

# ESCALATION & ELEVATION

D&D5e Compatible, Suggested Lvl 1-3

## Terrain

The cliffs are 40ft above the river's sides, and the northern stairs lead 20ft further up.

## Setup

An excavation to a freshwater stream and natural cavern below is stymied by rumors of ghosts. The party is offered 100gp to end "the haunting" so work can resume. Reports say ghostly apparitions and cries come from the river ahead of strange happenings.

## Elyra & Voz : Deathly Dance of the River

**Elyra** the **Dryad** is the spirit of the cave who lured **Voz** (as **Specter**) to her death to avoid her revealing the bounty of this place for outsiders to exploit.

**Elyra** has done this many times before and bound the dead souls to the **Spirit of the River** (as **Water Weird**). She can teleport between any greenery on the map once as a Free Action on each of her turns.

### Elyra

take advantage of this place, but **Voz** is incensed by her attempts and lashes out—by attacking everything.

## Phase 0: the Descent

The party arrives in the ravine.

- DC 13 **Nature** or **Survival** check to know these are rare, bountiful places normally exploited whenever found.
- DC 11 **History**, **Religion**, or **Arcana** check reveals ravines like this often host spirits of nature in the plants and waters. 16+ reveals that such spirits are normally nullified by their nearby stones smeared in blood cast into them; if such a stone hits **Elyra** or the river, they or the River Spirit take Disadvantage on all attack rolls and saving throws until the blood is washed clean—which takes one turn in the river.
- The elevators change position when they call up to their operators.
- When any creature reaches the banks of the river, strange sounds emerge—proceed to Phase 1+.

## Elevator Smashes & Bridge Swings

The elevator will crush any creature under it at the top of the round when it descends, dealing 2d8 bludgeoning damage, +1d4 per creature standing on the elevator; Strength Save DC 14 to halve. The swinging bridge elicits a DC 14 Dexterity save to remain on while it swings at the top of the round as

phase changes. A failure renders targets prone and rolls prone targets off to fall, a failure by 5 or more sends them directly off the side.

## Phase 1+ : the Haunting & the Slaughter

Ethereal cries of pain and rage echo.

- **Voz** appears flying 40ft over the river and excites the other trapped spirits—the chain mechanism goes out of control and the phase shifts once at the end of every round as the elevators and bridge swing. She attacks the nearest possible target and can only be calmed by magical means.
- **Elyra** arrives, rolls **Stealth**, and stalks around the edges looking for opportunities to strike the party—she does not remain engaged long.
- The **Water Weird** attempts to draw into the water and strangle any adjacent foe.
- If the **Water Weird** is destroyed **Elyra** loses her **Lair Actions** and **Voz** stops attacking.
- **Elyra** will spare a diplomatic party, but only if they guarantee to ensure the 6 **Commoners** above do not escape and swear an oath of secrecy about this place.

## Lair Actions : the River of the Damned

**Elyra** draws power from the river and the souls it has trapped. Save DC is 13.

- *Wail of the Dead*: Wisdom Save or become Frightened of the river as it glows blue and shows the faces of the dead as they cry out.
- *Surge Wave*: water rushes out from the ravine to hit all creatures 10ft up from the river. Strength save or fall prone, get pushed to the most direct wall, and suffer 3d4 bludgeoning damage.
- *Green Graze*: all greenery turns terrain within a 5ft radius into Difficult Terrain, creatures that move there suffer 1d6 piercing damage for every 5ft of space traveled.
- *Siphon through the Veil*: Voz loses 1d6+2 HP and it is delivered to one creature of Elyra's choice as Temp HP.

This encounter is created for **Swinging Bridge Battle Map**, it can be downloaded here:

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/swinging-bridge-77537610>

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