



## C. Cyclops and Chimera Fort

*Cyclops and Chimera Fort* is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 3, 5, 8, or 11**. This document offers details for the 3rd-level version. For the full adjustments for all level ranges, sign up for the DMDave Patreon. Dastardly monsters take hold of the fort that controls access to a rich river valley. Can your party drive them out in time?

### Background

Fort Southwatch lies in ruins. Built recently, the fort guards the main road into the river valley and has quickly become the keystone of the local economy, but it has also come to the attention of two monstrous creatures.

The fort's construction brought prosperity to the region, and with this wealth came caravans of new settlers and farmers, and

quickly the valley became a busy hub. The reclusive cyclops Thyrmar and a bestial chimera, who considered the river valley their domain, promptly grew weary of the hubbub.

Allied in their aggression, they recently assaulted the fort, destroying its defenses and taking up residence in its buildings. A party of adventurers has already tried and failed to turn the recalcitrant monsters against one another, hoping to manipulate the creatures to destroy each other.

When this failed, the locals made a mad deal with a tribe of goblinoids to slay the beasts. Far from doing so, the monstrous beings allied themselves to Thyrmar and now occupy the ruined walls, adding a further problem to any who sought to uproot the invaders.

## Fort Southwatch

A river that runs through the valley carves its way through the rocky pass, creating a large underground cavern. Before the construction of the fort, merchants sought refuge in these caves. However, when the fort was built atop them, the caves were fortified with heavy metal grills, modifying them as a holding place for prisoners.

Built atop a bluff high above the caverns, Fort Southwatch guards the primary entrance into the valley and acts as a barracks for the local military forces and a haven for caravans traveling through the valley. The fort boasted a square keep with thick stone walls and was surrounded by a well-built palisade.

These defenses meant little against the combined might of the giant Thyrmar and his fire-breathing ally, and while the chimera lanced the defenders with fire, Thyrmar picked apart the outer defenses as though they were nothing more than kindling. While the fort's defenders bravely fought to the death, the civilians fled through the lower levels, escaping north along the river.

### General Features

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Unless stated otherwise, Fort Southwatch has the following features.

**Architecture.** Although the fort's stone keep was built by dwarven masons, the buildings are intended for human use, so rooms are sized and decorated accordingly.

**Doors.** What few doors remain are made of wood reinforced with iron bands. All have sturdy metal locks. It takes a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using proficiency with thieves' tools to pick a lock or a DC 20 Strength check to force open a door.

**Illumination.** The goblinoids do not need light sources, so any read-aloud text assumes the characters have darkvision or a light source.

**Fragile Ruins.** The damage suffered during Thyrmar's assault has left the keep in a state of ruin. If the walls are damaged, there is a 50 percent chance of a collapse occurring. Any creature within 10 feet of the collapse must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and become restrained. On a success, they take only half the damage and are not restrained.

### Approaching the Fort

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A single road winds steeply up the side of the bluff to the fort. This road leads directly into the courtyard. At the foot of the bluff, a broad and fast-flowing river disappears underground and rushes along a large tunnel that cuts through the cliff and exits on the far side.

Large metal grills block these tunnels on both the northern and southern sides. Accessing either end of the tunnel is made via a single gate, big enough for a Large or smaller creature to fit through. The southern entrance lies in ruins, torn apart by the chimera, but the northern gate is intact. The key to this gate was held by the fort's administrator, who has not been seen since the attack. The locks on the gates can be picked with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check made using proficiency with thieves' tools. Entering from either direction leads directly to area C12.

### Keyed Locations

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The following locations are keyed to the Fort Southwatch maps on pages 3 and 6.



## C01 – Shattered Gate

Only splinters remain of the once-sturdy gatehouse, offering no protection to the fort’s current occupants.

Even from a distance, it’s clear the gatehouse is little more than rubble, but the palisade walls that surround the stone keep are still mostly intact. A dozen tall figures move within the courtyard, clearing debris and rubble.

**Encounter: Goblinoid Guards.** Two squads of goblinoids, each commanded by a sergeant, are clearing the courtyard of the gatehouse’s remains. Their weapons are carried on their person, but their shields lie discarded near the fort. While busy, these goblins are well trained and alert and will

split into even-numbered squads at the first sign of trouble. One team will form a shield wall in the gateway, while the other will launch projectiles behind the cover they make. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C01 Encounter table.

### AREA C01 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	1 <b>goblin</b> (with 12 hit points) leads 5 <b>goblins</b>
5th+	Available in the full version

**Battle Royale.** While he is used to ignoring the infighting of the other goblinoids, the goblin lookout (see area C02) will ring his bell if he hears any loud sounds.

The sound of the bell will alert all creatures within the keep, including Thyrmarr. If still alive, Boss Hagnar (area C05), Thyrmarr's pets (area C03), and the goblinoid guards (area C01) will come to investigate.

## C02 – Fallen Watchtower

Even though the watchtower has fallen, a single goblin stands watch from atop what's left.

A watchtower that must have once stood thirty feet tall now lies in ruins in the northwestern corner of the fortification. Moreover, the tower's collapse has destroyed the nearby wall, offering another entrance into the compound. A single goblin stands on top of the ruined building, carefully watching the northern and western approaches.

**Encounter: Goblin Lookout.** This **goblin** has strict orders to keep watch over the northern breach. In one hand, he holds a shortbow, an arrow ready on the string, and in the other, he has a bell. If the goblin is alerted to the approach of any humanoid, he will first ring the bell and then fire his bow at the nearest threat. The sound alerts the creatures within the keep (see the Battle Royale section in area C01).

## C03 – Ruined Mess Hall

Thyrmarr considers himself the master of Fort Southwatch, but his bulk means he can't easily explore further into the ruins. Instead, he has taken the mess hall for his lair. Having recently gorged himself on livestock, Thyrmarr is dozing, but his pets are alert and watchful. If Thyrmarr has not been alerted and drawn elsewhere, read or paraphrase the following:

Little remains intact in this large room, but it's clear it was once a mess hall. A massive human-shaped male is sprawled against a staircase in the far corner, his single eye closed and his large chest rising and falling rhythmically. Snuggled around him are several large beasts.

**Encounter: Thyrmarr.** Thyrmarr is snoozing and automatically fails any Wisdom (Perception) checks, but while his beasts seem similarly relaxed, their keen sense of smell keeps them alert. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C03 Encounter table.

### AREA C03 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	Thyrmarr the cyclops ( <b>ogre</b> ) and his 2 <b>mastiffs</b>
5th+	Available in the full version

**Stairs Up.** A staircase leads up to the barracks (see area C13).

**Treasure: Thyrmarr's Loot.** In addition to any weapons he carries, Thyrmarr keeps his loot resting beneath a pile of half-eaten animals. The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C03 Treasure table.

### AREA C03 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
3rd	75 gp and 5 pieces of jewelry worth 10 gp each
5th+	Available in the full version

## C04 – Barracks Kitchen

Feeding a giant and a tribe of goblinoids is no easy feat, and the cooks are always kept busy. While the assault damaged much of the kitchen, the goblins have repaired it enough to make it usable. Read or paraphrase the following:

The ruined remains of the fort's kitchen are a scene of utter chaos. A half dozen goblins dash about the room as an obscenely overweight bugbear shrieks streams of instruction mixed with obscenities.

**Encounter: Kutmar's Crew.** Chef Kutmar (a **bugbear** with AC 12 and 10 hit points) commands a squad of three **goblin** cooks (AC 12). None of the goblinoids wear armor, and while the goblins carry cleavers and Kutmar carries a meat tenderizer, these utensils act like their standard weapons (with their damage types changed as appropriate). There is plenty of food, and the goblins are excellent cooks. If eaten, one of these meals provides a creature with 5 temporary hit points.

### C04a – Pantry

This ruined pantry holds nothing of value.

## C05 – Captain's Office

Once the office of the fort's commander, this small room has been commandeered by the leader of the goblinoids.

**Encounter: Boss Hagnar.** Unless she has been drawn elsewhere, Boss Hagnar, the leader of the goblinoid forces, is here reading the reports of the room's previous owner, hoping to learn something useful. Hagnar seeks wealth and power for herself. Having no loyalty to Thyrmarr, she will stand aside while the characters destroy the cyclops.

Hagnar has her back to the cell attached to this room (area C05a).

### AREA C05 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	Boss Hagnar is a <b>bugbear</b>
5th+	Available in the full version

**Stairs Down.** A staircase leads down to the dungeons (see area C06).

## C05a – Damaged Cell

This small cell was used to hold merchants or travelers who had overindulged, but the assault left a large hole in the wall, allowing its occupant, a young noble, to escape. Now the breach offers another means of entering the keep. Picking the lock on the cell door requires a DC 20 Dexterity check made using proficiency with thieves' tools.

## C06 – Storage Room

The goblinoid force has turned over this storage room, so it holds nothing of value.

**Strange Lights.** In the gloom, strange, green lights can be seen through the cracks around the door leading into area C07. A character listening at the door who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check can hear the aggressive ramblings of a faint female-sounding voice.

## C07 – Torture Chamber

Previously used for interrogating prisoners, the goblinoid forces have transformed this room into a laboratory where the tribal shaman has been performing experiments on the remains of the fallen defenders.

**Encounter: Goblin Shaman.** Under Boss Hagnar's orders, the tribal shaman Merrix has



been secretly using necromancy to supplement the ranks of the goblinoid forces with undead. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C07 Encounter table.

### AREA C07 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	Merrix ( <b>priest</b> with <i>animate dead</i> prepared in place of <i>spirit guardians</i> ) and 3 <b>zombies</b>
5th+	Available in the full version

**Confiscated Goods Key.** Merrix carries a small iron key that opens the door to area C11.

### C08 – Cold Storage Chamber

This magically chilled room was used to keep food cold. The goblins use it to store corpses. Stacked atop one another are the bodies of

five goblinoids, four humans, one dwarf, and one halfling.

### C09 – Private Study

The fort’s administrator used this comfortably furnished room. Here he kept records of prisoners, shipments, and local events. The goblin shaman Merrix claimed it for herself, and the log and record books are now covered in her crazed ramblings. A character that spends at least 5 minutes reading these notes (written in Goblin) learns that the goblinoids plan to murder Thyrmarr once they have a large enough army of undead.

**Treasure: Merrix’s Loot.** The administrator was an apprentice wizard and kept a few items of arcane interest. The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C09 Treasure table on the following page.

## AREA C09 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
3rd	A gray bag of tricks and two spell scrolls ( <i>feather fall</i> and <i>magic weapon</i> )
5th+	Available in the full version

## C10 – Guardroom

When off duty, many of the soldiers and guards that worked at the fort would congregate here to avoid the watchful gaze of the fort's commander. Now the area is nothing more than a storage space for dried goods and tools.

**Incomplete Tunnel.** To the south of area C10, a new tunnel has been cut into the eastern wall. Although intended to offer another, shorter route into the dungeons, the tunnel still needs to be completed.

## C11 – Confiscated Goods Storage

The previous occupants would store the weapons, armor, and gear from anyone they were holding in the dungeon here, under heavy lock and key. When the goblins seized control of the location, they hoarded the best loot for themselves and stored it here.

**Trapped Entrance.** Distrustful of the other goblins, Merrix has trapped the entrance into the room with a modified *glyph of warding* spell (using the Explosive Runes effect). If the characters don't have the key (see area C07), the lock can be picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check made using proficiency with thieves' tools.

The glyph will trigger as soon as any creature steps inside the room. Each creature in

the room or the hallway leading to it from area C10 must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking acid damage on a failed save; this damage is halved on a successful save. The nature of the trap depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C11 Trap table.

## AREA C11 TRAP

Adventure Level	Save DC	Bludgeoning Damage
3rd	12	13 (3d8)
5th+	Available in the full version	

**Treasure: Goblin Hoard.** The nature of the treasure in this room depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C11 Treasure table.

## AREA C11 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
3rd	77 gp; 1,230 sp; and assorted goods worth 50 gp
5th+	Available in the full version

## C12 – Chimera Cavern

The chimera has claimed this massive, vaulted cavern. Unbeknownst to any but the chimera herself, the monstrous creature was heavily pregnant when it assaulted the fort and was searching for a suitable lair to birth her young.

**Encounter: The Chimera.** Exhausted, the chimera fled to these caverns to recuperate. She stands clawing furrows in the hard limestone floor, her hackles raised and ready for a fight. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C12 Encounter table.

## AREA C12 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	1 <b>chimera</b> (with 1 level of exhaustion and 60 hit points)
5th+	Available in the full version

### C12a – Ruined Cells

When the chimera arrived here, she tore open the cells and slaughtered the helpless prisoners before birthing her young in what was left of the cells.

**Chimera Hoard.** The goblins have been leaving offerings of shiny objects to appease the chimera, and a large pile of things has collected at the back of the cells. The ferocious creature enjoys playing with the shiny baubles, but they are worthless to the characters.

### C13 – Ruined Barracks

Sitting atop the mess hall, this area was once the barracks for the fort's defenders, but is now occupied by the goblinoid inhabitants.

**Encounter: Goblinoid Elites.** A squad of the toughest goblinoids is lounging here while their lessers do the grunt work in the courtyard. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C13 Encounter table.

## AREA C13 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	4 <b>goblins</b> (with 12 hit points each)
5th+	Available in the full version

### C14 – Rooftop

Three of the chimera's young, only recently capable of flight, have taken to the skies and made the rooftop above the barracks their lair. The monstrous creatures enjoy dive-bombing the goblinoids below but are too lazy to join any combat in the courtyard.

**Encounter: Chimera Cubs.** While they cannot utilize all the abilities and weapons of their mother, the three chimera cubs are nonetheless extremely dangerous. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area C14 Encounter table.

## AREA C14 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
3rd	3 chimera cubs ( <b>brass dragon wyrmlings</b> with 6 hit points each and no Sleep Breath option)
5th+	Available in the full version

## Aftermath

With the chimera and cyclops slain, the region is safe, and the surviving forces can reoccupy the fort. Once again, goods can flow through the valley, and its residents can prosper.

If the goblinoids were not also destroyed, the residents will find harsh taxes applied to their goods and a much more cunning foe to drive out of the fort. Ω