

THE SPIRITS OF THE WOODS

A mystery adventure for DnD 5e

DnD Must Haves

<i>Estimated playtime:</i>	<i>4 - 5 hours</i>
<i>Player level:</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Party members:</i>	<i>3 - 5</i>
<i>Difficulty:</i>	★★★★☆

In this short module you will undergo an adventure in an unpredictable woodland, filled with mystical creatures and small twists, in a quest to restore the spiritual balance of the woods.

THE SPIRITS OF THE WOODS

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Let us know how your adventure went! We'd love to hear your story and it would help us improve this and future adventures.

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INTRODUCTION

In this adventure, your party embarks upon a quest to find the source of the disbalance of the spirits that live in the forest of Andrun.

STORY OVERVIEW

An important feature of this module, is the new ability: **spirit**. Next to your standard DnD abilities this ability will be used on multiple occasions where a spirit attack is made, or communication with other spirits takes place. In the detailed descriptions of the chapters you will find some examples, but naturally you will have the freedom of creating your own 'spirit checks' as you play.

Abilities

Strength	measuring physical power
Dexterity	measuring agility
Constitution	measuring endurance
Intelligence	measuring reasoning and memory
Wisdom	measuring Perception and Insight
Charisma	measuring force of Personality
Spirit	measuring connection to spirits

Running The Adventure

This adventure will follow a common approach, divided into three sections: **roleplaying**, **exploration** and **combat**.

1. Roleplay
2. Combat
3. Roleplay
4. Exploration
5. Combat

Chapters

You can see the chapters of this adventure in the adventure flowchart to the right. The chapters are guidelines and are used to dictate a solid tempo of the adventure, you are free to spend more or less time on chapters. The description of the characters and the information of the monsters and items can be found after the chapters in the appendix.

ADVENTURE FLOWCHART

PROLOGUE: A MYSTERIOUS PAMPHLET
The party comes across an intriguing pamphlet.
Roleplay

CHAPTER 1: THE HERMITS TENT
Receive information and quest from Brian Beetlebum and start the quest into the forest.
Roleplay

CHAPTER 2: ATTACKED BY SPIRITWOLVES
Ambushed by spirit wolves the party is forced to defend their own.
Combat

CHAPTER 3: CHIEF GNOME DORFAN WHISTLESTICK
The party have a run in with Gnomes and receive valuable information about the forest and its spiritual presence.
Roleplay

Optional Path

CHAPTER 4: SPIRITFLOWERS
The party gets the opportunity to heal some of their spiritwounds with the knowledge of the Gnomes.
Exploration

CHAPTER 5: THE SPIRITTREE
The party must make a decision to help the spiritwolves or continue their path.
Exploration

CHAPTER 6: KOBARU, THE SPIRIT KINGCOBRA
The final confrontation. Fight the spiritsnake Kobaru and restore the spiritual balance of the forest.
Combat



PROLOGUE:

A MYSTERIOUS PAMPHLET

On your travels from one city to the next, you happened to stumble upon a piece of paper, stuck to a tree with some weird, thick mucus. The paper reads: “Help save the forest of Andrun! Adventurers needed. Reward: material desires available, but mostly new experiences and friendships! Interested? Apply in tent downstream of the river.”. Rereading the paper once more, you walk down the river, and indeed spot a small, slightly clumsy handmade tent.

CHAPTER 1:

THE HERMITS TENT

The adventure starts with your partymembers entering the tent one by one. Here they meet the hermit called **Brian Beetlebum** (see appendix B: Monsters and NPCs). Brian makes an enthusiastic, but socially awkward first impression. The tent is made out of sticks and animal skins, with handmade pots and a bed consisting of soft moss. It is truly the living place of someone living in the forest in solitude.

Introductions

Give your partymembers the time to introduce themselves by having Brian (Mr.) Beetlebum asking questions. Weird it up by having Brian ask some silly questions in between, like their favorite bark skin or where they keep their stick collection. Partymembers can also introduce themselves to the others, and/or state their interest in this quest.

After everyone is introduced, you can start with the information about the quest itself. Brian Beetlebum has made connections with the spirits of the forest of Andrun where he lives. He has noticed that the spirits are uneasy and appear to be out of balance. Spirits can manifest in plants, flowers or trees; but also in the ground or animals. Sometimes even people. The spirits are in constant motion: a general flow can be observed. They can dwell in a flower until the plant is eaten, or an animal until it dies. It lives to connect itself with its surroundings, and to communicate within itself – yet this communication is more based on what humans would describe as feelings, rather than words. Lately the spirits have been disturbed, uneasy and the previous ‘flow’ appears to be disrupted by something or someone. “There is yet much to learn about the spiritworld, but something is off, that’s for sure. I need you guys to find the source and restore the balance to this forest. Head north,

a lot of spirit energy emerges from there”.

Before the party leaves, Brian Beetlebum gives the adventurers his blessing. By placing two hands on every individual, he gives them a bit of spirit. The adventurers roll 4 d6's, select the highest three and add these together to get their seventh ability: Spirit (see table 1: Abilities). Regarding rewards for this quest you may be creative. Perhaps Brian Beetlebum has something of great value that he doesn't realize, like 'this very useless and way to big cutting knife', which happens to be a precious and rare sword. Or maybe the adventurer is a researcher looking for this specific animal/mushroom, or in a search to learn more about themselves, etc.

CHAPTER 2: ATTACKED BY SPIRITWOLVES

After a long stroll (and perhaps a little bit of roleplay) the party has to make the choice to travel at night (and receive 1 level of fatigue) or take a rest. After describing how they set up camp, or while walking through the forest at night, the spirit wolves attack. Two **adult spiritwolves** (mother + father) and two **cub spiritwolves** engage in combat.

During Chapter 2, the following must be done:

1. In describing the spiritwolves, make sure that the party understands that these four wolves are a family. The two parents being significantly bigger and stronger than the cubs.
2. Next to normal attacks, the two adult spiritwolves also have to make spiritattacks (See spiritattack in the attack table of the spiritwolf for its effects). At least one spiritattack has to succeed.
3. Once one wolf is very close to dying (15 hp or less), have all of them retreat. Describe how the wolf closest to dying was badly injured, and might not make it. If a wolf does actually die in combat, have the other wolves take it away through grabbing and dragging (This information will be used in chapter 5).
4. At any stage, the wolf can make a spiritconnection with a partymember. You can do this several times, to indicate the intentions of the wolves (e.g.: hungry, agitated, concerned, angry, scared). First and foremost, the wolves attack because they are hungry and see the party as pray. They flee because they are scared.

Battle Map

For a roster/map, a woodland/forest map is advised with a few obstacles (trees/bushes/rivers). Have the party lay out their camp/resting spot before the spiritwolves attack if they decide to rest.

CHAPTER 3: CHIEF GNOME DORFAN WHISTLESTICK

The party stumbles upon a small Gnome village after the spiritwolves attack. Play this out through perception checks or have a villager come up to them. The village is partly above ground, but mostly underground in their burrows. Considering Gnomes, this burrow is relatively big. Their burrows have extended for quite some generations as they have lived here for a while. The gnomes are, just as Brian Beetlebum, very much in touch with nature. The guard/ villager/ random gnome the party met, has led them to the chief of the village: **Dorfan Whistlestick**. Just like most gnomes, these forest gnomes are very friendly – close to being naïve some would say – in their hospitality and trust in strangers. They are keen on helping: tending to any wounds the party might have, or trade items. Their 'inventory' is limited however. A couple of health potions and potent beans (See Items list) that give an adrenaline rush is the most they can offer for trades. They are not interested in gold, so the party must have items they can trade.

Entering the burrows and trading the items can be roleplayed, this is optional. The meeting with chief Dorfan Whistlestick must take place. Whistlestick will ask about the goal of the party and if they (the gnomes) can be of any assistance. Some charisma checks may be made during the conversation to gain valuable information.

Chief Whistlestick

Chief Whistlestick has the following information:

1. The gnomes also have noticed the disbalance in spirits. It seems that something is only taking spirits, but not giving it back, disrupting the flow of the spirits
2. The spirits are concentrating near a cave, the gnomes can give clear directions in how to get to this cave
3. The cave is home to a creature called '**Kobaru**' by the gnomes: a giant, white cobra.

Next; either choose 4 or 5, not both!

4. **The gnomes have the ability to restore the spirits of the party members** who were harmed through a spiritattack. *Only choose this option if you wish to skip Chapter 4 due to time management.*
5. **The gnomes know how to restore the spirits of the party members** who were harmed through a spiritattack. They explain about the powers of a **spiritflower**, where to find this and how to make a proper potion out of it. *Only choose this option if you wish to do Chapter 4.*

CHAPTER 4:

SPIRITFLOWERS

This is an optional Chapter

Pick chapter 4 if you have enough time. If not, skip this chapter and go to chapter 5. If you do skip Chapter 4, make sure that the party has received a spiritcure for their spiritwounds in the gnome village (See Chief Whistlestick).

The party has decided to first find a cure for their spiritwounds, before continuing towards the cave. With directions and instructions given by the gnomes, they move along. Have the party members roll investigations checks for searching. The best situation would be that the party splits up: someone will find the secret stick collection of Brian Beetlebum, some encounter the **Mushroomdragon**, and one finds the spiritflower. The Mushroomdragon interaction is a fun extra bit in the exploration part (see appendix B: Monsters and NPCs for information about its properties). If the party does not split up, first play the Mushroomdragon encounter, then find the spiritflower. The party manages with some medicine/ herbalism/ nature checks to make the potions out of the spiritflower. Based on the rolls, you can decide the quantity and the quality of the potions. By rule of thumb you can decide that they managed to brew potions to instantly heal all spiritwounds, and roll a d4/ d6 for extra potions to keep (might come in handy in their final combat).

CHAPTER 5:

THE SPIRITTREE

As the party is on their way to the cave of Kobaru, they encounter **an ominous tree**. One party member (spirit check) feels the tree calling to them. Upon discovering the tree, they see gentle warm orbs orbiting the tree, floating around and sharing their kind light. The tree is old and strong, its branches far outstretched both up and wide. Underneath the tree, the party sees the spiritwolf family. Three wolves howl softly and sad, as the fourth family member lays quietly on the grass. The spiritwolf that was mostly injured in the previous fight/ or was killed and dragged away, appears to be on the brink of death/ is dead. The spiritwolves can share their feelings (sadness, but no hostility) towards the partymembers through spiritconnection. They also do not interfere in any of the further actions the partymembers take.

The spirittree calls upon the partymembers. It asks if they wish to help the dying/ dead spiritwolf. If no



partymember steps up, the spiritwolf dies on the spot and can't be resurrected anymore. Through a successful spiritcheck, they can see that the spirit leaves the body of the wolf and is pulled forcefully into the direction of the caves. As this happens, the spiritwolves howl and the branches lose some of fierceness and bow down, as if the tree itself is sad and is grieving.

If a partymember does step up to the question, the tree asks to step closer while the rest of the party must wait. The tree gently encases the player with roots from its own, as branches, leaves and twigs surround the player. If the player does not intervene this process, the tree will completely engulf the player up to the point it can no longer move, and the body is no longer visible through the vines for the rest of the party. Now the tree starts to take away the spiritforce of the player. It takes every ounce of spirits it needs to save the spiritwolf. It takes so much, that the player who is being held by the tree, passes out without being able to make a sound or an effort to stop this.

After the player wakes up again, the player has become the spiritwolf it tried to save (for further instructions, read 'spiritwolf as a playable character' in appendix B: Monsters and NPCs).

Give the party some time to roleplay and grow into his new roll as spirit wolf. After they have settled down, continue to the last Chapter.

CHAPTER 6: KOBARU, THE SPIRIT KINGCOBRA.

The party has entered the cave and were noticed quite quickly by **Kobaru**, who sensed nearby spirits. Waking up from a slumber, Kobaru emerges from the shadows...

"I ssssmell fressssh meat... fressssh spiritssss... I know why you have come, and I know you will fail in your quesssst."

Kobaru's lair is a small cave with a giant boulder in the room and Kobaru's nest (see appendix C: Maps) and appear fairly easy to climb. There is dim light, enough to see the whole rooms layout but difficult to spot details that are further away than 30ft. There is also a tiny stream of water coming into the cave, no steeper than 1ft and not wider than 10ft. Kobaru is hostile and doesn't dwell too long into (spirit) conversation. It has a hunger that needs to be sated. It must be evident – before combat – that the spirits disbalance comes from Kobaru, who only engages into frenzied eating and absorbing spirits but doesn't give back, hence disrupting the flow of the spirits. If the spiritwolf died in chapter 5, and no partymember has taken over the body, have Kobaru thank the players for the snack. Kobaru's abilities and statistics can be found in appendix B: Monsters and NPCs

If the party dies, Kobaru takes their spirits and feasts on their flesh. If the party defeats the king cobra, there are two options the DM can choose:

1. Kobaru dies by physical means that could cut of his head or part of its body.

E.g.: like a swing from a sword or axe, magic that incinerated the flesh like a lightning strike, and other ripping/ slashing/ cutting/ piercing damage. Kobaru's head was separated from its main body and dies. The party celebrates, as the lifeless body stops twitching. They are briefly out of combat, before they hear a weird noise. The sound of boiling water, the squeaking of wood and an unmistakable hiss. They turn around, and see out of the body that was separated from the head, two new heads grow. One head is the same: white, angry, agitated and with a sense of consuming. The other head is black, and has a more calm and serene appearance. The black color of the head now twists in a spiral downwards over the body, as if two colors of rope are wrapped around each other. The black head communicates with the party through a spirit connection.

"We are Kobaru, you have sssssaved ussss and the foresst of our destruction. We were unable to give what we took, to ssssshare what we ssssstole. Have our blessing and our gratitude".

Because of Kobaru's blessing, if a partymember was turned into a spiritwolf, they now turn back to their original form. Kobaru slithers away, vowing to keep the spirits in balance. From here the campaign is over. If needed you can roleplay the ending in depth by traveling back to Brian Beetlebum. He will give the rewards as promised and will confirm that the balance to the forest and it's spirits is restored.

2. Kobaru dies by non-physical means.

E.g.: a poison spray, psychic spells or a radiant beam. The party celebrates as they feel the spiritenergy being blasted away in every direction, like a cork on a champagne bottle. Balance has been restored to the forest! If a partymember was turned into a spiritwolf, they remain a spiritwolf until another human being wishes to trade places. If you wish to roleplay some more, you could have Brian Beetlebum (with some persuasion though) ask to trade places. If needed you can roleplay the ending in depth by traveling back to Brian Beetlebum. He will give the rewards as promised and will confirm that the balance to the forest and it's spirits is restored.

APPENDIX A: ITEMS

HEALTH POTION

Potion, Uncommon

Brewed and distilled from rare flowers and carefully mixed with the proper ingredients, a bright orange health potion from the Gnomes will restore 10 Hit Points when consumed. A player can consume this potion as a bonus action.

CAFFEINE BEANS

Wonderous Item, Common

Dark brown beans, roughly the size of walnuts, where gathered from thorny bushes. They provide a sudden burst of energy when chewed on. Consuming a caffeine bean as a bonus action, will give the player an extra action in its next turn.

SECRET STICK COLLECTION OF BRIAN BEETLEBUM

A Collection of Sticks, ??

No one really knows why Brian Beetlebum collects these mundane but somewhat pleasand looking sticks.

SPIRIT FLOWER

Wonderous Item, Rare

A mystical flower with a an eerie purple white glow. It has potent powers when harvested correctly. It always blooms, as long as it has spirits connected to it.

To make a spiritcure out of the spiritflower, one must take the whole plant, the roots; stem and pedals and cook it. The plant will dissolve and leave behind a light purple liquid which can be drunk, or stored for later consumption.

SPIRIT CURE

Potion, Uncommon

After consuming a spiritcure, the player loses all of the effects of previous spiritattacks.

APPENDIX B: MONSTERS AND NPCs

Dorfan Whistlestick

Dorfan Whistlestick is a young chief in the burrows of the gnomes. He is charismatic, disarming, interested and helpful. He is keen in offering help and demonstrates a great hospitality. He is respected by his peers, who do what he asks them to do. He does not suspect any evil, disloyalty or other negative intentions from his own people or the party members. His glass is always half full. For more guidance, you could base his personality around the snowman 'Olaf', from Frozen – but with a tad more charisma and knowledge.

Spirittree

A mysterious, large tree with a strong connection to the spirits. It communicates through spirits with its surroundings and you would therefore – though misinterpreted – say it was 'alive'. Due to its strong connection, it feels the disbalance within the forest. Working as some sort of catalysator, it will do anything to restore the balance. It has no sense of good or evil, only the intention to distribute the spirits in the forest evenly.

Mushroomdragon

The Mushroomdragon is a far distant relative of the actual dragons, yet this little creature feels strongly connected to them. It can often be found amongst mushrooms and fungi, as the Mushroomdragon sees them as its treasure and will protect them against any intruder. A unknowing adventurer might just encounter the Mushroomdragon while searching for food. Though it might startle you with its tiny roar, or might even bite you with its soft teeth, it does not pose a threat. It is too small to inflict any actual harm upon medium sided humanoids, but it will defend its hoard with the ferocity of its great descendants.

When partymembers stumble upon the Mushroomdragon while searching for the spiritflower, the Mushroomdragon produces spores that can't be seen with the naked eye. The spores land on party members whom interacts with the Mushroomdragon. They must make an Charisma saving throw (13). If they fail the Charisma check, they receive 15 temporary Hit Points. They are also under the impression that nothing can hurt them, for they are strong and all the enemies are puny. They don't see, acknowledge nor sense any danger and charge into foes without a second doubt. They will unnecessary take the frontline and belittle enemies as much as they can. These effects will linger until 30 Hit Points in total are lost in combat.

If they succeed the Charisma check (13), they receive 5 temporary Hit Points and show the same characteristics as described above. They lose these effects once the player has lost 10 Hit Points in total in combat.



SPIRITWOLF

Medium Creature, neutral

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 75 (14d8 + 14)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	SPI
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 30 ft., Passive perception 13
Languages spiritual spiritconnection 80 ft.
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The Spiritwolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Spirit checks that rely on hearing, smell or spirit.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Spiritwolf's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Spirit Attack. reach 5ft., one creature. The target makes a DC 12 Spirit saving throw. the spiritwolf 'bites' of some spirit on a failed save.

Spirit damage (d6)

- 1-2 **Bite in arm:** disadvantage on attack roles made with arm or hands.
- 3-4 **Bite in leg:** disadvantage on Dexterity / Strength saving throws and the creatures speed is halved.
- 5-6 **Bite in face:** disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.

SPIRITWOLF CUB

Medium Creature, neutral

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 50 (11d6 + 11)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	SPI
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 30 ft., Passive perception 13
Languages spiritual spiritconnection 40 ft.
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The Spiritwolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Spirit checks that rely on hearing, smell or spirit.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Spiritwolf's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

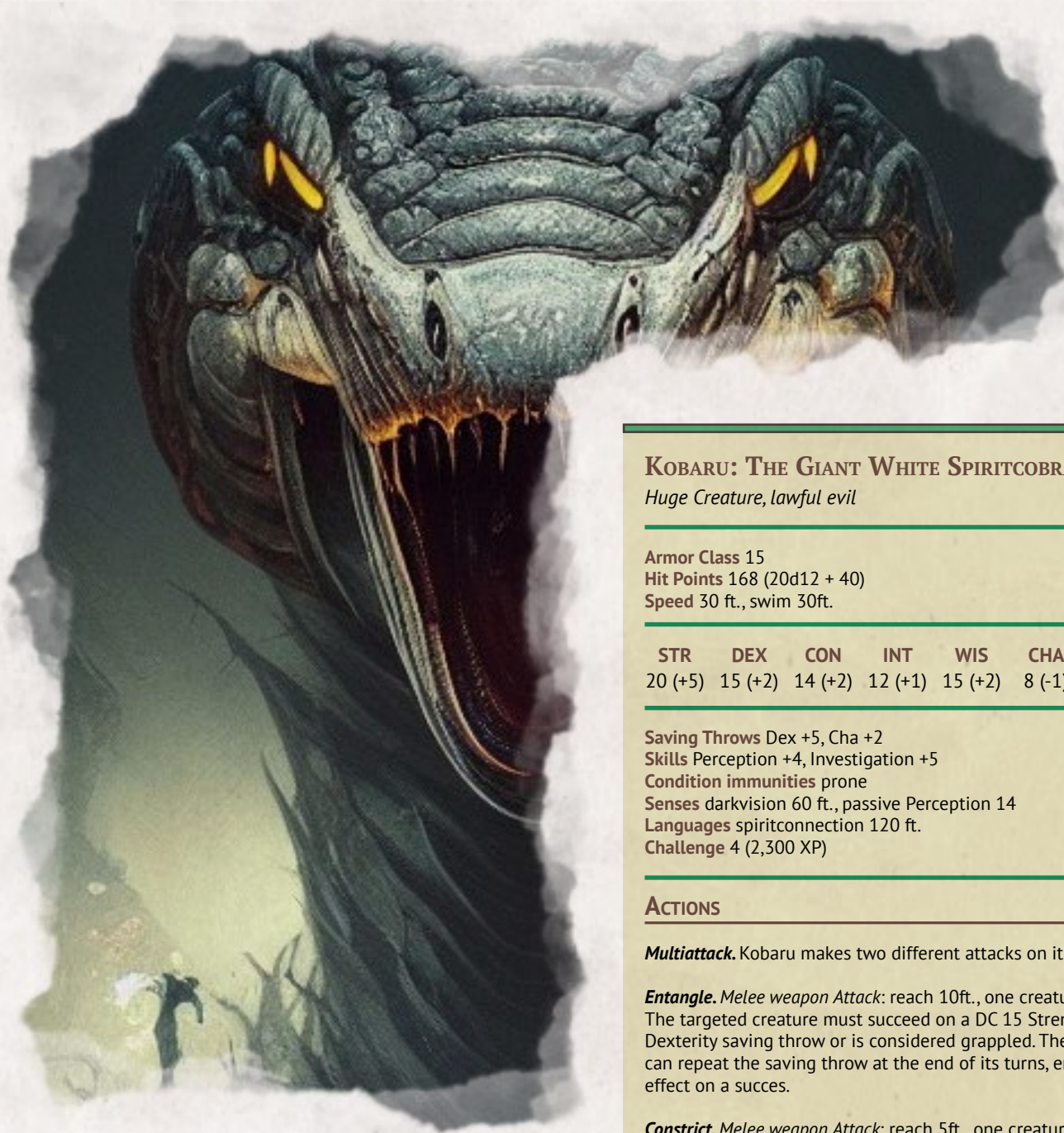
ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Spiritwolf as a playable character

When a player has its spirit (and mind) transferred to the wolf, the following takes place:

- The player keeps its characteristics, it's own mind, memory and alignments.
- The player can no longer communicate through speaking with their partymembers. It must use a spiritconnection and can only convey emotions, no speech.
- The player will keep its own ability stats for Constitution, Wisdom, Charisma and Intelligence.
- The player will receive the ability stats for the wolf concerning Strength, Dexterity and Spirit, unless these are lower than its previous ability stats.
- The player will receive the Hit Points and Armor Class from the Spirit wolves, along with Keen sense and Pack tactics.
- The player can still use spells
- The player can still make attacks with the bonuses, feats and other previous race/ class features it had in its original form. For example, it would still have the ability to do a double attack as a lvl 5 fighter, along with the bonus stats/ proficiency bonus from weapons the fighter had.



KOBARU: THE GIANT WHITE SPIRITCOBRA

Huge Creature, lawful evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 168 (20d12 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	SPI
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +2

Skills Perception +4, Investigation +5

Condition immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages spiritconnection 120 ft.

Challenge 4 (2,300 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kobaru makes two different attacks on its turn.

Entangle. *Melee weapon Attack:* reach 10ft., one creature. The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw or is considered grappled. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Constrict. *Melee weapon Attack:* reach 5ft., one creature entangled by Kobaru. The player must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Bite. *Melee weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Tail Swipe. *Melee weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. On a hit the target must make a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw. If it fails, the creature is knocked back 10 ft.

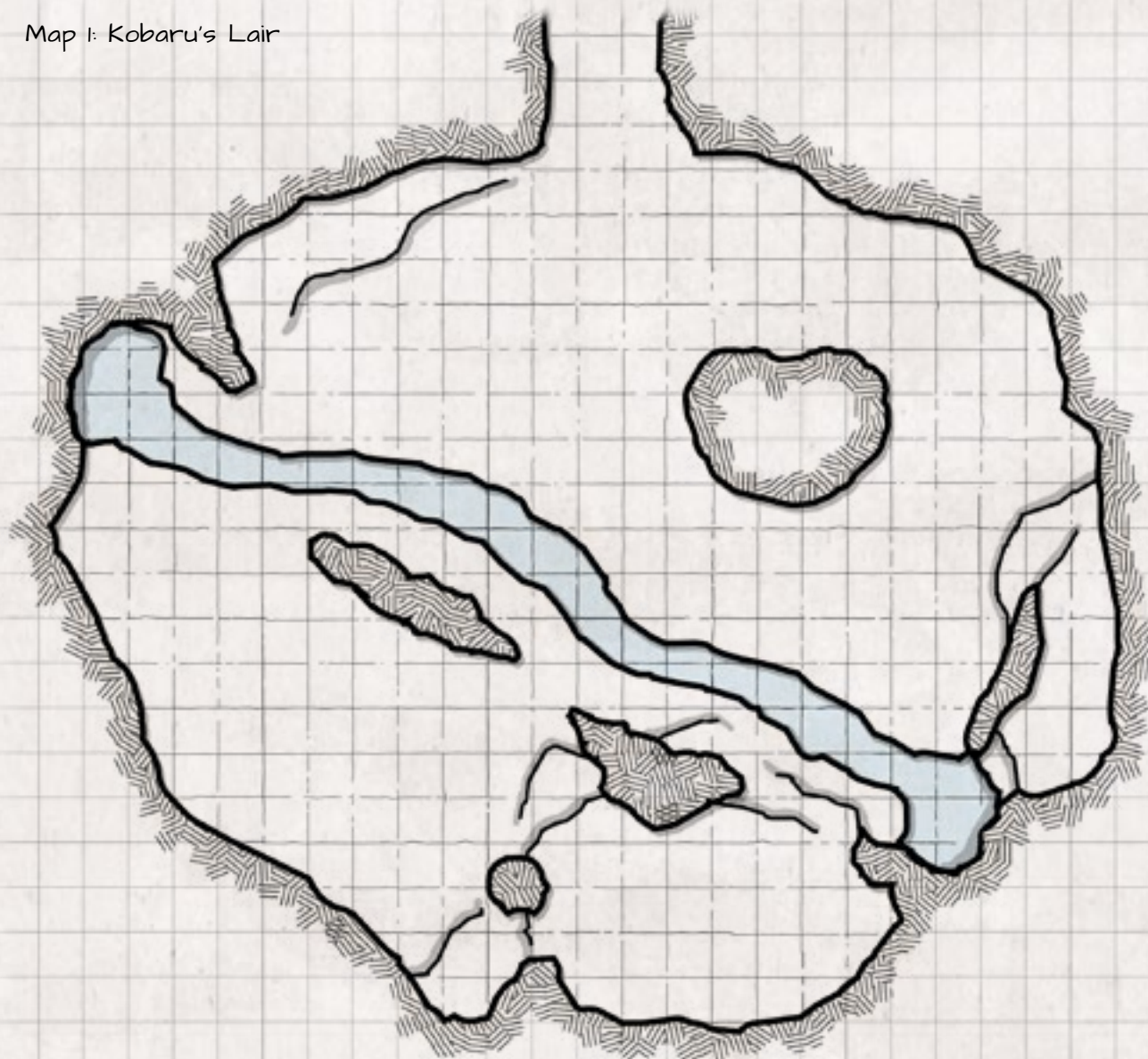
Spirit Attack. reach 10ft., one creature. The target makes a DC 14 Spirit saving throw. Kobaru 'bites' of some of the targets spirit on a failed save.

Spirit damage (d6)

1. Bite in arm: disadvantage on Attack rolls
2. Bite in leg: disadvantage on Dexterity/ Strength saving throws and the creatures speed is halved.
3. Bite in face: disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma saving throw rolls made with arm or hands.

APPENDIX C: MAPS

Map 1: Kobaru's Lair



1 square = 5 ft.