

# Catfished

The desperate villagers of Raven's Breach have hired a group of intrepid adventurers to find two missing teen boys; the eighth and ninth of their children to go missing in the last six months. While no bodies have been found, hunters from the village have found evidence leading to a dwarven mine in the mountains 18 miles to the north. The villagers are perplexed, as the dwarves have never been aggressive. Some suspect that whoever abducted their children may have also brought harm upon the miners, who've not traded with the villagers in some time.

**1:** The mine entrance is overgrown by saplings and vines. There is a small void in the foliage, which would allow passage for an animal or small humanoid. Footprints in the dirt lead inside. The mine is enveloped in darkness more than a few feet beyond the entrance.

**2:** The door to this chamber has been smashed in. The words "Foreman's Quarters" are carved in simple Dwarven script on its face. The room has been ransacked, and there is no sign of the foreman. A cursory search turns up a small cameo of a dwarf woman, an empty footlocker, and the foreman's ledger. The last entry is from three months prior.

**3:** This dusty barracks holds living quarters for twelve, including cots and footlockers. Six heavily decomposed dwarf bodies sit slumped around a table in the corner. Playing cards, steins, and plates with remnants of a meal are scattered about the tabletop. A thorough inspection reveals that the steins contain dried bits of skin from poisonous berries.

**4:** This kitchen nook is separated from the barracks by a wooden partition. There are three more dwarf bodies on the floor between a large wood burning stove and several casks of ale. If a player drinks from the tapped cask, they will be poisoned and fall unconscious after three minutes.

**a:** Another dwarf body lies here. As they near the body, the players have a chance to spot a small figure with green skin kneeling over it, then darting down the hall to the East.

**5:** This storage room contains 16 crates of dried meat, and flour. Water skins hang from two of a dozen iron hooks along the wall. Ten more appear to be missing.

**b:** An armed bear trap covered in dust.

**6:** "Powder Room" is written in Dwarven above the door to this room. Inside are 22 barrels of blasting powder. Any open flame or fire spell in this room will cause ignition. A detonation collapses the ceiling, and blasts fire down the halls as far as areas 4 and 10.

**7:** A natural cavern carved by water. Players should watch for falling stalagmites.

**c:** An open container of dried meat sits in an alcove next to a bedroll and a water skin. A pale, thin, seemingly-dead dwarf lies on the bedroll. If the players investigate the body, the dwarf will grab a knife and jab it at the closest player. He is clearly frightened and weak, and pleads with the players to leave him alone. If they gain his trust, he will reveal that he and his friends were poisoned. He did not die, but was rendered unconscious. He awoke to monsters ransacking the barracks. Gravely ill, he escaped to this alcove and has been recuperating and preparing to make an escape. When asked about his attackers, he will say it was "the goblins" that poisoned his mates. He says they rarely venture through areas 7 and 8, as the soft calcite ceiling could fall without warning, and that they're "smart little bastards". He also warns them of his "noisy neighbors" to the east.

**8:** A continuation of the previous cavern. A swarm of bats will attack the players if disturbed.

## NOTES:

All ceilings are 6' unless otherwise noted.

Every 15 minutes, roll 1d6. On a 6, two "goblins" on patrol will enter the area occupied by the players, except areas 7 and 8. They carry torches, except while in areas 6 and 10.

The berries are hallucinogenic and large doses are deadly. Fire or cold water will end the hallucinations, which last for 30 minutes. Players who see the "goblins" up-close should quickly realize they are human children. If any of the children are killed, the players will not be paid upon their return to the village, and may be attacked by distraught parents.

**9:** Small pinholes of daylight shine through the ceiling in this cavern. If they remain quiet, the players can hear roaring water from the chamber to the north. Players with better hearing may catch the sound of voices over the roar.

**10:** A massive salt quarry with a 10' ceiling and scaffolds along the perimeter. If the players chased the small figure from area A to this room, they'll encounter several trip-wires strung between support columns (difficult to notice, nearly impossible in the dark). If any player trips over or moves too quickly into a wire, one end will pull a steel rasp over a piece of flint, causing a spark which ignites a powder trail fuse. Any errant fire spells in this area have a good chance of causing ignition. Once lit, the powder trail will burn until it encounters several barrels of blasting powder stacked near the entrance to area 9. Detonation will seal this room off from area 9, and cause other consequences at the GM's discretion, including concussive damage to the players.

**11:** "Extreme danger" is written in dwarven script on the wall leading from area 6 to this room. Scaffolds line the perimeter of the room. A mother wolf and four cubs have taken refuge in the collapsed tunnel in the northeast corner.

**d:** A collapsed tunnel. Clearing it by hand will take at least two days. Blasting is possible, but should be met with dangerous consequences.

**12:** Soft sunlight beams through a jagged fissure in the ceiling of this cavern. A waterfall of frigid glacial meltwater flows through the fissure into an underground lake (14). Centuries of erosion has made the lake quite deep. The water flows toward the east, before disappearing under the rock. Soft green moss grows around the edge of the lake, fed by the mist and gentle light. Rubbing the moss causes green stains on skin and clothing. Speaking over the roar is difficult without yelling. A crude rope bridge spans the lake.

**13:** Several tents made of scavenged scraps and a large campfire. Seven to nine humanoids with green skin can be seen dancing around the fire and chanting. They are not goblins, but the missing human children. They range from 8 to 17 years old.

A hog-tied dwarf is next to the fire. A second dwarf lies hog-tied in one of the tents next to several baskets of purple berries. He can speak, but will range from incoherent babbling to terrified screaming if engaged. If allowed to sober up, he will introduce himself as the foreman, and ask for help escaping. After chanting for several minutes, the children will lead the first dwarf toward the rope bridge, cut his bindings, and shove him into the water. A giant catfish will surface to eat the weakened and struggling dwarf as the children cheer.

If the children discover the players, they will arm themselves with makeshift spears, but will not attack unless provoked. They appear frightened of the players, except for the oldest girl, who regards them with callous indifference. She keeps the others dosed with berries and acts as their mother. She will not give up willingly, and must be incapacitated for transport back to the village. The others trust her, and will follow most of her orders.

**14:** A huge, ancient catfish calls this lake home. If anyone falls into the water, the fish will attack by grabbing the victim and dragging them to the bottom as it tries to swallow them.

