

Avalon Adventures



Into the Mouth of the Machine

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Background

The good people of Finwich have been subjected to kidnappings and mysterious disappearances for quite some time. Rumors abound of monsters made of flesh and metal taking people away. No one readily admits to knowing the truth since those who spread the rumors have a habit of becoming one of the missing.

The stories are true. The cleric of a forgotten god has been led into resurrecting an ancient empire. Each victim is subject to a barrage of torture called worship by the few who follow this god. The victims are then thrown into a portal and in exchange, a servant of the god is released into the world. Each of the new arrivals are a clockwork mishmash interweaved with flesh. These horrors will vaguely resemble those who have been captured and enslaved. Creatures from kobolds to titans have been made into clockwork golems with the more powerful the victim thrown into the portal, the more powerful the servant that will be released. It is only a matter of time before the god itself is freed...

Initial Hooks

1. One desperate man has hired the PCs to investigate the rumors of the clockwork monsters. If they investigate the scene of any recent kidnapping, then they will find bits and pieces of bent metal and small gears left behind.
2. The PCs need to spend the night somewhere and this town has a reasonable looking inn. If they choose to stay, they will mysteriously encounter delays designed to make them stay in Finwich longer. After a bit, they may encounter a few clockwork golems and some cultists who try to capture them.
3. One of the PCs' relatives or a well-liked NPC has gone missing. They were hired to deliver a package to Finwich but they have never returned.

A. Entrance

The cavern's entrance is not hidden but not everyone remembers its significance. The cave is two days away by horseback. A guide can be hired for the price of one gp and modest expenses. The guide may or may not be a member of the cult. If the guide is true, then he will tell the PCs that the cavern was a place where many have lost their lives due to a cult who had taken roots here before they were driven away. If the guide is a member of the cult, he will tell them that the cavern is only used if invaders should happen to come into the village.

The entrance is on the top a very large hill. A pile of small stones has blocked the entrance. It will take a half hour of labor for four people to remove the rocks by hand. They can bribe the guide to help for an additional few copper coins. If he helps, then it will take about 25 minutes by hand. If they try to be quiet while removing the stones, then double the time needed to remove the rocks.

The entrance is natural, roughly 5 ft wide and 10 ft high. The cavern widens from 5 ft to 20 ft as PCs walk about 100 ft down. The slope has a 30 degree slope for the first 100 ft before the slope goes away to a large, flat area. The PCs will need to make a DC 10 acrobatics roll in order avoid tumbling down the slope and taking 1d3 points of damage.

From this point forward, refer to the map included with this adventure. One square equals 10 ft.

1. Entrance area

Once the slope is gone, the next 80-90 ft are clear. The stone is roughly hewed, as if an attempt was made to make travel easier. This path will lead to a large open area 40 ft wide and 20 ft high. There is an opening into the next area 60 ft on the other side. The ground is covered with small pebbles, some spots have far more stones than others. Each of the areas with thick stones (the squares with rocks on them) has a falling block trap triggered via a pressure plate on the floor designed to trigger if more than 20 lbs is placed on it. If someone detects the trap, inform them of the larger amount of pebbles in that area. Disabling a trap means that someone has somehow jammed the pressure plate, keeping it from triggering the trap. If one of the traps is triggered, the guards in area 2 are alerted to the presence of intruders.

If the PCs happen to look for secret doors along the southern wall, they will find a hidden switch if they make a DC 25 Perception check. The secret hallway has intermittent metal bowls filled with a continual light orb. There are enough to make the whole hallway filled with light equivalent to oil lanterns. It will lead into the southwest part of area 4.

Falling Block Trap CR 5

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20;
Disable Device DC 20

Trigger location: Reset manual

Effect Attack at +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. square)

If the guards are not alerted and the PCs enter the eastern corridor on the other side, they will quickly come to a "T". The south part will with etched walls depicting scenes of the forgotten god conquering the local area. A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) skill check will allow the PC to recall vague legends referring to a cruel god who liked to turn living beings into machines. This hallway will lead to a set of unlocked double doors made of stone which open into area 4.

If the PCs continue to go east and head towards area 3, remember if they triggered any traps. If they did not, then they will not be attacked. If they did trigger a trap and they go either south or east, they will hear loud scraping noises and they will be attacked by a clockwork minotaur (or a pair if the ACL of the group is 7+) within 2 rounds.

2. Guard's room

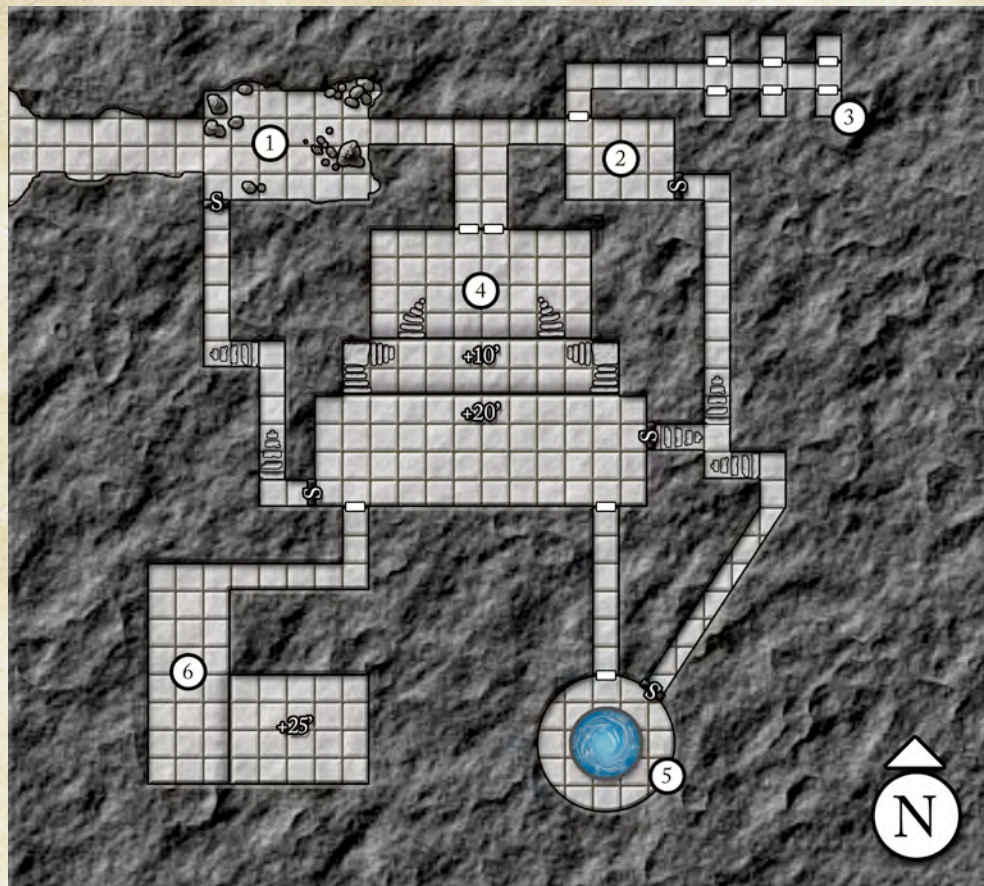
The room in area 2 is filled with all sorts of debris from rags to wood to hunks of metal. Clockwork creatures are hidden away, buried underneath the debris. If the guards are not alerted, the PCs are free to open the door and go into area 3. Likewise, if they look for secret doors, they will find one if they search the eastern wall and make a DC 25 Perception roll. The hallway into the southeastern side of area 4 and also to the portal room (area 5).

If the PCs look for treasure, they will 1500 gp in salvageable materials but only 500 gp are immediately portable. The other 1000 gp will take a group of a laborers about a week to clear everything else out. In addition, searching the debris will cause the guards to rise. If the clockwork minotaur(s) was not awoken, then they will attack along with 8 clockwork orcs. If the PCs already beat the minotaurs, then only the orcs will attack.

If the PCs go into area 3 and haven't activated the guards, they will be attacked once they come back into area 2.

3. Prison

The hallway leads to six cells, four of them are full and two are empty. The four cells each have a single human prisoner in them. Their names are Carlin, Morite, Himley, and Garvos. All of them are level 1 commoners. The keys to the cells are hanging on the eastern wall. The clinking of the locks activates the guards in area 2 if they haven't been defeated already.



Construct Traits:

A construct possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- No Constitution score. Any DCs or other statistics that rely on a Constitution score treat a construct as having a score of 10 (no bonus or penalty).
- Low-light vision.
- Darkvision 60 feet.
- Immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms).
- Immunity to bleed, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning.
- Cannot heal damage on its own, but often can be repaired via exposure to a certain kind of effect (see the creature's description for details) or through the use of the Craft Construct feat. Constructs can also be healed through spells such as make whole. A construct with the fast healing special quality still benefits from that quality.
- Not subject to ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, or non-lethal damage.
- Immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless).
- Not at risk of death from massive damage.
- Immediately destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points or less.
- A construct cannot be raised or resurrected.