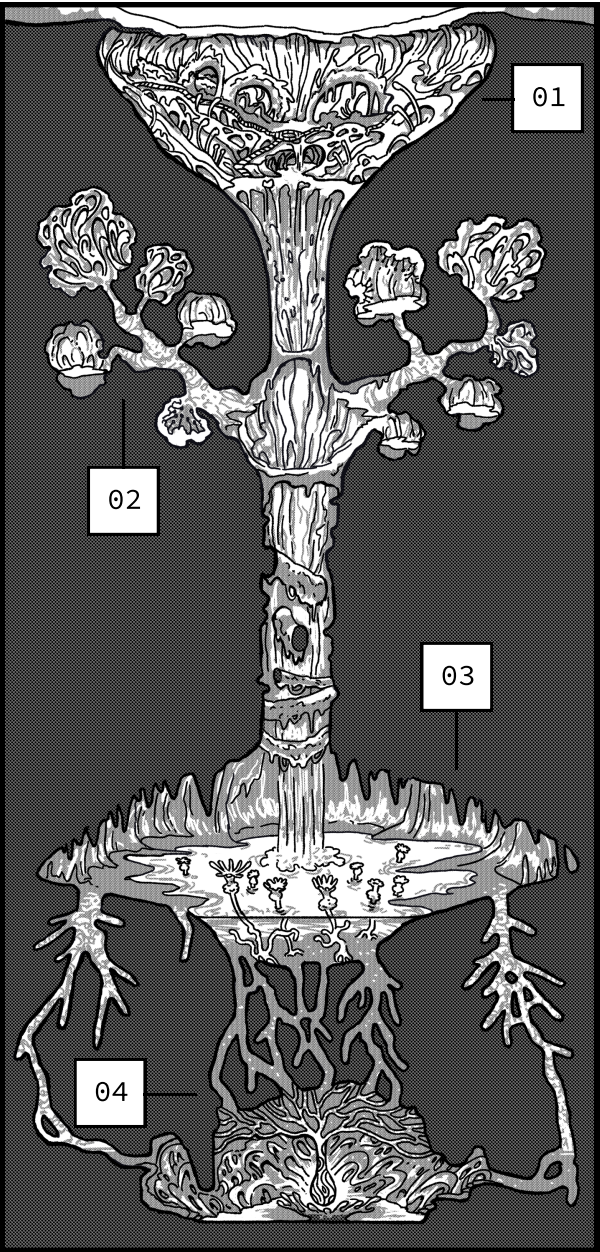


ILSPERODAN:

The Pit of Despair

A Starfinder 1e Adventure by Adis Roberts
(CR 5)



00: Overview

On the fairly barren desert planet of Ilsperodan, a flourishing paradise is contained within a mysterious crater. Local legend tells of a comet that crashed centuries ago, but no known star map contains a comet that would have been anywhere near the solar system at the time of this crash. Regardless, some sort of enormous collision occurred and created what is now known as the Pit of Despair. Despite what its name may imply, the Pit is a cultural monument and tourist hotspot. Rather than as a result of the Pit's cultural role, its name originates from a popular folklore story about a well dug so deep that it reached the underworld.

Descending through the layers of the pit has historically been a rite of passage for natives of the planet. Today, it's primarily traversed recreationally or by tourists, but it remains relatively untouched by civilization beyond the surface level, making the task of exploring the Pit an incredibly dangerous and sometimes lethal one. The further a visitor explores into the earth, the more strange and dangerous the Pit becomes. The most popular explanation for the formation spontaneous oasis is the presence of magical font that dwells at the very bottom of the Pit, affecting its structure and ecosystems.

The tale of the underworld well associates treasure that can be found at the bottom of the pit; the verity of this association is unknown. However, there is most definitely a source for the magic affecting the area, and for it to have such an incredibly strong effect, it is likely very valuable.

01: The Funnel

Lush plant life and a dense ecosystem of fauna create an idyllic scene in the crater. A paradise-like microcosm is sustained and influenced by some unseen arcanic source. Unobtrusive walkways have been constructed around the perimeter of the Funnel, spiraling downwards towards the crater. There are a number of signs with inscriptions detailing the significance and history of the pit. Tourists litter the walkways, quietly observing and enjoying the up-close wildlife.

There is a herd of 5+1d10 grazing creatures that use the Large Herd Animal statblock. These animals have shimmering patches on their hides and spiraling horns that protrude from the center of their face.

At around halfway down the funnel, the walkway turns into a cul-de-sac. Here, a merchant eagerly calls for the attention of any passers-by. The merchant attempts to convince travelers of their apparent ability to successfully traverse the Pit, appealing to any ego they can stroke. They will then attempt to sell their wares, an array of 'vitality necessary' gear for anyone venturing into the Pit. Most of their wares are standard gear that has been slightly modified, and they insist that it's specialized and crafted from ancient Pit-splunking tradition. It's pricy, but ultimately not more than 125-140% the normal price of the gear, so it may be a worthy purchase for a party that forgot to stock up.

Past this surface-level habitat is where the Pit truly begins. A lake at the bottom of the crater drains into an enormous sinkhole. Few people occupy the walkway as it begins to descend past these falls and into the earth.

Strange formations sprout from the walls of the sinkhole. Curls of prismatic, crystalline structure wind into the rock face like sinew into bone. This alien material is hard and shatters like rock, but bears more visual similarity to a fungus than a mineral formation. It provides footholds against the sheer drop of the pit downwards.

02: Spokes

Descending lower, the vertical channel opens up into a wider chamber. It's ringed with a natural platform of mineral and crystal. There are no guard rails; in fact, aside from discarded and broken belongings, there is little immediately clear that indicates civilization nearby. The streams of water loudly tumble downwards past this section.

A series of branching cavities spiral out around this central chamber, resembling a strange plant or root-like system. The furthest of these cavities are filled with a frilled fungus-like organism. The closer cavities lack this organism, but seem to have been hollowed out by it; they look almost carved, the folds of the fungus giving a deeply unnatural and almost flesh-like appearance to the walls.

6 of these cavities are accessible and unoccupied by the folded fungus. Roll on a table for the contents of each:

d6	
1	An empty room.
2	A room with a few abandoned metal crates, one locked with a Simple Lock and rusted shut. A spool of discarded Everlength rope and a Trap Scanner are found inside.
3-4	Strange undulating fungi draw your attention, causing the fascinated condition for 1d4 rounds (DC 16 Will negates)
5	A nest of 2 territorial Gloomwings that don't appreciate intruders.
6	A shrine to the native god of fortune and sport. Credsticks worth 50+2d100 rest before the effigy.

Past the cavities, a tunnel stretches downwards, its sides lined with crystalline spikes and stalactites. A DC 35 Athletics check can make the climb down, but there's probably a better way.

03: Lower Basin

After the stretch of tunnel following the Spokes, the tunnel walls open out into another chamber, this one even wider than the initial crater. The water seems to glow ever so slightly, and is strikingly clear. A DC 12 Perception check reveals a number of tunnels beneath the lake's surface leading downwards.

In the lake, a number of stalks with strange flower-like heads peek out from the waters. These are 2+1d6 Feeder Fungus that rest at the mouth of each tunnel system beneath the lake. They only become hostile if players venture within 30 feet.

Within the lake dwells a school of mesmerizing iridescent fish. Their appearance is used to draw in small invertebrate prey both above and underneath the water's surface. If caught and consumed, the player gains an effect identical to the Moonflower drug statblock.

A trail of blood and bits of shredded viscera lead towards the back of the opening. Strange huffing and tearing noises emanate from an alcove tucked against the outer walls. Entering into the alcove reveals 2 hostile Arabuk Yearlings feasting on a humanoid corpse. It's too destroyed to identify by sight alone, but other means of investigation could reveal the corpse to be that of an unfortunate Moyishuu traveler.

Alternatively, if players choose to enter into the darker corners along the outer wall of the caves, a DC 10 Perception check will discover a tunnel system that also leads downwards, but is not flooded with fluid, and is difficult to traverse safely.

In general, this is considered the end of the trip; no one ventures past this point. There are 1d4+2 camps of adventurers here, resting in the alcoves of the cave walls before returning back up to the surface. There are 1d2 abandoned camps with some spelunking gear the party can attempt to scavenge.

04: Godheart

Past the lower basin and through its drain tunnels lies the very bottom of the pit. It's virtually impossible to find first-hand accounts of this area; its unknown whether anyone has actually ventured this far and returned. It gains its name from local underworld folklore rather than concrete knowledge about what it contains.

In the tunnels leading up to the chamber, there are a number of strange scratches in the otherwise smoothed tunnel walls. They look more like symbols than random animal scratches, but they aren't recognizable as any known script.

Upon entering, players are greeted by the most exaggerated form of these crystalline structures yet. The formations almost pulse or ripple outwards from the center of the room, where an orb illuminates the chamber. This chamber is completely submerged in the same fluid that makes up the lake.

Connecting up towards the ceiling and branching into the start of the lake tunnels, a number of fibers glow with flashes of rainbow bioluminescence and draw towards the center of the room.

A presence lies within the glowing mass in the center of the room. If touched or damaged, the core unfurls to reveal swirling threads of bright color and light that form a shifting approximation of a humanoid. She uses the Itmi Vruh statblock, but lacks the unliving and incorporeal abilities, the undead trait, and undead immunities. Additionally, she can use Psychic Sonar at 3rd level 3 times per combat.

The humanoid is immediately hostile, disoriented and not speaking. She can be incapacitated, but if dropped to 0 hit points, she simply appears to disperse into the tunnels. She can also be calmed.

If Naolis is successfully calmed, she becomes peaceful and gains the helpless condition. She doesn't seem fully lucid or present, but speaking with her, she can't remember much of anything outside of her name.