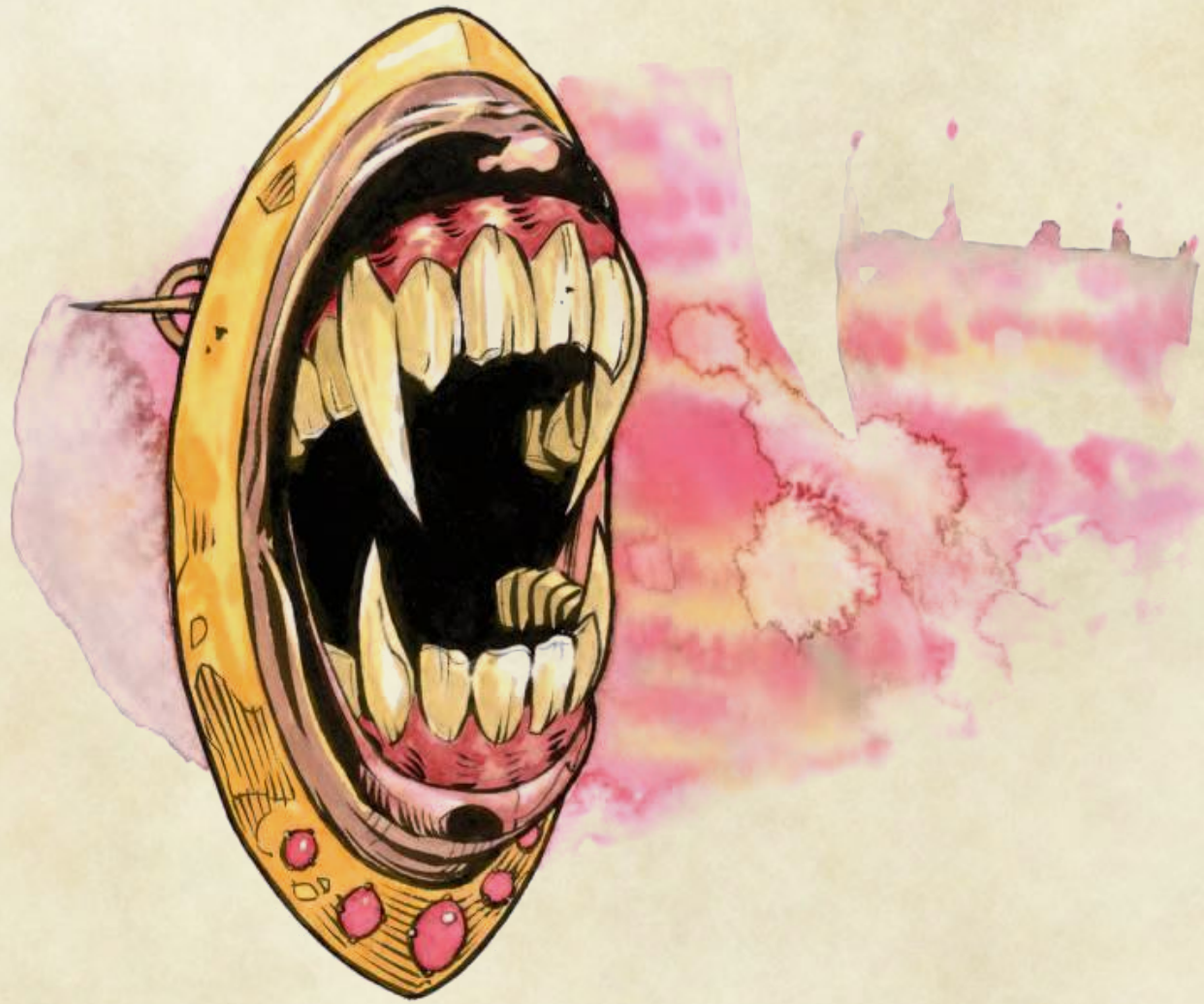


INTO THE JAWS OF THE MIMIC QUEEN

A 3-5 HOUR ADVENTURE FOR LEVEL 5 PLAYERS



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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Disappearances are not the most abnormal thing to happen from time to time, but when a string of disappearances presents a pattern of supposed kidnapping, it creates cause for alarm, especially amongst small towns. Even worse are the cases where there seems to be no motive behind the kidnappings - just a series of missing people who are never found.

Such is the case found in this module. Multiple individuals have gone missing from the small town of Orilon - no note, no enemies, no apparent motive. The local guards are completely stumped, and have turned to a wandering group of adventurers for help. Can your party help uncover the twisted secret behind these kidnappings and save the town from a possibly devastating entity?

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The players have travelled long and hard on their journey to Orilon, perhaps to rest after a perilous and exhausting adventure, or perhaps because they have some business there. Maybe they just stumbled upon the town while travelling through the forest. While Orilon is a relatively quaint logging town nestled in a dense and lush forest, even the most isolated, idyllic town isn't without its share of eerie problems and the new adventurers walking into town might be just the ones to solve them.

During their stay in Orilon, players will investigate missing persons and sleuth through town to discover that mimics disguised as furniture have been kidnapping them. The players will have to work out why and how they were taken as well as who might be next. As they uncover the secrets of Orilon they'll have to interact with townsfolk of all walks of life, deal with doppelgangers (unbeknownst to them!) and fend off mimics of all shapes and sorts, including one in the form of an entire two story house (and gazebo).

The adventure is designed for four 5th level characters. Feel free to raise or lower the difficulty as you see fit to tailor it for your group of players.

ADVENTURE SETTING

This adventure is designed to be setting-agnostic, meaning you can drop it into almost any campaign! If it doesn't mesh perfectly with your campaign setting at first, feel free to change the town name or NPC names to ones existing in your world, or change Orilon from a forestry town to a different type like a fishing or mining town.

It can be confusing remembering which NPCs are doppelgangers and which are not. See **Appendix A** for a full list of NPCs in this adventure.

HOOKS

There are several hooks that could be utilized when introducing this quest to players:

Hook 1: Going For Glory - The mayor living in the town has personally reached out to the adventurers as one of the missing people is their wife. Eager to make a name for yourself, you take on this job to gain favour with this noble.

Hook 2: Rescue Mission - Among the missing are children and the elderly. The players see that there currently aren't the resources available for the townsfolk to conduct a proper investigation. They believe the keen eyes and experience of an adventurer are needed.

Hook 3: Solving A Mystery - Your players sense something is afoot in Orilon and the players' nagging curiosities push them to try and figure out why things seem to be more sinister than a few missing persons.

MEETING THE LOCAL GUARD

As the party enters Orilon, they are approached by the town guard, who recognize them as travelling adventurers. While Orilon has no walls, there is an obvious main road that is used to travel in and out of the town that the guards will be on when the PCs arrive.

The captain of the guard, Emmelie Imidrieth, is a well-built half-elf who has years of experience in guarding the town. She approaches the players and reveals to them that there have been missing people in town and the guard is stumped on trying to solve the case.

If you are using the Going For Glory adventure hook above, Emmelie and her guards might recognize or assume these are the adventurers called upon by the mayor, Safra, to help solve the problem. From here, Emmelie provides the following information:

- Over the course of the last few weeks, nine townspeople have gone missing.
- These townsfolk have no enemies and nothing connecting them, leaving the local guard with little to no clues as to the motive of the kidnappers.
- The last person to go missing was the wife of the mayor, Mercy, who disappeared the night before last, making it the freshest crime scene to investigate.

The guards may offer any resources that they feel may help the party, and mention that the reward for successfully uncovering the truth behind these kidnappings is 500 GP (if running as part of a larger campaign, the DM may consider offering a reward such as a residence for the party in town, perhaps even the remainder of the Mimic Queen's house). They then request the party head straight to the mayor's home, where she is waiting for them to arrive and investigate.

THE MAYOR'S RESIDENCE

The party is escorted by the local guard to the house of the mayor, Safra, a tall half-elven woman who appears to be middle aged. The building is a modest two-story structure, where the bottom half doubles as town hall and the top half acts as the mayor's residence. The mayor is quite distraught at the loss of her wife, but players will be able to question her if they wish. If they do, she has some information that may help players learn what is going on in the town. She was out

of her home when her wife Mercy disappeared, and returned to find her gone. Safra mentions that the living room, where Mercy spent most of her time, was completely rearranged before she returned, leading her to believe that there was quite a struggle. She mentions that while not all the townspeople like her leadership, she has no active enemies, and Mercy is well-liked by everyone in Orilon.

If the players choose, they may inspect the room where Safra claims the kidnapping happened. It appears to be a basic living room, but the furniture seems slightly haphazardly arranged; the table is pushed to one wall, a chair lies tipped over in the center, and the desk pokes out from a right angle from the wall. Have any players who wish make an Investigation check, where different rolls reveal different amounts of information. On an 11 or less, the players see nothing out of the ordinary in the room outside of the strange furniture arrangement. On a 12, the players notice slight scuff marks on the floor, confirming Safra's statement that the furniture had been recently rearranged. On an 18, the players find a sheet of paper crumpled in a couch cushion that appears to be a receipt for a recently purchased china cabinet, which does not appear to be in the room. On a 21 or higher, the players notice a large square area on the floor that is covered in slightly less dust than the area around it; they would probably know that it is around the same size as a cabinet.

If the players ask Safra about either the receipt or the strange dust imprints, she tells them that they had recently purchased a new cabinet from Wodren, a local woodworker who sells furniture out of his shop downtown. She hadn't even noticed the missing cabinet given the events surrounding her wife's disappearance, but says that, while it is quite nice, the cabinet is not an item that would be ideal for stealing, especially given that several pieces of jewelry remain untouched in their bedroom. If asked about Wodren, she replies that he was initially thought to be among the missing, but turned up almost a week after his disappearance. Since then, he has been slightly distant, and did not provide any information about his kidnapping.

MISSING NO LONGER?

After concluding the conversation with Safra, Emmelie will let the party know that her guards have found one of the missing. Anne Springfoot, a stout halfling woman, was previously missing for almost three weeks and was just found wandering the outskirts of the town. According to the report Emmelie received from the guards, Anne seemed very disoriented, and was taken to the guard's base of operations to find out if she had any information on the missing. Emmelie gives the players directions to the base and stays to continue searching for additional clues at Safra's house.

After arriving at the base, the players find a horrific scene; several guards lay dead, and a clearly unstable halfling woman stands bloodied in the middle of the room. After seeing the players enter, she will immediately move to attack them.

This is not actually Anne, but an unstable **doppelganger** (MM p. 82) created by the Mimic Queen who has taken her place. After defeating Anne, she will revert back to the relatively featureless form of a regular doppelganger before slowly melting; it would appear that the Mimic Queen's process is incomplete. This is not meant to be a difficult fight;



it is merely meant to cause the players to become suspicious of the other citizens in the town.

WODREN'S WORKSHOP

Wodren's Woodworking is a workshop in the downtown core of Orilon, owned by Wodren Lieses. It is rather roomy and seems well-maintained. When the PCs enter, they see Wodren at a workbench with a half assembled rocking chair. He is rather cold and speaks without emotion, as he is still new to masquerading as Wodren (remember, he is a doppelganger!).

The players should be off-put by Wodren's mannerisms, making him an immediate suspect. Wodren's stories and timelines don't quite add up with what the players currently know, and he even manages to contradict himself a few times. If called out on it, he will commit to the answer suggested by the party if possible.

CONVERSATION EXAMPLE

Wodren: "I went to the pub after I finished up that coat rack yesterday."

Player: "Coat rack? I thought you said you were working on a cabinet?"

Wodren: "Oh. Yeah. Cabinet. I was working on a cabinet."

If players wish, they may make an Insight or Investigation roll while speaking with Wodren. On a 16 or higher, the players will notice two unusual things in the workshop:

- Wodren is supposedly "working" on the rocking chair but there is no evidence of work being done. The tools are all stowed away, some dust has begun to accumulate on the half-made object, and Wodren himself appears to be very clean and free of any sweat or sawdust that would be expected from carpentry.
- Most stock in the store looks rather dusty and unused with the exception of one children's sized bed, which looks brand new.

As the party leaves Wodren's Workshop, they can see a man and his son (Ari and Nir) approaching the workshop from the West side of town. They are talking excitedly about getting the son a new bed. If questioned, they reveal that the son's bed has broken and they are picking up a new one from Wodren today.

The son, Nir, recognizes the players as adventurers and asks if they are here to kill the monsters he's seen wandering the outskirts of town last night. Ari dismisses Nir's questions as the overactive imagination of a child.

If the players press Nir for details on the "monsters", he describes furniture in a vague and indirect way ("it was dark! I was hiding so I couldn't see it all!") and says that he saw them while he was playing in the North end of town. He saw them moving further North, and after he got the courage to follow them, he came upon a spooky, run down house on the outskirts of Orilon. He heard a roar come from the house and ran back to Orilon. A detail he remembers is passing over a large hill right before seeing the house.

Staking Out Wodren: If the players are suspicious enough of Wodren that they wish to stake him out after meeting him, let them! Wodren will sell Ari and Nir the bed, and stay in his shop until the sun goes down and the town settles in for the night before sneaking out of his shop and off towards the outskirts of town to the West. The players might think he is headed to Ari and Nir's house, but tailing him will lead them beyond the town limits and into the forest. This will eventually lead the party to the Mimic Queen.

Following Nir to the House: If the party convinces Ari and Nir to let Nir show them where he saw the spooky house, he leads them north to the outskirts of town and into the surrounding forest. After a few minutes he tells the players that it's just over a hill. When the players crest the hill, they see a clearing of matted grass and dirt, an imprint about 30 ft. by 30 ft. There are large claw marks, starting with one on either side of the imprint. Another set can be seen 15 ft. away at an angle, making it look like whatever left it had turned 90 degrees. A third set are 15 ft. in front of the second, headed west. The claw marks are about 5 ft. across and sink a foot into the earth.

The imprint does not look like any kind of footprint or bodyprint of a beast known by the party, but a DC 12 Investigation check reveals some sharp angles in the perimeter of the imprint as well as some brownish-red powder (russet red) and wood fibres from milled lumber. The powder and fibres are from the wear and tear of the Mimic Queen, from its brick and wooden structure.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 1: FIGHTING WODREN AND FINDING PHANY

If players wish, they may attack Wodren, perhaps believing that he is behind the disappearances. Wodren uses the stat block for a regular **doppelganger** (MM p. 82). In addition, if players decide to fight Wodren before he sells the bed to Ari and Nir, the bed, which is actually a **mimic** (MM p. 220), will also join in the fight; if Wodren has already sold the bed, he is the players' only opponent. The only thing on his body after slaying him is a key that can be used to open the Mimic Queen's house.

If players kill Wodren before he can be followed to the Mimic Queen, they will encounter Phany Tark, an older halfling who would appear to be the town drunk. He is intoxicated when the players find him outside of Wodren's shop. He will drunkenly tell players that Wodren has been acting funny since he got back, and that he once followed him out of town after he closed the shop and witnessed him arrive at a creepy old house on the outskirts. If the players wish, they may make a DC 12 Persuasion check to have Phany help them reach this location (this check is made with advantage if players offer Phany either money or alcohol for his help). In this case, you may use the same guide for following Nir to the house, substituting Phany for Nir.

THE HOUSES OF THE MISSING

If the players investigate the other scenes and ask the townsfolk, they will find out that in all cases, some furniture broke, the family got Wodren to replace it with a new piece, and then quickly after (within a day or so), the kidnapping happened.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER 2: THE BED MIMIC

If the party chooses to stake out Wodren's house, they will see Ari and Nir leave with a bed. This bed is actually a **mimic** (MM p. 220). If the players follow the pair home, they will either witness Nir being attacked by the mimic (if they are actively watching the house) or hear his screams from the street. Players are then able to combat the mimic in an effort to save Nir. This may trigger the opportunity for Nir to lead the party to the lair of the Mimic Queen.

FINDING THE MIMIC QUEEN

As the characters follow the trail in the forest north of Orilon, they notice that almost everything in the path's way has been destroyed and levelled. Trees have been felled, earth overturned, rocks and smaller foliage pressed into the dirt below. The claw marks continue to flank the main path created. More brick powder and wooden fibres can be found along the way. The trail leads up a hill and once they reach the top, they can see what seems to have made these tracks: a house.

The players just see a modest, 30 ft. by 30 ft. two-story house. Parts of the house are made of bricks and lumber of the same colour as the debris and remains found on the tracks. The house has two forward facing circular windows on the second floor and a larger than normal wooden door (big enough for large furniture to move through). There are a couple shuttered windows on the main floor and a brick chimney sticking out of the roof. The house does not look to be inhabited.

If the players attempt to damage the house or otherwise become hostile towards the house, the Mimic Queen reveals herself (see below). The front door is locked and can be opened by using Wodren's key or breaking it down. Picking the lock is impossible, as that part of the mimic is only posing as a lock and isn't actually a locking mechanism with tumblers to align. The window shutters do not open, so looking in through the main floor is not possible.

Combat against the Mimic Queen begins if the players attack the house in any way or if any player enters the house (if the latter occurs, the first player is considered swallowed and starts combat in the Mimic Queen's lobby floor. The Mimic Queen then rises out of the ground and attacks the party.

The Mimic Queen can be fought either from outside or inside of it. The outside of the house, as it is a house, is very resistant to damage; it has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage, as well as fire, cold, and force damage. The Mimic Queen will attempt to ingest players that appear to be putting up a significant fight from the outside in an attempt to stop them, believing that this will render them useless but will continue assaulting players that are doing less damage. If it is unable to swallow a creature, the Mimic Queen will attempt to throw that creature off the hill that it sits on, which is 40 ft. high.

The Mimic Queen's lobby is a small 30 ft. by 30 ft. area that resembles a twisted version of a living space. The ceiling of the room appears to be made of a strange, brain-like substance that lightly pulses at regular intervals. While inside the lobby, the characters are able to take their turns without restriction, but are not able to leave the house. Three **mimics (MM p. 220)**, posing as a table, lamp, and fireplace, as well as a **Rug of Smothering (MM p. 20)**, will attack the players while they are here. Also inside the lobby are the remaining missing individuals, who are cowering in fear away from the mimics. Players can only escape by hitting the Mimic Queen's uvula, which is masquerading as the pendulum on a hanging wall clock and which can be identified by a DC 15 Investigation check (a similar Intelligence check will let the players know that they should somehow make the Mimic Queen gag or vomit them out to escape). Additionally, if they wish to try and escape by brute force, they may make a DC 18 Athletics check to force the jaws open as an action and leave the lobby.

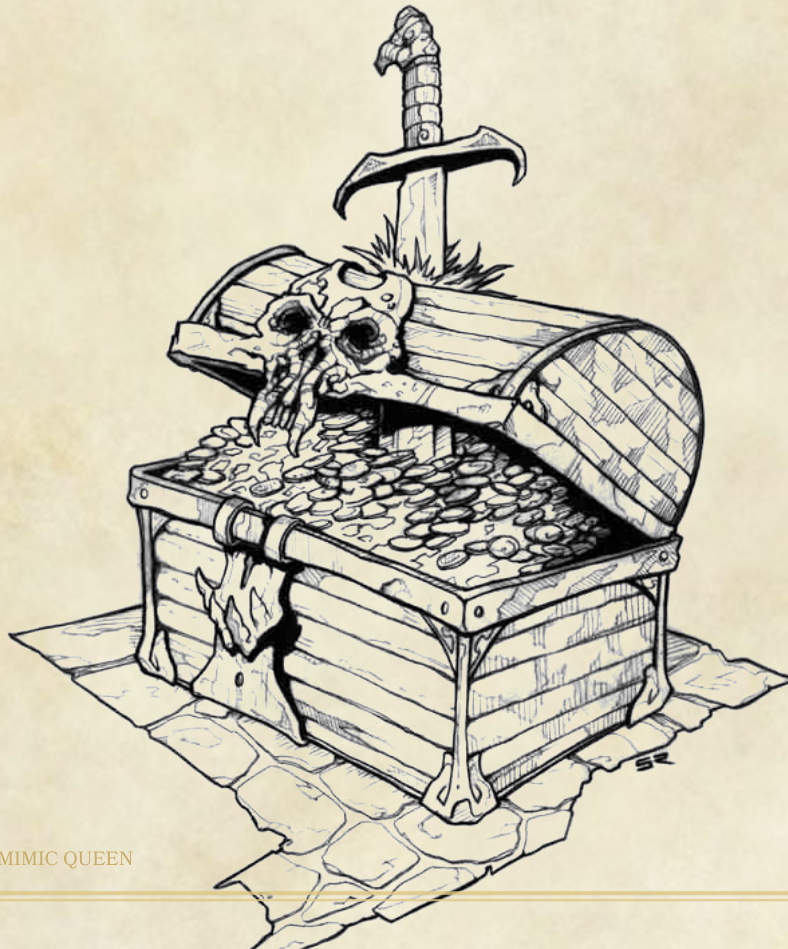
Alternatively, the players may choose to stay inside the Mimic Queen and attempt to destroy it from the inside. In this situation, they may attack the strange brain-like material that makes up the ceiling. This area does not have any resistances, unlike the exterior of the house, and in fact is vulnerable to any piercing, slashing or bludgeoning attacks made against it. It also only has an AC of 14, as opposed to the AC of 16 the exterior possesses.

Scaling the Encounter: this encounter may be adjusted for players of higher or lower levels. For lower-level parties, lower the HP of the Mimic Queen to more reasonable levels, or remove the mimics from the Mimic Queen's lobby. For higher-level parties, add more mimics to the Mimic Queen's lobby. Alternatively, an additional mimic known as The Dread Gazebo may attack the players outside; a stat block for this mimic may be found in the appendix.

AFTERMATH

After defeating the Mimic Queen and the mimics within the lobby, the players are able to free the terrified missing townspeople and return them to Orilon. The missing are all scared except Mercy, who had been attempting to keep them hopeful, with limited success. She explains that they have been kept here while the Mimic Queen created numerous doppelgangers of them in an attempt to infiltrate the town. After returning the missing townsfolk, the grateful people of Orilon will gladly bestow the promised rewards on the party, and they are hailed as the heroes of Orilon.

What happens next is up to you. Did the players really collect all the distributed mimics? Are there any other people who the Mimic Queen replaced with broken doppelgangers? What exactly is the Mimic Queen, and are there more like it? These are tales that will be decided by you and your party!



APPENDIX A: NPC LIST (IN ORDER OF APPEARENCE)

Running an adventure where several of the NPCs are not what they appear to be can be confusing. For this reason, we have included this appendix of all NPCs found and whether they are indeed who they appear to be or not. Feel free to introduce more NPCs to flesh out your town, or to turn against the players in a moment of surprise.

Emmelie Imidrieth: captain of the town guard. A well-built half-elf who has years of experience in guarding the town. Generally well-demeanored but still stern and serious. Not a doppelganger.

Safra: half-elf mayor of Orilon. Middle-aged and tall, Safra maintains a professional demeanor but is clearly stressed from the loss of her wife Mercy. Not a doppelganger.

Mercy: human wife of Safra. Short with delicate features and flowing red hair. She is the most resilient of the group of survivors and can be found rallying the others to continue to hope for escape. Not a doppelganger.

Anne Springfoot: short halfling with short-cropped red hair. Caked in dirt, incredibly aggressive and clearly unstable. Doppelganger.

Wodren Lieses: old human who owns Wodren's Workshop. A skilled craftsmen, he will appear quite confused and easily agrees with anything the party says. Doppelganger.

Phany Tark: old halfling town drunk. Former friend of Wodren before his return and subsequent transformation, he knows some information but will have to be persuaded to give it up. Not a doppelganger.

Ari: middle-aged human and Nir's father. He is focused on acquiring a bed for Nir's room, and does not suspect any foul play when entering Wodren's Workshop. Not a doppelganger.

Nir: young human boy and Ari's son. He knows more than he lets on about the happenings in the town, but is scared of what he knows and will have to be assured by the party that this knowledge can help others. Not a doppelganger.



APPENDIX B: STAT BLOCKS

THE MIMIC QUEEN

Huge monstrosity (shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (Outside), 14 (Inside)
Hit Points 150 (14d20 + 60)
Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances *See Module*
Condition Immunities Paralyzed, Poisoned
Damage Vulnerabilities *See Module*
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Shapechanger. The Mimic Queen can use its action to polymorph into a house or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies. This ability is only accessible if there are no creatures inside of the Mimic Queen.

False Appearance (House Form Only). While the Mimic Queen remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary house.

Grapppler. The Mimic Queen has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

Actions

Multiattack. The Mimic Queen makes two attacks: one Tongue Lash and one Swipe, or two Swipes.

Swipe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., two targets. *Hit* 10 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Grab and Chomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. On a hit, the player takes 15 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 5 (1d8) acid damage and must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the player is swallowed by the Mimic Queen. While swallowed, the player may take its turn within the lobby of the house, but may not leave without successfully hitting the Mimic Queen's uvula (DC 15 Investigation check to identify). On a successful save, the player is dropped, taking 2d6 damage.

Tongue Lash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. On a hit, the player takes 8 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage and must make a Strength check against the Mimic Queen's Strength check to avoid being grappled. If the Mimic Queen succeeds, the player is grappled, and is pulled into the Mimic Queen's lobby on its next turn.

THE DREAD GAZEBO

Large monstrosity (shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 75
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Condition Immunities Paralyzed, Poisoned
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Challenge 3 (1,100 XP)

Shapechanger. The Dread Gazebo can use its action to polymorph into a gazebo or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies. This ability is only accessible if there are no creatures inside of The Dread Gazebo.

False Appearance (House Form Only). While The Dread Gazebo remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary gazebo.

Grapppler. The Dread Gazebo has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

Actions

Grab and Chomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. On a hit, the player must make a DC 12 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the player takes 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d6) acid damage and is tossed into the Mimic Queen's mouth (or off the cliff face if the Mimic Queen is already dead).

Stomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit* 7 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL CITY SOCIETY FOR HELPING FLESH OUT, EDIT, AND PLAYTEST THIS MODULE, AND SHOUT OUT MY OLD PLAYERS KATIE, MATT, TESS, KAT, AND MICHAEL FOR BEING THE FIRST TO GET ENTANGLED IN THIS ADVENTURE DURING OUR HOME GAME MANY YEARS AGO.



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