

Hatchling Cave Encounter

The earth beneath your feet starts to soften, and a musty smell lingers in the air. When before the cave tunnels had echoed with the sounds of the parties movements and the whistling of the air flow, now it was being dampened by something. As you approach another intersection of the tunnels you notice the dark brown rock covered in a white stringy material, that clings to the harsh edges of the walls, ceilings and floor softening the underground landscape.

Rounding the corner you see the cause for the change in terrain; large pale clusters of webbed sacks litter the cavern, occupying the floor and the roof. Various items seem to be engulfed by the webbing, glimmers of silver and gold can be made out amongst glimpses of what might be faces. In the far end of the cavern a light shines from what appears to be a bottle, nestled amongst a nest of webs attached to the wall.

Any member of the party with a passive **Wisdom (Perception)** score of 14 or for any member of the party that makes a **Perception check DC 14** read the following:

The egg sacks appear to vibrate in response to the party's presence. And within the egg sacks appear to be humanoid creatures, their faces appearing to be at rest.

If any creature gets within 5 feet of any of the egg sack clusters, without having made a **Dexterity (Stealth) DC 16** check, then the eggs sacks burst open and Hatchlings emerge. During the first round of combat only the closest egg sack cluster releases, but during consecutive rounds have the remaining egg sacks burst in a ripple effect, dependent on encounter difficulty.

Extended threat: If you wish to make the encounter more threatening then have a larger Tender emerge from the tunnel entrances or from hidden holes in the ceiling of walls to protect the hatchlings.

Whether the party defeats the threats or manages to avoid them, if they get to the back of the cavern they may pick up the bottle of light without any further threats. It is a **Bottle of Light** containing Sunlight.

Story Hooks:

Where did the humanoid creatures in the webbing come from?

Why was the Bottle of Light placed where it was?

Was this hatchery a natural or being cultivated?

And for what?



ENCOUNTER THREAT LEVELS

This encounter has been designed for three different threat levels depending on the party level and size you wish to run. Generalised creatures, monsters and loot are referenced in the text and tables are presented later to give threat appropriate suggestions for monster stats and loot rewards. The three different threat levels are designed for parties of 4 at levels 4, 8, and 12.

THREAT LEVEL 1 MONSTERS

Hatchlings: 5 Swarms of Spiders
Tender: 1 Giant Spider

LOOT

Potion of Healing, gold and gems worth 70 gp, 52 sp, a couple of simple weapons and a shield.

THREAT LEVEL 2 MONSTERS

Hatchlings: 3-5 Carrion Crawlers
Tender: 2 Neogi

LOOT

Potion of Greater Healing, gold and gems worth 160 gp, 63 sp, Elemental Gem (air), Spell Scroll (Sanctuary), +1 longsword, Adamantine Armour (Scale mail)

THREAT LEVEL 3 MONSTERS

Hatchlings: 3-5 Phase Spiders
Tender: 1-2 Driders

LOOT

2 x Potion of Greater Healing, gold and gems worth 280 gp, 16 sp, Rope of Climbing, Brooch of Shielding, Spell Scroll (Acid Splash), +2 Weapon (Light crossbow)

