

Feast of the Father

An Adventure for Expert Characters



Small towns and settlements dot the coasts and wilds of the Empire, and the people living in them have learned to eke out a meager existence in what is often a harsh and unforgiving environment. Some people turn to local traditions and faiths to keep them safe, others invent them to suit their needs. One such place is the town of Argron's Dock, where the locals have taken to worshipping a small god they call The Father. Today is a holy day, a time of great celebration, when the people can give thanks to the Father's bounty and receive his gifts as they have since they first embraced him as their lord and savior.

Feast of the Father is an adventure for expert characters who happen upon Argron's Dock during their travels. By interacting with the locals, the group learns festivities are to take place, and the townsfolk invite them to participate. Exploring the town and interacting with the unhinged people living there should provide ample warning of the danger lying in wait. The characters complete the adventure when they discover what is truly going on and unmask the horror lurking behind the god's mask.

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BACKGROUND

Argron's Dock is a bayside village that stands far enough away from the major routes crisscrossing the Northern Reach that the community rarely receives visitors, and the few who stop there only stay long enough to catch the ferry and hasten the trip to the other side of the bay. As a result, the circumstances behind the town's wretchedness have largely passed unnoticed by the rest of the world.

The troubles started when a fisherman named Derwas Plont dredged up tainted fish from the bay's depths on a day just before the last harvest. One of the fish was sickly and crawling with small black worms. He tossed it back, but failed to notice a few worms had fallen into the baskets containing the rest of his catch. The tainted fish became his family's meal that night.

The fisherman fell ill a few weeks later, bedridden until his bowels finally erupted to give birth to the **mind worm**. This psychic horror grew from one of the worms the man had unwittingly ingested. The mind worm was able to eavesdrop on everything Derwas thought and thus learned about the town and people. Freed from the man's bowels, the mind worm hungered and had a strong desire to multiply. Derwas survived the ordeal to become the mind worm's thrall and, later, high priest. Together, they spread the mind worm's influence throughout the town.

By the time the priest Regilas realized his people were being taken over by parasites, it was too late. Most people had already become ill and loosed more worms from their bowels. Most victims recovered and fell under the power of their "offspring." So, when the priest tried to rally the community against the slithering overlords, the infected fought back, resulting in the fire that consumed the southern part of town, the shrine, the priest, and the scant few who had not yet been infected.

Of the surviving townsfolk, all but one live as thralls to the mind worms. Every few weeks, the infected heave more worms from their bowels, which then slither off to live with the original mind worm that now calls itself the Father. The people then happily consume more eggs so the brood might grow. The Father hopes to spread its control beyond the town soon, and it senses the chance has come with the characters' timely arrival.

GETTING STARTED

The adventure begins when the player characters approach Argron's Dock a few hours before sunset by way of an old dirt path that climbs up the side of a hill, affording a clear view of the community. The characters could have happened upon this place after completing a previous adventure or stumble across it on the way to the next. You can come up with another reason, but it's important that none of the characters be familiar with the community.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Since the mass conversion to this mysterious god, the townsfolk put on a great feast every few months to celebrate their new patron, one that ends in a gruesome ritual cleansing, followed by a willing supplication and consumption of their god's "gifts." No outsider has ever seen the feast, at least until now.

The feast begins a few hours after the characters arrive. The timeline presented below summarizes the events as they might happen if the player characters fail to discover the truth before the feast begins. The group's efforts—forcing their way into the burnt shrine, killing a townsfolk—could accelerate events and lure the mind worm out into the open. Therefore, use the timeline as a guide, modifying the events as needed to conclude the adventure.

4pm	The characters arrive. The townsfolk notice them almost right away, but the locals do nothing more than stare or gabble at them in broken Common.
5pm	If the group has not met the mayor of the town, Talani Deskar , she seeks them out. She invites them to attend the Feast and welcomes them to stay at the Dead Crab.
6pm	The townsfolk set up tables and chairs, light the torches, and make other preparations for the festival in the street right out in front of the Dead Crab.
6:45pm	At dusk, the town drunk, Jelcum , goes on a rampage, fighting the other townsfolk. Unless the characters intervene, the townsfolk beat Jelcum to unconsciousness and take him to the mayor's house where he is killed and his body hidden in the basement. If the characters break up the fight and spirit Jelcum away, the drunkard tells them what he knows and begs them to stop Derwas Plont, the high priest. For more information on Jelcum, see Notable Characters.
7:30pm	The Feast of the Father begins. The townsfolk gorge themselves on huge plates of food, washing it down with the "Father's nectar" from the sacred barrels, which were brought out just before the festival began. Over the next hour, they eat far more than any of them should be able, growing huge fat bellies. A success on a Perception challenge roll reveals something seems to writhe under their now taut skin.
8:40pm	The first feaster defecates the worms from his body. Others quickly follow suit.
8:50pm	After the expulsion, the people rise up and begin the procession to the burned out shrine with all of their newly birthed "young."
9:00pm	The townsfolk reach the shrine and the mind worm surges forth from the ruined crypts below. Townsfolk line up and receive his blessing, one by one.
10:00pm	The townsfolk go home, and the mind worm slithers back into its lair.

LOCATING THE TOWN

You can place Argron's Dock on the shores of any large bay or estuary in the Northern Reach. The town needs to be remote, not on any major trade route, and be part of a slow-traveling ferry circuit that makes its way around the bay. When the characters arrive, this ferry is set to arrive sometime later the next day.

ARGRON'S DOCK

The town has seen better days. Since the mind worm's arrival, the townsfolk gave up on even the most basic maintenance. Weeds grow in the streets, leaky roofs rot, and broken doors and windows are left in disrepair. A foul stench hangs heavy in the air due to poor sanitation and stagnant pools of filth.

Argron's Dock has twenty homes and other small buildings, only three of which rise above the other squat structures—the Dead Crab Tavern, the mayor's home, and the remnants of the shrine. A band of blackened, burned buildings, about a dozen total, spread across the town's south side. Not far from the tavern stands the town square and the docks, which consist of three rotting piers, stretch out over the waters to the north.

LOCALS

About one hundred people call Argron's Dock home, though over half live in the farms and cabins in the outlying area. Townsfolk tend to be odd-looking; they are thin with loose skin hanging down past their waists. They have slumped postures and dark circles under their eyes. Most are missing teeth and sport open sores on their skin.

People go about their business as they did before the Father came to power, but they wander about, listless and speaking as slowly as they move due to the time it takes for them to receive commands from the mind worm that controls them. The townsfolk appear amiable enough, offering hellos and good evenings, though their speech is slurred. They don't volunteer information, but they might impart a few facts with the right questions:

- The ferry stopped by the town yesterday, so it won't be back until tomorrow afternoon.
- The only place to stay is The Dead Crab tavern. The food there is *good*.
- Tonight is the feast of the father. The characters are welcome to join in the feast.

Questions about the feast or the Father are met with silence and blank stares. Although if pressed, the locals tell the characters to talk to the priest Derwas, who can be found in his house, located on a stretch of land that lies between the bay and its attaching ocean waters until the festival begins.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

A few important members of the community have parts to play in the adventure beyond those carried out by the wretched thralls.

DERWAS PLONT

Derwas has risen and fallen far since the days he spent working as a simple fisherman. His guts were the sacred crèche that produced the Father, and thus he was chosen to be the "god's" high priest. He's thoroughly insane, but he doesn't have long left in this world; the parasites have made short work of his innards.

The high priest stands just shy of 6 feet tall with a skeletal frame and a bulging potbelly. Much of his hair and teeth have fallen out, and his eyes are bulging and rheumy. He wears stinking, crimson robes stained by unspeakable materials. When he talks, he always speaks of the Father's glory and how everyone would be wise to accept his blessings and gifts, as they are the only way to salvation. If pressed about details, he gives a ghastly smile and promises all will be made clear at the feast.

Use the **high cultist** for Derwas, but replace the Forbidden tradition with Enchantment. He's learned the following spells: *bewitch* (3), *charm* (2), and *compel* (1). His magic comes from the mind worm, and if the horror is slain, Derwas loses his magic and becomes permanently impaired, with no recollection of what has happened.

TALANI DESKAR

The mayor was infected soon after Plont. Once the mind worm took control of her faculties, it was able to deflect inquiries into the weird happenings in town and give the worms time to spread throughout the community. Talani (as a **cultist**) appears to be a middle-aged human woman, but she is actually a changeling, though almost no one in town knows this. Her magical nature has let her retain her normal appearance despite being infested with the worm's parasites. She wears worn simple gowns, but is clean for the most part.

She comes off as distant and distracted when she talks, but she seeks out the characters to invite them to the feast shortly after they arrive. If the characters ask her about the town, she goes on about what a great place it is, how quiet and peaceful the streets are, and how everyone works together. She even offers to help the characters secure a house if they want to settle down. Above all, Mayor Deskar assures them that everything is fine, there's nothing wrong with the people, and that folk here just aren't in any kind of hurry.

JELCUM HALBRIT

Jelcum (as a **commoner**) is the only person in town not infected by worms thanks to another, different lethal affliction. A few years ago, Jelcum contracted a wasting disease, which he has taken to treating with extremely strong drink consumed in incredible amounts. His guts have become inhospitable to the worms; the eggs die on contact with the unsavory stew brewing in his innards. Being drunk all the time has made Jelcum powerless to do anything about what's happening in town, so the infected have ignored him so far.

Standing out from the rest, Jelcum is portly, reeks of cheap rotgut and vomit, and he has more gaps in his mouth than he does teeth. Patches of scaly brown skin cover his body, symptoms of the disease that has been slowly killing him. He is middle-aged, unkempt, with a wispy beard trailing from his chin. He dresses in shit-stained rags, having sold his nicer clothes to keep him in his cups.

Jelcum is quite drunk by the time the group arrives. He doesn't want to be conscious when the feast begins, having found his head swimming with booze, and a makeshift bed on a fishing boat preferable to the horrors

he's witnessed so far. He intends to spend this night as he has so many others: far away from the action.

Throughout the afternoon, Jelcum can be seen wandering about the town, drinking, irritable, occasionally barking obscenities at others. If cornered and questioned, he might tell the tale of the town, as he knows it, if the characters can befriend him by getting a success on an Intellect or Will attack roll against Jelcum's Will. Plying him with drink grants 1 boon to this roll. If they fail, he conveys this same information to them just before the feast begins.

Jelcum does not know why things have happened, only that the people here began acting odd last autumn, and not long after, they started having their feasts. He tells them that everybody gorges themselves and makes a terrible mess. People who participate are never the same after. He does not know about the worms or who or what the Father is, but he blames Derwas for the blight. He believes the fisherman made a deal with the devils in the bay: foul creatures who demand folks eat themselves near to death so they can be fattened for when the devils come to harvest them.

Rampage: Jelcum finds his courage just before the feast begins. Unless something happens to stop him, such as the characters meet him earlier and offer to fight against the Father's followers, he attacks the infected setting up for the feast. If the characters don't interfere, the valiant effort goes as described in the timeline. If the characters interfere and can get him away from the infected, Jelcum reveals what he knows to them—if he hasn't done so already—and either begs them to flee (if the characters are inclined to help) or to stop the high priest (if they are inclined to flee).

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

The following locations are far from the only places the characters can visit, but other locations are generally one-room shacks in which infected families huddle.

STONE SQUARE

The only paved part of Argron's Dock, the stone square stands at the town's center and boasts a 5-yard-tall stone menhir carved with ancient symbols at its center. Arrayed around it are small marker stones, which let the rock act as a sundial. The townsfolk clear out this area shortly after the characters arrive so they can set up for the feast.

DEAD CRAB TAVERN

A run-down drinking hole, it is one of the town's few large buildings. A shell of a dead crab hangs on a nail on the door leading inside to the squat common room filled with long narrow tables and benches.

Lathas Flig (as a **pickpocket**) runs the Dead Crab. A scrawny man with greasy black hair and sunken eyes, he, like almost everyone else in town, carries the worms in his guts and talks in a slow, wandering manner. His threadbare clothing is finely made, but filthy, as if he has not washed it in weeks.

Lathas' main job is to see to the needs of people visiting the Dead Crab, which lets him spy for the mind worm. He talks very little and seems to get flustered at even the simplest inquiries (beyond orders for more drink or requests for a room). If asked about the town, he tells the characters to visit the "famous" dock and look out upon the bay. If asked about the fire and the burnt out portion of town, he says it was an accident and nothing to worry about.

He offers characters cots in a room for just 1 cp a night. If the characters take the offer, they find an incredibly modest chamber up a short flight of stairs climbing from the back of the taproom. The room lacks a door and contains 8 straw mats and a simple basin filled with gray water.

The tavern offers up beer, ale, and rotgut, and most nights it sells a crude stew, too, but not this night. The mind worm wants people hungry for the feast. Lathas plies the characters with as much as they can drink, rarely charging them (and clearly makes math errors when he does). He insists the characters will be properly fed at the feast, and although he does not interfere with any of their plans, he eavesdrops on them, reporting any suspicious gossip to Derwas Plont if he can slip away, even if doing so would leave the bar unattended.

MAYOR DESKAR'S MANSION

Mayor Deskar's mansion stands opposite the Dead Crab on the other side of the stone square. Once a fine and well-kept home, the two-story building shows signs of neglect. Part of the roof of the front porch collapsed, and aside from moving enough debris to let the mayor come and go, no one has bothered to clean it up. The mayor spends much of her time here, but she leaves to talk to the characters and invite them to the feast.

If the characters pay her a visit first, she invites them inside to her sitting room where she welcomes them in a distant, distracted way and urges them to join in the festivities. The mansion itself is well appointed, but everything is dirty, dusty, and covered in cobwebs. Nothing looks like it's been moved or cleaned in many months. To make matters worse, water dripping from a leaky roof stained the ceilings and rotting plaster has fallen to the floor in chunks, where it has been left to mold.

Exploring the house turns up dirty rooms, discarded foodstuffs, and evidence of neglect. A few items of value might be salvaged, bringing 1d6 gc if cleaned and repaired.

THE DOCK

A decaying wooden pier juts out over the bay on tilting piles. Although it is creaky and rotten, the dock still serves for people boarding the ferry when it stops here. Three small fishing skiffs moor at the dock. One of them has taken on water and is half submerged. Investigating the boats reveals they look in poor repair, stink of fish and chum.

PLONT HOUSE

Located on the shore of the bay, sandwiched between it and the neighboring ocean, this rotting shack belongs to the high priest, Derwas Plont. Originally, it was also home to the man's wife and son, but they withered and died after giving birth to the first worm swarms. Now, Derwas spends most of his time here wandering through the three rooms muttering to himself.

If the characters visit, Derwas does not invite them in and instead comes out and leads them to the dock if they want to talk. Beyond the tree line, the characters can see the tips of three sailed masts of ships run aground on the beach, which, upon closer inspection, appear rotted and unmoved for some time. Characters investigating the house find nothing but decay inside. The bodies of his wife and son lay rotting on their beds, and the thick stench of filth hangs heavy in the air. Characters seeing the neglected corpses must make Will challenge rolls with 1 boon, gaining 1 Insanity on a failure.

BURNED QUARTER

A band of burned homes spreads across the south side of the town, marking the efforts of the infected to purge the community of the people who opposed the Father. Aside from the shrine, which is described below, the buildings here were all houses. Searching through the rubble reveals charred skeletons with melted and ruined remnants of crude weapons (daggers, pans, clubs, and the like) lying nearby. A few walls still stand, and doors as well, and it is clear they were boarded up and barricaded from the inside, far more than simply locking or barring the door. Last, it's clear no one has bothered to sift through the ruins. Bodies have not been disturbed, and the buildings have not been looted for any valuables. Each house searched has a 1 in 6 chance of turning up something interesting: either an enchanted object or valuables worth 1d6 gc in miscellaneous coins, art objects, gemstones, or equipment.

THE SHRINE

The burned remains of the shrine stand at the center of the burned quarter. Built to honor the gods of the Old Faith, it was, for many people, the heart of the community. Now, it is a burned-out husk of blackened stone walls, melted glass, and the interior filled with the rubble from the collapsed roof.

The attendant priest, Regilas, escaped infection, and he took steps to fight the Father and the infected townsfolk by gathering the other people who had not yet been exposed to

the parasites and scour the town for the dreaded mind worm. In between searching, the priest returned to the temple. One night, the monster commanded its thralls to deal with the meddling priest by setting fire to the brush around the building. The fire spread to the eaves, causing the shrine's thatch roof to collapse. The burning debris killed the priest and the few people who sought refuge there. Once the fire burned itself out, the mind worm slithered into the ruins and made a lair in the catacombs below.

The mind worm instructs the infected to keep the visiting characters from looking too close. If the characters approach the shrine without taking precautions to do so stealthily, one of the infected spots them and sends word to mayor Deskar. She shows up a few minutes later and implores the player characters to leave the place alone. If they persist, she flatly tells them not to meddle in the town's tragedy. Ignoring her pleading and exploring the site should escalate events in the town—the mind worm summons all of its



minions to the shrine to defend it and these minions gathering into **2 mobs of commoners** who show up 1d6 minutes later to drive the characters off.

The collapsed roof makes gaining access to the shrine's interior difficult. Breaking down the door requires a success on a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes. Doing so reveals utter destruction, a veritable maze of burned pews, broken glass, and tangled, scorched bodies. A thorough search of the place turns up 1d3 enchanted objects, which should have some religious significance. A partly collapsed wall conceals a staircase that descends to the crypts. Characters with Perception scores of 13 or higher automatically spot the gap in the wall, though characters thoroughly searching find it as well.

The mind worm dwells in the catacombs, its flexible body suited for slithering through the fallen timbers and debris to reach the waterlogged crypts below. If the characters enter the crypts, the mind worm finds them and attacks, while 1d3 mobs of commoners show up 1d3 minutes later to tear the characters apart.

THE FEAST

Unless something happens to disrupt the festival, the feast begins at the appointed time, when all of the townsfolk shuffle to the tables set up in the stone square, each loaded to groaning with heaping plates of food covered by filthy sheets. This complex scene unfolds as follows, though the characters might disrupt the events at any time.

THE INVOCATION

Once everyone is seated, Derwas rises up to give thanks to the Father for granting the people of Argron's Dock such a bounty and for "putting the seed of life" into each and every one of them. He also gives thanks for erasing all doubt and worry from the minds of the faithful, so they might live free and happy lives. This prayer takes a minute or two.

THE FATHER'S NECTAR

When he finishes, townsfolk dressed in fish netting roll out the sacred barrels containing "Father's Nectar," tap them, and fill enough mugs with the stuff so that everyone, including attending characters, has a drink. Derwas then toasts the Father, and everyone drinks deep.

The "Father's Nectar" is a powerful sedative and hallucinogen. A living creature that drinks the milky fluid must make a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes. On a failure, the creature takes 1d6 damage and becomes poisoned until after it completes a rest. If the creature is already poisoned, it becomes slowed for as long as it remains poisoned.

As well, a creature poisoned by this nectar must make a Will challenge roll whenever they see worm swarms or the parasites in their food. On a failure, the creature overlooks the worms, treating them as if they were not there—this also prevents them from having to deal with the effects of being horrified by such creatures.

The nectar acts differently on those infected with the mind worm parasites. For them, it causes the parasites to writhe and make their way into the host's bowels. This is very uncomfortable, but the young worms excrete a powerful tranquilizer that causes the infected to experience intense pleasure instead of pain. Creatures not poisoned by the nectar can see the worms writhe in the bellies of those nearby and must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity.

INFECTED CHARACTERS

A living creature that consumes the worm larva becomes infected with parasites. While infected, the creature is charmed by the mind worm and can be controlled by the mind worm should the monster choose to exert its influence. Luckily, the mind worm does not exercise control unless it or its young are at risk. Instead, it allows its thralls to act freely, hoping they draw other uninfected characters into its clutches.

An infected creature is impaired from the near-constant headaches and odd twitching, which turn into complete malaise and lethargy after a few days. One month after consuming the worms, the host creature becomes violently ill. The young mind worms become desperate to vacate the creature's body and force their way out. If the host creature drinks the father's nectar (a brew made up from the mind worm's poison) the creature is overcome with euphoria as their bowels relax and let loose a tide of worms.

The birth deals 2d6 damage to the host under the influence of the nectar, and the creature remains charmed by the mind worm for 1 hour after the young escape.

Those who do not drink the father's nectar are wracked with terrific pain and must make a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes. A creature takes 4d6 damage from the worms forcing their way out and becomes impaired for 1 hour on a failure, or just takes 2d6 damage on a success. In either case, birthing the worms removes the charmed affliction.

A scholar of medicine with a healer's kit can attempt to remove the mind worm parasites from a host by spending 1 hour working. At the end of this time, the scholar must make an Intellect challenge roll with 3 banes. On a success, the mind worm parasites are successfully extracted and die. On a failure, the host takes 1d6 damage. Infected creatures never willingly allow this to be attempted on them. They always resist such attempts as if they are compelled.

The simpler way to cure the infection is to kill the mind worm that has sway over the charmed creature. This causes the mind worms inside the hosts to wither and die. Although revolting, the worms then pass out of the creature a few days later.

THE GORGING

After drinking the nectar, the infected turn to the food with abandon. They toss back the sheets to reveal heaping plates of raw and half-cooked food piled on top of spoiled and rotten food, remnants from the last feast. It takes an hour for the villagers to clear their plates, at which point their bellies are quite swollen, and they become lethargic and unresponsive.

Characters present for the feast receive their own special dish: a large, seared catfish. Although the outside is blackened, much of the inside of the fish is raw and infested with worms. Characters poisoned by the drink might not notice the worms before taking a bite. Anyone who eats the worms becomes infected. See the Infected Characters sidebar for details.

THE BIRTHING

About an hour after gorging, the townsfolk start swaying in their seats, most barely conscious. Without warning, one of them falls forward and unleashes a forceful blast of blood, waste, and worms the size of garden snakes from his bowels.

Dozens of other villagers join in, each one moaning in ecstasy as they give “birth” to more of the mind worm’s children. The violent nature of these expulsions kills one in five townsfolk.

Within moments, the newborn worms form into 4 worm swarms. If the characters have not been infected, the swarms sense their revulsion and move to engulf them. Most of the villagers are too exhausted from their ordeals to become involved in a fight, but Derwas is not, and he moves to help the young, crying out that the characters must “accept the father’s blessing.”

WORM SWARM

When first birthed from their hosts, mind worms are not particularly dangerous unless consumed, but if many worms are born at the same moment, they instinctively gather into a dangerous swarm. Looking like a writhing mass of blood and waste-covered eels, these pale worms lash out at those not under the parent worm’s direct control.



WORM SWARM

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 frightening monster (swarm)

Perception 13 (+3); truesight

Defense 15; **Health** 45

Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 10 (+0), **Will** 12 (+2)

Speed 6; climber, swimmer

Immune gaining Insanity; blinded, charmed, dazed, deafened, diseased, grabbed, immobilized, poisoned, prone, slowed, stunned

Multitude A swarm takes half damage from attacks that use an attack roll and double damage from effects that require it to make a challenge roll.

Revulsion Creatures that are not swarms are impaired while they remain in the swarm’s space or within 1 yard of it.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Mandibles (melee) +2 with 1 boon (2d6 plus Invasion, or just 1d6 if the swarm is injured)

Invasion A living target must make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, one of the mind worms slithers into the creature’s mouth, attempting to crawl down into its gullet. The creature takes 2d6 extra damage and becomes impaired. An impaired creature (or any creature that can reach it) can use an action to make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane to attempt to pull the worm out. If successful, the worm is removed and immediately dies. At the end of the round, the worm slides into the creature’s stomach, and the creature becomes infected (see Infected Characters).

END OF THE ROUND

Swarming Worms Each creature not a swarm that is in the swarm’s space or within 1 yard must make an Agility challenge roll. On a failure, the creature takes 2d6 damage and becomes slowed for 1 round.

THE PROCESSION

Once the fight against the swarms is over, the townsfolk rise up and drunkenly head toward the old, burned-out shrine along with a few straggler worms that did not manage to form into swarms. Everyone in the procession ignores the characters, even if attacked.

Upon arriving, they line up before the doors from which the great mind worm surges forth. One by one, the people make their way up and suckle upon one of the many tendrils that sprout from the mind worm’s belly, infesting themselves with a new brood of parasites before stumbling home to pass out and begin the cycle all over again.

If the characters are present and hostile, all of the remaining townsfolk move to protect the worm (this is about 30 villagers, of which 20 form together to make a pair of mobs, while the remaining wander about in an aimless stupor, putting up no defense at all). If they instead play along and line up, they can eventually make their way right up to the worm without being stopped or hindered in any way.

MOB OF COMMONERS

DIFFICULTY 10

Size 3 human

Perception 9 (-1)

Defense 10; **Health** 44

Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 9 (-1)

Speed 10

Mob A mob takes half damage from attacks that target individual creatures and double damage from attacks that affect creatures in areas. The mob acts as a single creature, but it counts as 10 creatures for the purpose of choosing targets. A mob makes Strength, Intellect, and Will challenge rolls with 1 boon.

Creatures can move through a mob's space, but they treat the area as difficult terrain. The mob can squeeze through openings large enough to accommodate Size 1 creatures and can move through spaces occupied by creatures of any Size.

Spawn When the mob becomes incapacitated, it dissipates and 1d6 commoners appear in open spaces with the space formerly occupied by the mob. The commoners can take the next available turn.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Clubs (melee) +1 with 2 boons (3d6 or 1d6 if the mob is injured)

END OF THE ROUND

Overwhelm If the mob is not injured, each creature that isn't a swarm or a mob that is in the mob's space or within 1 yard of it must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or take 2d6 damage.

THE MIND WORM

The mind worm is a pale white eel the size of a small horse and coated in a glistening sheen of mucus, fed by the continuous stream pouring from its pincered maw. Tendrils blanket its bulbous belly, like writhing nipples, each leaking milky fluid.

Birthing from the digestive track of a humanoid host, the mind worm gains a limited form of mind control over its "parent." From there, it grows to immense size, implanting its young in other creatures to form a web of mind-controlled thralls. Although intelligent in its own right, the only knowledge a mind worm ever gains is what it learns from its thralls through their senses and memories.

MIND WORM

DIFFICULTY 100

Size 2 horrifying monster

Perception 15 (+5); truesight

Defense 13; **Health** 90

Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 15 (+5), **Will** 14 (+4)

Speed 6; climber, swimmer

Immune gaining Insanity; blinded, charmed, deafened, diseased, poisoned

Lure When the mind worm finishes moving on its turn, each creature charmed by its poison and within medium range of it must move up to half its Speed toward the mind worm.

Slippery Body A creature attempting to grab the mind worm makes the attack roll with 2 banes, and a grabbed mind worm makes attack rolls with 2 boons to escape.

Slave Minds A mind worm can see and hear through the bodies of each creature that has been permanently charmed by it, as long as these creatures are within 10 miles.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Mandible (melee) +3 with 2 boons (2d6 plus Mind Poison)

Mind Poison A living creature must get a success on a Will challenge roll made with 1 bane or gain 1 Insanity and become charmed for a number of rounds equal to its Insanity total. If the target is already charmed by the mind worm, it instead gains 1d3 extra Insanity.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Infest Host The mind worm uses an action to force a tendril into the mouth of one creature it has charmed within its reach and fill it with its eggs. The target creature must make a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes. On a failure, it gains 1d6 Insanity, and the charmed affliction becomes permanent until the creature or the mind worm dies.

Poison Spray The mind worm sprays poison in a 1-yard-wide, 10-yard-long line from a point it can reach. Each creature in the area must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity and then make a Will challenge roll with 1 bane. If the creature gets a failure on the Will roll, it becomes charmed for a number of rounds equal to its Insanity total. If already charmed by the mind worm, the creature gains 1d3 extra Insanity. Once the mind worm uses Poison Spray, it cannot do so again for 1 round.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Compel Mind A mind worm can use an action, or a triggered action on its turn, to cause one creature within 10 miles of it that is charmed by it to become compelled for 1 round.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure ends once the player characters destroy the mind worm, are themselves destroyed by it, or after the characters flee the community. If free from the mind worm's influence, the surviving townsfolk, of which there ought to be few, are likely hopelessly insane and wander away to die in the wilderness. Of course, a few of them might take some of the delicious fish with them from the bay, starting the cycle all over again in a new and unsuspecting community.

