

When the quarrymen at Sylphare stone quarry unearth a cavern the excitement of adventure quickly disappears as each day another one of their brethren vanishes into thin air. But the owners of the Quarry, the Sylphare family, need to keep the quarry open so they have sent for mercenaries to come and defend their assets.

But, those who have answered the call will find that they have bitten off more than they can chew as some the picks and shovels have awoken a hunger in the dark that feeds with a vengeful hunger.

DM: (Beneath the stone mine lies a tomb where a previous civilisation sealed away an evil spirit. The quarrymen have opened up quarry to where the evil was trapped and this sinkhole, previously known as the Chilled Well, and it's started to lure in people into its depths to feed upon to regain its strength.)

As the parties look for work in the village of Briss they stare at the nearly empty job board and try to avoid the one request for aid that is left on it. "Adventurers wanted to remove rat infestation in the general store's basement. Ten gold pieces as payment.- See Abigail Piebald." It hadn't been long since their last job so they could afford to be picky but the caravan out of here would cost them nearly ten gold pieces and there wasn't much going on in this village.

As they reached for the job a panting messenger ran to the board, muttering "pardon, 'scuse me." before he impaled a small square of paper upon a nail on the board.

"Wanted. Adventurers and warriors to explore a mysterious cave discovered at the Sylphare Quarry. Harry Sylphare, head to the Sylphare masons company, to provide a generous reward if the cave can be made safe enough for the quarry to resume business. Promptness awarded with a portion of payment in advance.- Harry Sylphare."

DM: (Harry intends to pay fifty gold pieces but he is desperate. He will pay one tenth on arrival and the rest upon completion. He doesn't know what is wrong, only that he has lost a few miners and he suspects they are trying to explore the caves for their own wealth. He wants to discover any wealth first so he can profit more and expand from simple Stone Quarrying. For reference see, 428MoSyQu)

The party travels and meets with Harry Sylphare who reveals that his workers are going missing. "They are greedy you see, most of them can't be trusted and they are getting lost and getting turned around in the cave seeking their own wealth. Others believe that it's a curse or something unseemly but that's just superstition if you ask me. No, I need a sensible approach. You." he began.

"If you can go into the cave, clear these rumours that it's haunted or cursed or whatever then I can get the quarry back to working order. Also, I am willing to offer a bonus if you find anything interesting in there. I always had a feeling that there was something more to this place. So if there's anything interesting like, I don't know, veins of gold or mythril, then come tell me but keep it quiet." the greed in his eyes could not be ignored.

DM: (The party are introduced to Thomas Ruggery, the senior miner now that several had given up due to 'superstition' or going walking in the caves. He guards the entrance to the cave and advises the party that just last night he lost his friend, Reggie (refer to 428TuQuSy))

"I suspect he went into the cave, the damned fool." Thomas began. "But you got to know that Reggie wasn't normally like that. Happy with his lot in life he was. But," he paused as if considering whether to mention something or not, "Last night he was acting strangely as if listening or watching something just within the cave. I told him to quit it and

focus on the watch and he did for a while. But then it got so very cold and when I went to get more wood for the first that's when Reggie disappeared."

The next morning the party entered the cave and used the ropes that had been used to explore the early parts of the cave. Finding a series of shuffling footsteps they followed a passageway deeper into the cavern as there were indications that one, or more, people had climbed deeper into a giant sinkhole. They found evidence of people too, a burnt out torch, a shoe and a broken lantern. But then the disturbed dust began to get less and less.

As they followed the worn trail deeper into the caverns below the quarry they followed the small path of disturbed dust. Eventually the passage began to get colder and the walls of the passage began to look as if a thin layer of disturbed rime had set in. However, the cavern wall gave way to the first of dozens of hunched shapes. Coming out of the wall was the humanoid sized statue of a skeletal man.

hunched over he was shorter and the facial structure was more pronounced in stone than it would have been in life. An expression of pain mixed with joy gripped its face as it looked further into the cavern.

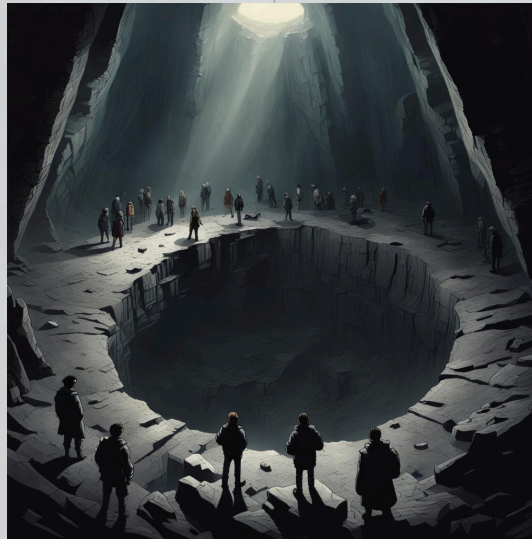
DM: (These statues are part of the ritual to keep the evil spirit trapped. However it may prevent the creature from passing by them but it won't stop people from being lured as its evil influence has found a way to pass.)

The party find themselves standing in a low ceilinged chamber where a constant drip could be heard. It was near freezing within the chamber and every breath they took created a cloud of steam. A faint blue light could be seen in the darkness of the cavern, a large throne glowed as dozens of runes and sigils of binding, warding and protection fizzled and winked as if the magic that sustained them was waning. In the faint blue light, and the light they carried with them, they could make out the scraps of miners' uniforms on the ground near the throne along with dozens of other bones.

The light caught on pools of water which flickered and moved as if they themselves were alive. As they waited a skull fell over near the altar-like throne and rolled slowly away from it before sinking beneath the surface of a dark and cold pool of water. However several bones started to shift, vibrate and move as they floated slowly to the air, the lights from the runes and sigils winked out of existence all at once and the bones started to form the rough shape of a creature. Cold mist wrapped around the bones revealing a creature half made of shadow-mist with the bones of its victims giving its form substance. A presence in their mind, beckoning them to join it by the altar touched their mind. A whisper, a promise of power and salvation from the cruelty of the world.

Blue light from the altar's carved runes and sigils burst forth and the energy caused the creature's form to waver, the bone falling to the ground as it sank lower. The presence instantly disappears. But as the bones clattered to the cold stone the creature disappeared, sinking into shadow and only the rippled, rustled and clatter of moving bones and rocks indicated where the creature was as it stalked its new prey.

DM: (Refer to map on next page, see also 428ThSyQuCa, the creature should be a Challenging encounter as it is incorporeal, refer to 428FrDeCh for guidance. It will use hit and run tactics primarily relying on its unsubstantial form to move around. However, there are swarms of ancient piranha in the pools of water, these are Trivial or barely challenging for the party.)



The Chilled Well - 428SuChWe

©2024 BrazenWolfe Tabletop, All Rights Reserved, Permission Granted to copy for personal use.

