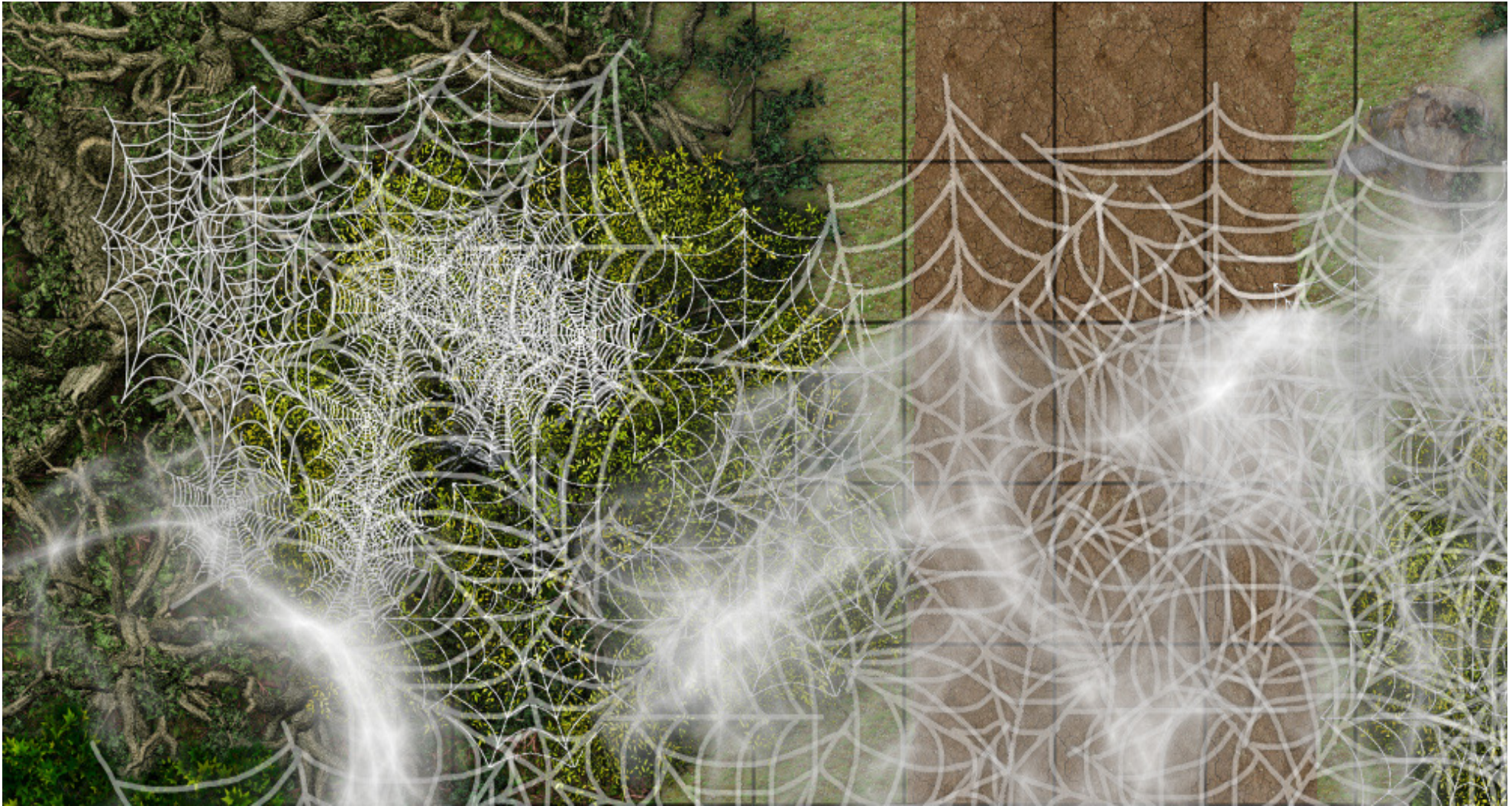


Tile #14 - B5



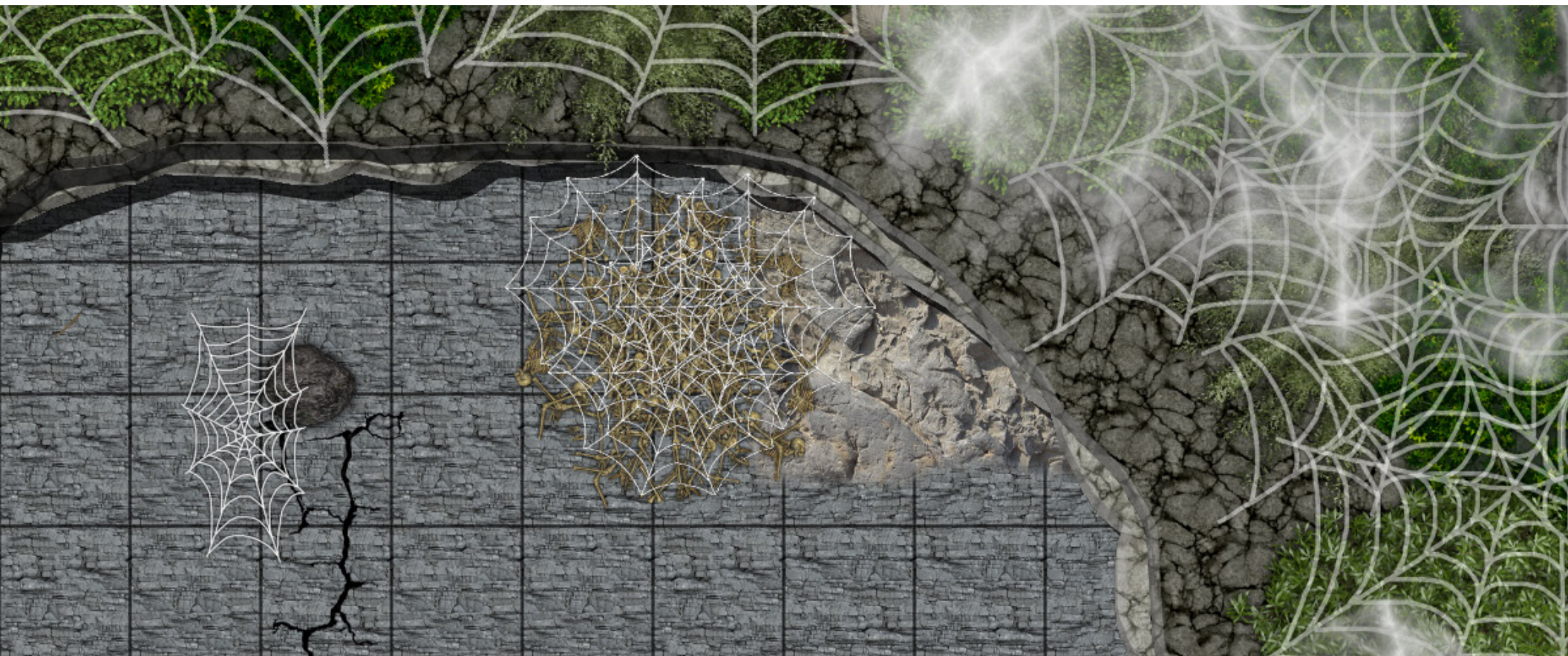


Tile #16 - A6

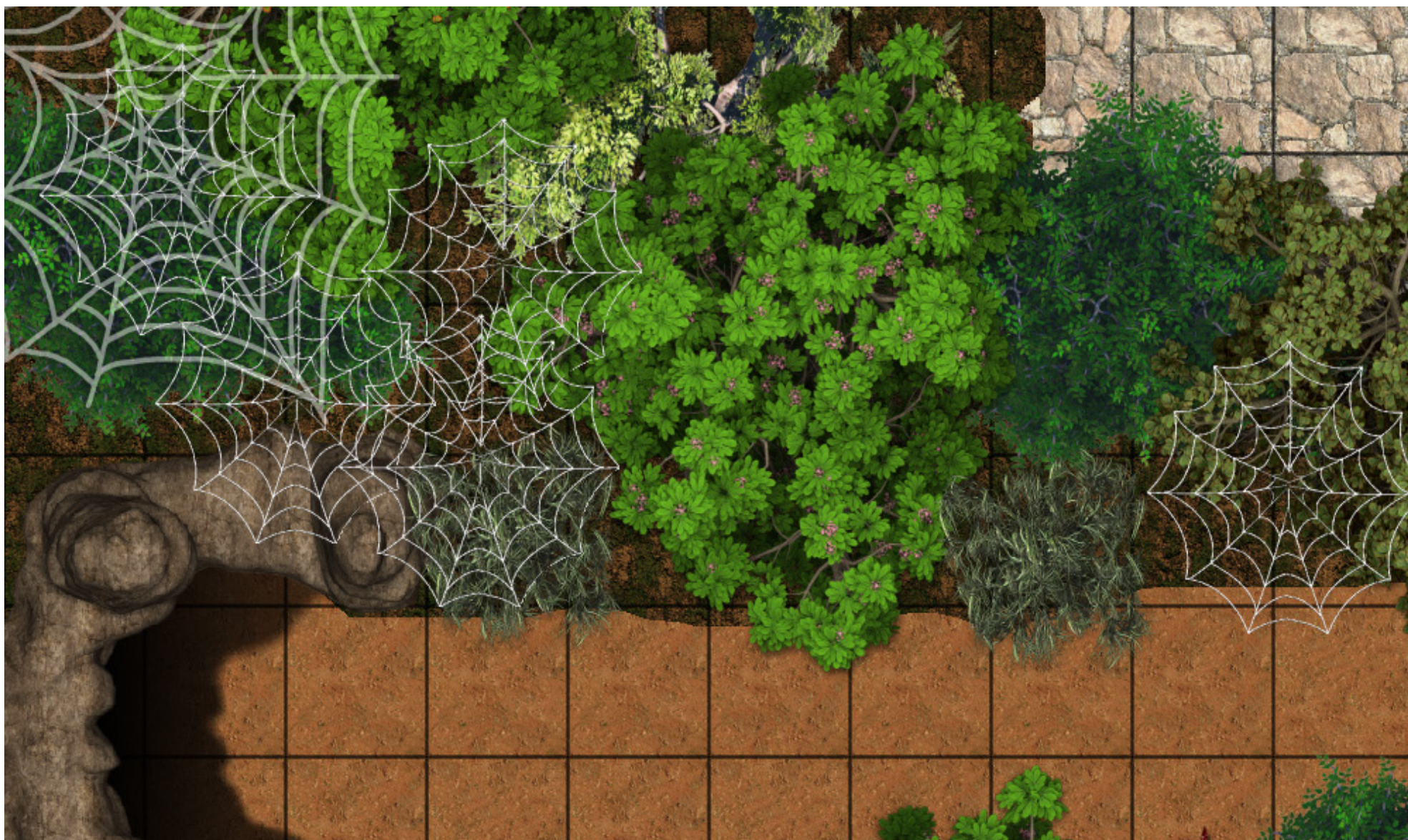




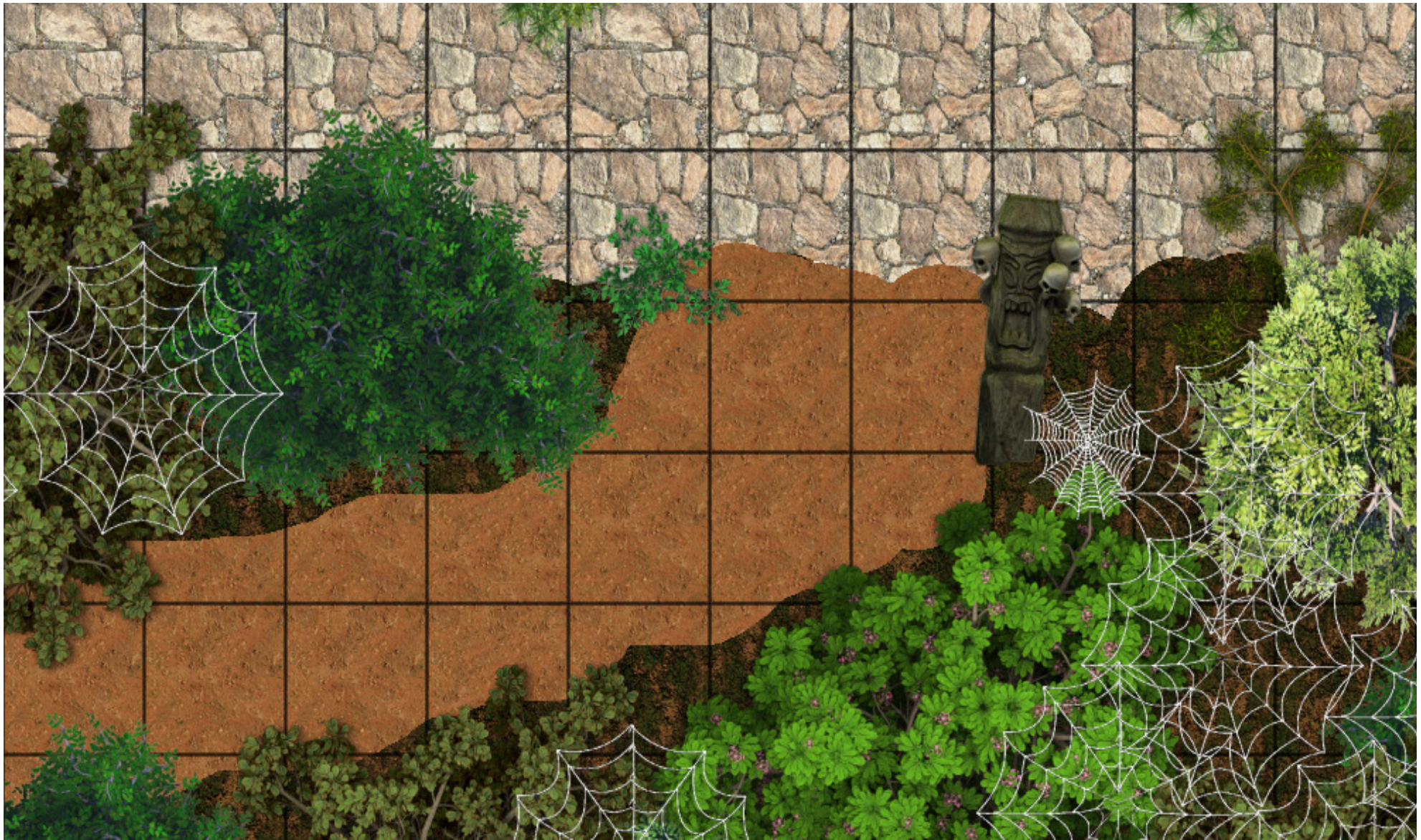
Tile #18- C6



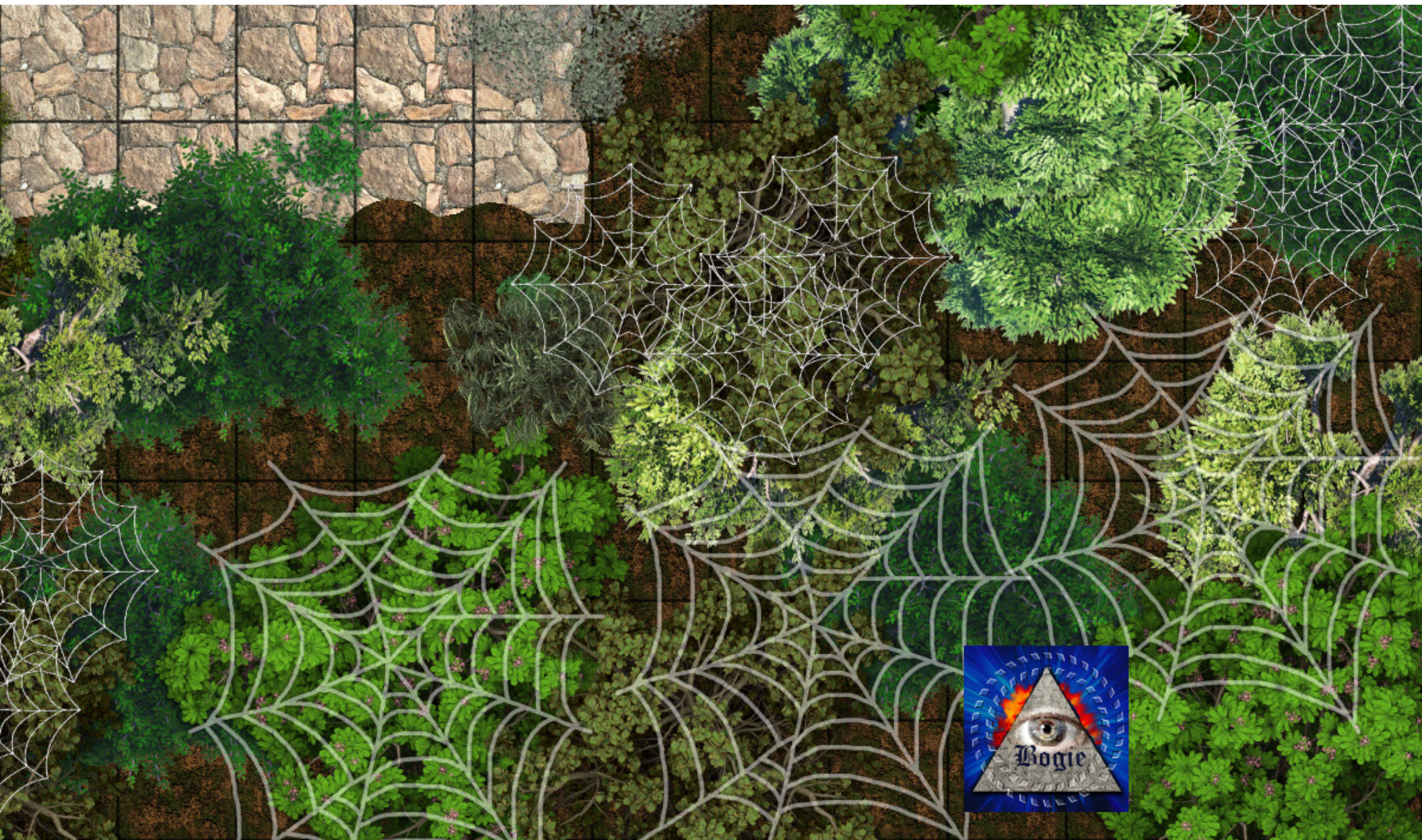
Map 2: Tile #19 - X1



Tile #20 - Y1



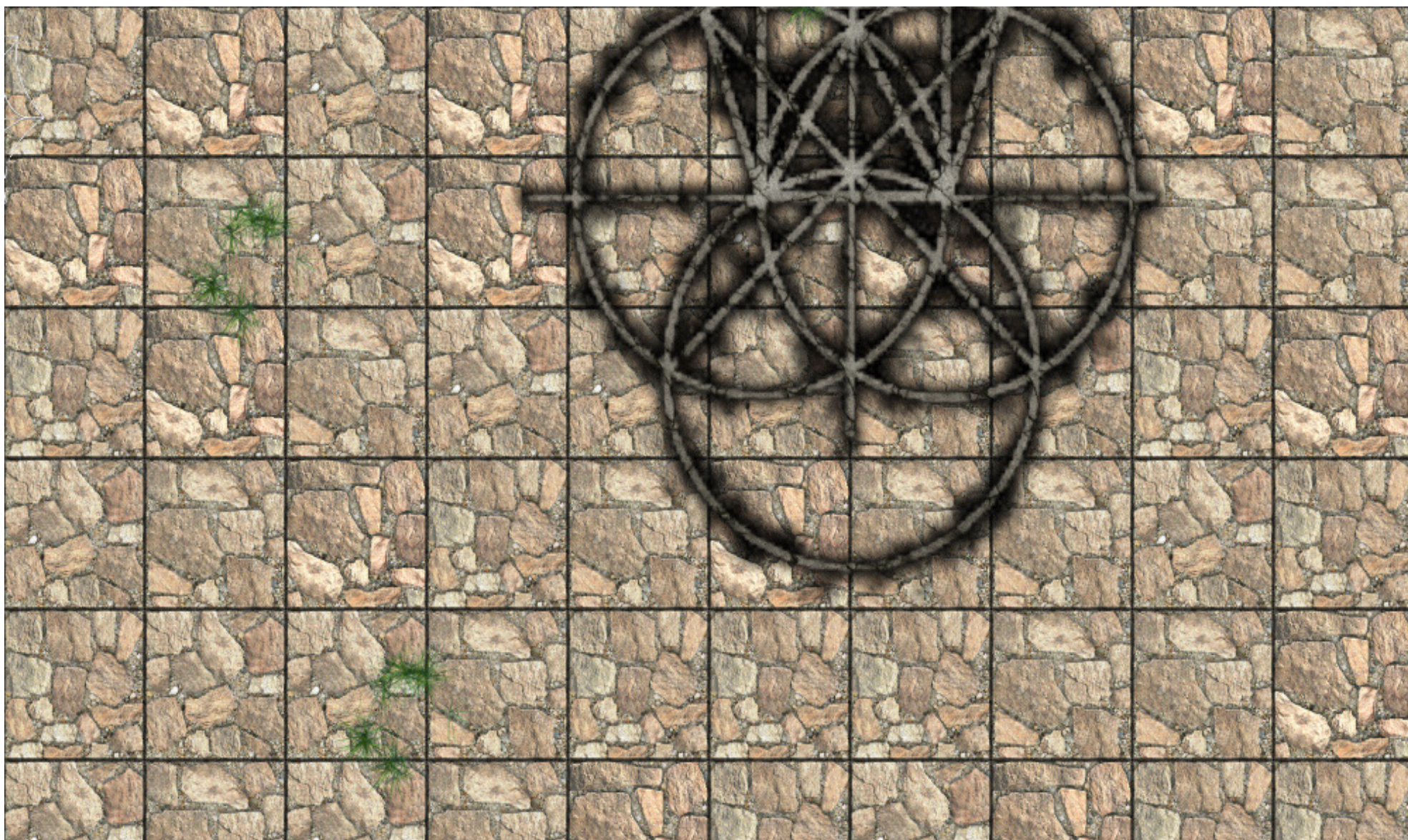
Tile #21- Z1



Tile #22 - X2



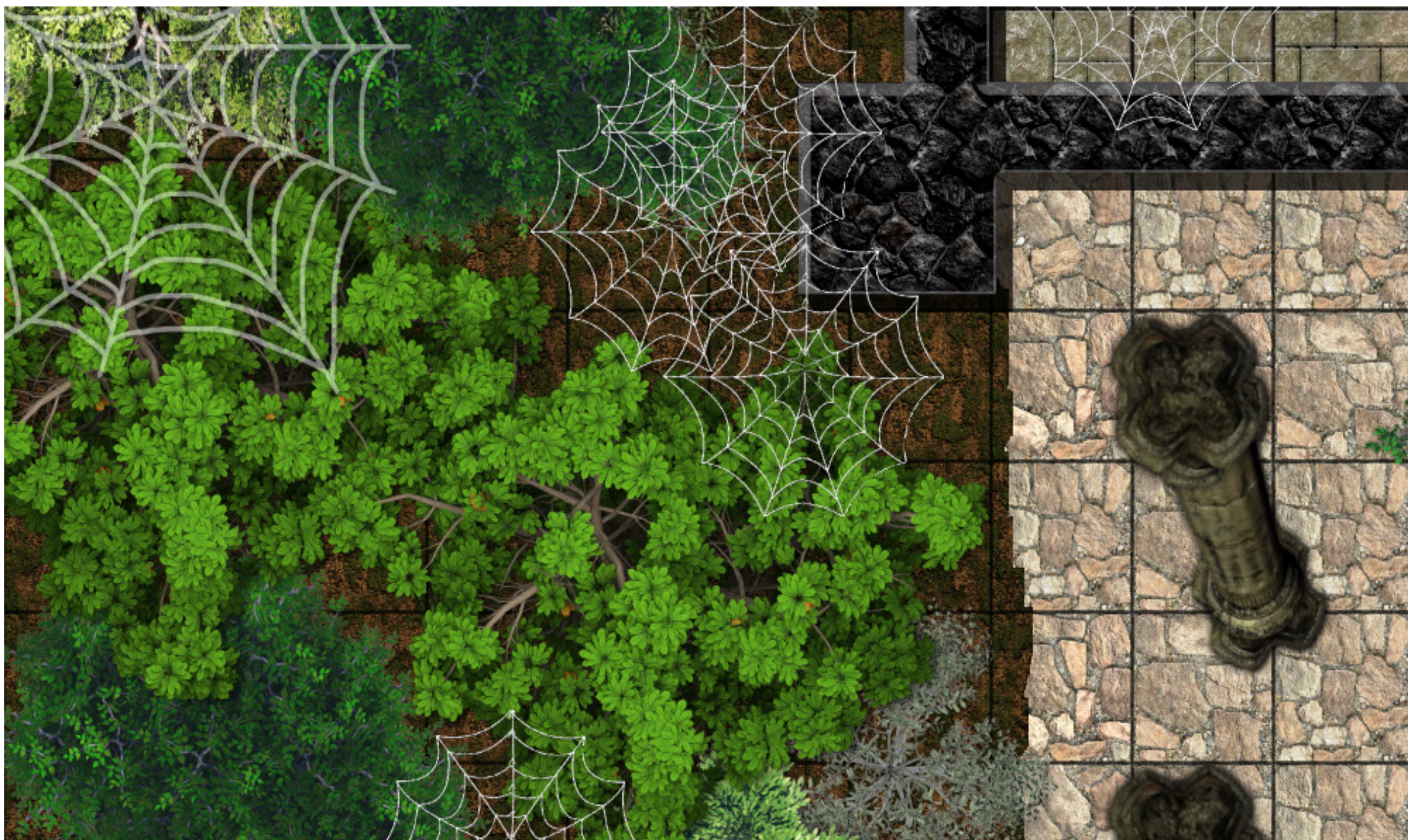
Tile #23 - Y2



Tile #24- Z2

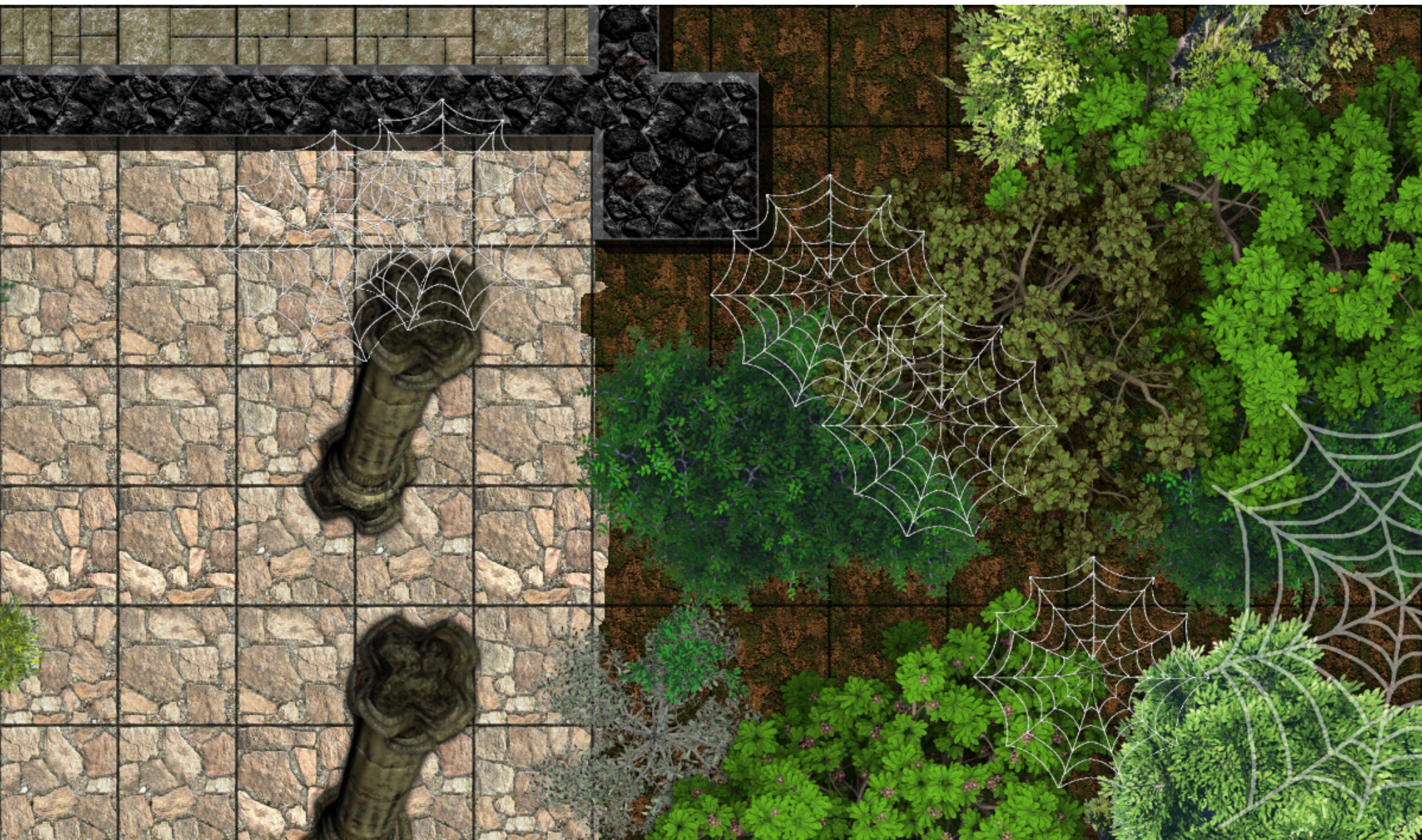


Tile #25 - X3

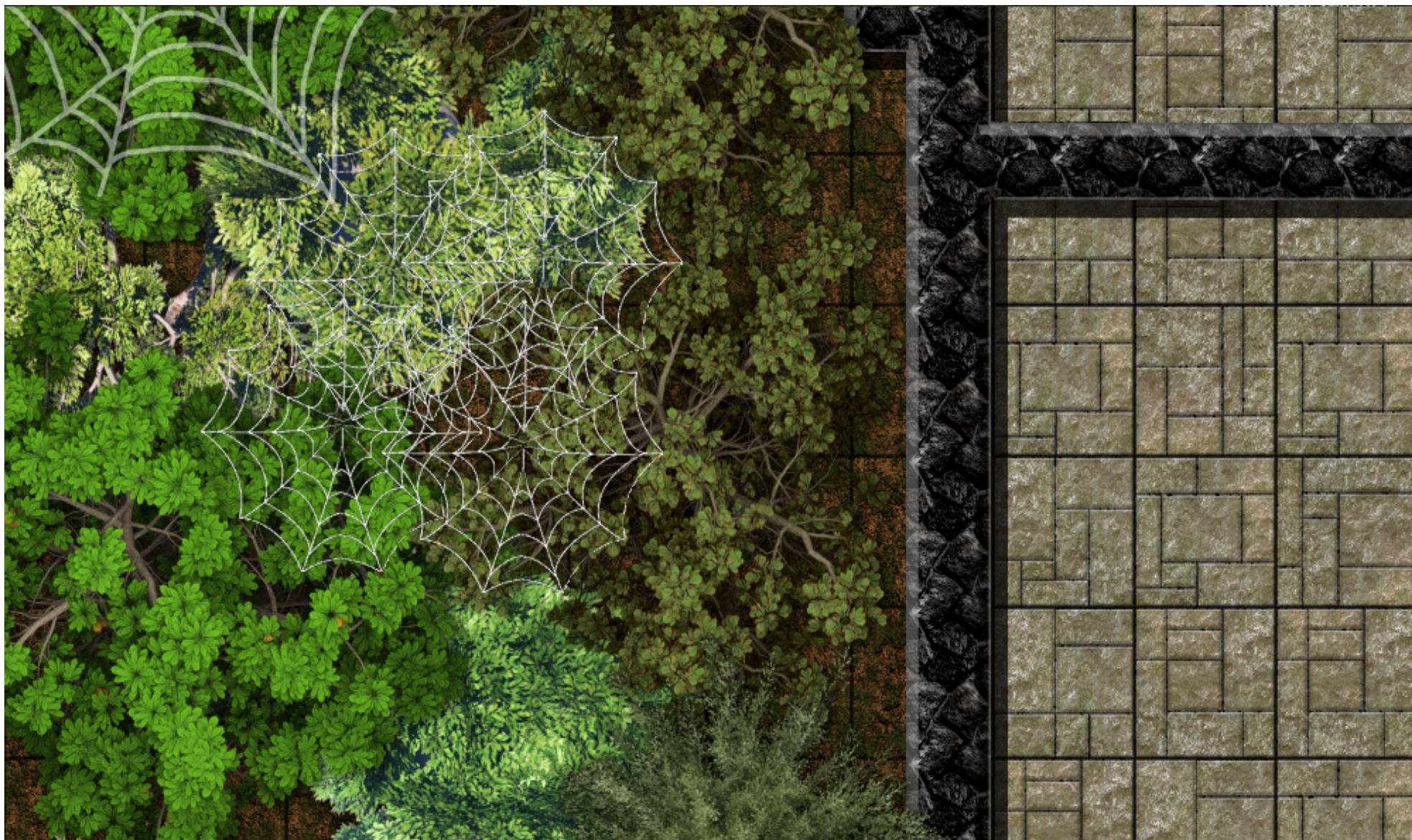


Tile #26 - Y3

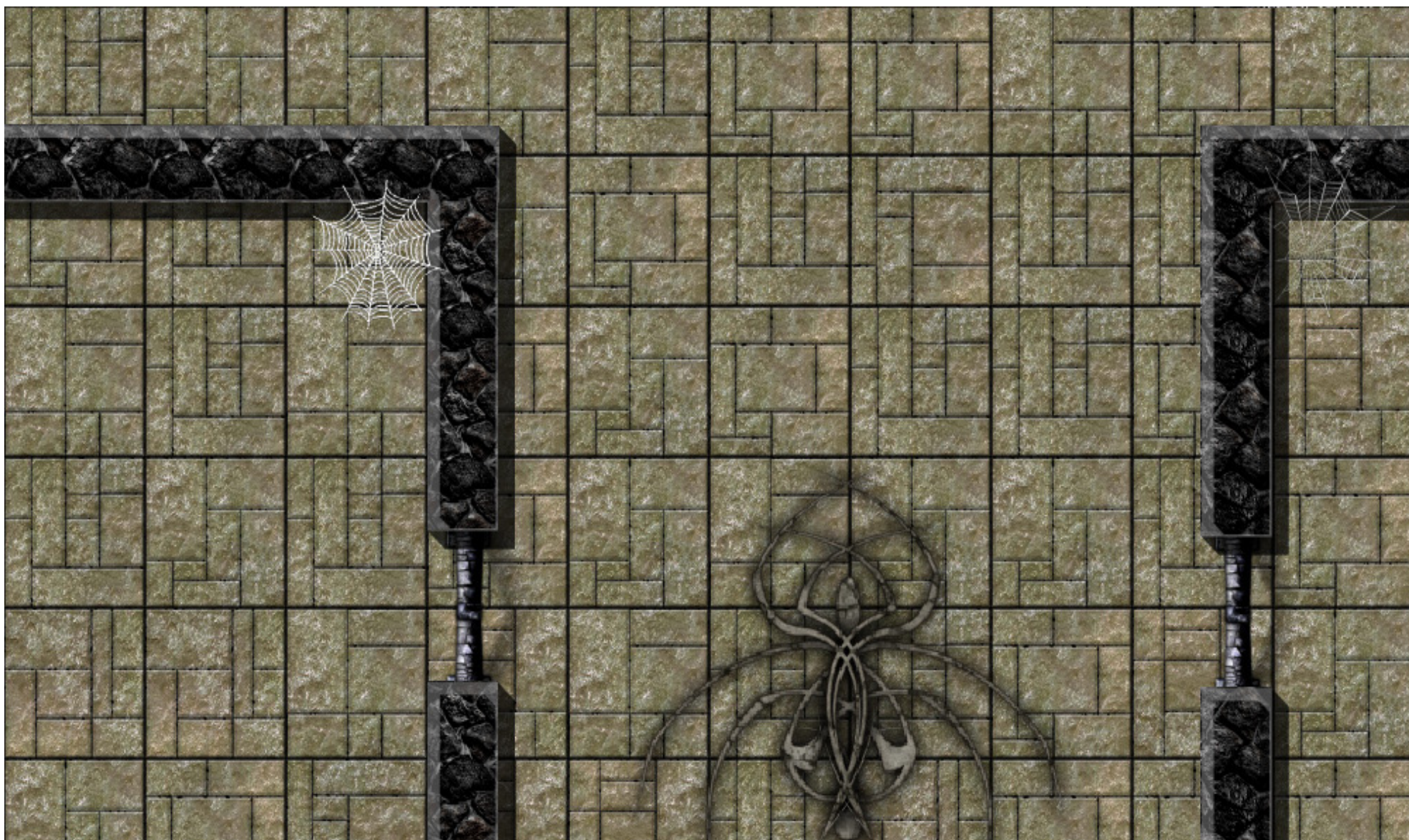




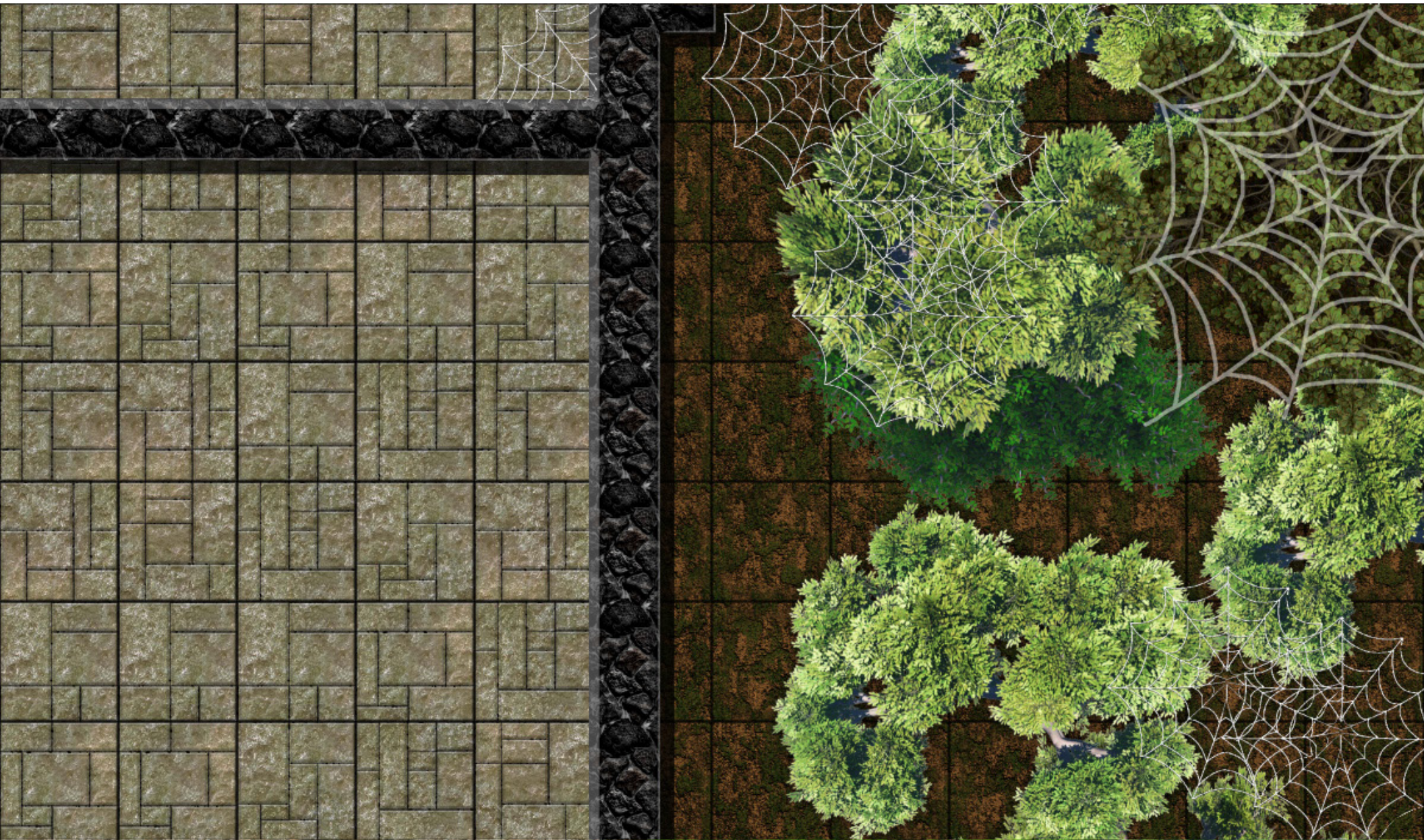
Tile #28 - X4



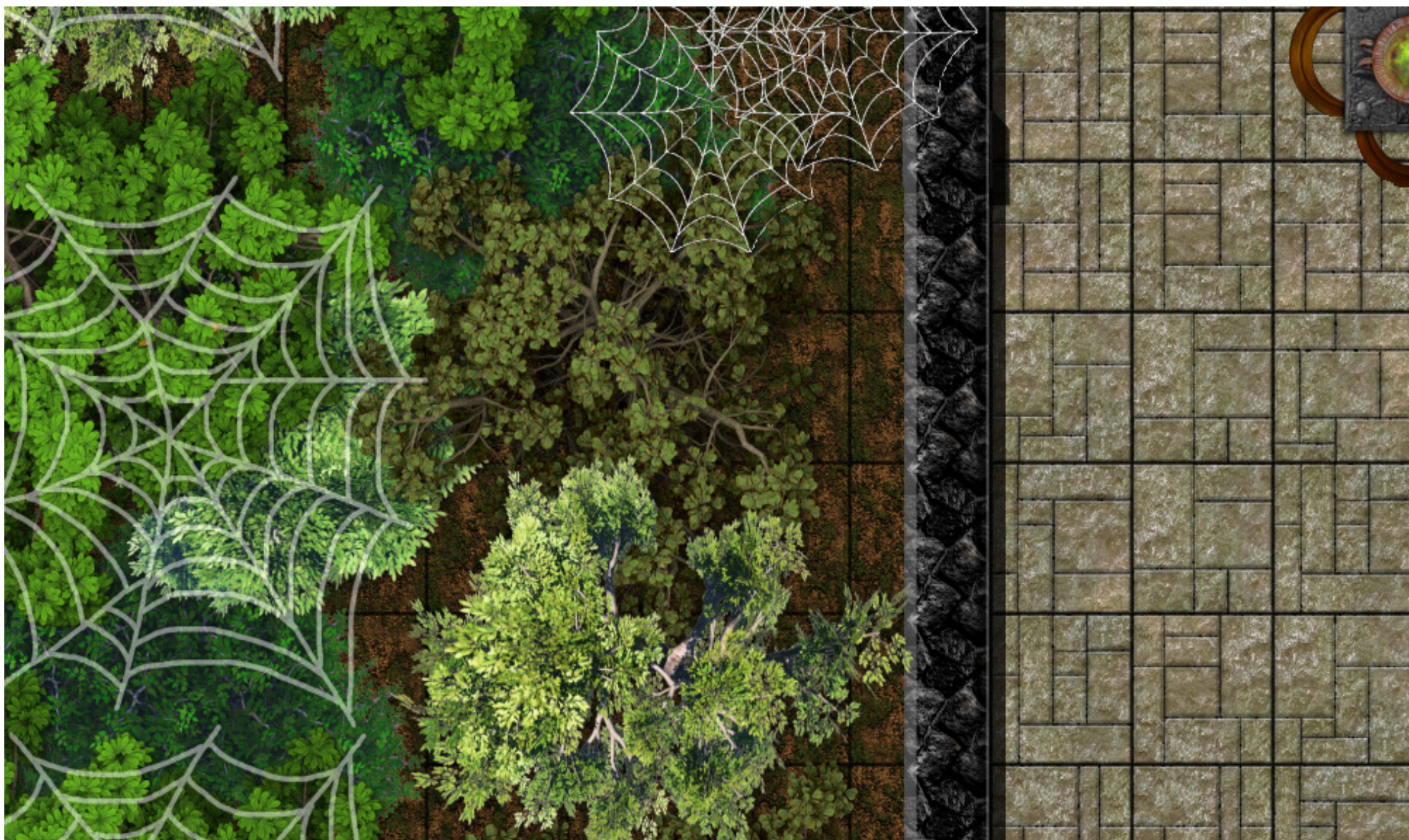
Tile #29 - Y4



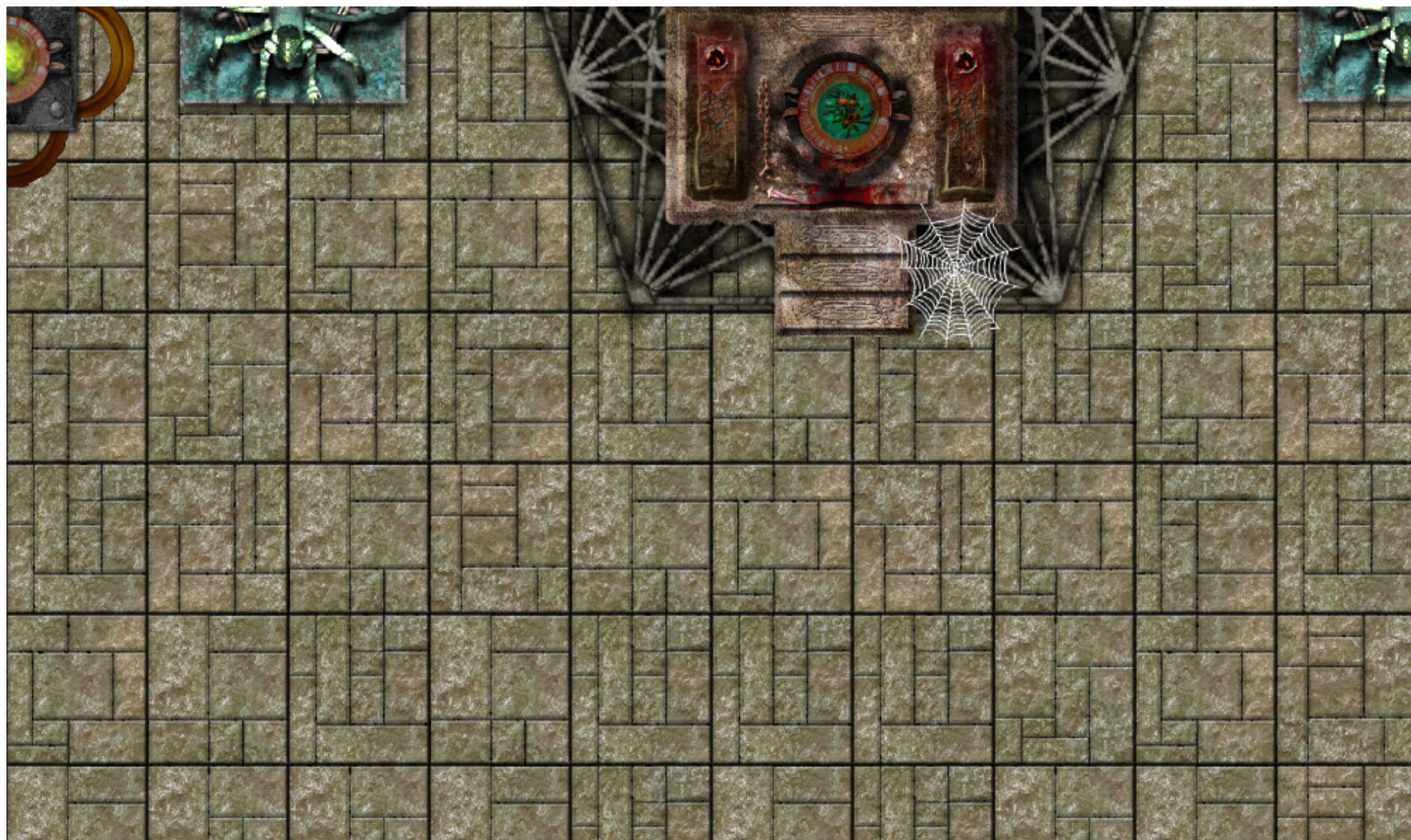
Tile #30- Z4

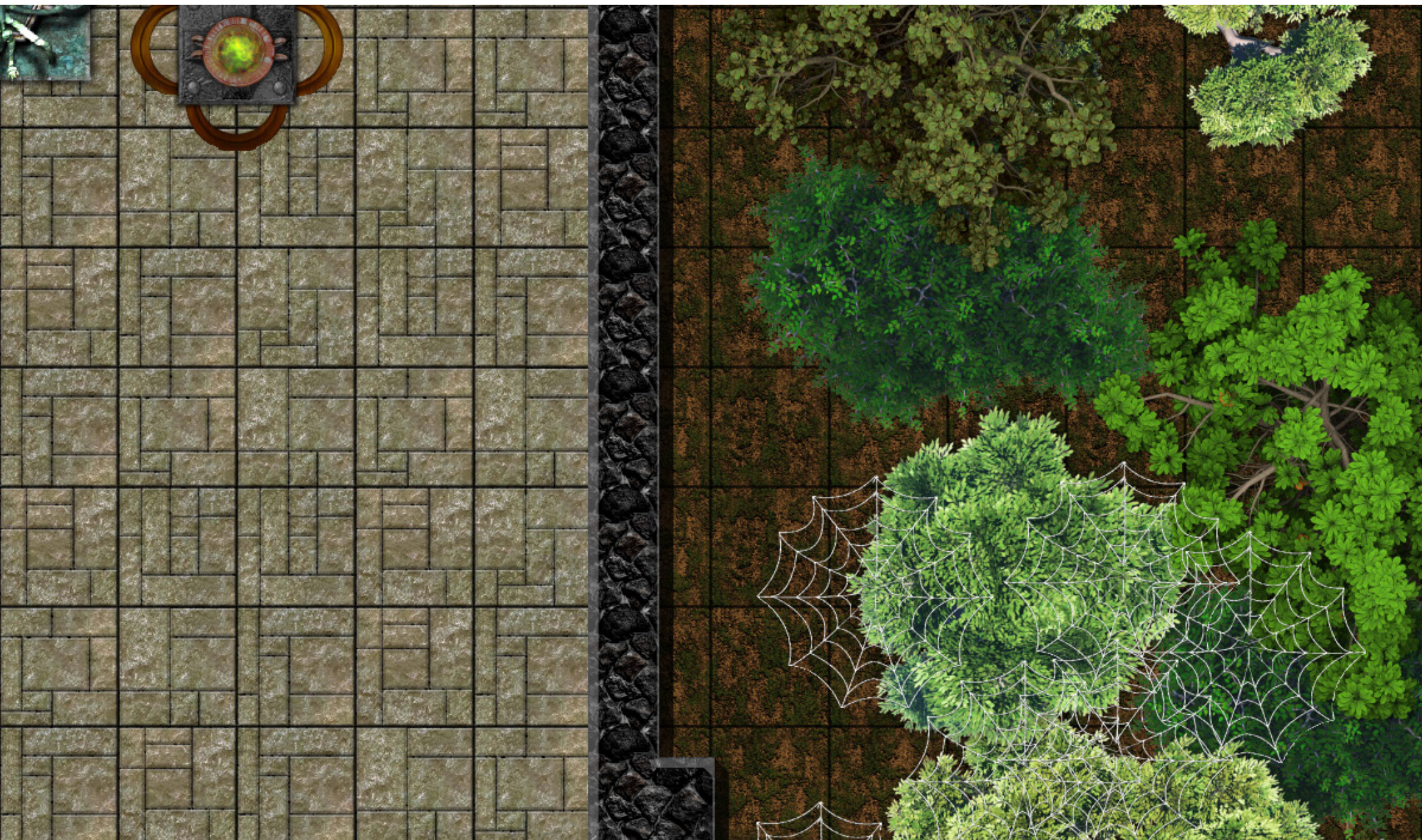


Tile #31 - X5



Tile #32 - Y5





Tile #34 - X6

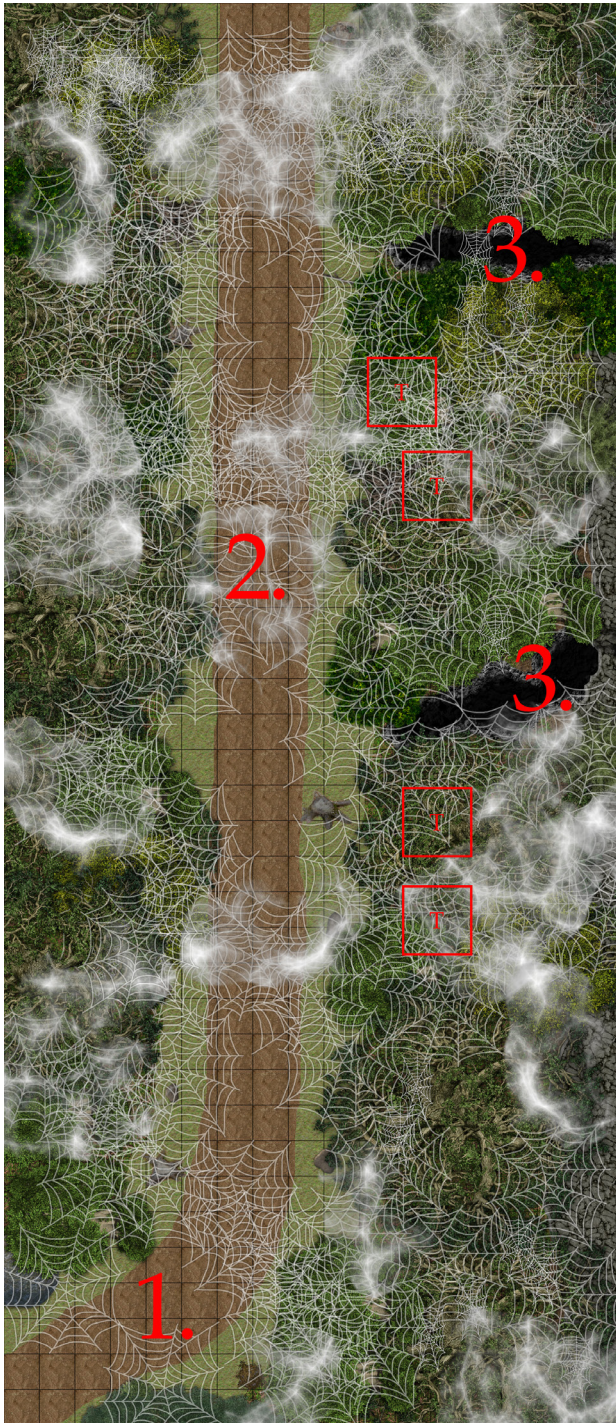




Tile #36- Z6



ENCOUNTERS 1-3: MINI MAP



1. THE GREAT WESTERN TRADE ROAD

The encounter ends when the heroes round the bend in the road and arrive at the Silken Glen.

2. THE SILKEN GLEN (EL 7)

Once the mood is set, have the spiders strike. Those PCs who succeeded at the Perception check can act normally, those who failed are surprised.

Each spider's goal will be to grab one of the heroes and drag him into their underground lair. They want to isolate their victim from his friends then make a group meal of him. As soon as one of the spiders succeeds, those who are not currently grappling will use their next action to also return to the lair. Those who are grappling will continue to try to drag their prey underground, too. Any spider that takes more than half its hit points in damage will flee back to the lair, too.

Once back in the lair, the spiders will attack as a group against the victims they've dragged there. They are not intelligent creatures, but they fight with natural teamwork that lets them employ what seems to be advanced strategy. In particular, one spider may grapple and attempt to pin an opponent so the other spiders may more easily attack him.

Once the heroes see the spiders leap from their tunnels, it is a relatively easy matter for them to locate the burrows they use to travel to and from their underground lair. There are eight such burrows hidden in the webs covering the Silken Glen, and a DC 8 Perception check will allow the heroes to locate one. For every 2 points by which they exceed that number, they notice an additional burrow (so anyone beating DC 24 will see them all).

From the glen, the heroes can faintly but clearly hear any words shouted in the spiders' lair. But to get there, they must crawl down the burrows.

If the heroes manage to chase the trapdoor spiders away without anyone being dragged below, they may not have an immediate incentive to follow. However, allow them to attempt DC 5 Intelligence checks to realize that one reasonable explanation for the children's complete disappearance would be if the spiders grabbed them.

3. BURROWS

The burrows are barely holes dug in the dirt of the forest floor that connect the Silken Glen with the trapdoor spiders' lair. Although the spiders are Large creatures, their arachnid bodies allow them to squeeze through very small spaces. As a result, these burrows are barely wide enough for most humanoid creatures to crawl through.

They are 30 feet long and count as difficult terrain. Medium size creatures must squeeze through a burrow (moving at one-quarter speed—the difficult terrain and squeezing penalties stack), but creatures that are no bigger than Small may move normally (incurring only the difficult terrain movement penalty). Creatures that are Large or bigger cannot pass through the burrows unless they have segmented, insectoid, or snake-like bodies (or some other way to make their forms fit through such a small space).

ENCOUNTERS 4-5: MINI MAP

4. THE SPIDERS' LAIR

This underground cavern is the lair for the trapdoor spiders that ambushed the heroes in the Silken Glen. Their goal is to drag one or more of the heroes back here, separating them from their compatriots, and then to team up to make a meal of them. (See "The Silken Glen" for more details on the spiders and their strategy.)

Unlike above, the spiders will fight to the death to protect their lair.

The cavern is a natural formation, with all the rough ground, stalagmites, and stalactites that implies. The whole of this cavern is considered difficult terrain. The ceiling is only eight-feet tall, so it is difficult for the heroes to move and fight normally. Aside from the penalties for terrain, anyone using a melee weapon with reach takes a -2 penalty on all attacks.

Besides the spider burrows, there is only one passageway out of this chamber—a narrow, steep crevasse that leads upward.

In this close environment, sound echoes and carries a long way. Any words spoken in a shout can be heard in the Silken Glen, but also carry throughout the underground complex. Each time a hero shouts in this chamber and every round that combat happens, there is a cumulative 5% chance that the ettercaps will hear and come to investigate. It takes the creatures two minutes to reach the top of the crevasse.

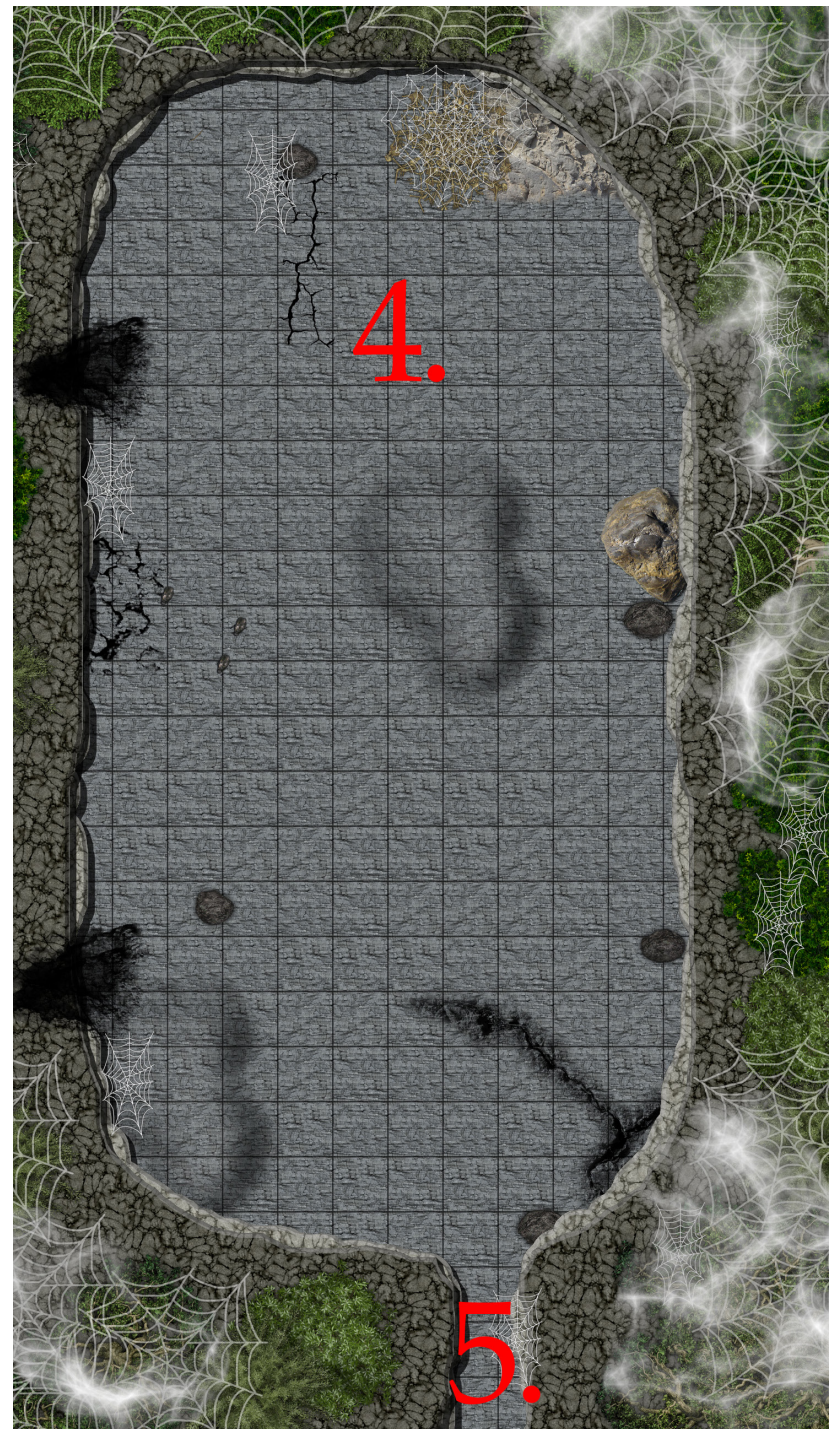
If the heroes examine the cavern after the fight, they will find signs that the children were here—a child-sized boot or cap and a couple of sacks the kids used to gather silk strands—all made of spiderdown.

5. CREVASSE

This very thin, steep passage is the only connection between the trapdoor spiders' lair and the rest of the underground complex. It counts as difficult terrain.

Going down the crevasse may be done using normal movement. Going up, though, must be done using Climb. The check itself is not difficult (DC 5), but the movement restrictions are cumulative with the difficult terrain penalty.

Creatures that are Medium size or smaller may pass through normally. Large creatures must squeeze in order to use the crevasse. Anything Huge or larger cannot pass through this area.



ENCOUNTER 6: MINI MAP

6. ADDITIONAL CAVERNS (EL 8)

Although the map shows just one additional cavern, there are a series of small chambers leading upward toward the surface. Each cavern is connected to the next by a passage that functions identically to the way the Crevasse does.

These are naturally formed chambers, but not as rough as the ground in the trapdoor spiders' lair, so characters are able to move within them normally. They are empty, with the exception of the final chamber that leads to the surface—that cavern is where the ettercap minions have set up camp now that they have been ejected from the temple.

If the heroes make it that far without giving away their presence, they may be able to surprise the ettercaps. Certainly, though, once the creatures are aware of the heroes, they will attempt to kill them.

It is possible, though, that the ettercaps may have come down further into the complex—they would do so if they heard sounds of combat or the heroes shouting in the spiders' lair. In that case, the GM should decide at what point in the complex the two groups meet. In any case, unless the heroes are invisible or otherwise completely obscured, it will not be possible for them to surprise the ettercaps.

While the ettercaps were once fanatically devoted to their spider god, the fact that the death spider recently spurned them as the guardians of the temple has shaken their faith. Although they are not ready to simply turn on their former master, they are not quite as willing to lay down their lives in its defense.

They will attack the humans on site, but once the ettercap cleric is killed, the remaining creatures will offer to surrender and give information to the heroes in exchange for their lives.

Once the heroes have dealt with the ettercaps (one way or another) there are no more obstacles between them and the surface.



ENCOUNTERS 7-8: MINI MAP

7. ARCADE

The forest floor at first appears to be worn down like a game trail—as though a great many animals travel along this way on a regular basis. A DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that as unlikely. There is nothing in the cave complex that would draw animals there, with the possible exception of bears looking for somewhere to hibernate. A closer look at the path, and a DC 15 Perception check, however, reveal that this is not a game trail but a long disused roadway set with paving stones.

Each of the stones each bears a sigil that resembles a spider with a skeletal skull in place of a head. A successful DC 22 Knowledge (religion) check informs the heroes that this emblem is associated with a long defunct cult that worshipped a spider god. Little is known about the religion or their deity, other than that the cult performed blood sacrifices and believed their god's web tied together all the various afterlives from other religions—making their god the ultimate authority over death and undeath.

8. GRAND PLAZA (EL 9)

The arcade leads up to an open plaza. Even after centuries of disuse, it still radiates a palpable evil, and even the woods seem to have been scared of trespassing. Unlike everything else in the area, the plaza is not overgrown with vines and brush. Indeed, except for thorny, sickly looking weeds sprouting here and there, no plants grow on the plaza or the temple.

The entire temple complex is an *unhallowed* site. The most trying part of that effect is that the plaza and temple function as if under the effects of a *magic circle against good* spell. (See spell descriptions for other details.)

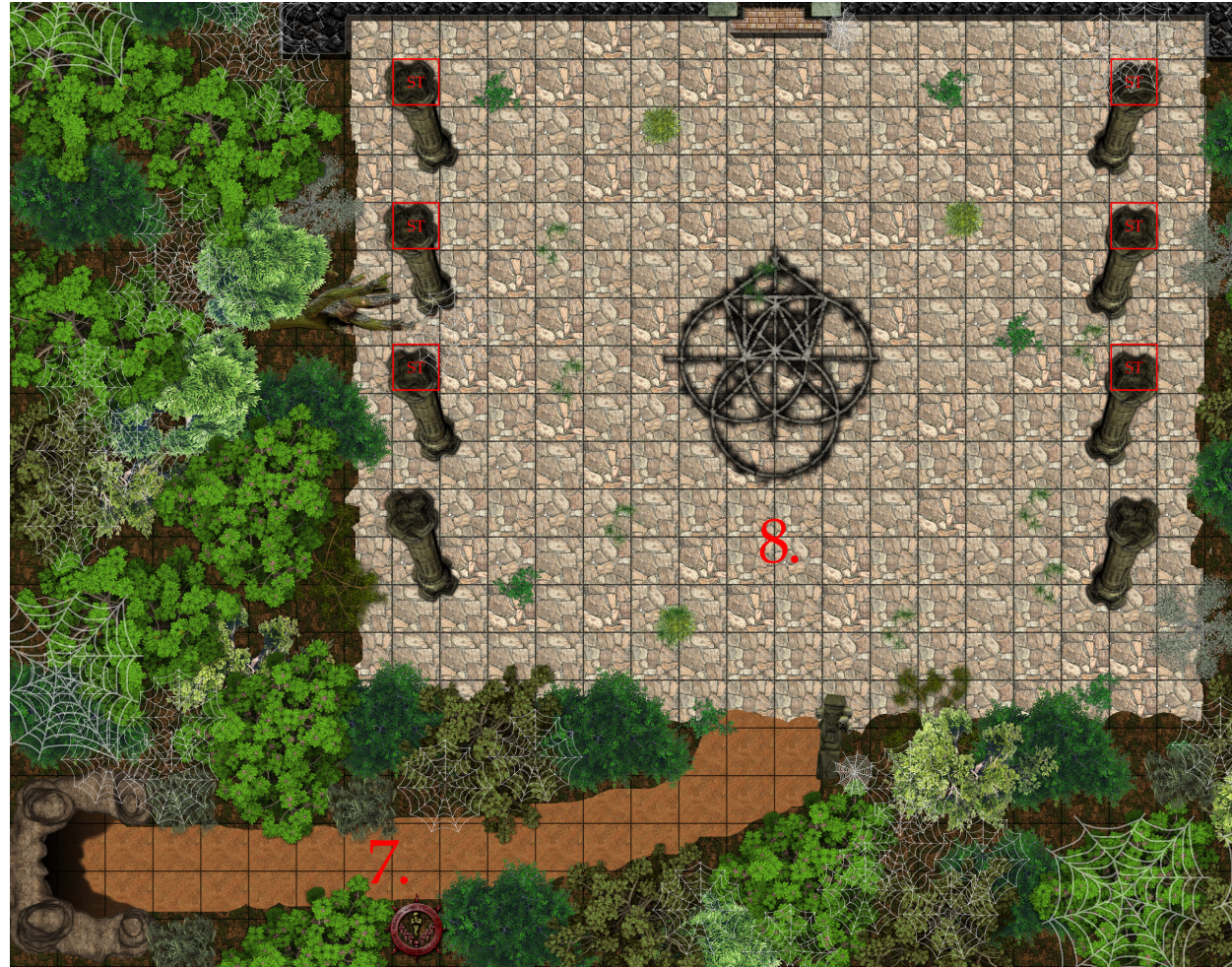
The plaza itself is a tremendous courtyard paved with stones (each marked with the same spider god sigil) laid out in a mosaic that creates an arachnid-shaped design. Along each side of the plaza is a row of four pillars that may have once held aloft a roof or awning, but now are purely decorative. The spider thralls are hiding at the top of 6 of the pillars.

If the heroes do not yet know that the thralls are the children from Villago, allow them to attempt DC 12 Intelligence checks to figure it out. The clues are there—the creatures have childlike bodies, there are the same number as there are missing children, and in the fight it may be possible to see beneath the spidery skin.

The spider thralls have been ordered to prevent anyone from approaching the temple door, and so wait until it is clear that the heroes are moving in that direction before they attack. Their goal is not necessarily to kill the heroes, but rather to chase them off. However, they will press on in their assault until they fall, with no chance they can be scared off or forced to make morale checks.

If the heroes manage to open the temple door (see “Temple Door” for more details) and enter the temple, the spider thralls will not follow them in. Their goal was to keep the heroes out and, having failed at that, their fear of their master is greater than their desire to correct their error.

There are two ways for the heroes to free the children from their servitude as spider thralls. In order to discover one of these methods, a hero must succeed at a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering, nature, or planes)—if the check beats DC 25, the hero learns both methods. One way is to beat a spider thrall in combat which, if done right, should leave the victim alive and whole (though in need of some healing). The other way is to kill the death spider, which will free all thralls created by the spider or any of its spider thralls.



ENCOUNTERS 9-13: MINI MAP

9. TEMPLE DOOR

A DC 10 Perception check will reveal that the spider on the door is very similar to the mosaic on the plaza floor. If the check beats DC 20, the character notices subtle but important differences between the two and gains a +2 bonus to any Disable Device or Intelligence checks the group makes in attempting to open the door.

One person alone cannot solve the puzzle—it requires the combined efforts of at least three people working together in order to open the door. They must move different segments of the sculpture in a specific order and hold them in place in order to trigger the mechanism. Figuring this out requires a DC 10 Disable Device check or a DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check.

One person must take the lead for this endeavor, and that person must have at least one rank in Disable Device. Opening the door requires a minimum of three people (if there are fewer than that, the door cannot be opened no matter DC is achieved with the Disable Device check). A maximum of ten people can work together in this effort, each taking hold of one of the moving parts. The leader makes a Disable Device check while the others assist (using the “aid another” rules) by making either a Disable Device or Intelligence check. The DC for the group effort is 40.

Any unsuccessful attempt to open the door causes the mechanism to stutter, inflicting bludgeoning damage on everyone involved in the effort. This damage is equal to 1d4 for every 5 points (or portion thereof) by which the check failed.

If the group is unable to solve the puzzle, the door can be broken through brute force. It has AC 8, hardness 10, and 30 hit points.

10. NARTHEX

It's clear that the path has been trod many times. A successful DC 15 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check will reveal that the most recent of these tracks are only a few days old and were made by at least three different types of creatures.

If the check beats DC 20, the hero realizes that some of the tracks were made by human children and others by ettercaps (though it is impossible to determine how many of each kind). The third type of tracks remains a mystery, though the hero knows this is because he has never encountered this type of creature before.

If the check beats DC 25, the hero realizes that the human tracks only lead into the building and the mysterious tracks only lead out. It also reveals that, based on the size and irregular shape, they could very well belong to the spider thralls.

11. VESTRY

The door to the vestry is unlocked. Inside are three wooden benches, a wooden table, and a lacquered wooden chest.

After all the centuries, the furniture is rotted through and each piece will break if anyone sits or rests a heavy object on it. The chest, on the other hand, is still in very good condition. It is closed, but not locked.

The outside of the chest is decorated with images of spiders and web motifs. It is a very beautiful piece of craftsmanship (though somewhat disturbing in its imagery) and can be sold as a piece of artwork for 50 gp.

Inside the chest is a stack of six neatly folded, black, hooded robes. They appear to be made from spiderdown, but in truth the cloth is of even higher quality, woven from silk spun by a death spider many centuries ago. These were robes for worshippers to wear during ceremonies. They are decorated with a web pattern and on the back of each is a large embroidered image of a spider with poison dripping from its mandibles.

One of the cloaks is a *gossamer shielding mantle* (see the “Treasure” section for details).

Underneath the robes is a *sacrificial blade*—a magical dagger that was used in the dark rites practiced in this building long ago. The dagger is curved and covered with images of spiders. (See the “Treasure” section for details.)

12. ABATTOIR

Four stone slabs rise seamlessly from the floor in this room, one parallel to each wall. The floor itself slopes almost imperceptibly toward the center, where there is a drain built into the ground. All the stones in the room are discolored with dark, ancient bloodstains, though the deepest discoloration is in the center where the blood apparently pooled.

13. DARK CHANTRY (EL 9)

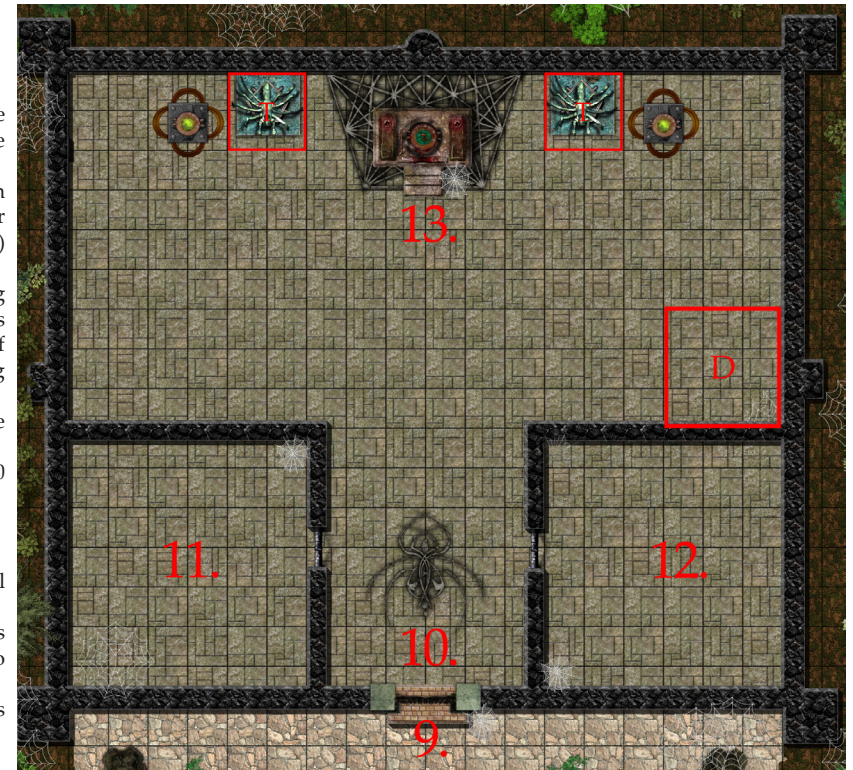
Like other sections of the temple, there is no light here. Though, if the GM prefers, the center area might be in dim lighting conditions from light streaming through the open door. Both wings of the room, however, should remain in darkness unless the heroes do something to alter that situation.

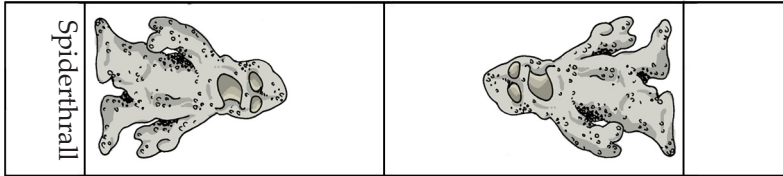
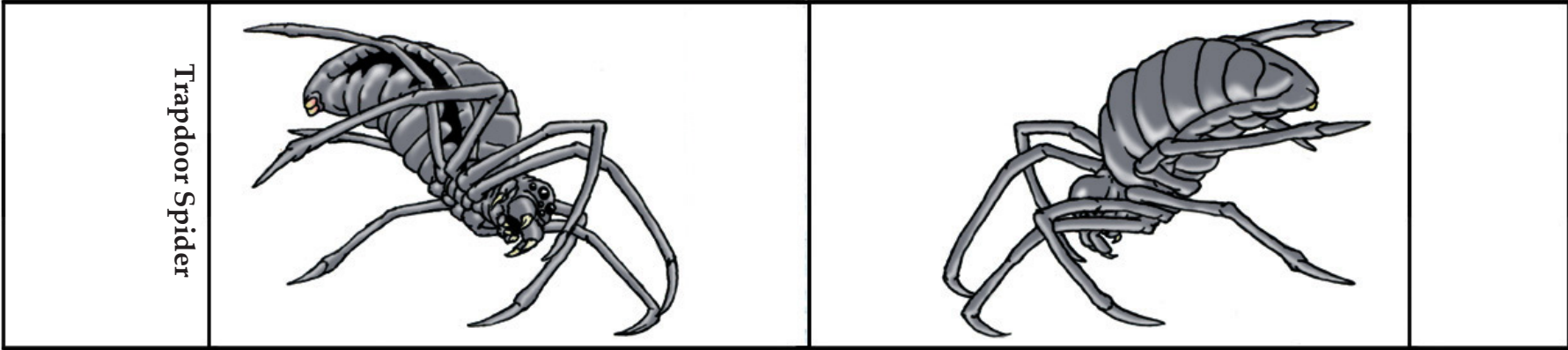
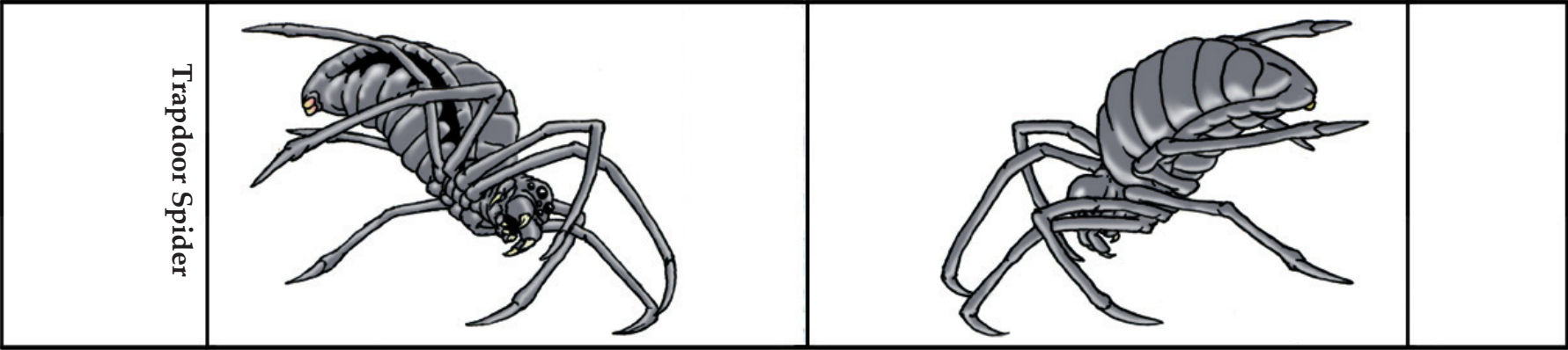
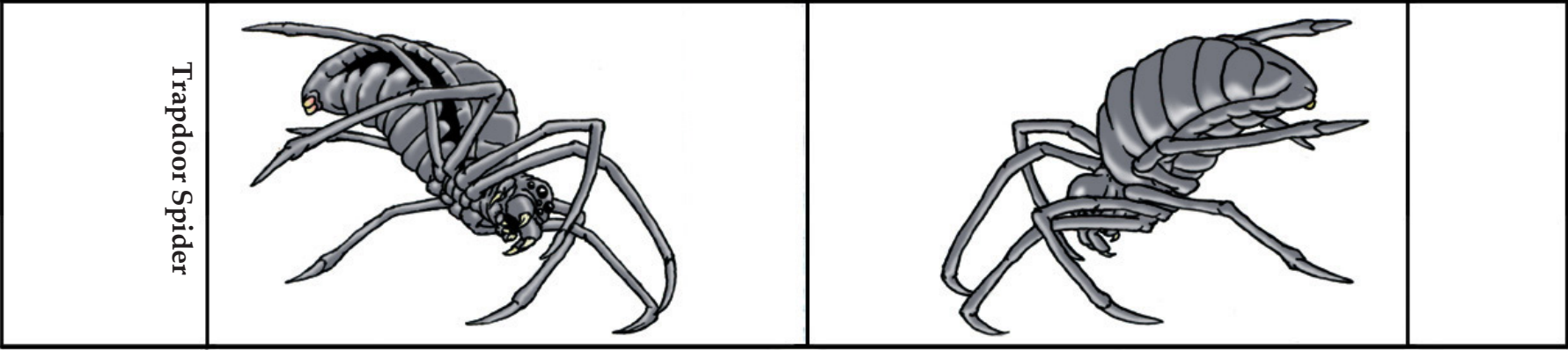
The death spider will lurk in the shadows for as long as it can, trying to gain information about intruders. It is a highly intelligent creature that at least claims to be the earthly avatar of an ancient spider god, so it is not prone to rash decisions or ill-advised actions. At the death spider's command the two statues will come to life and attack the heroes (use trapdoor spiders). In addition, it will use its telepathic abilities to call any spiders or spider-like creatures in range to assist it (including swarms of ordinary spiders and any remaining spider thralls and ettercaps).


Since several of the death spider's ability require dark conditions to function at peak efficiently, it will first work to extinguish any light source the heroes are carrying and then attack any spellcasters it deems likely to be able to cast spells that create light. It will focus its attack on those characters, hoping to turn them into spider thralls and then unleash their magical abilities against their former allies.

The death spider would love to increase its growing army with these powerful heroes as thralls, but in the end it is more interested in survival and will sacrifice any of its minions to save its own life.


Sunlight is anathema to the death spider, so it will only leave the temple if it thinks it can get safely to a dark hiding place (like the underground cave complex) before the heroes catch it.


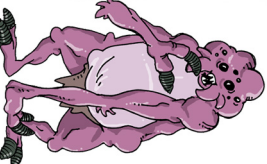


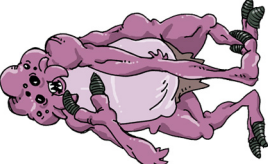



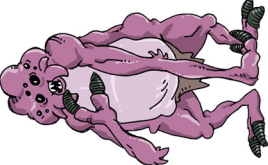
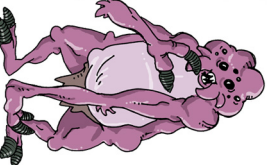
Trapdoor Spider			



		
Spiderthrall		



		
Spiderthrall		

		
Ettercap		



		
Ettercap		

		
Ettercap		

		
Ettercap Cleric		

		
Spiderthrall		

Death Spider		

	
	
Spiderthrall	

WE ERR ON THE SIDE OF AWESOME!

CREDITS

Designers:

Stan! and R. Hyrum Savage

Editor:

The Geniuses!

Cover Art:

Dan Roy

Interior Art:

Dan Roy (cartography), Marcum Curlee and Jacob E. Blackmon (standees), Stan! (standees), Shaman Stockart, and Joseph Calkins and Cerebus Illustrations

Graphic Design and Typesetting:

R. Hyrum Savage

Produced By:

Super Genius Games

www.supergeniusgames.com

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