Encounter: Jungle Whispers

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“Jungle Whispers” is an encounter designed for four characters of level 2. It presents a challenging mix of combat, environmental hazards, and potential for role-playing, suitable for a party ready to tackle their first foray into the depths of a treacherous and rain-soaked jungle.



Read to players:

> As the ceaseless rain of the jungle intensifies, the once firm path underfoot turns treacherous with slippery mud and entangling roots. Without warning, the ground collapses, and vine snares whip around your limbs, pulling you towards the earth. Amidst the cacophony of the storm, you hear a symphony of goblin cackles as shadowy figures encircle you, the slick carapace of a corpse cleaner reflecting the dim light. A goblin, garbed in bone trinkets, steps forth, his incantations causing the forest to come alive and constrict. The goblins aren’t just attacking; they’re defending their hallowed ground, and the deluge above suggests this confrontation must be swift lest the jungle claims you all.

DM’s information

The characters are trapped by a magical snare, an environmental hazard created by the goblin shaman. They’re facing a mixed threat: the goblins on

the ground, the shaman’s magic, and the corpse cleaner—a beast used for hunting by the goblins. Players must make a DC 12 Strength check to free themselves, or a DC 14 Intelligence check to disable the trap. Failing these checks means remaining vulnerable to the goblins’ pending attack and the environment’s hostility.

Tips for the DM:

- Emphasize the sensory overload: the smell of wet earth, the feel of rain on the characters’ faces, and the disorienting echoes of goblin jeers.
- Use the corpse cleaner as a mobile hazard. It tries to drag away anyone who falls prey to the shaman’s snares.
- The goblins use hit-and-run tactics, leveraging the terrain’s natural pitfalls and the corpse cleaner’s distraction.
- Consider the escalating rain as a timer. If the party takes too long, they risk a flash flood, which could sweep them into dangerous rapids or separate them.

Further Ideas:

- If the party frees themselves quickly, they could find the shaman’s charm, offering a clue to a greater mystery or a potential magical item.
- Capturing a goblin could lead to negotiations or a truce, offering a role-playing opportunity or an unexpected ally.

Tactics:

- Goblins target spell casters and ranged fighters first, seeking to close the distance under the cover of rain and foliage.
- The shaman uses the environment to his advantage, perhaps causing thorny growths to sprout in the area, providing additional cover for the goblins and hindrances for the players.
- If the corpse cleaner is wounded, it retreats, and the goblins attempt to cover its escape, valuing their hunting ally’s life.

Encounter Development:

- If the encounter goes poorly for the goblins, have them scatter, leaving behind loot that hints at their next move or the location of their lair.
- Should the party be overwhelmed, a rival jungle creature may inadvertently intervene, creating chaos and providing the party with a chance to regroup or escape.

Treasure: If the players defeat the goblin shaman, they find a small pouch containing:

- A charm carved from a strange, luminescent stone, which acts as an *Arcane Focus* and can cast *Entangle* once per day.
- 50 gold pieces in various denominations, some stamped with unfamiliar symbols.
- A crudely drawn map leading to a nearby cave, possibly the goblins' hideout or a location of interest.

Experience Points:

- Defeating the goblins: 25 XP each.
- Defeating the corpse cleaner: 200 XP.
- Defeating the goblin shaman: 150 XP.
- Successfully disarming the magical snare without combat: 100 XP.
- For smart use of the environment or negotiating with the goblins: 50 XP bonus.

Total possible XP for the encounter: 575 XP, plus bonuses for creative problem-solving or role play. Divide the total XP evenly among the players.

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