

# GOING LAST – MAY OF THE DEAD CARNIVAL



## Last Stand at Camp Starfall

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® 4E ADVENTURE OF  
HORROR ON MULTIPLE LEVELS

By TEOS ABADIA

*IT HAS BEEN WEEKS SINCE THE LAST COMMUNICATION FROM JUNGLE SITE VF426, KNOWN AS CAMP STARFALL. DOES ANYTHING YET STIR AT THE CAMP? WILL YOU RECLAIM THE ARTIFACTS YOUR EMPLOYER SEEKS? WILL YOUR SOUL BE TORN APART BY THINGS YOUR MIND WAS NOT MEANT TO CONTEMPLATE? YOU BET.*

DESIGNED FOR 4<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL CHARACTERS (3<sup>RD</sup>-6<sup>TH</sup> WITH SOME WORK BY THE DM)

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

This is a fan-created adventure. No claim is made on the intellectual property, trademarks, or copyrights of Wizards of the Coast.

# IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

Part of the [Going Last Podcast's May of the Dead Carnival](#), *Last Stand at Camp Starfall* is first and foremost meant to be a fun gaming session. It is also a tale of zombie horror. And, it is an adventure with campy horror, featuring classic "silly" monsters: vegepygmies and flumphs (though it can be played fairly seriously and the silliest parts modified – if you really must). Finally, the adventure is a sci-fi/fantasy crossover with nods to module S3 *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* and even the very first Original Dungeons & Dragons TSR adventure: *Temple of the Frog God* (included in OD&D's *Supplement II: Blackmoor*).

This adventure makes use of several sourcebooks and a DDI Dungeon Article. All of these are recommended for purchase due to their utility (other than the Dungeon article, where I have clear bias!):

- [Ecology of the Vegepygmy](#) in *Dungeon 201* or use of the DDI monster builder or compendium (required for the vegepygmy monsters mentioned in this adventure).
- [Thingamajigs of the Barrier Peaks](#) in *Dungeon 201* or use of the DDI compendium (required for the 'artifacts' mentioned in this adventure).
- [The Shadowfell: Gloomwrought and Beyond](#) (optional, required for the Despair Deck used in this adventure).
- [Monster Vault](#) (optional, and the basis for some of the undead in this adventure)

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

**Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.**

## APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

The adventure is intended for 5 PCs of level 4. The adventure contains instructions for parties of 4 or 6 players. You may further modify the adventure for higher or lower level PCs, though staying within the 3-6 range is recommended. You may either level up the monsters (using a tool like the Adventure Tools online Monster Builder – files are provided to import new monsters) or add/subtract creatures until you reach the necessary XP encounter level. See the *DMG* or *Rules Compendium* for XP levels.

## CONVERTING TO 5E

You can modify this 4E adventure to a 5E adventure for level 4 PCs in the following ways:

- Skill checks: You can in most cases subtract 2 from the 4E DC and be reasonably close. When in doubt, use the 5E range of DC 5 (Very Easy), DC 10 (Easy), DC 15 (Medium), DC 20 (Hard) and DC 25 (Very Hard).
- Any traps or other components attacking a non-AC defense should either target AC or be a saving throw against DC 11 for a suitable ability.
- Despair Deck: Most will work as written. Consider disadvantage in certain situations, half healing, or -1 to saves or attacks when other options don't work.
- Encounter 1: because this isn't a traditional 4E skill challenge, it works as written (with DC modifications). Endurance checks against disease should be Constitution saving throws, DC 11. The weakened condition should be poisoned.
- Encounter 2: Substitute 10 Zombies (MM p316) for Vine Zombies, but add the Punch power so they can break through defenses. Substitute 1 Swarm of Quippers (MM p338) for the Vine Zombie Mob, but change it to large size and add the Dwindling Numbers power, which takes place when reduced to 0 hit points and produces 4 Crawling Claws (MM p44). Follow the instructions for introducing monsters across different rounds and add a second swarm if needed.
- Encounter 3: Use 6 Zombies and 3 Vine Blight (MM p32), but make the blights large and add the Swarmlike Thicket and Malleable Vines powers. If you need a challenge, when the Vines are killed they can spawn 2 Crawling Claws.
- Encounter 4: Use 2 Shriekers (MM p138) and 3 Myconid Adults (MM p232) in the Guard Chamber. Describe the Myconids as looking like Vegepygmies, remove their Rapport Spores, and have Pacifying Spores trigger as a reaction when first struck. In the Chief's Area, use 2 Myconid Adults, a Myconid Sovereign (MM p232) as the witch doctor, and for the chief use a Myconid Adult with 44 HP and add the Tribal Fury and Commanding Chest Thump powers. For all Vegepygmies, their death triggers an area of russet mold (treat as described in *Ecology of the Vegepygmy* or convert to a disease mechanic of your choice).
- Encounter 5: Use the statistics for Flumph, but give each 20 hit points and an additional power from the following:

## Space Flumph Customization Options:

Some flumph exhibit one or more of these options.

**Melee Attack – Acidic tentacles:** +5 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature).

*Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) bludgeoning damage and the target is coated in acid. While coated in acid a creature takes 5 (1d6+2) acid damage at the start of its turn and may spend its action to end the effect.

**Melee Attack – Underbelly Spikes:** +5 to hit (reach 5 ft.; one creature).

*Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. *Failed Save:* 5 (1d6+2) acid damage.

**Reaction: Acidic Death:** As a reaction to being hit by an attack that would reduce the flumph to 0 hit points, the flumph squirts acid in a 10 ft. radius centered on itself. All creatures in the area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. *Failed Save:* 5 (1d6+2) acid damage. The flumph then dies with a sad sigh.

**Reaction: Horrible Gasses (Recharge 5-6):** As a reaction to a melee attack that hits it, the flumph emits a foul-smelling gas. Creatures adjacent to the flumph must make a DC 14 Constitution save. *Failed Save:* The creature has disadvantage on its next attack.

## DEALING WITH FAILURE

While the adventure provides reasonable challenges, it is possible the PCs may be overwhelmed. If that is fun, go with it. Allow the PCs to bring in a second team and face off against vegepygmy zombie versions of their former selves. Or, have the witch doctor arrive and resuscitate the PCs in his lab... perhaps as revenants or changed in some other way. Either way, let the failure be part of the story without stopping the fun.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In ages long past, a spaceship on an exploration and colonization expedition fell victim to a deadly plague. In an attempt to prevent the spread of the plague, sections of the ship were separated and sent in different directions. *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* tells the story of one of the larger sections. Another

smaller section was populated by a benign race of space creatures. It traveled through a black hole and ended up in this world, crashing into a jungle and coming to rest against a mountain. The crash ruptured the spaceship's power source, bathing the virus in anti-matter and creating a twisted necrotic form of russet mold. Over hundreds of years the craft was buried by rocks and debris, the virus spores dormant and undisturbed... until an earthquake shifted the debris, creating an opening.

### Recent History:

In the past weeks a wizard of some power divined the presence of one or more ancient artifacts in a nearby jungle. The divination did not reveal the exact location or the type of artifacts (perhaps due to their otherworldly nature). Intrigued and unable to resist the possibility of more power, the wizard hired dozens of henchmen and a few explorers and had her apprentice mount an expedition. The expedition began to search sections of the jungle, periodically reporting no success. The expedition had just reached the section labeled on their map as VF426 when an earthquake struck, opening a crevasse leading into the mountain. A small scouting party was sent... and all communications from the camp ceased.

Worried for her apprentice and still eager for finding artifacts, the wizard has hired the PCs to mount a second expedition.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins with a scene reminiscent from Indiana Jones, as the PCs clear a path through the jungle and search for Camp Starfall. This scene can be expanded or kept brief.

The camp is strangely overgrown, as if it had been abandoned decades ago. It was clearly the site of a last stand, and as the PCs search and darkness comes they gain the sense they must prepare for an attack. Preparations impact the coming battle.

The former camp's inhabitants return, but as horrid zombies. Driven by mindless hunger they aim to pierce Starfall Camp's defenses. Large numbers of minions and abilities to punch through terrain are meant to evoke classic zombie battles.

If the PCs still live they gain a brief respite. They may examine the strange vine-covered zombies and repair their defenses before more zombies arrive, this time in the form of two large vines wrapped around zombie bodies.

If the zombies are defeated the sun finally rises. The PCs can follow the zombies to the crevasse. Strange fungi grow within, and the PCs have a chance to avoid early detection if they can outsmart the shriekers within. A tribe of undead vegepygmies have risen from the tainted russet mold and must be defeated to progress into the chieftain's cave. The vegepygmies include a witch doctor with a strange

device allowing it limited speech, creating role-play opportunities.

The PCs either accompany the witch doctor beyond or find a second witch doctor in the next room, which is a laboratory. Here the witch doctor has strange specimens. A smooth metal door can be seen amongst the rubble, but has not yet been opened by the tribe. Disturbing the specimen triggers the combat, as the undead spacemen present a final challenge.

If the PCs live they may reclaim the artifacts. They may also learn a little of the strange space creatures. DMs may expand upon the adventure, perhaps using *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* or similar adventures to create a campaign experience.

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

***You swing again, hacking through a wall of vines and pushing further into the jungle. Bird calls and monkey cries punctuate the constant buzzing of stinging insects and the sound of a river off in the distance.***

***It has been this way for four days, ever since you left the powerful wizard Yutani in her crimson tower. Yutani claims to have divined the presence of strange artifacts from a lost civilization. Unfortunately, her divinations could not determine the exact location of the artifacts. The map she gave divides a large area of the jungle into squares. You head toward what you hope is the one labeled VF426. It was here that Yutani first sent an expedition. Dozens of hired hands and her wizard apprentice Kayne had camped there and reported an earthquake. No further communications followed.***

***Pushing the memories aside, you stop to clear sweat from your brow and orient yourself. Above the thick canopy of trees obscures much of the light from the sun, but you can tell that it will soon set and plunge the jungle in darkness. The camp must be near!***

***You take stock in your fellow companions and their capabilities. Can you locate it before night falls?***

Allow the players to introduce their characters. Encourage the PCs to share their weaknesses and fears in addition to strengths. The following may help players come up with some backstory for their PCs:

- How did the character come to this nation that borders such an untamed jungle and into a wizard's employ?
- How does the character feel about being hired by a wizard? Does the character trust them?
- Is the character accustomed to jungle exploration?

- Has the character had any close calls with death in the past?
- How does the character feel about artifacts of power?
- Is the character optimistic or pessimistic?
- Does the character have any phobias or weaknesses?
- Does the character worry about the coming of the darkness?

**Equipment Note:** It is recommended that sunrods not be allowed, perhaps due to a local superstition. The use of torches, with a smaller radius of light, can heighten the sense of horror.

After introductions, allow the characters to discuss their situation and how to proceed. The following should be clear:

- It was very strange for communications from the camp (sent via a trained bird) to cease.
- Communications ceased a week and-a-half ago. The camp had been set up for roughly two weeks before that time.
- The camp was large, holding dozens of humans and a large amount of equipment.
- The equipment and camp tents should be visible from a distance due to the size of the camp. However, the foliage is very thick in this jungle.
- Wild beasts frequent the jungle. Human tribes do not usually venture here, considering the land cursed.
- Many beasts seek food at night. It is safest to set up a protected camp before nightfall.

### Finding the camp

Rather than use a skill challenge, allow the players to suggest approaches if they desire and call for skill checks as appropriate. You may wish to describe the jungle as they pass over massive moss-covered fallen tree trunks, through vine-choked trails, or across a muddy river. Higher skill rolls correspond with mastery over the tough environment, while low rolls represent falls, impassable obstacles, and other momentary setbacks.

At some point, call for perception checks. Note the character with the highest and the lowest check and the value of the highest check.

### Highest Check

DC < 10: The PC stumbles into a crate of supplies, its wood stained with blood. As the PC with the lowest check approaches, he or she pushes aside a wall of vines and a skeleton falls onto that PC, its head tumbling off its shoulders before coming to a stop

where it is visible by all. All PCs draw from the Despair Deck.

DC 11 – 20: The PC spots a wooden crate of supplies amidst the jungle and coming closer can see the wood is stained with blood. As the PC with the lowest check approaches, he or she pushes aside a wall of vines and a skeleton falls onto both of them! The two PCs draw from the Despair Deck.

DC 21+: The PC spots a wooden crate of supplies covered in vines and notes a red stain on the wood. As the PC with the lowest check approaches, he or she pushes aside a wall of vines and a skeleton falls onto the PC. Only the PC with the lowest check draws from the Despair Deck.

Once this is resolved, PCs can make out the rest of the camp:

*The blood stained crate was hidden by vines. Slowly your group makes out other crates, a table, tent poles, and equipment... all covered by the jungle. Though the overgrowth suggests the camp has been here many months or years, the writing on the crates indicates this equipment belonged to the expedition!*

### **Inspecting the Crate**

The crate contains expedition supplies. The blood stain is large, as if someone suffered a terrible wound while standing behind the crate.

### **Inspecting the Skeleton**

The skeleton shows signs of having been picked clean and even eaten (back when it had flesh) by predators. With a DC 14 heal check a PC can tell some of the bite marks and claw marks were a cause of death, not just after death. With a DC 21 heal check a PC can tell the skeleton died fairly recently, around the time the communications stopped (roughly 10 days).

### **Inspecting the Camp**

Wildly overgrown, the camp appears to have been undisturbed for a long time. A DC 14 Nature check confirms the growth was unnaturally fast. In addition, the check suggests more could be learned from the predominant vine-like plants if there were time to study them. A DC 21 Nature, Arcana, or Religion check additionally suggests the growth was a corruption of some sort and not due to any commonly known spells or rituals (more could still be learned with time).

In addition, a DC 10 Insight, History, Perception, or Thievery check suggests the camp is arranged strangely, as if to use the crates and supplies to cut off approach routes. It probably wasn't done very well. PCs get a -1 to attempts to shore up defenses in the next scene.

A DC 14 check confirms this and shows it to be similar to circling wagons – an attempt to create a defensive barrier out of all available materials. This

barrier was breached in several places and requires repair.

A DC 21 check adds an understanding of the most effective methods used, giving a +2 to party's attempts to shore up the defenses.

Finally, the PCs find a crate containing a leather-bound book. Bearing the name of the apprentice, Kayne, it describes his employ for the wizard Yutani before later chapters detail the expedition. The later chapters discuss the following:

- Repeated attempts to find the artifacts in other sections of the jungle without any success. The few natives they meet tell them not to go to the section marked as VF426, as it is cursed.
- Once in VF426, they set up camp. Initial searches yield nothing.
- The earthquake strikes. Kayne sends a missive via a trained raven, then orders a small scouting group to explore the area. The scouts report the mountainside has shifted, and an open chasm leads further inside. They request permission to explore, and Kayne grants it.
- The scouts do not return. Kayne sends a larger group to investigate. He notes that he wishes the raven did not take so long to the wizard's tower and back, so he could provide his master with an additional update.
- That night, the camp wakes to find all night guards are missing. Blood is found, but no bodies.
- Kayne's writing becomes erratic, as if his hand was shaking. The page is stained with sweat. He describes how the next night the dead rose from the forest and were of the forest. Many died before first light. They work feverishly to create defenses, sure they will be killed if they try to run.
- The last page bears hurried shaking script and is stained with sweat and blood. Kayne reports the initial wave this night has spelled their doom. Their defenses were breached and many of the expedition lie dead or were dragged away. Kayne is wounded and worries the first light is too far away. His last statement is "we die to those that were once our own."

Once PCs have completed the investigation of the camp and read the expedition book, the DM should have a PC note that night will soon be upon them.

### **Troubleshooting**

PCs should want to fix up the camp's defenses. If they wish to explore the mountain, they should realize they

do not know where the chasm lies and would have to stumble through the dark jungle trying to find it. Similarly, returning through the dark the way they came is dangerous and very slow movement. It is likely whatever attacked the camp in the past could catch up to them.

If PCs insist on leaving the camp, have them see the full force of the undead and have a chance to run back to the camp. They can also fight in the open, but they will likely be overwhelmed.

# SKILL CHALLENGE ENCOUNTER

## I: A NEW LAST STAND

### SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5, SPECIAL COMPLEXITY (800 XP)

#### SETUP

Night is rapidly approaching and the PCs must prepare the camp before undead attack. Viewing the existing defenses and devising plans of their own they hope to avoid the horrible fate of Camp Starfall's previous inhabitants.

PCs should be encouraged to think about what the camp needs. Each PC has roughly enough time to attempt two different projects. They may work together and even focus on a single task. Suggestions can be offered as needed or provided organically at the midpoint of the challenge.

**Despair Deck:** To represent the pressure upon them, each PC should draw one card from the Despair Deck, suffering the effect. This will likely be a role-playing effect during this skill challenge and a mechanical hindrance during the undead attack.

#### SKILL CHALLENGE: PREPARE CAMP STARFALL FOR A NEW LAST STAND

**Goal:** PCs race against the coming darkness to prepare the camp against an attack by unknown undead foes.

**Complexity:** (Special, see below)

**Primary Skills:** Any skill may be attempted during this challenge, so long as the DM agrees. Each PC may attempt two checks in this skill challenge.

**Other:** DMs may award successes for clever thinking or effective role-playing (such as a PC that through role-played fear convinces the rest of the party to work harder).

**Victory:** The number of successes determines the benefit from each certain project, with bonuses from hard DCs.

**Defeat:** This skill challenge cannot be failed in a traditional sense. Instead, individual skill failures detract from progress. At worst, the camp is no better for their efforts.

#### SELECTING A PROJECT

The following process is used in this skill challenge:

1. PCs should discuss possible projects to achieve the goal. The DM may make

suggestions. PCs know they have time for no more than two projects each, but could also focus on a single project.

2. Each PC should select one project and describe what they are doing. The player and DM decide on a skill to represent the activity. Players roll their skill checks.
3. The DM determines a bonus for ingenuity or role-playing for each PC, if appropriate.
4. The project's success, if any, is determined.
5. PCs decide how the camp changes.
6. The process is repeated for their second project. PCs can remain on their first project or change projects as desired.

#### POSSIBLE PROJECTS AND BENEFITS

The DM (and PCs) may add to this list. Failures can represent nervous breakdowns, finding grisly remains, becoming demoralized or weak from exertion, or simply making a costly mistake while rushing to complete a task.

##### Reinforce Barriers

The walls are barely standing in some places, particularly near access points. These could be reinforced to prevent undead from breaking through.

< DC 10: No benefit. In addition, each failed check impedes progress, resulting in a cumulative -1 to skill checks to reinforce barriers.

DC 15: Each moderate success reinforces 3 adjacent border squares, clearly making them harder to break through. Mechanically, a zombie must "punch through" twice before they can break through this area.

DC 22: Each hard success reinforces 4 adjacent squares.

##### Close Entrances

There are three obvious entrances to the camp at the start of the challenge. PCs may move crates, bulky equipment, and tree trunks to block access.

< DC 10: No benefit. In addition, failed checks weaken the barrier, making one of the closed-off squares normal instead of reinforced.

DC 15: Each moderate success closes off one square of the access point. The square counts as a reinforced barrier (being resistant to "punch through").

DC 22: A hard success closes off an additional square.

##### Prepare traps

PCs may create traps to slow down or kill some of the undead along a likely route.

< DC 10: No benefit. In addition, a failed check injures the PC, causing them to lose a healing surge and begin the next combat slowed (save ends).

DC 15: Every two moderate successes sets a trap with a blast 3 area of effect. PCs can set it off as a free

action when a creature enters the area of effect. The trap can inflict one of the following upon all creatures in its area:

- Restrained until end of creature's next turn
- Slowed (save ends, -2 to this saving throw)
- Attack at +7 vs Reflex to inflict 4 damage

DC 22: If at least one of the two successes is a hard success, the area of effect for a trap is instead a blast 4.

### **Research**

PCs could try to learn more about the plants in the area.

< DC 10: Education comes at a price. The PC sees something that looks like a flower, but it explodes, showering the PC in red and black spores. The PC loses a healing surge and begins the next combat weakened (save ends).

DC 15+, First Success: A first success reveals that the plants are not only unnatural; they are not of this plane of existence. Examining the vines show that they once had bulbs filled with spores. Spore remnants suggest the unnatural vine was tainted somehow. It is likely that these spores have a corrupting effect and should be avoided.

DC 15+, Second Success: Experimenting with spore remnants shows that they would normally slowly transform flesh into plant matter. The corruption has created an intermediate step similar to undeath! However, that corruption can be prevented. If a PC undergoing the transformation receives a DC 15 Religion or Heal check the intermediate step will not occur (Mechanically, this results in normal russet mold contagion rather than adding an undead step).

DC 22: If any of the checks is a hard success, that PC also gains a +2 bonus to Endurance checks against disease during this adventure.

### **Rituals and Other Projects**

A PC has time to cast one ritual. PCs and DMs may agree upon other projects that can benefit the camp.

## **ADJUSTING ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY**

**Intended Difficulty:** This is intended to be an easy to moderate challenge where PCs gain some benefits and perhaps a few setbacks.

The skill challenge can be slightly harder or easier depending on whether PCs role-play or simply choose their most effective skills. You can increase or decrease the DC based as needed to achieve the right challenge level.

## **ENDING THE ENCOUNTER**

The encounter ends once each PC has attempted two projects. Determine success and allow PCs to add the

earned benefits to the map, marking the location of improvements.



## ENCOUNTER 1: A NEW LAST STAND MAP

The map below is a suggestion, made with many *Streets of Shadow* tile sets for crates, *Dungeon Tile Master Set: The Wilderness* for shrubs, and *DT5 Sinister Woods* for the border. You may draw on a battlemap or use a different map or tiles to construct the camp. The crater poster map found in both *Fantastic Locations: Dragondown Grotto* and in *H1: Keep on the Shadowfell* can also be used, as it has roughly three entrances and a circular area.

Ideally, the terrain is verdant on the outside, with the camp in the center. The camp should be roughly 10 squares in diameter, with three entrances about 3 squares wide. Trees and other details can be added for a jungle feel.

**Walls:** You may also prefer to use wooden blocks or other removable pieces for the camp walls, so they may be removed.

**Skill Challenge Benefits:** You may want to use tokens or markers to display the reinforcements, walls, traps, or other features created by the skill challenge.



## COMBAT ENCOUNTER 2: FIRST WAVE

### Encounter Level 4 (878 XP)

In this encounter the first wave of undead crashes upon the heroes. Consisting of vine-covered minions and two larger mobs of zombies, the encounter is meant to feel fast and furious. In addition, the way the vine zombies interact with the defenses is revealed, adding a dynamic aspect to the battle.

### SETUP

This encounter includes the following:

- 12 Vine Zombies**
- 2 Vine Zombie Mobs**

**Map Placement:** Use the same map from Encounter 1. PCs should be placed on the map prior to the combat, in any spot visible on the map. (Any PCs outside of the camp will be attacked preferentially). Once all PCs are positioned read the following:

*Darkness does not come from above. The last rays of light still fall through the jungle canopy, while below shadows form. It happens under roots and shrubs, behind walls of vines. Shadow grows into darkness as you strain to complete your preparations. The rays of light become pinpricks, then vanish.*

*A low moaning builds, and it is not the wind. The sorrowful moan comes from all sides, the camp suddenly feeling very small, your allies too on the edge.*

*Suddenly they come forth from all sides, shuffling stiffly out of the brush and into the small clearing around your camp. Flickering torchlight shows rotting undead, their bodies overgrown by twisting vines similar to those in the camp. Their moan intensifies! It is the last stand at Camp Starfall!*

Place the 2 Zombie Vine Mobs and 6 of the Vine Zombies on the map, spread around but with a majority near the entrance ways. Make a note to introduce the other zombies in later rounds (see Adjusting the Encounter).

**Despair Deck:** Don't forget the effects of the Despair Deck!

**Optional rule:** In addition, and for more horror, consider having a PC roll a saving throw every time they are bloodied or struck with a critical hit. If they fail, they must draw again from the Despair Deck!

## TACTICS

The zombies are primarily mindless, shuffling forward and seeking the closest foe upon which to feed. Several of the Vine Zombies and both Zombie Vine Mobs try the original three entrances, even if they are now closed. A few Vine Zombies head straight toward the walls, using *Punch Through* on walls that are not reinforced.

Vine Zombie Mobs show a small amount of cunning, trying to find existing openings and squeezing through into the camp. They also seek to maximize the number of PCs in their aura.

## ROLE-PLAYING

Though the foes are mindless undead, opportunities for role-play include their hunger, moaning, and their description – they are clearly former camp inhabitants killed in horrible ways and vines snake through their bodies. Describe *Punch Through* so it evokes scenes from zombie movies, and the Zombie Mobs as being a horde of hungry zombies that finally is reduced in number to just 4.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

**Intended Difficulty:** This is a moderate encounter for level 4 PCs. There are many minions, but if you use them well and break into the camp they can pose a challenge. PCs should use a few resources in this fight.

**Reducing the Challenge:** If the monsters are overwhelming the party in a way that isn't fun, delay the introduction of the last six zombies or introduce them two at a time.

**Increasing the Challenge:** If the challenge is too low to be fun, accelerate when you add the additional zombies, and consider allowing them to charge with *Punch Through* to quickly get into the camp. You could even add a zombie that comes out of a crate within the camp, or the skeleton that was found earlier might suddenly rise from an examination table. You may also increase the base damage of the zombies by a point, and by two if they score a critical hit.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the zombies have been defeated. The party gains a single short rest before the second wave.

**Optional:** If it seems fun and if it is needed, the PCs could have time to perform one more skill challenge check as in Encounter 1, in addition to getting a short rest.

## ENCOUNTER 2: FIRST WAVE STATISTICS

<b>Vine Zombie</b>	<b>Level 4 Minion Lurker</b>
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 44
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	<b>Initiative</b> +5
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 17; <b>Reflex</b> 16; <b>Will</b> 15	<b>Perception</b> +1
<b>Speed</b> 4	Darkvision
<b>Immune</b> disease, poison	
<b>Standard Actions</b>	
④ <b>Slam</b> • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 6 damage.	
<b>Move Actions</b>	
<b>Punch Through</b> • Encounter	
<i>Effect:</i> The zombie breaks through one adjacent square of blocking terrain. The square becomes difficult terrain instead. The zombie then shifts into the square. An enemy adjacent to the zombie at the end of this movement may take an attack of opportunity against the zombie.	
<b>Triggered Actions</b>	
<b>Deathless Hunger</b> • Encounter	
<i>Trigger:</i> The zombie is reduced to 0 hit points, but not by a critical hit.	
<i>Effect (No Action):</i> At the start of the zombie's next turn, roll a d20. On a 15 or higher, the zombie stands as a free action and has 1 hit point.	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 8 (+1)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 1 (–3)
	<b>Wis</b> 8 (+1)
	<b>Cha</b> 3 (–2)
<b>Alignment</b> unaligned	<b>Languages</b> —

<b>Vine Zombie Mob</b>	<b>Level 4 Brute</b>
Large natural humanoid (swarm, undead)	XP 175
HP 63; <b>Bloodied</b> 31	<b>Initiative</b> +3
<b>AC</b> 17; <b>Fortitude</b> 17; <b>Reflex</b> 15; <b>Will</b> 14	<b>Perception</b> +2
<b>Speed</b> 5	Darkvision
<b>Resist</b> half damage from melee and ranged attacks; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 against close and area attacks	
<b>Traits</b>	
⚔ <b>Swarm Attack</b> • <b>Aura</b> 1	
Any enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 damage plus 2 extra damage for each additional vine zombie mob adjacent to the enemy.	
<b>Swarm</b>	
The swarm can occupy the same space as another creature, and an enemy can enter its space, which is difficult terrain. The swarm cannot be pulled, pushed, or slid by melee or ranged attacks. It can squeeze through any opening that is large enough for at least one of the creatures it comprises.	
<b>Zombie Weakness</b>	
A critical hit automatically bloodies the swarm (see <i>Dwindling Numbers</i> ).	
<b>Standard Actions</b>	
‡ <b>Multitude of Claws</b> • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC	
<i>Hit:</i> 3d6 + 5 damage and the target is pushed 1.	
<b>Free Actions</b>	
<b>Dwindling Numbers</b> • Encounter	
<i>Effect:</i> (No Action): The mob is destroyed, and four vine zombies appear in its former space. The vine zombies act on the mob's initiative count.	
<b>Str</b> 10 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+3)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+3)	<b>Int</b> 2 (–2)
	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+2)
	<b>Cha</b> 4 (–1)
<b>Alignment</b> unaligned	<b>Languages</b> —

Errata: The *Dwindling Numbers* power should be an effect when first bloodied.



## COMBAT ENCOUNTER 3: SECOND WAVE

### Encounter Level 4 (964 XP)

After only a single short rest the undead surge forward once more. A few vine-covered zombie minions are now joined by two crawling masses of vines, zombies entangled within. The clusters add a dynamic element, as zombies emerge when struck.

### SETUP

This encounter includes the following:

**6 Vine Zombies**

**2 Vine Zombie Clusters**

**Map Placement:** Use the same map from Encounter 1. PCs should be placed on the map prior to the combat, in any spot visible on the map. (Any PCs outside of the camp will be attacked preferentially).

You may describe the coming of the zombies as you see fit, placing them all on the map where desired. For a harder challenge, place the Vine Zombie Clusters closer to any openings in the barrier, including medium-sized ones (the PCs may not expect them to squeeze through).

**Despair Deck:** Don't forget the effects of the Despair Deck!

**Optional rule:** In addition, and for more horror, consider having a PC roll a saving throw every time they are bloodied or struck with a critical hit. If they fail, they must draw again from the Despair Deck!

### TACTICS

The Vine Zombies continue to act mindlessly, though if desired they can show more cunning due to their hunger.

Vine Zombie Clusters show no fear, trying to enter the camp for maximum carnage. They use *Swarmlike Thicket* to move through opponents (provoking if necessary or simply shifting into a foe's square) and squeeze through any medium opening without penalty due to *Malleable Vines*. They attack with *Snaring Blow*, unless the movement of *Violent Advance* allows them to enter the camp or to position their aura for maximum effect. If both Clusters can enter the camp they work to pin as many foes as possible in the aura.

### ROLE-PLAYING

The vine-covered zombies are frantic, hungering for the flesh within the camp. The clusters are horrifying things that should not be. The vines that make up the

clusters reinforce any research done by the party, showing signs of unnatural taint and promising a horrible fate if a character should be drawn within.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

**Intended Difficulty:** This is a moderate-to-difficult encounter for level 4 PCs. Though there are many minions and the *Split* power can create many more if PCs are not tactical. You may allow PCs to use role-playing and tactics to drive some zombies away, such as with fire.

**Reducing the Challenge:** If the encounter is too hard, have the Clusters use poor tactics. Provoke even when they could avoid doing so, and use *Snaring Blow* only on opponents that want to be in melee with the Cluster. Consider lowering the Cluster's hit points by 30.

**Increasing the Challenge:** The challenge can be increased by optimal use of *Violent Advance* to enter the camp without provoking or to place themselves so as to maximize the aura's damage. When using *Split*, place the zombies in a tactically superior location, such as one that makes it hard for a PC to move out of the aura.

### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the zombies have been defeated. Though sounds are heard in the forest during the rest of the night, no further attacks take place.

The party can take any number of short rests, but not an extended rest (unless the party is very beat up or has used up many resources, in which case you could either allow the recovery of one daily power and two surges or allow a full extended rest).

**Despair Deck:** All Despair Deck card effects end when the sun finally rises. If the current cards are a lot of fun (good RP, etc., you could optionally require a saving throw to overcome them).

**What Now?** With the coming sun the PCs can do the following:

- Inspect the vines as described in Encounter 1 if they haven't already. It is clear that the vines contributed to the expedition rising as undead.
- Additional checks suggest the transformation could continue.
- The zombies left a clear trail, likely heading back to the chasm.
- Counting the number of undead suggest only a few remain, likely back at the chasm.
- No artifacts have been found so far... perhaps at the chasm!

Though the PCs have some understanding of the fate of Camp Starfall, they are hopefully intrigued enough

to travel to the chasm. You could try to lure them to the chasm with a humanoid form watching them from the edge of the jungle that runs back to the chasm when spotted.

Once the PCs decide to explore the chasm, they take a few hours traveling through the jungle before reaching the mountains. Continue with Encounter 4.

## ENCOUNTER 3: SECOND WAVE STATISTICS

Vine Zombie	Level 4 Minion Lurker
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 44
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	Initiative +5
AC 18; Fortitude 17; Reflex 16; Will 15	Perception +1
Speed 4	Darkvision
Immune disease, poison	
<b>Standard Actions</b>	
④ <b>Slam • At-Will</b>	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC	
Hit: 6 damage.	
<b>Move Actions</b>	
<b>Punch Through • Encounter</b>	
Effect: The zombie breaks through one adjacent square of blocking terrain. The square becomes difficult terrain instead. The zombie then shifts into the square. An enemy adjacent to the zombie at the end of this movement may take an attack of opportunity against the zombie.	
<b>Triggered Actions</b>	
<b>Deathless Hunger • Encounter</b>	
Trigger: The zombie is reduced to 0 hit points, but not by a critical hit.	
Effect (No Action): At the start of the zombie's next turn, roll a d20. On a 15 or higher, the zombie stands as a free action and has 1 hit point.	
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 8 (+1) Wis 8 (+1)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 1 (-3) Cha 3 (-2)
Alignment unaligned	Languages —

Vine Zombie Cluster	Level 4 Elite Brute
Large natural animate (plant, undead)	XP 350
HP 114; Bloodied 57	Initiative +3
AC 16; Fortitude 18; Reflex 16; Will 14	Perception +1
Speed 4, climb 3	Tremorsense 10, Blind
Immune blinded, gaze effects; Vulnerable 5 to close and area attacks	
Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1	
<b>Traits</b>	
⚙ <b>Churning Thorns and Claws • Aura 1</b>	
An enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes 5 poison and necrotic damage.	
<b>Swarmlike thicket</b>	
The cluster can occupy the same space as another creature, and an enemy can enter its space, which is difficult terrain.	
<b>Malleable Vines</b>	
While squeezing, the cluster moves at full speed rather than half speed, it doesn't take the -5 penalty to attack rolls, and it doesn't grant combat advantage for squeezing.	
<b>Standard Actions</b>	
④ <b>Violent Advance • At-Will</b>	
Effect: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d6 + 12 damage.	
Effect: Before or after the attack, the cluster shifts up to its speed.	
↓ <b>Snaring Blow • At-Will</b>	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude	
Hit: 2d6 + 12 damage, and the target is pulled into the cluster's space and restrained (save ends). While the target is restrained, if the cluster moves, the target moves with it. If the target saves, it can shift to a square adjacent to the cluster.	
<b>Triggered Actions</b>	
<b>Split • At-Will</b>	
Trigger: An enemy hits the cluster with a weapon attack.	
Effect (No Action): A vine zombie appears in the unoccupied square closest to the cluster.	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 12 (+3) Wis 9 (+1)
Con 17 (+5)	Int -1 (-4) Cha -1 (-4)
Alignment unaligned	Languages —

# COMBAT ENCOUNTER 4: UNDEAD VEGEPYGMIES!

Encounter Level 5-6 (1,413 XP)

Thought the PCs don't know it, the chasm holds an alien spaceship! When it crashed long ago, the antimatter leaked, corrupting the already terrible virus. The virus became corrupted russet mold over time, lying dormant inside the mountain. When the earthquake struck, the explorers investigated and became infected. Some became corrupted vegepygmies, but those that died were turned into horrible mutations combining plant and undead.

The undead hungered for prey. The undead vegepygmy formed a sort of colony, organized by a brutish leader and a witch doctor. The witch doctor had a strange gift: prophetic visions of times long past, perhaps passed on by the virus that had infected the spaceship's inhabitants or perhaps due to this creature having once been Kayne, the wizard's apprentice. The witch doctor has begun to explore the spacecraft, making startling discoveries.

The scene begins outside, as the adventurers reach the mountain and find the chasm.

## SETUP

This encounter includes the following:

### Guard Chamber:

- 2 Antimatter-Corrupted Shriekers**
- 2 (Undead) Vegepygmy Scavengers**
- 1 (Undead) Vegepygmy Hunter**

### Chief's Area:

- 1 (Undead) Vegepygmy Hunter**
- 1 (Undead) Vegepygmy Chief**
- 1 (Undead) Vegepygmy Witch Doctor**
- 1 (Undead) Thorny**

In addition, the encounter features the following disease:

### **Antimatter-Corrupted Russet Mold Contagion**

**Map Placement:** Review the map provided at the end of this encounter, but do not place any of the foes on the map. PCs begin anywhere on the green grassy area outside.

The first two fungi squares are the two Shriekers. The Guard Chamber consists of the first hallway, with foes hidden by the overgrowth (but starting near the pit).

In the central chamber the Chief is located northwest, where the water ends. The Witch Doctor hides near the large rocks to the southwest. The Hunter and Thorny are near the bridge. Any

vegepygmy from the guard chamber take up positions north and south of the east-most section of the water.

**Illumination:** The phosphorescent fungi give off a pale red glow, providing dim illumination.

**Water:** The water is shallow and is considered difficult terrain.

***Having reached the mountains, you searched only a short while before finding a huge rend in the mountainside. Fungi and vines spill out from the chasm, and moist warm air bears the smell of rot.***

Thought the map does not show it, the interior is covered in fungi and vines.

Allow the PCs to discuss their approach and make preparations. The mouth of the chasm initially blocks the shrieker's detection from the west, but if the PCs do not identify the shriekers or if they fail at a Stealth check then the hazard initiates combat. This alerts the other guards, who will begin combat hidden due to *Adaptive Coloration*.

If PCs succeed at the countermeasures they instead surprise the vegepygmy, seeing them as they draw closer. (The shriekers may still react once combat begins).

## TACTICS

The Shriekers have no intelligence, simply attacking if they detect a non-plant creature. They can be killed safely from afar if all other foes are defeated.

The vegepygmy fight for one round before retreating. Depending on your play style, you can play this out in initiative order or give any PCs in melee opportunity attacks and then allow the vegepygmy to retreat.

In the Chief's Area, the Hunter(s) will use ranged attacks, then intercept a melee combatant who approaches the Chief or Witch Doctor. One Hunter begins combat riding the Thorny.

The Witch Doctor opens with *Rampant Growth* and *Verdant Command*, and then speaks in rough common asking the PCs strange questions about whether they are ancients or ancestors.

The Chief readies for foes to approach, trying to stay in the thick of battle so as to maximize its aura and use *Commanding Chest Thump* as often as possible.

The Thorny stays near the Chief, making it harder for foes to target the Chief.

Any Scavengers fight fearlessly, working to provide support for their allies.

## ROLE-PLAYING

The vegepygmy look like green plant creatures, except where foul gray-black vines run throughout their bodies. Their eyes have the glazed over stare of the undead. The vegepygmy act like brutish creatures and

are unable to communicate with the PCs.

Within the Chief's Area, the Chief is a horrid brute that slaps its chest and thighs to indicate its displeasure and encourage its allies to fight.

The Witch Doctor wears the tattered remnants of wizard robes. It has trouble understanding PCs and does not remember its former life, though anyone calling it Kayne gives it pause. Whether it stops fighting is up to the DM and should be based on the PCs' actions.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

**Intended Difficulty:** This is a challenging encounter for level 4 PCs. The difficulty can vary depending on how long the PCs are subjected to the shrieker attacks, and whether the vegpeygmyies are able to get surprise and then retreat into the main cave. PCs should use their resources (such as daily powers, any magic items, and many healing surges) to survive.

**Reducing the Challenge:** If the monsters are overwhelming the party in a way that isn't fun, interactions with the Witch Doctor could cause him to cease fighting or even for all vegpeygmyies to call a truce. You could delay when powers like *Vegepygmy Fission* activate, delaying the arrival by a round. You can also lower damage dice by a die size and not use powers even when they recharge.

**Increasing the Challenge:** If the challenge is too low to be fun, increase the number of *Vegepygmy Scavengers* created by powers, increase damage by 2 for all creatures, and add the following power to the Chief (it has the appearance of a strange rod – a grenade launcher):

### ❖ Artifact of the Ancients • Recharge ☐ ☐ ☐

**Attack:** Area burst 2 within 10 (creatures in the burst); +8 vs. Reflex  
**Hit:** 4d10+6 fire damage and target is dazed (save ends).

**Miss:** Half damage.

**Special:** If the attack roll was an odd number the artifact is destroyed and this power can no longer be used on subsequent turns. Otherwise the artifact ceases to function at the end of the encounter.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the undead vegpeygmyies have been defeated or if parley was somehow established with the Witch Doctor. The party can take any number of short rests.

### Disease (Special Rules)

At the end of this encounter, any infected PC must make a saving throw or contract **Antimatter-Corrupted Russet Mold Contagion**. This is a particularly virulent strain... in addition to the usual progression check after an extended rest, they must make a progression check every time they draw a Despair Deck card.

## Gul'gek the Witch Doctor

If the PCs killed the Witch Doctor, it can rise again, as if it had successfully used the *Seed of Fate* power. If given the chance to speak, it tries to share what little it knows.

- It woke recently, perhaps a week.
- It thinks it died once before and somehow came back.
- It is smarter than the others, and is learning about the ancients, receiving strange visions from them.
- The ancients built the world, or at least the part he is discovering.
- Their home seems to be through the door to the north.
- Gul'gek found a gift of the ancients that lets him enter their home (a violet-colored key card that opens the first two doors).
- Gul'gek is doing experiments very carefully, so as to learn of the ancients but not die.
- Gul'gek will show the PCs its lab if they are interested.

### The Door with no Handle

Gul'gek had rubble cleared and stairs carved leading to the home of the ancients (the spaceship). The door at the end is flanked by strange glowing cubes (part of the engine of the spacecraft, which leaked antimatter that corrupted the russet mold virus aboard the spacecraft).

The door is made of a strange very smooth metal and has no handle or marks upon it. The frame is also made of the same metal. One side of the frame has a small slit in it, wrapped in metal (for the keycard). It opens only with the keycard.

### Entering the Home of the Ancients

The first 10x10' area has storage containers. Characters can find the treasure here. The containers bear strange markings in a language that none recognize (and no ritual or spell can decipher) and their construction is incredibly precise and unusual. Continue with Encounter 5.

## TREASURE

A Laser Pistol (*Thingamajigs of the Barrier Peaks* article) can be found in one of the storage containers. If PCs need it, they could find a strange cylinder/potion that restores 2 lost surges for each PC.

## WHAT IF PCs DIE?

If a PC dies, allow them to play Gul'gek. If multiple PCs die, you could allow one of them to rise as a zombie vegpeygmy, using a Hunter or even Chief as a companion. Or, they could rise as a former version of themselves, perhaps losing a power or two and replacing it with a vegpeygmy or zombie power.



## ENCOUNTER 4: UNDEAD VEGEPYGMIES! STATISTICS

<b>Antimatter-Corrupted Shrieker</b>	<b>Level 4 Hazard</b>
Medium Plant	XP 175
<b>Detect Nature</b> DC 21	<b>Initiative</b> +6
<b>HP</b> 57	
<b>AC</b> 16, <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 14, <b>Will</b> — <b>Perception</b> +6	
<b>Speed</b> 1	
<b>Immune</b> all conditions; <b>Resist</b> 5 psychic	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
<b>C Piercing Shriek</b> (fear, psychic) <b>F At-Will</b>	
<i>Attack:</i> Close Burst 10 (enemies in burst); +7 vs. Will	
<i>Hit:</i> 1d8 + 2 psychic damage and target is pushed 2 squares.	
<i>Effect:</i> If no vegepygmy hunters are within the area of effect, 2 vegepygmy hunters enter play at the top of the initiative.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
<i>Trigger:</i> A non-plant creature first enters a square within 10 of the shrieker or attacks the shrieker for the first time.	
<i>Effect:</i> The shrieker uses <i>piercing shriek</i> and then enters initiative.	
COUNTERMEASURES	
<b>F Delay:</b> Stealth DC 14 (move action). <i>Requirement:</i> no enemy has taken an action other than stealth this round. <i>Success:</i> The creature may move its speed without triggering the shrieker.	
<b>F Disable:</b> Nature DC 14 (standard action). <i>Requirement:</i> must be adjacent to the shrieker. <i>Success:</i> The shrieker cannot use <i>piercing shriek</i> until the end of the character's next turn. <i>Second Success:</i> The shrieker is disabled, taking no further actions.	
<b>F Destroy:</b> When the shrieker is reduced to 0 hit points it is destroyed.	

This encounter also features the following creatures found in the *Ecology of the Vegepygmy* article in *Dungeon* 201:

**Vegepygmy Scavenger**  
**Vegepygmy Hunter**  
**Vegepygmy Chief**  
**Vegepygmy Witch Doctor**  
**Thorny**

The creatures are the same, except they gain the undead keyword and gain resist 5 necrotic and vulnerability 5 radiant.

Finally, the Russet Mold Contagion disease has been renamed **Antimatter-Corrupted Russet Mold Contagion** and some of the stages altered as follows:

**Special:** A creature infected by Antimatter-Corrupted Russet Mold Contagion continues to make Endurance checks even when dead, making the checks at the end of each night.

**Stage 1:** The mold is colored rust and black. If the creature is dead, it rises as a Vine Plant Zombie and continues to make checks for disease progression. If an undead creature reaches Stage 0, it no longer is infected but is now dead.

**Stage 2:** If undead, the creature may join others of its kind to become a Vine Zombie Mob or Vine Zombie Cluster (50% chance of each).

**Check (Stage 3):** If an undead creature fails this check, it still becomes a Vegepygmy, but is considered undead and gains resist 5 necrotic and vulnerability 5 radiant.

## ENCOUNTER 4: UNDEAD VEGEPYGMIES! MAP

The PCs enter from the bottom right, starting on the green grassy area. The first two fungi indicate the shriekers. In the area beyond the shriekers, near the pit, is the first set of vegepygmies. After the initial combat they run around the corner, joining the rest of the foes. The northern portion of the map is the spaceship.

**Doors:** The first two doors can be unlocked by the witch doctor. The first two double doors are opened by foes. The final double doors are locked and lead to an adventure of the DM's own devising.

**Blue Sphere:** This indicates the cylinder containing the first undead flumph.

**Tile Sets Needed:** This map primarily uses *DU3 Caves of Carnage* and *ET1 Master Tiles: The Dungeon*.



# COMBAT ENCOUNTER 5: FLUMPH FROM OUTER SPACE...

## Encounter Level 5 (1,000 XP)

In this encounter the adventurers explore the strange home of the ancients (a spaceship). Gul'gek can show them the room he has discovered. He hasn't been able to open the next set of doors, but this room bears a strange water-filled tank. He has been afraid to approach...

*Stepping past the strange antechamber you behold an even more bizarre sight. The walls and floor of this high-ceilinged room are made of a shell-like pale grey material showing no mortar or fastenings. The walls are scalloped, forming niches, and the walls of each niche bears a band of colored studs, spheres, and other geometric protrusions out of some gnome trapsmith's worst nightmares. A section of each wall is clear glass, but nothing but dirt can be seen beyond.*

*The far wall, some 30' distant, bears two large doors. As before, no handle or marking exists outside of a narrow slit on the leftmost doorframe.*

*The fungi that light up the rest of the cave are absent here. Instead, an eerie blue light filters through the water in a floor-to-ceiling cylinder of glass positioned in the center of the room. Suspended unmoving within the water is a pale-skinned tentacled creature with a disk-like body and long eye stalks. The bulbous eyes are closed.*

**Despair Deck:** To represent the unnatural nature of the room, each PC should draw one card from the Despair Deck, suffering the effect.

## EXPLORATION

PCs may investigate the room. Combat begins when they interact with the tank.

**Bands of geometric shapes:** These were once computer banks and ship controls, no longer functioning. You can have fun moving buttons and joysticks and perhaps strange lights and sounds.

**Double Doors:** These cannot be opened from this side. They open once combat begins.

**Gul'gek:** The witch doctor has only walked around the outside of the room, afraid of the tank. It is not sure if the creature is an ancient or not.

**Holding Tank:** Lights in the ceiling cast dim blue light through the column of water, creating strange shadows over the body of the creature within. Combat begins when a PC interacts with the tank. Depending on your players, you may let them do things like tap on the glass, or for more cautious groups it may be

sufficient to trigger the next scene when they are simply adjacent to the tank.

When a character interacts with the tank, read the following:

*The strange creature floats placidly in the fluid, the blue light casting strange shadows as it slowly drifts within the tank. Your action has an effect. The eyelids fly open, the eyes beyond rust-colored. A torturous wail comes from the creature, and then its tentacles pull back, pushing it against the far wall, before coming together to push it forward. Under its disk-like body are dark grey spikes, and the glass shatters as they strike. Water and glass burst into the room as it levitates closer!*

Every PC is subjected to the following surprise attack:

### Shattering Glass • At-Will

**Attack:** Close Burst 2 (creatures in burst); +8 vs. Reflex  
**Hit:** 2d8 + 2 psychic damage and the target is pushed 2 squares.

**Effect:** If a critical hit is scored, that target must draw a card from the Despair Deck, immediately suffering the effect.

Roll for initiative!

## SETUP

This encounter begins with the following:

**1 Zombie Flumph Castigator**

And adds the following at the end of the first round:

**1 Zombie Flumph Castigator**

**4 Zombie Flumph Plummeters**

**2 Zombie Flumph Spurters**

**Map Placement:** Use the same map from Encounter 4, using the room with the blue circle. PCs should be placed on the map anywhere in the room based on what they were doing.

**Chainsaw Sword:** Once the flumph enter, a strange jagged sword (see Treasure, below) can be seen just inside the double doors. A PC adjacent to the square can pick it up with a minor action.

## TACTICS

The Zombie Flumph Castigators try to spread out, using their aura to impose attack penalties. When possible they charge with *Impale from Above* or *Stinking Mess of Rotten Tentacles*.

Zombie Flumph Plummeters use *Impale from Above* when possible and otherwise try to provide other flumph by flanking.

Zombie Flumph Spurters do their best to control the PCs. They isolate a squishy PC with *Repelling Rancid Squirt* and then use *Second Foul-Smelling Squirt* to push allies away. Other flumph then target



the isolated PC. Spurters save *Shunning Squirt* for a bloodied PC so as to prevent them from being healed.

## ROLE-PLAYING

Imagine you were made fun of by gamers for four editions. Imagine that the Owlbear, just as silly, received praise and appeared on multiple covers and in multiple forms. Harness that anger as you role-play the undead flumphs.

These flumphs were once Lawful Good and the brilliant pilots of this portion of the spaceship. The antimatter leak and the virus combined to twist them into horrible undead versions of their former selves. They resent this greatly. They emit horrid flatulence, scream and challenge in an indecipherable language, and curse in agony as they are felled.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

**Intended Difficulty:** This is a challenging encounter for level 4 PCs, especially if they are low on resources. This is intended to be a climactic battle against horrid foes from beyond!

**Reducing the Challenge:** Delay the use of rechargeable powers and provoke with *Impale from Above*. The Spurter can be played less effectively. If necessary, you could shave 10 hit points off of a flumph once they become bloodied.

**Increasing the Challenge:** Consider decreasing the recharge die on powers to recharge more often. Consider having a flumph grab a gun from a hidden panel, then use the *Artifact of the Ancients* power from Encounter 4. A flumph could also use the Chainsaw Sword, perhaps adding a d8 to damage on melee attacks.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the zombie flumphs have been defeated. The party can explore the final room and make a decision on how to proceed.

**Space Jockey:** The room beyond has a large throne-like device. In it are the fossilize remains of a flumph, its tentacles connected to strange dials and levers. Bizarre maps of start can be found in the room, as well as a set of doors that cannot be opened... unless the DM wants to expand upon this adventure!

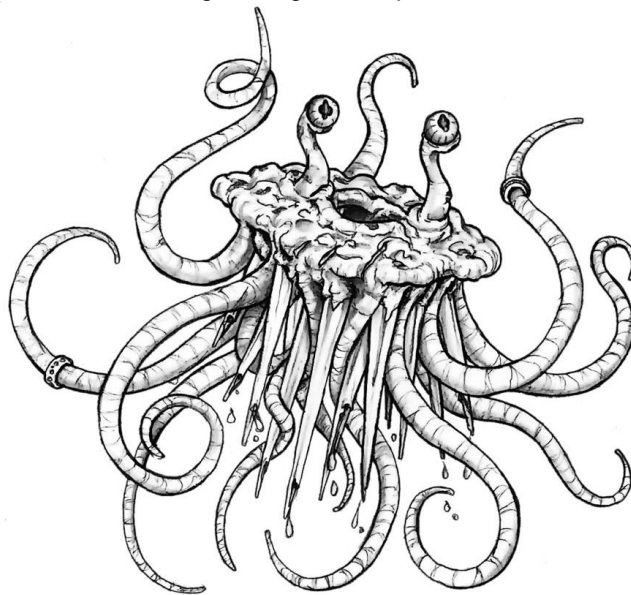
## TREASURE

The level 4 Chainsaw Sword (*Thingamajigs of the Barrier Peaks* article) can be retained at the conclusion of this adventure. In addition, some of the objects in the chamber could be sold to sages for a gold value that fits the DM's needs for the campaign.

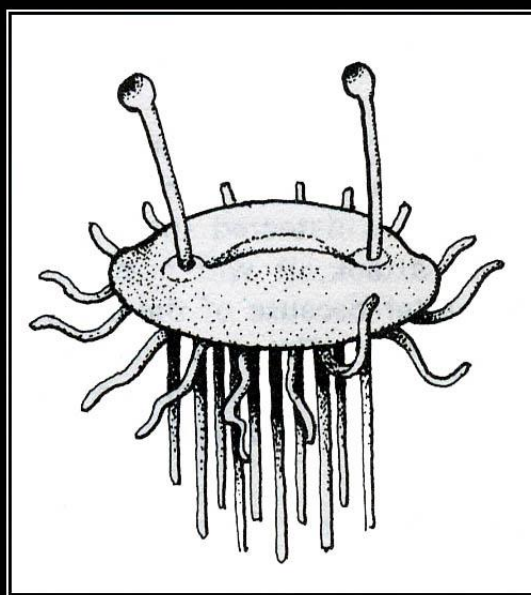
## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The PCs may desire to destroy all traces of the rust mold, and can do so with fire and other means.

The PCs can bring back various artifacts (parts of the ship, the sword, etc.) to Yutani, their wizard employer. She is very pleased, and her friend Weyland may even ask for an expedition to bring back the bodies of the strange creatures they found (or traces of rust mold). Just for study, not for creating flumph clones for the neighboring evil empire...



[Flumph, by Butterfrog](#)



# DUDE, WHAT?

It's bad enough people think we're Satan-worshippers and freaks. We don't need them to think we do drugs, too. And making flumphs "Lawful Good" was just adding insult to injury, really.

## ENCOUNTER 5: FIRST WAVE STATISTICS

Zombie Flumph Castigator		Level 5 Soldier
Small natural magical beast (undead)		XP 200
HP 71; <b>Bloodied</b> 35		Initiative +7
AC 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 17; <b>Reflex</b> 18; <b>Will</b> 17		Perception +4
Speed 1, fly 4		Darkvision
Resist 10 acid, 5 necrotic; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant		
Traits		
<b>Prone Helplessness</b>		
A flumph that is knocked prone becomes helpless and may take no actions (save ends).		
☠ <b>The Stench that Must End • Aura 2</b>		
Any non-flumph creature in the aura takes a -2 penalty to attack any creature other than the flumph castigator.		
Standard Actions		
④ <b>Underbelly Spikes • At-Will</b>		
Attack: +10 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d10 + 8 damage.		
<b>Impale from Above • Recharge</b> when bloodied		
Effect: The flumph charges with Underbelly Spikes, ending its movement one square above the target. This attack is a critical hit on a natural attack roll of 17 or higher. If the attack is successful, the target also takes ongoing 10 acid and necrotic (save ends).		
☠ <b>Stinking Mess of Rotten Tentacles • Recharge</b> ☠ II		
Attack: Close Burst 1 (enemies in burst); +8 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 2d8 + 3 acid and necrotic damage and the target is dazed until the end of the flumph's next turn. No ally of the target may voluntarily end their movement adjacent to the target while it is dazed.		
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 15 (+4)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 12 (+3)	Cha 7 (+0)
Alignment unaligned		Languages Lawful good version of common

Zombie Flumph Plummer		Level 5 Minion Skirmisher
Small natural magical beast (undead)		XP 50
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +11
AC 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17; <b>Reflex</b> 18; <b>Will</b> 17		Perception +3
Speed 1, fly 4		Darkvision
Resist 10 acid, 5 necrotic; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant		
Traits		
<b>Prone Helplessness</b>		
A flumph that is knocked prone becomes helpless and may take no actions (save ends).		
Standard Actions		
④ <b>Underbelly Spikes • At-Will</b>		
Attack: +10 vs. AC		
Hit: 6 damage.		
<b>Impale from Above • Recharge</b> when bloodied		
Effect: The flumph charges with Underbelly Spikes, ending its movement one square above the target. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. If the attack is successful, the target also takes ongoing 10 acid and necrotic damage (save ends).		
Triggered Actions		
☠ <b>Fear of Death (acid) • Encounter</b>		
Trigger: The flumph is hit by an attack that would reduce the flumph to 0 hit points		
Target: The creature attacking the flumph		
Attack (Immediate Reaction): +8 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 8 acid damage. The flumph then dies from fright, making a sad sighing noise.		
Skills Stealth +11		
Str 7 (+0)	Dex 18 (+6)	Wis 13 (+3)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 13 (+3)	Cha 7 (+0)
Alignment unaligned		Languages Lawful good version of common

Zombie Flumph Spurter		Level 5 Controller
Small natural magical beast (undead)		XP 200
HP 61; <b>Bloodied</b> 30		Initiative +9
AC 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17; <b>Reflex</b> 18; <b>Will</b> 17		Perception +8
Speed 1, fly 4		Darkvision
Resist 10 acid, 5 necrotic; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant		
Traits		
<b>Prone Helplessness</b>		
A flumph that is knocked prone becomes helpless and may take no actions (save ends).		
Standard Actions		
④ <b>Tainted Acidic Tentacles (acid, necrotic) • At-Will</b>		
Attack: +10 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d8 + 8 acid and necrotic damage and the target is pushed 1.		
☠ <b>Repelling Rancid Squirt (acid, necrotic) • Encounter</b>		
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 1d8 + 10 acid damage and ongoing 5 acid and necrotic damage (save ends). Saving throws against this effect are at a -2 penalty. While the target is subject to the ongoing damage, no ally of the target may willingly end their movement within 5 squares of the target.		
☠ <b>Rancid Spurt • At-Will</b>		
Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 1d8 + 8 acid damage and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).		
Minor Actions		
<b>Second Foul-Smelling Squirt • Encounter</b>		
Effect: The Flumph Spurter chooses one target suffering from ongoing acid damage. All non-flumph creatures within 5 of the target must make a saving throw at -2 or be pushed 3 away from the target.		
☠ <b>Shunning Squirt • Encounter</b>		
Attack: +8 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 1d10 + 8 damage and the target is subject to a disgusting stench (save ends). While subject to the stench the creature cannot be the target of any ally's power.		
Skills Stealth +11		
Str 7 (+0)	Dex 18 (+6)	Wis 13 (+3)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 13 (+3)	Cha 11 (+2)
Alignment unaligned		Languages Lawful good version of common

## ENCOUNTER 5: FLUMPH STAND-UP TOKENS

The following tokens may be printed to create miniatures for the Flumph. Cut each long strip, then fold in half and tuck the grey areas underneath so as to make a double-sided tent. One extra flumph is provided in case it is needed.

