

# MOONSOON

## Trail of Madness



*“Trail of Madness” is a short adventure designed for four characters of 5th level set in any region featuring forests or jungles. Characters of higher or lower levels can accomplish this quest with clever tactics or with additional dangers added by the GM.*

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**W**ELCOME TO THE WORLD OF MOONSOON, a roleplaying game set in the Archipelago of Tooj. Like all of Moonsoon, Tooj is a land without humans where four ages of myth and legend have led to a fifth that stands on the verge of seeing its tempestuous past come back to haunt it at the hands of exploitative foreign powers and vengeful warbands.

Amid its lush mangroves, impenetrable jungles and rimy peaks, the anima live in close-knit communities that are bound together by tradition, blood and loyalty to the regional clans – whose roots go back countless lifetimes to the first bands of rebels and revolutionaries that won their people's freedom from ancient tyrants.

“*Trail of Madness*” is a short adventure taken from the Moonsoon 5E RPG to give you an introductory taste to the setting and themes. This adventure is designed for 4 level 5 characters, though notes are provided for adapting it to work better with a slightly varied number or level of characters. Beyond characters of your own, this adventure doesn't require anything else to enjoy.

## The Quest

Each year, the cappy village of Lok Bhay conducts a rite of passage called the Stonefruit March. The children of the village parade to a nearby rock outcropping, bringing offerings to a friendly boulderling they call the Elderstone. However, a few days ago, an erstwhile gruuk hero named Brukh Bakuja attempted to make a name for himself by slaying the boulderling. It did not go well, and the want-to-be hero was the one who perished. However, in the last moments of the battle, Brukh managed to drive his enchanted axe into the boulderling's back, where it stuck fast. The blow did not kill the rock creature but the interaction between the relic's magic and the boulderling has driven it insane. To make matters worse, the madness is spreading.

When the adventure begins, the characters enter Lok Bhay to behold a wide swath of destruction running down the center of the community, smashed huts, trampled gardens, and the like. This calamity appears to be recent and, as the characters arrive, the village inhabitants are still bandaging the wounded and digging out collapsed structures.

## Gathering Information from the Mystic

Isho, the village headwoman, latches upon the characters as a solution to the rogue boulderling problem. She is an older cappy with a bandage upon her face and one arm is in a sling.

- The attack occurred early this morning as the village was preparing for the Stonefruit March. Elderstone smashed its

way out of the jungle and right through the middle of the village.

- The boulderling acted strangely. It moved in fits and jerks as if confused and there was a glowing axe stuck in its back. After smashing the caravan, it moved on down the trading trail.

- The village inhabitants mostly fled but there were some injuries and a great deal of destruction. Haan, the village's best warrior, also perished.

- To make matters worse, three of the older children - Esha (male, 10), Ialaa (female 12) and Nyth'a (female 11) - ran off after the boulderling.

- Isho offers to create a special luckstone (see conclusion) from the boulderling's remains if they bring the children home and finish off the rogue boulderling. She doesn't want an insane rock creature returning to the village.

- Isho is also concerned about the warrior who died. In the middle of the fight with the boulderling he suddenly turned and attacked his friends. They had no choice but to defend themselves.

- **A DC 10 Intelligence (Nature)** check establishes that the rock creature is probably a boulderling but its behavior does not sound normal.

- **A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana)** check reveals that the strange behavior of the warrior is similar to the effect of a confusion spell.

- **A DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** check suggests the influence of Gilga but the movement of the sky is not right for the Madness moon to be the true cause.

## Tracking the Boulderling/Children

Luckily, the boulderling made tracking it quite easy (DC 10 Survival check) as the massive creature smashed trees and uprooted shrubs as it lumbered along.

### 1. Disturbing Sign

An hour or so from the village, the characters happen upon a strange sight. Around two dozen dead diopo litter the muddy clearing around several huge footprints.

**A DC 10 Intelligence (Nature)** or **DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine)** check reveals that the little birds pecked each other to death.

**GM Note:** A character who decides to eat any of the dead, but delicious diopo gains a confusion effect (as per the spell) for the first 1d6 rounds when confronting the boulderling.

**Development.** A DC 10 Survival check allows the character to continue tracking Elderstone. It also reveals the smaller footprints of three children following the boulderling's trail.

## 2. The Swarm

Three massive trees completely block the trading trail up ahead. The trail here is 30 feet wide and 60 feet long. The pile of trees is around 15 feet high. The trees appear to have been smashed by huge fists and now lie piled up across the road. Two clouds of tiny birds seem to be engaged in a complicated dance in the air around the fallen trunks.

A **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature)** check identifies the groups of birds as Krokol swarms. They appear to be very agitated.

**Development.** As soon as a character identifies the swarms or approaches the fallen trees the two krokol swarms turn on the newcomers in a frenzy.

**Creatures.** 2 (Weakened) Krokol swarms (*See Appendix*)

**Statistics.** The weakened krokol swarms use the statistics for krokol swarm but with the following modifications.

- Each swarm has 40 hit points
- When one (or both) swarms drop to 15 hit points, they use an action to merge into a single swarm. Add their current hit points together.

**Tactics.** The krokol swarms immediately attack the nearest targets and fights to the death.

**Development.** If the characters take some time (and effort) to move the fallen trees off the trading trail, they discover the crushed remains of an Aarisian druid still holding a wand of entangle in her hand. If they dispose of this body respectfully, Isho rewards them with 25gp each.

A **DC 10 Survival** check allows the character to continue tracking the Elderstone and the children.

### Creatures.

#### 1 Veteran and 3 Thugs

**Statistics.** In addition to their stats, all of the gruuk have the following modifications:

- **Trait: Savage Charge.** Immediately after you use the dash action on your turn and move at least 20 feet, you may make a melee attack with your tuks (1d4 + Strength) as a bonus action
- **Trait: Relentless.** When you take damage, you may use your reaction to reduce the damage dealt by 1d12 + your Constitution modifier. You may only use this once per long rest.

**Tactics.** The gruuk are desperate to prevent anyone from getting the axe before they do so they attack mercilessly.

**Treasure.** The gruuk veteran carries 2 carved healing sticks (as potions of healing but they must be broken to activate) and a note written in Kadraazian on a scrap of leather that reads, "Recover the Addling Axe or do not return".

## 3. Gruuk Attack!

Up ahead, the trail of the boulderling opens onto a narrow clearing, 80 feet long by 15 feet wide with heavy undergrowth on either side. At the far side, two massive rocks lie shattered and the last 30 feet of the area is strewn with jagged shards of stone. Beyond this destruction, the land begins to rise toward a rocky hill partially covered with thick trees.

Also in this location is a group of gruuk warriors - **1 veteran** leading **3 thugs**. They hope to recover the enchanted axe lost by Brukh Bakujaand savagely attack anyone on the boulderling's trail. Determine which group notices the other first as if neither side is aware of the other unless the characters have made specific choices to be stealthy or to listen for danger.

**Rock Shards.** The 30 feet by 15 feet area is considered difficult terrain.

**Development.** A DC 15 Survival check allows the characters to continue to track the boulderling over the rocky ground leading up toward the hill. A successful check also reveals smaller footprints apparently walking side-by-side with the boulderling.

## 4. The Hill of Doom

The trail of the boulderling seems to end at a steep 80-foot slope climbing up to the top of the hill. The surrounding hillside is formed of steep, jagged cliffs.

The boulderling holds perfectly still at the top of the hill. It resembles an ordinary boulder or outcropping.

Nearby, the missing children also hide, believing they are boulderlings too, thanks to the confusion effect of the Addling Axe. However, the children are not patient and forget to remain in hiding. There is a 10% chance each round (adding +5% each round) that they will make a noise and give themselves away.

As soon as any of the characters begin to ascend the slope, the boulderling begins pushing large rocks down the slope at them!

**Slope.** The incline is 40 feet wide by 80 feet long and steep but not quite steep enough to be difficult terrain.

**Climbing the Hill.** Characters who opt to ascend the hillside by way of the jagged cliffs must succeed at DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks for each 10 feet of movement (8 checks in all). Due to the nature of the treacherous ascent, characters can only make two such checks in any round. Those making the climb may be targeted by ranged attacks from the children or the boulderling

**Rolling Rocks.** On initiative count 20, the boulderling rolls a Medium sized stone down the slope in a 60-foot straight line. The rocks will continue moving in the direction of the line for 150 feet. When a stone enters a creature's space or a creature enters its space while it's rolling, that creature must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

**Children.** When the battle begins, the children all stand on a large rock to one side of the battlefield (out of range of any area effect spells). They taunt the characters with childish threats, proclaiming "you'll never beat the boulderlings!" They also throw rocks (1 per round on Initiative count 1) especially at anyone attempting to ascend the cliff sides of the hill.

### Creature. 3 Confused Children

**Statistics.** The children use the statistics for commoners with the following modifications:

- **Action: Thrown Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, range 20/50 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 1 (1d4-1) bludgeoning damage.

### Creature. Maddened Boulderling

**Statistics.** The maddened boulderling uses the statistics for boulderling (*See Appendix*) with the following modifications:

- **Trait: Aura of Confusion.** Any creature that enters within 30 feet of the boulderling must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be confused (as per the spell) for 1 round. At the end of each of its turns an affected character can attempt a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw to end the effect.
- **Action. Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10+6) bludgeoning damage.

**Tactics.** The boulderling concentrates on rolling boulders until foes get within melee range. It will throw rocks at anyone attempting to scale the cliffside of the hill. It will not attack the children.

**The Axe.** A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the faintly glowing axe in the boulderling's back, emanating barely discernible waves of energy. It requires two successful DC 15 Strength checks to pull the weapon free. If the characters remove the axe, the boulderling instantly regains its true, peaceful nature and stops fighting.

**Climbing the Boulderling.** Some characters may attempt to climb the boulderling to reach the axe. Elderstone is 20 feet tall, meaning the axe is 15 feet off the ground. Climbing the creature requires a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check contested by the boulderling's Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

In addition, a character beginning its turn on the boulderling's back must make a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check contested by the boulderling's Strength (Athletics) check to stay on their perch.

**Development.** If the axe is removed, the boulderling stops attacking and the children suddenly recover from the confusion effect. The boulderling is grateful and gives the characters several shards from its own body as payment. These pieces can be taken from the boulderling's body if it is slain.

## Conclusion

The Elderstone will return to its former location near the village once it has rested for a few months. When the characters return to Isho, they are rewarded for bringing the children home as well as killing the boulderling or curing it. Isho takes the boulderling shards and spends three days fashioning a Boulderling Luckstone (see below).

If the characters discern the curse upon the addling axe, Isho can tell them of a forge dedicated to D'rak, Avatar of Minerals that can "repair" the addling axe. The journey there will take several days, during which the Gruuk will surely attempt to intercept them. But this is a story for another adventure.

### Boulderling's Luckstone

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

While this polished granite is on your person, you gain a +1 bonus to ability checks and saving throws. In addition, once per short rest you can apply double your proficiency bonus to your attack and damage rolls for a single melee or ranged weapon attack.

### Addling Axe

*Weapon (any axe), uncommon (requires attunement)*

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. While attuned to this axe you are immune to the effects of the confusion spell. In addition, it sheds light like a torch.

**Curse.** This axe is cursed and becoming attuned to it extends the curse to you. As long as you remain cursed, you are unwilling to part with the axe, keeping it within reach at all times. You even unattune to other magic items to make room for the axe, if necessary. You also have disadvantage on attack rolls with weapons other than this one, unless no foe is within 60 feet of you that you can see or hear.

Once per encounter, when a hostile creature damages you while the axe is in your possession (regardless if you are attuned to it or not), you must succeed at a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or trigger a confusion effect in a 30 foot radius around you (as per the spell, DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, 1d4 round duration). You are immune to this effect.

# Appendix A: Monsters

## Bird, Krokol Swarm

Flapping red feathered wings, hundreds of tiny birds with overly large jaws and protruding fangs surge through the air eager for blood.

**Surging Mob.** Krokrol are not particularly dangerous individually or in small groups. However, mating season or clear signs of danger can drive many together, at which point matters grow dire. The presence of hundreds of krokrol in proximity to each other drives the birds into a frenzy of voracious consumption.

### Bird, Krokol

TINY BEAST, UNALIGNED

**Armor Class.** 12  
**Hit Points.** 2 (1d6-1)  
**Speed.** 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2(-4)	16(+3)	9(-1)	1(-5)	6(-2)	3(-4)

**Senses.** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages.** --

**Challenge.** 0 (10 XP)

**Feeding Frenzy.** The krokrol has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

#### ACTIONS

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1 (1d8-4) piercing damage.

**Omnivorous.** Krokrol eat almost all natural substances - animals, vegetables or insects - with the exception of metals and stones. They can entirely devour a wounded elk in mere minutes, leaving only cracked bones behind.

## Bird, Krokol

Flapping red feathered wings, this tiny bird opens its mouth impossibly wide to reveal a staggering number of razor-sharp fangs.

**Harmless Alone.** Krokrol are not particularly dangerous individually or even in small groups. Animals of means looking to make a statement often tame krokrol to ride on their shoulders and show their teeth to passersby. However, certain times of year or environmental conditions cause large flocks of krokrol to swarm in a biting frenzy of voracious consumption.

**Omnivorous.** Krokrol eat almost all natural substances - animals, vegetables or insects - with the exception of metals and stones.



## Bird, Krokol Swarm

MEDIUM SWARM OF TINY BEASTS, UNALIGNED

**Armor Class.** 14  
**Hit Points.** 66(19d8-19)  
**Speed.** 0 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	16(+3)	9(-1)	1(-5)	6(-2)	3(-4)

**Damage Resistance.** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunity.** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned.

**Senses.** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages.** --

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Darting Dash (2/day).** Twice per day as an action the swarm can accelerate itself so that it gains a speed of 80 feet for 1 round as long as it ends the move with an attack. It does not incur any opportunity attacks while dashing.

**Feeding Frenzy.** The swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a tiny krokrol. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

#### ACTIONS

**Bites.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. Hit: 20 (8d4) piercing damage, or 10 (4d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half its hit points or fewer.



## Boulderling

Descended from Kar, the Asura of Stone, boulderlings are beings of living rock. Though legends speak of slumbering titans that carry mountains on their back and unassuming, diminutive “pebblings”, boulderlings of huge size are the most likely to be encountered, particularly near populated areas.

**Patient.** Boulderlings can hold still for effectively indefinite periods, requiring no food, water, or air. Requiring no sustenance beyond a connection with the earth itself, they have been known to lay dormant for months, years or even generations. Rare is the village that doesn’t have some second or third-hand story of a favorite landmark or secluded lover’s spot that turned out to be an indignant boulderling.

**Mysterious Benefactors.** As they have never been observed to speak, nor demonstrated discernible needs such as shelter or companionship, the motives of boulderlings can be difficult to discern. This, along with their size, strength, and natural defenses, can make boulderlings quite intimidating when encountered. Nevertheless, in most tales they are portrayed as benevolent, such as in stories of boulderlings spontaneously building levies to protect a village from a flood or carrying children away from danger to later return them safely home.

**Dangerous Enemies.** Gentle as they are, it is nevertheless well understood that systematic mistreatment of boulderlings and their surroundings can upset them deeply enough to leave them with little of the placid benevolence they’re known for. Whilst stories vary about whether an enraged boulderling can be placated peacefully, it’s a fact that a maddened boulderling can cause a great deal of destruction and harm to a community. It is therefore considered wise to treat all large stones and outcroppings with great respect, and to judiciously steward the land around them, just in case the stones happen to be more than they appear.

## Boulderling

HUGE ELEMENTAL, OFTEN NEUTRAL GOOD

**Armor Class.** 15 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points.** 187 (15d12+90)  
**Speed.** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	8 (-1)	22 (+6)	7 (-2)	13 (+2)	8 (-1)

**Damage Resistances.** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities.** poison

**Condition Immunities.** exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

**Senses.** tremorsense 60 ft, passive Perception 12

**Languages.** understands local tongues (including Toojian) but does not speak

**Challenge.** 7 (2,900 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the boulderling remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal boulder.

**Mystic Builder (1/short rest).** The boulderling touches a large stone object, of Huge size or smaller, or a section of stone up to 30 feet in any dimension, and form it into any shape that suits the boulderling’s purpose.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The boulderling makes two smash attacks.

**Smash.** Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 10 ft, one target. Hit: 22 (3d10+6) bludgeoning damage.

**Crush.** The boulderling slams itself into the ground, creating a shockwave. Each non-elemental creature within a 15-ft radius must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) thunder damage on a failure, or half that on a success. Creatures that are not touching the ground have advantage on this saving throw.

## Appendix B: Handout

*You can give this handout to your players when they interview villagers, or print it and clip it on your DM Screen for ambiance.*



## MOONSOON

There's far more to Moonsoon than what is presented here. Twelve moons crisscross the sky day and night, influencing the world and those who live within it in ways both striking and subtle. The moons also act as the thrones of the 12 avatars and 36 asura; divine beings who battle and scheme for the favor of mortals alongside their more esoteric ambitions.

While these aspects are beyond the scope of this adventure, you can find more at:

[facebook.com/moonsoontooj](https://facebook.com/moonsoontooj)

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