

# TWISTED SPACE

An encounter for five 5<sup>th</sup> level adventurers

By Nick Wedig

*As happens so often, the adventurers came upon the vile ritual just as the mad wizard reached the conclusion. But the heroes were too late. As they watched, the Realms Beyond poured through the portal and Twisted creatures sprang forth from the opening. Everywhere the portal's energies touched, reality warped and twisted in impossible ways.*

This PDF presents a simple encounter that can be inserted into your existing 4<sup>th</sup> edition *Dungeons and Dragons* campaign. The mad wizard, Antilles, driven insane by grief, attempts to tear a hole to a hostile alien plane of existence. Once open, this portal to an alternate reality warps and changes the mortal world.

This warping of reality is more than just flavorful description: There are two maps for the same encounter space provided and neither map has a traditional one inch grid. As the encounter occurs, the fight is thrown into chaos as the encounter area changes shape.

## DEALING WITH BIZARRE GEOMETRY:

In 4th edition, diagonal movement counts the same as orthogonal movement. Therefore, most of the extreme oddities of the fight should be easy to deal with. Similarly, all monsters in the encounter are medium or small sized to keep everything simple. Here are some guidelines for dealing with the effects of warping space:

- **Movement:** Any space that shares an edge or corner with your current space is considered adjacent and costs one square of movement to enter (two squares if the square is difficult terrain).
- **Range, Cover, Concealment, etc.:** Trace the path you wish to fire along and count squares one at a time. When determining range, trace a straight-line path from the attacker to the target and count the spaces it passes through. Determine cover, concealment, line of sight and line of effect by also tracing a straight line and locating any potential obstructions (consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 43 for more detail).
- **Bursts:** Bursts work similarly to movement. An area burst 1 affects one square plus all adjacent squares. A burst 2 affects a square and any squares up to two steps away.
- **Blasts:** These are a bit trickier, but still manageable. It's easiest to translate a blast into the equivalent burst size. For example, a close blast 3 covers the same area as an area burst 1 would. So the blast 3 is warped by the map's geometry in the same ways a burst 1 would be if it occupied the same spaces. A blast 5 is the same area as a burst 2, and so forth.

To further confuse tactics and plans, the encounter environment can shift and change during the fight. Partway through the fight, a wave of strange energy spreads from the planar portal. As it spreads, it warps the shape of the room and relocates the combatants. Use your best judgment as GM when this is would work best: changing the shape of the room can cause the party to revise their tactics. Try to have it happen when the fight is getting repetitive or too easy. A good time to perform the shift would be when Antilles dies, or if all the other monsters except Antilles have died, or if all the monsters (including Antilles) are bloodied.

When the shift occurs, read:

*The planar portal shutsters and for an instant releases its energies across the battlefield. For a second you are disoriented, and you find the room to have shifted its form.*

Replace the first map with the second map and make an attack on each PC:

- **Warping of Space:** +9 vs. Fortitude;
  - **Effect:** The target is teleported 10 squares.
  - **Hit:** The character's new position is determined by the GM.
  - **Miss:** The character's new position is determined by the player.

If the player characters have any zones or walls on the board, repeat the attack but versus the caster's Will for each zone. Once all the PCs and zones have been placed, place the monsters (and Antilles's zone) on the board wherever you see fit. Their innate connection to the portal allows the monsters to relocate as they please.

## ANTILLES:

Antilles's motives and personality could be altered or replaced to fit your campaign's needs; Antilles might be used to represent any evil mastermind or evil wizard in your campaign by modifying details if necessary.

## BACKGROUND:

His little daughter Elspeth had disappeared. All Antilles's divination rituals seemed to suggest that she did not exist and never had existed. Sages, oracles and priests could find no evidence of her on any plane of existence.

Years of searching for the truth have slowly driven Antilles insane. He now believes that Elspeth somehow fell into the terrifying Realms Beyond, a warped non-plane antithetical to human life or sanity.

Despite the warnings of saner minds, Antilles has been studying how to open a gateway to a place that doesn't exist. Once opened, the gateway floods Antilles with the force of the alien realm.

## ROLEPLAYING ANTILLES:

The background provided is intended to make Antilles a partially sympathetic villain. If you want to play up this feature, make sure the PCs uncover his backstory before the encounter occurs. During the encounter itself, Antilles might mistake the PCs for those responsible for his daughter's disappearance. If the encounter is too difficult for the PCs, Antilles might come to his senses, realize his mistake and turn against the other monstrosities. For a dramatic but possibly clichéd conclusion, Antilles could sacrifice himself to close the portal once more.

## THE OTHER MONSTERS:

When Antilles opens the gateway only a few creatures first emerge from the portal. The two types of creatures are unspeakable and bizarre, but instinctively aid Antilles in the battle. These creatures are unlike any that the player characters have seen before. Nonetheless, a successful Dungeoneering or Arcana check can extrapolate information about them based on seeing their physiology and general nature.

## ENCOUNTER: TWISTED SPACE

### **Encounter Level 5 (1150 XP total value)**

Antilles (A)

2 Ungeometric Entities (U)

2 Humanoid Piles of Tentacles (P)

### SETUP:

When the PCs enter the encounter area, the ritual has already torn open a hole beyond reality. The player characters enter from the doorway to the south. Place one **Ungeometric Entity** and one **Pile of Tentacles** on the board at the start of battle. When the portal sends forth a wave of energy and the second map is put out, place a new Ungeometric Entity and a new Pile of Tentacles on the board.

### **As the PCs enter the area, read:**

*Though the chamber appeared rectangular from the outside, once inside the geometry of the space is very odd. In the center of the room, a glowing portal to another plane sits, and strange energies emanate from it. The man in robes is standing at an altar, apparently having finished some sort of ritual. When he sees you, he yells for the other strange creatures to attack you.*

### **With a DC 17 Arcana or Dungeoneering check:**

*The portal is a gateway to the Realms Beyond, a terrifying plane antithetical to human life or sanity. Though the portal is open, it is in a dormant state. It won't spread any further, though it may continue changing the geometry of the surrounding area.*

## **Antilles**

Level 5 Elite Controller

*He looks to be a human man wearing elaborate ritual robes, but as you watch corruption washes over him, changing his body into something clearly unnatural.*

Medium aberrant humanoid

XP 400

---

**HP** 124; **Bloodied** 62

**Initiative** +6

**AC** 19; **Fortitude** 16; **Reflex** 16; **Will** 19

**Senses** Perception -2

Speed 6

**Resist** 10 cold; **Vulnerable** fear When hit by a fear effect, Antilles is also knocked prone or pushed 2 squares (*attacker's choice*).

**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

### **Traits:**

---

**Seeping Madness** aura 2; Enemies that end their turn in the aura take 5 psychic damage and are dazed until the end of their next turn.

### **Standard Actions:**

---

Melee basic: **Warping Touch** (*Necrotic, Poison*) • At-Will

*Antilles's touch changes anything it comes in contact with, often for the worse.*

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC

*Hit:* 1d6 + 4 necrotic and ongoing 5 poison (*save ends*).

*Effect:* Antilles shifts 1 square.

Ranged: **Reality Shift** (*Arcane*) • At-Will

*The ground seems to move under your feet, and things are not as they seem.*

*Effect:* Antilles makes two attacks as one action. Each attack must target a different creature.

**1. Alter The World:** (*Psychic*)

*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. Reflex

*Hit:* 1d10 + 7 psychic and slowed until end of Antilles's next turn.

**2. Alter Perception:** (*Radiant*)

*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. Will

*Hit:* 1d10 + 7 radiant and slide 2 squares.

Area **Alter Reality** (*Arcane, Zone, Acid, Force*) • Recharge 5, 6

*Antilles changes the substance in the area into something inhospitable to human life.*

*Attack:* Area burst 1 in 10 (creatures in burst); +8 vs. Fortitude

*Hit:* 2d8 + 3 Force damage and the area becomes a zone until Antilles uses this power again. The zone is difficult terrain and any enemy ending their turn in the zone takes 5 acid damage.

**Skills** Arcana +11, History +11, Religion +11

**Str** 15 (+4)

**Dex** 10 (+2)

**Wis** 3 (-2)

**Con** 14 (+4)

**Int** 18 (+6)

**Cha** 14 (+4)

**Alignment** Chaotic Evil

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Deep Speech, Primordial, Elven

### **Humanoid Pile of Tentacles**

Level 4 Soldier

*A swarm made entirely of tentacles takes on a humanoid form temporarily to attack the player characters.*

Medium aberrant magical beast

XP 175

**HP** 52; **Bloodied** 26

**Initiative** +7

**AC** 20; **Fortitude** 16; **Reflex** 17; **Will** 14

**Senses** Perception +3;

**Speed** 7

**Resist** Half damage from melee or ranged attacks while in swarm form.

**Vulnerable** 5 Close or area attacks while in swarm form

### **Traits:**

#### **All Around Vision**

Enemies can't gain combat advantage by flanking the Pile of Tentacles.

#### **Grasping Tentacles** • *aura 1 (Only while in swarm form)*

Enemies that start their turn adjacent to the Pile of Tentacles take 5 necrotic damage and are slowed until the start of their next turn.

#### **Swarm Traits** • *(Only while in swarm form)*

The Pile cannot be pushed, pulled or slid by melee or ranged attacks, and it can squeeze through any space a Tiny creature could fit through. While a swarm, the Pile can enter enemy spaces (and vice versa), and the Pile's space is considered difficult terrain to enemies.

### **Standard Actions:**

Melee basic: **Tentacle Lash** (*Psychic*) • At-Will

*Tentacles swing around you. Their touch burns the mind and body alike.*

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC

*Hit:* 1d6+3 damage and 1d6 psychic damage and the target cannot shift until the end of the Pile of Tentacles' next turn. On a Hit from an Opportunity Attack, the target is also dazed until the end of the Pile's next turn.

### **Minor Actions:**

**Swarm Shifting** (*Polymorph*) • Recharge 5, 6

*The Pile of Tentacles dissolves into a mass of individually acting pieces.*

The Pile enters swarm form until the end of its next turn. In swarm form, the Pile of Tentacles gains the vulnerabilities, resistances, traits and aura described above.

**Skills** Acrobatics +11

**Str** 18 (+6)

**Dex** 18 (+6)

**Wis** 4 (-1)

**Con** 12 (+3)

**Int** 4 (-1)

**Cha** 12 (+3)

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages:** Deep Speech

## **Strange Ungeometric Entity**

Level 5 Skirmisher

*A strange geometric form seems to move as if alive, though it appears to be nothing more than non-Euclidean shapes without matter.*

Small Aberrant animate

XP 200

---

**HP** 60; **Bloodied** 30

**Initiative** +8

**AC** 17; **Fortitude** 16; **Reflex** 19; **Will** 17

**Senses** Perception +8

**Speed** 2 (clumsy), Fly 7 (Hover)

**Resist** 5 radiant **Vulnerable** 5 force, 5 psychic

### **Traits:**

---

#### **Form Without Substance**

The Entity's attacks ignore the insubstantial property.

#### **Out of Phase**

If an Ungeometric Entity makes a target "Out of Phase", then that target is Phasing, Weakened, Vulnerable 5 psychic and Vulnerable 5 force until the effect ends.

### **Standard Actions:**

---

**Melee basic:** **Distortion** (*Force*) • At-Will

*The Entity distorts space nearby it in a way that can be quite painful to humanoid beings.*

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. Fortitude

*Hit:* 2d8 + 4 force damage and **Out of Phase** (*see above*) until end of the Entity's next turn.

**Melee:** **Warp** (*Radiant*) • Encounter

*When you're not looking, the entity changes the rules of reality on you.*

**Requires Combat Advantage.**

*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. Will

*Hit:* 3d6 + 4 radiant and **Out of Phase** (*save ends*).

### **Triggered Actions:**

---

**Non-Euclidean Locomotion** (*Teleportation*) • Encounter

*While you deal with another enemy, the Entity slips through a hole in reality.*

*Trigger:* An ally within 5 squares takes damage.

*Effect:* The Entity teleports 4 squares.

**Str** 12 (+3)

**Dex** 18 (+6)

**Wis** 12 (+3)

**Con** 12 (+3)

**Int** 12 (+3)

**Cha** 4 (-1)

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages:** --

## FEATURES OF THE AREA:

**Illumination:** The portal to the Realms Beyond reality sheds an eerie multicolored glow across the area. The braziers provide additional lighting. The area is brightly lit.

**Portal:** The portal is dangerous to living beings. Any creature that enters the portal's spaces takes 2d10 lightning, acid, and force damage and is pushed 1d6 spaces from the portal. The portal could be closed via a simple skill challenge (complexity one or two) primarily using Arcana, Dungeoneering and Religion. A DC 17 Arcana or Dungeoneering check will reveal that the portal is unlikely to spread or produce more monsters if Antilles is not actively drawing them through. (Therefore, the PCs could wait until after the encounter to do so.)

**Statues:** Each statue occupies its square and can provide cover. Each has AC 15, Fort 15 and Reflex 8 and 20 hps. An adjacent character can knock one over onto an adjacent space with a DC 15 Athletics check.

### **Standard Action**

**Requirement:** You must be adjacent to the statue.

**Targets:** Each creature in one space adjacent to the statue.

**Attack:** +11 Vs. AC

**Hit:** 3d6+6 damage and prone.

**Effect:** The statue is destroyed. The statue's original space and the targeted space are difficult terrain until end of the encounter.

**Altar:** The altar is large enough to provide cover. It has defenses of 10 and 10 hit points.

**Braziers:** The braziers are large enough to provide cover. Each can be knocked over as an attack.

### **Standard Action**

**Requirement:** You must be adjacent to the statue.

**Targets:** Each creature in close blast 3.

**Attack:** +9 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1d8+4 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire damage (*save ends*).

**Effect:** The statue is destroyed. The statue's original space and the targeted space are difficult terrain until end of the encounter.

**Stairs:** The stairs are shallow, but can be tricky to navigate. The stairs cost an extra square of movement to go up, but not when going down.