

A 5E ADVENTURE

THE CARRION TRAIL

BLOODSOAKED EARTH MARKS THE PATH
WHERE THE ROT FEASTS AND HUNGERS STILL...



THE CARRION TRAIL

BY



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THE STENCH OF CARRION

The forest reeks of endings. Trees stand as withered silhouettes, their roots knotted around carcasses left to spoil. Crows gather in droves, their wings blackening the sky, yet they will not touch the flesh. It rots untouched, as if claimed by something deeper, something fouler than hunger. The path ahead is not marked by footprints, but by a trail of corpses left as offerings to an unseen power.

Travelers whisper of hunters gone missing, of villages where dogs howl for nights unending, and of blood-soaked soil that never dries. At the center of these stories lies a sickness not of flesh alone, but of spirit. The Sanguine Rot seeps through beast and man alike. It festers in silence, blooming not like a flower, but like a wound that refuses to close.

The Severed have tracked its presence here, blades drawn against the shadows beneath every bough. Yet even they, hardened by rot and ruin, tread carefully. The further you march, the thicker the stench becomes, clinging to your lungs like damp ash. Every step down this trail feels as though it is pulling you deeper into the throat of something vast and hungry.

Somewhere ahead, in the hollows of the earth, the Rot waits. Not passive, not lingering, but growing, fed by the dead it has been given, and eager to be given more.



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INTRODUCTION

Kelfecil's Tales is all about strong and deep narratives. We create stories and adventures inspired by art. We believe that well-designed narratives in TTRPGs can be extremely important if we want to create memorable and meaningful stories. For that reason, we put a lot of effort into designing our adventures, so that you and your players can later leave the table with something that you will find difficult to forget.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The Carrion Trail is a descent into the heart of corruption, where the Sanguine Rot has turned forest, beast, and man into grotesque offerings for a nightmare's birth. Hired by the Severed, a faction of relentless hunters, the party joins their march into a woodland blighted with slaughter. From the open forest strewn with butchered animals, to the long night of ambushes at their camp, and finally to the rotting mine where the Maw of the Rot festers, every step drives them deeper into a war against decay itself.

The adventure is structured in three acts: Act 1 reveals the trail of corpses and ambushes by Rotwolves; Act 2 forces the players to survive a night of relentless attacks; Act 3 culminates in a brutal descent through a mine turned sacrificial pit, ending with the Maw of the Rot's horrific confrontation. Throughout, the Festering Rot environmental effect builds dread and exhaustion. The choices the party makes and the fate of the Severed will shape whether the Rot weakens or spreads unchecked.

QUICK ADVENTURE INFO

Some quick information about the adventure:

- **Recommended APL:** 6
- **Themes:** Grimdark Horror, Decay, Journey, Ambush
- **Setting:** Central Latakar, on the fringes of Sanguine Rot (tainted woodland)
- **Expected Sessions/Playtime:** 1 to 2 sessions (3 to 6 hours total)





BACKGROUND

The Carrion Trail is the result of months of silent sacrifice. Beasts were slain and left to rot, their blood soaking into the soil, until the very air began to thicken with the taste of decay. Each carcass, each offering, fed the spread of the Sanguine Rot until it reached a fevered pulse beneath the forest. The corruption has turned roots brittle, driven birds from the branches, and lured carrion flies in clouds that blot out the sun. What lingers on the trail is not simply disease, but ritual. The Rotten do not wander here by chance. They are drawn by the promise of a growing wound.

The forest path leads to a cave where the ritual of offerings has continued without pause. Corpses are dragged inward, where the Sanguine Rot seeps into the stone, warping it into slick walls and pulsing growths. From these chambers rises a Maw of the Rot, a manifestation birthed through endless feeding. The Maw is no accident of nature. It is a creation of obsession, formed by the constant supply of flesh and blood surrendered to the Rot. Left unchecked, it will anchor the Sanguine Rot deeper into Latakar, spreading decay beyond hunters' reach.

The Severed know this. They are not strangers to Rot, nor to the horrors it births, but this lair presents something far more dangerous than stray thralls or roving beasts. This is a nest, a place where the Rot has been cultivated. If it is not destroyed now, the Maw will become the heart of a new plague.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure should be run with a heavy emphasis on dread and attrition. The Festering Rot is not a side mechanic, it is central. Remind players often of the creeping fatigue, the rancid stench, and the constant threat of corruption. Let the pressure of Rot Exposure accumulate until choices feel desperate.

Tone and Atmosphere: Play up the grotesque imagery: butchered animals, rotting corpses, glowing fissures in the rock, and the choking air of the mine. Let silence and small sounds, like flies buzzing or chains scraping, carry weight. Make players feel they are trespassing in a place claimed by something unnatural.

Encounters: Combat should feel overwhelming. Rotten fight without fear, pressing every advantage of numbers and terrain. Thralls grapple, Juggernauts batter, and the Maw consumes. Push the players to use their environment, tools, and wits to survive.

The Severed: The Severed are allies, but they are not meant to solve the fight. Use them to create urgency, to rescue when needed, but keep victory or defeat firmly in the party's hands.

Scaling: For stronger groups, increase the numbers of Thralls, intensify Rot Exposure, or escalate the Maw's Sanguine Surges. For weaker groups, reduce enemy reinforcements or allow Severed actions to make a larger impact.

Making the Experience Easier: If the adventure proves too punishing, allow the Severed to intervene more directly. One option is to use the Severed Hunter stat block from the Rotten Monster Codex as a supporting ally. Their presence can thin enemy numbers or buy the party time. Alternatively, reduce the frequency of Rot Exposure saves or allow the Severed to carry extra supplies that grant advantage on key saving throws.

Keep the pacing sharp. Between moments of combat, give the party enough narrative space to feel the dread grow, then strike with sudden, brutal violence. The Rot is not patient, it spreads, consumes, and waits for nothing.

NPC BACKSTORIES

THE SEVERED

The Severed are a fractured brotherhood of hunters bound by scars and oaths. Once men and women of ordinary villages, they became marked by the Rot and chose exile over infection. Now they walk the edges of civilization, hunting the blighted creatures no one else dares face. To outsiders they appear grim and broken, but to themselves they are the last wall between the living and the decay that waits beyond the firelight.

- **Unique Phrase:** "The Rot remembers."
- **Desire:** To excise corruption wherever it festers and to destroy the Maw before it takes root.
- **Fear:** That the Sanguine Rot cannot be stopped, only delayed.
- **Misbelief:** That sacrifice is the only path to redemption, and that none of them will see peace in life again.
- **Current Development:** The Severed have traced the Carrion Trail to its source and now seek allies to make the final descent into the cave. They know too well that alone, they will be consumed.

FESTERING ROT

As the adventurers travel deeper along the Carrion Trail, the Sanguine Rot asserts itself in the very air. It clings to breath, festers in wounds, and gnaws at resolve. The land is not simply corrupted, it is alive with a hunger that seeks to spread.

EFFECT: ROT EXPOSURE

The Rot builds as the party continues, shaping encounters and tension.

- At the end of each in-game hour spent on the trail or within the caves, each creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they gain one level of **Rot Exposure**.
- Whenever a creature takes piercing or slashing damage from a Rotten monster, they must repeat the saving throw.
- A creature that dies while under the effect of Rot Exposure begins to bloat and stiffen. Within minutes, their body is at risk of rising as a Rotten Thrall unless purified by fire or radiant magic.

ROT EXPOSURE TABLE

- **1 Level:** Fatigue sets in. Disadvantage on saving throws against the frightened condition.
- **2 Levels:** Flesh blackens around veins. Disadvantage on death saving throws.
- **3 Levels:** The Rot takes hold. The character becomes poisoned until cured.
- **4 Levels:** The character falls unconscious as the body begins to seize. If not cured within 1 hour, they die and rise as a Rotten Thrall.

CLEANSING THE ROT

Exposure can be reduced through:

- Long rest with lesser restoration or similar magic.
- Sacred flame or radiant energy deliberately applied to a wound (1d6 radiant damage, but removes one level of Rot Exposure).
- Ritual burning of Rot-tainted remains to reduce the aura in the area.

This effect ensures that time is not on the adventurers' side. Every pause, every wound, and every delay feeds the Rot and brings them closer to becoming part of the corruption they seek to destroy.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Adventurers are drawn to the Carrion Trail for many reasons. Each hook offers a different entry point, ensuring the players step willingly into the grimdark descent.

- **The Severed's Plea.** A band of Severed hunters reaches out to the adventurers, seeking their aid. They have traced the spread of the Sanguine Rot to a forest trail where carcasses mark the path to a hidden lair. Their own numbers are too few, and they need allies willing to face horrors no blade alone can silence. The adventurers are promised coin, secrets, or forbidden lore in return, but the Severed's true hope is that together they can cauterize this festering wound before it swallows entire villages.
- **Crimson Silence.** The trail begins with blood. Farmers and woodcutters who once roamed freely now find their livestock and companions mutilated, their remains scattered like ritual offerings. Local leaders, unable to quell the panic, offer payment and supplies for anyone brave enough to follow the bloody trail into the woods. Rumors speak of the Severed already at work there, and desperate folk pray the adventurers might join them in cleansing the corruption.
- **Whispers of the Rot.** Stories travel faster than feet. A traveling priest speaks of a cave where corpses are carried by unseen hands, where the Rot itself stirs. The priest fears the Rot will not stop at carrion beasts, but will seep into the very souls of men. They beg the adventurers to investigate and put a stop to the blasphemy, urging them to find the Severed hunters who are already searching for the lair. Though gold is offered, the priest warns that the truest reward is survival itself.
- **Thread from Before.** If the adventurers have previously faced the Rotten, the Severed seek them out directly. Their past victories against the Rot are known, and the hunters believe fate itself marked them for this task. A Severed emissary arrives with haunted eyes and ragged gear, imploring the party to follow him into the forest where their experience may mean the difference between purging the Rot's lair or unleashing something far worse.

PROLOGUE

THE AIR CARRIES THE STENCH OF CARRION LONG BEFORE THE FIRST CARCASS IS SEEN. FLIES BUZZ IN THICK CLOUDS, RISING AND FALLING IN WAVES THAT COAT EVERY BRANCH AND TRAIL EVERY STEP. THE FOREST FLOOR IS LITTERED WITH REMAINS, SOME LONG DECAYED, OTHERS FRESH AND BLOODED AS THOUGH ABANDONED ONLY HOURS AGO. NO BEAST DARES FEED HERE, NO SCAVENGER DARES TOUCH WHAT HAS BEEN CLAIMED BY THE ROT.

ROOTS TWIST THROUGH THE CORPSES, BLACKENED AND PULSING AS IF DRINKING DEEP OF THEIR ROT. EACH MILE FORWARD TIGHTENS THE AIR, FILLING LUNGS WITH A BITTER COPPER TANG. THE SEVERED MOVE IN SILENCE, THEIR EYES HARDENED, THEIR BLADES ALREADY DRAWN. AHEAD LIES A TRAIL CARVED NOT BY TRAVELERS BUT BY DEATH ITSELF.

EVERY TREE FEELS LIKE A WITNESS. EVERY STEP FEELS LIKE TRESPASS. BARK IS SCORED WITH STRANGE PATTERNS, SOME RESEMBLING RUNES, OTHERS THE CLAWS OF BEASTS LONG DEAD. LANTERNS ONCE HUNG ALONG HUNTING PATHS LIE SHATTERED, THEIR FRAMES BENT AS THOUGH CRUSHED IN UNSEEN HANDS. THE FURTHER YOU WALK, THE THICKER THE SILENCE GROWS, UNTIL EVEN THE BUZZING OF FLIES SEEMS SWALLOWED BY THE WOODS.

SOMEWHERE FURTHER DOWN THIS CARRION PATH, THE HEART OF THE ROT WAITS, PULSING IN THE DARK.

● **Signs of Rot. Survival or Nature (DC 13).** A character who succeeds can identify that the bodies have not been killed for food or sport, but laid deliberately to empower the spread of the Rot.

● **Lingering Stench. Constitution (DC 12).** On a failure, the character retches and coughs, beginning the journey with disadvantage on their first saving throw against Rot Exposure.

● **Carrion Runes. Arcana or Religion (DC 14).** Strange symbols carved into tree bark appear as though they might be writing. On a success, the character realizes they are not words at all, but the mindless scrawls of Rotten Thralls, repeating fragments of thought burned into their memory as they wandered.

● **Silent Watchers. Perception (DC 15).** Success reveals faint shapes watching from the treeline: rotting birds perched motionless on branches, their heads twisting in unison as the party passes. Approaching them causes the birds to crumble into foul-smelling ash.

● **Trail of Sacrifice. Investigation (DC 13).** Examining the animal corpses shows a pattern. Each one faces the same direction, as though placed deliberately to lead deeper into the forest. Following this knowledge gives the party advantage on checks to avoid becoming lost later in the adventure.

● **Broken Lanterns. History (DC 12).** The scattered lanterns are remnants of old hunting lodges that once dotted the forest. Success reveals that this was once a well-trodden path, but the Rot's spread has erased its purpose and turned it into a graveyard.

● **Moment of Unease. Wisdom saving throw (DC 12).** Each player rolls individually. On a failure, they feel an overwhelming sense of being followed. For the rest of the prologue, their character cannot sleep easily and will begin the next long rest with one level of exhaustion unless reassured or calmed by another character.

CONTINUING TO ACT 1:

Once the players have explored the trail, interacted with its signs, and felt the presence of the Rot around them, the Severed urge them onward. Their scouts speak of the forest's heart being close, where the density of corpses becomes unbearable and the first true resistance of the Rotten awaits. This transition leads directly into **Act 1: The Forest of Carcasses**, where the party faces their first encounters with the corrupted beasts of the Carrion Trail.



ACT I: THE FOREST OF CARCASSES

THE TRAIL OPENS INTO A CLEARING WHERE THE FOREST HAS BEEN HACKED APART. TREES LIE IN HEAPS, THEIR TRUNKS SLICK WITH DRIED GORE AS THOUGH FELLED NOT FOR LUMBER BUT FOR RITUAL. THE GROUND IS A CANVAS OF SLAUGHTER: DEER WITH ENTRAILS PULLED FREE, WOLVES NAILED TO STUMPS, BIRDS STRUNG FROM BRANCHES LIKE ORNAMENTS OF DECAY. BLOOD SOAKS THE SOIL, BUT NONE OF IT HAS CONGEALED. THE ROT DRINKS IT DRY, LEAVING ONLY HUSKS. THE SEVERED DRAW THEIR WEAPONS IN SILENCE, THEIR EYES SCANNING THE TREE LINE. A WRONGNESS CLINGS HERE, THICK AND HEAVY, AS THOUGH THE EARTH ITSELF WAITS FOR SOMETHING TO MOVE.

● **Blood Harvest. Medicine or Arcana (DC 15).** A successful check reveals the cuts are deliberate and clean, closer to surgical work than savagery. The blood has been siphoned into channels that vanish into the soil, feeding something beneath the clearing. On a failed check, the character mistakes it for animal predation, missing the ritualistic purpose.

● **Signs of Struggle. Survival (DC 14).** The dragged carcasses leave gouges in the earth that are too wide for ordinary predators. Success shows that multiple beasts worked together, hauling bodies into place. A character who exceeds the DC by 3 or more notices paw prints corrupted with bony protrusions, a clear sign of Rotwolves.

● **The Stench of Purpose. Investigation (DC 15).** Careful observation uncovers that the spiral of bodies converges on a central stump where bark is saturated with coagulated blood. On success, the character realizes this is no accident but a blood altar, anchoring Rot's spread into the land. If the party burns or sanctifies the stump, creatures in later encounters lose their advantage on their first attack.

➤ **Encounter! At 1. on the map,** as the party examines the clearing, x8 **Rotwolves** burst from the undergrowth. Their hides are patchy, their ribs visible beneath stretched skin, and their movements eerily coordinated. They circle to isolate a single target, driving them toward the blood-soaked stump where footing is slick and treacherous.

THE SEVERED CRY OUT IN WARNING AS THE TREELINE SPLITS OPEN. SHAPES OF FUR AND BONE DART BETWEEN THE CORPSES, JAWS WIDE AND DRIPPING WITH CRIMSON FROTH. THEIR EYES BURN WITH A HUNGER NOT OF THIS WORLD AS THEY LUNGE FROM THE SHADOWS.

Encounter Guidelines:

- The Rotwolves focus on dragging prey toward the spiral, where each square of terrain costs double movement due to gore and tangled roots.
- Use pack tactics aggressively. Two wolves harry a single character while the third distracts with constant hit-and-run lunges.
- Severed allies fight alongside the party but are quickly pushed back, forcing the adventurers to take the lead. Make their struggle visible but not decisive.

➤ **Encounter! At 2. on the map,** moments after the first skirmish, x6 **Rotwolves** launch a flanking ambush. One emerges from beneath a collapsed tree, the other from a hanging mass of carcasses. They strike in perfect unison, aiming to drive the party apart and force them into the spiral once again.

THE AIR ERUPTS IN SNARLS AS MORE OF THE BEASTS SURGE FROM THE DARK. THEIR MOVEMENTS ARE UNNATURALLY SYNCHRONIZED, AS THOUGH DRIVEN BY THE SAME PULSE. ONE LEAPS OVER A LOG OF BLOOD-SOAKED TIMBER WHILE ANOTHER LUNGES FROM BENEATH A HANGING CARCASS, THEIR ATTACK TIMED TO OVERWHELM.

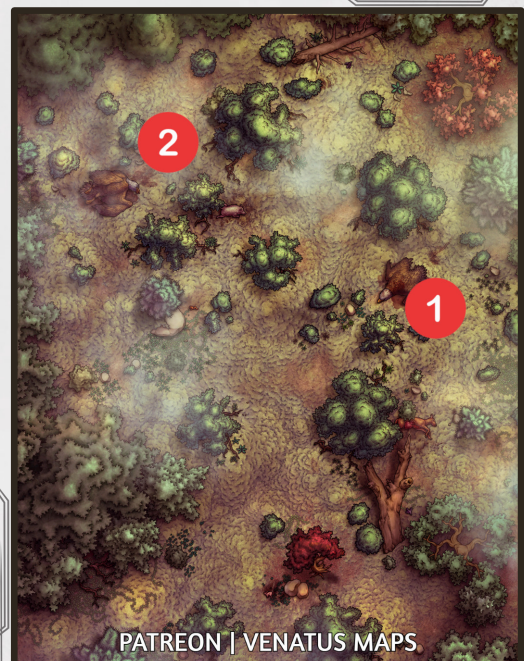
Encounter Guidelines:

- These wolves fight with reckless ferocity, attempting to knock adventurers prone and drag them toward the center.
- The Severed try to form a perimeter but are forced to defend their own against surprise attacks. Highlight their vulnerability to increase pressure on the players.
- Allow the wolves to retreat and re-emerge if the battle feels too comfortable for the party. Their tactics should exhaust and disorient, not simply die in place.

GM NOTES:

- Use the wolves' coordination and the spiral terrain to create an overwhelming sense of danger. Characters who split off risk being swarmed.
- This act is meant to wear down resources early. Lean on the Festering Rot mechanic here. The gore-soaked environment should force saving throws after the fight.
- Describe the Severed as grim but strained, showing that even these seasoned hunters are being pressed hard by the Rot.

ACT 1 MAP



CONTINUING TO ACT 2:

Once the last wolf falls silent, the Severed urge the party to set camp before pressing further. Their scouts warn that the trail will only worsen as night falls. This transition leads into Act 2: Night Encampment, where the hunters attempt to rest but the Rot will not allow peace.

ACT 2: NIGHT ENCAMPMENT

NIGHT FALLS HEAVY OVER THE FOREST. THE SEVERED CHOOSE A NARROW CLEARING RINGED BY SKELETAL TREES, WHERE A CAMPFIRE SPITTERS AGAINST THE CHILL. TENTS ARE PITCHED IN SILENCE, WEAPONS LAID WITHIN ARM'S REACH. BEYOND THE FIRELIGHT, THE WOODS BREATHE WITH UNSEEN LIFE, EVERY CREAK AND WHISPER SOUNDING TOO CLOSE, TOO DELIBERATE. SMOKE CARRIES POORLY HERE, CURLING ONLY A FEW FEET BEFORE BEING SWALLOWED BY THE BLACK AIR. THE SEVERED TAKE TURNS PACING THE EDGE OF THE LIGHT, THEIR SHADOWS STRETCHING THIN ACROSS THE EARTH LIKE DRAWN BLADES.

THIS IS NO SAFE CAMP. THE FOREST HAS EYES, AND THE ROT DOES NOT SLEEP.

The adventurers and the Severed may attempt to rest here, but their sleep is fractured by the persistent presence of the Rotten. Use the following mechanics and encounters to wear them down through the night.

● **Restless Night. Constitution saving throw (DC 14).**

Each character must attempt this save after the first hour of attempted rest. On a failure, they gain one level of exhaustion as the smell of rot and the sense of unseen eyes keeps them from sleeping deeply.

● **Ward the Fire. Arcana or Survival (DC 15).** Success allows a character to arrange wards of ash and sigils of smoke around the fire, reducing the chance of certain encounters. Failure means the fire burns too brightly, drawing attention.

● **Listen to the Dark. Perception (DC 14).** On success, a character hears unnatural movement in the treeline moments before an attack begins, granting the camp advantage on initiative during the next encounter.

NIGHT AMBUSH TABLE

Roll or choose encounters throughout the night. A long rest cannot be completed without enduring at least two of these ambushes.

1. WHISPERS IN THE TREES.

FAINT MURMURS RIPPLE THROUGH THE AIR. VOICES WITHOUT BODIES WEAVE TOGETHER INTO A CHORUS THAT GROWS LOUDER UNTIL IT SURROUNDS THE CAMP. THEN THE TREES SHIFT, AND ROTTEN THRALLS STUMBLE FORTH, THEIR MOUTHS MOVING SOUNDLESSLY EVEN AS THEY LUNGE WITH GRASPING HANDS.

- **Encounter:** 1d10+4 Rotten Thralls crawl into camp. They try to grapple sleepers first, dragging them away from the fire.

GM Note: Place them between tents to force the party to protect their Severed allies while still fighting off the assault.

2. HOWLS AT THE EDGE.

A LOW HOWL BREAKS THE SILENCE, ANSWERED BY ANOTHER, THEN ANOTHER, UNTIL THE WOODS SING WITH A CHORUS OF HUNGER. FROM THE DARKNESS, EYES FLICKER LIKE EMBERS, AND ROTWOLVES CHARGE IN, THEIR FORMS BREAKING THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH AS ONE.

- **Encounter:** x4 **Rotwolves** strike from opposite ends of the camp. Their goal is to scatter defenders and isolate the firelight's weakest.

GM Note: They retreat if bloodied but leave enough chaos to rattle the camp.

3. THE BLOOD DRIP.

SOMETHING DRIPS ONTO THE CANVAS OF A TENT. THE LIQUID IS WARM AND THICK, STREAKING DOWN THE FABRIC. WHEN THE TENT FLAP IS PULLED ASIDE, A HALF-FLAYED STAG IS HANGING UPSIDE DOWN FROM A TREE ABOVE, ITS ENTRAILS SPLIT OPEN. AS THE REALIZATION SETS IN, THE CORPSE JERKS, PULLED BY UNSEEN HANDS, AND ROTTEN JUGGERNAUTS BURST FROM THE TREELINE.

- **Encounter:** x2 **Rotten Juggernauts**. Their sudden arrival gives them a surprise round unless the party succeeded on "Listen to the Dark."

GM Note: Make this one grotesque and unsettling. The Severed react with grim familiarity, but even they tighten their grip on weapons here. This should be a difficult encounter, so have some Severed die as they bring down one of their Juggernauts (in case the players need help).

4. A SHADOW IN THE FIRE.

THE CAMPFIRE FLARES UNNATURALLY BRIGHT. FOR A MOMENT IT SEEMS TO STRETCH INTO A PILLAR, CASTING TWISTED SILHOUETTES AGAINST THE TENTS. ONE SHADOW MOVES WHEN IT SHOULD NOT, BENDING, STRETCHING, AND THEN BREAKING FREE FROM THE LIGHT TO TAKE FORM.

- **Encounter:** x4 **Rotten Halberdiers** stride from the fire's edge, their weapons dripping with blackened rot.

GM Note: This should be a hard fight in the confined camp. The halberdiers use their reach to strike at multiple targets while Severed try to hold the line.

Extra Notes:

- The goal of Act 2 is not to kill the party but to grind their resources and deny them rest. Play the encounters as waves that break up attempts at safety.
- Consider splitting the night into three "watches," with one or two encounters per watch. This ensures tension and denies the sense of security.
- Emphasize exhaustion. The Rot presses not just through monsters, but through sleeplessness and dread.

CONTINUING TO ACT 3:

By dawn, the Severed are weary, their eyes hollow from watching the dark. Tracks and crimson stains lead onward through the trees, pulling the party toward the final lair. A tainted glow lingers through the branches as the sun rises, the entrance to the caves awaits in **Act 3: The Rotting Mine**.

ACT 2 MAP



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ACT 3: THE ROTTING MINE

THE TREES THIN TO A RAW SEAM OF EARTH. AHEAD, A WIDE CLEFT YAWNS WHERE AN OLD MINING CUT BITES INTO THE HILLSIDE. RUSTED RAILS VANISH INTO BLACKNESS, THE METAL SLICK WITH A THIN FILM OF DRIED BLOOD. FROM DEEP WITHIN, A TAINTED CRIMSON GLOW PULSES LIKE A HEARTBEAT, STAINING THE MIST AND PAINTING THE STONES THE COLOR OF FRESH WOUNDS. THE SEVERED FALL QUIET. EVEN THE FLIES REFUSE TO FOLLOW.

Deep Rot Conditions. Within the mine, the Festering Rot intensifies. Each hour spent inside requires a DC 16 Constitution saving throw for Rot Exposure. Any slashing or piercing hit from a Rotten creature forces an immediate save. Short rests taken here impose a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw to stave off creeping dread; on a failure, gain disadvantage on your next Rot save.

Map Overview. The mine is a series of open galleries that descend along the rail line. There are no doors, only broken supports and ruptured walls that open into chambers. The party will pass two small side galleries and three large chambers. Use the numbered points below.

1. THE CUTMOUTH GALLERY (LARGE CHAMBER)

THE RAIL WIDENS INTO A LOADING FLOOR WHERE BROKEN WINCHES AND SPLINTERED RAMPS SAG TOWARD A PIT OF STAINED GRAVEL. IRON HOOKS HANG FROM CHAINS FIXED TO OLD BEAMS. THE CRIMSON GLOW BEATS HERE IN TIME WITH DISTANT WET SOUNDS, LIKE A THROAT STRUGGLING TO BREATHE.

● **Rail Survey. Investigation or Survival (DC 16).** Success reveals fresh drag marks where bodies were hauled along the rails. A character who exceeds the DC by 3 or more spots clotted blood lodged in wheel grooves, proof that carts have been used to ferry offerings inward. On a failure by 5 or more, the character disturbs a clutch of Rot larvae that scatter, causing immediate Rot Exposure saves.

● **Breathing Walls. Arcana or Nature (DC 16).** The stone flexes with each crimson pulse. Success identifies a Rot resonance that can be disrupted with radiant damage. If the party spends an action to apply at least 5 radiant damage to the wall here, all Rotten in this chamber roll disadvantage on their first attack. On a failure, the pulse intensifies and each character in the chamber must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 1 level of Rot Exposure.

➤ **Encounter!** At 1. on the map, a Rotten Crusher lumbers from behind a shattered hoist while x6 Rotten Thralls crawl over the rails to surround the party.

FROM THE FAR SIDE OF THE LOADING FLOOR, A SHAPE HEAVES ITSELF UPRIGHT, MUSCLES KNOTTED WITH BLACK CORDS UNDER PALE SKIN. IT DRAGS A CHAIN THAT SCRAPES ALONG THE RAIL, EYES DULL AND HUNGRY. BEHIND IT, PALE HANDS SCRABBLE ACROSS IRON AS SLACK-JAWED THRALLS SPILL ONTO THE PLATFORM.

Encounter Guidelines: The Crusher bull-rushes characters toward the pit's slick edge. Any creature shoved here must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone, losing 15 feet of movement as gore cakes their hands. Thralls attempt grapples to hold targets for the Crusher's follow-ups. Two loose carts sit on the rails; a character can spend an action and succeed on a DC 15 Athletics check to shove one 20 feet as an improvised ram, dealing 3d8 bludgeoning damage to the first creature in its path and knocking it prone on a failed DC 14 Strength save.

GM Notes: Do not hold back. Let Thralls grapple spellcasters while the Crusher isolates a frontline fighter. Force players to use space, carts, or radiant effects to break the chokehold.

OFF THE MAIN LINE, A NARROW CHUTE DESCENDS TO A TROUGH CUT INTO THE STONE. BLOOD TRICKLES ALONG THE CHANNEL, BLACK AND SYRUP-THICK, FED BY A HEAP OF BUTCHERED REMAINS THAT SLUMP AGAINST A COLLAPSED SUPPORT. THE AIR HUMS LIKE A SWARM INSIDE THE WALLS.

2. BLOOD SLUICE (SMALL SIDE GALLERY)

● **Cut the Flow. Medicine or Religion (DC 15).** Success finds the plug points where the blood is guided inward. A minute of focused work, or a successful check during combat, reduces Rot intensity in the next chamber. The party gains advantage on their first two Rot Exposure saves after leaving this room. On a failure by 5 or more, a spray of coagulated blood bursts, forcing every creature within 10 feet to save against Rot Exposure.

● **Cart Cache. Investigation (DC 14).** Among broken tools is a strapped crate of old blasting powder. Handling it requires care. On success, recover x3 **volatile charges**. As an action, a character can light and throw a charge to a space within 20 feet; creatures in a 10-foot radius make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d6 fire damage, half on success. If the check to recover fails by 5 or more, the charge explodes immediately, forcing the handler to make the same save or take damage.

If the party makes loud noise, x5 **Rotten Thralls** arrive from the main line at the start of the next round.



3. THE SWITCHYARD (LARGE CHAMBER)

RAILS FORK ACROSS A BROAD GALLERY, THE GROUND RIBBED WITH SLEEPERS AND CROWNED BY LEANING TIMBER FRAMES. MINE CARTS SIT AT ODD ANGLES, ONE TIPPED ON ITS SIDE LIKE A BROKEN JAW. THE CRIMSON LIGHT IS STRONGER HERE, SEEPING FROM FISSURES IN THE ROCK AND POOLING IN SHALLOW RUTS LIKE VEINS LAID BARE.

● **Trackwork. Engineering Tools or Investigation (DC 16).** Success lets a character re-pin a switch as a bonus action. While a switch is set, the next cart pushed down that line travels 30 feet and can strike multiple targets. Treat as an improvised ram dealing 4d6 bludgeoning on a failed **DC 15 Strength save**. On a failure, the rail locks instead and requires another action to reset.

● **Slick Shadows. Perception (DC 16).** Success spots shapes stalking between carts before the attack, granting the party advantage on initiative. Failure means the Rotten act with surprise.

➤ **Encounter! At 3. on the map**, x3 **Rotten Halberdiers** take positions on opposing catwalks while a Rot Juggernaut steps onto the central crossing. During round 2, x4 **Rotten Thralls** crawl from under a tipped cart to harry spellcasters.

IRON-SHOD STEPS POUND THE PLANKS AS A TOWERING FIGURE SQUEEZES THROUGH THE BRACES, BONES CREAKING UNDER CORDS OF ROT-SWOLLEN MUSCLE. ON THE CATWALKS ABOVE, TWO SHAPES LEVEL RUSTED POLEARMS, POINTS TRACKING THE PARTY THROUGH THE WEB OF RAILS. THE GLOW BRIGHTENS, AND SOMETHING BEGINS TO MOVE UNDER THE FALLEN CART.

Encounter Guidelines: The Juggernaut advances to lock down the center, using brute force to batter clusters and throw characters onto rails. Halberdiers hook and drag targets onto prepared lines where carts can be rammed. If a character ends their turn adjacent to a fissure of crimson seep, they must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of Rot Exposure. A cart can be released from a higher track with a **DC 15 Athletics check**, moving 30 feet downhill.

GM Notes: The Juggernaut's resilience should pressure the frontline while Halberdiers carve into backliners. Thralls distract casters. Push terrain hazards and force the party to spread thin.

4. THE NAIL SHRINE (SMALL SIDE GALLERY)

A SHALLOW ALCOVE OPENS WHERE RAILS ONCE ENDED. NAILS, HOOKS, AND SCRAPS OF LEATHER HANG FROM A BEAM OVER A WAIST-HIGH CAIRN OF PICKED BONES. OLD PRAYERS ARE ETCHED INTO THE WALL, LONG SINCE DROWNED BY SMEARED, DARK FINGERPRINTS.

● **Old Prayers. Religion or History (DC 15).** Success deciphers a miners' protection rite. A one-minute chant steadies the will. Each participant gains 2 successes they can spend to automatically pass saving throws against the frightened condition before their next long rest. On a failure by 5 or more, the words blur, and the chanter suffers a frightful vision, rolling on the short-term madness table.

● **Bone Cache. Investigation (DC 14).** Success finds a wrapped bundle beneath the cairn: a vial of thick, honeyed liquid. Drinking it as a bonus action grants 7 temporary hit points and advantage on the next two Rot Exposure saves taken within 1 hour. There are two doses.

Disturbing the shrine without care triggers a **Rot Burst**. Each creature within 15 feet makes a **DC 14 Constitution saving throw** or gains 1 level of Rot Exposure.

5. THE SANGUINE PIT (LARGE FINAL CHAMBER)

THE RAILS BEND TOWARD AN OPEN WOUND IN THE EARTH. A CIRCULAR SHAFT DROPS INTO A LAKE OF THICK, DARK CRIMSON. BONE PYLONS JUT FROM THE POOL LIKE TEETH, STRUNG WITH ROPES OF TENDON AND IRON CHAIN. IN THE CENTER, SOMETHING RISES AND FALLS WITH EACH PULSE OF LIGHT, A SWOLLEN MASS SLICK WITH CLOTTED BLOOD. THE AIR TASTES OF COPPER AND SPOILED FRUIT. WHEN THE SEVERED RAISE THEIR BLADES, THE MASS SHUDDERS AND UNFURLS A RING OF GLISTENING TEETH.

● **Blood Geometry. Arcana or Medicine (DC 16).** Reading the pattern of chains and pylons reveals how offerings were fed to the heart of the pit. Success allows a character to identify a weak pylon. As an action, a character adjacent to that pylon can collapse it with a **DC 15 Strength check**, forcing creatures in a 10-foot line to make a **DC 15 Dexterity save** or fall prone as the chain whips free.

● **Fetid Mists. Nature or Survival (DC 15).** Success teaches how the air currents shift. Until the end of the encounter, the party can choose one 15-foot square each round that counts as lightly obscured instead of heavily obscured by Rot vapor. On a failure, the mist thickens, and one character chosen at random begins their next turn blinded until the end of it.

➤ **Final Encounter! At 5. on the map**, the **Maw of the Rot** heaves free of the pool. At initiative count 20 on rounds 2 and 4, x3 **Rotten Thralls** slough from the water on opposite sides of the pit.

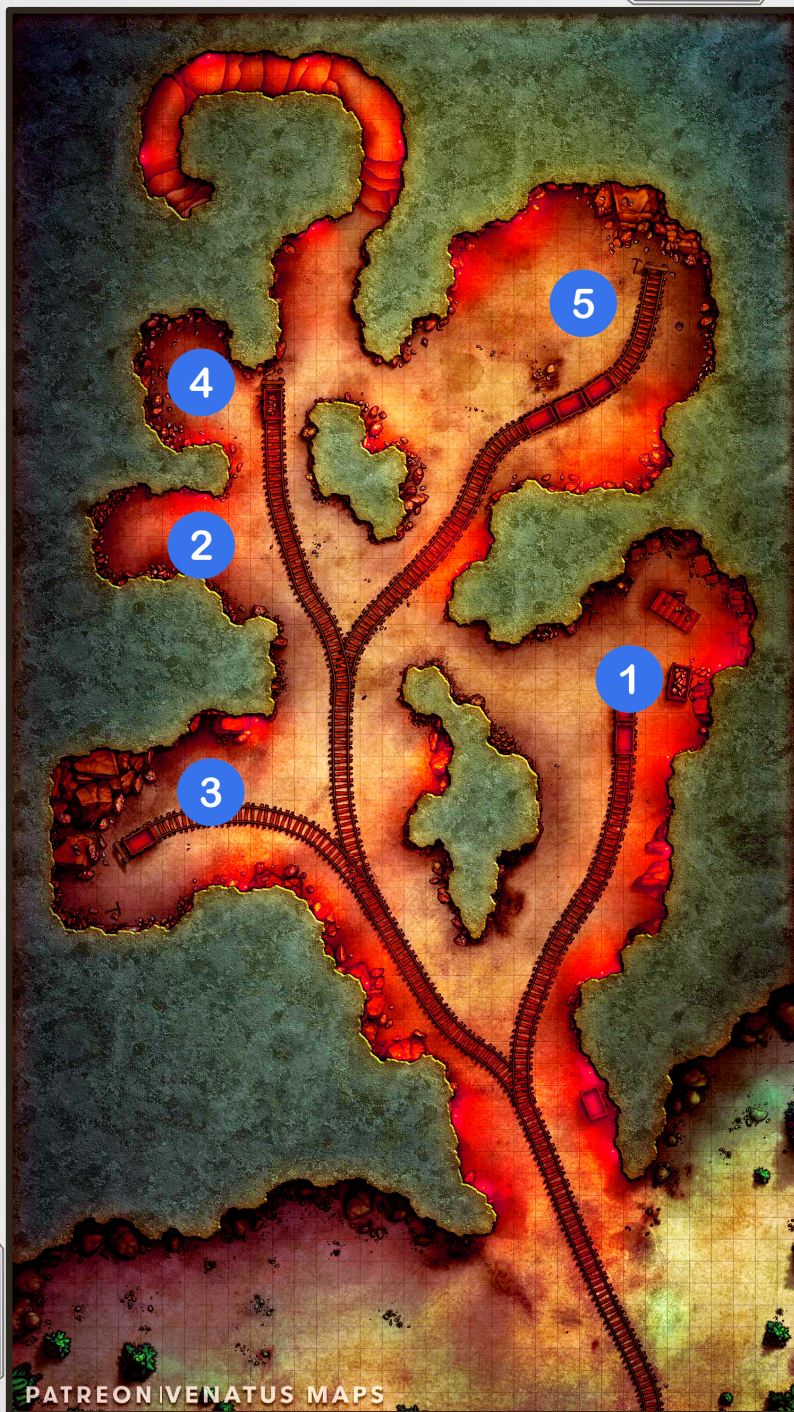
THE HEART IN THE PIT SPLITS OPEN. A RING OF TEETH YAWNS WIDE AROUND A PITILESS THROAT. TENDRILS STUDDED WITH BONY HOOKS LASH ACROSS THE STONE, DRAGGING THE UNWILLING TOWARD A MOUTH THAT NEVER STOPS HUNGERING. EVERY PULSE OF LIGHT DRAWS BLOOD FROM THE AIR.

Battlefield Effects: Every round at initiative count 10, a Sanguine Surge ripples across the chamber. Each creature not Rotten must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of Rot Exposure. Creatures standing within 5 feet of a bone pylon have advantage on this save as the structure grounds the pulse. At initiative count 5, the Maw exhales a spray of clotted blood. Each creature within 20 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d8 necrotic damage and gain disadvantage on their next attack.

Encounter Guidelines: The Maw anchors near the center, using reach to control bridges and rail edges. Thralls act as living barricades, grappling to hold targets for the Maw. The Severed attempt to pull wounded characters away with ropes and hooks; do not let them outshine the party, but let their efforts buy breathing room. A character can shove a mine cart down the approach with a DC 16 Athletics check; on a hit, it deals 4d6 bludgeoning damage and forces the Maw to release one grapple.

GM Notes: This battle must feel desperate. Use additional Thralls if players are not pressured enough. Increase Sanguine Surges in frequency if needed. Keep the Rot Exposure building alongside direct damage so the threat is layered and constant.

ACT 3 MAP



EPILOGUE

IF THE MAW IS DESTROYED

THE MAW COLLAPSES INWARD WITH A SCREAM OF TEARING FLESH, ITS MANY TEETH GRINDING INTO PULP AS THE CRIMSON POOL GUTTERS INTO SILENCE. THE GLOW FADES, LEAVING THE CAVE IN DARKNESS SAVE FOR THE WEAK SHIMMER OF LANTERNS. THE SEVERED WASTE NO TIME, DOUSING THE PIT WITH OIL AND SETTING IT ALIGHT, CHOKING THE MINE WITH GREASY SMOKE. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE ENTERING THE FOREST, THE AIR FEELS STILL. THE WHISPERS OF THE ROT RECEDE, LEAVING ONLY THE MEMORY OF HUNGER BEHIND.

The Severed mark this as a victory, but warn that the Rot can never be fully killed. This lair's destruction will slow its spread, buying time for other hunters to strike elsewhere. Each Severed survivor speaks of the party with grim respect. Rewards may come in coin, relics pulled from the mine, or simply the trust of the Severed in battles yet to come.

IF THE MAW IS DESTROYED

THE MAW DOES NOT FALL. TENDRILS THRASH THROUGH THE CAVERN AS THE SEVERED SCATTER, THEIR BLADES CLATTERING ACROSS THE STONE IN FUTILITY. THE CRIMSON GLOW SWELLS, PAINTING THE WALLS BRIGHTER THAN FIRE. THE MINE ITSELF SHUDDERS AS THOUGH WELCOMING ITS NEW MASTER. THOSE WHO ESCAPE DO SO HALF-DEAD AND REEKING OF THE ROT, DRIVEN INTO THE FOREST WHERE NO SAFE GROUND WAITS.

Survivors will forever carry the taint of this defeat. The Severed faction may splinter under the weight of failure, while the Rot spreads outward unchecked. The forest becomes a festering wound in Latakar, drawing Rotten beasts in numbers too great for any local force to repel. The tale of the Carrion Trail becomes a warning: where hunters fall, the land itself follows.

IF THE PARTY FLEES

THE SEVERED SHOUT AFTER THE RETREATING PARTY AS THE MAW HEAVES FROM ITS PIT, TENDRILS LASHING IN TRIUMPH. THE RAILS RATTLE UNDERFOOT AS THE HUNTERS' RETREAT ECHOES THROUGH THE MINE. BEHIND THEM, THE CRIMSON GLOW GROWS BRIGHTER, FEEDING ON EVERY DROP OF FEAR LEFT BEHIND. BY THE TIME THEY EMERGE INTO THE NIGHT AIR, THE SKY ABOVE THE FOREST PULSES FAINT RED, A BEACON OF FAILURE THAT NO TRAVELER WILL MISTAKE.

Though the party survives, the Severed brand them cowards. Word spreads quickly among hunters, and their reputation suffers. Worse, the Maw will continue to feast on blood, growing more powerful until another group dares to challenge it. The forest will not forget their retreat.

GM Notes: Use the epilogue outcome to shape future arcs. A victory may earn the party rare Severed allies. A defeat may see the Rotten surge outward in greater numbers, changing encounters in the region. A retreat can add narrative weight, forcing the party to reckon with their failure and perhaps return one day to finish what they abandoned.

AFTERMATH

The Carrion Trail leaves scars no matter the outcome. The Severed will remember what was done here, and so too will the Rot.

- **If victorious**, the Severed escort the party back through the forest. Word spreads quickly that a lair of the Rot has been broken. Settlements nearby may experience a brief reprieve, their hunters emboldened by hope. Yet the survivors know the Rot never dies... it waits. Rumors of other crimson glows will reach the party before long.
- **If defeated**, the Severed survivors limp into the wider world carrying failure like a disease. Fear grows among common folk as strange shapes are seen in the treeline at dusk. Villages empty, roads become unsafe, and whispers of the Maw spread like wildfire. The Severed fracture, some turning to despair, others to reckless vengeance. The world grows darker.
- **If they fled**, the party's reputation sours. The Severed are not forgiving, and word of abandonment spreads fast. Allies may turn cold, merchants wary, and contracts scarce. More dangerous still, the Rot thrives unchecked. When next the party hears of the Maw, it may be too powerful to face at all. Their choice on the Carrion Trail will haunt them, both in whispers and in consequence.

GM Notes: The Aftermath should echo forward into future sessions. Use it to shape factions, NPC attitudes, and the state of the wilderness. Whether triumphant or broken, the trail has left its mark on the adventurers and the world alike.





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APPENDIX: STAT BLOCKS

Here you will find all of the stat blocks for all the NPCs and monsters involved in the adventure.

ROTWOLF

Gaunt and ragged, Rotwolves move in hungry packs, their fur matted with black sores and patches of crimson glow beneath the skin. Their howls echo with unnatural resonance, spreading dread long before they close in. To meet their gaze is to see a beast both alive and rotting, compelled by the Rot to hunt without rest.

ROTWOLF

Medium beast (Rot-touched), unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception NaN, Stealth NaN

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks; poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Reeking Rot. When a creature starts its turn within 5 feet of the Rotwolf, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Rot Point.

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

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the Rotwolf to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the Rotwolf drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

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



ROTTEN THRALL

Medium humanoid (Rot-touched), unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks; poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Reeking Rot. When a creature starts its turn within 5 feet of the Rotten Thrall, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Rot Point.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the Rotten Thrall to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the Rotten Thrall drops to 1 hit point instead.

Rabid Onslaught. If the Rotten Thrall scores a critical hit with its claws, the target must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone as the Thrall tears into them with feral force.

ACTIONS

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

ROTTEN THRALL

These are the most common servants of the Rot. Once living villagers, hunters, or soldiers, now reduced to shambling husks. Their bodies bear wounds that never close, stitched by crimson veins that pulse faintly in the dark. They swarm with single-minded hunger, grasping and dragging foes into the reach of stronger Rotten.



ROTTEN CRUSHER

A warped brute whose frame has swollen under the Rot's corruption. Its flesh hangs in heavy folds, cords of muscle twitching beneath like coiled ropes. It wields chains, hooks, or blunt wreckage of the mine itself, slamming into foes with crushing force. Their approach is heralded by the grinding sound of metal dragging stone.

ROTTEN CRUSHER

Medium humanoid (Rot-touched), unaligned

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points 51 (6d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks; poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Reeking Rot. When a creature starts its turn within 5 feet of the Rotten Crusher, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Rot Point.

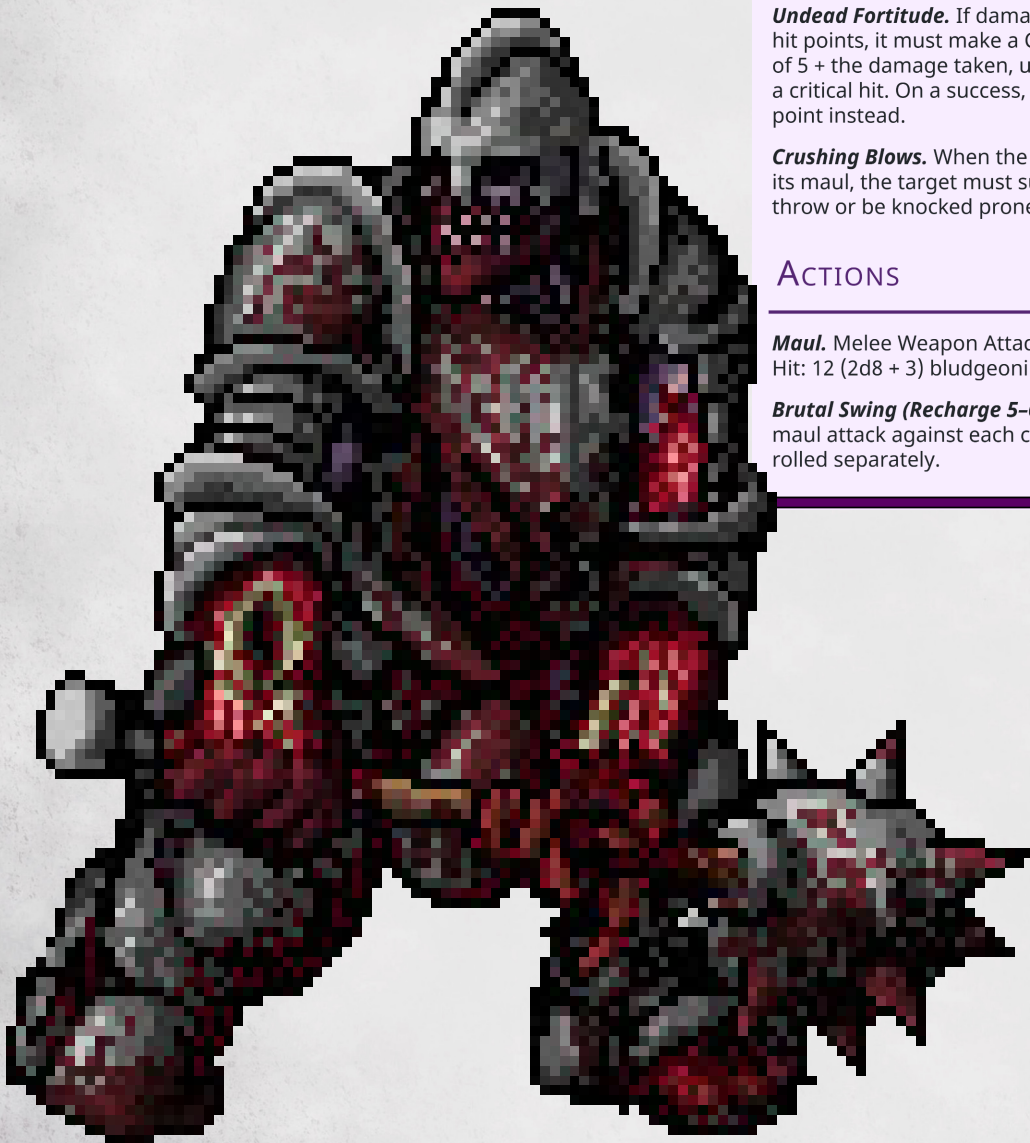
Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the Rotten Crusher to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the Rotten Crusher drops to 1 hit point instead.

Crushing Blows. When the Rotten Crusher hits a creature with its maul, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Maul. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Brutal Swing (Recharge 5–6). The Rotten Crusher makes a single maul attack against each creature within 5 feet. Each attack is rolled separately.



ROTTEN JUGGERNAUT

Medium humanoid (Rot-touched), unaligned

Armor Class 18 (plate armor, shield)

Hit Points 95 (10d8 + 50)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks; poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Reeking Rot. When a creature starts its turn within 5 feet of the Rotten Juggernaut, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Rot Point.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the Rotten Juggernaut to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the Rotten Juggernaut drops to 1 hit point instead.

Bulwark of the Rot. The Rotten Juggernaut has advantage on saving throws against being knocked prone or moved against its will.

Flail Sweep. When the Rotten Juggernaut hits a creature with its spiked flail, it can choose another creature within 5 feet of the original target. That creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (1d12 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

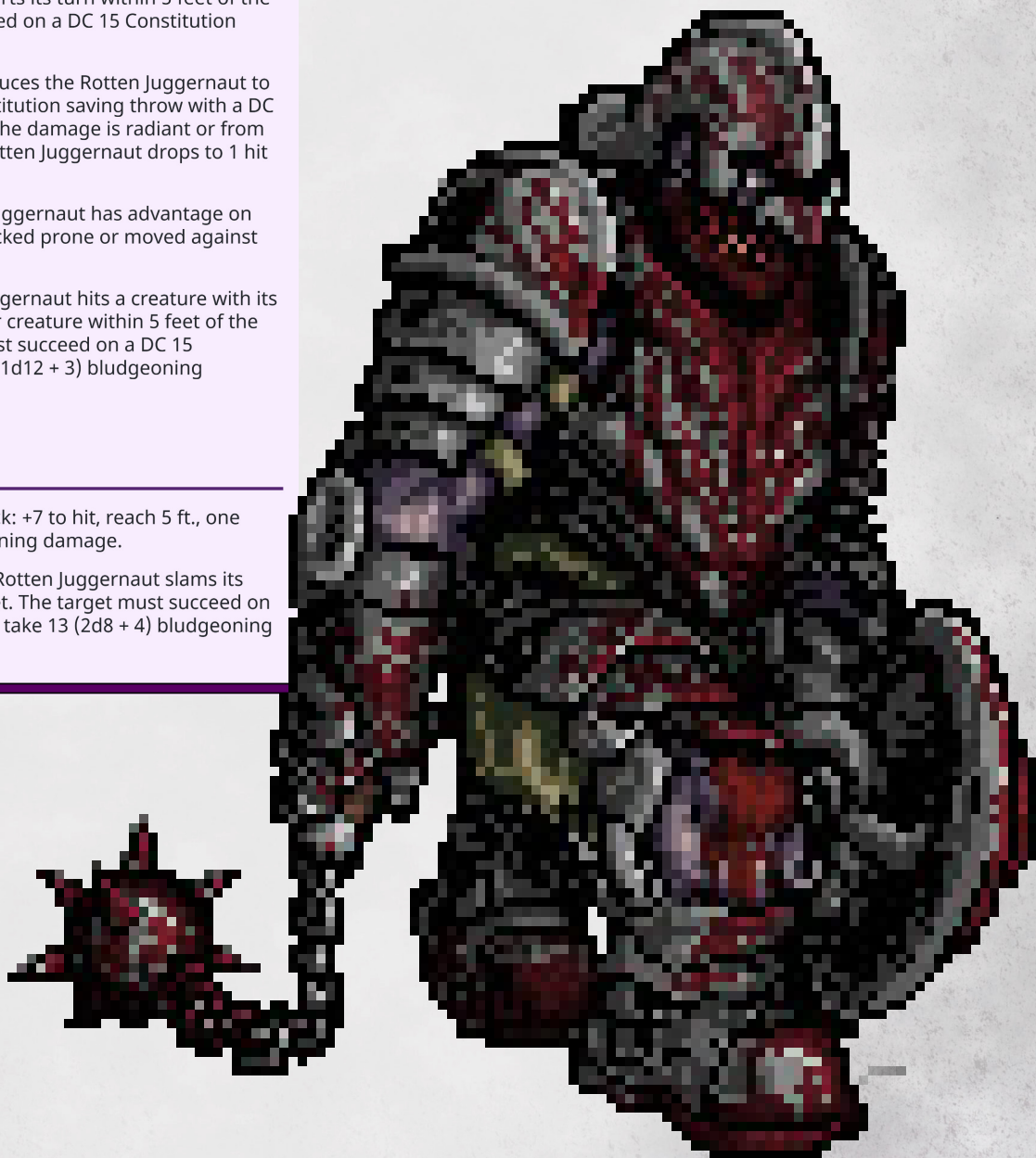
ACTIONS

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

Shield Slam (Recharge 5-6). The Rotten Juggernaut slams its shield into a creature within 5 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or take 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

ROT JUGGERNAUT

The Juggernaut is a living fortress of decayed flesh and thick bone, its body fused into a single massive weapon of brute strength. Black ichor drips from its every wound, pooling in its wake. It smashes through barricades and defenders alike, heedless of pain or injury, its roar carrying the promise of collapse and ruin.



ROTTEN HALBERDIER

Once disciplined warriors, these Rotten retain fragments of their martial training. Their halberds are rusted but deadly, and they fight with a cruel precision amplified by the Rot's persistence. Their movements are jerky, like puppets tugged by unseen strings, yet their strikes bite deep and drag prey into the waiting jaws of other monsters.

ROTTEN HALBERDIER

Medium humanoid (Rot-touched), unaligned

Armor Class 14 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 34 (4d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks; poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

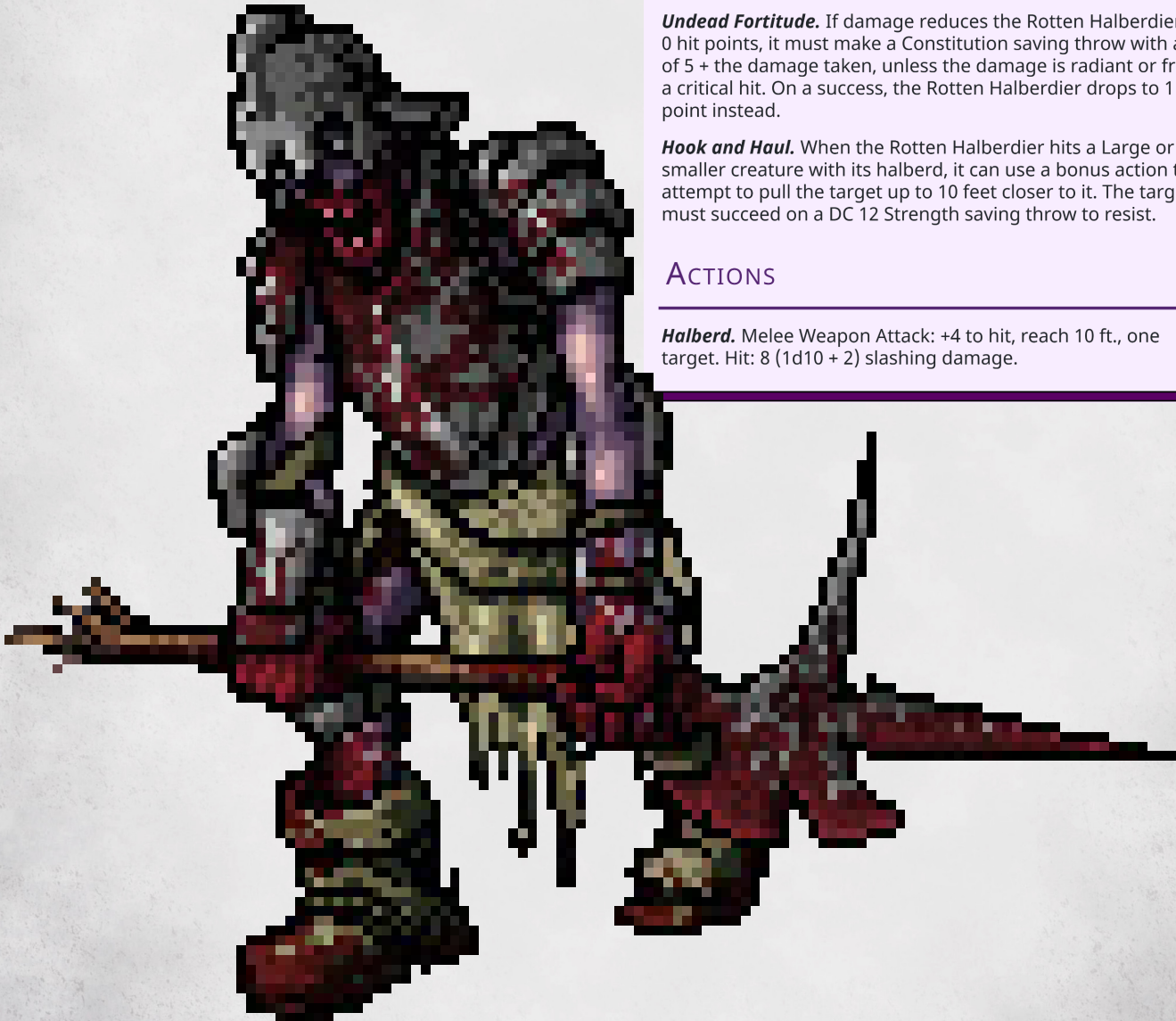
Reeking Rot. When a creature starts its turn within 5 feet of the Rotten Halberdier, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Rot Point.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the Rotten Halberdier to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the Rotten Halberdier drops to 1 hit point instead.

Hook and Haul. When the Rotten Halberdier hits a Large or smaller creature with its halberd, it can use a bonus action to attempt to pull the target up to 10 feet closer to it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw to resist.

ACTIONS

Halberd. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage.



MAW OF THE ROT

Large aberration (Rot-touched), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con NaN, Wis NaN, Cha NaN

Skills Perception NaN, Intimidation NaN

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks; poison; necrotic

Condition Immunities prone, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages understands Common and Deep Speech but can't speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

All-Seeing Malice. The Maw of the Rot has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded.

Aura of Dread. Any creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the Maw must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the start of its next turn.

Rot Infusion. When the Maw hits a creature with a bite or tendril attack, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Rot Point.

Magic Resistance. The Maw has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Maw makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its tendrils.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 21 (4d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Tendril. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the Maw can't use that tendril on another target.

Eye-Ray Volley (Recharge 5–6). The Maw targets up to three creatures it can see within 60 feet. Each target must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Maw of the Rot can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Maw regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tendril Whip. The Maw makes one tendril attack.

Blood Glare (Costs 2 Actions). The Maw fixes all its eyes on one creature it can see within 60 feet. That creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be paralyzed until the end of its next turn.



MAW OF THE ROT

A monstrous abomination birthed from endless sacrifice, the Maw is less a creature than a festering wound given form. A ring of teeth and tendrils surrounds a pit that never ceases to hunger. Its presence is accompanied by a crimson glow that stains stone and air alike. To stand before it is to face the inevitability of consumption, as if the world itself has opened a mouth to devour the living.

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