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Brown Bag Adventures

THE CAVE OF THE SPIDER QUEEN





Something is amiss near the rural hamlet of Keverstone in the deep of winter. And all paths lead to a small cave in the far wood. Just some orcs raiding in the lean winter months or is something more sinister at work? What lies in the Cave of the Spider Queen.

The Cave of the Spider Queen is the first of the Brown Bag Adventures, a new series of adventure modules from UnderCity Games that are designed for quick insertion into any campaign. They are specifically designed with light art (only providing the necessary maps required to run the adventure and thus remaining printer friendly) and with open ended hooks, to allow the adventures to be easily modified to suit the GMs particular needs. Our goal is to recapture the feel of when the GM would quickly scrawl down the next weeks adventure between bites of lunch with just enough detail to pull the players in and yet open enough to be modified on the fly.

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Cave of the Spider Queen

Background:

Winter has been long and cold this year. The snow is deep and the nights are dark. The small hamlet of Keverstone sits on the edge of the deep wood, creating a quiet and picturesque scene to any braving the wintry roads. Its welcoming inn's hearth shedding a warm light and filling the air with the smell of baked cherry-apple spice cakes, the pride of the hamlet, and the Shaggy Pony's cook, Ingrid, a close second to the reputation of the rural hamlet's bowmakers.

For the GM:

Tellisana, a dark elf priestess, was ambitious, even a bit too ambitious for the mother temple where she trained in her dark homeland. The result, her ordered execution and thus she fled to the one place that her dark kin would not follow, the surface world. But her exile only strengthened her fanatical resolve. She would pass this test her dark queen had placed before her.

So in a matter of a few short months, Tellisana found a cave, secure enough to raise a temple yet close enough to civilization to begin her work. Her first task, find some faithful to work through...these came in the form of a small war band of orcs that held up in her cave during the daylight to prepare for a nighttime raid. The orcs were resistant to the conversion of faith...not that it mattered much to Tellisana.

For the Players:

- The players are wintering in Keverstone when a farmer enters the Shaggy Pony distraught; his nephew went out with some of his friends to hunting camp two weeks ago, but were due back a few days ago. He is looking for some help to form a group up to go look for them before the brewing storm makes the hunting trails unpassable.
- The players arrive in Keverstone, having traveled here in the midst of winter at the behest of the Temple of Go'h. They were to meet a cleric from distant monastery and escort him back to the city of Kingston. The cleric was escorting an ancient relic that was to be entrusted to the care of

the Temple in Kingston.

- Word reached the city of Kingston of the disappearances happening around the hamlet of Keverstone on the kingdoms frontier. The party has arrived to investigate the rumors.

Note: Regardless if the players are brought in by one of the above hooks or by another the GM creates, it is important that the fact that a dark elf is present is a surprise. Raids by orc war bands are not uncommon in the frontier and thus should be the primary suspect.

The Scene of the Crime:

Having set out early from Keverstone to investigate the disappearances / missing hunters / overdue cleric, around evening the party comes to the scene of a battle.

The snow in the area is compacted around an old campfire. The wood is burned down to charcoal and is cold. There are a number of tracks around the area, the majority easily identifiable as orc (again they are common in the area and even one not skilled in tracking can identify their tracks), as well as spattering of (now dried) blood. Equipment (the type carried by the appropriate missing persons) is scattered about the area, however most of it sits intact, where it was placed when the camp was set.

Tracks lead off northeast (and appear to have come from that direction as well) with no attempt to conceal them. Trough marks in the snow look as if something (or someone) was dragged from the site as well.

(Investigation of the tracks by anyone skilled in such will reveal that the tracks are unusually deep and scuffed. As if the orcs were plodding or shuffling through the snow, even more so than usual for their ilk.)

If the campsite is searched carefully, a severed orc hand is found tangled in some of the scattered belongings. If any attention is paid to the hand, it will be found to be decayed and desiccated.

The Cave:

The tracks lead to and apparently from the mouth of a cave tucked into a snowy knoll.

A) The Cave Mouth

The mouth of the cave is ten feet wide and only four feet high with a sagging arched entryway. Once inside the cave, rough stone ceiling continues to sag with roots dangling from the earth; however, the floor slopes away, dropping ten feet over the next fifteen feet before leveling out to a rough earth floor below.

Once down to the level floor a passageway leads out of the pack of the cave. The floor is littered with bones and debris, including several badly maintained weapons. Though the air is cold, the air reeks of decay.

The party will not be here long before the warmth of their bodies will draw out an ambush. From the earthen floor, skeletons (orc) will crawl forth and attack anything living.

Skeleton, Orc: (16) AC 7; HD 1 (hp 8, 8, 8, 8, 7, 7, 7, 6, 6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 3, 1); #AT 1; D 1d6 (or by weapon); SA n/a; SD See Below; MV 12; SZ M; AL NE; ML Sp; S 10, D 10, C 10, I 3, W 6, Ch 3; XP 65.

B) The Pit

The short passage is a rough cut into the earth that ends in a five foot circular hole in the floor. The floor around the pit is a scattering of bones and some debris, including a piece of equipment known to be carried by one of the missing (GM should describe something the party would recognize). Careful examination of the edges of the pit will also note scratch and claw marks, as if something was trying to resist being put into the pit or unsuccessfully climbing out.

The pit is not without peril, though. It descends twenty feet to the ceiling of the cave below. Though not difficult to descend (except for the cramped space), it is not unoccupied. Anyone climbing down will be attacked by zombies (orc) attacking from the walls of the pit. (Note this could be a particularly horrifying experience and GMs should consider asking for a save vs penalization to determine if the characters are able to keep composed during the attack.)

Zombie, Orc: (12) AC 8; HD 2 (hp 16, 16, 16, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 7, 6, 6, 5); #AT 1; D 1d8; SA n/a; SD See Below; MV 6; SZ M; AL NE; ML Sp; S 14, D 6, C 10, I 3, W 6, Ch 4; XP 65.

C) The Crevasse

This part of the cave has a low ceiling ranging between five and six and a half feet; however, near the east end a deep chasm (fifty foot drop) splits the cave. The chasm itself is nothing more than a large wedge shaped crevasse in the rock.

The dirt on the floor of the cave here has a sparse scattering of bones, but more notably is littered with scrapes and pock marks.

If the sides of the chasm are investigated, webbing is packed into the far reaches and strung along the chasm walls.

A rope bridge spans the chasm in the center of the passage. If inspected, it is made from a fine silk (spun spider silk). The bridge is only a few feet wide and despite its frail appearance can support well over a ton of weight. Thin (almost invisible unless closely examined) tendrils of webbing run from the sides of the bridge to the webs in the chasm walls.

Falling into the chasm would result in a painful drop, stopping when the character becomes wedged between the narrowing sides (large characters fall 5d4 feet, medium fall 3d8+10 feet, while small fall 1d20+30 feet); any character falling into the chasm must also save vs polymorph or find themselves wedged in place and will not be able to free themselves.

Falling though is not the only danger here. Giant spiders (bred by Tellisana and brought from her homeland) guard this passage against the unwanted.

Tangled in the web on the desicated corpse of an orc left behind by Tellisana, is a potion of healing and longsword (-1)

Guardian Spider: (4) AC 4; HD 5 (hp 31, 27, 25, 24); #AT 1; D 1d8; SA Poison; SD n/a; MV 3, Web 12; SZ L; AL NE; ML 15; S 14, D 15, C 10, I 3, W 10, Ch 8; XP 420.

D) The False Shrine

The far end of the passage is blocked by a black silk curtain (the same silk the bridge is

woven from). This tapestry has a large spider with a woman's head embroidered on it; however, the embroidery is only visible to the elven eye, to all others no design can be discerned.

Behind the tapestry a crude shrine has been erected. The shrine is carved from the rock of the cave and is roughly shaped as a spider. The eight eyes are the only thing of value, being small garnets.

The shrine is trapped; if a garnet is removed, a gas bladder within will cause poison to spray out in a five foot arc. The poison is a contact poison distilled from the spider venom causing 5d4 points of damage; a successful save reduces the damage by half.

An opening in the south wall is cleverly concealed by a false wall made from pasted dirt and spider webbing.

E) Tellisana's Lab.

The passageway on the other side of the false door winds to the east and ends in what looks like a large spider web. This web is actually a magical doorway. It will part at Tellisana's command, but for others it acts like a spider web, trapping anyone who touches it who has a strength score of less than 13. Anyone with a strength score of 13 to 17 can break free with successful bend bars check. Anyone possessing a strength score of 18 or more may break free at will and with a successful bend bars may force the door open.

Within is where Tellisana makes her home (her bed being a suspended hammock that resembles a spider egg cocoon). The remainder of the chamber serves as a place for her experiments, many of which will rise to attack any that intrude.

Tellisana will fight behind her zombie servants; if wounded or the fight is going poorly, she will seek to flee through the secret door to the temple of her dark queen.

Zombie, Orc: (8) AC 8; HD 2 (hp 16, 14, 12, 12, 11, 8, 6, 4); #AT 1; D 1d8; SA n/a; SD See Below; MV 6; SZ M; AL NE; ML Sp; S 14, D 6, C 10, I 3, W 6, Ch 4; XP 65.

Zombie, Spider: (1) AC 6; HD 6 (hp 36); #AT 1; D 2d8; SA n/a; SD See Below; MV 3; SZ L; AL NE; ML Sp; S 15, D 13, C 10, I 2, W 9, Ch 8; XP 650.

F) The Temple of the Spider Queen.

Tellisana will flee here if injured or if the fight is going poorly. The passage leading to this chamber descends ten feet via a curved set of stairs that are actually a natural formation in the rock. The chamber of the temple was formed by water eroding the stone and has a vaulted ceiling covered in dangling stalactites. The north wall has been shaped by Tellisana to serve as an alcove for her altar. The altar itself has been shaped into the body of a giant spider, its maw open and leering down upon any knelt before it. Flanking the altar are two statues. The statues are in the likeness of muscular dark elven warriors with six arms and the head of a spider. The right statue is complete while the left is unfinished. The completed statue will animate and defend the temple against any intruders.

While here, if Tellisana attacks with her spider dagger any damage done is transferred to her as healing magic. (This only happens if she is fighting in the temple and the altar remains intact and only if she strikes with her spider dagger.)

Depending on what brought the party to the cave will depend on what they find in the temple. If they are seeking a missing person(s), they will be found chained and bound here, in horrible shape but alive (planned sacrifices for Tellisana's dark goddess); if they are looking for the cleric, he will be lost, but the relic will be found here (Tellisana had plans to corrupt it); if they were investigating the strange disappearances-well, they should have that answer.

*note the creation of the darkstone guardian is a gift from Tellisana's dark goddess.

Darkstone Guardian: (1) AC 2; HD 4+4 (hp 36); #AT 6; D 1d4; SA See Below; SD See Below; MV 9; SZ M; AL NE; ML 20; S 18, D 9, C 18, I 3, W 9, Ch 1; XP 420.

Tellisana: (1) AC 0; HD 8 (hp 4); #AT 1; D 1d4+1 (Spider Dagger); SA See Below; SD See Below; MV 12; SZ M; AL LE; ML 20; S 10, D 16, C 10, I 11, W 17, Ch 13; XP 4000.

Spells 3(5)/3(5)/3(4)/2 *# in parentheses include bonus do to Wisdom

Fear* x2. 2nd level: Warp Wood, Hold Person x3, Silence 15' radius. 3rd level: Animate Dead, Cause Disease* x2, Dispel Magic. 4th level: Poison*, Sticks to Snakes. *reversed version of spells.

Treasure:

Aside from the items that Tellisana is carrying, she has the following treasure secured in her web hammock: 30 Platinum Coins and 8 Gems (3x Amber-100gp/e, 5x Garnet-400gp/e).

Appendix A: Bestiary

Skeleton, Orc

No. Appearing:	3-30 (3d10)
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	12
Hit Dice:	1
No. Of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1-6 (or by weapon)
Special Attacks:	n/a
Special Defenses:	n/a
Magic Resistance:	n/a
Size:	M (6' tall)
Morale:	Special
Statistics:	
Str: 10	Dex: 10
Int: 3	Wis: 6
	Con: 10
	Chr: 3
Alignment:	Neutral evil
XP Value:	65

Skeletons are immune to all sleep, charm, and hold spells as well as fear spells and never check morale. Cold-based attacks do no damage and edged or piercing weapons inflict only half damage. Holy water inflicts 2-8 points of damage per vial striking the skeleton.

Zombie, Orc

No. Appearing:	3-24 (3d8)
Armor Class:	8
Movement:	6
Hit Dice:	2
No. Of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1-8
Special Attacks:	n/a
Special Defenses:	n/a
Magic Resistance:	See below
Size:	M (6' tall)
Morale:	10
Statistics:	
Str: 14	Dex: 6
Int: 3	Wis: 6
	Con: 10
	Chr: 4
Alignment:	Neutral evil
XP Value:	65

Zombies always striking last in combat. They always fight until called off or destroyed, and never check moral. Zombies are immune to sleep, charm, hold, death magic, poisons, and cold-based spells. A vial of holy water inflicts 2-8 points of damage.

Guardian, Spider

No. Appearing:	1-8 (1d8)	
Armor Class:	4	
Movement:	3, Web 12	
Hit Dice:	5	
No. Of Attacks:	1	
Damage/Attack:	1-8	
Special Attacks:	Poison	
Special Defenses:	n/a	
Magic Resistance:	n/a	
Size:	L (8'-12' diameter)	
Morale:	15	
Statistics:		
Str: 14	Dex: 15	Con: 10
Int: 3	Wis: 10	Chr: 8
Alignment:	Neutral evil	
XP Value:	420	

Poison bite: save vs poison or death in 1 to 2 rounds, no damage if successful.

Darkstone Guardian

No. Appearing:	1-4 (1d4)	
Armor Class:	2	
Movement:	9	
Hit Dice:	4+4	
No. Of Attacks:	6	
Damage/Attack:	1-4	
Special Attacks:	See Below	
Special Defenses:	See Below	
Magic Resistance:	n/a	
Size:	M (6' tall)	
Morale:	20	
Statistics:		
Str: 18	Dex: 9	Con: 18
Int: 3	Wis: 9	Chr: 1
Alignment:	Neutral evil	
XP Value:	420	

Darkstone guardians only suffer 1/4 damage from edged weapons and 1/2 damage from cold, fire, or electrical attacks. Normal missiles cause no damage.

Zombie, Spider

No. Appearing:	1-6 (1d6)	
Armor Class:	6	
Movement:	9	
Hit Dice:	6	
No. Of Attacks:	1	
Damage/Attack:	2-16	
Special Attacks:	n/a	
Special Defenses:	See Below	
Magic Resistance:	n/a	
Size:	L (8'-12' diameter)	
Morale:	Special	
Statistics:		
Str: 15	Dex: 13	Con: 10
Int: 2	Wis: 9	Chr: 8
Alignment:	Neutral evil	
XP Value:	650	

Zombies always striking last in combat. They always fight until called off or destroyed, and never check moral. Zombies are immune to sleep, charm, hold, death magic, poisons, and cold-based spells. A vial of holy water inflicts 2-8 points of damage.

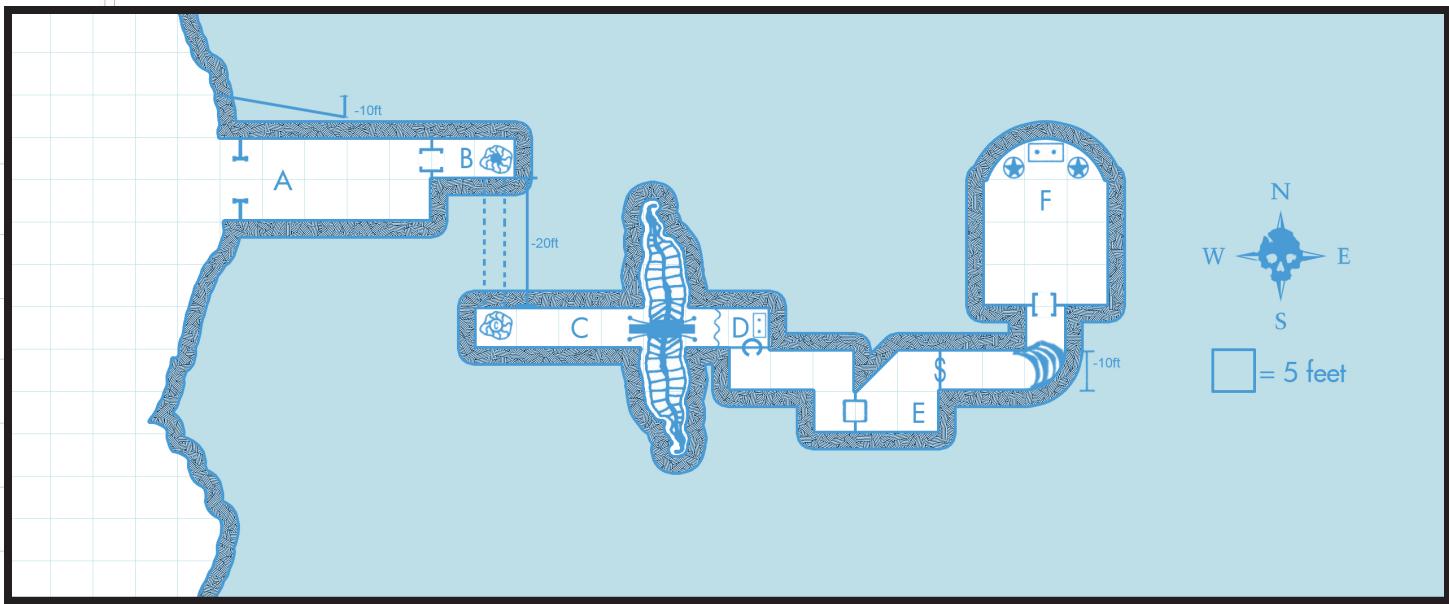
Tellisana (Dark Elf Cleric – 8th)

No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	0 (Armor & Dex)
Movement:	12
Hit Dice:	8
No. Of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	2-5 (Spider Dagger)
Special Attacks:	See Below
Special Defenses:	See Below
Magic Resistance:	66%
Size:	M (5' 5" tall)
Morale:	20
Statistics:	
Str: 10	Dex: 16
Int: 11	Wis: 17
Alignment:	Lawful evil
XP Value:	4000

Tellisana is able to use the following spells once per day: dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness, levitate, know alignment, and detect magic once per day. She can also cast detect lie, clairvoyance, suggestion, and dispel magic once per day at will, in addition to her normal clerical spell complement.

Tellisana also gains a +2 to all saves vs magic that penetrates her magic resistance.

Tellisana wears dark elf chain armor (that retains the magic of her homeland but will fade in time if exposed to sunlight) +3. She wears boots and a cloak that function as Boots and Cloak of Elven-kind (again though, their magic will be lost in time once exposed to sunlight). She carries a Spider Dagger (+1) made from the fang of a giant spider, which functions as a Dagger of Venom (currently loaded with Type A with immediate onset).



Notes:

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