Exploration Challenges

Some exploration challenges are straightforward sequences like crossing a rickety bridge, escaping a patch of quicksand, or bypassing a dangerous trap. Others involve prevailing against massive snowstorms, negotiating supernatural phenomena, or traversing seas of sandy dunes.

Tiers

An adventuring party should be expected to trivially overcome exploration challenges from a lower tier of play. While the exploration challenge might be narrated in order to give more flavor to the journey, there is no need to individually run lower-tier exploration challenges.

Challenge

Exploration challenges have challenge ratings, much like monsters do, which helps the Narrator to determine appropriate encounters for the party and how much experience is rewarded for an exploration challenge successfully overcome.

  Each exploration challenge also includes two Difficulty Classes. The first is used when individual ability checks or saving throws are being made, and the second is used for group checks.

Area

An entire region is sometimes an exploration challenge — arctic expanses, demanding deserts, or turbulent seas — and others might relate to the immediate vicinity. Each exploration challenge includes a suggested size and the typical time to traverse it at a normal pace. The Narrator should use a map of the world the game is set in to determine the appropriate area for any exploration challenge.

Immediate. This exploration challenge affects the immediate area around the party; it's likely about 100 feet or so across, but is almost certainly under 1 mile. It takes less than 1 hour to traverse at normal pace.

Local. This exploration challenge is up to 3 miles (1 league) across, and takes 1 hour to traverse at normal pace.

Intermediate. This exploration challenge is up to 10 miles across and takes 3 hours to traverse at normal pace.

Greater. This is the distance a party can usually walk in a day at normal pace, and is up to 30 miles across.

Region. This exploration challenge covers the entire region the party is currently traveling in. Its exact size depends on the size of the region.

TABLE: EXPLORATION CHALLENGE SIZES

AREA	SIZE	CRAWL (1 MPH)	SLOW/WAGON (2MPH)	NORMAL (3 MPH)	FAST/MOUNTED (4 MPH)	GALLOP (8 MPH)
Immediate	Up to 1 mile	Less than 1 hour	Less than 1 hour	Less than 1 hour	Less than 1 hour	Less than 1 hour
Local	Up to 3 miles	6 hours	1 1/2 hours	1 hour	1 hour	Less than 1 hour
Intermediate	Up to 10 miles	2 days	5 hours	3 hours	2 hours	1 hour
Greater	Up to 30 miles	1 week	2 days	1 day	6 hours	4 hours
Region	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies

Running Exploration Challenges

Exploration challenges are designed to be free-form, allowing the Narrator a great deal of latitude when adjudicating them. The exploration challenges in this book contain guidelines to assist the Narrator in this task, but they are not meant to be binding or constraining.

Each entry details the various traits of the exploration challenge, what its effects are, and what the outcome of certain ability checks or actions might be.

Suggested Solutions. Each exploration challenge contains one or more example ways to resolve it. Players are encouraged to come up with inventive solutions, and a clever idea or an appropriate expenditure of a spell or resource can be rewarded with success, or with advantage on one or more checks made.

Travel Time. Many exploration challenges include effects which are dependent on the amount of time spent overcoming them. The party's travel pace (normal travel pace is 3 miles per hour, slow is 2 miles per hour, and fast is 4 miles per hour) and the exploration challenge's size should be established as normal in order to determine how long the adventurers remain in the area. Some exploration challenges affect the party's travel pace, or are affected by the pace at which the party moves.

Outcomes. Each exploration challenge also lists some possible outcomes. These outcomes are graded into four categories, from critical failures up to critical successes (see Exploration Challenges: Success and Failure). It is entirely up to the Narrator which outcome the adventurers qualify for, depending on the actions they take. An inventive solution might immediately qualify them for a critical success, as might a group check in which everybody succeeds, and a critical failure might be triggered by a disastrous decision, but the Narrator ultimately decides what the outcome of an exploration challenge is and what rewards are granted or penalties accrued.

Some results — especially when a group check has been made — may affect the entire party, while others may affect only a single adventurer. The Narrator should determine who is affected based on the actions being taken.

Failing an exploration challenge does not halt the journey, but it does usually mean that the adventurers suffer some kind of penalty. Typical penalties include the loss of time or Supply, or gaining fatigue or strife, while rewards include

Boons and Discoveries, as well as experience.

Avoiding. At the Narrator's discretion, some exploration challenges might be avoided by backtracking and taking a different route; if the party chooses to do this, they will typically lose some travel time and will not earn any experience for the exploration challenge, but they do not have to face it. The time to avoid an exploration challenge is equal to quadruple the time it would normally take to traverse the area.

Telling a Story. Exploration challenges are designed to be inserted seamlessly into an adventure. The Narrator should never announce that an exploration challenge is in progress, or present the players with a list of options or potential actions.

Exploration Challenges: Success and Failure

The outcomes of exploration challenges range from the very worst results to the very best.

Critical Failure. A disastrous decision or action, a group check in which everybody fails, or a single check which results in a Critical Failure. This often results in penalties such as fatigue or strife, time, or loss of Supply. No experience is gained.

Failure. A bad decision or action, a group check in which half or less of the party succeed, or a single check which results in a failure. This often results in penalties such as loss of Supply or time. No experience is gained.

Success. An appropriate solution, a group check in which more than half the party succeed, or a single check which results in a success. The party gains experience equal to half the exploration challenge's CR.

Critical Success. An optimal solution, a group check in which the whole party succeeds, or a single check which results

in a critical success. The party gains experience equal to the exploration challenge's CR, and often a boon or discovery.

Group Checks

Group checks take place when the entire party is engaged in a single task. In a group check, every player makes an ability check. If more than half of the group succeeds in their check, the group as a whole succeeds. If half or less of the group succeed, the group as a whole fails.

When an exploration challenge mentions a group check, the Narrator should allow adventurers to use different skills or abilities where appropriate. Not all adventurers have to make the same check, as long as each is contributing in some way.

Group Criticals. A critical success is achieved when all members of the party succeed in their checks, while a critical failure takes place if all members of the party fail.

Acid Field

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP); DC 17/15
Area Local (1 hour)
Strange black spots mar the sparse ground ahead. After a few moments of observation, it's clear why — acidic fluid erupts from fissures in the ground!

Acidic Spray. Every half hour spent traveling in this area a corrosive geyser explodes near the party sending acid in a 60-foot radius. Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) acid damage on a failure.

Nature. A Nature check reveals to the party that their Supply is vulnerable to the corrosive atmosphere.

Protecting Provisions. An Engineering check (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) allows each adventurer to adequately protect any

Supply they are carrying. This check must be made before the Supply is destroyed.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival check is made to adequately protect the adventurers and safely traverse the area.

Critical Failure. The party loses 6 (2d4 + 1) Supply to the corrosive atmosphere, and each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue from acid burns.

Failure. The party loses 2 Supply to the corrosive atmosphere and any adventurer that failed their check suffers a level of fatigue from acid burns.

Success. The adventurers make it through the area successfully.

Critical Success. The adventurers make it through the area successfully and they notice something important. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Blinding Blizzard

0th tier (weather)
Challenge 1 (200 XP); DC 13/13
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Heavy snowfall blasts the countryside reducing visibility to just a few feet. Travel through the area is even harder than usual as slips, trips, and falls are difficult to see.

High Winds. Ranged attacks are made with disadvantage, unattended and poorly secured objects fly off in the wind, and flying is nearly impossible (requiring an Acrobatics check each minute to avoid plummeting to the ground).

Intense Cold. At the end of every hour spent traveling through this area, a creature makes a Constitution saving throw (DC 5 + 2 per previous save) or it takes 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Reduced Visibility. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 10 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival check allows the party to find or construct shelter and outlast the storm. Alternatively an Athletics check (or Animal Handling if mounted) can be used to outrun the storm.

Critical Failure. The party loses 5 (2d4) hours of travel time facing the storm head on. In addition, each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply that's dropped or ripped away by the wind then quickly covered in sweeping layers of snow.

Failure. The adventurers lose a day of travel as they get lost due to covered landmarks, disorientation from the storm, and the need to move more slowly at times to avoid danger.

Success. The adventurers either find a small alcove and can wait out the storm in relative comfort, losing 5 (2d4) hours, or successfully outrun it losing no time.

Critical Success. The winds shift and the worst of the storm passes the adventurers by.

Bridge of Sorrow

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP); DC 19/16
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A narrow bridge made of polished black marble crosses a deep and fast-flowing river ahead. Ominous clouds cover the sky in a 2-mile radius, casting the area into shadow. Each adventurer feels an urge to plunge into the water, and the entire area dampens their very spirits.

Suppressing Aura. All magic within the shadow of the clouds is suppressed (as if in an antimagic field). In addition, each of the adventurers sees visions of their worst fears reflected in the bridge.

Possible Solutions

The bridge is physically safe to cross, as long as the adventurers can resist the urges tugging at their minds. A group check focused on bolstering the party's resolve is needed. For example, a Performance check to lift the party's spirits, a Religion check to

recall and recite an inspiring prayer, or a Wisdom check to keep the oppressive magic at bay

Alternatively a boat or raft and a group Survival check (rolled with advantage for any characters with proficiency with both Survival and water vehicles) can be made to cross the river without setting foot on the bridge.

Critical Failure. The adventurers are compelled to plunge into the river 60 feet below, each making an Athletics check to dive, taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage from impacting the water, or half damage on a success. In addition, they each suffer two levels of strife.

Failure. They make it across, but their very souls are dampened. Each adventurer suffers a level of strife.

Success. The adventurers cross the perilous bridge without incident.

Critical Success. The adventurers cross the perilous bridge without incident, stronger for having been tested. For the next 11 (2d6 + 4) days they have advantage on saving throws made against mental stress effects. Roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Bridge of Stones

0th tier (terrain)
Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A fast-flowing 150-foot wide river is crossable only by a series of slick, unstable stepping stones. The river isn't especially deep, but the current is strong. Any adventurer or mount that falls in is carried 30 feet downstream at the end of each of their turns.

Boulders. An Athletics check can be made to lift and brace one of the boulders, granting advantage to checks made to cross the river (or, if a rope is already tied, to gain an expertise die).

Nature. A Nature check reveals that the waters will be lower tomorrow and crossing will be less hazardous. Crossing at that time triggers an automatic success.

Ropes. Checks to cross the bridge are made with advantage if a rope is tied across the river.

Possible Solutions

Make a group Acrobatics check to cross the bridge.

Critical Failure. The adventurers fall into the water, losing a day's worth of travel and 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Failure. Each adventurer that fails the check falls into the water and loses 1 Supply.

Success. The adventurers cross safely.

Critical Success. The adventurers leave the bridge safer for those who come after, and they discover a gift or clue leading to something important left for them whenever they return. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Choking Smoke

3rd tier (weather)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
A massive forest fire, volcanic ash, hellish fumaroles, or a burning city have covered the landscape in a thick suffocating cloud.

Choking Smog. At the end of every hour in this area, creatures make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) poison damage on a failure. A creature that is immune to poison damage or does not need to breathe automatically succeeds on this save. Any creature that takes a 40 or more poison damage from the smog becomes poisoned, and a poisoned creature that fails its saving throw suffers one level of fatigue. A poisoned creature that critically fails its saving throw falls unconscious for 60 (1d12 × 10) minutes.

Face Coverings. The use of 1 Supply worth of water adequately wets a cloth or face-covering for 2 (1d4) hours, granting a creature wearing it advantage on Constitution saving throws against the smog's effects.

Hazy Vision. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 30 feet. In

addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.

Keep Low. An adventurer can make an Investigation check to find areas free of smog to get re-oriented and help navigate the area. On a success, the party gains an expertise die on ability checks made against this challenge.

Spell Solve. The smoke can be temporarily blown away by the casting of a *gust of wind* spell, giving the adventurers advantage on checks and saving throws made against it.

Possible Solutions

Make a group Survival check to safely traverse.

Critical Failure. The winds shift and the smog seems to follow the adventurers like a hungry predator. Navigating away from it takes 5 (2d4) hours of travel time.

Failure. The adventurers lose 2 (1d4) hours of travel time navigating through the smog.

Success. The adventurers make it through a thin bank of the smog and are only exposed to it for 1 hour.

Critical Success. A confluence of timing and luck sees the weather take a turn for the better and the adventurers are not slowed at all by the smog. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

Bypassing the choking smoke is possible but difficult as the air currents and raging fires can spread if unmonitored and controlled. Safely traveling around it costs an extra 3 (1d4 + 1) days of travel time.

Caught in the Crossfire

3rd tier (circumstance)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Two warring factions or armies have made the adventurers' travel route their battleground, fighting with weapons and spells both near and at range. The conflict

may or may not concern the party, but their first priority is continuing on their journey — and cutting directly through is a potentially lethal endeavor.

Possible Solutions

Make a group Acrobatics check to deftly maneuver through the battlefield. Alternatively, one Persuasion check can negotiate a momentary ceasefire to pass through safely.

Critical Failure. The party is caught in the crossfire and each adventurer suffers two levels of fatigue — they are unable to pass and must take a different route, losing 6 (1d4 + 2) hours of travel.

Failure. The party is caught in the crossfire and each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue — it takes them a full 3 (1d6) hours of travel to traverse the battlefield.

Success. The adventurers find a safe way through the battlefield, losing 1 hour of travel.

Critical Success. The adventurers find a safe way through the conflict and they find treasures on the dead soldiers that line the battlefield. Roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Collapsing Roof

1st tier (constructed)
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP); DC 15/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A thin wire sits 3 feet off the ground, connected to a structure that holds up a weak portion of a ceiling. When something trips the wire, that structure falls and the ceiling on top of it collapses.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 14 or with a Perception check to notice the construction. If the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

Only one check is needed to circumvent this challenge. Rolling or sliding an object heavy enough (30 pounds or more) to trip the wire will cause the roof to collapse safely.

Alternatively, an Engineering check can be made to prop up the ceiling or a thieves' tools check to disarm the trap.

Critical Failure. The adventurers trigger the trap, causing the ceiling to collapse. Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. Failure on the saving throw also causes a level of fatigue.

Failure. The adventurers trigger the trap, causing the ceiling to collapse. Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success.

Success. The trap is avoided or disarmed.

Critical Success. The adventurers avoid or disarm the trap but have the option to leave the trap active for someone else to deal with.

Corrupted Druid Grove

4th tier (supernatural)
Challenge 17 (18,000 XP); DC 21/17
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A clearing of fetid, rotting plant life festers after the archdruid in charge of maintaining it was murdered in cold blood. Corrupted by this violent act of betrayal, the grove itself lashes out at living travelers who dare pass through.

History. An adventurer can make a History check to recall the story of the archdruid's murder.

Stubborn Nature. Magic that influences plants and animals, such as the spell entangle, has a 50% chance of not functioning in this grove.

Vulnerable to Magical Fire. When an adventurer casts a spell or uses another magical effect that deals fire damage against the grove they gain an expertise die on their next ability check against it.

Possible Solutions

There are several ways to deal with this challenge. The party can make a group Stealth check to traverse the grove without being discovered. Alternatively, an adventurer can make a DC 20 Arcana check to discover a way to spend an hour calming the grove which allows the whole group to traverse it safely. Finally, a Nature check can discover a way to purify the grove permanently; this process takes a full day but grants double the experience award.

Critical Failure. The grove lashes out at the party, sending 4 (1d4 + 2) treants to kill them. Each adventurer loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply while escaping, or 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply in the fight against the towering plants.

Failure. The party loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply trying to escape or sneak around the treants and each adventurer suffers one level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers exit the grove unscathed.

Critical Success. The adventurers travel through the grove unhindered and for the next 10 (2d6 + 3) days a friendly shambling mound follows them in hopes that it can exact revenge on the archdruid's murderer. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Counterfeit Goods

0th tier (circumstance)
Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13
Area Region (special)
While resting at a haven or at some point along the journey, the adventurers discover they have acquired counterfeit goods! Though the items initially appear to be fully functional, they are either very poorly crafted and made from inadequate materials prone to break, or simply appear to be the items in question but are no better than stage props. These could have been purchased or received as a quest reward. The party has a few options: find the person who slighted them or ignore it and move on.

Bad Goods. The items are damaged and become broken after the first time they are used.

Possible Solutions

This challenge requires that the party and the vendor are still in the same region. A group Survival check can be made to follow the trail of the merchant who gave the adventurers the goods in the first place. Alternatively, an adventurer may make a Deception check to sell the counterfeit goods to someone else, then use that money to replace them with genuine items.

Critical Failure. The party loses a day searching for the person that cheated them. Each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Failure. The party loses half a day searching and each adventurer loses 1 Supply.

Success. The adventurers catch up with the dishonest vendor after 1d6 hours and with an Intimidation check may replace the counterfeit goods.

Critical Success. The adventurers not only catch up with the vendor after 1d4 hours and replace their goods, it turns out that the replacements are of a higher quality level than they've paid for (standard items become fine, and fine items become masterwork).

Cursed Temple

2nd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A circle of standing stones was constructed eons ago to worship a dark god and its evil still permeates the surrounding lands. At night bats can be heard — but never seen — flapping overhead. A nagging dread pervades the area, and those with access to divine magic receive a premonition that great evil will spread if this curse is not lifted.

Bones. A Medicine or Survival check finds the bones of several small animals scattered around the stones. Removing or burying these bones grants advantage on further checks against this exploration challenge.

Dreaded Curse. Attack rolls and saving throws made within a 600-foot radius of the standing stones have disadvantage. Anyone under the effects of protection from evil and good is immune to the Dreaded Curse.

Possible Solutions

A Religion check and a ritual performed for a good-aligned god permanently breaks the curse, as does a casting of the *hallow* spell. Alternatively, an Athletics check can topple the standing stones, breaking the circle and ending the curse — though not without a greater cost than some physical effort and sweat. Each adventurer within 100 feet of the stones makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) force damage and suffering one level of fatigue on a failure.

Critical Failure. The cursed area expands and becomes more aggressive, dragging down the very limbs of travelers. While within 3 miles of the standings stones, every mile traveled requires 4 miles worth of travel time. The party discovers that 7 (2d4 + 2) Supply from each adventurer has spoiled, and everyone suffers one level of strife.

Failure. When they leave the area, the party discovers that 6 (2d4 + 1) Supply from each adventurer has spoiled.

Success. The curse is lifted, rendering the circle of standing stones creepy but harmless.

Critical Success. The adventurers receive a divine blessing, granting them an item or discovery relevant to their quest. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Cursed Waterway

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
The lake, river, or other waterway ahead of the party bubbles with obviously sinister energy. Malevolent magic has plagued this place for far too long, cursing the water — those who touch it are made to carry the fell magic so great care must be taken when

traversing it. The nature of the curse is determined by the Narrator and functions as a *bestow curse* spell cast at 6th-level.

Magical Effect. The cursed waterway is a magical effect created through necromancy magic. Using *dispel magic* on the waterway to suppress its enchantment for 1 hour requires a DC 22 spellcasting ability check.

Lore. An Arcana or Nature check can identify the origin and effects of the curse.

Research. Make an Arcana or Nature check to find a means of permanently dispelling the curse by undertaking research that requires 7 (1d6 + 4) days. The waterway's curse can be dispelled with considerable time and effort. This usually involves fighting a powerful creature involved with the original cursing (such as a hag or even lich), or by gathering a large group of clerics or druids to purify the area through the use of the *hallow* spell or similar magic.

Possible Solutions

A group Acrobatics check allows the party to successfully avoid the bubbling water while traversing the waterway.

Critical Failure. The adventurers fall into the waterway and are cursed until the curses are removed. In addition, each adventurer loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply.

Failure. An adventurer touches the water in some way becomes cursed for 7 (2d4 +2) days, and each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Success. The adventurers lose 2 hours of travel time traversing the cursed waterway.

Critical Success. The cursed waterway doesn't delay the adventurers at all, and they discover a clue for removing the curse (if they did not learn that already). Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Dark Alleys

1st tier (urban)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); **DC** 14/13
Area Local (1 hour)

Shadows seem to cling to every corner, eyes stare from behind hidden barriers, innocents scurry away from the light — petty crime is the method of survival here, and anyone unable to adapt or blend in will suffer for it. The party needs to traverse this area of the city in order to reach their destination but it seems that no matter where they turn that eyes are watching them from the shadows, equal parts inquisitive and fearful.

Possible Solutions

A group check is needed to make it through this district. The adventurers may each use any reasonable ability check. Examples include Deception to use simple disguises and body language to pass as tough locals, Intimidation to give off a demeanor threatening enough to get others to mind their own business, or Stealth to move from shadow to shadow.

Critical Failure. The adventurers are hassled by a guard squad, a gang of 6 criminals (bandits or thugs depending on the locale) confront the party, or their identities and location are leaked to their enemies.

Failure. Between youthful pickpockets, brazen brutes, and charming passersby each of the adventurers has their coin purses lightened, losing half of their gold (maximum 100 gold).

Success. The adventurers pass themselves off as if they belong and travel through unhindered.

Critical Success. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table. Alternatively, the adventurers acquire a reliable connection to a local NPC.

Dense Fog

2nd tier (weather)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Thick fog blankets the area. It's possible the fog originates from smoke, descended clouds, volcanic ash, or other natural events.

Causes. If the fog is not natural, an Investigation check finds the origin of the haze, though it still needs to be plugged, put out, or otherwise stopped.

Fogged Vision. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 5 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.

Spell Solve. The fog can be temporarily blown away by the casting of a gust of wind spell, giving the adventurers advantage on checks made against it.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival check helps the party navigate through the fog. Alternatively, individual adventurers may choose to use Perception and scent, sound, or tremors to navigate.

Critical Failure. The party gets terribly lost, losing 8 (2d4 + 3) hours of travel time, and one adventurer suffers a level of fatigue when they take a hurtful fall in the fog.

Failure. The adventurers lose 4 (2d4 – 1) hours in the fog.

Success. The adventurers find pockets of clear sight within the haze and lose no travel time.

Critical Success. The adventurers travel unhindered through the area of haze and manage to find a faster route that lets them cover the area in just 1 hour.

Leave It Be

The haze may lift after 2d12 hours. The choice to wait or venture forth into the obscured area is in the hands of the adventurers. If they wait, they lose that amount of time and gain no experience.

Divine War

4th tier (supernatural)
Challenge 20 (25,000 XP); DC 23/18
Area Region (time varies)
The skies rain blood and bolts of necrotic lightning strike the earth as celestials and fiends clash overhead in a battle of truly epic proportions, filling the sky with divine violence. Swarms of angels trace blinding radiance as demons and devils spout hellish flames in pursuit, and for every lance of pure light cast down onto the conflict from the clouds above there is a swarm of darkness that rises up to consume it.

Divine Interventions. Every hour the effect of so many extraplanar beings unleashing their power in such close proximity has an unintended impact that falls upon the party. Each adventurer rolls 1d20, and whoever has the lowest roll becomes the target of this effect. When there is a tie, the point in space between the two is targeted instead. Roll 1d8 and refer to the Divine Interventions table.

Creatures with the Good alignment trait have advantage on saving throws against celestial Divine Interventions, and creatures with the Evil alignment trait have advantage on saving throws against fiendish Divine Interventions.

Magical Effects. Divine interventions are magical effects. Using *dispel magic* on the effects of a Divine Intervention requires a spellcasting ability check. On a failed check, the spellcaster becomes a target of another Divine Intervention the next round.

Realize Danger. Any adventurer that makes an Arcana or Religion check realizes the less obvious dangers of being so close to this conflict and how the clash of divine forces manifests strange effects on the environment nearby.

Possible Solutions

There is no easy way to get through this challenge. The PCs must simply push through and suffer the effects of the Divine Interventions; there is no way to end the war. They might choose to join the fray (on either side) and powerful magic such as wish can delay the battle long enough for them to leave the region. With a Persuasion check to convince a squad of celestials or fiends that the party is neutral to the conflict, the adventurers receive either an angelic blessing or hellish enchantment, gaining an

expertise die on saving throws against the
exploration challenge's Divine Interventions.

TABLE: DIVINE INTERVENTIONS

1D8	EFFECT TYPE	EFFECT
1	Fiendish	**Blood Rain.** Crimson rain laced with negative energy falls in a 60-foot radius around the target. Each creature in the area makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) necrotic damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. In addition, a creature that fails its saving throw loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply as provisions melt into into moldy slop and water turns into sewage.
2	Fiendish	**The Fallen.** The blazing corpse of a slain celestial plummets to the ground landing in a square adjacent to the target. Each creature in a 40-foot radius makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) fire damage and 35 (10d6) radiant damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. The target has disadvantage on this saving throw. The explosive inferno damages objects in the area and ignites unattended flammable objects.
3	Fiendish	**Harmful Blast.** A virulent disease is released on the target and they make a Constitution saving throw, taking 49 (14d6) necrotic damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. In addition, a target that fails the saving throw reduces its hit point maximum by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This damage can't reduce the target's hit points below 1. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest.
4	Celestial	**Restorative Ray.** A surge of positive energy washes through the target and they regain 70 hit points. In addition, the ray cures a target of the blinded and deafened conditions as well as any disease affecting it.
5	Celestial	**Stunning Utterance.** The target clearly hears the unfiltered song of a celestial's rage, leaving it dumbfounded. If the target has 150 hit points or fewer, it is stunned until the end of its next turn and rattled for the following hour. If the target has more than 150 hit points, it is instead rattled for the next hour instead. At the end of every minute, a rattled target makes a Constitution saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.
6	Celestial	**Sunburst.** Brilliant sunlight flashes down from the heavens in a 60-foot radius around the target. Each creature in the area makes a Constitution saving throw. On a failure a creature takes 42 (12d6) radiant damage and is blinded for 1 hour, or on a success it takes half as much damage and isn't blinded. Undead and oozes have disadvantage on this saving throw. A blinded creature repeats the saving throw at the end of every 10 minutes, ending the effect on itself on a success.
7	Either	**Lethal Utterance.** The target clearly hears either a fiend utter a prayer or a celestial scream a curse. If the target has 100 hit points or fewer it dies, or if it has more than 100 hit points it takes 50 hit points of damage.

8	Either	***Exsanguinated Horror.*** Two of the divine combatants from above swoop down amidst a furious duel, soaring past the target. Creatures able to see witness the unfiltered purity and depravity of celestials and fiends sliced open in a gruesome display. Each creature in a 30-foot radius (including the target) makes a Wisdom saving throw, becoming frightened for 1 minute on a failure. At the end of every round a frightened creature repeats the saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) psychic damage on a failure or ending the effect on itself on a success.

Enchanted Statue

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
When a pressure plate concealed on the ground registers 20 or more pounds of weight, a nearby statue expels fire from an orifice (such as a mouth or nostrils) or a spellcasting focus (such as a wand or staff).

Magical Effect. The statue has a magical effect created through evocation magic, though its aura requires a passive Perception of 14 to be seen while under the effects of detect magic. Using *dispel magic* on the statue to suppress its enchantment for 24 hours requires a spellcasting ability check.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 17 or with a Perception check. If the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Variant. Elemental Statues. Not all statues need to breathe fire! Because this trap is magical, it can deal most types of magical damage instead of fire. Use the Elemental Statues table for alternate damage types and the extra effects of an elemental statue.

Possible Solutions

An adventurer can make a Dexterity check to wedge a dagger beneath the pressure plate or a thieves' tools check to disarm the pressure plate before triggering it.

Critical Failure. The adventurers trigger the trap and a 45-foot cone of flame washes over them. Creatures in the area make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 26 (4d12) fire damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. All flammable objects that are unattended are lit on fire.

Failure. The adventurers trigger the trap and a 30-foot cone of flame washes over them. Creatures in the area make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (2d12) fire damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. All flammable objects that are unattended are lit on fire.

Success. The adventurers avoid or disarm the trap, or activate it from a safe distance.

Critical Success. The adventurers avoid or disarm the trap but have the option to leave the trap active for someone else to deal with.

TABLE: ELEMENTAL STATUES

DAMAGE TYPE	SAVING THROW	EXTRA EFFECT
Acid	Dexterity	Unattended objects are damaged by acid.
Cold	Dexterity	The frigid ice explodes on impact with a surface, dealing an extra 5 (2d4) piercing damage to any creatures in the cone's area.
Lightning	Dexterity	Stunned for 1 round on failed saving throw.

Poison	Constitution	Poisoned for 1 hour on a failed saving throw.
Psychic	Intelligence	On a failed saving throw, a creature has disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws for 10 minutes.
Thunder	Constitution	Knocked prone on a failed saving throw.

Enchanted Windmill

0th tier (constructed)
Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
  A mechanically-minded wizard built a windmill to power her experiments — she has long since moved on, but the illusion disguising the windmill as a massive giant swinging a club remains atop a high hill with a commanding view of the area for miles around.
    Attack! Ranged attacks against the giant have no effect as they appear to bounce harmlessly off the swinging club. A melee weapon attack allows an adventurer to see through the illusion, but they damage their weapon and suffer a level of fatigue from swinging directly into a stone wall.
    Magical Effect. The figment of a giant is a magical effect created through illusion magic. Using *dispel magic* on the figment requires a spellcasting ability check. Successfully dispelling this challenge earns double experience.
    Mindless Figment. Intimidation and Performance checks to draw the giant's attention have no effect.

Possible Solutions

As this is only an illusion, the adventurers can walk safely past, but this is only realized after a successful Perception check, which reveals that the sounds of the giant's swings don't perfectly align with its movements. If at any point they figure out that this is a windmill and make it inside, roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Endless Plummet

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP); DC 19/16
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
  An enormous and seemingly infinitely deep pit sits in the center of the ground. Any who fall into it plummet forever thanks to the transmutation magic that keeps it working, and those who peer too closely find the strange enchantment also perilously hampers balance.
    Dangerous Darkness. The darkness of the pit's illusion makes it impossible for creatures further than 10 feet from its edge to see anything inside of it, though sounds from within the pit can easily be heard from further away. Any Investigation or Perception checks made against the pit require being within 10 feet of the edge.
    Sneaky Compulsion. A creature that looks into the pit from within 10 feet of the edge must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw or it loses its balance, suddenly stumbling forward and falling inside!
    Spell Solve. Using *dispel magic* on the pit to suppress its enchantment for 1 hour requires a spellcasting ability check. An adventurer that falls into the real pit travels 100 feet to its true bottom where there is a 10% chance they find an entrance to Underland. Successfully dispelling this exploration challenge triggers a critical success.

Possible Solutions

The pit is a magical effect created through illusion and transmutation magic, but it requires sight. A clever party can cover or shut their eyes, making a group Intelligence check to keep their bearing and walk near the pit's edge without being compelled by it.

Once an adventurer has fallen inside the pit, they can make an Arcana check to identify a weak point in the illusion that helps them escape, or an Athletics check to grab onto something real and climb out of the pit.

Critical Failure. The adventurers fall until the magic is dispelled or someone passing by helps them get out after 2 (1d4) days. Each adventurer loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply, and suffers a level of fatigue and strife for every day spent falling.

Failure. The adventurer falls, losing 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and suffering one level of strife before either the magic is dispelled or someone helps them get out.

Success. The adventurers lose negligible time navigating the pit.

Critical Success. The adventurers lose negligible time navigating the pit. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

End of Hibernation

0th tier (creatures)
Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13
Area Region (time varies)
A season is coming to an end and hibernating animals are starting to wake up in their caves or crawl up from their holes. This area is typically safe to travel, but the hibernating animals are a mixed bag of restless, groggy, and hungry. Bears in particular are lethal yet still dazed from their winter naps, so it should be possible to get past without disturbing them — get on their nerves too much and it could be fatal.

Food Bribery. The party can give away a number of Supply equal to the number of adventurers to befriend, distract, and sate the hunger of the waking creatures long enough to make their way past, gaining advantage on checks made to influence the beasts.

Possible Solutions

Either a group Animal Handling check to demonstrate peaceful intent to the animals or a group Stealth check to sneak past the animals.

Critical Failure. The adventurers disturb the hibernating animals and are pursued by 3 (1d4 + 1) black bears (or other beasts of CR 1/2 or lower).

Failure. The adventurers disturb the hibernating animals and are pursued by a black bear (or other beast of CR 1/2 or lower).

Success. The adventurers successfully pass through the animals' territory without incident.

Critical Success. The adventurers pass through the animals' territory without incident. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Faerie Ring

2nd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
While traveling down a track crowded on either side by near-impenetrable woodlands, the party comes across a clearing with a mushroom ring of tall and brightly red-capped fungi that blocks their way. Being in sight of the mushroom ring causes strange hallucinations of gnomes peeking around trees, which end when an adventurer steps into the mushroom ring. In addition to ending the hallucination, the adventurer feels extreme peace — and the urge to recite a riddle they have never heard before, which if answered correctly causes a powerful enchantment to spread through the area.

Investigation. An Investigation check reveals that the hallucinations are harmless.

Lore. An Arcana check determines that this is the work of mischievous fey.

Magical Aura. Observing the mushroom ring while under the effects of detect magic reveals an aura of divination magic.

Possible Solutions

The adventurers have three attempts to answer the riddle posed by the faerie ring. Answering correctly on the first try is a critical success, and on the second or third

try a success; otherwise a failure is triggered. Alternatively, a group Acrobatics check allows the party to carefully step over all of the many fungi making up the mushroom ring, risking a critical failure, but they gain no experience from the exploration challenge.

Critical Failure. When the mushroom ring is damaged each of the adventurers immediately suffer one level of strife as a sense of dread spreads from it. As they continue on, the hallucinations become just tangible enough to mercilessly tickle them and each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue.

Failure. Going far enough from the ring for the hallucinated gnomes not to follow requires half a day of travel time.

Success. The area around the mushroom ring is turned into a haven for the next 24 hours.

Critical Success. As a success, and when the party awakens they find a delicious breakfast waiting for them.

TABLE: FAERIE RING RIDDLES

D10	RIDDLE	ANSWER
1	I am a stone that flies through the air but has never been thrown, what am I?	A roc.
2	What begins in T, ends in T, and has T in it?	A teapot.
3	What can you hold in your right hand but never in your left?"	Your left hand.
4	What bites deeper than a wolf, yet has no teeth?	Blades.
5	What can you catch, but not throw?	Diseases.
6	I named myself, I'm well armored, and squid men love to eat me, what am I?	A brain.
7	What always murmurs but never talks, always runs but never walks, and has a bed but never sleeps?	A river.
8	Why wouldn't acid burn me if a green dragon used its breath on me?	Green dragons breathe poison.
9	What comes and goes and always says 'yes'?	The seashore.
10	A stupid adventurer is condemned to die. They must choose between three doors. One is full of soldiers with swords, the second one leads into a pit of fire in Hell, and the third is full of owlbears that haven't eaten in three years. Which one is safest?	Room 3 — the owlbears haven't eaten in three years, they're dead.

Falling Net

0th tier (constructed)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); DC 13/13

Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)

A hunter has set up and left a net trap to catch some massive creature in this prime hunting spot. The height and dimensions of the net are at the Narrator's discretion, but should be big enough to capture at least a Large creature. Several thin wires sit 3 feet off the ground, each connected to a structure that holds up the net. When something trips the wire, the net drops down around it.

Item. The net is made of a tough material (AC 16, 20 hit points) and needs to be cut in at least four places no less

than 1 foot apart for a trapped creature to free itself.

Escape. If the adventurers are caught in the trap, an Athletics check allows them to free themselves, and an Acrobatics or Sleight of Hand check enables them to wiggle a blade free.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 14 or with a Perception check to notice ropes overhead. If the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

Once the adventurers notice the trap, an Investigation check disables it. They might instead make Acrobatics checks to carefully move around the wires, or Athletics checks to climb on any objects or structures nearby (if there are any) to avoid touching the ground entirely.

Critical Failure. The entire party is caught by the net and suspended 20 feet in the air. Each of the adventurers is grappled and restrained. If they are unable to escape, a hunter comes by in two days and frees them.

Failure. The adventurer that failed the check is caught by the net and suspended 20 feet in the air, grappled and restrained by it. Safely freeing them takes 2 hours (though they can be freed more quickly if the net is dropped 20 feet to the ground first).

Success. The party spots and avoids the trap.

Critical Success. The party disassembles the trap and gains a tough net as well as 250 feet of hemp rope.

Fey Glade

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Special

The glade seems to go on forever and ever — because it does! A prankster fey has enchanted this place to make it seem as if it can never be left.

Lore. An Arcana check allows an adventurer to recognize the fey influence.

Magical Effect. The fey glade is a magical effect created through illusion magic. Using *dispel magic* on the glade to suppress its enchantment for 8 hours requires a spellcasting ability check.

Possible Solutions

The party can make a group Survival check to navigate the glade despite the illusion magic.

Critical Failure. The adventurers lose 3 (1d4 + 1) days of travel. Each wakes up the next morning with their most brightly-colored non-iron object missing.

Failure. The adventurers lose a full day of travel time. Each wakes up the next morning with their most brightly-colored non-iron object missing

Success. The adventurers successfully navigate the glade.

Critical Success. The adventurers keep fond memories of traveling through the glade. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Flash Flood

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Local (1 hour)

While journeying through a valley or canyon that appears to have recently burned, a rumbling comes from up ahead and soon after the spray of water — a flash flood!

Don't Run! Nature or Survival checks reveal that outrunning a flash flood is impossible and that the best solution is to climb to safety. Those who try to run automatically fail the group check.

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, or similar magic triggers an automatic success for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

A group Athletics check allows the party to climb to safety. An adventurer with a climb speed automatically succeeds in this check.

Critical Failure. Adventurers, mounts, and vehicles in the area when it floods are carried 260 (2d12 × 20) feet away.

Each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue and the party loses 7 (2d4 + 2) Supply.

Failure. Adventurers, mounts, and vehicles in the area when it floods are carried 260 (2d12 × 20) feet away. Any adventurer that is carried away suffers a level of fatigue and loses 3 (1d4) Supply.

Success. The adventurer reaches safety.

Critical Success. The party reaches safety. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Flimsy Rope Bridge

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP); DC 17/15
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A ravine ahead can only be traversed via a narrow bridge made from knotted ropes. It sways in the wind and looks unstable. When the adventurers are halfway across the bridge, the ropes snap if a Medium or larger creature steps on them.

Fly Away. The use of *fly* or similar magic (except *levitate*) triggers a critical success for that adventurer.

Realize Danger. Any adventurer that makes an Engineering or Investigation check identifies some places that the bridge could be strengthened, including the weak point in the middle.

Possible Solutions

Making it across the bridge requires a group Acrobatics check.

Critical Failure. The bridge suddenly breaks and the party has to scramble or be dropped into the ravine! Each adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw to grab and hold onto the rope as they swing down into the sides of the ravine, taking 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage from the impact. Any adventurers ahead of the break fall towards the far end of the bridge, and those behind the break fall back towards the bridge's start.

On a failed save, an adventurer falls 100 feet down into the ravine, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage when they land. Climbing back out requires a

successful Athletics check, with advantage if a rope is thrown down.

Failure. The bridge breaks as above, but the adventurers have 1 round to react after the process starts and advantage on their Dexterity saving throw to grip the rope. Grabbing both sides and holding the bridge together requires a Strength check at the end of each round.

Success. The adventurers safely make it across the rope bridge.

Critical Success. The adventurers safely make it across the rope bridge and notice something important while doing so. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Flood

1st tier (weather)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/13
Area Local (1 hour)
Heavy rains, a dam breakage, or a spiteful spellcaster have caused a sizable flood. While there isn't significant risk of building damage in rural or frontier areas, the flood is difficult to travel through especially for travelers with mounts or vehicles.

Deep Water. The adventurers can only travel at a crawl pace unless they have swim speeds.

Possible Solutions

A group Athletics check is needed to wade through the water. Alternatively, an Engineering check (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) can build a raft or other floating device at the cost of 1 hour and 1d4 gold worth of materials.

Critical Failure. The adventurers are unable to continue and must remain where they are until the flood passes in 2 (1d4) hours.

Failure. The adventurers lose 6 (2d4 + 1) Supply.

Success. The adventurers are able to journey through the flood at a slow pace.

Critical Success. The adventurers faultlessly navigate the flood unhindered. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Forested Hills

0th tier (terrain)
Challenge 1 (200 XP); DC 13/13
Area Intermediate (3 hours)

Lush woodland foliage covers leagues of stoney hills and valleys. The tree canopy splays rays of sun. Careful steps are needed to scramble around loose moss-covered stones and exposed roots.

Ascending. The steep hills are treated as difficult terrain when moving up them.

Animal Tracks. A successful Perception or Survival check spots animal paths through the hills that make them easier to traverse, enabling the party to move at normal pace.

Opportunistic Shoves. An attacker can choose to make attack rolls with disadvantage to include a shove basic maneuver. A target that fails its saving throw falls 100 feet down into the hillsides, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage when they come to a stop.

The High Ground. Ranged attacks made against targets downhill from an attacker have advantage.

Possible Solutions

Traveling through the steep hills requires a group Athletics check.

Critical Failure. The series of hills are deceptively dangerous. The adventurers each lose 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and suffer a level of fatigue.

Failure. The adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply as they scramble amongst the hills.

Success. The adventurers navigate a safe and speedy path over the hills and vales.

Critical Success. The adventurers spot something of import tucked in a tree trunk or small dale amongst the hilly woods. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Forest Fire

4th tier (circumstance)
Challenge 19 (22,000 XP); DC 22/17
Area Intermediate (3 hours)

An errant spark or bit of fire quickly grows and before the party realizes it they are surrounded on all sides by a conflagration! Hungry flames wreathe through the treetops as winds fuel the rapidly increasing inferno, singeing everything with scorching heat. Wild animals run for cover in a panic, blinded by choking smoke.

Clear Spots. An Investigation check can find an area free of fire and smoke to get re-oriented and gain an expertise die on ability checks made against this exploration challenge.

Face Coverings. The use of 1 Supply worth of water adequately wets a cloth or face-covering for 1 hour, granting a creature wearing it advantage on Constitution saving throws against the Choking Smoke and Inescapable Heat hazards.

Fogged Vision. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 30 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.

Hazards. At the end of every hour in the area, roll 1d6 on the Forest Fire Hazards table.

Spell Solve. A casting of *control weather* abates the effects of the flames, and the adventurers gain an expertise die on saving throws made against Choking Smoke and Inescapable Heat.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival check is needed to navigate through the smoke.

Critical Failure. The adventurers take twice as long to traverse the area, and each suffers a level of fatigue.

Failure. The adventurers make it through the forest fire in twice the normal time.

Success. The adventurers make it through the forest at normal speed.

Critical Success. The adventurers make it through the forest and they spot something important. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

TABLE. FOREST FIRE HAZARDS

1D6	HAZARD	EFFECT
1–2	Choking Smoke	Creatures must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage. A creature that is immune to poison damage or does not need to breathe automatically succeeds on this save. Any creature that takes a 40 or more poison damage from the smoke becomes poisoned, and a poisoned creature that fails its saving throw suffers one level of fatigue. On a critical failure, a poisoned creature falls unconscious for 60 (1d12 × 10) minutes.
3–4	Inescapable Heat	Creatures must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage and suffer a level of fatigue. Immunity to fire damage grants an automatic success on this save.
5–6	Panicked Animals	Fleeing beasts won't engage in combat but that doesn't mean they aren't still dangerous. Adventurers make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, they take 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage, lose 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply, and suffer a level of fatigue.

Forge, Foundry, and Factory

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
While moving through the town, the road ends at a massive foundry the size of a city block. Massive piles of unprocessed ore fill nearly every corner of this foundry and it is in full working order — molten buckets of alloys move overhead, conveyor belts carry stone and metals throughout, and ovens hot as the sun belch fire and blistering waves of heat.

   Unbearable Heat. Adventurers and mounts wearing medium or heavy armor make a Constitution saving throw or suffer a level of fatigue. Immunity to fire damage grants an automatic success on this save.

Possible Solutions

A group check is needed to traverse the factory. Adventurers can choose from Acrobatics to weave around the factory floor, Engineering to deduce the factory's layout and the most efficient routes to take,

and Intimidation or Persuasion to hastily convince workers to make way.

   Critical Failure. It takes the party 4 (1d4 + 2) minutes to make it through the factory. Each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue from a workplace mishap and loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

   Failure. It takes the party 2 (1d4) minutes to make it through the factory, they lose 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply, and any adventurer that failed their check suffers a level of fatigue.

   Success. It takes the adventurers 1 minute to make it through the factory.

   Critical Success. It takes the party 1 minute to make it through the factory, and they either overhear about something or spot something of import. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

The adventurers can backtrack and find another route, which takes them an hour and earns no experience.

God Corpse

4th tier (supernatural)
Challenge 17 (18,000 XP); DC 21/17

Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)

The skyline is broken by the massive, jagged silhouette of an impossibly enormous humanoid's ribcage. A shattered skull and massive femurs are embedded into the ground around it. Those with access to divine magic sense that some kind of action is needed.

Aligned Casting. When a spellcaster with the same alignment trait as the dead god casts a spell, roll 1d4. On a 1 the spell functions as intended, although with some harmless or unusual cosmetic effect. On a 2–3, the spell is absorbed into the corpse of the god. On a 4, the spell's mechanical effects (hit points restored, damage dealt, or bonuses to attacks, checks, and saving throws) are doubled and the ground shakes with the remembrance of divine potency.

Alignment. Roll a d6 to determine the dead god's alignment trait. On a 1–2 the god was Evil, on a 3–4 the god was neither Good nor Evil, and on a 5–6 the god was Good.

Cause of Death. An Arcana or Medicine check reveals the means of death. Roll 1d4. 1 — another god, 2 — adventurers who perished in the battle, 3 — a powerful non-god entity, 4 — something outside mortal knowledge entirely.

Domain. Roll a d8 to determine the domain of the god before it fell. 1 — knowledge, 2 — life, 3 — light, 4 — nature, 5 — tempest, 6 — trickery, 7 — war, 8 — roll twice (ignoring duplicates).

Locus of Power. God corpses frequently draw out or errantly beckon certain creatures of up to challenge rating 10. What creatures appear near the god corpse are determined by its alignment. evil — fiends or undead, neutral — aberrations or fey, good — celestials or plants.

Nearby Shrine. An adventurer can make a History check to know of a shrine to the god within 7 (2d6) hours of travel. Making an offering of 1,000 gold at the shrine grants all participants in the ritual an expertise die on checks made involving the god corpse.

Possible Solutions

A Religion check reveals that this is the corpse of a god, as well as its domain and alignment. The check also reveals to the adventurers that they need to put the god to final rest. A group Religion check can give the corpse peace by enacting appropriate rituals lasting for a day.

Critical Failure. All adventurers suffer two levels of strife. For the next 5 (2d4) days, each of the adventurers subtracts a d4 whenever they make an attack roll or saving throw.

Failure. The adventurers fail to enact the ritual, and each suffer one level of strife.

Success. The god is put to rest. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Critical Success. The gods are pleased. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table. Additionally, the next time each is reduced to 0 hit points, they are immediately restored to their hit point maximum.

Leave It Be

If the party abandons the god to its fate their disregard offends its lingering essence, triggering a Critical Failure.

Green Lake

2nd tier (terrain)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14

Area Local (1 hour)

The lake ahead is an eerie and unnatural green, and when gazed upon in the night it glows. Algae has turned the water this color and the fish living within it have adapted to have no eyes.

Dangerous Algae. A Nature check identifies the type of algae as a poisonous variety, making the lake water dangerous to touch. Deliberately drinking or trying to swim across the lake triggers a Critical Failure.

Harvesting. A Medicine check reveals that the algae can be dried out, at which point it is no longer poisonous and can be

used as a clotting agent (functioning as an improvised bandage).

Possible Solutions

The party can make a group Athletics or water vehicle check to cross the lake by boat or raft. At least one adventurer must be making a water vehicle check; otherwise all Athletics checks have disadvantage. If they do not have a water vehicle, one adventurer can spend 3 hours to build a raft with an Engineering check.

Critical Failure. The boat capsizes and the party is plunged into the green water, losing half their Supply. They each gain a level of fatigue, and are poisoned until they take a long rest.

Failure. The adventurers boat across, but they encounter a mishap, losing 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply.

Success. The adventurers follow their route and cross the lake unhindered.

Critical Success. The adventurers harvest useful things from the lake, gaining one use of a healer's satchel and 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Leave It Be

Bypassing the suspicious lake is possible but takes a while — safely traveling around it costs an extra day of travel time. No experience is awarded to the party.

Hail Deluge

2nd tier (weather)
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP); DC 17/15
Area Local (1 hour)
Suddenly the sky rains down with chunks of ice the size of a warrior's fist that pummel away at anything left out in the open.

Possible Solutions

The adventurers can make a group Constitution check to tough out the storm or a Survival check to find a safe place to wait out the storm (losing half a day of travel).

Critical Failure. The party is pelted by the hail, taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage at the end of every hour they

travel. Each adventurer also suffers one level of fatigue and travel time is doubled through the storm's area.

Failure. The adventurers are pelted by the hail, each taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and suffering one level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers successfully avoid being damaged by the storm.

Critical Success. The adventurers successfully avoid the storm and also discover a hailstone infused with magic (worth 42 gold). Any spellcaster holding it can use a bonus action to draw power from the hailstone, regaining one 1st-level spell slot.

Hail Storm

0th tier (weather)
Challenge 1 (200 XP); DC 13/13
Area Region (time varies)
Giant lumps of ice and other particles are falling from the sky, making travel slower and more dangerous. It might be better to wait this one out, but finding shelter in this weather is also difficult.

Possible Solutions

The party can make a group Constitution check to tough out the storm. A Survival check enables them to find a safe place to wait out the storm, but they lose a full day of travel.

Critical Failure. The party is pelted by the hail, taking 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage at the end of every hour they travel. Each adventurer also suffers one level of fatigue and travel time is doubled through the storm's area.

Failure. The adventurers are pelted by the hail, each suffering one level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers successfully avoid being damaged by the storm.

Critical Success. The adventurers successfully avoid the storm and also discover something useful as they fight through the dangerous weather. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Hallowed Ground

4th tier (supernatural)
Challenge 16 (15,000 XP); DC 21/17
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
The will of the gods will not be ignored, and it is divine will that travelers pass with great difficulty or not at all. Perhaps someone in the party has angered a god or spirit, or a deity is conspiring with one of their enemies. Travel in this place feels slow and sluggish, as though the land itself is rejecting trespassers.

> **Appeasement.** A Religion check reveals a way to appease the god and ensure safe passage. Roll 1d6 to determine what is required. 1–2 an offering of 250 gold, 3–4 an offering of 10 (2d6 + 3) Supply, 5–6 a willingly accepted geas to perform some service for the god.

Possible Solutions

The adventurers can make a group Survival check to tough it out and force their way through.

> **Critical Failure.** The party loses two days of travel and each adventurer suffers two levels of strife. Acolytes and followers of the deity recognize the party and are hostile to them for the next month.
>
> **Failure.** The party loses two full days of travel and each adventurer suffers one level of strife.
>
> **Success.** The party successfully crosses the area.
>
> **Critical Success.** The party's determination wins the favor of the god, and for the next 3 (1d6) days each adventurer gains an expertise die on attack rolls and saving throws.

Haze

0th tier (weather)
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP); DC 12/10
Area Local (1 hour)
A thin fog blankets the area. It's possible the haze originates from smoke, low-lying clouds, or other natural events.

> **Hazy Vision.** The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 60 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.
>
> **Spell Solve.** The haze can be temporarily blown away by the casting of a gust of wind spell, giving the adventurers advantage on checks made against it.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival check allows the party to navigate the haze.

> **Critical Failure.** The party gets terribly lost, losing 4 (1d4 + 2) hours of travel time, and one adventurer suffers a level of fatigue when the haze causes them to take a hurtful fall.
>
> **Failure.** The adventurers lose 2 (1d4) hours in the haze.
>
> **Success.** The adventurers find pockets of clear sight within the haze and move through the haze at normal speed.
>
> **Critical Success.** The adventurers travel unhindered through the area of haze and uncover one tier 0 Boon or Discovery.

Hellscape

4th tier (terrain)
Challenge 18 (20,000 XP); DC 22/17
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Gouts of flame and choking gases spew forth from the ground as rivers of molten lava flow beneath thin crusts of blackened stone.

> **Hellstrikes.** Once every hour, the Narrator rolls 1d4 for each member of the party to see if they run into a hazard in this terrain, and on a result of 4, roll 1d6 and refer to Table. Hellstrikes to determine what assails them.

Possible Solutions

The adventurers need to tough this one out, bearing the brunt of the hellstrikes. They succeed by making it across the area alive. A few different types of checks can help:

- An Engineering check determines which areas ahead are the most dangerous to walk upon. The Narrator rolls 1d8 for the adventurer when determining if they run into a hazard (instead of 1d4), and a Hellstrike only occurs on a result of 8.
- Perception check to be on the lookout for danger, granting advantage on one ally's saving throw against a Hellstrike.
- Survival check to navigate towards safer routes through the area, granting an expertise die on saving throws made against Hellstrikes.

Critical Failure. For every Hellstrike that an adventurer makes a saving throw against, they lose 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Failure. Each adventurer loses 1 Supply per Hellstrike.

Success. The adventurers persevere through the Hellstrikes and do not suffer any additional negative effects.

Critical Success. As a success, and roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

TABLE: HELLSTRIKES

1D6	EFFECT
1	*Scorching Blast.* Jets of flame explode outward. The adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage and 14 (4d6) poison damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. Any flammable objects being worn or carried by the adventurer catch on fire, dealing 3 (1d6) ongoing fire damage until the flames are extinguished with a DC 15 Dexterity check.
2	*Volcanic Ejecta.* Magma pressure builds up until a jet of lava bursts up into the sky. The adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the adventurer takes 27 (5d10) fire damage and 27 (5d10) bludgeoning damage and is restrained. A restrained adventurer takes 16 (3d10) ongoing fire damage until freed with a Strength check. The ongoing damage also ends if the cooling molten stone is destroyed (AC 17, 30 hit points, and immunity to fire damage).
3	*Poison Gas.* The adventurer wanders into a cloud of invisible poison gas and makes a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they take 22 (4d10) poison damage and are unable to speak for 1 minute. On a failure by 5 or more, the adventurer is stunned for 2 (1d4) rounds and exposed to the poison gas at the start of each of their turns until they are at least 30 feet away from it.
4	*Lava Pit.* The stone ground beneath suddenly cracks and gives way! The adventurer must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall into a pit of lava and take 55 (10d10) fire damage. While in the lava pit the adventurer takes 55 (10d10) ongoing fire damage. Any creature that attempts to pull the adventurer out with a Strength check also makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) fire damage on a failure.
5	*Ashen Cloud.* A thick cloud of ash and smoke erupts from cracks in the stone, filling a 500-foot radius around the adventurer with smog. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 5 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5. The adventurer or their companions require a Survival check to regroup, losing 2 (1d4) hours of travel time for each failed attempt.
6	*Shifting Earth.* The ground below tilts and slides. The adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw, falling prone on a failure. Getting up from prone and moving to a solid area requires an Acrobatics check. On a failure by 5 or more on either the saving throw or ability check, the adventurer's hands punch through the crust of stone into the lava beneath, and they take 33 (6d10) fire damage and suffer a level of fatigue.

Hoar Frost

3rd tier (weather)
Challenge 15 (13,000 XP); DC 20/16
Area Region (time varies)

Lethal creeping cold pervades — deadly to warm flesh, covering objects in frost, instantly freezing even boiling water, and making the eyes sting as bodily fluids try to solidify into thin layers of ice.

Fires. Both mundane flame and arcane heat can stave off the building frost, but maintaining any fire requires constant vigilance with 2 (1d4) ongoing fire damage at the end of every 10 minutes (for flames kept alight with cantrips) or a Survival check once each hour.

Frozen Solid. Keeping one's belongings relatively warm is paramount. Each day 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply becomes useless as it freezes solid — waterskins burst and leak when their contents melt and provisions crumble when thawed.

Lethal Cold. At the end of every hour in the area, creatures take 3 (1d6) cold damage. Wearing cold weather gear halves this cold damage (minimum 1). No short or long rests are possible in the cold. A creature reduced to 0 hit points can become stable, but only after it is wrapped in furs and blankets or placed adjacent to fire to protect it from the cold — otherwise it continues to suffer from the cold while in the area, making additional death saves when dealt cold damage.

Keep Moving. To prevent frostbite an adventurer needs to keep moving, stay wrapped in warm garments, and expose as little flesh as possible. Any stationary objects become covered in thick layers of ice and freeze solid (this includes tents or spells that create solid surfaces.)

Possible Solutions

The party needs to make a group check to get through the region. Adventurers can choose from the following:

- Engineering checks to create improvisational structures that allow the party to safely stay warm.
- Medicine checks to treat frostbite. This may be necessary to prevent the loss of fingers and toes.
- Survival checks to locate shelter that will stay warm enough for safety.
- Constitution saving throws to simply power through.

Critical Failure. The party loses 2 (1d4) days of travel time and suffers one level of fatigue navigating through the area. In addition, a pocket of warm air from far above suddenly condenses and falls in a soaking slush, forcing each adventurer to make a Strength saving throw or be restrained as the liquid transforms into ice that encases their body. A restrained adventurer takes 16 (3d10) ongoing cold damage until they are freed with a Strength check. The ongoing damage also ends if the encasing ice is destroyed (AC 16, 20 hit points, and immunity to cold damage). Any adventurer that takes 30 or more cold damage suffers an additional level of fatigue.

Failure. The adventurers lose 1 day of travel time and suffer one level of fatigue navigating through the area.

Success. The adventurers manage to push through the area.

Critical Success. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Killing Cloud

4th tier (weather)
Challenge 18 (20,000 XP); DC 22/17
Area Local (1 hour)

A lethal poisonous cloud of gas that burns lungs and melts flesh flows out from fissures, an alchemist's lair, or the pyroclasmic aftermath of a volcano to sweep over the area. Extraplanar explorers know that these are a particularly common threat when traveling in the lower realms,

sometimes covering entire regions in a miasma of flesh-eating death.

Fogged Vision. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 5 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.

Poison Cloud. At the end of every hour in the area or when exiting the killing cloud, a creature makes a Constitution saving throw or takes 45 (10d8) poison damage. A creature that is immune to poison damage or does not need to breathe automatically succeeds on this save. Any creature that takes 80 or more poison damage from the cloud becomes poisoned, and a poisoned creature that fails its saving throw suffers one level of fatigue. On a critical failure, a poisoned creature falls unconscious for 60 (1d12 × 10) minutes.

Realize Danger. Any adventurer that makes an Arcana or Nature check realizes the nature of the poison cloud and its effects.

Spell Solve. The fog can be temporarily blown away by the casting of a gust of wind spell or other wind-based magic that uses a spell slot of 6th-level or higher, giving the adventurers advantage on saving throws and checks made against it.

Spoiled Supply. The poison cloud ruins 1 Supply each hour, spoiling rations and contaminating water.

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, or similar magic is an automatic success in the group check for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival check is needed to navigate safely through the cloud.

Critical Failure. The party stumbles through the area, losing 7 (2d4 + 2) hours of travel time getting lost in the killing cloud. Adventurers suffer a level of fatigue for each time they fall unconscious in the killing cloud or take more than 100 poison damage from it.

Failure. The adventurers lose 3 (1d4 + 1) hours of travel navigating through the killing cloud.

Success. The adventurers navigate safely through the killing cloud.

Critical Success. As a success, and roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Labyrinthine Ravines

1st tier (terrain)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 13/13
Area Intermediate (3 hours)

The terrain on either side of the path rises higher and higher until the rock walls block out the light — suddenly there are several paths ahead and it's confusing as to which is the right way forward.

Mapping. To map the ravines, roll 1d6 to determine what comes next. 1 — bends left, 2 — forks, 3 — T-junction, 4 — three-way split, 5 — circle linking back to somewhere the party has already been, 6 — bends right. Every roll represents 10 minutes of travel.

Scout It Out. An Athletics check lets an adventurer climb to the top of the canyon wall, allowing them to find their way out and trigger a success.

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, or similar magic triggers an automatic success for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

The adventurers may try to map the ravines, automatically succeeding if they do so out of character. Otherwise, a Survival check ensures an accurate map of where they have been, or a Nature check reveals that a little rivulet runs downhill and leads to an exit from the ravines.

Critical Failure. The adventurers get hopelessly lost and only find their way out after 5 (1d4 + 3) days.

Failure. The party finds a way out, but it's difficult. With all the turning about and backtracking they lose 6 (1d4 + 4) hours of travel time and each adventurer loses 5 (2d4 + 1) Supply.

Success. The adventurers find their way out after 4 (1d4 + 2) hours.

Critical Success. The adventurers find their way out. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Landslide

0th tier (terrain)
Challenge 1 (200 XP); DC 13/13
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
Recent rains or heavy snow has rendered a nearby slope quite perilous. A landslide is set off by any loud noise such as conversation, music, spellcasting, fleeing animals, the cracking of a fallen tree branch, thud of a rolling stone, or any substantial impacts on the ground.
Each adventurer must make a Strength saving throw. On a success, they are carried 2d12 yards down the slope; on a failure, they are carried twice that far and suffer a level of fatigue.

Realize Danger. Any adventurer that makes a Nature check recognizes that the ground or snow ahead is unstable, and that loud noises or rough impacts could trigger a landslide.

Spell Solve. Spells that produce water or heat can melt and refreeze a snow-based landslide, while a spell that can shape earth can solidify an earthen landslide.

Possible Solutions

If the party realizes the danger of the landslide, a group check using Acrobatics or Stealth lets them pass without setting the landslide off. Making a group Athletics check allows the adventurers to cross after the landslide, but on a failure, they set off a second landslide. A Survival check finds animal tracks showing a safe way around the area.

Critical Failure. The party loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and each adventurer suffers one level of fatigue.

Failure. Each adventurer that fails suffers one level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers lose 2 (1d4) hours of travel time.

Critical Success. The adventurers continue unhindered and the landslide

triggers behind them. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Lethal Outgassing

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 14/13
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Poisonous gases once trapped deep within the soil and rock of this area are leaking into the air. These fumes are deadly to people who breathe them for too long, making for a dangerous situation to both passersby and those living in the area.

Spell Solve. The outgassing can be temporarily ventilated by the casting of a gust of wind spell (making the air in that space breathable for up to 1 hour), but adventurers need to find the offending soil and rock to permanently get rid of it.

Possible Solutions

The party needs to make a group check to get through, with at least one each of the following:

- An Investigation check to find the source of the gas.
- A Nature check to understand the outgassing phenomenon.
- An Engineering check to plug up the leak.
- Survival checks can be made by those simply trying to last long enough to fix the problem.

Critical Failure. Adventurers breathe in the fumes and are poisoned, gaining a level of fatigue, and taking 21 (6d6) poison damage at the end of every hour spent in the gas cloud. Local areas suffer heavy loss in the wake of the destructive gases.

Failure. Adventurers breathe in the fumes and are poisoned, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage at the end of every hour spent in the gas cloud. The area around it suffers minor loss in the wake of the destructive gases.

Success. Adventurers successfully traverse the dangerous area.

Critical Success. Adventurers successfully prevent the outgassing from claiming further lives and they take no damage in the process. Roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Lifeless Desolation

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP); DC 19/16
Area Greater (1 day)

Dust lazily drifts across featureless salt flats that extend to the horizon. Food and water are nowhere to be found — and neither is hope.

Devoid of Radiance. Spells that deal radiant damage deal half as much damage, and healing spells restore half as many hit points as normal.

Lifeless. There are no sources of food or water, and any journey activity checks made in the area to acquire more Supply automatically fail.

Natural Undead. Any corpse that is not completely destroyed rises as an undead 24 hours later. The type of undead is at the Narrator's discretion. A Nature check notices that there are no corpses or even skeletons to be found, no matter how small or large (though what that might mean is unclear).

Nowhere to Hide. Stealth checks made in this area have disadvantage.

Unnatural Stress. Boredom and the overwhelming desolation weigh more heavily on the mind with every day that passes. At the end of each short or long rest in this area, each adventurer makes a Wisdom saving throw or they suffer a level of strife.

Possible Solutions

Traversing this area requires spirit and conviction more than physical endurance. The party needs to make a group check to get through the region. Adventurers can choose from the following:

- A Performance check to inspire some humor, levity, and vibrancy.
- A Religion check to pray to gods of light and hope to protect the party from whatever fell forces pervade this area.
- A Wisdom saving throw to persevere in the face of despair.

Critical Failure. The fell forces pervading the area prevent recuperation. While in the area, long rests are not possible and short rests take 8 hours (instead of 1 hour).

Failure. While in the area, short rests take 2 hours and long rests take 16 hours.

Success. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Critical Success. Roll three times on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Living Land

2nd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14
Area Greater (1 day)

As the party walks along, they start to notice that the plants are responding to them, and then a woody voice greets them.

Everything in a 10-mile radius has been awakened by a crotchety druid who expected nothing but courtesy, and the plants and animals are the same — if they feel that they are not granted that courtesy they can make life very difficult for passersby.

Benign. A Nature check confirms that this is the result of benign magic.

Possible Solutions

Being overtly rude or hostile to the awakened plants causes them to withdraw and triggers a Critical Failure. Otherwise, a successful group check using the following options allow the adventurers to travel across the area.

- An Animal Handling check helps reassure unsettled animals that there is no threat.
- A Persuasion check convinces the plants that the party is friendly.
- A Nature check allows the party to walk carefully without damaging anything.
- A Religion check can help appease the nature gods.

Critical Failure. The area counts as difficult terrain and each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue from snagging groundcover or troublesome roots.

Failure. The area counts as difficult terrain and the journey takes twice as long.

Success. The adventurers are allowed to pass unhindered, and at the edge of the area they're given delicious berries and mushrooms making up 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply.

Critical Success. As a success, and the impressed plants tell the party about something of use to them. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Lost Item

0th tier (circumstance)
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP); DC 12/10
Area Immediate (special)
While walking along, something important drops from an adventurer's pack — a cherished trinket, common magic item, gold pouch, or similar — and falls with a plink into a sewer, crack in the rock, or other irritatingly small place. The opening is 1 inch wide, at least 1 foot long, and 3 feet deep.

Stuck. The Narrator may rule that the object is stuck, making *mage hand* an ineffective solution and increasing the CR of this encounter by 1 and the DC for checks by 2.

Possible Solutions

Use of the *mage hand* cantrip easily retrieves most items, triggering a success, as does magic that can shape stone or earth, or an Athletics check, to widen the opening enough that the item can be retrieved. Alternatively, a thieves' tools check (or a similar tool kit) retrieves the item.

Critical Failure. The item slips further and is lost forever.

Failure. The item becomes stuck (see above). Another attempt is permitted.

Success. The item is retrieved.

Critical Success. The item is retrieved along with 2 (1d4) random items that were also lost down there.

Magical Overgrowth

2nd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Local (1 hour)
The path ahead is completely overrun with plants that regrow within seconds of being cut!

Magical Effect. The overgrowth is a magical effect created through evocation magic. Using *dispel magic* on the plants to suppress its enchantment for 1 hour requires a spellcasting ability check, and on a success the adventurers gain an expertise die on ability checks made against the overgrowth.

Vulnerable to Fire. When an adventurer uses an attack, spell, or other effects that deals fire damage against the overgrowth they gain an expertise die on their next ability check against it.

Possible Solutions

With a group Acrobatics check the adventurers squeeze through the brush, or with an Athletics check cut through it. A Nature check can reveal the path of least resistance.

Critical Failure. Travel time in the overgrowth is tripled, and adventurers each suffer one level of fatigue.

Failure. Travel time in the overgrowth is doubled.

Success. The adventurers pass through the undergrowth with no delay.

Critical Success. The adventurers pass through the overgrowth with no delay. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Malfunctioning Planar Portal

4th tier (supernatural)
Challenge 16 (15,000 XP); DC 21/17
Area Intermediate (3 hours)

The sky turns dark and purple as lightning crackles, converging on a pool of oily, swirling energy crackling in the middle of a 20-foot wide circle of stones. The planar portal has — through time or deliberate sabotage — become dysfunctional and the effects of the unstable magics are spreading. It is immediately apparent what has happened, and that if left unchallenged the portal will continue to expand with catastrophically lethal consequences.

Violent Weather. While the planar portal itself is relatively small, its effects spread across the landscape in a 10-mile radius, filling the area with high winds, rain, and lightning strikes. Adventurers can only hear sounds within 15 feet of them (except for loud, explosive noises). In addition, at the end of each minute a randomly determined adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) lightning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success.

What's Broken? An Arcana check reveals that the reason the portal broke was because a stone around it fell within, breaking the magical circle that kept it intact.

Possible Solutions

This challenge requires a group check using Arcana, Engineering, and stonecutter's tools. Mending is not sufficient to repair the damage to the portal, but a fabricate or similar spell can recreate the stone needed to fix it, counting as a successful check from the adventurer casting the spell.

Critical Failure. The portal expands and each adventurer suffers a level of strife. The party loses 4 (1d4 + 2) days going around it, each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue during the intensified storms,

and over the course of the next month the area around the portal becomes a wasteland.

Failure. Each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue from trying to fix the portal and the errant magic strips the party of 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply, but they manage to stabilize it enough that it does not expand further.

Success. The storm ends and the portal collapses, forever turning the area between the stones into a void of magic (as the *antimagic field* spell but with a permanent duration).

Critical Success. The adventurers restore the portal to full functionality (where it leads is at the Narrator's discretion). Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Marsh Gas

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP); DC 17/15
Area Local (1 hour)

Gases bubble upon the marsh's surface — the gas is poisonous at best and combustible at worst.

Realize Danger. Any adventurer that makes a Nature check recognizes the prevalence and dangers posed by the marsh gas.

Possible Solutions

A Medicine check and use of a healer's satchel (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) can create a remedy to the poisonous gases, or a group Survival check enables the party to carefully navigate the marsh.

Critical Failure. Travel time in the marsh is doubled, adventurers are poisoned for 4 (1d4 + 2) hours, and each takes (22) 4d10 fire damage from exploding gas.

Failure. Adventurers become poisoned for 2 (1d4) hours, and each takes 11 (2d10) fire damage from exploding gas.

Success. The adventurers safely cross the marsh.

Critical Success. The adventurers pass through the marsh safely without penalty

or injury. Additionally, an alchemist's supplies or poisoner's kit check harvests enough gas for 2 (1d4) vials of basic poison or explosive flasks (which function as alchemist's fire, but deal regular fire damage instead of ongoing fire damage).

Mushroom Ring

1st tier (terrain)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/13
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A ring of orange and purple mushrooms, perfect and unbroken, blocks the path. This is the home of a very curious pixie — suffering from boredom — that follows the adventurers for miles in search of entertainment.

Awareness. A Perception check spots the pixie, who is too shy to approach.

Esoteric Knowledge. An Arcana or Religion check reveals that faeries sometimes plant mushroom rings to signify their home.

Natural Knowledge. A Nature check reveals that mushroom rings can sometimes be formed around a particularly rich area of soil, such as a buried corpse.

Studious. A History check recalls stories of pixies rewarding those who leave them small gifts.

Possible Solutions

This challenge hinges on how the adventurers choose to proceed. A group Acrobatics check can be used to carefully step over the ring.

If the adventurers break or otherwise defile the ring, they incense the pixie. The next time they take a short or long rest, the party realizes that 4 (1d4 + 2) pieces of their gear are broken and 3 (1d4 + 1) are damaged.

If they keep their distance and respect the area, they feel like they are being watched for several miles after encountering the mushroom ring, making Perception checks with disadvantage until they take their next long rest.

If they leave a small gift for the fey or do something that it strongly approves of, soon after leaving they find flower petals leading them to something important. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Perilous Cliff Path

3rd tier (terrain)
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP); DC 20/16
Area Local (1 hour)
The road ahead is narrow and wraps around a steep, rocky cliff. Groups traveling light should watch their steps — rocks can break off and knock travelers off their footing in an instant.

Narrow. Adventurers with mounts, wagons, or other bulky travel gear have disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity checks without a creative solution for animals, vehicles, and ungainly items.

Possible Solutions

A group Acrobatics check is needed to deftly traverse the path. If an adventurer makes an Engineering check to rig climbing gear together and secure everything to the mountainside, everybody gains an expertise die and any falling damage is halved.

Critical Failure. Each adventurer (and any mounts or vehicles) falls 200 feet down the steep mountainside, taking 70 (20d6) bludgeoning damage and suffering two levels of fatigue.

Failure. Each adventurer (and any mounts or vehicles) falls 100 feet down the steep mountainside, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage and suffering a level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers safely traverse the path.

Critical Success. The adventurers traverse the path. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Pests

1st tier (creatures)
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP); DC 15/14
Area Immediate (special)
A nasty horde of bugs has broken into the party's provisions and are eating them all

up! The insects need to be dealt with quickly or desperate times are imminent.

Possible Solutions

An Animal Handling check drives the pests away or a Nature check locates a tastier treat to lure the pests away.

Critical Failure. All of the party's food and water are ruined and each adventurer loses their entire Supply.

Failure. Each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply to the pests.

Success. The adventurers deal with the pests without losing any Supply.

Critical Success. The adventurers deal with the pests without losing any Supply. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Pit Trap

1st tier (constructed)
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); DC 15/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
A group of crafty bandits have dug a hole right in the middle of the road and filled it with spikes. They also covered it with leaves and flimsy wood to hide the trap! The hole is so large that riding and pack animals cannot move around it as the path is surrounded by dense forest or steep cliffs.

Solo Challenge. Each adventurer decides for themselves how to avoid the pit trap.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 15 or with a Perception check. If the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

Who falls into the pit depends on the actions of the party and how they organize crossing attempts. An Acrobatics or Athletics check allows an adventurer to climb or leap across the pit. On a failure they fall 20 feet to take 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and 5 (2d4) piercing damage. Alternatively, an Engineering check (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) can be made to build a makeshift bridge across the spike pit at the cost of 1 hour.

Critical Failure. The adventurer(s) and their mount(s) fall 20 feet into the pit, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from the drop and 5 (2d4) piercing damage from spikes. At the end of the next round 3 (1d6) bandits arrive to ambush the party.

Failure. The adventurer(s) drop half their Supply into the pit.

Success. The adventurers make it across or around the spike pit unscathed.

Critical Success. The adventurers make it across or around the spike pit unscathed. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Poison Darts

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
When a pressure plate concealed on the ground registers 20 or more pounds of weight, poisoned darts fire from the wall, ceiling, or floor.

Poisoned Darts. *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +6 to hit, one creature. *Hit.* 2 (1d4) piercing damage plus 16 (3d10) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or becomes poisoned for 1 hour. While poisoned, the target's flesh swells and it has disadvantage on Dexterity checks and attack rolls made using Dexterity. A Medicine check can treat the poison.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Investigation of 18 to notice the slits and holes that conceal the poisoned darts. If not detected, the trap automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

A group Acrobatics check allows the adventurers to safely move around the pressure plate. Alternatively, a thieves' tools check disables the trap.

Critical Failure. Each adventurer and mount in the area is targeted by 2 (1d4) poisoned darts.

Failure. Each adventurer and mount in the area is targeted by a poisoned dart.

Success. The adventurers evade or dismantle the trap.

Critical Success. The adventurers evade or dismantle the trap and acquire a vial of the poison (enough to coat a single blade or up to three pieces of ammunition).

Poison Needle

3rd tier (constructed)
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP); DC 19/16
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)

A poison needle is hidden inside a locking mechanism of a chest or door, or otherwise concealed in something that an adventurer might be inclined to touch. The needle trap triggers when the object is manipulated.

Poisons Aplenty. There are a wide variety of poisons that might be applied to a poison needle.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Investigation of 20. If the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

A Sleight of Hand check to trigger the poison needle without taking damage, or a thieves' tools check to disarm the trap.

Critical Failure. The adventurer that failed the check triggers the needle, taking 1 piercing damage and 44 (8d10) poison damage. In addition, they must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

Failure. The adventurer that failed the check triggers the needle, taking 1 piercing damage and 22 (4d10) poison damage. In addition, they must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

Success. The adventurer disarms the trap without taking damage.

Critical Success. The adventurer disarms the trap and can keep the poison needle (which functions as a dart with the poison applied to it, using the poison statistics from a critical failure).

Primordial Tornado

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP); DC 19/16
Area Intermediate (3 hours)

Something shimmers on the horizon, rapidly drawing nearer — a tornado, but not like any cyclone they've seen before. Roll 1d4 to determine the type of tornado. 1 — water (sharks optional), 2 — fire, 3 — lightning, 4 — sand. The primordial tornado affects a 3-mile radius, and normal methods for withstanding or avoiding a tornado are ineffective against it.

Spell Gone Awry. An Arcana check indicates that this is an elemental spell gone wrong.

Tempest Winds. When a creature rolls a natural 1 on an ability check against the tornado, it must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be thrown 2 (1d4) miles, taking 52 (15d6) bludgeoning damage. In addition, the primordial tornado deals an additional 14 (4d6) damage determined by its type. bludgeoning for water (or piercing if sharks are included), fire, lightning, or slashing for sand. A creature suffers one level of fatigue for every 20 damage it takes from being thrown by the primordial tornado.

Possible Solutions

A spell that allows the caster to manipulate the relevant element and affects a large enough area can redirect the tornado, though any spell with a casting time greater than an action will likely take too long.

Alternatively, a group Athletics check can withstand the tornado and trudge forward, taking 14 (4d6) additional damage determined by the tornado's type, or a Survival check can quickly find shelter and take cover, waiting a day for the storm to pass.

Critical Failure. Each of the adventurers loses half their Supply, and they suffer both a level of fatigue and a level of strife.

Failure. The party avoids the primordial tornado but it is a frantic and desperate

escape. Each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and suffers a level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers avoid the primordial tornado's fury.

Critical Success. The adventurers avoid or overcome the primordial tornado, and its passing reveals something of import. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Private Property

1st tier (constructed)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/13
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
In order to get where they're going the party needs to pass through someone else's property. It is gated off with high fences, guards, and attack dogs — no expense was spared to keep trespassers out of this area.

Material Aid. Adventurers can use certain materials to gain an expertise die on an appropriate ability check. For example, a bribe of 10 gold might be used to gain an expertise die on a Persuasion check, and acquiring the patrol schedule might gain an expertise die on a Stealth check.

Possible Solutions

An Intimidation check scares the forces guarding the property or a Persuasion check can bribe them. Alternatively, the adventurers can make a group DC 13 Stealth check to sneak across the property.

Critical Failure. Adventurers are pursued by a guard squad and each suffer one level of fatigue after the ensuing chase or fight.

Failure. A patrol of 3 (1d4 + 1) guards pursue the adventurers.

Success. The adventurers successfully traverse the property and lose 2 hours of travel time in the process.

Critical Success. The adventurers deftly traverse the property unhindered. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Poorly-Repaired Tunnel

0th tier (constructed)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 13/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
This tunnel has suffered some damage and though repairs have been made its structure is not entirely stable.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 13 or with a Perception check to notice the construction. If not detected, the trap automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

Only one check is needed to circumvent this exploration challenge. Finding and using the precise route the trapbuilder used is the most straightforward answer, requiring each adventurer to make a DC 13 Acrobatics check. Alternatively, a DC 14 Engineering check can be made to prop up the ceiling and effectively disarm the trap.

Critical Failure. The adventurers trigger the trap, causing chunks of earth and stone to rain down. Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (2d8) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. Failure on the saving throw also causes a level of fatigue.

Failure. The party triggers the trap, causing chunks of earth and stone to rain down. Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (2d8) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success.

Success. The PCs avoid or disarm the trap.

Critical Success. The adventurers avoid or disarm the trap but have the option to leave the trap active for someone else to deal with.

Public Ceremony

0th tier (circumstance)
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP); DC 12/10
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
Music, drumming, cheering, or mourning emanates from ahead, and the way is blocked by a mass of bodies. Moving through the crowd is almost impossible. Roll 1d4 to determine the type of ceremony, or

make one up. 1 — festival, 2 — religious event, 3 — military parade, 4 — funeral.

Possible Solutions

A group check is needed to get through this crowd. Each adventurer can choose from an Athletics check to climb nearby buildings or trees and move above the crowd, or a Persuasion, Performance or Religion check to blend in, moving with the festival and slowly crossing to the other side.

Critical Failure. Each adventurer is trampled, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, suffering a level of fatigue, and losing 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Failure. Each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue and is moved 250 (2d4 × 50) feet with the procession before getting to the other side.

Success. Each adventurer is able to travel through the crowd without incident.

Critical Success. The adventurers are mistaken for participants and are thanked by a grateful individual or group who makes way for them, allowing the party to move across unhindered. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

Going back or around takes 3 (1d4 + 2) hours.

Quicksand

1st tier (terrain)
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); DC 15/14
Area Local (1 hour)
Suddenly the ground gives way and in a matter of seconds everyone is knee or waist-deep in dirt, muck, and sand!

Rescue. An Acrobatics or Athletics check made within the first two rounds can pull a creature free from the quicksand.

Spell Solve. Spells that shape stone or earth can render the quicksand stable, granting advantage on checks made to escape.

Turn-Based Action. If any of the adventurers are caught in the quicksand,

they become grappled and at the beginning of each of their turns the quicksand sucks them in further. At the beginning of an adventurer's second turn they become restrained, at the beginning of their third turn they are unable to use their arms at all, and at the end of their fourth turn they become totally submerged and must hold their breath or suffocate.

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, or similar magic triggers an automatic success for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

Navigating the quicksand requires a group Acrobatics or Survival check.

Critical Failure. Any adventurers who failed their check are caught in the quicksand. In addition, they lose 4 (2d4) Supply each and gain a level of fatigue.

Failure. Each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply in the struggle to get through the muck.

Success. The adventurers make it through, filthy but unharmed.

Critical Success. The adventurers find the body of an unlucky traveler in the quicksand, their pack waterproofed and containing 5 (1d4 + 3) Supply that's been well-preserved.

River Rapids

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Local (1 hour)
Frothy eddies and whorls create a deceptively intense undertow in this 200-foot waterway, its powerful current launching spills over slick and smooth boulders.

Fly Away. The use of *fly* or similar magic (except *levitate*) triggers a critical success for that adventurer.

Wait. A Nature check reveals that the waters will be lower tomorrow and crossing will be less hazardous. If the party waits, they have advantage on checks made to cross it then.

Possible Solutions

A group Athletics check is needed to swim across the water, made with advantage if a rope is tied over the river, or an Animal Handling check to ford the river on a mount of at least Large size.

Critical Failure. The party is carried 500 (2d4 × 100) feet downriver (roll separately for each adventurer), losing 4 (1d4 + 2) hours of travel time and 7 (3d4) Supply.

Failure. Each adventurer that fails suffers a level of fatigue and is carried 250 (2d4 × 50) feet downriver. The party loses 2 (1d4) hours of travel time regrouping.

Success. The adventurers cross safely.

Critical Success. The adventurers cross safely, and they discover a gift or clue along the way. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

Bypassing the river and crossing in a safe place is possible but takes a great deal of time — safely traveling around it costs an extra day of travel time.

Rockfall

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
Poorly secured barrels, rocks nudged by a sizable creature, or some other wave of objects come tumbling down directly onto the adventurers!

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, or similar magic triggers a critical success.

Possible Solutions

Make a group check. Each adventurer may choose from a Dexterity saving throw to dodge out of the way, a Constitution saving throw to simply withstand the barrage, or an Engineering check to rapidly reinforce or improvise cover.

Critical Failure. Adventurers, mounts, and vehicles take 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage. Each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and suffers a level of fatigue.

Failure. Adventurers that fail their check suffer a level of fatigue.

Success. The objects pass through without consequence.

Critical Success. Something unexpected is revealed inside a broken barrel or from damage wrought to the area. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Rolling Sphere

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP); DC 18/15
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
When a pressure plate concealed on the ground registers 20 or more pounds of weight, a trapdoor opens in the wall or ceiling and releases a Huge stone sphere that rolls directly towards the adventurers.

Hold It! An adventurer can make an Athletics check to stop the sphere from rolling after the trap is triggered. This allows the rest of the party to get away, but the PC holding it up suffers a level of fatigue.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 18. If the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

An Engineering check can adequately obstruct the sphere before the trap is triggered, and a thieves' tools check can disarm the trap before triggering it.

Critical Failure. Adventurers must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Failure. Adventurers must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 28 (5d10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Success. The adventurers manage to avoid or disarm the trap.

Critical Success. The adventurers avoid or disarm the trap but have the

option to leave the trap active for someone else to deal with.

Rooftop Run

1st tier (constructed)
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); DC 15/14
Area Local (1 hour)

An event forces the party into a hectic rooftop chase! Roll 1d4 or select one of the following events. 1 — a pickpocket steals something from one of the adventurers, 2 — the party witnesses a crime down a nearby alley, 3 — a noble's exotic pet escapes, 4 — the party sees an enemy they have encountered before. The target flees, running, jumping, and leaping across angled shingles, chimneys, and warped wood struts.

Possible Solutions

Every participant on each side of the chase rolls initiative as normal. At the start of each participant's turn, they choose what tactics to use to flee, pursue, or otherwise race forward, making an ability check. A participant cannot use the same tactic two rounds in a row. The first participant to achieve 10 successes wins the chase by either making an escape, blocking their competitors' travel, catching their prey, taking the right shortcuts, or just being a little faster.

When a participant has a Speed of 45 feet or higher, they have advantage on ability checks made for the chase.

Examples of appropriate checks include:

- Acrobatics to run across ledges, ropes, and other precarious surfaces to cross the rooftops. On a failure, that adventurer falls 20 feet down to the streets, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.
- Athletics to leap from rooftop to rooftop. On a failure, that adventurer's next ability check is made with disadvantage.
- Engineering to predict the arrangement of buildings ahead and take a more expedient route. On a failure, that adventurer stumbles into a minor hazard and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage.
- Perception to keep track of participants while stuck on the streets below.
- Stealth to use cover and confound the other side of the chase. On a failure, that adventurer cannot attempt another Stealth check next round.

Critical Failure. Each time an adventurer rolls a critical failure they remove 1 success from their side's total successes for the chase. An adventurer can choose to instead suffer a level of fatigue.

Failure. The participant holds their own, their position in the chase neither improving or worsening. An adventurer loses or otherwise ruins 1 Supply.

Success. The participant adds 1 success to their side's total successes for the chase.

Critical Success. The participant adds 2 successes to their side's total successes for the chase.

Rot Grubs

2nd tier (creatures)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)

The corpse of a slain adventurer or monster lies upon the ground and when closely observed it explodes with disgusting flesh-eating parasites!

Spell Solve. A casting of *detect poison and disease* reveals the presence of rot grubs inside of a corpse.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Perception of 20 to notice the skin of the corpse moves unnaturally. If

the trap is not detected, it automatically triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

Dealing at least 10 fire damage kills the rot grubs, triggering a critical success, while covering and pulverizing the corpse with at least 50 bludgeoning damage kills the rot grubs, triggering a success. If the party hesitates or does nothing, a failure is triggered, and if they interfere with the corpse a critical failure occurs.

Critical Failure. Each adventurer within 20 feet of the corpse makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the adventurer is hit by 1d4 rot grubs that burrow into their skin, dealing 3 (1d6) ongoing damage until removed. Removing the rot grubs requires taking fire damage (as above), having each dug out with a weapon that deals piercing or slashing damage (1d6 per rot grub), or an effect that removes disease. The corpse and all of its belongings are ruined.

Failure. As a critical failure, but only one rot grub hits each adventurer within 10 feet of the corpse.

Success. The rot grubs perish inside the corpse and the adventurers salvage 5d20 gold worth of equipment.

Critical Success. As a success, and roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Sandstorm

2nd tier (weather)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Sand, grit, and glass pelt the flesh as powerful winds fling debris in such overwhelming amounts that navigation is nearly impossible.

Extremely High Winds. Ranged weapon attacks have disadvantage and can only be made with thrown weapons, unattended and poorly secured objects fly off in the wind, and flying is nearly impossible (requiring an Acrobatics check each minute to avoid plummeting to the ground). At the end of each hour in this area, each adventurer must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be thrown 50 feet by the wind, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and landing prone.

Reduced Visibility. The maximum range of any sight-based senses is 5 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.

Ropes. Any adventurers attached together by rope have advantage on saving throws to resist being thrown by the wind, but on a failed save anyone directly attached to a thrown adventurer is themselves thrown half as far.

Possible Solutions

An Engineering check allows an adventurer to hastily assemble improvised shelter capable of surviving the sandstorm, losing 7 (2d6) hours, or a group Survival check helps push through the onslaught.

Critical Failure. Everything is lost! All of the party's Supply and one randomly determined item from each adventurer is scattered to the winds. Collecting all of their belongings after the storm ends (in 3 hours) takes 13 (2d12) hours, and even then half of their Supply is ruined.

Failure. Each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply to the sands and winds.

Success. The adventurers have to brush off a thick coating of sand but otherwise push through the storm.

Critical Success. The storm passes quickly or the adventurers find an unexpected route (a steep canyon, underground passage, and so on) that allows them to continue unhindered.

Sea of Sand

0th tier (terrain)
Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Undulating waves of dunes stretch toward a horizon distorted by waves of heat. The sand shifts and flows to cover up tracks in a matter of moments, and the dunes are both exhausting to crest and dangerous to descend.

Appropriate Gear. The use of appropriate mounts (such as camels) and keeping a light pack (less than half carrying capacity) allow for travel at a normal pace without suffering from Unforgiving Heat.

Cool Nights. The cool nights alleviate the dangers of travel under the blazing sun. Night time travel has its own issues such as predators and tripping hazards, but reduces the strain of the journey and adventurers gain an expertise die on checks made against the exploration challenge.

Hilly. When a creature is knocked prone, it makes a Dexterity saving throw or tumbles 20 feet down a sand dune.

Sandy. The area is difficult terrain, and Survival checks made to find tracks have disadvantage.

Unforgiving Heat. When traveling through this area during the day at faster than a slow pace, at the end of every hour each adventurer and mount must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or suffer a level of fatigue. Immunity to fire damage grants an automatic success on this save.

Possible Solutions

A group Survival or Athletics check is needed to traverse the sand dunes.

Critical Failure. All of the water being carried by the party evaporates or spoils. The adventurers suffer a level of fatigue and need to locate a source of water as soon as they reach a new area.

Failure. Each of the adventurers lose 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply to contamination or spoiling in the heat.

Success. A hardened pass of dirt and stone allows for a reasonably flat and straight path.

Critical Success. The party stumbles upon a natural spring or oasis. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Shattered Earth

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP); DC 17/15

Area Intermediate (3 hours)

Massive pillars, plates of stone, and earthen boulders haphazardly confound the broken landscape ahead and navigating a way through requires equal amounts of careful stepping, scaling rock formations, and rounding obstacles.

On Foot. Land vehicles and most mounts cannot traverse this area, and in order to continue the party must dismount and unload overladen wagons. Squeezing through narrow passes, lifting heavy loads over debris, and ducking under stone overhangs quadruples the amount of time needed to travel through this area with vehicles or mounts.

Precarious Boulders. Boulders tumble down whenever they are even slightly disturbed by passersby far below. At the end of every hour spent in this area, roll 1d20. On a result of 15 or more, rocks fall. Each adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. In addition, on a failed save they are knocked prone and restrained by the boulder. The boulders are large enough to offer three-fourths cover or potentially block passage forward.

Up and Away. The use of *fly, levitate*, or similar magic to scout ahead triggers a critical success.

Possible Solutions

A successful group check using the following options will allow the adventurers to travel across the area:

- Acrobatics check to avoid putting too much weight on any step.
- Athletics check to scale the walls and reach a set of boulders.
- Perception check to spot a set of precarious boulders.
- Stealth check to move in utter silence and disturb as little of the terrain as possible.

Critical Failure. The adventurers become trapped after a catastrophic collapse of stone and rock. Digging themselves and their equipment out takes a day, and the party loses 2 (1d4) days travel time making it through this area.

Failure. The adventurers each suffer a level of fatigue but make it through this area.

Success. The adventurers make it through this area.

Critical Success. The adventurers find a path through the maze of rock and safely make it through in just 1 hour. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

Bypassing the precarious area is possible but takes a great deal of time — safely traveling around it costs an extra 5 (2d4) days of travel time.

Sinkhole

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
As the adventurers travel the ground beneath them suddenly gives way! The sinkhole is 30 feet across and 60 feet deep, and it forms immediately.

Premonition. Adventurers with a passive Perception of 16 or higher notice something is off about the ground and gain an expertise die on their Dexterity saving throw.

Possible Solutions

Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, falling into the pit on a failure and taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage upon landing. For those within the pit, an Athletics check is needed to climb out (made with disadvantage if lifting wagons or mounts). An Engineering check can be made to jury-rig a rope system to give everybody advantage.

Critical Failure. The adventurer fails an attempt, losing 3 (1d6) Supply and suffering a level of fatigue.

Failure. The adventurer fails an attempt and loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Success. Adventurers avoid or make it out of the sinkhole.

Critical Success. Adventurers make it out of the sinkhole. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Sphere of Annihilation

3rd tier (constructed)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
Inside the mouth of a statue or well is nothing but void — a *sphere of annihilation* concealed as a simple hole or pit with the promise that something of value may be hidden beyond it.

Tales. A History check recalls tales of horror involving the use of a fell sphere or information about those who built the statue or well.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Investigation of 20 to notice the subtle runes and glyphs carved around the void, but only if observed under the effects of detect magic.

Possible Solutions

The outcome of this exploration challenge is not measured by failures or successes, instead depending entirely upon the party's actions. An Arcana check identifies the sphere once it has been detected.

The sphere completely annihilates anything that passes through it, with the exception of artifacts. Anything that touches the sphere but does not entirely pass through it takes 44 (8d10) force damage. In addition, the energies of the sphere spoil any Supply the adventurer is carrying.

A unique effect happens if the sphere comes into contact with a planar portal or extradimensional space (such as a portable hole). In the case of such an event, the Narrator rolls d100 to determine what happens next. on 1–50 the sphere is destroyed, on 51–85 the sphere simply moves through the portal or into the space, and on 86–100 a rift forms that pulls in all creatures and objects within 180 feet. Each

object and creature, including the sphere, reappears in a random plane of existence.

Using their combined knowledge and some good luck the adventurers can gain control of the *sphere of annihilation* with a DC 25 Arcana check.

If the party manages to get past the sphere, roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Spinning Walls

3rd tier (constructed)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)

When a pressure plate concealed on the ground registers 20 or more pounds of weight, solid stone walls shift, slide, and spin as the structure around the party becomes an ever-changing maze that blocks them off from each other, swiftly carrying everyone in different directions.

The walls can be any solid surface appropriate to the environment, setting, and situation — stone barriers in a castle's dungeon, mindless constructs in ancient catacombs, heaving earth in an archdruid's warren, arcane barriers of solid translucent light below an archmage's tower, and so on.

Trap. This trap can be detected by a passive Investigation of 20 to notice the panel that triggers it.

Possible Solutions

Each adventurer rolls 1d12 at the start of each round. Any adventurers with duplicate results are moved together, but otherwise each member of the party becomes isolated and moved to another passage away from their allies.

An Engineering check can disable the trap for 1 minute, during which an Intelligence check can be made by each adventurer to navigate to a particular point.

A Dexterity saving throw allows an adventurer to leap towards one ally in the same section and be moved with them; alternatively, adventurers who rope themselves together move together. An Engineering check can also reveal the

nature of what's going on — the adventurer rolls 2d12, choosing which to use.

The challenge ends when all the adventurers are next to each other.

Critical Failure. The ordeal is particularly jarring, long, and painful. Each adventurer loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply, suffering one level of fatigue and strife.

Failure. The adventurer suffers one level of fatigue and strife.

Success. The adventurer suffers one level of fatigue or one level of strife (determined by their actions and the Narrator).

Critical Success. The adventurers deftly make it through this vexing obstacle and one of them finds something important. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Stampede

0th tier (creatures)
Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC** 14/13
Area Local (1 hour)

A massive herd of stampeding animals are racing towards the party with little to no regard for what's in their way!

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, or similar magic triggers an automatic success for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

Each adventurer decides for themselves how to avoid the stampede as part of a group check.

- An Acrobatics or Athletics check can outrun the herd. This check is made with disadvantage if the adventurers have pack animals with them.
- An Animal Handling check diverts the herd. Anyone able to speak to animals (from a class feature or spell) has advantage.
- A Survival check to search for high ground to wait it out.

Critical Failure. Each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue and the party loses a pack animal, if they have one.

Failure. Each adventurer suffers a level of fatigue.

Success. The adventurers successfully avoid the stampede and continue on their way.

Critical Success. The adventurers successfully avoid the stampede. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Sunspots

3rd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); DC 18/15
Area Region (time varies)
The sun seems weirdly blotchy, like something has stained its surface, and the light shining on the ground ahead appears dappled as well. Magic is unpredictable in the area for the next 2 days and every night is moonless, making it completely dark.

Incensed Fauna. The strange light sets beasts and monsters in the area into fits of rage and they attack the party on sight. The party has to overcome at least one random monster encounter while in the area.

Unpredictable Magic. Spells cast at night or in the shade function normally. When a spell is cast in the sunlight, roll 1d4. On a 1 the spell fails, on a 2 the spell fails and the spellcaster rolls on the Wild Magic Surge table, or on a 3 or 4 the spell functions normally and the spellcaster rolls on the Wild Magic Surge table. When rolling on the Wild Magic Surge table because of Sunspots, roll 1d12 instead of 1d10, and a result of 11 or 12 it triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

This task simply involves traversing the area.

- Trial and error reveals that the sun's light currently has adverse effects on magic. Traveling at night triggers a success.

- An Arcana, Nature, or Religion check reveals that this is a natural aberration of the sun, not the effect of interference.
- An Investigation check determines that spellcasting functions normally in the shade.

Critical Failure. A spell fails dramatically and without warning, debilitating everyone nearby. Each of the adventurers is slowed for the next 7 (2d6) hours.

Failure. Each adventurer loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply from stumbling around in the dark or when briefly blinded by the sun's strange behavior.

Success. The adventurers travel through the area unhindered.

Critical Success. The adventurers travel through the area unhindered and the phenomenon uncovers something interesting. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

Bypassing the capricious anomaly or hoping it subsides is possible but takes a great deal of time — safely traveling around it costs an extra 4 (1d6 + 1) days of travel time.

Swinging Blades

2nd tier (constructed)
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP); DC 18/15
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)
The corridor ahead is filled with churning blades for 20 feet or more of the passage. Whenever an adventurer enters into a square in the area or begins their turn there, they are attacked by a swinging blade.

History. A History check reveals information about the people who constructed the trap, granting advantage on Engineering and Perception checks to disable it.

More Blades. For each additional 10 feet added to the area beyond the first 20 feet, increase this encounter's challenge rating by 1.

Swinging Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack.* +6 to hit, one target. *Hit.* 10 (3d6) slashing damage and the target makes a DC 15 Strength saving throw or it is knocked prone.

Possible Solutions

With an Acrobatics check an adventurer can time a tumbling roll through the blades and take no damage.

An Engineering check (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) can be made to wedge a blade in place. On a failure by 5 or less, the wedge is temporary. Roll 1d4 each time someone passes through, and on a 1 the wedge breaks and the blade comes down (attacking with advantage).

Critical Failure. The swinging blades have advantage on their attack rolls, and any swinging blade that hits gets a critical hit.

Failure. The swinging blades have advantage on their attack rolls.

Success. Only 1 (1d4 – 1) swinging blades attack each adventurer (minimum 1).

Critical Success. The adventurers make it through safely and find or discover something of value from the nearby corpse of someone not so lucky. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Thundering Stampede

2nd tier (creatures)
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14
Area Local (1 hour)

An enormous herd of stampeding animals are racing through and destroying everything that stands in their way! Each adventurer can decide for themselves how to avoid the stampede.

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, *rope trick*, or similar magic triggers a critical success for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

Each adventurer decides for themselves how to avoid the stampede as part of a group check.

- An Acrobatics or Athletics check can outrun the herd. This check is made with disadvantage if the adventurers have pack animals with them.
- An Animal Handling check diverts the herd. Anyone able to speak to animals (from a class feature or spell) has advantage.
- A Survival check to search for high ground to wait it out.

Critical Failure. The party loses a pack animal, if they have one. Each adventurer takes 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage, loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply, and suffers a level of fatigue.

Failure. Each adventurer takes 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage, loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and suffers a level of fatigue.

Success. The party manages to avoid the stampede and continue on their way.

Critical Success. The adventurers successfully avoid the stampede. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

A party that waits out the stampede finds the ground ahead is completely destroyed by the thousands of hooves or paws that just trod upon it, sucking their feet down into the mulched dirt with every step and increasing their travel time by 5 (2d4) hours.

Thunderstorm

1st tier (weather)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/13
Area Greater (1 day)

A blinding bolt of light strikes the ground followed by deafening rolling thunder. The torrential rain soaks everything, fills concavities, and turns dust to mud. Flash flooding is imminent.

Slippery. Deluges of rain turn the area into difficult terrain.

Violent Weather. The thunderstorm's effects spread across the landscape in a 20-mile radius, filling the area with high winds, rain, and lightning strikes. Adventurers can only hear sounds within

30 feet of them (except for loud, explosive noises). In addition, every 1d10 hours a randomly determined adventurer makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) lightning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success.

Possible Solutions

The party can make an Engineering check to hastily construct improvised shelter or a group Survival check to push through the storm and endure the elements.

Critical Failure. The party loses 1 day of travel time in the thunderstorm. Each adventurer finds that water has ruined 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply and they suffer a level of fatigue.

Failure. The party loses 7 (3d4) hours of travel time in the thunderstorm and 1d4 Supply.

Success. The party pushes through the worst of the thunderstorm after 5 (2d4) hours of travel.

Critical Success. The party pushes through the worst of the thunderstorm after just 3 (1d6) hours of travel. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Tornado

2nd tier (weather)
Challenge 10 (5,900); DC 18/15
Area Intermediate (3 hours)
Stormy skies above quickly mass together as the wind picks up. In a matter of minutes the gusts are strong enough to knock creatures over and a cyclone touches down onto the nearby ground!

Realize Danger. With a Nature check an adventurer knows how to stay safe in a tornado (sighting funnel clouds that will develop into new twisters, avoiding trees, protecting one's head, crouching to avoid the wind, using ditches and gullies) and the party has advantage on Athletics checks made against it.

Spell Solve. A casting of *control weather* immediately ends the tornado and triggers a critical success.

Tempest Winds. When a creature rolls a natural 1 on an ability check against the

tornado, it makes a Strength saving throw or is thrown 200 feet, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage. A creature suffers a level of fatigue when it takes 20 or more damage from being thrown by the tornado.

Possible Solutions

A successful group check using the following options allow the adventurers to travel across the area.

- A group Athletics check to withstand the tornado and trudge forward.
- A group Survival check to find shelter along the way and take cover, waiting a day for the storm to pass.

Critical Failure. Each adventurer suffers one level of fatigue and loses half of their Supply, and the party loses an extra day of travel time.

Failure. Each adventurer suffers one level of fatigue and loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Success. The adventurers make it through, fighting against the winds.

Critical Success. The adventurers travel through the tempest unhindered. Roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

The party cannot choose to simply avoid the tornado altogether without an adventurer succeeding on a Nature check, and even then it costs them 2 (1d4) days of travel time.

Treacherous Tundra

2nd tier (terrain)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Greater (1 day)
Pristine white snow hides a multitude of hazards underneath its surface.

Realize Danger. With a Nature check an adventurer knows how to stay safe in

the tundra and the party has advantage on Athletics checks made against it.

Tundra Troubles. At the end of every hour they travel, the Narrator rolls 1d4 for each adventurer to see if they run into a hazard in this terrain. On a result of 4, roll again and refer to Table. Tundra Trouble to determine what assails them.

Possible Solutions

A group check can be made to overcome this challenge, including Athletics checks to quickly march through the snow or Survival checks to find paths that minimize exposure to crosswinds.

Critical Failure. The party takes 2 days to get across the tundra. Any adventurer that takes 20 or more cold damage suffers a level of fatigue.

Failure. The party loses 1 day of travel time getting across the tundra and each adventurer loses 4 (1d4 + 2) Supply.

Success. The adventurers cross the tundra in half a day's travel.

Critical Success. The adventurers cross the tundra in just half a day, and they see something interesting amongst the snow and ice. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

TABLE: TUNDRA TROUBLES

1D6	EFFECT
1	**Biting Cold.** A blustering tempest of freezing gales roils through. At the end of every hour spent traveling through this area, a creature makes a Constitution saving throw (DC 5 + 2 per previous save) or it takes 3 (1d6) cold damage.
2	**Reduced Visibility.** Vast amounts of snow drop down from the sky. For the next hour, the maximum range of any sight-based senses is 10 feet. In addition, Perception checks are made with disadvantage, and all passive scores (including passive Perception) are reduced by 5.
3	**Shifting Ice.** The ground beneath suddenly cracks and gives way, revealing that it was ice! The adventurer makes a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or they fall into freezing water, taking 11 (2d10) cold damage. While submerged in the freezing water the adventurer takes 11 (2d10) cold damage at the end of each of its turns. Any creature that attempts to pull the adventurer out with a DC 17 Strength check also makes a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5 (1d10) cold damage on a failure.
4	**Predator.** A creature (of a CR equal to twice the party's average level) that is native to the area spots the party and tracks them, waiting for the next Tundra Trouble hazard before it attacks.

Tsunami

4th tier (weather)

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP); DC 21/17

Area Intermediate (3 hours)

Waves twice the height of a humanoid sweep across docks, decks, and deserted streets, but these are only meager precursors of the titanic wall of brine swelling in the distance.

Countdown (1d6). The adventurers have a limited amount of time to respond. At the start of each round, roll 1d6. On a result of 6 the tsunami hits.

Don't Run! Nature or Survival checks reveal that outrunning a tsunami is impossible and that the best solution is to climb to safety. Those who try to run automatically fail the group check.

Titanic Wave. The tsunami is 10 + 2d10 feet high and thousands of feet wide. When it hits, each creature in the area makes a Strength saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half damage on a success. Creatures, vehicles, and other objects are carried

1,000 (4d4 × 100) feet away and suffer two levels of fatigue.

Up and Away. The use of *fly*, *levitate*, or similar magic to scout ahead triggers a critical success for that adventurer.

Possible Solutions

A successful group check using the following options allow the adventurers to endure the tsunami:

- Athletics check to climb to safety. An adventurer with a climb speed does not need to make this check.
- Engineering check to quickly create an improvised floating structure to climb on top of, or to determine whether an object will provide adequate shelter or be carried away with the water.

Critical Failure. In the struggle against and rush to avoid the tsunami each adventurer suffers one level of fatigue and one level of strife. Anyone also hit by the tsunami loses all of their Supply.

Failure. In the struggle against and rush to avoid the tsunami each adventurer suffers either one level of fatigue or one level of strife (determined by their actions and the Narrator). Anyone also hit by the tsunami loses 7 (3d4) Supply.

Success. The adventurers survive the catastrophic wave.

Critical Success. The adventurers survive the catastrophic wave with little injury to speak of. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Leave It Be

The tsunami appears suddenly and the adventurers have no choice but to face it head on unless they are able to quickly teleport or take to the air along with their companions, mounts, and vehicles.

Urban Blaze

1st tier (constructed)

Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/13
Area Immediate (less than 1 hour)

Smoke rises from a building that's ablaze with flames! The adventurers have 10 minutes to rally a response to the fire before it spreads to another building. If someone is trapped inside the building, they are incapacitated after 1 minute, dying 1 minute after that, and the challenge rating increases by 1.

Spell Solve. Spells that conjure or otherwise manipulate water help to dampen the blaze, granting advantage on checks made to put the fire out.

Possible Solutions

This is a group effort. The following three checks need to be made; each has a consequence for failure.

- If someone is trapped inside the building an Athletics or Acrobatics check is needed to rescue them, and the rescuer makes a Constitution saving throw or they are poisoned from the smoke for 10 minutes.
- An Engineering check (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) to protect the nearby buildings from fire.
- An Intimidation or Persuasion check convinces passersby to help.

Critical Failure. Large swaths of the settlement are destroyed and the party is blamed. The adventurers have disadvantage on checks made to acquire help or information in the nearby region, regardless of the nature of the assistance or any impending threats.

Failure. A few nearby buildings catch on fire but the flames are quickly extinguished. Rumors of the adventurers' interference and help make people unwilling to trust them — they cannot gain expertise dice on Deception, Insight, or Persuasion checks in the nearby region.

Success. The building burns to the ground but no one else is harmed.

Critical Success. The adventurers manage to save most of the building and receive help from grateful townsfolk. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Urban Quake

1st tier (constructed)
Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/13
Area Local (special)

The buildings all around begin to shake as the ground roils and the world trembles! The earthquake lasts for 5 (1d10) minutes. Dozens of townsfolk mill around in a panic — can the party save them?

Dangerous Debris. At the end of every minute pieces of building come loose and hurtle towards the party! Each creature in the area must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage.

Safe Spots. A Nature check reveals that earthquakes are more scary than dangerous, but can cause problems for buildings, and the safest place to stand is in a corner or doorway. Anyone that does so has advantage on saving throws made against Dangerous Debris.

Possible Solutions

If the adventurers save no townspeople, they trigger a Critical Failure. If they save fewer than 5, they trigger a failure. Saving between 5 and 10 is a success, and more than 10 is a critical success. Each check below takes one minute and saves 1d4 townspeople.

- An Engineering check (or a check made with tools the Narrator deems appropriate) to brace buildings that are shaking loose.
- A Persuasion check to direct townsfolk to safety.
- A Strength (Athletics) check to physically support a precarious building.

Critical Failure. Dozens of townsfolk are killed and buildings destroyed. Inflation quickly sets in, doubling the prices of goods and services in the settlement.

Failure. Several buildings are damaged and townsfolk injured.

Success. The townsfolk and their settlement survive the earthquake without much incident.

Critical Success. The adventurers are lauded for their heroism by grateful townsfolk who do all they can to help the party. Roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Voracious Pests

2nd tier (creatures)
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP); DC 17/15
Area Immediate (special)

The adventurers discover a horde of resilient and pervasive pests crawling throughout their supplies! These vermin aren't just tough, they are particularly dangerous and disturbing them provokes a violent response.

Possible Solutions

An Animal Handling check drives the pests away from the provisions, or a Nature check locates a tastier treat to lure the pests away.

Critical Failure. All of the party's food and water are ruined — each adventurer loses their entire Supply. In addition, they are attacked by 7 (2d4 + 2) swarms of rats.

Failure. An hour after the adventurers next consume any of their Supply, they are poisoned for 24 hours and realize the pests spoiled it. Each adventurer loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply.

Success. The adventurers deal with the pests without losing any Supply.

Critical Success. The adventurers deal with the pests without losing any Supply. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

White Elk

2nd tier (creatures)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14
Area Immediate (special)

The party encounters a herd of elk, but one stands apart — a white bull elk with antlers that shine like crystal. The white elk is clearly wounded, an arrow sticking into its side. It looks at the party before bounding off into the woods or undergrowth.

Arcane Lore. Arcana check to know that the heart, blood, and antlers of this creature are highly valued by certain spellcasters.

Divine Lore. Religion check to recognize that white elk are a sign of divine favor and any who kill a white elk are cursed.

Natural Lore. Nature check to determine that this is not a natural form of albinism.

Possible Solutions

A success on this exploration challenge requires three ability checks. The party needs to track the elk first with a Survival check, and when they catch up with it they have to calm it with an Animal Handling check so it lets them approach, finally tending to its wounds with a Medicine check (or by using magical healing that restores at least 20 hit points).

Critical Failure. If the party harms the elk, divine powers curse each of the adventurers. The nature of the curses are determined by the Narrator and function as bestow curse spells cast at 9th-level. In addition, a wake of confusing energies is left behind by the white elk's passing to obscure its trail from pursuers, making the party magically lost for 4 (1d4 + 2) days.

Failure. If the party does not help the elk, the weather turns bad for the remainder of their time in this region, and their next combat encounter or exploration challenge has an encounter element determined by the Narrator.

Success. If the party heals the elk, they earn its blessing and the next time the adventurers take a short rest they gain the benefits of a long rest.

Critical Success. If the party heals the elk and any of their ability checks are a critical success, the adventurers are touched by the elk and imparted with important knowledge. Roll on the Boons and Discoveries table.

Wild Magic Zone

2nd tier (supernatural)
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP); DC 17/15
Area Local (1 hour)

Whether from reasons natural or malevolent, the area ahead is a wild magic zone. Distances seem to be warped, and time seems to move in a random fashion, making progress confusing and difficult.

Careful Casting. An Arcana check reveals that casting using the Subtle Spell metamagic or casting spells without a vocalized component helps minimize the effect, allowing the spellcaster to roll twice on the Wild Magic Surge Table and choose which result to use.

Incensed Fauna. The strange magic sets beasts and monsters in the area into fits of rage and they attack the party on sight. The party has to overcome at least one random monster encounter while in the area.

Quiet Casting. A Performance check to cast a spell with a sufficiently quieted vocalized component allows the spellcaster to roll twice on the Wild Magic Surge table and choose which result to use.

Wild Magic. When a spell is cast in the area, roll on the Wild Magic Surge table.

Possible Solutions

This task simply involves traversing the area. A group Arcana check or Wisdom saving throw is required to keep the adventurers' bearings and not get lost within the confusing warped space and time.

Critical Failure. The party loses 2 (1d4) days of travel time as the effects of wild magic on the environment confuse and beguile them, and each adventurer inexplicably loses 8 (2d6 + 1) Supply.

Failure. The adventurers lose 1 day of travel time.

Success. The adventurers continue unhindered.

Critical Success. The adventurers continue unhindered and fortune smiles upon them. Roll twice on the Boons and Discoveries table.

TABLE: WILD MAGIC SURGE

1D8	EFFECT
1	The spellcaster and everyone within 100 feet lose all their hair. They regrow hair at their natural rate.
2	The spellcaster must succeed on a DC 18 saving throw with a randomly determined ability or be blinded and deafened for 2 (1d4) hours.
3	The spellcaster shrinks to Tiny size for 2 (1d4) days. Their equipment does not change size, and while shrunk they have disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
4	The spellcaster and everyone within 100 feet glow for 2d12 days, producing dim light in a 10-foot radius. The color of the glow changes with their mood.
5	The spellcaster and everyone within 100 feet sneezes uncontrollably for 2d12 hours. They have disadvantage on ability checks that require speaking and are unable to cast spells that require speaking (such as suggestion) for as long as the effects last.
6	The spellcaster becomes violently flatulent for the next 2 (1d4) days, but is completely unaware of what they emanate. Checks made to track them using scent gain an expertise die.
7	The spell's effects are doubled. Roll 1d4: on a 1, it centers its effect on the caster.
8	For the next 10 minutes the spellcaster can read minds as per the detect thoughts spell.
9	For the next 5 (2d4) hours the spellcaster and everyone within 100 feet can only speak lies.
10	The spellcaster gains (or regains) a spell slot of one level higher than the spell they just cast.

Creating Exploration Challenges

The exploration challenges here provide a plethora of ways to make journeys impactful and memorable, but Narrators can also create new obstacles for their campaigns.

Step 1: Start With a Problem

Come up with a problem the adventurers need to solve. When creating an exploration challenge, keep in mind that its purpose is to provide something to overcome on their journey to other, greater things (the campaign's plot, the next big conflict, and so on). A good exploration challenge is something that the party doesn't just react to, but can also directly apply their skills, gear, and ingenuity to overcome.

Step 2: Add Challenge Traits

Many exploration challenges have traits that add mechanics to change the way the adventurers can interact with them or details for the party to discover. Other traits grant adventurers bonuses or penalties depending on which strategies they employ.

Also consider the size of the challenge. Exploration challenges that gradually deal damage should be large enough in area to threaten adventurers, but not big enough

that it means certain death for the party —
unless it is being used to create a barrier
that the PCs must circumvent or otherwise
advance in level before attempting because
something crucial to the campaign waits on
the other side.

Step 3: Brainstorm Solutions

The solutions provided by each encounter
challenge are by no means an exhaustive
list of ways around the problem, although
they do suggest which approaches should
be harder or easier to attempt.

Certain solutions might also have an
added cost or penalty associated with them.
If adventurers would rather take the time to
engineer a solution to a broken bridge
instead of just trying to jump over it, then
that should take more time to overcome.

When an exploration challenge makes it to
the table, players might present a
completely unexpected solution and that's
okay! Use the existing solutions to gauge
how difficult this new solution should be in
the situation, and the DCs for each
Challenge Rating listed in the sidebar on
Setting DCs.

Step 4: Determine the Consequences

There are usually four outcomes to consider
in an exploration challenge: critical failure,
failure, success, and critical success. Not
every exploration challenge follows this
structure, but those which are based on a
group check or an individual ability check
often do, and these outcomes can be
applied at the Narrator's discretion.

Step 5: Challenge Rating and Experience

To determine the appropriate challenge
rating and experience points to reward for a
new exploration challenge, use the same
calculations used for a new creature
(averaging the DCs for ability checks and
using them in place of Armor Class).

Otherwise compare the consequences of
failures between the new exploration
challenge and those listed in this chapter.

Setting DCs

When creating an exploration challenge the
Narrator needs to assign appropriate
Difficulty Classes to any ability checks or
saving throws it requires. The DCs are up to
the Narrator, but as a rule of thumb for an
individual check an appropriate DC to start
with is 13 plus half the Challenge Rating
(round down). For a group check, the DC
should be 10 plus a quarter of the
Challenge Rating (round down).

TABLE: EXPLORING SOLUTION DCS

CHALLENGE RATING	INDIVIDUAL CHECK	GROUP CHECK
Less than 1	12	10
1	13	13
2–3	14	13
4–5	15	14
6–7	16	14
8–9	17	15
10–11	18	15
12–13	19	16
14–15	20	16
16–17	21	17
18–19	22	17
20	23	18