



MIND & IRON

6 Difficulty
5 Complexity

A short adventure for five players

By Corwin Riddle

Mind & Iron is a short adventure designed for five 7th to 9th-level adventurers. The rural farming village of Casai was not prepared for Movasi and his *Magnificent Mechanicals of Mind and Iron*, automated mechanisms that have begun replacing the villagers, one by one.

The players will fight off a pride of hungry lions, then follow the clues to Movasi's shop, where they will fight some of the new mechanicals he has created, then confront Movasi himself, fighting him in the heart of his factory.

BACKGROUND

The farming community of Casai is a long way from the modern cities of the world in both distance and mind-set; the lavish comforts of such ivory towers and luxurious markets are of no concern to those living off the land—survival is their only self-indulgence. All alone in the rural wilderness, each day brings a new difficulty that threatens to snatch away the fleeting and precious lives of the vulnerable villagers; packs of wild animals, inclement weather, and disease could deal irreparable damage to a community reliant on every last body to survive. Without enough farmers, ranchers, or guards, the community would starve or fall to predators and be wiped out, making procreation an urgent necessity in Casai; each child works to take over the duties of their family until they have children of their own.

Although life is tough in Casai, the community is at least free from the troubles of the modern world. There are no power struggles or mindless wars; any loss of life would slow down crop and livestock production and cause a famine that few would survive. But regardless of the dangers, those in Casai serve themselves and no other master—they work their own fields, grow their own food, and spend their nights together in song and dance, free from the greedy and oppressive grasp of kings and their titles. The children are taught this early and often, and even though passing travelers and their stories pique interest in the pleasures found in the outside world, few are willing to leave their families behind, unprotected. After all, there is joy to be found in a simple life.

However, the simple life of Casai has suddenly become a little complicated with the arrival of a mysterious merchant promising the end to all worldly inconvenience. The trader, an eccentric eladrin artificer named Movasi, has come to Ca-

sai to set up his unique shop: *Movasi's Magnificent Mechanicals of Mind and Iron*, a magical emporium of custom-designed automated machines, capable of everything a human could do—and more. Isolated from guild laws and prying eyes, Movasi has replicated a girl from the village and sent back a magical automaton in her place. Now, his deception in the open, the villagers seek help in finding the girl and bringing justice to Movasi for his crime, and, more importantly, protecting their beloved children—the future of Casai depends on it.

USING THE ADVENTURE

Mind & Iron is designed as a short, one-shot adventure that guides the players through the story with a series of related encounters.

Though they are presented in a particular order, the encounters can vary or be used wherever they might fit within your narrative. There are several hooks provided to move the adventure along, and each encounter includes flavor text to transition into the next area.

Encounter 1: *The Plains of Casai*

The players stumble upon a small pride of lions that have just killed a young girl; the beasts attack the intruders to defend their prey.

Encounter 2: *The Showroom*

The players enter Movasi's shop, and are attacked by an assortment of mechanicals from the artificer's display area.

Encounter 3: *The Assembly Line*

The players corner Movasi in the assembly line of his shop, and must defeat him and the mechanicals defending him.

USING THE MAPS

Each of the encounters has a map you can cut out and use:

Encounter 1: *The Plains of Casai*

Maps: **M1a, M1b, M1c, M1d** (pages 12, 13, 14, and 15)

Encounter 2: *The Showroom*

Maps: **M2a, M2b** (pages 16 and 17)

Encounter 3: *The Assembly Line*

Maps: **M3a, M3b, M3c, M3d** (pages 18, 19, 20, and 21)

ENCOUNTER 1: THE PLAINS OF CASAI

Encounter Level 7 (1750 XP)

To start the adventure, the players should be travelling somewhere and pass through an area known as the Plains of Casai, a rural and dangerous area of open wilderness. Tell your players the history of Casai and its people, or let them roll knowledge checks to determine what they know:

History (DC 12): Casai is well-known for its population of farmers who endure its harsh conditions and dangerous creatures.

History (DC 16): It has been said that the farmers of Casai prefer to deal with the dangers themselves and stay independent of the many surrounding cities that would eagerly protect them in exchange for controlling part of their crop.

When you are ready to start the adventure, read:

As you cross through the waist-high, golden grass of the plains of Casai, a terrified scream tears across the open air. Up ahead, barely within sight, is a young woman sprinting toward you, waving her arms frantically as she tries to move quickly toward the tall grass. Within seconds of noticing her, you see a large, tan shape emerge from the grass, claws and teeth showing as it pounces—the woman's voice cuts out immediately.

Nature (DC 12): You recognize the animal as golden monarchs; giant lions and fierce predators of the plains, known for their ambush tactics—they rarely hunt alone.

Perception (DC 16): Though currently you only see one of the animals, you could have sworn you spotted several other areas of the grass moving—you don't think it was the wind.

When your players near the woman, read:

The woman fell between an outcropping of large stones in the middle of the plains. As you near the area, you see a juvenile lion standing proudly over the woman. It growls and bares its teeth at your presence. The sound is echoed almost immediately in louder, deeper tones, and another, much larger adult lion appears atop one of the rocks.

THE MAP

Use maps M1a, M1b, M1c, M1d (pages 12, 13, 14, and 15).

SETUP

- 1 Young Golden Monarch (Y)
- 3 Adult Golden Monarchs (A)

Two of the adult golden monarchs are invisible when combat begins; they will enter combat with their normal initiative turn and attempt to sneak attack several of the players.

Adult Golden Monarch	Level 7 Elite Lurker
Large natural beast	XP 500
HP 120; Bloodied 60	Initiative +6
AC 21, Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 18	Perception +10
Speed 8	Low-Light Vision
Saving Throws +2	
Action Points 1	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Bite ♦ At-Will	
Attack: +12 vs. AC Hit: 1d8 + 12 damage.	
⊕ Claw ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Reach 2, +12 vs. AC Hit: 1d6 + 8 damage and an ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
⊕ Golden Fury ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The adult golden monarch makes a bite attack and a claw attack, or two claw attacks. The target is pushed 1 square for each successful hit.	
⊕ Crushing Pounce ♦ At-Will	
Effect: The adult golden monarch charges and makes two claw attacks against a single target. If the adult golden monarch was invisible when making these attacks, each attack deals an additional 1d6 damage. If both of these claw attacks hit, the target is knocked prone.	
MOVE ACTIONS	
In the Weeds ♦ Recharge ☐☐☐☐	
Effect: The adult golden monarch can move its speed. If it ends this move in high grass, it becomes invisible until the end of its next turn or until after it hits or misses with an attack.	
Rockclimbing ♦ Recharge ☐☐☐☐	
Effect: The adult golden monarch jumps to the top of a boulder within 2 squares without making an Athletics check.	
Skills Athletics +12, Stealth +12	
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 17 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 2 (-1)
Wis 15 (+5)	Cha 9 (+2)
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –

Young Golden Monarch	Level 6 Lurker
Medium natural beast	XP 250
HP 40; Bloodied 60	Initiative +6
AC 19, Fortitude 20, Reflex 19, Will 18	Perception +10
Speed 8	Low-Light Vision
TRAITS	
Pride of the Pride	
The young golden monarch deals an extra 1d6 damage with any attack made while adjacent to or flanking with an adult golden monarch.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Bite ♦ At-Will	
Attack: +10 vs. AC Hit: 1d6 + 10 damage.	
⊕ Claw ♦ At-Will	
Attack: +11 vs. AC Hit: 1d6 + 6 damage.	
MOVE ACTIONS	
In the Weeds ♦ Recharge ☐☐☐☐	
Effect: The young golden monarch can move half its speed. If it ends this move in high grass, it becomes invisible until the end of its next turn or until after it hits or misses with an attack.	
Skills Athletics +10, Stealth +10	
Str 17 (+5)	Dex 15 (+4)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 2 (-1)
Wis 13 (+3)	Cha 9 (+2)
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The plains are well-lit with a sunny sky.

High Grass: Marked as patches of yellow grass. A creature in high grass has partial concealment against ranged attacks.

Boulders: marked as giant grey rocks; 10' tall.

GOLDEN MONARCHS IN COMBAT

The young monarch and the one visible adult monarch will try to lure the players further into the rock outcropping, where the two hidden adult monarchs await, hidden in the grass. The hidden adult monarchs will attempt to begin combat with *Crushing Pounce*, taking advantage of the bonus damage, while trying to end their turns close enough to the other lions to give either combat advantage or multiple attacks against the same player—the lions prefer to take down one player at a time, if possible.

The young monarch knows it is the weakest and will try to stay on the edge of combat, rushing in to take advantage of *Pride of the Pride* when applicable. All of the lions will do their best to use *In the Weeds* when possible, often all in the same turn, so they can pounce on vulnerable players before they have a chance to react. The adult monarchs will jump onto the boulders to escape combat and lure players closer.

FLAVOR TEXT

If you want, use the following flavor text to explain powers and effects to your players as an organic narrative.

When an adult monarch uses *Golden Fury*, read:

The giant lion rears back, slashing at you and knocking you back with the force of each attack.

When an adult monarch uses *Crushing Pounce*, read:

The giant beast bounds through the high grass, bearing down on you with its razor sharp claws.

When a monarch uses *In the Weeds*, read:

The lion runs through the high, yellow grass, blending into its surroundings and disappearing from view.

When the young monarch uses *Pride of the Pride*, read:

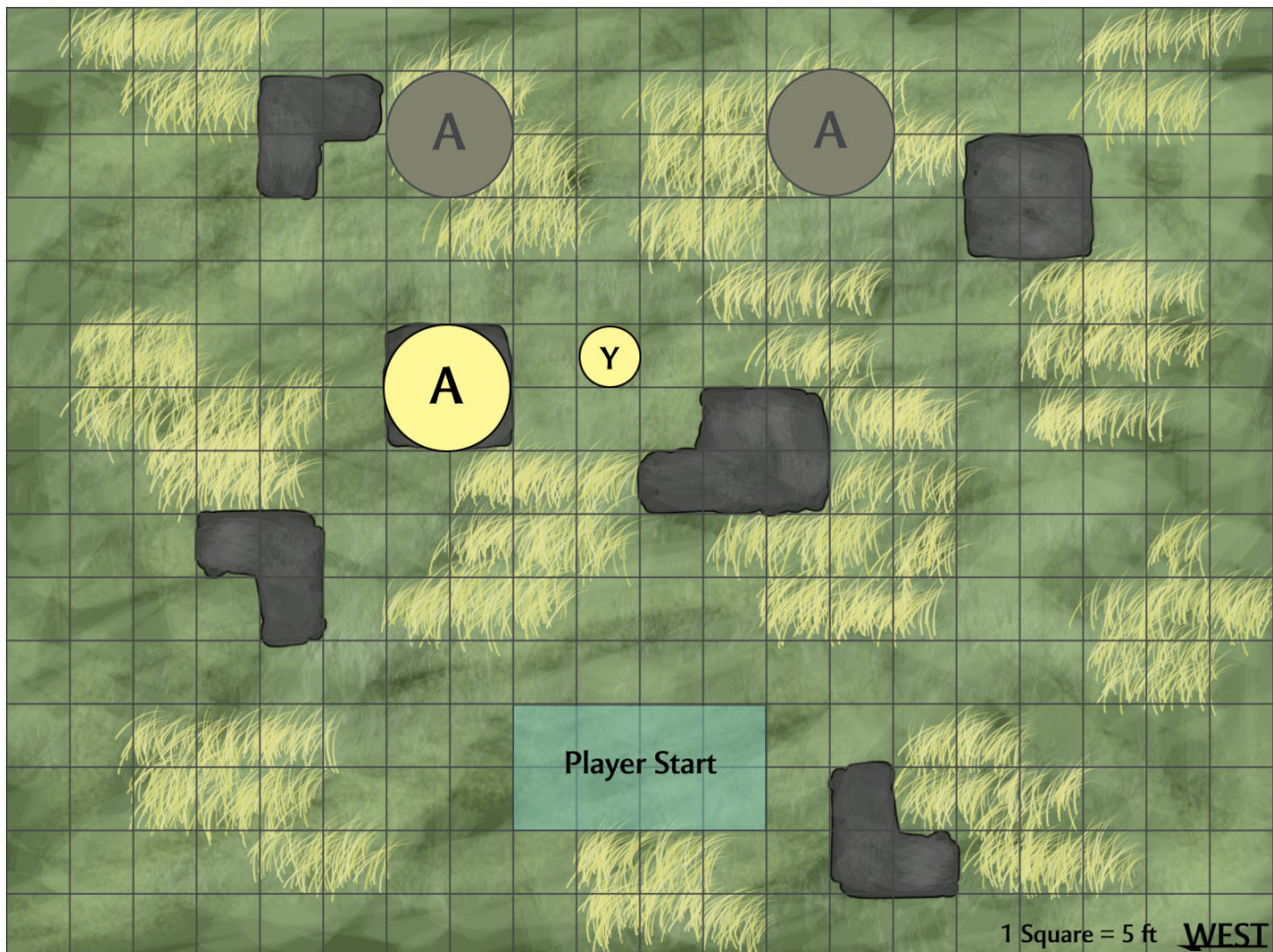
The smaller lion seems more confident next to its larger kin, and unleashes a more powerful attack.

When an adult monarch uses *Rockclimbing*, read:

The large lion leaps high into the air, scraping and clawing its way to the top of one of the large boulders.

When an adult monarch deals bonus damage, read:

The lion takes advantage of its unsuspecting prey, striking with uncanny precision to deliver a devastating blow.



DEVELOPMENT

The lions will fight until dead to defend their kill. When the players have defeated them, allow them to inspect the surrounding area and the woman's body.

When the players inspect the woman, read:

Nearing the fallen body of the running girl, you notice an unnatural twitch in its neck—the head turns, its mouth opening and eyes widening, before snapping back and turning again, with the same effect. There is no blood flowing from its wounds, which reveal insides filled with pumping metal rods and turning gears. With each spasm, a handful of iron bolts and screws eject, landing softly in the surrounding grass. “Father... father... father... father...” it whispers, incessantly, in a monotone, unnatural voice.

Perception (DC 12): *The resemblance to a real person is uncanny. You still have trouble believing the girl before you is merely a mechanical construct.*

Perception (DC 16): *The girl—or robot—looks to have been traveling down a worn path through the grass, leading to a small farming community. You can see its buildings in the distance.*

Arcana (DC 16): *There is a slight magical essence surrounding the construct, but it fades as you try to determine the nature or source.*

When the players reach Casai, read:

The village before you has seen better days. The harsh winds and weather of the plains have worn most of the stone buildings down, and the fields seem barren and empty. Most of the workers are either very old or quite young—teenagers, plowing the fields and performing the hard physical labor. A number of the older residents are gathered in a group, talking frantically in worried tones.

The farmers are talking about one of their young women who has gone missing—the girl in the field, named Sulas. If the players tell them about her (and didn't bring her body to them), a handful of farmers will head out to bring the body back.

They are all confused and exasperated by what they find, and at first don't understand the robotic parts. Several of the farmers seem to realize what's going on, including the girl's father, Calvos, and an older man named Vonodan.

Allow the players to think they can detect whether any of the humans are actually robots with an Arcana check, which reveals they are all human (the robots do not give off arcane energy until they are destroyed).

HOOK 1: PUT MOVASI OUT OF BUSINESS

Vonodan is one of Casai's older farmers and has endured more trying seasons than most. He tells the PCs that he's seen enough to recognize a problem before it becomes a problem, and he knew Movasi was the worst kind of trouble as soon as he came to town. Now it's become apparent that

he's kidnapped one of their own, replacing her with a mechanical construct, as if no one would notice.

Vonodan tells the PCs that this is just the beginning. Every day for months, Movasi's shop has been working overtime, churning out those mechanical monsters. It's only a matter of time before the artificer has an entire army of these robots to do with what he will, and it's already become apparent that he sees the village of Casai as nothing but a place to test his creations. He and his kin are mere farmers, incapable of stopping such a powerful force, and every day that goes by the eladrin grows his army—their doom is inevitable.

Fortunately, Vonodan has done some research and discovered that Movasi's assembly line, and all its robots, are powered by a series of strange, magical crystals, embedded deep in the metal mechanisms of the assembly line. Destroy those and all of the robots should stop working. It's the only way to overpower him and remove him from the area. Only then can Casai live in simple peace, safe from the meddling of the outside world.

Vonodan asks the PCs to shut down the assembly line. He warns the PCs that Movasi will probably be carrying one of the controlling crystals on his person and that they should do whatever necessary to ensure its destruction. He says that he can't afford to pay the PCs, but there should be more than enough material wealth at the shop, free for the taking.

Quest XP: 1,000 XP for shutting down Movasi's assembly line.

HOOK 2: SHE, ROBOT

A distraught farmer named Calvos approaches the PCs and tells them his tale of woe. His teenage daughter, Sulas, has always been a rebellious child with an insatiable curiosity of big cities and fast-paced lives, and despite his orders, she snuck off to see the wonders of Movasi's shop. Weeks later, she was horribly injured in an unfortunate accident and crushed by a pile of stones. Upon closer inspection, the body was a mechanical construct that perfectly represented his daughter—sending everyone in the village into a wild panic.

Clearly, Movasi has kidnapped Sulas for some purpose, sending a robot to replace her so as not to arouse suspicion. Calvos and the rest of the farmers are eager to break into Movasi's shop and rescue her, but they can't get past his security. A group of the PC's experience should be able to break in and force Movasi to tell them what he knows of the girl. He offers the PCs an expensive family heirloom if they bring him any information about Sulas.

Quest XP: 500 XP and a ring worth 1,000 gp for finding out what became of Sulas.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE SHOWROOM

Encounter Level 8 (2300 XP)

The players are sent to Movasi's shop to discover the fate of the real Sulas and shut down the assembly line—most likely by killing the artificer. The farmers did not tell the players that they have hired several other groups of adventurers to do the same in the past, and that Movasi has grown to expect such unwelcome visitors—he is more than ready for the players, though he prefers to toy with them.

When the players approach Movasi's shop, read:

Detecting your presence, the building appears to come alive. Large mechanical arms raise themselves high, waving in your direction. Above the doorway, a small door opens, a strange-looking automaton emerging, wearing a top hat and brandishing a gear-laden cane. "Come one, come all! Welcome to Movasi's Magnificent Mechanicals of Mind and Iron! The future awaits!" Below, the shop's sign lights up with shimmering colors, and the doors open.

Thievery (DC 12) or Perception (DC 16): *There appear to be several pressure-plate traps around and near the entrance, but they have all been disabled.*

When the players enter the showroom, read:

The room is dark at first, though a series of dim, overhead lights buzz and come to life. The room is filled with large glass cases, though they seem to be empty. Other, smaller cases hold polished display models of inanimate mechanicals. A neon sign flickers as it struggles to activate, its letters becoming visible one at a time. "Tomorrow is only a purchase away," it reads.

The doors to the back of the room are firmly bolted on the opposite side—no amount of pushing, picking, or magic of their level will give entry.

To start the encounter, read:

Suddenly, a bright spotlight appears, though its origin seems magical, unreal. There is a mechanical screech, followed by a loud, echoed tapping noise. "Hello? Hello? Oh there we are," a voice says, slightly distorted, before clearing its throat and continuing:

"Friends! Step right up and count your gold pieces, for they've never been worth more! I can tell from your attire that you're ready for action, and who isn't, in this day and age?"

As the voice talks, a loud whirring noise sounds. Trap doors beneath several of the glass cases slowly move aside as the case lights up brightly. Inside, thin slender constructs rise into the case. On its chest and head are large, painted targets.

"I present, for all your training needs," the voice says, "the highly trainable, cheaply obtainable, No-Pain-No-Gain Train-o-maton." The glass cases shatter as the robots come to life, waving their arms as they approach. "Take them for a spin," the voice says. "I insist."

THE MAP

Use maps **M2a** and **M2b** (pages 16 and 17).

SETUP

- 2 Train-o-matons (T)
- 2 Movasi Mashers (M)
- 2 BFF-8000.02s (B)

The robots appear in waves. Only the two train-o-matons enter the fight initially. When one of them becomes bloodied, the two movasi mashers enter the fight. When one of the mashers becomes bloodied, the two BFFs enter the fight.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Spotlight:

- At the beginning of each round, Movasi casts a spotlight on one of his mechanicals. Roll **1d4**, **1d6**, or flip a coin to determine which robot gains the bonus each turn.
- That robot deals an additional **2d6 damage** with all attacks and gains +2 to all attack rolls and all defenses.

Displays:

- There are several inactive display models around the showroom. If a player breaks the glass and knocks one of these models over, Movasi will order his robots to attack that particular player, if possible, giving chase.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Height: The ceiling is 20' high.

Illumination: The showroom is well-lit.

Large Displays: White, empty glass cases, these block line of sight. The glass can be shattered with a minor action.

Small Displays: Yellow cases with robots inside, a minor action can destroy the glass, a standard knocks over the robot.

TRAIN-O-MATONS IN COMBAT

The train-o-matons deal the majority of their damage when a player misses or makes an attack while adjacent to it, so they will do their best to stay adjacent to players in order to trigger *Riposte* and *Deflection*. The train-o-matons try to annoy and harass the players indirectly, knocking them down with *Flanking Formation* so the mashers can take advantage of *Grounding Pound*.

The movasi mashers will charge and use *Hammer Charge* when possible, giving preference to attacking prone targets. In general the mashers are mostly mindless fighters, taking orders from Movasi.

The BFFs are clever and tactical, and will choose a target for *Best Friends Forever and Ever*, trying to stay in position for *Friendship Zone*, using *Loving Embrace* when in range.

FLAVOR TEXT

If you want, use the following flavor text to explain powers and effects to your players as an organic narrative.

Use the following to describe the spotlight's effects:

The bright spotlight swings across the room, landing on a particular automaton. "It's time to shine," the voice says, "show these shoppers what they'll be paying for!"

"The automaton's actions are empowered by its master, as it deals a more powerful strike than normal."

"The automaton's defenses seem bolstered by its master's special attention, and your attack slides off harmlessly."

When a player destroys a display case, read:

"Sabotage!" the voice yells. "Keep them away from the merchandise, those models are for display purposes only!"

When a train-o-maton uses Riposte, read:

The train-o-maton spins around the blow, striking back with a piercing counter-attack.

When a train-o-maton uses Deflection, read:

The train-o-maton attempts to deflect your attack, using your own force against you.

When a player is affected by Friendship Zone, read:

The BFF 8000.02's presence compels you to stay close, making it difficult to move away.

When a BFF uses Loving Embrace, read:

The BFF leans in and pulls you close for a loving embrace, squeezing you tighter and tighter as it begins to crush you.

When a BFF uses Best Friends Forever and Ever, read:

The BFF marks you as its new best friend, enticing it to follow you around and show you its combat skills, increasing the power of its attacks the longer it feels a connection to you.

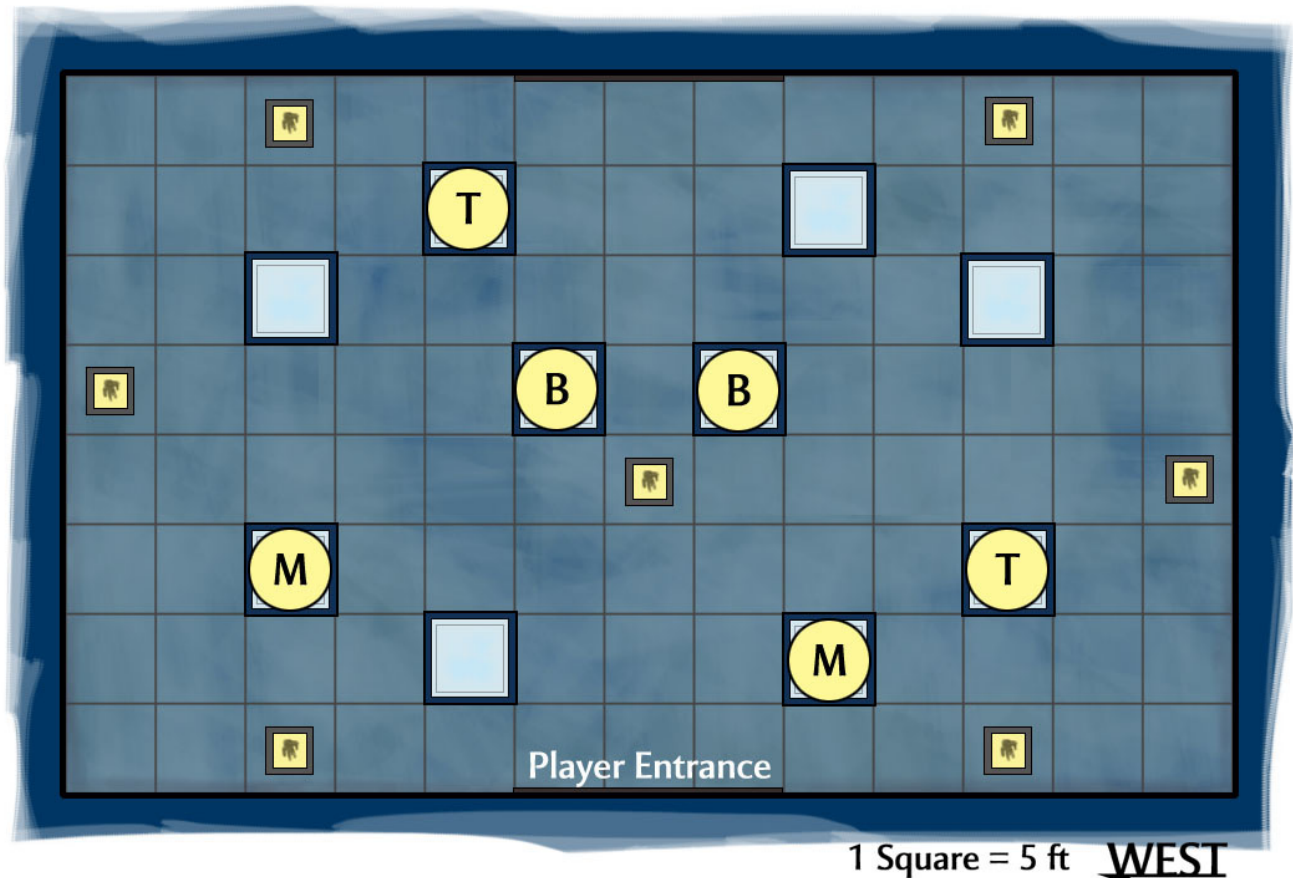
WAVES

Whenever a construct is bloodied, the next wave begins.

Wave 1 is two train-o-matons; Wave 2 is two movasi mashers, and Wave 3 is two BFF 8000.02s.

When Wave 2 begins, read the following:

"I see your point, friends. Those automatons aren't quite enough for your daily adventuring needs. The customer is always right, that's what I say. You're clearly into the newer models—allow me to introduce the Movasi-Masher, a hammering, slammering mechanical for all of your crushing needs... This will be a hands-on demonstration. Feel free to participate."



1 Square = 5 ft **WEST**

Another pair of glass cases rise and open, revealing two monstrous mechanicals with pounding hammers in place of arms.

When Wave 3 begins, read the following:

“Not satisfied yet, I see. Worry not, I always deliver. Why bother with such inanimate animates when you could have it all—power, endurance, and... friendship. Presenting this year’s newest model, a humanoid’s other half, for both alliance and compliance, the BBF-8000.02!”

Two more glass cases rise, shattering as another pair of robots emerge and join the fray.

When all of the showroom robots are destroyed, read:

“I see you’re looking for something more than just a floor model, friends. I’m a businessman, after all, aiming to please. I think I have exactly what you’re looking for, right here in the back. Come and collect, if you’re still interested.”

DEVELOPMENT

All of the robots will fight until destroyed. The players can inspect the robots and discover that once destroyed, they give off a slight arcane aura that wasn’t detectable while they were alive. Once the robots are destroyed, the doors to the rear of the shop unlock, allowing the players passage to the assembly line.

If the players search the room they will find 100gp in many of the display case coin slots, which light up and give a brief description of the robot inside when a gold is inserted. The players are now free to enter the assembly line and take on the artificer himself.

Movasi Masher		Level 8 Brute	
Medium natural animate (construct)		XP 350	
HP 100; Bloodied 50		Initiative +2	
AC 21, Fortitude 21, Reflex 15, Will 17		Perception +10	
Speed 6		Darkvision	
Immune disease, poison, sleep			
TRAITS			
Grounding Pound			
The movasi masher deals an additional 1d6 damage when attacking a prone enemy.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⊕ Hammer ♦ At-Will			
Attack: +13 vs. AC Hit: 2d8 + 8 damage.			
⊕ Hammer Charge ♦ At-Will			
Attack: The movasi masher can use this power as part of a charge; +13 vs. AC Hit: 2d8 + 10 damage; the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.			
Str 20 (+9)	Dex 7 (+2)	Wis 13 (+5)	
Con 18 (+8)	Int 4 (+1)	Cha 12 (+5)	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –	

Train-o-maton		Level 8 Controller	
Medium natural animate (construct)		XP 350	
HP 90; Bloodied 45		Initiative +9	
AC 21, Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 18		Perception +6	
Speed 6			
Immune disease, poison			
TRAITS			
Flanking Formation			
Whenever the train-o-maton makes a successful attack while flanking a target, the target is knocked prone.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⊕ Longsword (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: +13 vs. AC Hit: 2d6 + 8 damage.			
⊕ Tactical Adjustment (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: one or two creatures; +12 vs. Reflex Hit: 2d6 + 4 damage and slide the target 1 square.			
TRIGGERED ACTIONS			
↓ Riposte (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Trigger: A creature misses the train-o-maton with a melee attack. Effect: 1d8 + 8 damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses until the end of the train-o-maton’s next turn.			
↓ Deflection (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to the train-o-maton makes an attack against a creature other than the train-o-maton. Effect: The enemy’s attack takes a -2 penalty to the attack roll; if the attack misses, the enemy takes 1d8 damage.			
Str 15 (+6)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 15 (+6)	
Con 17 (+7)	Int 3 (0)	Cha 3 (+0)	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –	
Equipment Longsword			

BFF 8000.02		Level 8 Elite Skirmisher	
Medium natural animate (construct)		XP 400	
HP 160; Bloodied 80		Initiative +8	
AC 22, Fortitude 21, Reflex 21, Will 20		Perception +5	
Speed 5			
Saving Throws +4 for ongoing damage			
Action Points 1			
TRAITS			
Friendship Zone			
As long as there is only one enemy within 2 squares of the BFF, that enemy is slowed.			
STANDARD ACTIONS			
⊕ Glaive (weapon) ♦ At-Will			
Attack: Reach 2; +12 vs. AC Hit: 2d8 + 10 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the BFF’s next turn.			
↓ Loving Embrace ♦ At-Will			
Attack: +12 vs. Reflex Hit: 2d4 + 8 damage and the target is grabbed. During the BFF’s turn, it can spend a minor action to sustain the grab. If it does, it deals an automatic 12 damage to the grabbed enemy.			
MINOR ACTIONS			
Best Friends Forever and Ever ♦ Recharge [☹][☹][☹]			
Effect: The BFF marks an enemy within 5 squares. Each time the BFF makes a successful attack against that enemy, the BFF gains a +1 bonus to the attack roll and deals 1d6 damage to the next attack against that target. This effect is cumulative, but ends when the BFF misses an attack against that target.			
Str 21 (+9)	Dex 15 (+6)	Wis 13 (+5)	
Con 17 (+7)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 17 (+7)	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Elven	
Equipment Plate armor, glaive			

ENCOUNTER 3: THE ASSEMBLY LINE

Encounter Level 9 (2500 XP)

Once the showroom is clear, Movasi unlocks the door to his assembly line, welcoming the intruders to enter. Inside are the answers to the fate of Casai's missing farmers, but the players must fight through Movasi's latest inventions and subdue the artificer to uncover them.

When the players enter the assembly line, read:

The room bursts into bright lights as mechanical lamps turn on overhead, one by one. You seem to be in the middle of a production facility; large pieces of machinery take up most of the room, placed between conveyor belts and stacks of inanimate automatons.

Arcana (DC 16): *The conveyor belts seem to be controlled by magical crystals—a strong magical force could affect the belts.*

Thievery (DC 16): *You think you could disable the mechanical arms with a simple technique used in deactivating some traps.*

When you are ready to begin the encounter, read:

There is a loud crack, and an eladrin appears in the rear of the room. "You're not the first group of adventurers those insufferable peasants have sent my way," he says, sighing, "and you won't be the last." He snaps his fingers, and the room springs to life—the belts begin to turn, and mechanical contraptions start to shake and churn.

A group of automatons step off the assembly line, approaching menacingly. "Forgive the aggressive sell, friends. I know it's bad business, but I also know why you've come and, sadly, there's nothing to be done about past sales. Contracts were signed, after all."

THE MAP

Use maps M3a, M3b, M3c, and M3d (pages 18, 19, 20, and 21).

SETUP

1 Movasi, Eladrin Artificer (M)
6 Auto-Magic Automatons (A)

SPECIAL FEATURES

Facsimile:

The automatons have a melee ability called *Facsimile* that copies another player to confuse the party:

- The automaton magically changes to perfectly replicate the targeted PC, but retains its normal defenses and abilities.
- The automaton and the targeted PC are teleported up to 4 squares in opposite directions when *Facsimile* hits.

- Alert the players that the minis (if you are using them) do not represent which one is which. Mark that information down yourself where they can't see.
- Not even the replicated player will know which one they are (until their turn begins).
- Other players can not tell the difference between that automaton and the player: if the replicated player speaks, the automaton speaks identically.
- To discern which one is which, a different player can make a **DC 20 Perception** or **DC 20 Insight** check as a minor action. A successful check reveals which one is the automaton and which one is their ally.
- Regardless of successful checks, when the replicated player's turn starts, inform that player which mini they are so they can take their turn normally. At this point, it should be clear to the other players who is who.
- If a player attacks their ally accidentally, do the attack as normal. If a player heals an automaton on accident, use the ability as normal and the automaton gains the hit points.

This works best if you have at least five doubles of humanoid minis. As the battle goes on, more and more players will be replicated by robots, which can get very confusing for everyone if there is no visual component to knowing who is copied by which robot. When a player is replicated, take their mini off the table and use the two doubled minis (one for the automaton and one for the so the other players can see who is replicated by which robot. Also make sure you're keeping track of this on a piece of paper!

Assembly Line:

The players fight in the middle of Movasi's assembly line:

- Conveyor belt 1 begins going north. Belt 2 begins going west and belt 3 begins going south. At the end of each round, each belt reverses direction. *Cut out and use the arrows on page 11 to indicate direction of each belt.*
- A player moving with the direction of the conveyor belt moves twice their speed. A player moving in the opposite direction moves half their speed.
- A creature that begins its turn prone is automatically moved 3 squares in the direction of the conveyor belt at the beginning of its turn.
- There are several mechanical arms that extend over the conveyor belts. These are above the actual belts, so creatures can pass below them.
- A mechanical arm has 15 hit points and defenses of 16. It makes the following attack against any creature passing below it:
Attack: +11 vs. AC
Hit: 10 damage and the target is knocked prone

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Height: The ceiling is 30' high.

Illumination: The shop is well-lit.

Conveyor Belts: Marked as black conveyor belts, see *Special Features* for details. A player within 2 squares of a belt can use a minor action to make a **DC 12 Arcana** check to change the direction of a conveyor belt that turn.

Mechanical Arms: Marked as yellow mechanical claws, see *Special Features* for details. A player adjacent to an arm can use a minor action to make a **DC 12 Thievery** check to disable an arm for the rest of the encounter.

Machinery: Marked as orange gears and spikes. A creature entering one of these squares is pushed 2 squares and takes **1d6** damage.

AUTO-MAGIC AUTOMATONS IN COMBAT

The automatons are clever robots controlled by Movasi, who can command them without any kind of visible or verbal orders. Their biggest priority is to protect Movasi and stay between the players and him, attempting to keep them on the conveyor belts and push them into any machinery if possible. They are not stupid and will avoid walking into the mechanical arms or dangerous machinery.

An automaton uses *Facsimile* as soon as possible on a player, hoping to confuse the rest of the party. Automatons

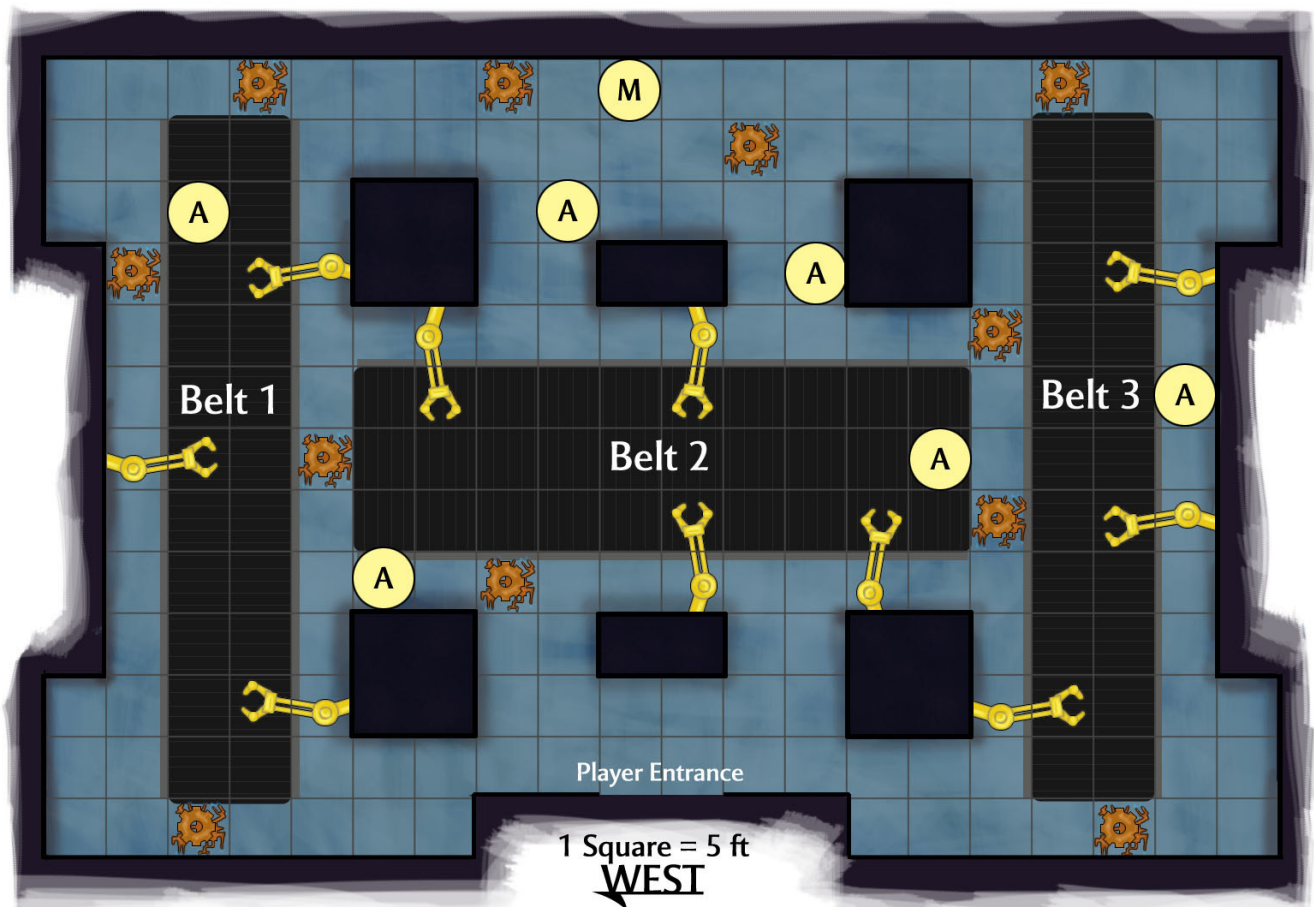
will target separate players to add to the confusion, making it difficult for the allies to attack the correct target without making a check or damaging their ally. When an automaton's replication is discovered at the beginning of its target's turn, it will try to copy that player again or another nearby player.

Once a player has been replicated, the automaton that copied it will try to make use of *Empowered Replication*, attacking that same target if possible with *Slam* for the bonus damage. When an automaton is about to die, it will try to get as close as possible to nearby players to damage them with *Shrapnel Explosion*.

MOVASI IN COMBAT

Movasi is unsure of the player's abilities, and will try to keep his automatons in front of him until he sees the players in action. He will move around using his teleportation powers to stay behind automatons and the assembly line, hoping to trap the players on the conveyor belts.

Movasi will use *Charged Bolt* to teleport nearby players away from him or distant players into danger or adjacent to automatons. He is in control of the automatons and will have them group up on a player or two before casting *Auto-Magic Empowerment* on a group. Both *Robotic Recall* and *Fey Step* are used to escape combat or put an enemy between himself and attackers.



FLAVOR TEXT

If you dislike reading powers and effects to your players, give them hints with the following flavor text.

When Movasi uses *Robotic Recall*, read:

Movasi snaps his fingers and one of the automatons briefly vanishes, reappearing next to its master.

When Movasi uses *Auto-Magic Empowerment*, read:

The artificer unleashes a ball of pulsing lightning, which energizes any automatons caught in the blast.

When an automaton uses *Facsimile* on a player, read:

The automaton begins to change shape, taking on the physical attributes of its target. Within seconds it appears to be a perfect copy of you and your mannerisms. Suddenly, you both disappear and reappear in a flash—turning toward your allies, you notice them looking back and forth to you and the robot, unsure which one is their ally.

If a player tries to discern a replicated player's position, read (to encourage them to make a check):

Both the automaton and your ally call out in unison, pleading with you to attack the other. Only those keen enough to perceive the smallest difference or find insight into their intentions could tell them apart.

When a player uses *Perception* or *Insight* to discern their ally, read one of the following:

- *Your ally shouts a key phrase to you that only he would know, identifying him as the real version.*
- *You notice one of the copies twitch suddenly with an unnatural jerk—not the movement of a humanoid.*
- *You watch one of the copies favor a particular leg, revealing an injury your ally received on a previous adventure.*
- *One of the copies speaks slightly out of tune, its mechanical parts betraying its identity.*

When an automaton uses *Empowered Replication*, read:

The automaton is familiar with your physical structure, taking advantage to empower its attacks.

When a replicated player begins his turn, read:

After a few moments, you recognize your ally's familiar movement and words, identifying him as the real thing.

When an automaton uses *Shrapnel Explosion*, read:

The automaton begins to twitch and shake, sparks flying out in random directions—suddenly it explodes in a shower of metal shards, damaging those close to the blast.

Movasi, Eladrin Artificer		Level 8 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid		XP 700
HP 200; Bloodied 100		Initiative +7
AC 23, Fortitude 20, Reflex 24, Will 22		Perception +6
Speed 6		Low-Light Vision
Saving Throws +2, +7 against charm effects; Action Points 1		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
Ⓢ Quarterstaff (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: +13 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d10 + 8 damage.		
Ⓢ Charged Bolt (lightning, teleportation) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10, +13 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 3d6 + 15 lightning damage and teleport the target up to 2 squares.		
⚡ Auto-Magic Empowerment (lightning) ♦ Recharge [1/1]		
Attack: Area burst 1 within 10; +13 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 2d12 + 18 lightning damage to every enemy in the burst. Any automatons in the burst gain a temporary +5 damage to all attacks until the start of Movasi's next turn.		
MINOR ACTIONS		
Ⓢ Robotic Recall (teleportation) ♦ Recharge [1/1]		
Effect: An automaton within 10 squares is teleported adjacent to Movasi.		
MOVE ACTIONS		
Ⓢ Fey Step (teleportation) ♦ Recharge [1/1]		
Effect: Movasi can teleport 5 squares.		
Skills Arcana +16, History +16, Nature +10		
Str 11 (+5)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 11 (+5)
Con 9 (+4)	Int 19 (+9)	Cha 15 (+7)
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Elven
Equipment Robes, Quarterstaff		

Auto-Magic Automaton		Level 7 Skirmisher
Medium natural animate (construct)		XP 300
HP 74; Bloodied 37		Initiative +11
AC 21, Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 17		Perception +2
Speed 5		
Immune disease, poison		
TRAITS		
Empowered Replication		
As long as the automaton is under the effect of <i>Facsimile</i> , it gains +2 to all attack rolls against the replicated target and deals an additional 1d6 damage with all attacks against the replicated target.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
Ⓢ Slam ♦ At-Will		
Attack: +11 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage.		
Ⓢ Facsimile ♦ Recharge [1/1]		
Attack: +12 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 2d6 + 10 damage.		
Effect: The automaton turns into an exact physical copy of the target. This lasts until the automaton uses this ability again on a different target. See Special Features for details.		
TRIGGERED ACTIONS		
Shrapnel Explosion		
Trigger: The automaton is reduced to 0 hit points.		
Effect: The automaton explodes. Every creature within 1 square takes 1d6 damage and is pushed 1 square.		
Str 15 (+6)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 7 (+2)
Con 11 (+4)	Int 3 (+0)	Cha 3 (+0)
Alignment Unaligned		Languages —

CONCLUSION

When defeated, Movasi falls to his knees. He reaches into his robes and pulls out the control crystal before dashing it on the ground in front of him, destroying its magic and keeping it away from the players. He turns to the PCs with a look of annoyance, gasping, and says: *“I would gladly offer a refund to any unsatisfied customers... pending a valid receipt, of course...”* On his body is a level 9 magic item and 1,000 gp. Around the shop is another 1,500 gp in jewels and crystals. The PCs can easily dismantle the assembly line, destroying the crystals inside. When the last crystal is destroyed, all of the remaining automatons lining the walls fall apart in a concentrated pile of gears, bolts, and metal.

If the players investigate further, they will find a desk full of ledgers and receipts. The PCs notice that most of the receipts are signed by residents of Casai, including one by Sulas, who left a forwarding address to the nearest big city, Simth. Depending on how much they interacted with the farmers, they might or might not realize these are almost all of Casai's younger residents and workers.

Upon returning to town, read the following:

Though you are some distance from Casai, you can already make out the tortured cries and moans of pain from its villagers. As you hurry to investigate the commotion, you notice several families crowded around many different areas in tight circles, standing over something that glimmers in the mid-day sun.

Littering the ground all over the farmland are piles of bolts, gears, and metal parts. You count dozens of these automatons, each one a unique and perfect representation of one of the farm's younger residents, all of whom seem to be missing. “Our children!” one of the older farmers cries, distraught, “I told you we should have killed that Movasi when he first showed up—you can't trust those city people.”

ADJUSTMENTS

Below is some advice on how to run and adjust the adventure according to the needs of your particular group:

We have too few or too many players:

For 4 players, subtract 1 one adult monarch from the first encounter, 1 BFF 8000.02 from the second encounter, and 2 auto-magic automatons from the third encounter. For 6 players, add the opposite.

We aren't the right level:

*Movasi is based off one of the many eladrin wizards found in the **Monster Builder**. The lions are based off the golden lions, the showroom robots are based off the training dummy, marching hammer, and warforged, and the auto-magic automatons are based off any construct of the appropriate level with modified abilities.*

It's too easy:

- *The first encounter should be easy enough so the players don't consider taking an extended rest before heading off to Movasi's shop.*
- *The difficulty of the second encounter depends on how you make use of the spotlight, line of sight, and the BFF's powers.*
- *If the third fight is too simple, have the automatons push targets 1 or 2 squares with slam so they can knock players into the machinery.*

My players want to check all of the farmers to see if any more are robots:

This is the usual response I think, because most players are very paranoid and will cling to the smallest mystery until they're exhausted every possibility. To counter this and keep the end a surprise, let them think that they can detect the robots by the arcane aura they saw from the first robot's body (the Sulas copy).

The aura is only detectable when the robots are dying and it leaks out, so that should be enough to convince them the rest of the farmers are humanoids. Then, when they come back later and discover the truth, let them know the aura is all over so they don't feel cheated.

My players don't want to fight Movasi:

Movasi isn't stupid, and many adventurers have come before the players on behalf of the farmers. Many tried to bargain with him or trick him into talking so they could attempt to subdue him, and he's not falling for it again. He'll take the initiative and send his robots after the players without a second thought, since they are likely carrying weapons and armor and seem like they're looking for a fight.

What happened to Sulas and the others?

It was supposed to be subtle, but Sulas and the other farmers grew tired of their boring lives, and, since they couldn't leave their families behind without enough workers and protection, they paid Movasi to create robot copies of themselves. Everything was done through legitimate transactions, and Movasi kept his mouth shut as part of the contracts that were signed.

Movasi may be a strange man, but his business contracts are his first and number one priority; he doesn't allow people to break them, and he certainly won't break them himself.

The irony is that the farmers tried so hard to get rid of Movasi, who they saw as a threat to their way of life—and in doing so, they condemn themselves to a bleak future, as their children are all missing now and they don't even have the robot copies to help out.

Where do we go from here?

The farmers could beg the players to search for some of their children in the nearby cities, bringing them back or at least making sure they're all right. Or the players could stick around Casai and defend them from monsters while they try to get things in order. It's all up to you and what your players feel like doing!

