

Durkenstaff's New King

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Introduction

A TTRPG adventure compatible with Dungeons and Dragons 5e adventure for a party of level 8 characters.

The party find themselves on the road to Durkenstaff - a town known for the ores it digs out of the ground. However there is a disturbance in the valley and the native wildlife seem to be spooked. A shadow walks amongst the trees while a second casts shadows down below as the valley near Durkenstaff has now become hunting ground for alpha predators. What will the party be able to do against such odds?

Trouble brewing at Durkenstaff

Returning Scouts



She looked at the mountains with the worry of what tomorrow might bring. It had been a day since the hunters had left to investigate the mine. Being the best at tracking and moving over the rough terrain of the mountains they volunteered to head out first to at least investigate what had happened. Many of the villagers' husbands, wives and children worked in the mines nearby, digging for iron primarily. However, since they had left at the start of last week they hadn't returned yet and they were long past due.

Concerned that something had happened they had organised a search party to go and investigate. However they were now overdue.

"They're here!" a voice called from a nearby watchtower and those that remained in the village rushed to the entrance. However the sight of the hunters returning without those that worked in the mind caused the village to let out a collective sob. But not for Jandice. Her son, Randal, ran up to her with his bow on his back, tired but still alive.

"We didn't find them. Anything really. All of them are gone. All their carts empty, their tools laying there in the mud. Nothing. Not even a sign of them in their tents. Everything was intact. But there was something I did notice. I slipped off when the others looked up the path towards the top of the mountain. They've found a new tunnel. a whole new part of the mine to dig in. But it's weird, it doesn't look like it was created properly. Half opened without the normal supports like what father used to talk about." He opened his mouth to continue but a roar broke across the village. One that curdled blood and caused every hair to stand on end. A roar that came from up the mountain.

NPC's:

- Jandice Baker
- Randal Baker

Encounter: Talks with Durkenstaff Villagers

Creature: N/A

Map - N/A

Talking to Jandice and Randal Baker

Greeting the party with a warm cup of broth and a chunk of bread she sits down at the table opposite them and explains the situation. "It's not just the income from selling the ore from the mines, it's our family. We rely on them for protection as well as helping around the village. They are our strongest and fittest villagers and we will be lost without them." she began, waiting for the adventurers to drink some of the meagre soup.

She gripped the hand of her son, Randal who stood next to her. "A week ago our miners went to work. They normally stay up there for five or so days and return for just as many to relax and help sell the wares. But on the sixth day when they didn't return we sent out our hunters to go find them and bring them home. We thought they'd been attacked by wolves and bears and were holed up somewhere. But when the hunters came back they couldn't find any sign of them. Surely they have missed something. I can't believe that they would just vanish like that." Jandice stood up and walked off towards the pot to stir it.

Randal sat down in front of the party. "Jandice the wise is what the others call her. A healer of sorts but she doesn't always listen to counsel. I'm Randal, Jandice is my mother. Without the villagers from the mine we won't last the winter. The others don't want me to tell you this, they fear that you will run off and take what you want from the mine. But there was something strange in there. A new passage. Now I help the miners occasionally, escorting them back and bringing them food. They would have told me about a new mine." he began, pausing to look around at the others in the hall.

"I fear that they entered the new passage and got lost. Or something. I know we don't have much to offer but can you hear out our request? Durkenstaff's request?" he paused for a moment. "I'd start with the mines. We searched the rest of it. I'll talk to the villagers and mother. I'm sure we can make it worth your while if you're willing to help us find our families."

Trek into hills

Randal agrees to take the party to the mines, it's a track from the village leading up into the mountains. The trek into the mountains isn't a dangerous one but Randal explains that the game and animals are acting strange and have been for about a week.

NPC's:

- Randal Baker

Encounter: Encounter linked to the scene:

Creature: Random encounter

Map - N/A

Random encounter with forest creatures. They seem to be afraid and look to be aggressive out of this fear.

The Mines of Durkenstaff

The Miners discovery

The mines of Durkenstaff is a mine dug into the side of the mountain. A large hole being enough for large beasts of burden to haul the mined materials out is the main entrance. However the tents, lean-to's and camp sites where the miners would rest lay deserted without a great deal of evidence into how or why the miners and villagers have disappeared.

Randal shows the party around the area and to the mine entrance but he doesn't go in. He explains that there are a few short entrances to the mine but one large new one has opened up recently that the miners had started to explore that appeared to be a cave system that led deeper into the mountain.

Randal then leaves the party saying he needs to return back to the village.

NPC's:

- Randal Baker

Encounter: The underground river

Creature: Roper, Stirges

Map - 324SuDuLoMi

A Long rocky path and cave that has a few chambers off it. The first path to the right has a 'secret' path up to another little area where you may choose to hide something. Perhaps a surviving miner or two who could have some wisdom for the party.

The water is deep, Maybe not infinitely deep but deep enough that you are at risk of drowning if you get stuck in there with heavy armour. Another hazard is the pit to the end of the left passage where I wouldn't mind this being even fifty feet deep. Deep enough that to slip would mean death.

1 Roper ambushes in one of the caverns, stirges fly out of the top left cave in the floor.

The Lair of the King

NPC's:

- Villagers

Encounter: The King and Queen

Creature: 1 Stone Giant, 1 Chimera

Map - 324ThDuCa

The Chimera will attack first, after suffering one attack greater than 20 damage or three attacks (which ever first), she will roar and the Stone giant will come.

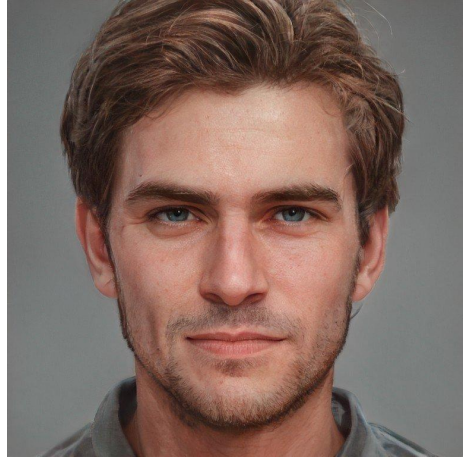
The Chimera will try and fight around the Stone giant but when her fire breath has recharged she will retreat and fly up into the air to flyby

Lore & NPCs

Jandice Baker



Randal Baker



Lore - Prisoners

Groggy and sore, Farden looked around the dark and gloom around him. Bones of animals litter the cavern they found themselves in and the slow realisation that his nightmare was real sunk in. Luckily the creature was gone but evidence of its appetite was strewn around the room. Half eaten cow carcasses, a horse's leg propped up against the wall and bones everywhere.

But as Farden looked around the room he could barely make out the shapes of his fellow miners in cages much like his. Feeling around the confines of the cage he found a shard of broken stone, or bone and he started to cut at the bindings of the cage. Little by little the strands of fibre broke apart from their fatty resin that bound them in place. His freedom close, he pushed the cage beam away and he wriggled out.

"Farden. Don't. The creature only just left it will be back soon." his fellow miners warned as he snuck around looking at the bindings on the other cages. All the miners had some form of injury and they were weak, but alive. Moving towards the exit he looked around the corner and seeing nothing but a large open cavern. "Don't worry. I will get help"

Watching from a ledge nearby the human wandered out into the cavern. Licking its lips, the creature crawled down the wall, its claws biting into the soft stone of the walls. The look of terror flashing on the human's face brought the creature delight as it skulked forwards, its tail lashing in anticipation. Remembering the orders it had received it didn't want to kill it, but she couldn't let the creature wander the mountain king's new home could it?

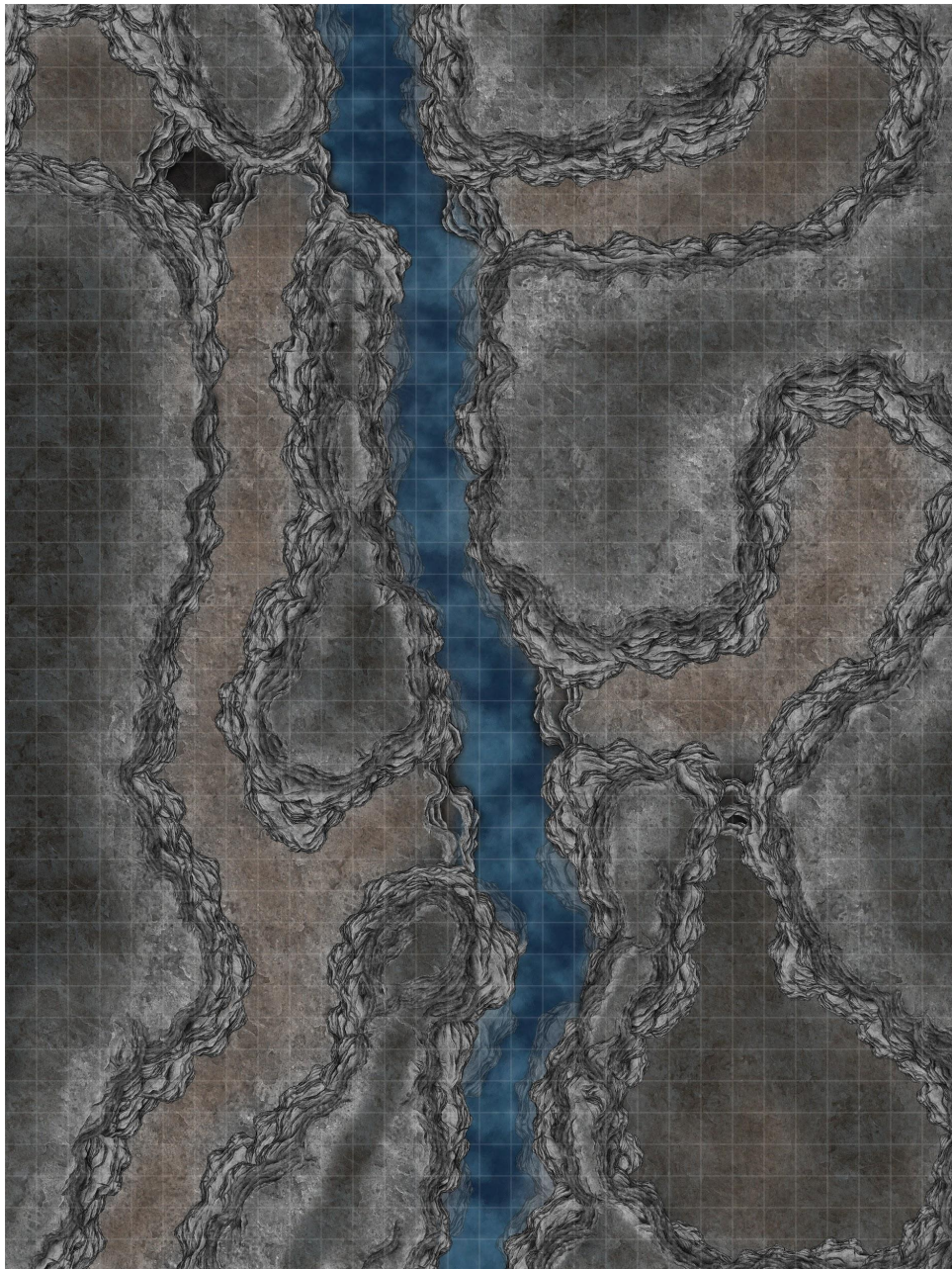
With a sudden burst of speed the creature pounced onto the human, the sounds of a few bones breaking brought a shiver of delight over

the malice filled creature. The urge to devour it was immense but it carefully grabbed the human and placed it back in the cave where the others were kept.

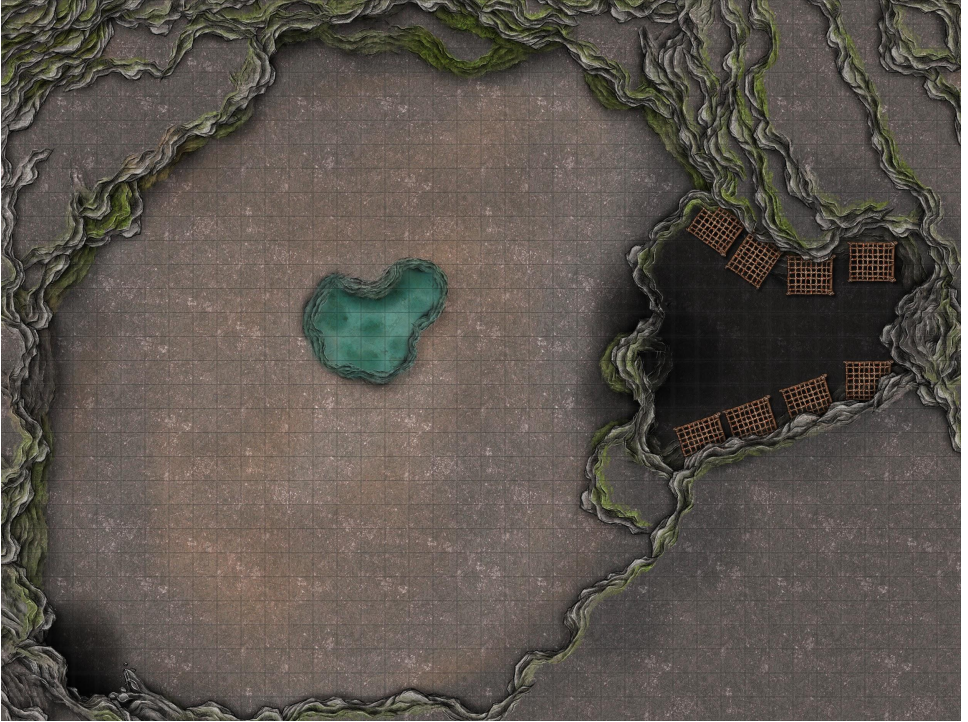
"Well done Rak'shamaneth. I found more treasure of what these humans had tried to hide from you." the mountain king said, his voice vibrating stone and air alike. Striding over to the king Rak'shamaneth looked at another chest filled with gold that was placed at her feet. She practically purred with delight. This arrangement was working very well indeed for her.

Maps

324SuDuLoMi



324ThDuCa



A large cavern with a small cave on one side is known as the Durkenstaff cavern. A hole in the top of the cavern allows bats and birds to fly in if they dare but also sky access for the Chimera. It also brings rain water into a pool that's featured in the middle of the cavern floor.

Tall craggy cliff faces litter the walls of the cavern with platforms built into the side. This gives plenty of vantage points for archers or Chimeras to perch and watch as prey enters their vision.

Monsters

Adventure Encounters

Stirge

STIRGE

Tiny Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Blood Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the stirge attaches to the target. While attached, the stirge doesn't attack. Instead, at the start of each of the stirge's turns, the target loses 5 (1d4 + 3) hit points due to blood loss.

The stirge can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. It does so after it drains 10 hit points of blood from the target or the target dies. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the stirge.

Roper

ROPER

Large Monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

False Appearance. While the roper remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal cave formation, such as a stalagmite.

Grasping Tendrils. The roper can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). Destroying a tendril deals no damage to the roper, which can extrude a replacement tendril on its next turn. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it.

Spider Climb. The roper can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The roper makes four attacks with its tendrils, uses Reel, and makes one attack with its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the roper can't use the same tendril on another target.

Reel. The roper pulls each creature grappled by it up to 25 ft. straight toward it.

Chimera (Rak'shamaneth)

CHIMERA

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10 + 48)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages understands Draconic but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The chimera makes three attacks: one with its bite, one with its horns, and one with its claws. When its fire breath is available, it can use the breath in place of its bite or horns.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Horns. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon head exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 31 (7d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Stone Giant (King Gorath)

STONE GIANT

Huge giant, neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 126 (11d12 + 55)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +8, Wis +4

Skills Athletics +12, Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Giant

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Stone Camouflage. The giant has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant makes two greatclub attacks.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

REACTIONS

Rock Catching. If a rock or similar object is hurled at the giant, the giant can, with a successful DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, catch the missile and take no bludgeoning damage from it.

Random Encounters

Brown Bear

BROWN BEAR

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 34 (4d10 + 12)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Wolf

WOLF

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.