

Delayed Blast Gamemaster

Issue #2



J.B.

For those of you who asked for more
dungeon stupidity, this zine delivers!

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back, gang, to the second issue of *Delayed Blast Gamemaster*! When I started work on the first issue, I was unsure of whether or not anyone would even be interested in the project. Fortunately, 600 project backers showed me that you do enjoy wild and warped resources for your fantasy roleplaying games; the campaign was a success!

Now, as the feedback on the first issue has come in, we step into a second issue and will see what other nonsense hides in the deepest corners of my brain. I'm following the same format as the first issue – no true format and definitely no rules – and I hope that you enjoy this as much as you did that very first issue of the zine.

Will there be a third issue of *Delayed Blast Gamemaster*? At this point, I think we'll have to wait and see what your response is to this second issue. If enough of you have fun with this, I'll try to create #3.

onesix DUNGEON CHARACTERS

The player characters aren't the only ones who like to get dirty in the world's dungeons. These six non-player characters also explore the dungeons of the lands, though what they're doing there is anyone's guess.

To make any of these characters even more entertaining in your campaign, give them a magic item or two. Of course, these odd characters won't hesitate to use their magic items if they are attacked . . .

1 Mad Mage

It can't be a true dungeon crawl unless there's a crazy wizard somewhere in sight, right? When encountered, roll 1d3:

1. The Mad Mage thinks that the party is an army of zombies and attacks, using his staff for melee and casting low-level, offensive spells.
2. He instantly launches the most powerful spell in his arsenal (a fireball?) . . . targeting a spot close enough that he is also caught in the blast.
3. He laughs wildly and charges the group, casting attack spells and swinging his dagger.

He fights to the death.



2 Aggressive Warrior

Equipped with bizarre, heavy gear, the warrior does not attack the group when encountered, but he is threatening and insists that they join him in clearing the dungeon of monsters.

If the party refuses, there's a 50/50 chance that the warrior shrugs and walks away. Otherwise, he attacks and will fight until someone is knocked to 50% of their hits.

If they do join him, they will find that the warrior is a powerful ally in the dungeon. He is strong, fearless, and more interested in murdering monsters than claiming the treasures.



3 Holden Stoneku

This dwarven fighter is over-armed, over-armored, and slow. He has a bit of a Napoleon complex and thinks that if he acts tough and strong, the world will fear him and overlook his height.

Holden can be a loyal companion, but it takes so long to get through his tough act that few know him long enough to become a friend.

When encountered, there's a 75% chance that he will be wounded. If helped, he relaxes a bit and will join the party as they explore the dungeon. He will fight to the death, and it is likely he will die soon. He is too aggressive to live long in this world.



4 Knight of Fire

While he prefers to be known as the "Knight of Fire," Zeb Gannester is far from a knight. Born as a peasant, Gannester has never had formal training as a warrior and, in fact, is unskilled with most weapons.

Months ago, when part of a work-crew clearing a forest, Gannester found the remains of a dead warrior and took the fallen fighter's armor and weapons. The most striking and unusual of the fallen one's weapons was a large, strange firecaster that is activated by touching a small stud on the weapon's handle.

Gannester is in over his head.



5 Alek Donavink

When encountered at a distance, Alek is easily mistaken for an undead warrior. He lifted armor from a devastated skeletal knight and, inspired by the experience, fashioned a helmet that gives him a skeletal appearance.

Alek, if attacked, will try to make it clear that he is human. He will remove his helmet if given the chance, but he isn't against standing up to any assault and fleeing only when absolutely necessary.

If befriended, Alek tells the party that he is in search of a rumored spellbook and asks for assistance. He promises the group they may keep all other found treasures.

6 Oncseamann

This ancient goblinoid stands as tall as a human warrior and is dressed as a ranger, complete with bow and arrows. If the party speaks with him, they hear the tale of a man, Chix Ahops, who was the victim of an evil spellcaster's transformation spell that turned him into the beast he is today.

Ahops asks the party for help. Somewhere in the dungeon, it is rumored, is a magic ring that will break the spell and revert him to his true form. If they help him return to his former self, Ahops becomes a loyal friend and ally who will sacrifice his life to save any one of them. The ranger is of mid-level and talented in battle.





FIVE SIX unwanted TREASURES

If you flip to pp. 10-13 of the first issue of *Delayed Blast Gamemaster*, you will find a table very much like this one. Why is this table here, then? Because I know that you always want more treasures, even trash. I am certain of it!

- 5 A detailed, ornate wooden staff encased in elven steel. The weapon is finely balanced and grants the wielder a bonus to attacks.
- 6 A short length of metal chain, roughly 12" long, that is snapped at one end and has a hook at the other end. An appraisal identifies the chain as part of an ancient necklace; it is worth several gold even in this state of disrepair.
- 7 A small pouch made of cheap cloth and tied tight with twine. It is sharp in places and clearly over-stuffed. Opening the pouch you find the remains of a battered and shattered gemstone; what could have destroyed the gem?
- 8 A bone scroll case that is yellowed with age, stoppered at both ends with wax. Opening the case reveals a tattered, shredded parchment showing the map to a cavern identified only as the "Cave of Eyes."



- 9 A metal helmet, painted red and white and slightly battered where a hammer or club struck the side. Dried blood inside the helmet tells the story, though what the runes engraved on the back of the helm mean is unknown. A mystic protection that failed? A curse? A warning?
- 10 Strands of spider webbing woven together. Eight teeth from goblins, orcs, and hobgoblins hang from the necklace, each one polished shiny and clean.
- 11 Heavy robes, crafted from the leathery hide of a minotaur and decorated with detailed embroidered patterns of stars and moons. The minotaur fur was completely stripped from the hide, and the robes were dyed a blood red.
- 12 A sealed glass jar filled with raisins. Opening the jar unleashes a foul stench that sickens those with a weak stomach. The raisins may have been good once, but they're a disgusting treat today and not a recommended snack.
- 13 The shriveled, mummified hand of a yeti, the hair yellowed with age. When found, the hand is clutching the remains of a broken dagger (the blade is snapped off). Neither item is magical, though some believe that the hand is a good luck charm and will pay to possess it.
- 14 A small book with metal covers and pages made of thick parchment. Half of the pages are blank, the other half – written in a common script – are the incomplete memoirs of halfling merchant who, if the text is to be believed, was quite a lover and warrior.
- 15 A battered and beaten rag doll, fashioned in the shape of a goblin wearing robes and missing an eye.

- 16** A brass candlesnuffer in the shape of a dragon. The tail serves as the handle and the sculpted head's open mouth extinguishes the candle's flame.
- 17** An oversized hourglass, roughly 3' tall and weighing hundreds of pounds. The design is plain, almost simplistic, and the hourglass has effectively no value because it is so unwieldy.
- 18** This small, wooden chest is a few feet across and finely-crafted with detailed images of spiders carved directly into the sides and lid of the chest. The chest is locked when found; it will have to be either broken open or the lock picked. Inside? Dozens of flat stones, each with a spider painted on one side.
- 19** A life-size model of a shield, constructed of dozens of sheets of parchment that are held together simply by careful folds.
- 20** This pair of leather boots looks to have never been worn. They are masterful in design and artistry (a spiderweb pattern decorates the surface), crafted by an expert who clearly spent a lot of time on the details.
- 21** A scrap of cheap leather folded over and over again. Unfolding the leather reveals 13 black candles, each the length of a human index finger.
- 22** Two blue crystals, each weighing roughly one pound and 6" in length. The crystals shimmer bright blue when in the presence of arcane powers, though they have no use beyond this ability to detect magic. There is a 10% chance each time they glow that the detection power will never work again.
- 23** This silver ring has no decoration and looks very plain. Inscribed inside the ring are elven runes that read "For she who saved my life." The ring has no special abilities and is worth only whatever the silver used in its construction may be worth to a buyer.



- 24 An envelope, sealed with wax, and bearing the seal of a long-dead nobleman. If opened, the document inside is simply a list of demands from a petulant nobleman to his dying mother, insisting that all of her possessions become his when she dies.
- 25 Two matching swords. The weapons are perfectly balanced, sharpened by a master, and easily worth twice the value of a standard sword. There are no markings on either one.
- 26 A deck of traditional cards, each one painted by an amateur artist. The painted backs are so poorly done that every card is effectively a marked card.
- 27 An empty wineskin. Someone has painted the image of a green dragon on one side of the item; the other side is unadorned.
- 28 A small coin purse . . . the gash through one side, clearly made by a dagger, tells the rest of the tale. If the party examines the item closely, they find a scrap of paper inside with a single name written on it – Gral Springcut – and the name of a nearby village. There is no other information on the paper.
- 29 A pair of cheap leather gloves with a twist: The palm of each glove is covered in a metal plate and several small, fine needles. Anyone shaking the hands of the wearer of these gloves would be in extreme pain in seconds. And is that the residue of a contact poison on the needles?
- 30 A small vial, solid black in color and stoppered with wax. If opened, the vial spews forth an inky cloud that blinds everyone within 20-feet. If a thief or assassin finds the vial, they have a 25% chance of recognizing it and understanding how it is best used: Throw the vial, which breaks and unleashes the darkness. The cloud lingers for 3d6+5 rounds.





ONEDEIGHT DUNGEON ODDITIES

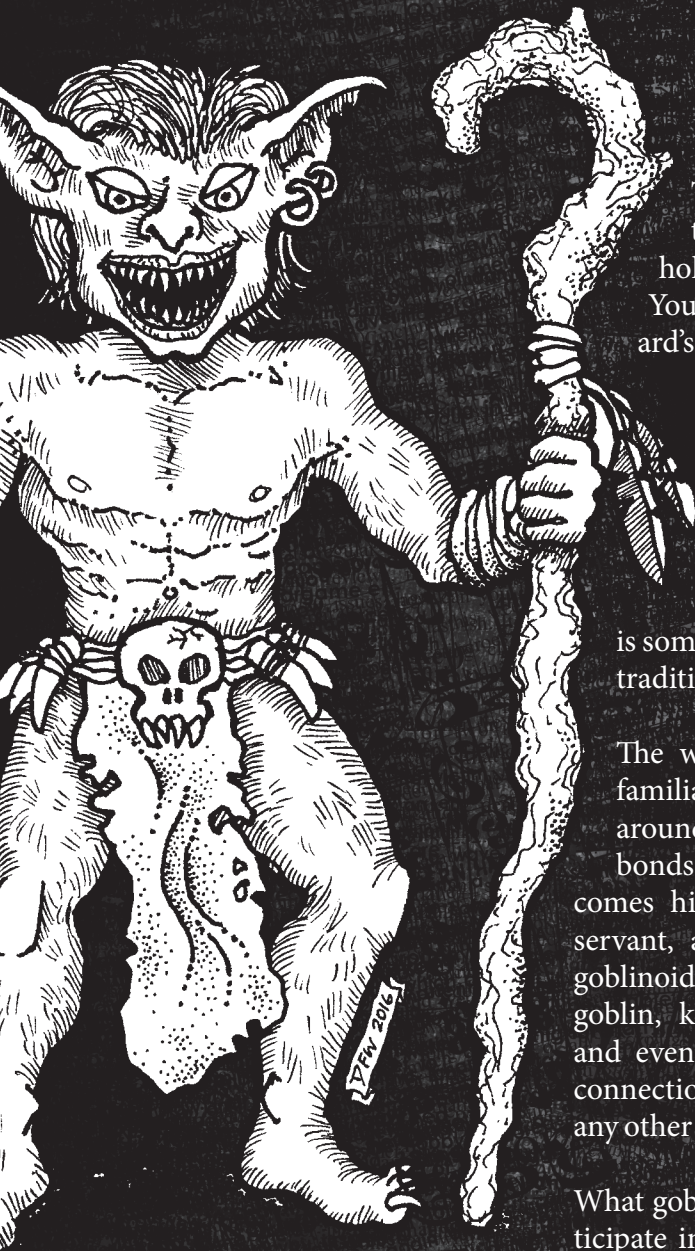
One of the earliest sections that I wrote for the first issue of Delayed Blast Gamemaster was the ONEDEIGHT DUNGEON ODDITIES found on pp. 14 to 23 of the zine. Those warped creatures were a pleasure to write, so I am back with another batch of oddities to keep your dungeons unexpectedly strange.

As with the first issue, the monsters described here were inspired by some of the creatures that are found in a variety of different roleplaying games and RPG adventures.

A book of monsters is a great thing and one that will spark the imagination, with the better-crafted beasts giving game-masters instant ideas for encounters and leading to concepts for dungeon designs that take advantage of the newly-discovered monsters' special features.

All of the creatures that follow exist for one reason: To cause your player characters pain, trouble, and, at times, force them to think of monsters in new ways. If a monster isn't slowing the party down in some way, then it isn't doing its job.

And never forget: If the adventurers are finding any encounter too easy, there's nothing stopping you from having any one of the characters described on pp. 2-5 from stumbling onto the scene and complicating things.



1 Wizard's Goblinoid

This one is tough to explain, gang, so hold onto your tankard. You've heard of the wizard's familiar, yes, a rodent or bird that acts as the mage's eyes and ears and is generally an annoyance to everyone but its master? Well, it turns out that there is something far worse than a traditional familiar.

The wizard's goblinoid is a familiar of sorts. This time around, though, the wizard bonds to a goblin who becomes his trusted companion, servant, and spy. The wizard's goblinoid has the abilities of a goblin, knows a few cantrips, and even has the same arcane connection to its master just as any other beastie familiar would.

What goblin would elect to participate in this bizarre relationship? Only one so mentally dis-

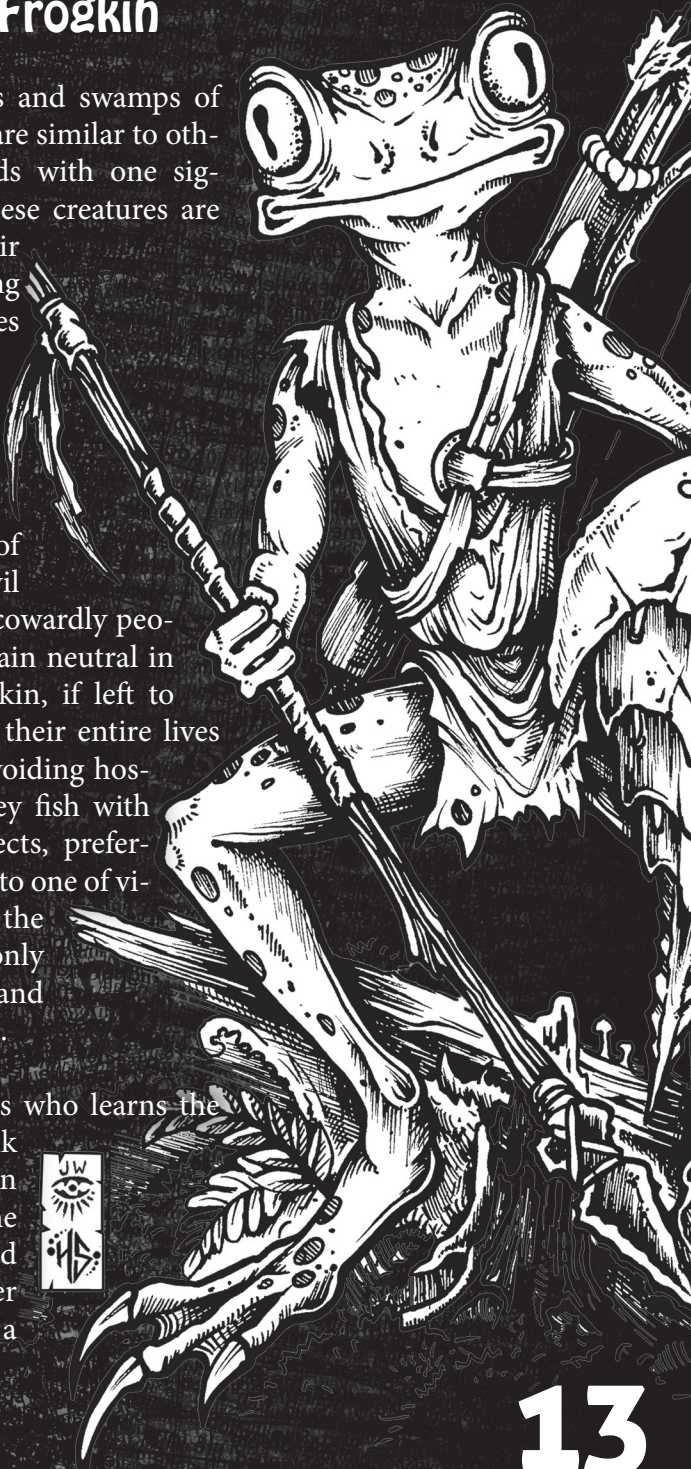
turbed as to find the connection an enjoyable experience. Goblins are an odd bunch on the best of days, but one that would submit completely to serve as a wizard's familiar is a strange creature and one you're better off avoiding. And as for the wizard who would choose a goblin as a familiar? Yeah, that's one wicked and evil mage. Kill 'em both and improve the world for us all.

2 Sinister Frogkin

Living in the marshes and swamps of the lands, the frogkin are similar to other frog-like humanoids with one significant difference: These creatures are more civilized than their distant relatives, living in mud and stick homes built along the edges of waterways, always hidden from view.

The sinister frogkin, named such because of the rumors of their evil society, are actually a cowardly people who prefer to remain neutral in all conflicts. The frogkin, if left to their desires, will live their entire lives raising families and avoiding hostility and conflict. They fish with spears and breed insects, preferring a life of simplicity to one of violence. If confronted, the frogkin flee, fighting only when their homes and families are threatened.

A party of adventurers who learns the true nature of these folk and befriends a frogkin village will find that the creatures are loyal and always willing to offer food and shelter to a friend.



3 Skeletal Horror

It looks like any other animated skeleton warrior. Bones. A sword. Chattering teeth. Eyeless sockets that still somehow manage to stare through your soul. The only clue that the skeletal horror is something more than the everyday skeleton is the creature's blue bones; rather than a white or yellowed white frame, the skeletal horror's bones are a steel blue in color; from a distance, the monster almost looks like it is constructed of metal.

This undead opponent is stronger than an average skeleton and possesses the masterful swordsmanship that it learned in life. An undead "muscle memory" in a creature without flesh and blood? No. The necromancer who raises a skeletal horror from the grave brings with it the spirit of its former life; rather than a mindless monster, the skeletal horror is more ghost with a physical form than it is an obedient skeleton. The undead monster is a willing partner of the necromancer and intent on completing some previous life goal.





4 Goblinoid Bearbeast

Standing taller than many human men, and much broader than many warriors, the goblinoid bearbeast is an arcane travesty in experimentation that should have never happened. And what makes it even worse is that the experiments were conducted only a few years ago. A wizard (with no limits on his evil dreams) used ancient sorcery to meld the bodies of goblins, hobgoblins, bears, and other sentient as well as animalistic creatures into the goblinoid bearbeast.

Fortunately, the creatures are incapable of breeding – an unexpected side-effect of the magic that created them – so their numbers are dropping as the creatures wander the world and encounter resistance. They are intelligent, though, and powerful fighters, and the dozen or so who survive are now seeking assistance to extend their species. Will the party fight them . . . or help them?

5 Wiggle Cube



At first glance, it looks like an oddly-colored and slightly unusual gelatinous cube. The orange blob, unnaturally squarish in shape, moves slowly toward you and your companions. You've no doubt heard the tales of the gelatinous cube, but you're not prepared for the terror of the wiggle cube.

A wiggle cube is more powerful than its gelatinous cousin, but what makes these sliming hazards more terrifying isn't their strength. No, the scariest part of a wiggle cube is that these slimes have developed a limited sense of awareness and intelligence. Rather than mindlessly stripping the dungeon of sustenance, the wiggle cube is purposefully exploring its lair, forging partnerships with other slimes and oozes; the creature can assume control of brainless slimes and oozes and direct them as if they were extensions of its own body. The creature is, thankfully, very rare and encountering one is a once-in-a-lifetime event.





6 Undying Anger

Often mistaken for a wraith, the undying anger is a ghostly undead creature that comes into existence only when a human male dies while consumed with boundless rage. Evil warriors felled in battle are those most likely to return as an undying anger . . . though it is fortunate that the monsters only return to the world 5d6 years after their physical death. And even then, the creature does not return where it died: Roll 2d12 to determine the number of miles from the site of death that the undying anger first appears after it returns to our world.

The undying anger has none of its former memories and wants nothing more than to destroy property and murder the living. The creature's touch causes physical pain and can weaken, and someone touched by the beast too many times can die. To defeat the undying anger, only enchanted and silver weapons can cause it damage. To banish the beast, a holy warrior must successfully turn the monster using his god's might.



7 Gnashing Rock Beast

A mobile and living stalagmite that makes its home in caverns and caves, this animate speleothem is similar in appearance to more common dungeon monsters that the party may have encountered in the past.

What makes the gnashing rock beast different from its close cousins? The monster is an undead creature as evil as the necromancer that fused the stalagmite with the powers of undeath.

To create the beast, an evil mage must tap into the dark energies of the negative planes of existence and then – in a ritual that requires several hours during a moonless night – force that power into a rocky formation. If successful, the result is the gnashing rock beast that exists for one reason: Spread the fear of the undead.

The creature ambles through the caverns and

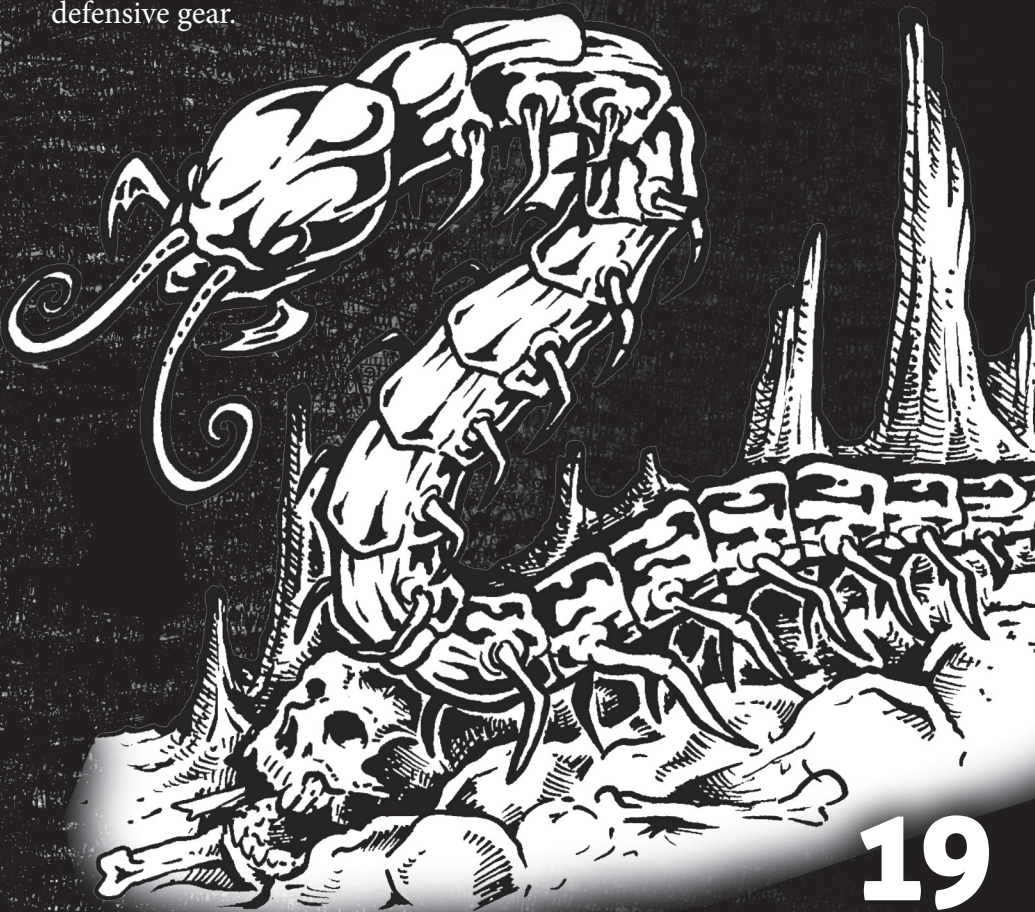
dungeons where it was created, seeking out the living to capture and eat. It serves no other purpose.

8 Giant Armoredpede

A twisted evolutionary branch of the giant centipede family tree, the giant armoredpede ranges in size from roughly 8-feet to 30-feet long. It is unusual to encounter the insectoid creature anywhere but the deepest of natural caverns, which is a good thing since the monster is territorial and will fight to defend its home.

In battle, the creature strikes with its poisonous bite, with every successful hit injecting a small amount of the monster's poison into the target. After $2d4+2$ successful bites, the beast's opponent must resist the accumulated poison or collapse into unconsciousness.

Armor and shields crafted from the hide of the beast are prized possessions. Although not magical, they are still tougher than most normal defensive gear.





TWOFOUR memorable Weapons

One of the things I never understood when I was a kid: All of those polearms in the *Unearthed Arcana* book. What was that about? Did we really need that many variants on “stick with pointy bit?” I guess so, because here are some weapons for you to enjoy.

Personally, I don’t enjoy long lists of weapons. I’d much rather have a weapon list in an RPG that lists a single sword – two at most, if we must have a two-handed sword – rather than the multitude of different types of swords that we encounter in so many games’ equipment lists.

Now when a game decides to elaborate a bit on each weapon, making them unique in some way, then I get excited.

2 Guardian’s Axe



A powerful weapon, this two-handed axe was originally owned by Heralak Tammand, the personal bodyguard of a human spellcaster who was known only as the “Starmage.” Tammand was a loyal companion of the mage, and the Starmage rewarded his bodyguard by ensorcelling Tammand’s weapon . . . this axe.

The axe has a magical bonus to damage and, whenever a critical is rolled, the axe inflicts lightning damage.



3 Bloodmemory

This longsword is made of a strange, foreign metal that none of your companions recognizes. If you find an expert in history (or metallurgy), you learn that the metal is known as bloodsteel and was crafted centuries ago by a long-dead demonic warrior.

Bloodmemory is a magical weapon with a single ability: The weapon never forgets those it has cut. If brought within 10' of someone who has been wounded by the sword before, the blade glows a dull red and emits a low hum. These effects continue even if the subject is dead.

4 Grayjaw's Flail

The thief Grayjaw, murdered years ago when his luck ran out after stealing from the wrong innkeeper, owned this flail for several seasons before selling it to a friend. It is known as Grayjaw's flail only because the thief carved his name in the weapon's wooden staff.

Rumor has it that Grayjaw was a master with the weapon, capable of killing powerful fighters who were beyond his skill. Those who investigate the rumor will soon learn that this is a lie; Grayjaw carried the weapon for show only and never used it in a fight. (He was a coward.)



5 Heartlimb's Bow

This bow once belonged to the elven ranger Heartlimb Windrace, dead for decades, who used it in his battle against the orc raiders of the western forests.

The bow is a magic item of great power, granting a bonus to hits and damage against all goblinoid creatures. If the matching quiver is also discovered, the owner will soon learn that the quiver also increases the damage of any arrows carried within it for more than a month.



6 Sanctified Hammer

This two-handed warhammer has been marked with the holy symbol of the god of destruction, making it a fitting weapon for his clerics and worshippers. The weapon is not in any way magic, but a cleric of the god of destruction who uses this hammer does not need to also carry a holy symbol; the hammer itself counts as a holy symbol and is all that the cleric needs in order to channel the god's power and cast clerical spells.

Additionally, those who oppose the god of destruction and his followers who attempt to use this weapon in battle are instantly burned by the holy might of the god. The weapon inflicts 1d6 hits of damage every round to an opposing follower or cleric.

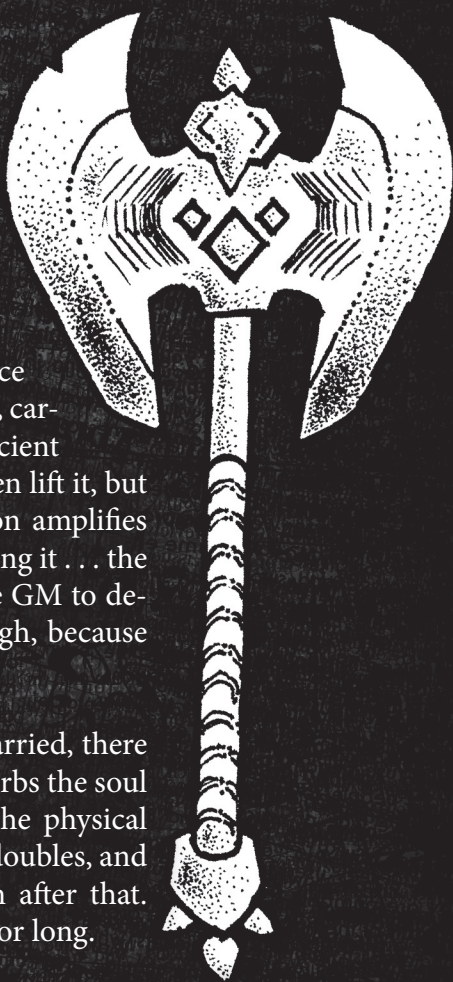
In battle, the weapon is treated as a standard two-handed warhammer and has no special combat benefits.

7 Waraxe of Demonic Strength

Though it isn't advisable to truck with demons, this magical waraxe is one that many warriors, regardless of their beliefs, would be happy to carry into a fight.

The weapon was forged in the furnace of a hellish otherworld and, it is said, carried by the Demon Princes of the ancient past. It requires a strong hand to even lift it, but once successfully raised, the weapon amplifies the strength of the wielder by boosting it . . . the extra bonus to strength is left to the GM to decide. It should be memorable, though, because the weapon also carries a cost.

For every week that the waraxe is carried, there is a 2% chance that the weapon absorbs the soul of the warrior and instantly kills the physical form. After six months, the chance doubles, and then it doubles again every month after that. Few successfully carry the weapon for long.



8 The Assassin's Heartless Dagger

This normal-looking dagger carries with it a terrible secret and a powerful, unavoidable curse. The weapon was crafted for a long-dead assassin who, it is said, wished that when he died, his soul would be forever grafted to the dagger's blade.

The assassin's wish was granted.

Even worse, the weapon is now cursed and anyone who kills with this dagger, if they are not forgiven by a good-aligned cleric, will also lose their soul to the blade when they die.

one eighth adventure HOOKS

1 Escape!

You shake the sleep from your eyes and stare in shock at your surroundings. When you and the party set camp last night, you were somewhere in the wilderness far from civilization. Now, for reasons you cannot explain, you're waking in a jail cell.

Your clothes are in place, but your gear – including weapons and armor – are missing. You're in a cell with a single cot on the floor. You can hear the other members of your party in nearby cells.



You and your companions were discovered in the night by a wicked warrior and his warband. They used sleeping spells to knock your watch asleep, and then cast the same spell on all of you to guarantee that you would remain sound asleep for several hours.

Over the first few hours after waking, you discover that you have been captured by Har Kodz, a warband leader known for his ruthlessness and desire for gold. As the day continues, you overhear enough from the various guards who come in and out of the cellblock to learn that your gear is in a storage room one floor above the cells. By afternoon, you've mapped out the guards' movements enough that you and your companions have a plan: when a guard is close to one of your cells, you will take a stab at snatching a key and freeing yourselves. Then, if all goes according to plan, you will overpower the guard and find your gear. Then? Escape!

2 In The Dead Of Night

You hear their footsteps, snapping awake despite their attempt at a stealthy approach. Being careful to avoid their notice, you roll to one side and peer into the darkness. Gnolls and kobolds, possibly as many as a dozen total in the group, are making their way to your and your companions. Gripping your sword tight, pulling it closer to you, you prepare to sound the alarm and raise your arms in defense of you and your friends.



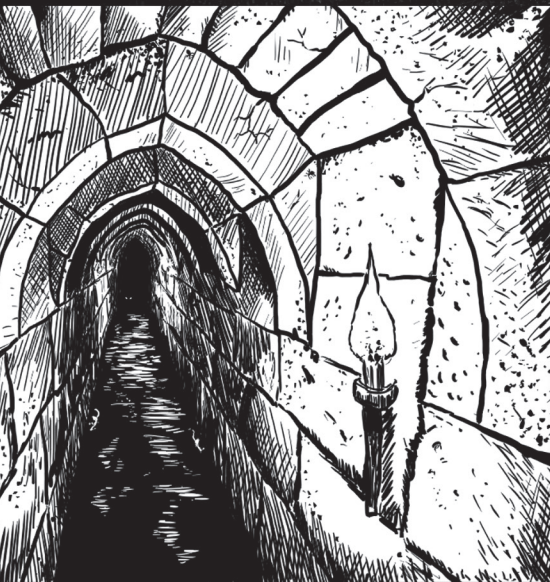
This works best far from society, though the GM may also spring this incident in even the most luxurious of inns; you don't want to know what these bandits did to the innkeeper and his staff.

The invaders, ready to murder sleeping adventurers, are taken completely by surprise when their stealth attack fizzles. The beasts are unwilling to fight to the death, though they will continue the battle if their numbers hold and none of them are reduced by more than 10% of their hit totals in the first engagement.

Nearby, several more of their kind are waiting and will join the battle after 2d4 rounds. As soon as three or more of their number are killed, though, the group begins to retreat.

They're a party of raiders in search of magic items to sell to an evil wizard who lives somewhere known as the "Cave of Eyes." If one of the gnolls or kobolds does manage to capture a magic item, he and a few of his companions separate from the main group and make a run for it.

If the party defeats their enemies and captures any alive, a bit of interrogation may be in order. Just where is this cave?



3 The Endless Passageway

When exploring a dungeon complex, you come across an unexpected passageway that stretches and stretches for as far as you can see. The hall is lined with torches, glowing dimly in the subterranean lair, and something unnatural and chilling both makes you wish to turn back and go deeper, all at the same time. What lies at the end of such a strange and seemingly neverending passage?

If you cast detection spells, everything comes back negative. There is no overwhelming sense of evil, no sign of arcane enchantments, and no aura that explains the bizarre feeling that you and your companions sense when you discover this unusual passageway.

After five minutes of walking down the passageway, even if you constantly look back every few steps, you suddenly find that the way behind stretches as far as the way forward. Whatever strange sorcery is causing this to happen evades even your most powerful detection spells. And if you were smart enough to leave your friends behind, they vanish from sight . . . and they can no longer see you.

The passageway is a dimensional anomaly, powered by cosmic forces that known spells cannot detect. The only way to escape the passageway is to go forward. After ten minutes of walking, there is a 20% chance of detecting a mirror duplicate of you and everything you have on you. (If the entire party is with you, their duplicates are also here).

Despite your best efforts, your cosmic doppelgangers attack and will not stop until you are dead . . . or until you defeat them. Once a copy – or the original! – is slain, that individual escapes the passageway.

4 A Night at the Inn of Misenchantment

Entering the town late, very late, you and your companions select the first inn you spot and enter to ask for a room. The inn is a smallish one in size, with only a handful of guests engaged in laughter and chatter in the common room. The guests and innkeeper look your group over quickly and welcome you, calling out for you to join in their talks and they offer food and drink (all at a price, of course).



The Flying Shield, the inn that you have settled into for the night, is one that has changed hands many times over the past few years. As you engage in conversation with the guests, you hear tale after tale of previous owners who died in unusual ways. Eaten by a swarm of beetles. Crushed under a falling chest of wizardly gear. A lightning strike from the heavens. Throughout the discussion, you notice the innkeeper smiling, clearly amused by the stories and seemingly not concerned by the obvious curse that consumes the inn.

After you turn in for the night, in a room with a sturdy door and strong lock, you hear voices in the hall arguing. You may ignore the situation, choosing sleep over the annoyance of others, or you may investigate. If you overhear the people – the innkeeper and a commoner who was involved in the earlier discussions – you soon learn the secret of the inn: The two are sorcerers who have been staging death after death, each one an illusion, attempts to give the inn a reputation that they hope will bring in curious guests.

The two are arguing about whether or not it is time to stage another “death” at the inn. If caught, there is a 50% chance that they try to bribe you to stay silent. There’s also a 50% chance that they try to silence you . . . by killing you.



5 Grizzled Warrior Questioning His Career

At an inn, you encounter a warrior who is a few too many drinks into the evening. He tells of his past exploits – exploring ancient tombs, dark of night encounters with the undead, facing down wicked spellcasters – the warrior has done it all. Surprisingly, the man also regrets everything and wishes that he had instead settled down decades ago.

Those who listen closely to the warrior's tales will catch scraps of information that, if accurate, may lead to riches. Roll 1d4:

1. *"It was twelve winters ago that I last saw the shield. We were exploring the ruins of Tower Gorvenal when a hobgoblin prince murdered the tower's master and slipped away with the Shield of Dimensions. You've not heard of the shield? It's a powerful artifact that opens gates to other planes. If I had that shield, my life would have been much richer."*

2. *"We were several days' march from the coast when the giant surprised us. Several members of our party were killed in the first blows; the giant's warhammer destroyed us. I managed to escape, and the last I saw of the giant he was collecting the possessions of the defeated."*

3. *"While others will call me crazy, I swear that the cellar of this very inn connects to the ancient dwarf city of Stonehome. This inn. Or maybe it was the inn at Troll's Rest. Whatever. Stonehome was untouched when I last left it; riches waiting for those who kill the skeletons, spiders, and rats."*

4. *"If the rising waters had not chased us from the dungeon, I would have owned that glowing sword. Which sword? The sword that Zezdithuk had been using for the months we were together. I saw the sword light with blue flames when goblins were near. Which dungeon? That cavern near Half-Eye's gang."*

6 Alley of Many Doors

Every city is one of doors. Doors to the homes. Doors to the shops. Even the gates of the city are doors of a sort. This alley, one of several in the city, looks near-identical to so many others that most who walk the pathway do not notice that all of the doors are . . . different. One who takes the time to look closely at each door soon notices a sigil, a wizard's mark that decorates each one of the doors. Why are the doors so marked, and where does each one lead?



The alley is part of a near-invisible route connecting locales throughout the world. A “wizards’ superhighway,” in some ways, every doorway in this particular alley leads to two separate places: One, to the building as it exists and the second, the secret door activated only by those with the proper password, to another city or town, a tower, a dungeon, or any one of 29 different places (one for each doorway).

Few know the secret of the alley, and fewer still know the passcode to activate the doors. Worse still, some of the owners have started to suspect that their shops and homes are being used in some nefarious way; there is a 4 in 6 chance that any one door will be locked when tried. Unfortunately for those who use the secret network, the gate forever collapses if the physical door is broken or the lock shattered.

If the party learns the password to the doorways, they’ll quickly discover similar locations . . . and that every point on the superhighway requires a different password to activate the portals. Knowing only the secret to the doors in this alley is a certain one-way trip to somewhere that the party may not wish to visit for long.

And following someone through a doorway could be a dangerous course of action. What if those at the destination are hostile to the adventurers?



7 Aggressive Hunting Party

The people of the village report werewolves in the area. Nightly, they claim, they can hear the howls and growls of the wolf-men outside, in the forest, even on the nights when the moon is hidden behind thick clouds. They are scared, feel threatened, and plead with the adventurers to clear the nearby woods of the evil werewolves. What is active in the night that has the villagers so very afraid that they will spend gold to hire the party?

As the characters no doubt suspect, it is not werewolves that are making the unholy noises at night. A group of huntsmen, 10+2d6 in total, from a nearby competing village are raiding the forests and fields at night in an attempt to capture as much game as possible. Their plan is to strip the surrounding land of animals so that, once winter comes, the unsuspecting villagers must pay to survive.

If the party of adventurers confronts the huntsmen at night, the competing villagers put up a fight. They are accomplished hunters, sure, but none of them are true warriors and they do not have any spellcasters in their group. For those reasons, the player characters could easily overpower and slaughter the huntsmen, but we can hope that the party will quickly realize what is happening and exercise some restraint.

How can the adventurers make the situation better for everyone? Will they negotiate a truce between the two villages and help them to form an agreement on hunting the grounds between the two peoples? No doubt, the player characters will do what is right and good to help both groups, yes? At least, that is what I would like to see.

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As the GM, your words can help guide the party. If the huntsmen are talkative and open to discussions, that will lead to a more friendly encounter than if the hunters chose battle.

8 A Sleepless Slumber

While the rest of your party takes turns on watch, giving everyone a chance for a touch of sleep before the next day, you're unable to close your eyes. Every animal, insect, and breeze keeps your mind racing in nervous anticipation. What has you so wired and worried? Is tomorrow one of death and pain? You and the group plan to step into the dungeon in the morning, but you've explored dungeons before. What makes this one any different?



As the GM, it is your responsibility to entertain the players, but what if you were to twist things around and surprise a player with an unexpected duty: Your turn as gamemaster, friend!

Each player rolls 3d6, with the highest roller now the temporary game-master for this session. The GM should take control of the player's character, though being careful to roleplay the character as much like the original player would as possible. The GM should also act as a co-GM, assisting the now-you're-the-GM during the session.

This works best for a session that is planned as a relatively standard dungeon crawl with some combats, treasures, and no serious plot twists or campaign developments.

The most important thing is that the group be supportive and encouraging of the now-you're-the-GM throughout the session. Provide advice. Provide solutions. Don't overwhelm the GM with . . . well, you know how some players can get.

This is an opportunity to give a player a chance at the GM's seat and, maybe, inspire a player to shift from a participant in future games to a full-fledged instigator: A Gamemaster.

ONESIX GUARDS

Every fantasy adventure I've ever participated in where the party entered a city, the town watch usually ignores the adventurers until the party is causing trouble.

Just think about it, those city guards were doing just fine dealing with the peasants and occasional thief . . . up until the party mage fireballed a local tavern because of some unkind word by a local.

1 Friendly Guard. Always looking for the best in people, the friendly guard starts every engagement doing his best to befriend others. He is slow to react, but once he determines that you are a threat to the people and city, he does not hesitate to take action to protect the citizens and their belongings.



2 Hero Guard. How this one chose a life as a member of the town watch instead of as an adventurer is a mystery that will never be solved. The hero guard wants only one thing: To be seen as a strong, powerful watchman who will do everything in his power to save the lives of the innocent.

3 Corrupt Guard. She is kind and gentle on the outside, but once in the darkest alley of the city, the corrupt guard is intent on only one thing: improving her position in life. The corrupt guard will take coin to let anything slide, including murder, and the only time that she will pass on a bribe is when there are witnesses.

4 Rookie Guard. He is green, inexperienced, and could be a danger to his fellow watchfolk. The rookie guard has only been on the streets for a few months and is not yet prepared for the dangers of the city. Fortunately, a rookie guard is never sent out alone; there is always at least one experienced guard sent along to keep the rookie out of trouble and show him the streets.

5 Mage Guard. When an apprentice fails and is no longer under the hand of a wizard, they sometimes join the watch where they are taught a few minor spells. The mage guard cannot go up against an accomplished spellcaster, but he knows a few cantrips that benefit him and his fellow guardsfolk.

6 Angry Guard. Some are just constantly ill-tempered and angry, and that includes this guard. She has lived a rough, terrible life, and even those she serves with say they've not seen a day when she wasn't angry. That anger means no one catches a break when they do wrong.



onedSIX GOBLINS

Goblins make a wonderful opponent for the beginning adventurer. They are quick, can be devastating in groups, and force the party to think . . . kinda. But rather than keep throwing the same generic goblin at your players time after time, how about we look at a few ways to make the goblin a little more unusual?

The trick with a table like this one is to use it so rarely that it is basically never used. Overuse of the “hey, look at these odd goblins!” table will make all of the goblins simply more of the same.

If you use one of the goblins on this table once in a dozen sessions, that may be too many times.



1 Goblin Mage. Scale the goblin mage's power to that of the party, giving the creature whatever spells you feel will cause the player characters the most trouble. A goblin mage is usually accompanied by 2d6 goblins, each of which is doing its best not to anger the ill-tempered mage. To make the goblin mage even more annoying, give him a few attack spell scrolls.

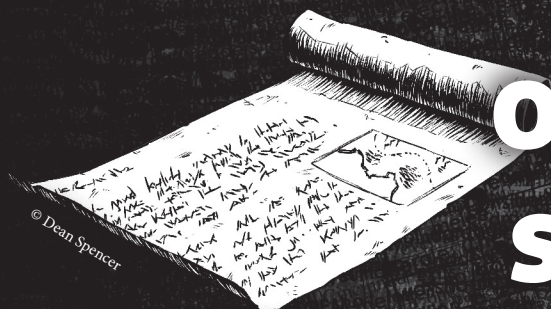
2 Goblin Peddler. The peddler is rarely encountered as part of a group, instead traveling the lands and trading goods with others. The goblin king does not forgive those who come between the peddler's duty – collect riches and coins – and the king's coffers.

3 Goblin Enforcer. A few inches taller and several pounds heavier than the average goblin, the enforcer is goblin muscle that serves the goblin king's will. The enforcer isn't afraid to get dirty and is willing to travel for weeks to deal with those the king has singled out for punishment. If you encounter an enforcer as party of a goblin warband, you've likely done something to anger their king.

4 Goblin Shieldwall. Surprisingly, even bigger and heavier than the enforcer, the shieldwall is a defensive master equipped with a spiked shield and a spear. The goblin shieldwall's primary purpose in battle is to drop to one knee at the front of the battle and provide goblin archers with cover. The spear is a stabby way to keep opponents away.

5 Goblin Shrike. Thin, light, wearing leather, and wielding dual daggers or short swords, the goblin shrike is a graceful warrior that is most dangerous when operating alone. Many shrikes serve the goblin king as thieves and assassins, sneaking into the human, elf, and dwarf cities and moving from shadow to shadow in an effort to remain hidden from view. If confronted, the shrike fights smart and does his best to escape. A goblin shrike will always choose flight over death.

6 Goblin Destroyator. Perhaps the ultimate in goblin warriors, the destroyator is as tall as a shieldwall and dressed in heavy armor. The goblin carries a hammer or axe, prefers to go without a shield, and isn't afraid to take a hit. The destroyator's lumbering gait disguises the monster's skill in battle; destroyators are often as talented in the art of war as many human fighters.



one six magic SCROLLS

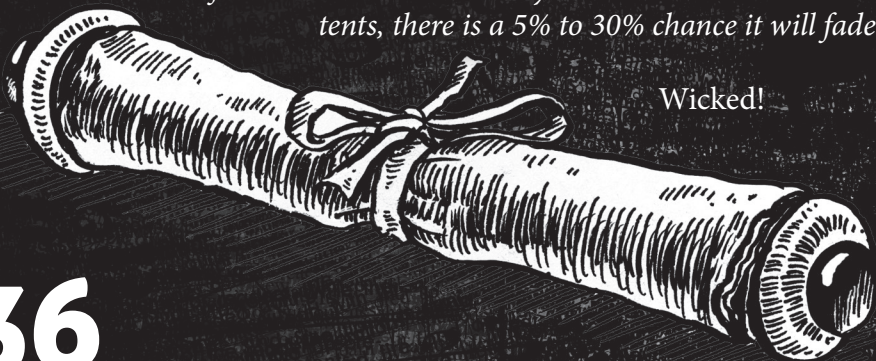
Consumed when cast, scrolls are an easy way to amplify the firepower of your favorite spellcaster without giving them permanent access to a spell. You say that your game system allows casters to copy spells from a scroll into a spellbook? Not if you don't want to allow it. You're the GM!

As a kid, when I first started gaming, I never quite understood why anyone would be excited to find a scroll after defeating monsters. A piece of paper, often in a wooden or bone case, wasn't anywhere near as awesome as finding a magic sword. It wasn't until after years of play that I started to understand: Scrolls can be fun! A wizard may have, back in my day, only had a few spells at the lower levels, but give that wizard a few scrolls and everything gets crazy!

Additionally, it was the release of the second edition *Dungeon Master's Guide* that changed my opinion on scrolls with this simple statement:

"If a scroll isn't immediately read to determine its contents, there is a 5% to 30% chance it will fade."

Wicked!





Asher's Gentle Words of Death

Soft spoken. Gentle. Unassuming. These are the words that best describe Asher the Mild, a wizard who is best known for his willingness to turn the other cheek.

The wizard created this low-level spell early in his career, infusing his soft voice with the power to harm others. For a single round after it is cast, any words the caster directs at a target within whispering range act as thrown daggers; each word inflicts damage as if the target had been struck by a dagger.

The caster may speak 2d6 words to the target, and there is a 50% chance per word of the subject hearing the word clearly enough to be struck by the assault.

2 Soulsinge

This is a higher-powered spell that may only be cast by mages with 10+ years of experience.

When cast, the mage must roll 1d6; on an even roll, the spell affects two targets while on an odd roll it affects three targets.

The spell has a range of 20 feet. Rather than causing physical damage, each affected target suffers 1d6 points of soul damage. Assign the target a number of tokens equal to the damage rolled.

For the rest of its life, whenever the affected target enters a holy site, it automatically subtracts one of these tokens and suffers 1d8+2 hits of damage. There is no known counter to this wicked spell.

3 Starsigns

This spell may be cast by any arcane practitioner, regardless of experience, though there is a chance of failure if the spellcaster has fewer than two years of experience as an adventuring wizard or mage.

Starsigns is a communication spell, designed to transmit a few dozen words as a celestial event in the blackest hours of night. When cast, the mage thinks of a target and then regardless of the distance (even stretching across dimensions) the subject sees and understands the message in the night stars. That is, if the target is looking to the heavens in the exact moment that the spell is cast.

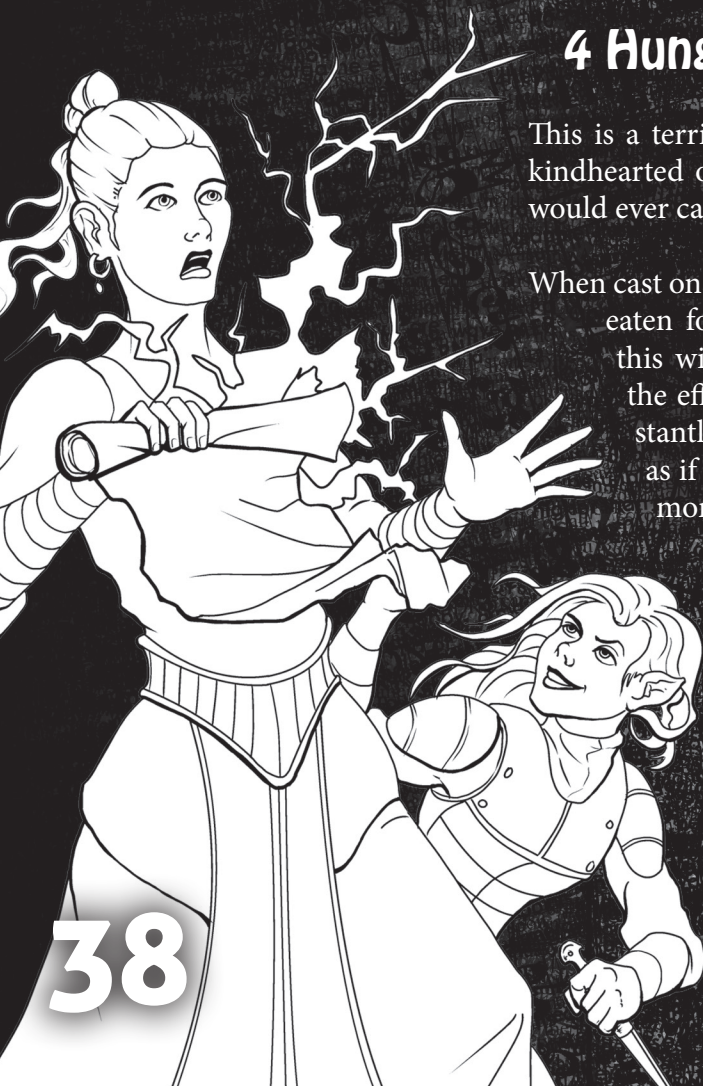
4 Hunger's Wrath

This is a terrible, evil spell and no kindhearted or good-aligned mage would ever cast it.

When cast on someone who has not eaten for more than a week, this wicked spell accelerates the effects of starvation, instantly impacting the target as if he had not eaten for a month.

Casting this spell on a target a second time within an hour of the first assault instantly kills the subject.

There is a 5% chance the spell will backfire and harm the caster.



5 Ooze Goblin's Armored Form

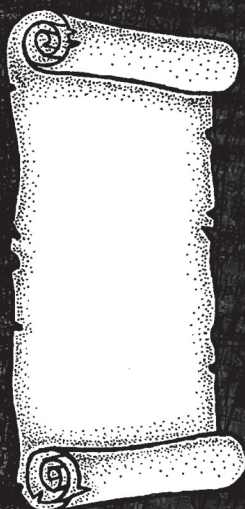
When a drunken wizard set out to create an intelligent ooze, there was no way that he could have known how many other arcane spellcasters would see the result and say: "I can build on that idea."

This powerful spell transforms the subject into an ooze goblin, a twisted kind of slime or ooze that has a bipedal shape and is capable of carrying weapons.

The spell's target is recognizable to its friends, though it is now a twisted monster that rapidly forgets its previous life.

The spell lasts for 5d6 minutes, during which time the subject is 100% a beast and not itself.

You say that your friend has been morphed into an ooze goblin? You can try to find a way to contain your friend until the spell expires, but there's a strong chance you may be harmed while waiting out the spell. Maybe it is best to destroy your friend and then seek out a new one, yes?



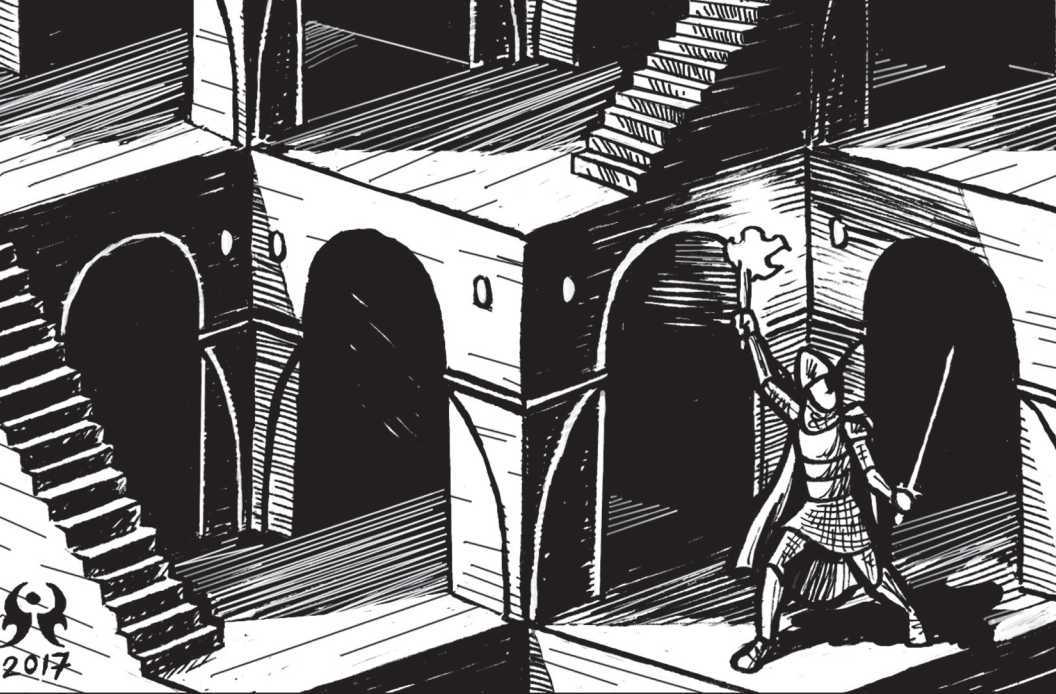
6 Ray of Light

Casting this spell fires a pure ray of sunlight from the caster's outstretched fingers, burning everything that the ray touches with the strength of an arcane fireball.

The ray of light spell is particularly effective against those undead and evil creatures who must hide from the daystar. The cast ray is sunlight that is drawn from the sun, regardless of when the caster was last in daylight, and affects creatures who are damaged by the sun exactly as if they were standing outside at noon on a bright summer day.

The spell's effect is instantaneous and the sudden burst of light can temporarily blind those who are not ready for the overwhelming flash of daylight.






2017

onepEIGHT dunGeon CONDItIONS

There are many, many dungeon complexes out there in the wild just waiting for you to adapt them to your campaign. Regardless of system, age, or publisher, you can twist those existing dungeons by randomly applying one of the following conditions to the complex, and changing things up a bit.

As with everything presented in *Delayed Blast Gamemaster*, these dungeon conditions should be used as guidance and inspiration and not as a demand. If you wish to make these suit your needs, change each and every one in any way that you wish! It's your campaign!

1 Freezing

The dungeon is cold, ice and snow covering the walls and floors of the complex. From time to time, strong gusts of wind whip the snow up, temporarily blinding you.

Activate: On the first turn.

Movement: Snow drifts and icy patches slow your progress. Running can be dangerous in the dungeon; be careful.

Monsters: The monsters are either arctic-based or are dressed and prepared for the cold. Replace any inappropriate monsters with a cold-based creature.

Special: The freezing conditions are the result of an open planar gate. Sealing the gate reverts the dungeon conditions to normal.

2 Collapsing

Tremors shake the walls and floors of the dungeon, stirring up clouds of dust and dropping stones from the ceilings of the complex.

Activate: 4d6+6 rounds into the dungeon.

Movement: Rocks, large stones, and other debris make moving through the dungeon difficult. Movement is reduced by 1/4.

Monsters: Most monsters seek to escape the dungeon, doing their best to avoid the party. Unintelligent beasts – such as slimes – act as if everything is normal.

Special: Each round, there is a 3% chance that the dungeon will collapse completely, burying all who are still inside. To make things tougher, increase the chance of collapse every round.



3 Slime-Infested

Every wall, every ceiling, everything covered in slimes and oozes, many of them growing so close together that they are fusing into a single entity.

Activate: On the first turn.

Movement: When the party first enters the dungeon, the various hazards are dormant, almost asleep. There is a 10% chance each minute that they will awaken and act. Once they do, see “special,” below. Inhabitants of the dungeon are in tune with the hazards and do not wake them.

Monsters: No change to existing monsters.

Special: Once awakened, the slimes and oozes take action, drawn to the intruders and seeking to consume their flesh.

4 Civilized

Only intelligent monsters live here, and they have transformed the dungeon into a small town. So long as visitors do not disrupt their way of life, the dungeon’s citizens are happy to trade and sell goods.

Activate: On the first turn.

Movement: No change.

Monsters: Only intelligent creatures, such as goblins, orcs, and ogres.

Special: Treat the dungeon as a hostile town. Instead of fighting their way through the complex, the party will have to play nice and treat the monsters as they would the people of any town. Who will be the monster in this environment?

5 Burning

A magical explosion rocks the dungeon, unleashing an unnatural flame that cannot be stopped.

Activate: When the party wins their first encounter.

Movement: Those who leap or run through the fires may suffer damage.

Monsters: Normal beasts and monsters attempt to flee the dungeon. Any with fire resistance/immunity use the disaster to their advantage.

Special: The fire spreads quickly. The party has half as much time to escape the dungeon as they spent getting to the point at which the accident strikes. Failure to escape before the time expires results in TPK.

6 Cosmic

Extraplanar forces have linked the dungeon to another dimension, sucking the complex into a demiplane all its own.

Activate: As soon as the party enters the dungeon.

Movement: No change.

Monsters: Replace traditional monsters with extraplanar creatures. If desired, transform a “normal” monster into a planar beast by giving it an odd color, strange eyes, and limited magic resistance.

Special: Exits from the dungeon connect to other worlds.

7 Flooded

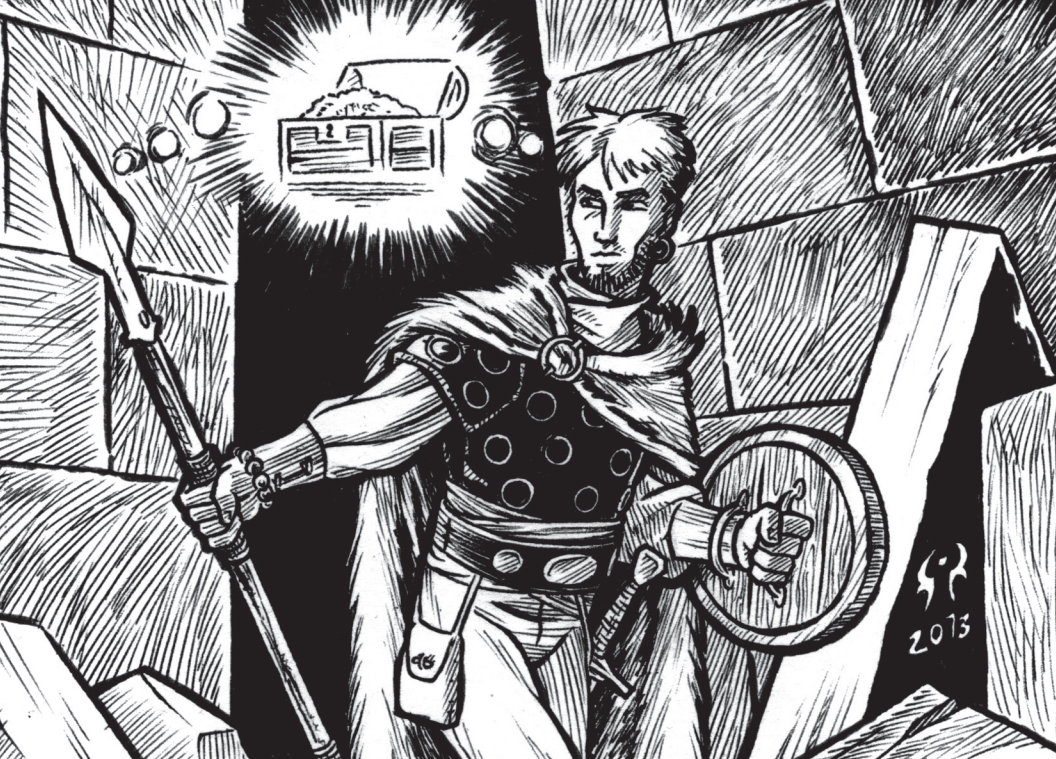
Waters fill the dungeon, with some chambers completely submerged.

Activate: On the first turn.

Movement: Halve all movement speeds.

Monsters: The monsters have grown used to the flooded chambers; no modifier to their movement.

Special: Some aquatic beasts may have invaded the complex.



8 Intelligent Items

You defeat the beast and shatter the final door, stepping into the long-forgotten treasure chamber. When you and your companions enter the room, you hear voices. Lots of voices.

Activate: When any treasure is found.

Movement: No change.

Monsters: No change.

Special: Centuries ago, an arcane experiment within the dungeon complex went horribly wrong, tapping into an extraplanar realm of high magic. The portal was too small for creatures, but it was just large enough for unwanted spirits to enter our world. Those spirits – dozens of them – possessed various inanimate objects in the dungeon. Now, when discovered, each spirit has been forever bonded to the item and has its own personality and beliefs to . . . well, to annoy the player characters. Will the party find a way to send these items home?

one six pockets picked

So you've decided to pick a pocket. The following table offers a (literal) handful of items that may be uncovered when picking the pocket of an average person in the city or town.

- 1** A letter from a merchant to one of his customers who is very, very late in paying a recent bill. The merchant threatens the customer, Thea Faneous, with death if the 100 gold is not received within the next week. The letter is dated yesterday.
- 2** A skeleton key, finely-crafted and carried in a leather pouch. A talented thief who looks at the key instantly recognizes the masterwork quality of the tool.
- 3** A vial filled with a thick, blue liquid. Popping the stopper, the scent of peppermint instantly hits the nose. This is a contact poison; be careful not to get any on you.
- 4** A small statue of an optic orb. carved from a fist-sized chunk of green marble. Small diamonds are inset into the statue to serve as the eyes of the beast; only 1d6+1 diamonds are still in place. The statue has no powers, but has some value as an odd art object.
- 5** A coin pouch, loaded with a few dozen copper coins, 2d8 silver coins, and a few gold coins. There is also an iron key with the letters "D," "C," and "E" engraved into its side.
- 6** A wooden box, roughly 7" square, secured with a length of chain that is padlocked. Once the chain is removed, either through force or skill, and the box opened, dozens of spiders rush out and quickly scatter.

If you need even more goodies to hide in pockets, see pp. 6-9 and select appropriate goodies. See *Delayed Blast Gamemaster* #1 pp. 10-13 for even more options.

cave of eyes

When the mage Delaeadeaus took possession of this cavern complex decades ago, one of his first acts was to cast a spell of seeing . . . many times. The mage covered every wall of the cavern with staring, unblinking eyes that only he could access. At any moment, whenever he desired, he could see through any one of the thousands of eyes; he was always aware of everything happening in his chosen home.

Dalaeadeaus still lives, is still master of the dungeon, and continues to keep a close watch on the chambers and occupants. While not a remarkably powerful mage, Dalaeadeaus is of sufficient arcane ability to keep the monsters there under his control. They work for his protection, a share of the treasures he sometimes takes from those traveling the nearby road, and out of some bizarre sense of loyalty to the mage.

On the facing page, you will find a map of the Cave of Eyes showing six different chambers. As is appropriate for *Delayed Blast Gamemaster*, I have not detailed every feature of this dungeon. Instead, what follows are broad overviews of each chamber. I recommend grabbing six note cards and fleshing out the rooms to suit your specific style of play.

1. Entry. Chairs and a small table are the only furniture in this room. Two or three of the goblins that live here are usually on guard, watching for unwanted intruders.

2. Rest quarters. The mage has decorated this cave with rugs, comfortable chairs, and a few tables. He wants the goblins happy and rested.

3. Goblin barracks. The dozen goblins who call this cave their home live here. Beds line the walls, and trunks hold their belongings.

4. Workshop. This small cave is filled with books, vials, and jars packed with unusual spell components.

46 **5. Arcane guard.** An animated suit of armor, armed with sword and shield, is permanently on watch here. The suit only allows the mage and his goblins to pass without interference.

Would you like to make the dungeon complex just a little more disgusting?

In addition to the walls being covered in eyes, the mage also cast his wicked spell on the creatures who live here. They have many eyes covering their faces.

In addition to the walls being covered in eyes, the mage also cast his wicked spell on the creatures who live here. They have many eyes covering their flesh!

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Thank You!

When I first started work on *Delayed Blast Gamemaster*, I had no idea what to expect. Now, thanks to your continued support, the second issue is complete and I can honestly say that I had a blast writing all of the random, useless, and wild fantasy RPG material that fills both issues.

Many of you may not know this, but I once wrote RPG supplements full-time, releasing PDF after PDF. After over a decade of project management and supervision, it was a real treat to again get the opportunity to write for gamemasters. This was a lot of fun, and it exists only because of your encouragement and support.

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