

# CRYSTALLINE CORRUPTION

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**5TH EDITION ADVENTURE**

**DECIPHER MYSTERIES AND SURVIVE THE JAWS OF GEODE MONSTERS**

# MONKEYDM

## CRYSTALLINE CORRUPTION

**CRYSTALLINE CORRUPTION IS AN ADVENTURE DESIGNED FOR 3-6 LEVEL 14 CHARACTERS FOR USE WITH THE 5TH EDITION RULESET.**



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## Plot Hook

Over their many journeys, the adventurers have traveled through the Forest of the Ethlezelli. The Ethlezelli, a tribe of spiritual elves, have even aided the adventurers when in need. Now, a scary message shifts the tides...

## CHAPTER 1. A CRY FOR HELP

In which the players learn a little about their history with the Ethlezelli and find out they are in need of aid, then rush to give this aid.

### 1.1. MESSAGES

Read this:

'Although by now you are fabled adventurers, times weren't always so easy for you. It is with a certain degree of fondness that you remember your time as early adventurers, requiring constant aid. Aid was once provided by a kindly tribe of elves known as the Ethlezelli. Hiding within their forest, these serve as protectors to ancient artifacts of immense arcane strength. Their leader, whom you all have met, Aralay, is a woman of particular kindness, who would never refuse anyone shelter or help, no matter the cost. But... as is often the case with adventuring, no good deed goes unpunished. As you recollect your memories of yesteryear, one of you feels a particular tingle in the back of their head, as they begin to hear a voice coming in via an arcane message. "Adventurers! You must come quick!" rings out a voice that reminds you of Aralay. "Crystals... Overtake. No... More... Strength... Turning, quick. Come. Help. PLE-" Before she could finish the last word, Aralay's voice goes out like a spark... You are left wondering. What could have possibly happened to your beloved elven tribe? Surely, this is a task in which you must return the favour they had brought onto you.'

Now, the adventurers can gather a few supplies, spell materials, etc. before heading out to help the Ethlezelli tribe. If they try to message any of the elves, the messages will go unresponded to, as if the creatures are no longer there. Any attempt at scrying will reveal that Aralay, alongside her surrounding villagers, have been turned into crystalline statues, or at least covered in Crystalline shells.

When the party decides to finally leave, read this:

'With no more time to waste, you head out and away, seeking to aid a tribe that has had your back in the past. For a short while, you travel among tree and leaves, seeking to get ever so closer to the small cave entrance that leads to the Ethlezellian Gates, a means of protecting and hiding the Ethlezelli elves from the rest of humanity, until you finally arrive close to the entrance into their hidden forest.'

#### GM NOTE:

While on this short trip, feel free to throw roadside encounters at the party. Whether it be the discovery of a crystallized shroom or a quirky one-shot merchant, if you intend on elongating this one-shot into multiple sessions, this can certainly help.

About 2 days later, the players will arrive at a small break in a mountain, akin to a tunnel, which will lead them through to the Ethlezellian gates in no longer than a few hours.

As they progress through the tunnel, any player with a **passive Perception above 16** will notice scratches, as well as small gem-like fragments on the ground. These may be analyzed with a **DC 18 (Intelligence) Arcana check**. On a success, they are revealed to be some sort of arcanic crystal, but unlike anything from this plane of existence. If the party chooses to take the crystals with them, write a note of it. It will have an effect later within the one-shot.

Then, after a little more travel, the players will arrive at the Ethlezellian Gates. You may proceed to the next chapter.

### 1.2. THE ETHLEZELLIAN GATES

Read this:

'As you expect it, the end of the tunnel opens up into the familiar Ethlezellian Gates, a large inner-chamber, filled with lily pads, water and a large glass-like gate, enchanted with elven abjuration magic. And yet... Something is off. On the side walls, large crystalline outbreaks crack through the wall, with the energy within feeling... Off. Those of you who use magic, every second feels vaguely, draining, as your head begins to lighten... You feel an odd sensation. Not just that, all the guard houses seem to be... empty. Regardless, you feel you must now head through the doors.'

Place the party on map 1. They will now explore the areas, but start a 7 minute timer. At the end of the timer, if they still haven't opened the gates, ask them to roll initiative. On each subsequent turn from there on out, all players must make a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw**, as the crystalline infection begins to suck out their energy. Any players that have spell slots must do so at disadvantage. On a success, they fight off the infection for a turn. On a failure, they take 2d8 poison damage. If they fail by 5 or more, they must expand one of their spell slots.

#### GM NOTE:

In order to make the players realise the cause of the sickness, you should describe the crystals beginning to glow more and more with each subsequent turn. This way, they may attempt to break them, which can be done from area 3.

## AREAS OF THE ETHLEZELIAN GATES

### 1 - GATE

Read this:

'As you get ever so closer to the gate, you begin to notice something is... wrong. The runes that used to glow on the glass-like structure of the gates are dim, powerless, with the large, butterfly like seal, although up, dim, motionless. You recall that before, this same seal was to fly away, granting you passage, and yet now it stands... Lifeless. The lock underneath, weirdly, larger.'

The players may examine the large keylock underneath the door with a **DC 16 (Intelligence) Investigation check**, realizing that it has been filled with the same crystals, almost like they grew inside the lock. Also, any player with proficiency in the Arcana skill may make a **DC 22 (Intelligence) Arcana check** to notice that the butterfly spirit is under the effect of a necromantic magic. This can also be identified with a detect magic spell.

The gate can also be broken via a **DC 30 (Dexterity) Thieves' Tools check**, which instantly opens the doors and leads the party to the next chapter, without needing to read the first paragraph.

If the players wish to free the spirit, they may attempt to do so with a *dispel magic* spell, which must either roll over a 14 or must be cast at 4th level. Once the spell is dispelled, the butterfly will begin to gain power. If the players use the runed log (area 2) instead of dispelling magic, the butterfly begins to gain power the same way.

As the butterfly begins to gain power, read this:

'You notice, with the weird effect broken, the butterfly begins to glow, slightly at first, but then, as time progresses, more and more runes on the glass glow too. It is then that you notice the crystals glow more in response, as if the magic is being stopped and syphoned by them. Then, with close to no time to react, you notice magical essence fly through the air towards the crystals, which grow ever so slightly.'

Upon witnessing this, the players should notice they must break the crystals, but in case they do not, allow them to make a **DC 12 Intelligence check**. On a success, give them this clue.

### 2 - RUNED LOG

Read this:

'Next to the gate, on the ground, rests a log with a bunch of elvish runes on it. You are unsure as to what it does, but surely it could help.'

If the players know Elvish, they may read what is written on the Runed Log. It says "For when danger is upon us, fire may cleanse our skin and reveal new ways." What is also found is, in front of the log, three small stone sigils, tied to necklaces, dropped to the ground. They look almost like keys.

In order to finish the puzzle, the party should light a flame close to the log. This will reveal, through shadows forming from the rune-carvings, small inlays into the log, where each medallion fits in. This will, in turn, power the seal (area 1).

### 3 - CRYSTALS

Large crystalline infections adorn the sides of the cave chamber, which slowly drain all magic from the chamber. If anybody touches the crystals, they must make a **DC 18 Constitution saving throw**. On a failure, they become poisoned for 1 minute and take 4d8 poison damage. Touching the crystal also reduces the timer by 30 seconds.

Players may destroy the crystals by attacking them with magical weapons. Each cluster of crystals has 70 hit points, 12 AC, vulnerability to bludgeoning damage and resistance to slashing damage. Alternatively, they can disable the crystals for 30 seconds by using a dispel magic spell on them. Lastly, players may attempt a **DC 20 (Strength) Athletics check** to temporarily displace the crystals, leading to them not working for 30 seconds.

### 4 - GUARD HOUSES

Read this:

'No matter where you go, each guard house is completely empty at first glance, though you do find signs of fighting on the walls. you also notice, all around within the homes, small shards of these crystals, some larger than others, some coming in from the walls, almost like a fungus.'

### 5 - SPRING LILIES

Players who step onto the lilies will instantly be sprung into the sky, but begin to fall slowly. For the next minute, their movement speed is halved, but they can't take any falling damage. This may harm their movement while within the initiative that comes if they don't move fast enough.

Once the players have destroyed the crystals and powered the butterfly, you may proceed to the next chapter.





### 1.3. CRYSTALLINE REMAINS

Read this (unless you broke in via Thieves' tools):

'With the crystals destroyed and the butterfly powered, you see as the runes on the gates begin to glow ever larger, getting stronger and stronger with every second, until finally, with a low rumble, the butterfly dissipates and the gates open. You quickly rush forward and find yourself stepping into the Forest of the Ethlezelli. And yet... nothing is as you remember it. Wherever you look, crystals overtake both house and tree, sucking the life out of all that surrounds it. You also see numberless bodies, stuck in different positions, engulfed in crystal, almost like an outer shell overtook them and they are now stuck inside. Midway towards a run, you see, the figure of Aralay, rushing towards the gate... The gate she never arrived at.'

The party can (and should) attempt to free Aralay, being able to do so either via a 5th level dispel magic or via a greater restoration spell. If they choose not to, or don't seem interested in this, ask for a **DC 15 (Wisdom) Perception check**. On a success, reveal that she seems to be holding 300 gold worth of diamond dust in her hand, and is in the process of an incantation.

Once the party casts the spell, the small crystal shell will break and Aralay will be found underneath, weakened yet alive. Weakened as she is, she will get up and say that the party must find the core of the infection and destroy it. She'll explain that a small crystal grew within a part of the forest and it slowly... multiplied, until... Creatures began to arise from it. They **MUST** head towards it. Then, she'll urge them forward and give them the directions. Proceed to the next chapter.



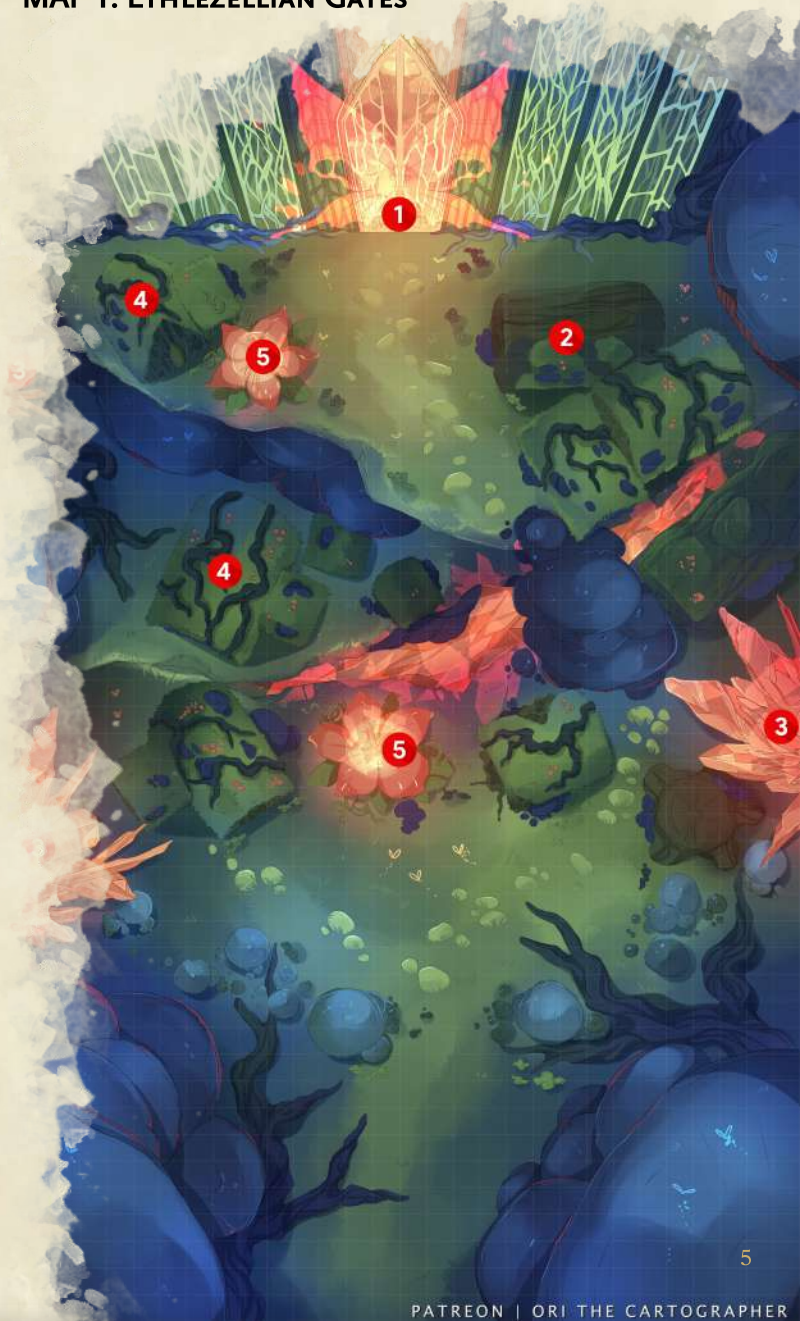
#### GM NOTE:

If the party does not wish to spend spells to help Aralay or they straight-up ignore her and seem to be heading nowhere, entice them by telling all players with a passive Perception above 17 that they see a shape in the distance, moving away from the town at a quickened speed. It looks vaguely... crystalline. They are very likely to be inclined to rush after it. When they do so, proceed normally to the next chapter.

#### MAP CREATED BY [ORI THE CARTOGRAPHER](#)

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#### MAP 1: ETHLEZELLIAN GATES





## CHAPTER 2. INFECTED

In which the players find out how far this has actually spread.

### 2.1. MORE CRYSTALS

Read this:

'At a quick and uneasy pace, you begin moving through what was once a calm forest and now is a mess of spread magic-consuming crystal. Although you are unaware as to where from or how this originated, there is no doubt it is a spore-like gem, not of this natural plane. What is however true is that it may have a source, which is your only chance at stopping it.'

During this short journey, the players will need to make **3 DC 15 Constitution saving throws**, as they will move in through more crystals. Failure on any of them will inflict 2d8 poison damage.

After a good bit of travelling, you may proceed to the next chapter.

### 2.2. THE CRYSTAL BRIDGE

Read this:

'As your travel continues intently, you find yourself turning the corner of the forest and arriving quickly at a place you had come across before. A large bridge of vines and plants, but instead of finding it in its natural state, the bridge is now overtaken with crystals, unlike anything else. It seems to have been fully engulfed, consumed. For a moment, sadness overtakes and you look at the bridge, now a mass for this crystalline plague. Then, you hear a crack, almost like a gem being broken in half. You gaze upon the bridge only to notice small shards of it breaking off. Humanoid bodies, yet with crystal-like features and no faces, eye you intently, hesitant, yet weary, watchful. Ready to fight.'

Whenever the party makes their next move, the crystalline beings will react. The party must now fight **5 crystalline keepers**.

In addition, whenever any party member ends their turn within 10 feet of the bridge, they must make a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw** or become poisoned for 1 minute and take 2d8 poison damage.

Upon defeating the keepers, you may proceed to the next chapter.

### MAP 2: CRYSTAL BRIDGE

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## 2.3. EVEN MORE CRYSTALS

Read this:

'With the weird crystalline beings defeated, you find yourself with only one choice and so you quickly rush through the bridge, not staying long enough within its area to suffer the effects of its magical sickness. Instead, you persevere through the perverted forest, only to find yourself feeling more and more sick the more you advance, and yet you persevere.'

The party must now find their way to the source. The player leading the search must make a **DC 18 (Wisdom) Survival check**. On a failure, the party must make 2 more **DC 18 Constitution saving throws** or they will take 3d8 poison damage, as the poison grows ever stronger the closer they get to the source of this issue. On a success, they avoid crystals and make their way to the source without issue.

Either way, once they've made their way past the crystals, read this:

'Weirdly enough, the feeling of illness is what guides you, as you begin to trudge along, making your way towards what you know to be the source of all this madness. Nestled within the forest, drawing from the waters and spreading sickness to the roots, you see a gigantic mass of crystals, surrounded by 5 smaller ones, which orbit around it, ever watchful, almost like the rays of a lighthouse. You must be watchful, but the source **NEEDS** to be destroyed, or else this forest will be lost.'

You may proceed to the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3. THE CRYSTAL SOURCE

In which the players hopefully solve the issue (or die trying).

### 3.1. THE WATCHER CRYSTALS

As long as the party watches from a distance, the light will begin to spin, shining from crystal to crystal, but it can be avoided. In order to do so, the party must make a **DC 16 (Dexterity) Stealth check**. Any creatures that had picked up crystals within earlier chapters (such as chapter 1.1) may make this check with advantage. On a success, the party goes by unnoticed and they may make a **DC 18 (Intelligence) Arcana or Investigation check**. If successful, they will realise they have to damage the main crystal, before it awakens, while going unnoticed. The crystal has 300 hit points, 20 AC, is resistant to slashing damage and all damage from spells. Upon taking more than 60 hit points, the crystal will awaken and become a crystalline behemoth, contorting and changing until it vaguely resembles a draconic build.

If only a single character fails the original stealth check, 2 crystalline watchers will awaken and begin attacking the party. Within two turns, the main crystal will awaken into a crystalline behemoth and combat will proceed normally, but with the behemoth at its full strength.

Either way, proceed to the next chapter.

## 3.2. CRYSTALLINE COMBAT

Read this:

'You slowly watch as crystal contorts to beings that are not fully alive, but rather, symbiotic, weirdly. Fear overtakes you almost to the bone, disgust more than fear, and yet you know what must be done. The battle commences. Roll initiative!'

The party must now either fight the **crystalline behemoth** or **2 crystalline watchers**, based on how they performed within the last chapter.

If/when the crystalline behemoth is awoken, it will roll initiative, but be stunned until the start of its next turn. From that point onward, it will then attack the party.

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### MAP 3: THE CRYSTAL



## LAIR ACTIONS

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At initiative 20 (losing initiative ties), the behemoth takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the behemoth can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- One creature chosen by the behemoth that must make a **DC 16 (Dexterity) Stealth check**. On a failure, the behemoth's lair will spawn a crystalline watcher. If two watchers are already part of the encounter, this action no longer functions.
- The behemoth begins syphoning the nearby magic. All creatures with spell slots must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or expand one spell slot of their choosing.
- The behemoth lets out poisonous crystalline spores. All non-crystalline creatures within the lair must make a **DC 18 Dexterity saving throw** or take 2d8 piercing damage and 2d8 poison damage.

## CHAPTER 3.3. THE END

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Upon defeating the behemoth, read this:

'As you see the large crystalline being fall, you wait for a second, then, with a large crack, it shatters to pieces. In a strange manner, all surrounding crystals begin to disappear and crack into dust, almost as if snapped out of existence. One by one, the trees are freed from their magical chains and you reclaim a small semblance of normality.

Once they return to the village, they see all villagers and the entire forest is safe. This crystal infection is now history and they are rewarded handsomely and live to fight another day.

The end!



## APPENDIX: MONSTERS

### CRYSTALLINE WATCHER

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 110 (13d8 + 52)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +7

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** petrified, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Magical Absorber.** The crystalline watcher has resistance to all damage from spells and advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Breaking Body.** Whenever the watcher takes damage from a weapon attack, any creature within 5 feet of takes 2d10 piercing damage, as crystals break off and strike those around

**Dispelling Strikes.** If a creature struck by the watcher's Crystalline Smash attack while under the effects of a magical spell effect of 3rd level or lower, the effect is immediately dispelled. If of 4th level or higher, the effect endures.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The watcher makes two crystalline smash attacks.

**Crystalline Smash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

**Crystal Spray (Recharge 5-6).** The crystalline watcher magically sprays shards of crystal in a 15-foot cone. Each target in that area takes 17 (7d4) piercing damage, or half damage with a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. In addition, each creature that failed the saving throw must expand one spell slot of their choice.

### CRYSTALLINE KEEPER

Large monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 104 (11d10 + 44)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning

**Damage Resistances** slashing

**Condition Immunities** petrified, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Magical Absorber.** The keeper has resistance to damage from spells and advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### Actions

**Crystalline Smash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

**Crystalline Shards.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) piercing damage.

**Crystal Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The keeper exhales crystal powder in a 20-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a target begins to turn to crystal and is restrained. The restrained target must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends on the target. On a failure, the target is petrified until freed by the greater restoration spell or a dispel magic spell of 5th level or higher.

# CRYSTALLINE BEHEMOTH

*Huge monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 256 (19d12 + 133)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Str +14, Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +10

**Skills** Athletics +14, Perception +16

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 26

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the behemoth fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Dispelling Shards. It then makes three attacks: one with its empowered crystalline smash and two with its crystalline claws.

**Empowered Crystalline Smash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 34 (4d12 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

**Crystalline Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage.

**Dispelling Shards.** The behemoth shoots out shards against all creatures within 60 feet of it. These stick to the body and begin severely poisoning it, as well as draining its magic. Each creature within the area must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. In addition, all magical effects within the area are targeted with a *dispel magic* spell, cast at 3rd level. If rolls are needed, the behemoth's spellcasting ability is Wisdom. A creature that succeeds this saving throw becomes immune to the poison.

**Crystal Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The behemoth exhales pure crystals in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw, taking 63 (18d6) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## Legendary Actions

The behemoth can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The behemoth regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The behemoth makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Smash Attack.** The behemoth makes a crystalline smash attack.

**Shard Explosion (Costs 2 Actions).** The behemoth explodes with shards. Each creature within 10 ft. of the behemoth must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 (2d6 + 8) piercing damage and be knocked prone. This attack also dispells all spell effects of 3rd level or lower within 10 feet of the behemoth.



# THANK YOU !

A big thank you to all of those who follow and support me, without you I couldn't have brought this project to life.

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And now onto the next project...

Cheers !

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