

THE WHISPERING CAIRN

5E CONVERSION NOTES

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This document converts *The Whispering Cairn*, the first installment of the *Age of Worms* adventure path from 3.5 to 5e. You will need a copy of the [adventure](#), [adventure supplement](#), [Player's Handbook](#), [Monster Manual](#), and [Dungeon Master's Guide](#). The adventure is available from paizo.com, and the core books are available from amazon.com, local gaming stores and other retail outlets. Most creatures other than named NPCs are included by reference from the Monster Manual.

ENCOUNTERS

The following section references the encounters found in the adventure *The Whispering Cairn*. Encounter Level (EL) was brought from the 3.5 adventure as a way to differentiate the difficulty of the encounters. Notes are added to each encounter on how to adjust the encounter for fewer or more than 4 PCs.

DM NOTE

It is advised that each member of the party starts with a potion of healing.

PART 1: A FACE IN DARKNESS

Finding the entrance requires a DC 6 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

WIND DUKE GLYPHS

As the PCs interact with the wind duke runes and glyphs, a successful Intelligence (History) or Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals additional information about the glyphs. More information is revealed with better checks with thresholds at 8, 11, 15, and 19.

1. COWARD'S REST

A DC 11 Wisdom (Nature) check locates the wolf tracks. A DC 11 Intelligence (History) check recalls the information about the girl who went missing. The DC is 1 less for each year under 20 of the PC's age. A DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the bedroll and surrounding area reveals the whittling shavings. A DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the pattern work reveals the tubes in the pattern work. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check is required to find the tubes from the outside. Anyone with a passive Perception above 10 who is not actively engaged in something else notices a faint, flickering green light in the distance.

2. TRANSPORT ALCOVE

Anyone investigating the area around the stone finds a few of the black shards. A DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the runes on the inside slot of the frame. A DC 8 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the runes as transportation runes. Depending on how quiet the party is being, the wolves from area 4 can hear them with a DC 10 to 20 Wisdom

(Perception) check with disadvantage due to distance.

3. COLLAPSED PASSAGE

Depending on how quiet the party is being, the wolves from area 4 can hear them with a DC 10 to 20 Wisdom (Perception) check with disadvantage due to distance.

4. HALL OF HONOR (EL 3)

Creatures: 1 Dire Wolf (MM 321), 2 Wolves (MM 341)

Each additional PC: Add 1 Wolf for each additional PC or 3 Wolves for every 2 additional PCs.

5. WOLF DEN

A casual investigation of the northern half of the den reveals the leather backpack and lantern. A DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the southern half of the den reveals the armband. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the rubble around the entrance reveals the marble finger.

7. FALSE TOMB (EL 2)

A DC 15 Intelligence (History) or Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the glyph on the sarcophagus is for a powerful elemental entity. It takes a DC 11 Strength check to turn the sarcophagus clockwise one click.

Sarcophagus Trap: DC 11. Intelligence (Investigation) to detect. Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) to disarm. Fires *burning hands* (PHB 220) on activation.

THE TUNNELS

A DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) locates the circle on the floor at the end of each tunnel.

GREEN TUNNEL (EL 3)

A DC 9 Dexterity saving throw allows any creatures standing on or around the circle to jump out of the way before the floor collapses. Passive Perception should allow the skittering beetles to be heard as long as creatures can hear and everyone is quiet. Climbing down the cave in is automatic.

Creatures: Swarm of Centipedes (MM 338); Mad Slasher, use an Ankheg (MM 21) with changes

- no burrow speed
- Acid Spray attack changes to do slashing damage in a 5 foot radius.

Each Additional PC: Add a Swarm of Centipedes.

BLUE TUNNEL

A DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the ceiling of this tunnel is not within range of torch light. It is a DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check to climb the chain. A DC 11 Intelligence (Medicine) check reveals the skeleton died from a long fall.

INDIGO TUNNEL (EL 2)

An inspection of the floor of the false elevator automatically reveals the crushed bones. A DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds the pouch.

False Elevator Trap: Automatic hit after 2 round delay. 2d10 bludgeoning damage.

8. PASSAGE OF THE FACE (EL 4)

A DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the deep scratch marks in the floor. These are noticed automatically by anyone investigating the floor. Any creature caught by the face's gaze must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be paralyzed, repeating the saving throw at the end of each of its turns until it is free.

Face in the Darkness Trap: DC 14. Wisdom (Perception) to detect pressure plate. Intelligence (Investigation) to confirm. Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) to disarm. Any creature affected by the wind must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw or suffer the effects of the wind. Round 1: Tiny creatures are knocked prone. Round 2: Tiny creatures are blown away; Small creatures are knocked down; and Medium creatures can make no forward progress. Round 3: Small and smaller creatures are blown away; Medium creatures are knocked down; and Large creatures make no forward progress. Round 4 and later: Medium and smaller creatures are blown away, and Large creatures are knocked prone.

9. ARCHITECT'S FOYER (EL 2)

It is a DC 19 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to squeeze through.

Slab Trap: DC 11. Intelligence (Investigation) to detect. Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) to disarm. Each creature in area 9 must make a Constitution saving throw, becoming poisoned for 1d6 hours on a failure or 1 hour on a success. A poisoned creature has disadvantage on Strength based attacks, ability checks, and saving throws.

10. PASSAGE OF HONOR (EL 3)

Creature: Lurking Strangler, use Spectator (MM 30) with the following changes:

- Remove Bite action
- Only select 1 beam per turn
- Add a Constrict action. Range 0 feet. Target: One incapacitated creature. The target cannot breathe and is suffocating. After a number of rounds equal to the target's Constitution modifier, the target dies.

Each Additional PC: Add 30 hp.

11. GALLERY (EL 4)

A DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the short wall north of the columns reveals the hidden catch.

Hazard: Brown Mold (DMG 105).

Treasure: The corpse wears +1 chainmail. The alcove contains the goggles of minute seeing and statuettes only.

12. LIVING QUARTERS

Anyone above the bed must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving

throw or suffer one level of exhaustion while they stay above the bed.

13. WORKSHOP (EL 1)

Anyone examining the staff notices the segments on the staff. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check identifies the gold symbol on the ebon egg; a successful DC 20 result also recalls the history surrounding it.

Creature: For the small earth elemental, use a Gargoyle (MM 140) with 37 hp and Small size.

Each Additional PC: Add 15 hp.

15. LABORER'S FOYER

A DC8 Strength (Athletics) check allows climbing back up the shaft.

16. FOOD ROOM/THE HIVE (EL 3)

Any creature who eats the food must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. A DC 8 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the lumps in the orange sludge in the corner. A DC 11 Intelligence (History) check recalls the information about the Seekers.

Creatures: Giant Centipede (MM 323), 3 Swarms of Centipedes (MM 338)

Each Additional PC: Add a Swarm of Centipedes.

Treasure: One corpse has 3 *potions of healing*, and one has a *pearl of power*. A DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the remains of the nest finds the *ring of feather falling*.

17. SLEEPING QUARTERS (EL 2)

Each round any creatures in the room must make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or suffer the first level of exhaustion. The beetle is under this effect. The statue can be tipped over with a DC 15 strength check.

Creatures: 2 Giant Centipedes (MM 323), Animated Armor (MM 19).

Each Additional PC: Add 15 HP to the Animated Armor.

19. SUBMERGED SHOWERS (EL 2)

Creature: Water Weird (MM 299) HP 39, +3 to hit.

Each Additional PC: Add 15 HP.

20. LOCKER ROOM WITH BENCHES

A DC 8 Intelligence (Medicine) check reveals the bones have been cracked open.

Treasure: A +1 *short sword* is on the body.

21. OTHER LOCKER ROOM WITH BENCHES (2)

Creature: Ghoul (MM 148)

Each Additional PC: Add 15 HP.

23. ALASTOR'S HAUNT (EL 4)

A DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check based on hearing can hear the grick moving in the iron balls below. Anyone taking a strenuous action must make a DC 8 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone.

There are some problems with the timeline given in the adventure. Alastor died 30 years ago and says he watched many others go through this room, but the Seekers led by Ulavant came through 50 years ago and removed the red lantern. Without that, the face in the wall would not have opened up and allowed access into this area. Either Alastor needs to be from much longer ago, or his body needs to be in an earlier area. The bones next to the blue lantern in area 7B would be one option, but the mention of watching other adventurers come through this area should be removed.

Creatures: Grick (MM 173), Ghost (MM 147)

Each Additional PC: Add 15 HP to the Grick.

Hall of Iron Spheres Trap: DC 11. Intelligence (Investigation) to detect. +3 to hit. *Hit:* 1d10 bludgeoning damage and the target must make a Dexterity saving throw or fall the 10 feet to the iron balls below.

24. ICOSIOL'S MAUSOLEUM (EL 4-6)

DM Note: If 2 Wind Warriors is too easy because the party is fully rested, you can bring another in partway into the fight.

Creatures: 2 Wind Warriors. Use Gargoyles (MM 140) with the following changes:

- Add speed: (hover)
- Remove the False Appearance trait.
- Replace Bite and Claw attacks with 2 short sword attacks.
- The Wind Warrior also has a light crossbow.
- As an action the Wind Warrior can clang its swords together to create a sonic burst in a 20 ft. line. Creatures in the line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d6 thunder damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful save.
- It is immune to thunder damage.

Each Additional 2 PCs: Add a Wind Warrior.

25. THE TRUE TOMB

A DC 11 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the black globe in the fresco as a sphere of annihilation. A DC 8 Strength check is sufficient to move the lid after speaking Zosiel's name. A DC 11 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the glyphs on the box as belonging to the Queen of Chaos.

Treasure: The magical items in the treasure are a *circlet of wisdom +1* and a *talisman of the sphere*.

THE LAND FAMILY GRAVEYARD

A DC 8 Wisdom (Medicine) or Intelligence (History) check identifies the flower motif on the grave stones. A DC 7 Intelligence (Investigation) check near the graves reveals the wheelbarrow tracks headed back to Diamond Lake. A DC 8 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the 5 sets of footprints going

toward the house and four sets going quickly away.

THE LAND FARMSTEAD (EL 3)

A DC 8 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals the baby owlbear can fetch up to 300 gold. A DC 8 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the house finds the arm with the tattoo. A DC 8 Intelligence check reveals the origin of the tattoo. A DC 11 Charisma check in town gathers the information that Smenk's gang frequent the Feral Dog tavern.

Creature: Owlbear (MM 249)

Each Additional PC: Add 30 hp to the owlbear.

BALABAR SMENK'S GANG (EL 6)

Creatures: Kullen, Berserker (MM 344); Rastophan, Spy (MM 349); Todrik, Thug HP 71, AC 13 (MM 350), Merovin Bask

Treasure: Treat drops from the group combined as 1 CR 0-4 Hoard.

Each Additional PC: Add another Thug with HP 71 and AC 13.

1. LANDING (EL 2)

A DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check unlocks the front door.

A check of 11 or lower alerts the skeletons inside.

Creatures: Tomb Mote: use a Modron Pentadrone at Tiny size (MM 226).

Each Additional PC: Add 30 HP to the Tomb Mote.

2. WATCHERS IN THE DARK (EL 1)

The tables grant $\frac{3}{4}$ cover. The entire room is difficult terrain. A DC 11 Wisdom (Medicine) check identifies the physical abnormalities as signs of the red death.

Creatures: 3 Skeletons (MM 272)

Each Additional PC: Add 10 HP to each Skeleton.

3. ABANDONED OFFICE

A DC 8 Strength check forces open the door.

4. CENOBITIC CHAMBERS

A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the far right room reveals the pouch.

5. FEASTING HALL

Anyone looking at the zombies realizes they are moving slightly.

9. BEDCHAMBER

A DC 11 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the rug.

Creature: Owl familiar (MM 333).

11. OPERATING THEATER (EL 5)

A DC 11 Wisdom (Medicine) check identifies the physical abnormalities as signs of the red death. A DC 11 Intelligence

(Religion) check reveals the worm as a Kyuss worm.
Creatures: 4 Zombies (MM 316), Skeleton (MM 272), Filge
Each Additional PC: Add 30 HP to Filge.

MONSTERS

The following are custom monsters for *The Whispering Cairn*.

FILGE

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 88 (16d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Special Equipment. Filge has syringes of *potion of false life*, *potion of healing*, and *potion of greater healing*.

Spellcasting. Filge is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Bask has the following Wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*
1st level (4 slots): *mage armor*, *magic missile*
2nd level (3 slots): *gentle repose*, *ray of enfeeblement*
3rd level (2 slots): *fear*, *stinking cloud*, *vampiric touch*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

MEROVINN BASK

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 38 (7d8 + 7)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Draconic, Orc
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spellcasting. Bask is a 2nd-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Bask has the following Wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *firebolt*, *resistance*
1st level (3 slots): *color spray*, *detect magic*, *mage armor*, *sleep*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.