



SERPENT'S EMBRACE



HOMEBREW

A collection of monsters and dungeons found in the Serpent's Embrace Desert



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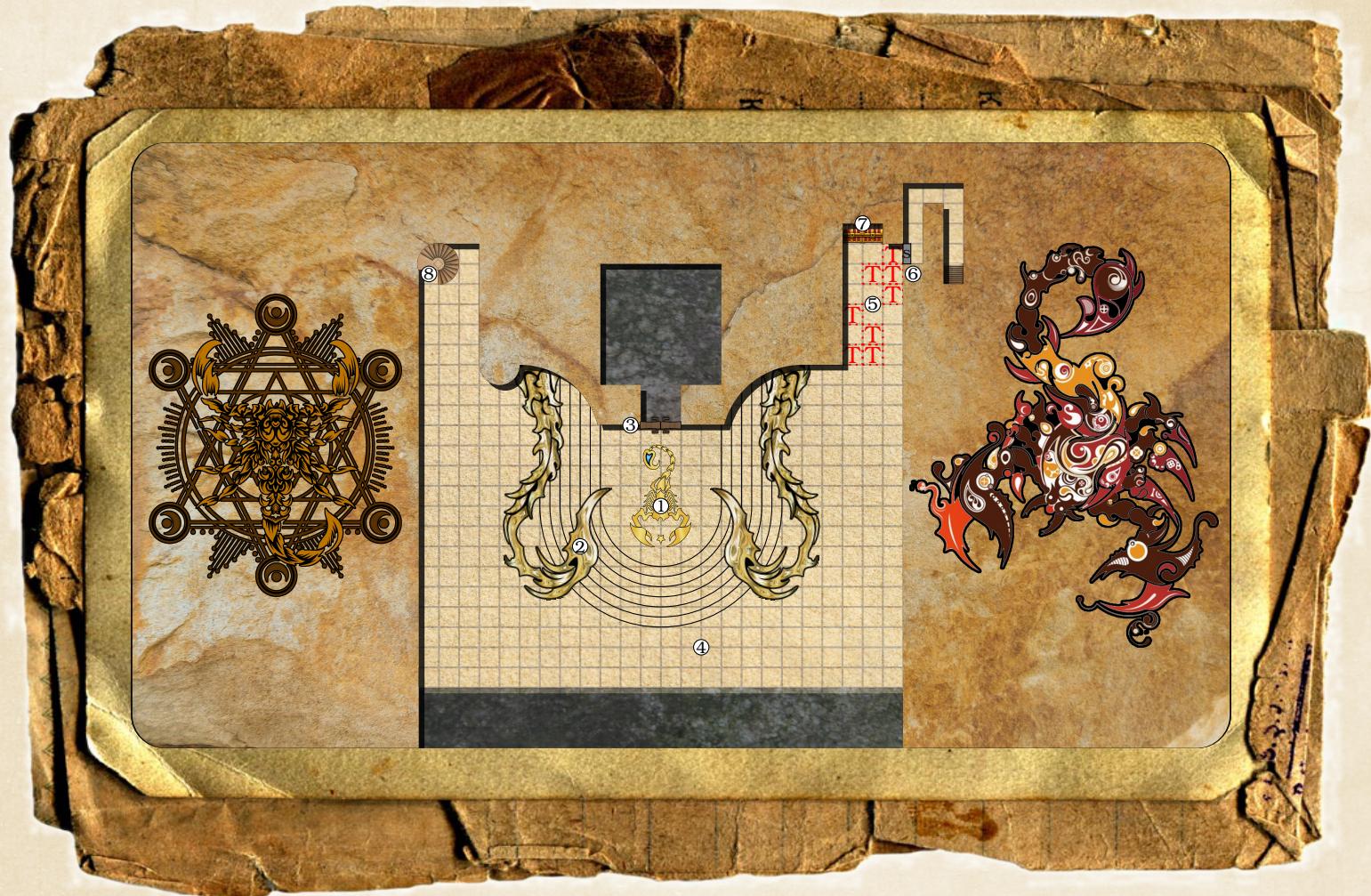
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PART 1

DUNGEONS

HISTORY

ENTRANCE AREA (OUTSIDE)



1. GOLDEN SCORPION STATUE

Before the imposing entrance to the "Tomb of the Scorpion King" stands a meticulously crafted golden scorpion statue. It is raised upon a pedestal, its intricate design capturing the essence of the desert's most fearsome predator.

Puzzle Its right eye socket is adorned by a orange gemstone (worth 500 GP) whereas the left eye socket remains empty. When the gemstone is removed from the right eye socket four Giant Scorpions appear from the ground surrounding the entrance area attacking the adventurers. One of these drops a particular **Silver Scorpion Stinger Key**.

The placement of different gems into either socket can have different, repeatable effects:

Violet Eye Gemstone

If the orange and the violet gemstones are placed into the eye sockets the main entrance opens.

Blue Eye Gemstone

A chain lightning emerges from the scorpion statue's eyes hitting the nearest character. Two bolts then leap from that target to as many as two other targets, each of which must be within 20 feet of the first target. A target must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. The target takes 18 (4d8) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Red Eye Gemstone

The statue produces extreme heat around it. Each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw taking 3 (1d6) fire damage and gaining one level of exhaustion on a failed save. This saving throw must be repeated after 1 hour when still standing near the statue.

Common Gemstone

A swarm of scorpions (see statblock) emerges from the statue's torso attacking the player that placed the gem into the socket.

2. GOLDEN SCORPION ORNAMENTS

Winding their way up the stairs these scorpion tails ornaments are in no way inferior in craftsmanship. Their intricate curvature imparts an aura of dynamic movement, as if the tails are poised to lash out at any who dare to disturb their path. These statues are more than mere decorations - they hold a magical secret.

Upon closer inspection, you notice a faint, iridescent shimmer playing upon the surface of the tails. These enchantments grant the tails a unique and perilous quality. If touched, one of the following effects are triggered, initiating a response that promises challenge.

- On a failed DC 15 Constitution saving throw the character is poisoned for 1d4 minutes.
- An illusionary Giant Scorpion appears. It cannot be interacted with and disappears after 1d6 minutes.
- A sudden cascade of sand swirls up from the ground. Each character within 5 feet must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or is blinded for 1 minute.

3. MAIN ENTRANCE DOOR

Crafted from massive timbers of weathered wood, the entrance exudes a sense of both strength and antiquity. The grandeur of the temple is mirrored in the sheer scale of the entrance, which dwarfs those who approach it.

It can only be opened by solving the Golden Scorpion Statue Puzzle and not by other non-magical means.

4. BURIED EYE GEMSTONE

A subtle 'X' is etched into the ground, a quiet testament to hidden treasure. For those with a keen eye (DC 15 Perception Check), its presence hints at the location of a small, buried strongbox, patiently awaiting discovery. Unearthing the prize demands dedication, a ten-minute endeavor that unveils the secrets held within, but the process is expedited to a mere minute when a shovel joins the effort. Inside the strongbox, a single gem gleams - an enigmatic **Red Eye Gemstone**.

5. TRAPS IN RIGHT PASSAGE

Based on the location of the trap there are 3 different kinds placed in the right passageway:

- **In front of the secret door**

Thunderwave Trap (DEX DC 18) that knocks a character back 20 feet. On an additional failed Constitution saving throw (DC 16) the target also takes 3 (1d6) force and 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage.

- **Near the cliffside on both sides**

Stone Drop Trap (DEX DC 14) that deals 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save.

- **Middle of passageway**

Poisoned Spring Trap (DEX DC 16) that deals 4 (1d8) piercing damage on a failed save. On an additional failed Constitution saving throw (DC 18) the target is poisoned.

6. SECRET DOOR

Embedded within the canyon's cliffside lies a covert passage, concealed by artful design. With a perceptive touch (DC 18 Perception or Investigation Check), the discerning eye may trace the subtle contour of a stone door, masterfully blended into the rugged facade. An engraving, reminiscent of a scorpion's stinger, graces this concealed entryway, a whispered promise of the secrets that lie beyond. Unveiling the portal's mystery requires the touch of destiny - a **Silver Scorpion Stinger Key**, a key to fate itself, snugly placed within the waiting notch.

7. TWIN-CHESTS

Nestled at the conclusion of the rightward path, a dual set of chests emerges, twin entities united in their enigma, virtually indistinguishable from one another. Side by side, they stand as a testament to the balance of secrets they guard.

Treasure In one of the chests the following treasures can be found:

- **Blue Eye Gemstone**
- 1d4 Potion of Cure Poison
- Shovel
- a Shield

Trapped Treasure The other chest is a transformed mimic that will attack the character that interacts or investigates it. When the mimic is killed the following note can be found within it:

ZE 214 17th of Altunia
I recall the words:

The first bathes in the fading sun's light,
Its beauty a beacon through the dusky night.
The second mirrors dawn's tender embrace,
A promise of warmth in the morning's grace.

Placing the orange gem in the socket, I wait, but nothing happens.
Relief washes over me as the surroundings remain still. The riddler's guidance rings true.

But my hand hesitates as it hovers over the red gem.
The allure is undeniable. It seems to throb with warmth and energy.
As I gingerly place it in the socket, a sudden rush of heat washes over me, an intense warmth that makes me reel back.

The entrance still remains closed, maybe I find something else . . .

Furthermore the following items can also be found in the dead mimic's corpse:

- 1d6 Potion of Cure Poison
- 200 GP
- Potion of Greater Healing
- an Amethyst (200 GP)

8. STAIRCASE TO SCORPION'S GAZE

Ascending from the depths of the canyon, a round sandstone staircase spirals upwards, its form a testament to the passage of countless ages. Carved with both precision and the artistry of time's touch, the staircase clings to the canyon walls with weathered grace. Each step, worn smooth by the footfalls of generations, tells a tale of pilgrimage and discovery.

The staircase leads to a lookout point, perched high above the entrance. Here, a plateau of the canyon extends, a sanctuary that time forgot. The vista before you is breathtaking, a canvas painted with the hues of desert life. The plateau's edge offers a vantage point that seems to touch the very heavens, granting you a commanding view of the canyon's expanse and the hidden entrance below.



SCORPION'S GAZE

Upon reaching the pinnacle of the ancient sandstone staircase, the world stretches out before you in all its splendor. The lookout point, perched high above the expansive canyon plateau, revealing the sprawling grandeur of the canyon plateau in vivid detail. The rugged terrain, an untamed canvas of sun-kissed earth and wind-carved rock, extends as far as the eye can see. The landscape is alive with the hues of the desert, its palette ranging from warm ochres to deep russets, illuminated by the sun's golden embrace.

The central figure is a resplendent scorpion, its stinger poised as if to strike the very heavens. Its body, carved with meticulous detail, forms the foundation for the grand design. Ingeniously, stairs are engraved into the scorpion's segmented back, leading to a small lookout platform nestled high above the ground. From here, a breathtaking panorama unfolds, revealing the canyon's undulating topography.

Emerging underneath the scorpion's figure, a substantial circular ring evokes the sinuous form of a centipede's body. This ring forms a courtyard of reverence before the statue. As you step onto its well-worn surface, you find yourself surrounded by an aura of ancient whispers, as if the stones themselves bear the memory of those who came before.

A narrow bridge, adorned with scorpion-themed ornaments that glisten in the sunlight, spans the circular ring's expanse. Its path guides you across the symbolic embrace of the centipede ring and ushers you into the courtyard plaza before the great scorpion statue. Here, amid a harmonious convergence of artistry and nature, you stand witness to a sacred meeting of the past and the present.

MYSTERIES AND DANGERS

Amid the beauty and grandeur of the lookout point, mysteries entwine with potential perils, weaving a tale of challenge and discovery. Upon the lofty viewing platform, a pedestal sits adorned with a single Violet Eye Gemstone. Its presence hints at an unspoken role, a piece in the puzzle of the plateau's enigma.

The gem's allure is undeniable, and a curious hand plucking it from its resting place triggers an audible click that reverberates through the air. A sudden realization dawns as the bridge leading back out the courtyard, a pathway that appeared a moment ago inviting and open, rises with a mechanical precision. A shiver races down spines as the once-accessible escape route becomes a cruel cage, ensnaring all within the courtyard's boundaries.

As tension thickens, a chorus of roars and growls pierces the air. From shadowed crevices and hidden corners emerges a Manticore, accompanied by 2 (1d4) Ebony Scarabs. Its intentions shrouded in malice, the monster embodies the very essence of danger that lurks within the tomb. A battle unfolds, and the clash of steel and the echoes of spells become a dance of survival against the backdrop of the plateau's commanding vista.

As the Manticore succumbs to defeat, the bridge descends once more, its mechanisms relenting. Freedom beckons, a reward for the valor displayed. The adventurers stand amidst the aftermath, surrounded by the cryptic aura of the lookout point, a place where triumph and trepidation mingled.

ENTRANCE AREA (INSIDE)

PART 2

MONSTERS

EBONY SCARAB

Hailing from the depths of arid deserts and sun-scorched wastelands, the Ebony Scarab is a marvel of natural engineering. Its chitinous exoskeleton shimmers with a rich hue of black or dark blue, akin to the darkest nights. Yet, this profound darkness is not devoid of life, for intricate golden accents dance across its carapace, capturing the very essence of stardust. These gilded highlights mark its eyes, mandibles, and the fine lines that trace patterns along its armor, a testament to the creature's innate mystique.

The Ebony Scarab stands at a formidable 4 to 5 feet in height, its presence radiating an eerie intelligence from its multifaceted, gleaming eyes. Its antennae, in a constant state of delicate twitching, seem to tap into the very vibrations of the earth. As it moves, the sand and soil beneath its feet seem to part willingly, acknowledging the ancient power it wields.

This creature's demeanor is a fascinating blend of the graceful and the fearsome. It carries itself with an almost regal bearing, its plated limbs moving with a fluid grace that belies its size. Yet, its mandibles, powerful enough to crush stone and bone alike, provide a constant reminder of its primal nature. When it locks eyes with its prey, an unsettling aura envelops its gaze, capable of instilling terror in even the most resolute souls.

Amidst the barren landscapes it calls home, the Ebony Scarab is a master of camouflage. Its exoskeleton, versatile as an artist's palette, can morph to match its surroundings—vanishing into shadows, or blending seamlessly with sand and rock. This natural gift, combined with its keen senses, makes it a predator that strikes from hidden lairs and buried tunnels.

A meeting with the Ebony Scarab, whether beneath the sun's unforgiving gaze or the starlit canopy of night, is an encounter with the mysteries of the desert—majestic, deadly, and filled with the allure of the unknown.



EBONY SCARAB

Medium Monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 30 ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Chitinous Armor. The Ebony Scarab has a +3 bonus to its Armor Class due to its tough exoskeleton.

ACTIONS

Crushing Mandibles. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage.

Eerie Gaze. The Ebony Scarab targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of its next turn.

Infectious Sting. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: The target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

REACTIONS

Chromatic Shift. When a creature targets the Ebony Scarab with an attack, the scarab can use its reaction to shift its color, imposing disadvantage on the attack roll.



GIANT SANDWEAVER

Native to sandy deserts and shrugged canyons, the Giant Sandweaver is a horrendous sight to encounter. Different to common spiders these monsters do not spin large intricate webs, but instead cover large areas of their territory with a thick weave of silk to act as an alarm system for intruders. Furthermore, Giant Sandweaver live in large families, similar to hives, which form around a matriarch - a so-called Sandwidow.

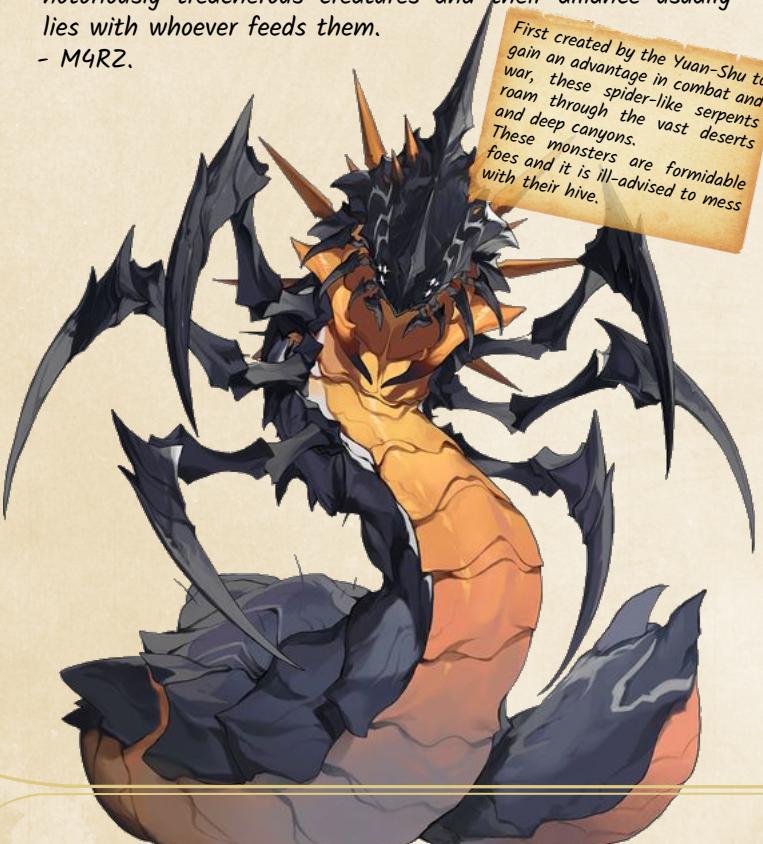
Appearance. Giant Sandweavers are large serpents that can reach lengths of up to 12 feet and have 6-8 spider-like legs. Individual specimens, especially Sandwidows, are said to have been up to 15 feet in length. The body itself is covered by hard plates, giving a very good resistance to any attack. Closer to the head these bodyplates form massive spikes. While the Giant Sandweaver is buried in the sand these spikes might be mistaken for stones or obelisk by unaware travellers.

Ritual Abomination. The first Giant Sandweavers were created in dark rituals by the lizardfolk tribe Yuan-Shu during the war with the Yuan-Ti. These were released in crucial positions, most commonly canyons, to hinder the advances of the opponent's troops and attack any snakefolk that trespasses the terrain. The Yuan-Shu relished in the idea of turning snakes into spider-like monsters that preyed upon the snake worshipping Yuan-Ti, a metaphor of the lizardfolk's superiority.

During combat the Giant Sandweaver tries to catch or incapacitate its opponents within its webbing. Already caught opponents are not the preferred target if other non-incapacitated opponents are around.

Monstrous Mounts. Over the centuries, Yuan-Ti were able to tame some Giant Sandweavers just enough to serve as mounts in combat. However, Giant Sandweaver are notoriously treacherous creatures and their alliance usually lies with whoever feeds them.

- M4RZ.



Variant: Sandwidow

The matriarch of a Giant Sandweaver family has more similarities to an actual snake and its legs are covered in hair, that can detect pressure differences and air movement in the Sandwidow's surroundings.

Hit Points. 163 ($15d12 + 66$)

Pit organs. The Sandwidow has blindsight in a 50 ft. radius, on creatures whose body temperature is more than half than the temperature of its surroundings.

Trichobothria. The Sandwidow can detect movement within a 100ft. radius.

Spit Venom (Recharge 5-6). The Sandwidow spits venom in a 40 foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 33 ($6d8 + 6$) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

GIANT SANDWEAVER

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 94 ($8d12 + 42$)

Speed 30 ft., climb 25 ft., dig/tunneling 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks (not Sandwidow), poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, prone

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Primordial

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spider Climb. The Giant Sandweaver can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down ceilings, without the need of an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the Giant Sandweaver knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Giant Sandweaver can attack twice each turn.

Poisonous Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 ($2d6 + 1$) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 ($4d6$) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failure, the target is poisoned.

Scythe Slashing. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 21 ($3d8 + 8$) piercing damage.

Web Shooter (Recharge 5-6). Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 20/60 ft., 5 ft. radius. Hit: Any target within the radius is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 16 Strength check, bursting the web on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; HP 7; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

ANCIENT SANDWEAVER LAIR

Built by the snakefolk Yuan-Ti, this monument to the snake deity Sseth is winding across the peaks of a jagged cliff formation in the middle of the Serpent's Embrace Desert. These rugged lands are home to Giant Sandweavers, huge abominations of part spider part snake. Occasionally, members of the Yuan-Ti are following the Path of Enlightenment visiting this shrine to bring offerings. Unbeknownst to many an even larger creature is calling this sanctum home - the Ancient Sandweaver. Legends are spreading around this ungodly creature and feared by those who live to tell the tale of its encounter. The desert is filled with stone pinnacles and broken obelisks and monument ruins clutter the area - But be aware, not everything is what it seems to be...

ANCIENT SANDWEAVER

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)

Hit Points 280 (16d20 + 112)

Speed 50 ft., dig/tunneling 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+0)	26 (+8)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, prone

Senses Tremorsense 3000ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Primordial

Challenge 22 (41,000 XP)

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the Ancient Sandweaver knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Ancient Sandweaver can attack twice each turn.

Poisonous Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 25 ft., one target. Hit: 48 (10d6 + 13) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 44 (8d6 + 16) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failure, the target is poisoned.

Bash. Melee Weapon Attack: +12 to hit, reach 35 ft., one target. Hit: 90 (12d12 + 12) bludgeoning damage. If the targets are creatures, they must succeed on a DC 22 Strength or Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

LAIR ACTIONS

Passive Effect: Legendary Malevolence.

In a radius of 10.000ft. around the lair no creature is benefitting from a long rest.

On initiative count 20, the Ancient Sandweaver takes a lair action to cause one of the following effect. It can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- A 30 foot square area of ground within 120 feet of the Ancient Sandweaver becomes quicksand.
- A 5 foot rock the Sandweaver can see is crashing to the ground. Any creature within that area must succeed a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffers 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage and their movement rate is set to 0 until the end of their next turn.
- A 10 foot wide, 20 foot deep hole within 120 feet of the Sandweaver is opening up.

Web Shooter (Recharge 5-6). Ranged Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, range 20/60 ft., 10 ft. radius. Hit: Any target within the radius is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 16 Strength check, bursting the web on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; HP 7; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

REACTION

Wrap. When a creature is hit by the Sandweaver's poisonous bite attack and becomes paralyzed by its poison, the Ancient Sandweaver can use its silk webbing to restrain the target. If the target is Medium in size or smaller, the Ancient Sandweaver can then attach the target to its back or belly. The Ancient Sandweaver can have only one creature attached to its body at a time. A creature freed from this webbing is no longer attached to the Ancient Sandweaver's body.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Ancient Sandweaver can take 3 Legendary Actions, choosing from the options below. Only one Legendary Action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Ancient Sandweaver regains spent Legendary Actions at the start of its turn.

Bite. The Ancient Sandweaver makes one Poisonous Bite attack

Sandhide (Costs 2 Actions). The Ancient Sandweaver creates a 50ft. cloud of sand. A creature engulfed by the sand must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or is blinded until the end of their next turn.

Dig and Strike (Costs 3 Actions). The Ancient Sandweaver digs down, being hidden until it resurfaces, and has advantage and +30 ft. reach (cumulative) on its next melee attack.



"SCORPION-GAZE" MANTICORE

A grotesque fusion of nightmarish forms, the Manticore stands as an embodiment of dread. Its lithe, serpentine body is ensconced in scales as dark as the abyss, their iridescent sheen catching the faintest glimmers of light. Sinewy muscles ripple beneath its reptilian hide, attesting to the creature's raw power. Its emerald eyes gleam with malevolent intelligence, fixating on interlopers who have disturbed the sanctity of its domain. The leonine visage of the Manticore houses a maw of dagger-like fangs, poised to rend flesh with ease.

It is the creature's torso that betrays its true otherworldly nature. The scorpion's influence manifests in the form of a segmented exoskeleton, a chitinous armor that extends along the creature's midsection. At the apex of this aberration rests a vicious, venomous stinger, dripping with lethality. The creature's wings, reminiscent of those belonging to an ancient and malevolent dragon, stretch forth in sinuous grandeur. Membranes of leathery skin, mottled with shades of obsidian and midnight blue, connect elongated skeletal structures, ready to propel the Manticore with a grace that belies its menacing nature.

As the Manticore unfurls its vast wings and emits a spine-chilling hiss, the very air seems to grow heavy with foreboding. Scorpion's Gaze trembles under the weight of ancient curses, stirred once more by the transgressions of those who dared to covet the Violet Eye Gemstone – the key to the Manticore's vengeful resurgence.

A Broken Pact Legend speaks of an age-old pact binding a fearsome guardian – the Manticore. Its role: to protect the mysterious Violet Eye Gemstone, a relic so mythical its power and purpose is most uncertain.

Forged by a forgotten civilization, this pact ensured the Manticore's vigilance watching over the gemstone and the tomb's secrets for eons. Silence enveloped the tomb until a reckless hand will disrupt the pact by seizing the gemstone, rousing the Manticore from its ageless slumber.

As you tread the path to the Tomb of the Scorpion King, brace yourself for the Manticore's fury and the revelations it guards – a testament to the binding ties between guardian and relic, eternally entwined.

"SCORPION-GAZE" MANTICORE

Large Monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., Fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Tail Spike Regrowth. The Manticore has 12 tail spikes. Used spikes regrow when the Manticore finishes a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The manticore makes three attacks: one with its **Bite**, one with its **Claws**, and one with its **Sting** or three with its **Tail Spikes**.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Sting. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 13 Constitution Saving Throw or is poisoned for 1 minute.

Tail Spike. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 100/200 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. If no Tail Spikes are left the Manticore cannot use this attack.

BIG THANKS TO THESE ARTISTS

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