

LAIR OF THE TENTACLED HORROR

The heroes defeat the high priest, but his horrific idol lurks below...

Following a trail of dead miners, the heroes arrive at the beast's lair...

The alignment of moons causes an extremely low tide, revealing a hidden tidal cavern...

The tentacled horror isn't a random encounter or wandering monster -- it should be what the heroes encounter at the end of the delve, adventure, or even arc. Use it to cap off a Lovecraft-flavoured story sequence, or to inject a little bit of Cthulhu into your heroic fantasy game.

The tentacled horror inhabits an underwater cave. At low tide, the water level is low enough that much of the cave can be walked on, but this "ground level" is not by any means the cave bottom. The encounter map is merely the tip of the iceberg -- beneath it lies an extensive network of submerged tunnels connecting all of the pools at "ground level." The tentacled horror lurks below the heroes, sending tentacles lashing out of any of the pools on the map from virtually anywhere. Because it does not need line of sight to guide its tentacles to their quarry, it only surfaces when a hero is grabbed, pulled within 3 squares of the edge of a pool, and either weakened or dazed.

Each tentacle can be infinitely long, and is therefore given its own move and swim speeds.

Area 1

The PCs rappel down from the cultists' temple, the depths of the mine, or the tidal cavern. They arrive in the red area. There is a small rocky outcropping (easy DC Athletics check to climb up) just north of them, and a pool of murky water to the west. Water flows over the cavern floor and along a tunnel to the south, toward Area 4.

When the PCs land, have them roll initiative -- with blindsight and tremorsense, the tentacled horror already knows they're here.

Area 2

A long tunnel connects Area 1 to Area 2. Area 2 contains two pools of deep water connected by shallows. This is a perfect area for the tentacled horror to slough up into the shallows for a bite attack if it pulls a PC close enough to the water.

An elevated tunnel (easy DC Athletics to climb up) connects this to Area 3.

Area 3

A wide elevated area overlooks a deep pool. The PCs might think they're safe here, but the tentacled horror can attack them from the surface of the pool (reach 3) if they get too close to the edge. Individual tentacles can also climb the ledge to attack.

To the northwest, a tunnel descends into Area 4.

Area 4

Water runs down from Area 1, pooling at the bottom of the tunnel. The tunnel slope is steep and rocky enough that an easy DC Acrobatics check is required to move in either direction on the ground. The shallow water is difficult terrain as normal. Like Area 2, this is another location where the tentacle monster will want to pull hapless PCs into its maw.

General Tactics

No matter where the PCs go, they can't escape the tentacles that continually emerge from the water. Even as the heroes are hewn into pieces, more and more continually emerge. Many groups of players will want to bunch up in a single location and try to attack the tentacles from range; simply have the tentacles continue their inexorable advance toward the PCs every round. If they hole up in an area accessible from multiple avenues, have tentacles move in from both sides. Tentacles spawned from the pools in Area 1 or Area 2 can easily reach even the most remote areas of the cavern with a double move action.

The tentacle monster wants to separate the PCs -- all the easier to eat them that way! If the tentacles grab more than one PC, they will generally pull in opposite directions, leaving the tentacled horror free to go after whichever PC is more isolated when the hapless hero is pulled within 3 squares of a water square.

The PCs will likely unleash their most potent attacks each time the tentacled horror surfaces, so time its emergence carefully so that the tentacled horror can also maximize the damage it deals before sinking back beneath the surface.

Monster Stat Blocks

Tentacled Horror		Level 20 Solo Lurker	
Huge aberrant beast (blind)		XP 14000	
HP 955; Bloodied 477		Initiative +16	
AC 36; Fortitude 33, Reflex 32, Will 34		Perception +16	
Speed 2, swim 10		Blind	
		Tremorsense 20	
		Blindsight 20	
Immune blinded, gaze			
Saving Throws +5; Action Points 2			
Traits			
Regenerating Tentacles			
Whenever the tentacled horror starts with fewer than eight tentacles within 20 squares of it, a number of tentacles appear so that the number of tentacles within 20 squares of it equals eight. These tentacles appear in unoccupied water squares, and the tentacled horror chooses what kind of tentacles appear: constricting tentacle, maddening tentacle, or sweeping tentacle. The tentacles roll initiative when they appear, acting on their own turns.			
Threatening Reach			
The tentacled horror can make opportunity attacks against any creature within 3 squares of it.			
Standard Actions			
⊗ Lash • At-Will			
Attack: Reach 3; +22 vs. Reflex			
Hit: 3d8 + 15 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.			
✓ Chomping Maw • Recharge [5] [6]			
Attack: Melee 1 (one or two creatures grabbed by a tentacle); +25 vs. AC			
Hit: 6d8 + 16 damage.			
Miss: Half damage.			
Move Actions			
Submerge • Recharge when the silt horror starts its turn on the surface			
Effect: The tentacled horror swims its swim speed to a fully submerged square. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. The tentacled horror may only pass through water squares during this movement.			
Triggered Actions			
◀ Fling Away • At-Will			
Trigger: An enemy reduces a tentacle to 0 hit points with a melee attack.			
Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The triggering tentacle can make a melee basic attack against the triggering enemy as a free action. If the attack hits, the tentacle deals 15 extra damage and pushes the target 5 squares instead of grabbing it.			
Str 26 (+18)	Dex 23 (+16)	Wis 23 (+16)	
Con 23 (+16)	Int 23 (+16)	Cha 23 (+16)	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages -	

Choking Tentacle		Level 20 Minion Soldier	
Medium aberrant beast (blind)		XP 700	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		Initiative +20	
AC 36; Fortitude 33, Reflex 32, Will 32		Perception +16	
Speed 6, swim 6		Blind	
		Tremorsense 20	
Immune blinded, gaze, teleportation			
Traits			
Attached			
The choking tentacle can be no more than 20 squares away from a silt horror.			
Unhindered			
When the choking tentacle moves, it pulls with it any creature grabbed by it. In addition, the creature remains grabbed, and the tentacle does not provoke an opportunity attack from the grabbed creature.			
Standard Actions			
☒ Seize • At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +25 vs. AC			
Hit: 15 damage, and the tentacle grabs the target.			
☒ Choking Grab • At-Will			
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the tentacle); +25 vs. Fortitude			
Hit: 15 damage, and the target is weakened until the end of the tentacle's next turn.			
Str 26 (+18)	Dex 23 (+16)	Wis 23 (+16)	
Con 23 (+16)	Int 23 (+16)	Cha 23 (+16)	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages -	

Maddening Tentacle **Level 20 Minion Skirmisher**
Medium aberrant beast (blind) **XP 700**

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +18
AC 34; **Fortitude** 33, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 32 **Perception** +16
Speed 6, swim 6 Blind
Tremorsense 20

Immune blinded, gaze, teleportation

Traits

Attached
The raking tentacle can be no more than 20 squares away from a silt horror.

Unhindered
When the raking tentacle moves, it pulls with it any creature grabbed by it. In addition, the creature remains grabbed, and the tentacle does not provoke an opportunity attack from the grabbed creature.

Standard Actions

☒ **Seize • At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +25 vs. AC
Hit: 15 damage, and the tentacle grabs the target.

☒ **Touch of Madness • At-Will**
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the tentacle); +25 vs. Will
Hit: 15 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the tentacle's next turn.

Str 26 (+18) **Dex** 23 (+16) **Wis** 23 (+16)
Con 23 (+16) **Int** 23 (+16) **Cha** 23 (+16)

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** -

Tripping Tentacle **Level 20 Minion Brute**
Medium aberrant beast (blind) **XP 700**

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +18
AC 32; **Fortitude** 33, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 32 **Perception** +16
Speed 6, swim 6 **Tremorsense** 20
Immune blinded, gaze, teleportation

Traits

Attached

The constricting tentacle can be no more than 20 squares away from a silt horror.

Unhindered

When the sweeping tentacle moves, it pulls with it any creature grabbed by it. In addition, the creature remains grabbed, and the tentacle does not provoke an opportunity attack from the grabbed creature.

Standard Actions

☑ **Seize • At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +25 vs. AC
Hit: 18 damage, and the tentacle grabs the target.

☑ **Tripping Grab • At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the tentacle); +25 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 18 damage, and the target falls prone.

Str 26 (+18) **Dex** 23 (+16) **Wis** 23 (+16)
Con 23 (+16) **Int** 23 (+16) **Cha** 23 (+16)

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** -