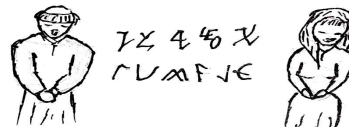


The Singing Caves

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Ages ago, when the world was young, a demigod overwhelmed a marauding beast and imprisoned it below the earth, under an enchantment that would keep it sleeping forever. But time passes, enchantments fade, and adventurers poke into places best left alone.

A cavern (which can be placed wherever the DM desires) filled with crickets and frogs of all sizes contains a deep artificial pool, flanked by bas-reliefs of choristers and with the inscription "Let them ever sing their song; let him sleep forever long" in an ancient tongue over it.

In the pool there is a door. The door cannot be opened; the door opens outward and the pressure of the water in the pool keeps it closed until emptied. Water drips constantly from above into the pool, making an almost musical sound. To empty the pool, this water must be diverted and then 2000 cubic feet of water moved out of the pool.

Even after the pool is emptied, the door is mortared shut, and will take at least an hour or two to chip open assuming the PCs have appropriate tools.

None of this is as easy as it sounds. The biggest crickets get panicked and jump randomly, potentially injuring PCs. The bigger frogs will actively try to eat PCs. Wandering monsters may show up, looking for a frog or cricket dinner. And the noise of combat or chiseling out that mortar could wake the sleeping beast.

Noise in the Singing Caves:

The caves are pretty noisy overall, but it's mostly soothing white noise, which works to keep the beast asleep. Diverting the water dripping into the pool (and draining it) reduces this white noise. Loud, sharp noises (like combat and hammering at mortar) scare the crickets and frogs, further reducing the white noise as well as creating discordant noise that threatens to wake the beast.

When the larger crickets are threatened, they will shriek to warn the others and leap in a random direction; half the time this random leap will be in the direction of a PC, and the cricket makes an attack roll to see if it accidentally hits the PC.

For our purposes here, only the loudest current ambient noise counts for keeping the beast asleep.

Discordant noises have a chance of scaring crickets or frogs into silence. For each round of discordant noise, there is a chance equal to the difference of the discord and the ambient noise the creatures create on 1d6 that the creatures will be scared. For example, the PCs are attacked by a large frog (combat), so level 4 discord is compared to the other creatures to see if they're scared. Crickets up to 1' create a level 1 ambient sound, so there is a $(4-1)=3$ in 6 chance per round that 1' crickets will fall silent, and 3 in 6 for tiny crickets as well. 3' crickets, tiny frogs, and 2' frogs fall silent on 2 in 6; 4' frogs fall silent on 1 in 6. Cricket shrieks may frighten other crickets, but never frogs.

Creatures making ambient noise equal to the discord have a chance of 1 in 12 of falling silent, so in the above example, 6' frogs will fall silent on 1 in 12 per round of combat.

Creatures that fall silent will remain silent during the disturbance and for 2d4 minutes afterwards before restarting their song. If half of the creatures of a given size are killed, the ambient noise they create will drop by 1.

Ambient Noises:

Source:	Noise level:
Tiny crickets (1000s of them, harmless, die in droves if area effect magic is used)	1
1' crickets (a few dozen, AC 7/13, 1d4hp, panicked leap damage 1point)	1
3' crickets (about a dozen, AC 4/16, 2HD, panicked leap damage 1d4)	2
Tiny frogs (stats as tiny crickets)	2
2' frogs (about 20, AC 7/13, 1HD, bite damage 1d3)	2
4' frogs (about a dozen, AC 7/13, 2HD, bite damage 1d6)	3
6' frogs (4, AC 7/13, 3HD, bite damage 2d4)	4
Water falling into pool	4

Discordant Noises:

Source:	Noise level:
1' cricket shriek	3
3' cricket shriek	4
Hammering on rock	4
Yelling/combat	4
Loud, messy magic (fireball, lightning, etc)	6

Events: (Roll 1d12 every turn)

- 1-2 Wandering monster (use appropriate chart based on where the Singing Caves are located)
- 3-4 Cricket panics
- 5 Frog attacks a PC
- 6-12 No event



Waking the Beast:

As long as the door in the pool is intact, all discord levels are halved for purposes of waking the beast. Once PCs begin chipping away the mortar, all that hammering counts at full discord levels. When the door is opened, combat, cricket shrieks, etc count at full levels.

Discordant noise in excess of ambient noise gives a chance on a d20 equal to the difference of the two (like the chance of creatures going silent) per turn (use the ambient noise level that dominates that turn; a few rounds of complete silence won't override many rounds of loud ambient noise) of rousing the beast. After being roused four times, it wakes fully.

The Nature of the Beast:

The beast here could be a demon, a dragon, a vampire, some crawling chaos from beyond the stars. The DM should choose a monster (and treasure) fitting for the campaign, and it should be powerful enough to give the party a run for their money. They should have to dip into their carefully hoarded magic items to finally beat the beast. But this is an opponent worthy of a demigod; simply beating the beast down to 0hp won't kill it. At 0hp, it falls unconscious and within a few hours, it will have regenerated back to full strength and may or may not remain sleeping depending on how badly the PCs mangled the ambient noise levels of the caves. If it isn't returned to its crypt with the door mortared shut, water dripping musically into the pool, and crickets and frogs singing (or some magical illusionary equivalent), the beast may escape once again to ravage the country and wreak its vengeance.