



PARAGON

11-20

WORSE THAN DEATH

by Robert J. Schwalb

A powerful dilettante goes missing in the wilderness, so it falls to a capable adventuring band to come to the rescue. “Worse Than Death” is a 4th Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure for five characters of 12th level. This adventure takes place in the wilderness, far from any communities or settlements, so you can drop it into any campaign setting with little work.

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BACKGROUND

Festud il'Sook is known throughout his city as a decadent and effete aristocrat—a man who has no interest beyond his hedonistic escapades and squandering his fortunes on drink, drugs, and excess. From his great estate piled on top of a hill overlooking his native city, he delights in his distractions, opening his doors to young men and women of his community to share in the revelry and sample the wonders only he can offer. Talk fills taprooms, winesinks, and brothels, as the curious and jealous speculate about what happens behind his rose-colored walls while thirsting for their own taste of the forbidden fruit il'Sook offers.

Such a character is bound to attract unwanted attention. Priests, politicians, and even his peers have come out against him, but most change their songs soon enough, switching from moral indignation to some of his staunchest supporters after but a single visit to his grand house on the hill. Those who aren't won over retreat, horrified by what they see and experience, while the rest vanish into the estate, never to be seen again.

Festud's success and power transcend what any mortal could ever hope to attain. His funds are without limit and his expenses dwarf those of any in the city. Many explain away his good fortune as being the result of business acumen or perhaps a large inheritance, perhaps from an adventuring uncle or aunt, but the fact of the matter is that Festud receives funding from a much greater benefactor: Fernia, the duchess of Phlegethos, archdevil of the Nine Hells. Indeed, Festud doesn't even exist. He's nothing more than a mask worn by a succubus named Amala, a cruel devil loosed onto the mortal world to corrupt and harvest souls for her mistress.

Amala has been at her task long enough to make a few enemies, and though vigilant about eliminating hidden threats, she's not naïve; there are always enemies, created from lives she has broken, people she has betrayed, and those who suspect that something foul lurks beneath the pleasant features of an idle youth. Periodically, Amala cleans house, slipping into a new guise to gain the confidence of those arrayed against her, and then she destroys them. It has been a decade since she last wiped out her enemies, and whispers lead her to believe the time for action has come once more.

From Festud il'Sook's great estate at the top of a hill overlooking his city, he invites young men and women to share in the revelry and sample the wonders only he can offer. He receives his funding from a great benefactor:

Fernia, archdevil of the Nine Hells. . . .

Assuming the likeness of a young manservant named Micah, she moved through il'Sook's holdings, listening to rumors and treasonous talk, picking out the orchestrators and uncovering each and every individual with an axe to grind. It took time, but in Micah's guise, Amala gained their confidence, winning them over to her cause by feeding them lies about cruel treatment, worship of demons, and any other fabrication she could concoct to convince her fellow conspirators to help "kill Festud."

Of those she recruited, she found Tyster Drent, a disaffected dwarf caravan master who despised il'Sook for using and shaming his sister. There's also Cara Toyden, Festud's household guard captain who blames the master for the horrific scars on her face and for destroying her life. Ayn, an insane halfling maid, suspected il'Sook's true nature, while Joaquin

Tantalroy, a fop, simply coveted Festud's coin. Amala let the conspirators concoct the plan, nudging them as needed, until they settled on kidnapping the aristocrat and ransoming him back to his household to extort his fortunes and then kill him once the gold changed hands. They would hold il'Sook at an abandoned ruin said to lay within a forest a few days to the south and would communicate with their conspirators by Tantalroy, who would remain behind to carry their demands back to the city.

What the conspirators didn't know, and what Amala knew all too well, was that the ruined tower

was not as empty as believed, for it housed a mad eladrin, whom Amala corrupted nearly a century ago, and who now abducts travelers that pass through his wood. He would take care of the kidnappers who took her, but Amala still needed someone to deal with the ones left behind. To this end, she has arranged for Lady Marissa Dunderly to hire a band of adventurers to rescue her soon after she is kidnapped. The reward she is offering is enough to secure a talented group certain to both succeed and ferret out the conspirators, thus dealing with the lot in one fell swoop.

It's an insane and convoluted plan, but Amala orchestrates the entire affair not for its logic, but because it suits her. Moreover, it puts her in the path of fresh servants she can corrupt and destroy at her leisure.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Lady Marissa Dunderly, one of Festuad il'Sook's courtesans and thralls, hires the adventurers to rescue her lover two days after the caravan sets out. With a hefty sum promised, the PCs set out following the caravan's route until they come upon the encampment. The PCs discover the camp is recovering from an attack the night before. Many guards and servants are dead, and il'Sook and a few others have gone missing. The timing seems strange, suggesting things might not be what they seem.

After some investigation, the adventurers should piece together what happened and possibly where the kidnappers went. Chasing the villains through the forest, the adventurers move from their world into the mad demesne of the Patriarch, a hideous eladrin twisted by corruption and insanity. Facing the forest's perils, the PCs eventually find the ruined tower and, with perseverance, il'Sook, who is in the chambers buried in the hill below.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

"Worse Than Death" assumes the characters are hired off-stage, having already negotiated the terms of their service with Lady Marissa Dunderly. In exchange for rescuing her lover, she promises to pay them 7,000 gp. Festuad is, however, a terrible villain in his own right, though this might not be readily apparent from the start. As the adventure unfolds, the PCs might learn about il'Sook's true nature. Leaving Festuad to fend for himself does not qualify since he has a silver tongue and he's more than able to bend the Patriarch to his will since he has done so before. If the PCs dispatch Festuad, be sure to award them 7,000 gp as part of the treasure found beneath

the ruined tower (unless they plan to bring back his remains to Lady Marissa, in which case consider decreasing that amount by half).

Alternatively, the characters might just happen upon the caravan after the attack. The PCs might become involved simply out of their sense of duty. Or, a caravan member might hire them to recover the missing master. A conspirator could send them into the woods in the hopes the forest will remove any witnesses to the terrible deed they committed.

In all cases, completing the adventure—rescuing the succubus or destroying her—is a major quest and worth 3,000 XP for Festuad's rescue or 3,500 XP for the succubus's destruction.

THE QUESTS

"Worse Than Death" offers PCs opportunities to earn quest XP. Provided here are the possibilities for the quest, and their rewards, in the adventure.

Major Quest—Rescue Festuad or Destroy the Succubus: The PCs are asked to rescue Festuad, but will they rescue him or discover Festuad's true identity and end up destroying her?

Reward: 3,000 XP for the rescue or 3,500 for her destruction; also 5,000 to 7,000 gp for a "safe return" of Festuad and half that for bringing back his remains.

MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

You can roleplay through the hiring process, which gives the characters a chance to learn a bit ahead of time. If so, Lady Marissa invites the adventurers to il'Sook's estate just outside of the starting city. There, the PCs get a good look at Festuad's wealth and his unseemly interest in occult art objects that leans toward the sinister. Lady Marissa is a red-haired

beauty—a half-elf with a sensuous manner and impeccable looks. She plies the characters with drinks, fine foods, and all the comforts available to her. She offers little about the character of her lover, saying only that he's a man of discerning taste.

She doesn't waste time in getting down to business: She explains that il'Sook was taken from his caravan about two days travel to the south, on the edges of the Whisper Wood. She offers the PCs 5,000 gp for his safe return, half for his remains. She's goes as high as 7,000 gp for his safe return. Once the PCs agree, she supplies the PCs with a map marking the caravan's route, highlighting the spot where the kidnappers struck, and horses to speed them on their way. She urges the PCs to waste little time and find her lover before it's too late.

If asked about a ransom, she explains the kidnappers have yet to make a demand. If asked how she learned of the kidnapping, she reveals one of il'Sook's agents used a Sending ritual to explain the situation and the caravan's location.

The characters can ask around to learn more about Festuad il'Sook from the locals. No rolls are necessary; the PCs learn he is a wealthy man with many friends and many enemies. No one speaks ill of him, for even his enemies know not to whisper against this powerful man. Of course, the lack of ill will might raise some suspicions on its own.

OTHER REWARDS

The characters should earn nine more parcels over the adventure's course. The adventure assigns treasures based on a typical adventuring group's composition as indicated in the encounter features. As with any adventure, consult your players' wish lists and replace items with ones more appropriate for the characters in the party.

PART 1: ON THE TRAIL

The caravan waits 75 miles south by road, or about a day and a half by horse. Unless the characters push on through the night—costing themselves one healing surge from the rigors of travel—the characters have to camp. Later that night, assassins, hired by the kidnapers (which is part of the plan Amala didn't know about), attack the adventurers to eliminate any potential rescuers.

Tactical Encounter: Night Knives (page 15).

PRISONERS

If the PCs think to take any attackers prisoners, they might learn some useful information from them by succeeding on an Interrogation skill challenge (DC 21, see *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 79). A successful challenge reveals they were sent by an arrogant male half-elf rake who paid them well enough to not have to cough up a name. He paid them to watch out for adventurer types over the next couple of days and make sure they disappeared.

CRIME SCENE

About halfway through the second day, the adventurers reach the caravan.

When the caravan comes into view, read:

The trade road forks, with one route heading south and the other heading east for a dark line of pine trees spread across the horizon. You spy an encampment near the forest where tendrils of smoke rise from the cook fires.



The bonfire burns green wood that was cut from the forest—this is what is causing all the smoke. Three sleek black carriages and five wagons circle the fire, and tents still stand inside the ring. However, only a few guards are standing watch, several tents lay collapsed, and far too few horses remain to pull all the vehicles. Furthermore, about 30 feet or so from the encampment, churned earth suggests a recent burial.

Characters closing in on the campsite find themselves confronted by a pair of guards—one old and the other young. They question the characters' purpose while brandishing spears, but it's obvious to everyone they are poor guardians.

Once the PCs put the guards at ease or frighten them off, Joaquin Tantalroy approaches them.

Read:

A half-elf steps out of the heavy smoke, his long blonde hair streaked with soot. He wears a smart doublet and black breeches tucked into black boots. His confidence and good looks are marred only by the muddy stains on his clothing and the fresh cuts across his face.

Tantalroy greets the PCs and welcomes them to the camp. Once he identifies their reasons for being here he says:

“They struck last night. It’s clear they had inside help because nearly all the guards, drovers, and even a few servants fell ill just before they attacked. I expect it was poison, since we lost most of them by morning. In any event, a small force swept through the camp, kept myself and a few others busy <gesturing to his face>, while the rest stole into Festuad’s tent, killed his lover, and vanished. That’s about it. Feel free to look around; I didn’t find much helpful, but you might.”

There are a few inconsistencies in the report—namely the timetable. If the attack came “last night” as Tantalroy says, then it most likely happened after the PCs were hired (adjust the text as necessary to reflect the speed with which the PCs arrived at the location, though, if needed). Thus, the adventurers might have some further questions, and the answers for the likeliest questions follow.

You say the attack came last night? We were hired two days ago. How can that be? That’s odd. You say you were hired? By whom? Lady Marissa you say? Well, she is one il’Sook’s courtesans, but I myself am at a loss as to how she anticipated the attack.

Is she trustworthy? About as trustworthy as anyone, I’d say.

Aside from Master il’Sook, who else is missing? We’ve lost three for certain, though a few servants ran off. Of the notable ones, there’s Tyster Dent, our surly dwarf caravan master. We also lost the captain of the guard, Cara Toyden, and Micah, Master il’Sook’s manservant.

Where were you during the attack? I fought the kidnapers and took this for my trouble.

Were there any witnesses? Just a few, and they all died from the sickness. From what I understand, five people left the camp, headed for the forest. I can only presume Master il’Sook was among them.

What’s your relationship with il’Sook? Me? I’m one of his companions. You might call me a sycophant, but I don’t mind. Friend, it’s all about power, and Festuad has it in spades.

After a few questions, the half-elf tires of the interview and urges the characters to look around.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

The conspirators, along with a half-dozen killers, struck the camp around midnight the night before. Ayn, the halfling servant, poisoned the wine and food and fed it to the guards, servants, and drivers to muddle their heads and make them easy picking for the killers. Once the poison took effect, the killers came up the road and slaughtered the weakened guards and anyone else who got in their way.

Joaquin, Cara, and Tyster, along with one of the killers, descended on Festuad’s tent in the chaos. There, Joaquin murdered his courtesans, while Cara and Tyster dealt with Master il’Sook. Hooding and tying him up, Cara, Tyster, and two assassins led their captive into the woods and traveled to the ruin. No one ever thought to question what happened to Micah. Joaquin believed the servant went with Tyster, while Tyster thought Micah stayed behind.

THE ENCAMPMENT

The adventurers can explore the encampment as they like and without interference.

Campsite: A bonfire burns in the middle of the wagons and carriages, but lack of suitable firewood forced the survivors to use green wood, causing the fire to give off thick smoke. A refuse pit is just outside the encampment, downwind. It’s filled with bones, dung, and other refuse. The remaining animals, nine horses, are corralled on the north side of the encampment.

Tents: Inside the ring of carriages and wagons are the tents. Most are two-person pup tents, and many are collapsed or trampled. A larger tent, used by il’Sook, stands untouched since the attack (Tantalroy’s arrogance prevents him from checking to see if he left anything damning inside).

Festuad’s tent is in disarray and it paints a grim picture of what happened.

When the PCs investigate Festuad’s tent, read: *Dried blood covers the tent’s fabric walls and collects in pools around where corpses must have lain. A few empty wine bottles, and upturned furniture, do not suggest where Festuad went or if he’s even still alive.*

Two women died in the tent—both il’Sook’s companions. If the PCs think to ask about their whereabouts, Tantalroy says he buried them a few hours ago. Searching the tent and succeeding on a DC 21 Perception check turns up a small jade idol of Asmodeus hidden in a small box beneath his cot, and a ritual scroll of Sending.

Carriages: There are three carriages, each sleek, black, and trimmed with silver. Their roomy compartments can hold eight people comfortably, with more

on the roof provided there's no baggage. Festuad, his courtesan, and a couple of sycophants occupied the lead carriage. More hangers-on claim the second and third carriages.

Characters searching the carriage interior might find something in Festuad's carriage with a vigilant search. A successful DC 16 Perception check in the lead carriage turns up a folded note on stained paper stuck between the cushions. It reads, "tonight" in a rough hand.

Graves: The adventurers can exhume the corpses. Twelve bodies are dumped unceremoniously in a mass grave. The worms have made been at the bodies already, but there's enough left to identify the corpses. There are six dead guards, all human, four servants—two halflings and two humans—and two young women dressed in rich clothing. Characters trained in the Heal skill and who examine the women identify they were stabbed a dozen times each. A DC 21 Perception check reveals that one of the corpse's lacquered nails and fingers are bloody as if she had scratched her attacker.

Examining the other bodies and succeeding on a DC 16 Nature check identifies a faint chemical smell as poison—specifically, oil of taggit, a thick substance favored for its soporific properties.

Characters with the Speak with Dead ritual might ferret out information regarding the circumstances of the two young women's deaths. What follows are typical answers to typical questions.

Who killed you? Joaquin wielded the blade that ended my life.

Where's Festuad? Gone. Taken.

Who took him? Servants and friends, traitors all. The guard captain and caravan master stole him from us.

What do they want with him? I don't know.

Did they say anything? Little, but Cara urged Joaquin to be quick about killing us.

Why did you have to die? I was a witness, I suppose, though I could ever feel Joaquin's lust.

What is Festuad? I don't know, but he's not human.

Other questions? Long association with Festuad as well as the selling of their souls damaged their psyches and so to any other questions they gibber and moan, offering little help.

Wagons: There are five wagons. Three hold supplies such as foodstuffs, tents, blankets, bedrolls, feed, and the like—enough to keep the entire caravan provisioned for two weeks. One wagon is empty and was set aside to haul the valuables that il'Sook acquires in his travels. The last wagon held servants and guards, and is equipped with benches.

Like the carriages, the wagons have been unloaded mostly, with only a few barrels of salted fish, crates, and trunks remaining in their beds. Hidden underneath one of the wagons—the second one searched—is a piece of evidence of the villainy. A successful DC 21 Perception check turns up a puddle of noxious fluid on the ground beneath the wagon. Looking up, the character sees a compartment where more fluid drips from the seam. Opening the compartment reveals a small storage space. Inside, there's a wet black bag, but nothing else. A DC 21 Nature check reveals the fluid is poison: oil of taggit (as drow poison).

Woods: The forest is dark, gloomy, and crowded with old trees that form a wall to either side of the old caravan track. Characters searching the forest's fringes who succeed on a DC 16 Perception check discover a human hand nailed through the palm to an old gray tree—this marks the forest as belonging to the Patriarch. The hand is a few days old, and it is

crawling with maggots. The spike holding it in place is crude iron that is streaked with rust and old blood. A second DC 10 Perception check reveals tracks leading off into the woods, away from the road.

INTERVIEWING THE TRAVELERS

The characters might interview the other survivors to discern if anyone saw anything.

ASTALLE FRUFX

Slender, attractive in an "undead" sort of way, Astalle has long black hair, with pale skin, red lips, and shadowed eyes. She wears black clothing, low-cut and revealing, but she doesn't flaunt her assets.

Personality Traits: Astalle rejects all notions of morality and religion, lamenting society's preoccupation with what she sees as nonsense. She's not above dalliances with strangers, excessive drinking and using more destructive substances, though she is reasonable in her appetites and rarely overindulges.

Motivations: Although educated and coming from a religious family, Astalle is not a believer. She concedes the gods must exist, but not as how mortals see them. Instead, she sees them as an aloof society of powerful and ancient beings who exploit mortals for their own ends, and they are thus not worthy of worship.

Information: Astalle is new to Festuad's clique and is not yet aware of his true nature. She has been concerned about his influence on the others. She also suspects il'Sook might be up to something, especially since she caught him in the midst of casting a Sending ritual from a scroll.

AYN

A frumpy halfling, Ayn looks like a doughy ball wrapped in stained clothes. She has porcine eyes and a small mouth underneath a broad dripping nose.

Personality Traits: A religious zealot, Ayn suspects everyone in the encampment of being corrupted, and she sees her master as the source of this brimming evil. Ayn watches. She grunts and tut-tuts when she sees someone doing something she condemns as wicked, but keeps most of her opinions to herself. Ayn interjects jumbled passages from the *Book of Erathis* to drive home her points.

Motivations: The halfling is a devout follower of Erathis, and she sees Festuad as the antithesis of her faith. So, she's thrown in her lot with the rest to ensure he's brought down a peg. She is unaware of who and what he is.

Information: Ayn has few useful talents. She's a passable cook and an acceptable maid, but she sees herself as an expert on religious matters, though her comments are often confused and just plain odd. Perceptive characters (DC 10 Perception check required) detect a faint chemical smell about her. A DC 21 Nature check reveals she smells of oil of taggit: the poison used to knock-out and kill the guards.

She stays closemouthed about her part in the kidnapping until the characters interrogate her (DC 16, Interrogation, see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 79; 700 XP). On a success, she reveals her part in the attack—poisoning the guards and others. She wasn't privy to where the others took the master, but they paid her 10 sp for her help—she shows the coins.

JOAQUIN TANTELROY

A young half-elf with long blond hair and regal features, he dresses in the current fashion—a blue doublet with silver piping, black breeches, and fine boots.

Personality Traits: Joaquin is cruel and arrogant. He behaves badly with no remorse or apology.

Motivations: Greed drives Joaquin; no amount of coin will ever be enough.

Information: Joaquin is a conspirator—the inside man. He doesn't hate Festuad, but he wants his money and status—things that he plans to get now il'Sook is out of the way. He has no idea Festuad is actually a devil and if he did, he'd expose the other conspirators without a second thought out of fear of supernatural agencies.

Joaquin killed the two young women to silence them, but he didn't escape without a few scratches. The left side of his face bleeds and he uses a silk cloth to staunch the flood. Characters discovering the skin and blood under the courtesan's nails (see *Graves*) should suspect him, and if he's confronted, he says "a love scratch and nothing more." Pressing the matter requires a skill challenge (DC 21 Intimidate; complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures); 1,400 XP). Success gets him to reveal he killed the women and he admits he was part of a conspiracy to remove Festuad from power. He also reveals the destination and the salient bits about their plans. A failure results in him drawing his weapons and attacking the characters. He fights until bloodied, at which point he flees for the forest, where, if the PCs don't get him, the horrors of the wood certainly will.

Joaquin Tantelroy		Level 12 Elite Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, half-elf		XP 1,400
Initiative +14	Senses Perception +14; low-light vision	
HP 232; Bloodied 116		
AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 27, Will 26		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Rapier (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage, and Joaquin can shift 1 square. Miss: No damage, but Joaquin can still shift 1 square.		
↓ Dagger (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+15 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.		
↖ Cruel Taunt (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Fear		
Close blast 5; one enemy; +15 vs. Will; the target is pulled 1 square, and grants Joaquin combat advantage until the start of his next turn.		
Combat Advantage		
Joaquin's melee attacks deal 3d6 extra damage to targets he has combat advantage against.		
Acrobatic Retreat (move; encounter)		
If Joaquin is marked, end this condition. Joaquin shifts 1 square and then moves up to his speed.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven	
Skills Acrobatics +17, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +18, History +16, Insight +11		
Str 15 (+8)	Dex 23 (+12)	Wis 16 (+9)
Con 12 (+7)	Int 20 (+11)	Cha 20 (+11)
Equipment fine clothing, rapier, parrying dagger		

TUM-TUM

With a powdered face, rouged cheeks, and fat, moist lips, there's something filthy about this little man even though he smells of mint. He's short and very fat, with long fingernails and dainty little teeth.

Personality Traits: Fawning and simpering, Tum-Tum is a wretched thing. He touches people who pay him attention, stroking their hands (or claws), and offering compliments to the point he seems insincere. Tum-Tum smiles and giggles, speaking in a high-pitched voice that suggests he's missing something more than sanity.

Motivations: Tum-Tum wants to please, and everything he does is for affection.

Information: This disgusting little man is quite mad and blurts out inappropriate things when he talks. He wails and shrieks about the losing his master and is utterly inconsolable. He sports a nasty bruise on the side of his face. A character might tease information out of the strange fellow by engaging in a skill challenge (DC 16 Diplomacy; complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures); 1,400 XP). A success calms him enough to report the caravan master, Tyster, batted him aside with a “*crude bludgeon, as he led the master, hooded, into the hideous wood.*” (Nobody else here knows about this incident or about Tum-Tum’s knowledge of the betrayal.) Failure leads to Tum-Tum attacking the character, biting the adventurer with his sharp little teeth, (+16 vs. Reflex; 4 damage, and the target contracts cackle fever, DMG 49). After biting the character, Tum-Tum flees into the forest. He has just 1 hit point and never takes damage from a miss like the minion he really is.

EXTRAS

The characters can discover additional information by chatting up the other folk. A successful DC 16 Streetwise check turns up a few servants who saw four people leading a fifth, whose head was covered, toward the forest, but no one saw who they were.

The adventurers can also ask about the conspirators and Festuad il’Sook to learn more about them by making a Streetwise check.

Festuad: Master il’Sook paid well and treated his servants with respect (DC 13), though some say a little too nicely (DC 25). He’s independently wealthy, a collector, a dilettante, and professional aristocrat (DC 13). Festuad is of middle height with a muscular

build, bronzed skin, smoldering eyes, and a wicked smile. His fingernails have a red enameled coating and his long, oiled black hair smells of incense (DC 15). He is charming, cultured, and striking. His good humor is infectious, but there’s something dangerous about him. He’s an expert on history, the arts, politics, and religion (DC 20).

Tyster Drent: Tyster Drent is the caravan master, and it’s his responsibility to manage the drivers, the servants, and the equipment’s maintenance (DC 13). Tyster is a middle-aged dwarf with a thick red beard, bald head, and craggy features. He wears a simple, though fine, damask silk uniform and a matching muffin-cap. A small silver dagger pin is his only badge of authority (DC 15). The dwarf does his best to play the part of a dutiful servant, smiling and fawning before Festuad, but then turning his wrath on his underlings when Festuad’s out of earshot (DC 20).

Cara Toyden: Cara Toyden sees to Festuad’s security, managing the guards, servants, and the rest (DC 13). The guard commander wears a bronze mempo over her face, covering her lips and chin, though one can see scar tissue crawling up her cheeks toward her bright green eyes. She has short, curly red hair and blue eyes. Thin and muscled, she is a competent combatant (DC 15). Toyden, like the others, has a reason to hate Festuad because he was the one who scarred her face. A former lover, when she resisted him, he punished her by scalding her face. She might have quit his company, but his money was too good to refuse. Suffering these years, she has finally resolved to see him dead (DC 30, again, Tanta-

Iroy might reveal this if his part in the kidnapping is revealed).

Micah: Micah is Festuad’s footman and manservant. He attends to his master’s needs, but was lackluster about his duties (DC 13). Short, thick, and always frowning, Micah is a plain fellow with few commendable traits (DC 15).



Festuad il' Sook

PART 2: TRACKING THE ENEMY!

Once the adventurers exhaust every avenue of investigation, the only thing left to do is follow after the kidnapers in the hope of catching up to them before it's too late.

INTO THE FOREST

Following the trail is not so difficult since haste was more important than stealth to those making the trail. Tracking the kidnapers requires a successful skill challenge in which the PCs follow the three sets of tracks and avoid the forest's perils.

Skill Challenge: Tracking the Kidnapers (page 16).

WOODCUTTER'S COTTAGE

The original owner is no more. For a while, he helped the Patriarch in the old castle ruin by waylaying and drugging travelers, but guilt drove him to suicide. Death offered him no escape though, and his spirit lingers still—a dark, twisted thing, in the thrall of a beautiful lamia who proves a more constant and useful servant to the mad eladrin.

Tactical Encounter: The Cottage in the Wood (page 17).

CORPSE

Not far after the Woodcutter's Cottage, the adventurers come upon a grisly sight.

Read or paraphrase the following text:

A woman lies facedown on the ground. She's missing her head. A pool of dark blood cools around the hideous wound.

The corpse is Cara Toyden. She succumbed to one of the many traps scattered through this part of the forest, in particular, a nasty line of adamantite thread stretched between the trees. Cara ran full tilt into the thread, taking off her head at the neck, but breaking the trap in the process. A DC 21 Perception check reveals the broken thread tied to the trees.

Perception Check

DC 21: *Glazed eyes watch you from the victim's head. Frozen in the dead flesh is a surprised look.*

A successful DC 21 Intelligence check identifies the woman based on her description (they don't get to check if they never got the description, though). The trail continues ahead, but there are now only two sets of tracks.

CARRIAGE GRAVEYARD

The tracks continue through the forest, though they move around pairs of trees now. Eventually, they open onto another clearing: a graveyard for old carriages and wagons.

Tactical Encounter: Carriage Graveyard (page 19).

PART 3: RUINS OF MALPHAS TOWER

The ruins of Malphas Tower are all that remains of an old eladrin citadel trapped in the mortal world centuries ago. Many of its people quit the tower when the malfunctioning magic that allowed their home to slip in and out of the Feywild exerted an unwholesome effect on them, warping their spirits and contaminating their flesh. In truth, it was Amala behind the malfunctioning magic. Most eladrin left, but not all. One remained—a wretched creature who long lost his name and now calls himself the Patriarch. It didn't take long before the queer influence infected his mind, turning him to darkness and unrepentant evil.

The Patriarch wants to rebuild what he lost. He wants his people to come home, but having no idea where his kin have gone, he constructs companions in the image of his warped memories. Thus he steals travelers, chops them up, and makes new creatures from their bodies.

The kidnapers, unaware the tower was occupied, reached the ruin and felt the full weight of their error as they were pulled into the tunnels, their flesh added to the Amalgamation and other horrors in the tunnels below. The only one spared this fate was Festuad, who immediately set about beguiling the Patriarch with promises of aid, secrets revealed, and anything else he could do to forestall the end the Patriarch intended for him. Festuad lingers, plying his captors with honeyed lies to buy time until help arrives.

COMMON DUNGEON ELEMENTS

Malphas Tower is a fraction of its former size, and its splendor has long since been lost to the elements. What was once a graceful spire is now a crumbling monument to a forgotten people, infested by creatures consumed by madness and grief. Beneath the ruin lies the Patriarch's lair, which is a grim complex infused with his insanity.

Floors: The floors throughout are stinking mud mixed with blood, filth, and discarded bits of flesh.

Ceilings: The ceilings are dried clay packed tight.

Corpses: Bodies litter the floors and passages. Most are missing one or more limbs, and all are disfigured beyond recognition of race, culture, or even gender.

Stairs: The steps are muddy and slippery, counting as difficult terrain.

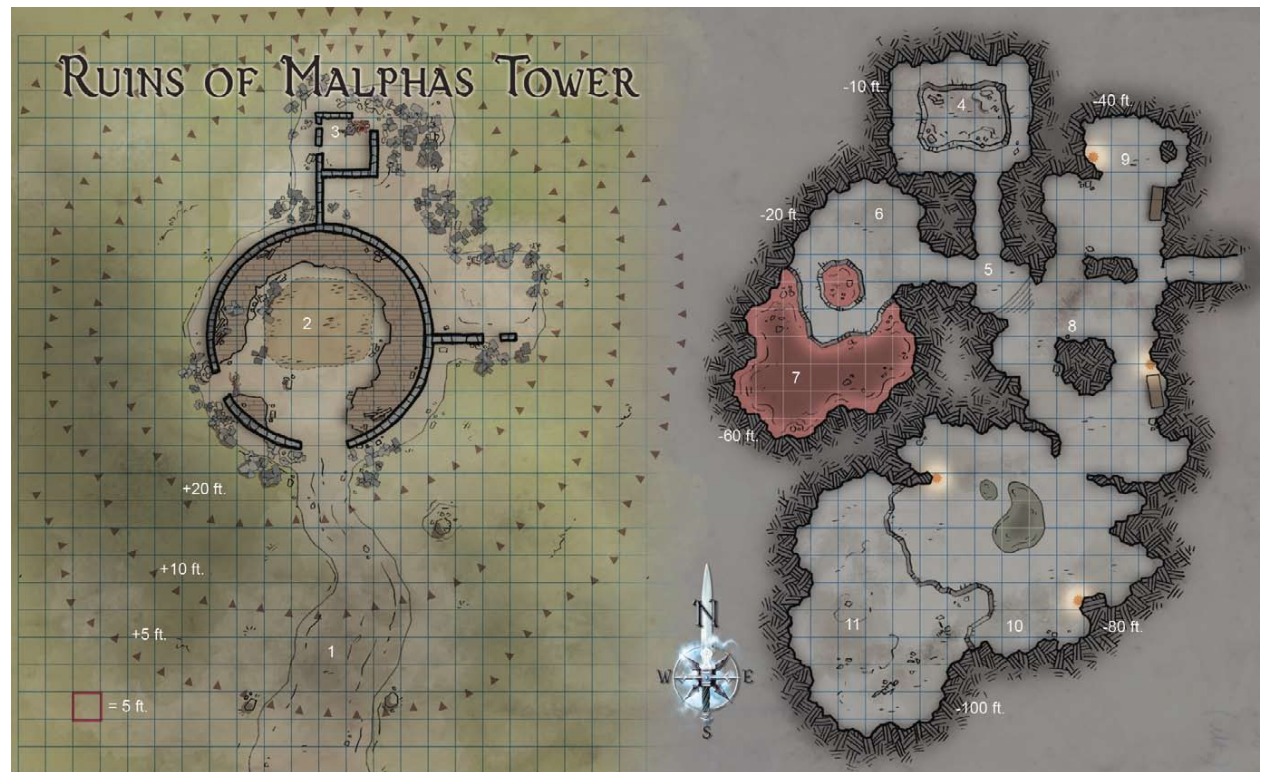
MALPHAS TOWER OVERVIEW

The following locations can be found around, in, and under Malphas Tower.

1. BODY ON THE PATH

A loose path of gravel mixed with dried bones and teeth runs up to the tower, and lying on it is a corpse that once belonged to a merchant. The corpse is missing everything below its abdomen, and stinking viscera trails off for a few feet behind the body.

Rubble: Squares containing rubble count as difficult terrain. Most pieces are unidentifiable chunks of rock, but a few hold the fantastic carvings that once adorned the tower, suggesting the place's fey origin in the unicorns, nature scenes, and sprites depicted in the material.



2. INFESTED TOWER

The tower is in its last days. Sentries protect the ruin from unwanted guests.

Tactical Encounter: Infested Tower (page 20).

3. SHED

A crumbling wall, overgrown with vines and crawling with black beetles, extends north from the old tower. A roofless shack stands nearly intact just before the sagging wall gives way to rubble. Inside, an escapee's bones lay huddled in one corner near a rotting backpack. Beneath it is a +3 *duelist's rapier* (or some other level 13 magic item).

4. PIT

Ten feet below the tower's floor is the bottom of the pit, which serves as an entrance into the complex. Since the ceiling caved in years ago, the denizens create a fragile floor from crushed cockroaches mixed with dung, clay, and mud.

5. TRAPPED PASSAGE

This area holds the tunnels' one alarm.

Booby-Trapped Passage Level 12 Obstacle
Trap XP 700

A tripwire sets off an alarm and damages the one setting it off.
Trap: The trap consists of 2 adjacent squares that contain tripwires. When a creature enters the square containing the tripwire without noticing it, the trap sounds the alarm and fires a barrage of poisoned darts at the character triggering the trap.

Perception

- ◆ DC 16: The character notices round holes burrowing into the muddy walls.
- ◆ DC 21: The character notices the tripwire.

Trigger

When a creature enters a trigger square, the trap sounds the alarm and attacks that creature.

Attack

Opportunity Action **Melee 1**

Target: Creature in trapped square

Attack: +15 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

Effect: A heavy iron bell rings behind a hidden panel in the ceiling, alerting all creatures in the dungeon to the presence of intruders. Until the characters take an extended rest, the creatures in the dungeon cannot be surprised.

Countermeasures

- ◆ A character who notices the tripwire can automatically avoid it when entering the square.
- ◆ A character can disable the trap by succeeding on a DC 21 Thievery check.

6-7. CHARNEL PIT

This area consists of two rooms, the charnel pit (room 7) and the shelf above (room 6). The dungeon's denizens discard body parts and useless organs here for the carrion eaters. An assassin's corpse floats on the surface of the rotting sea, worried at by the horrible ghouls that dwell in the pit.

Tactical Encounter: Charnel Pit (page 22).

8-9. PARTS IS PARTS

These rooms are where the Patriarch and his allies harvest body parts and construct new creatures.

Tyster Dent lies dead on an operating table.

Tactical Encounter: Parts Is Parts (page 23).

Secret Way: A narrow, cramped tunnel exits this room through the east wall, traveling about a mile until it opens onto a dark hillside not far from the carriage graveyard (see page 19).

Tailor's Nook: An operating table stands in this corner, holding what's left of Tyster Dent, the last kidnapper. He's missing most of what he started his life with and has gained an appalling number of new appendages—the Tailor thought to make him a flesh spider (see page 25).

10-11. RESCUE?

These chambers house the Patriarch and his beloved Amalgamation, a horrific abomination he has come to see as his bride. Festuad awaits his rescuers in this chamber.

Tactical Encounter: Rescue? (page 24).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Over the adventure's course, the adventurers likely have many reasons to suspect Festuad il'Sook of being more than he seems. From the strange circumstances of their employment, to contradictions in timing, to the fact he survives, and also his self-serving nature when finally rescued all point to his true nature. If the PCs rescue him, he's grateful and turns his attention to seducing and corrupting one of the adventurers, luring him or her into his service to harvest another soul for his dark mistress. Festuad might opt not to show his hand right away and instead use the adventurers to further his ends (perform discreet thefts, remove other threats, and so on) until the adventurers grow wise to what he's about, at which point Festuad will undoubtedly call in a favor from the Nine Hells to dispatch adventurers who outlive their usefulness.

NIGHT KNIVES

Encounter Level 10 (2,900 XP)

SETUP

- 2 human assassins (A)
- 3 human murderers (M)

The conspirators hired a small band of assassins to deal with any obvious adventuring types coming down the road.



Perception Check

DC 23: You hear movement and catch sight of a creeping shadow moving through the underbrush.

2 Human Assassins (A) Level 12 Lurker

Medium natural humanoid XP 700 each

Initiative +16 Senses Perception +12

HP 91; Bloodied 45

AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 21

Speed 6

⊕ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

+17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and the human assassin makes a secondary attack against the same target.

Secondary Attack: +15 vs. Fortitude; see *death blade* for effect.

⊕ **Swift Hand Strike** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

The human assassin makes a melee basic attack, makes a dagger attack, and can shift 1, in any order. Both attacks cannot target the same creature.

⚔ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Ranged 5/10; +17 vs. AC; 1d4 + 7 damage, and the human assassin makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +15 vs. Fortitude; see *death blade* for effect.

Combat Advantage

The human assassin deals 2d6 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Death Blade ♦ Poison

A creature hit by a weapon coated in death blade is blinded (save ends). *Aftereffect:* The target takes 10 poison damage.

Alignment Evil Languages Common

Skills Stealth +17

Str 18 (+10)

Dex 23 (+12)

Wis 12 (+7)

Con 13 (+7)

Int 14 (+8)

Cha 8 (+5)

Equipment leather armor, short sword*, 4 daggers*, 3 days rations, waterskin

*These weapons are coated in death blade poison.

3 Human Murderers (M) Level 10 Brute

Medium natural humanoid XP 500 each

Initiative +8 Senses Perception +6

HP 128; Bloodied 64

AC 22; Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 17

Speed 6

⊕ **Battleaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the murderer's next turn.

⊕ **Executioner's Swing** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Slowed creatures only; +13 vs. AC; 3d10 + 6 damage.

⚔ **Deadly Arc** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Close burst 1; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 6 damage, ongoing 5 damage (save ends), and the target is slowed until the end of the murderer's next turn.

Alignment Evil Languages Common

Skills Intimidate +9, Stealth +13

Str 22 (+11)

Dex 17 (+8)

Wis 12 (+6)

Con 18 (+9)

Int 10 (+5)

Cha 8 (+4)

Equipment hide armor, battleaxe, 3 days rations, waterskin

TACTICS

The murderers attack characters on watch, while the assassins target prone or sleeping PCs. The assassins use *swift hand strike* to hit one opponent and fling a dagger at another foe, specifically one facing a murderer. The murderers make basic attacks and following up with *executioner's swing*, reserving *deadly arc* for when they face two or more foes at once.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: A campfire fills a 10-square radius with bright light. Otherwise, there's dim light from the moon and stars.

Underbrush: Characters prone or crawling in the underbrush to either side of the road gain concealment.

Treasure: Each assassin carries a pouch with 400 gp.

TRACKING THE KIDNAPPERS

Encounter Level 12 (1,400 XP)

SETUP

Once the PCs decide to track the kidnappers, start the skill challenge.



Tracking the Kidnappers Level 12 Skill Challenge XP 1,400

The trail isn't that hard to follow, though the forest can hinder your efforts, and you must take care not to alert hostile creatures in the area to your presence.

The party attempts to find the kidnappers.

Complexity
2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills
Athletics, Endurance, Nature, Perception, Stealth.

Victory
The characters follow the trail and come to the woodcutter's cottage (see below).

Defeat
The PCs stumble into a trio of war trolls (MM 254) up to no good. Once they deal with these monsters, the characters can start the skill challenge again, but the complexity drops to 1. If they fail again, they still come to the woodcutter's cottage, but each party member loses a healing surge from their journey's trials.

Athletics (DC 21)
At least one character in the party must make an Athletics check each turn to overcome obstacles in the forest. A failed check costs a random character 1 healing surge in addition to counting as a failure.

The PC makes a path through a dense line of trees and foliage, and deals with other features of the rough terrain in the forest.

Endurance (DC 21)
At least one character in the party must make an Endurance check each turn to withstand the taxing effects of exploring the forest at night. A failed check indicates all party members lose a healing surge in addition to counting as a failure for the challenge.

The terrain in the darkened forest pushes the PC to the edge physically.

Nature (DC 16)
A character can make this check only once. In addition to counting as a success, the characters gain a +2 bonus to Perception checks for the duration of the challenge. A failed check costs each party member a healing surge since the PC mistakes a harmful herb for a beneficial one and feeds the group something noxious instead, in addition to counting as a failure.

The PC uncovers a patch of rare herbs that he or she knows has properties for sharpening the senses.

Perception (DC 21)
The PC picks out the tracks left by the quarry and can follow them easily.

Stealth (DC 21)
At least one character in the party must make a Stealth check each turn to avoid giving away the party's position to the kidnappers and also to the darker things of the forest. The PC points out paths for the group to walk that provide both cover and the best chance for silent movement.

THE COTTAGE IN THE WOOD

Encounter Level 13 (4,000 XP)

SETUP

1 feygrove choker (C)

1 lamia (L)

1 ogre warhulk (O)

1 woodcutter's ghost (W)

The woodcutter's spirit lingers on. The lamia made peace with the ghost, promising to set him free.

When the PCs enter the area, read:

The forest gives way to a small clearing, holding an old sod-roofed cottage and a gurgling brook with a small stone bridge spanning it.

The lamia emerges from the cottage to greet the PCs once she notices them. She has the appearance of a slim young woman and offers them shelter and food. Once half the PCs enter the house, she springs the trap.

Perception Check

DC 18: *The character notices the warhulk.*

DC 23: *The character notices the choker.*

Feygrove Choker (F) Medium fey humanoid	Level 12 Lurker XP 700
Initiative +14 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision	
HP 91; Bloodied 45	
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 22, Will 19	
Speed 8 (forest walk), climb 8 (spider climb)	
⊕ Tentacle Claw (standard; at-will) Reach 3; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). A target trying to escape the grab takes a -4 penalty to the check. The feygrove choker can grab up to two creatures at once.	
⊖ Choke (standard; at-will) Up to 2 grabbed targets; +17 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 4 damage. The feygrove choker makes a separate attack against each grabbed target.	
✱ Vine Fetter (standard; recharge [⊖]) Area burst 3 within 10; nearby vines animate and snare the feygrove choker's enemies; +15 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends).	
Body Shield (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a melee or a ranged attack against Reflex or AC; recharges when the choker makes a successful <i>tentacle claw</i> or <i>choke</i> attack) The feygrove choker makes its grabbed victim the target instead. The choker cannot use this power to redirect attacks made by a creature it is currently grabbing.	
Chameleon Hide (minor; at-will) The feygrove choker gains concealment until the start of its next turn. It can't use this power while grabbing a creature or while grabbed.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Elven
Skills Stealth +15	
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 18 (+10) Wis 13 (+7)
Con 13 (+7)	Int 6 (+4) Cha 6 (+4)

TACTICS

The woodcutter's ghost phases through the wall and uses *terrifying shriek* to stun the PCs. While waiting for the attack to recharge, it flits away, using its *death's visage* against defenders.

Meanwhile, the feygrove choker rushes from the trees and snatches a soft enemy (controller or striker) with a *tentacle claw*. If faced with two foes, it snakes out another tentacle claw to grab an extra PC and

Lamia (L) Medium fey magical beast (shapechanger)	Level 12 Elite Controller (Leader) XP 1,400
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +13	
Swarm's Embrace aura 1; an enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 10 damage.	
HP 244; Bloodied 122	
AC 28; Fortitude 25, Reflex 24, Will 26	
Resist takes half damage from melee and ranged attacks; Vulnerable 10 against close and area attacks	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6, climb 6	
Action Points 1	
⊕ Cursed Touch (standard; at-will) ⊕ Healing +16 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). In addition, the lamia regains a number of hit points equal to the amount of damage dealt.	
⊖ Devouring Swarm (standard; sustain minor; at-will) Reach 5; +16 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 4 damage. When the lamia sustains this power, the devouring swarm deals 3d6 + 4 damage to the target (no attack roll required). The target must be within this power's range for the lamia to sustain the power.	
⚡ Pacifying Burst (standard; recharge [⊖] [⊖]) ⊕ Psychic Close burst 5; +16 vs. Will; the target is stunned (save ends).	
Change Shape (minor; at-will) ⊕ Polymorph A lamia can alter its physical form to appear as an attractive Medium humanoid of any race or gender (see <i>Change Shape</i> , MM 280).	
Squeezing Swarm By altering its shape, a lamia can squeeze through small openings as if it were a Tiny creature (see "Squeeze," PH 292).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +14, Bluff +16, Insight +13	
Str 13 (+7)	Dex 14 (+8) Wis 14 (+8)
Con 18 (+10)	Int 17 (+9) Cha 21 (+11)

then *chokes* the characters and protects itself using *body shield*.

The ogre warhulk emerges from the woods to protect its lover, the lamia. It moves to defend the shapeshifter, using its heavy flail to smash through the ranks. The lamia uses *pacifying burst* against the PCs before the ogre arrives, and then attacks with *devouring swarm* and *cursed touch*.

Ogre Warhulk (O) Large natural humanoid	Level 11 Elite Brute XP 1,200
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +6	
HP 286; Bloodied 143	
AC 25; Fortitude 26, Reflex 21, Will 21	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 8	
Action Points 1	
⊕ Heavy Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
↖ Flail Hammer (standard; requires heavy flail; encounter) Weapon	
Close burst 2; +12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and a Medium or smaller target is knocked prone.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant	
Str 22 (+11) Dex 12 (+6) Wis 12 (+6)	
Con 23 (+11) Int 4 (+2) Cha 6 (+3)	
Equipment hide armor, heavy flail	

Woodcutter's Ghost (W) Medium shadow humanoid (undead)	Level 12 Controller XP 700
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 91; Bloodied 45	
AC 23; Fortitude 23, Reflex 23, Will 24	
Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial	
Speed fly 6 (hover); phasing	
⊕ Spirit Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
+15 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 2 necrotic damage.	
✂ Death's Visage (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic	
Ranged 5; +15 vs. Will; 2d6 + 3 psychic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses.	
↖ Terrifying Shriek (standard; recharge ☒ ☒) ♦ Fear, Psychic	
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +15 vs. Will; 2d8 + 3 psychic damage, the target is pushed 5 squares and is immobilized (save ends).	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +13	
Str 14 (+8) Dex 15 (+8) Wis 14 (+8)	
Con 13 (+7) Int 10 (+6) Cha 17 (+9)	

The feygrove choker fights until reduced to 22 hit points at which point it flees. The lamia falls back if reduced to 60 hit points, but the ogre and the ghost fight until destroyed.

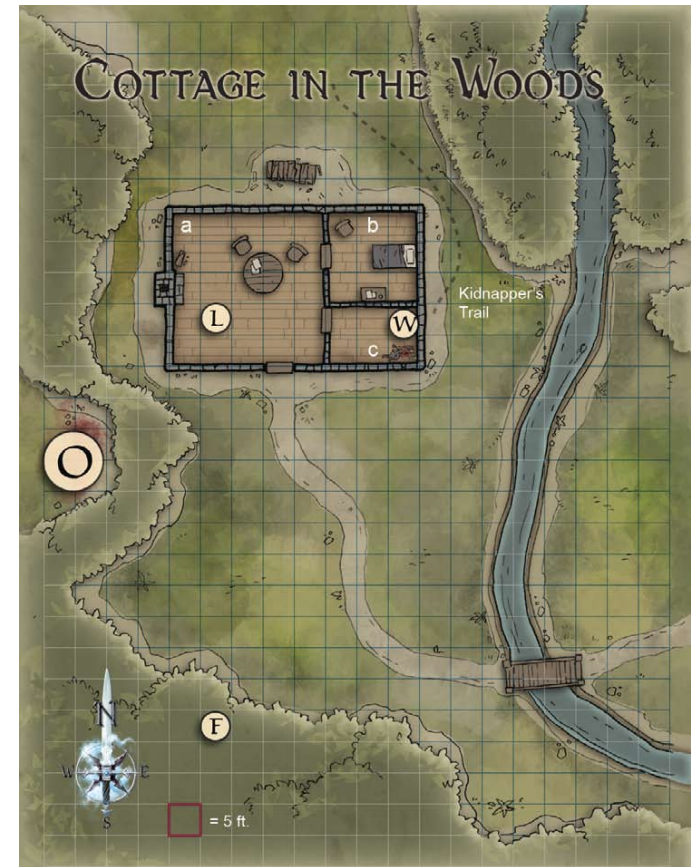
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: During the day, squares containing trees are dim and the clearing is bright; at night, squares containing the trees are dark and the clearing is dim (moonlight).

Cottage: The cottage contains three rooms, and entering it subjects characters to a horrific odor of rot. *Room A* is the main room and it holds a wooden table, a mildewed rug near the door, and a hearth that is cold from disuse. *Room B* is the old woodcutter's bedroom. It holds a bed, dresser, and a nightstand. A search of this room (DC 21 Perception) turns up a small box under the bed containing 25 locks of hair representing the full range of colors. Pink lace binds each lock—hair from the woodcutter's victims. In addition, the box contains the woodcutter's treasure (see below). *Room C* is where the woodcutter hanged himself. His corpse hangs still from the noose tied to the rafter overhead, though the head is black, the body bloated, and the entire thing crawls with flies. The first character to enter this room is subject to an attack (Fear): +16 vs. Will; the target is dazed until the start of its next turn.

Light Forest: Trees line the clearing's edge and creatures standing in the first square inside the forest gain concealment, while those standing deeper inside gain total concealment.

Ogre's Lair: A small clearing formed from toppled trees houses the ogre's clearing. Strewed about the area are bones, rotting limbs, and dead animals.



Stream: Spaces containing the stream count as difficult terrain. A character can leap across the stream with a DC 6 (DC 11 without a running start) Athletics check.

Treasure: In the box with the locks of hair is a *potion of vitality*, three sapphires (1,000 gp each), and 400 gp.

CONCLUSION

The kidnappers' trail continues beyond the cottage.

CARRIAGE GRAVEYARD

Encounter Level 12 (3,500 XP)

SETUP

1 **berbalang** (B)

4 **eaters of the dead** (E)

A **berbalang** and **eaters of the dead** claim this strange clearing, but don't place these miniatures on the map until they attack.

When the PCs come to the forest's edge, read:

The trees give way to a large clearing. Dozens of old wagons, carriages, and carts rot in the muddy field.

Perception Check

DC 21: When the characters enter the clearing: *You hear movement coming from somewhere ahead.* The character is not surprised.



Berbalang (B) Level 10 Solo Skirmisher

Medium immortal humanoid XP 2,500
Initiative +13 **Senses Perception** +6
HP 408; **Bloodied** 204
AC 25; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 21; see also *psychic deflection*
Saving Throws +5
Speed 6, fly 8
Action Points 2
 ⊕ **Claw** (standard; at-will)
 +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.

Summon Duplicate (minor, not usable while bloodied; at-will) Conjunction, Psychic

The **berbalang** manifests an exact duplicate of itself in an unoccupied adjacent square. It can have no more than four duplicates at once, and duplicates cannot summon other duplicates. When a duplicate appears, it makes an initiative check and joins the battle on that initiative count. All damage a duplicate deals is treated as psychic damage.

A duplicate has the same statistics as the **berbalang** except for its hit points. When a **berbalang** manifests a duplicate, the **berbalang** loses one-quarter of its current hit points and the duplicate appears with that quantity of hit points. The **berbalang's** maximum number of hit points remains the same.

Duplicates last until the **berbalang** reaches 0 hit points, absorbs them, or uses *sacrifice*. A duplicate must

stay within 10 squares of the **berbalang** at all times or it disappears.

Absorb Duplicate (standard; at-will) ♦ Healing

The **berbalang** absorbs a duplicate adjacent to it and regains 50 hit points.

Berbalang Sneak Attack

A **berbalang** or a duplicate that flanks an enemy with another duplicate deals an extra 1d8 damage on melee attacks against that enemy.

A Sacrifice (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic

Area burst 1 centered on a duplicate; the **berbalang** can cause one of its duplicates to explode in a burst of psychic gore; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 psychic damage, plus the target is dazed (save ends). *Miss*: No damage, but the target is dazed (save ends). *Hit or Miss*: The **berbalang** takes 25 damage.

Psychic Deflection (immediate reaction, when the berbalang is damaged by an attack; at-will) ♦ Psychic

The **berbalang** can deflect the damage it takes from an attack to one of its duplicates. Any effects or secondary attacks included in the attack are also deflected to the duplicate. The damage a duplicate takes in this way is considered psychic damage.

Alignment Evil	Languages Supernal	
Str 16 (+8)	Dex 22 (+11)	Wis 13 (+6)
Con 14 (+7)	Int 14 (+7)	Cha 15 (+7)

4 Eaters of the Dead (E) Level 10 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 250 each
Initiative +11 **Senses Perception** +9
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 28; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 26
Speed 6
 ⊕ **Hatchet** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 +19 vs. AC; 7 damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common
Skills Stealth +16
Str 23 (+13) **Dex** 19 (+11) **Wis** 15 (+9)
Con 18 (+11) **Int** 8 (+6) **Cha** 6 (+5)
Equipment hatchet, rags

TACTICS

The **berbalang** summons a duplicate twice and if not detected, it summons a third duplicate and it attacks. The **eaters of the dead** wait to attack until the **berbalang** sacrifices one of its duplicates. They rip into any dazed enemies.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: During the day, the clearing is bright and the woods are dim; at night, the clearing is dim (from moonlight), and the woods are dark.

Carriages and Wagons: These vehicles are all rotting and unserviceable, and entering their spaces costs 3 squares of movement.

INFESTED TOWER

Encounter Level 11 (3,425 XP)

SETUP

Ham (H)

1 cockroach swarm

2 crusties (C)

3 giant cockroaches

The Patriarch entrusts his home's security to a pair of crusties, which are living constructs fashioned from parts harvested from captured prisoners. These sentries loiter on a ledge inside the tower, where they watch for trespassers. Ham, a horror sporting a rotting pig's head in place of his own, waddles around the tower carrying a bucket of slop for the crusties to eat. The area (room 4) beneath the tower holds a nest of cockroaches, who survive by consuming escapees and those scraps left by the dungeon's inhabitants.

When the PCs approach the ruined tower, read:

Thrusting up from the hilltop is a crumbling tower, not unlike a broken sword. A yawning hole in the side and a few smaller rents grant access to its graveled interior.

Perception Check

DC 26: *For an instant, you see a grotesque face glaring at you, peeking out overtop the wall. Its eyes were in the wrong place and chunks of hardened slime clung to its greenish flesh.*

Ham (H)	Level 14 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (blind, living construct)	XP 1,000
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +8; blindsight 10
HP 175; Bloodied 87	
AC 25; Fortitude 29, Reflex 25, Will 23	
Saving Throws +2 against ongoing damage	
Speed 6	
⊕ Cleaver (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
⊕ Head Butt (minor 1/round; recharge ⓂⓂⓂⓂ)	
+15 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 8 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
⊕ Slice and Dice (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Dazed, stunned, or helpless targets only; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8 damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +11	
Str 23 (+13)	Dex 17 (+10) Wis 12 (+8)
Con 25 (+14)	Int 5 (+4) Cha 9 (+6)
Equipment hide armor, 2 cleavers	
Description This hulking humanoid's head is that of a rotting pig, and corruption oozes from empty eye sockets.	

Cockroach Swarm	Level 12 Skirmisher
Medium natural beast (swarm)	XP 700
Initiative +14	Senses Perception +7; darkvision
Stench (Poison) aura 2; enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls.	
Swarm Attack aura 1; the cockroach swarm makes a melee basic attack against each enemy that begins its turn within the aura.	
HP 124; Bloodied 62	
AC 28; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 20	
Resist half damage from melee or ranged attacks; Vulnerable 10 against close or area attacks	
Speed 6, climb 6 (spider climb)	
⊕ Corrosive Surge (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid	
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
Scuttling Mass (move; at-will)	
The cockroach swarm shifts 3 squares.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Skills Stealth +17	
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 22 (+12) Wis 13 (+7)
Con 20 (+11)	Int 1 (+1) Cha 6 (+4)

2 Crusties (C)	Level 11 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid (living construct)	XP 600 each
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +5; darkvision
HP 94; Bloodied 47	
AC 27; Fortitude 27, Reflex 26, Will 20; see also <i>crusty hide</i>	
Saving Throws +2 against ongoing damage	
Speed 6	
⊕ Slam (standard; at-will)	
+18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
✦ Roach Barrel (standard; at-will)	
Area burst 1 within 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends both).	
⚡ Eruption of Maggots (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Fear	
Close burst 1; +16 vs. Will; the target is dazed (save ends). The crusty explodes in a fountain of squirming maggots.	
Crusty Hide (while bloodied)	
The crusty takes a -2 penalty to AC and Fortitude.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +16	
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 22 (+11) Wis 11 (+5)
Con 22 (+11)	Int 5 (+2) Cha 3 (+1)
Equipment 3 roach barrels	
Description Amber-colored crust clings to these humanoid creatures' patchwork hides.	

3 Giant Cockroaches	Level 12 Minion
Medium natural beast	XP 175 each
Initiative +14	Senses Perception +7; darkvision
Stench (Poison) aura 2; enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls.	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 28; Fortitude 23, Reflex 25, Will 20	
Speed 6, climb 6 (spider climb)	
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will)	
+17 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
Scuttle (move; at-will)	
The giant cockroach shifts 3 squares.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 18 (+10)	Dex 23 (+12) Wis 13 (+7)
Con 16 (+9)	Int 2 (+2) Cha 6 (+4)

TACTICS

The crusties fling casks filled with cockroaches at the leading adventurers. They remain on the ledge until they run out of casks. Once exhausted, the crusties drop from the ledge, taking 1d10 damage from the fall and landing prone. They are utterly careless, tortured as they are, and ready to embrace death.

Ham lurches into the fight at the start of the second round. He moves around the tower, dropping his slop bucket, and joins the battle through one of the gaps in the wall. He prefers to use *slice and dice* along with his *head butt*, scattering and destroying his enemies at all sides.

The cockroaches do not join the fight right away. They join the battle only when a section of weakened floor collapses, at which point they roll initiative and boil up from below, hungry for flesh.

The cockroach swarm keeps moving, washing over and around enemies to position itself for the largest feast. Meanwhile, the giant cockroaches seek out dazed targets, so they go after Ham's leavings first.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The lighting depends on the time of day. During the day, bright light fills the area. At night, the center is dimly lit by moonlight, but dark in the spaces beneath the ledge.

Ledge: A ledge 10 feet above the floor is all that remains of the level above. A character can make an Athletics check to reach the ledge: divide the check result by 10 (or 5 if the character moves at least 2 squares before the check) and add the character's height to the result (*PH* 182).

A character can attack the ledge to cause it to drop. One square of ledge has an AC 16, other defenses 10, resist 5 all, and 30 hit points. If reduced to 0 hit points, that section of ledge collapses, carrying with it any creature on the ledge. The space below becomes difficult terrain until cleared.

Corpse: A dead assassin is where indicated on the map, though it's hard to tell who or what the victim was since the cockroaches gobbled up all the soft bits and left only bones behind.

Rubble: Crumbled masonry litters the hill's slopes. Spaces containing rubble count as difficult terrain.

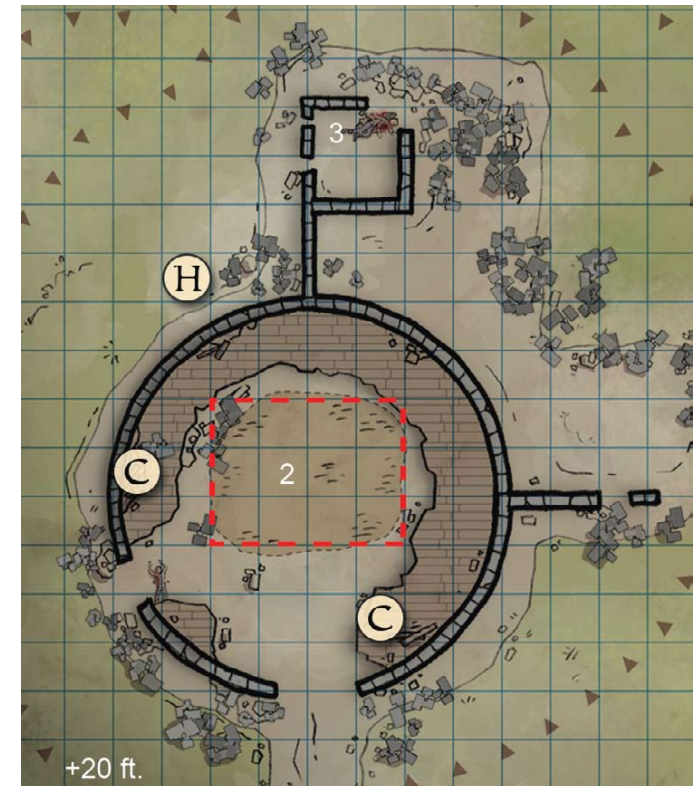
Weakened Floor: Each space marked with a "T" indicates an area of weakened floor. Any creature ending its move in a space containing weakened floor is subject to an attack: +16 vs. Reflex; the character and each adjacent square of weakened floor falls 10 feet to room 4 below. A character takes 1d10 damage from the fall and lands prone. On a miss, the floor stays intact, but it can attack on the following round.

Old Carving: Characters inspecting the interior wall discover a relief carving of a beautiful woman's face, with arched features, delicate lips parted slightly, and kind eyes. A smear of excrement across the face suggests what the denizens here think of the carving.

Treasure: One of the crusties (the first one the PCs search) carries a sack containing a topaz (500 gp), 100 gp, and 400 sp. In addition, there's a +4 *magic holy symbol* (or some other level 16 magic item).

CONCLUSION

If the characters avoided collapsing the floor, a DC 16 Dungeoneering check reveals the floor's weakness. Characters can rip up the floor with little effort and once they descend, they find a cockroach swarm and three giant cockroaches waiting in the darkness.



CHARNEL PIT

Encounter Level 11 (3,100 XP)

SETUP

- 1 death hag (D)
- 1 gibbering moulder (G)
- 3 horde ghouls (H)

Several creature prowl the fetid darkness here.

When the PCs enter this room, read:

A thin young man shuffles about in the stinking gloom. He digs into a pit with a long pole.

TACTICS

The gibbering moulder gibbers and flows toward the closest PC then uses *gibbering feast* to attack. The death hag keeps back until one or more characters come in range of *life drain*, which she uses straight-away. The horde ghouls scramble up the pit's walls.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The death hag has a lit candle affixed to the top of her head by melted wax, thus she sheds dim light in a 2-square radius.

Charnel Pit: The charnel pit drops 20 feet into a soup of liquefied flesh another 20-feet deep. A fall deals 2d10 damage and the character sinks to the bottom. Characters can swim with a DC 15 Athletics check. Climbing out of the pit requires a DC 20 Athletics check.

Treasure: The night hag, who digs through the mess with a long, hooked pole, recovered a level 14 magic item, a sack containing 2,400 gp, and a human hand with a platinum ring worth 2,000 gp.

Death Hag (D) Medium fey humanoid	Level 18 Soldier XP 2,000
Initiative +15 Senses Perception +12; low-light vision	
HP 171; Bloodied 85; see also <i>life drain</i>	
AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 31, Will 32	
Resist 10 necrotic	
Speed 6	
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic +24 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target is marked and cannot spend healing surges or regain hit points until the end of the death hag's next turn.	
← Life Drain (standard; recharge ☞☞☞☞☞) ♦ Healing, Necrotic Close blast 3; +22 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 necrotic damage, and the death hag regains 5 hit points for each creature damage by this attack.	
Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph A death hag can alter its physical form to appear as a female of any Medium humanoid race (see Change Shape, MM 280).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Bluff +19, Insight +17, Intimidate +19, Nature +17	
Str 25 (+16)	Dex 18 (+13) Wis 17 (+12)
Con 19 (+13)	Int 16 (+12) Cha 20 (+14)
Equipment candle, 20-foot long hooked pole	

Gibbering Moulder (G) Medium aberrant magical beast	Level 10 Controller XP 500
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +4; all-around vision, darkvision	
Warped Ground aura 3; enemies treat the area within the aura as difficult terrain.	
HP 110; Bloodied 55	
AC 22; Fortitude 23, Reflex 16, Will 19	
Speed 5, swim 5	
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid +15 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
← Gibbering (free, once on the gibbering moulder's turn before it takes other actions; at-will) ♦ Psychic Close burst 5; deafened creatures are immune; +12 vs. Will; the target is dazed until the end of the gibbering moulder's next turn.	
⊕ Gibbering Feast (standard; recharge ☞☞☞) ♦ Acid Close burst 5; unnatural mouths appear on dazed creature in the burst and bite them; +15 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 19 (+9)	Dex 14 (+7) Wis 8 (+4)
Con 22 (+11)	Int 4 (+2) Cha 18 (+9)

3 Horde Ghouls (H) Medium natural humanoid (undead)	Level 13 Minion XP 200 each
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 24, Will 20	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic	
Speed 8, climb 4	
⊕ Claws (standard; at-will) +16 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +16	
Str 17 (+8)	Dex 22 (+11) Wis 14 (+7)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 13 (+6) Cha 15 (+7)



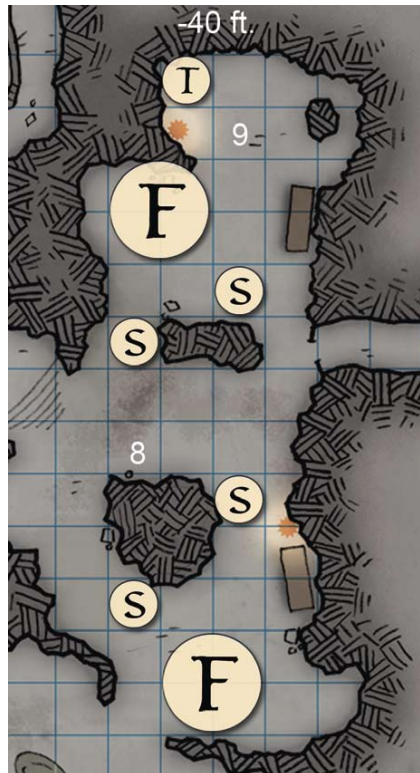
PARTS IS PARTS

Encounter Level 13 (4,200 XP)

SETUP

Grim Tailor (T)
2 flesh golems (F)
4 slipperies (S)

The Grim Tailor fashions wondrous and terrible things in these dark chambers and looks to add the adventurers to his foul collection. The tailor is a spiderlike creature, it scuttles about on seven legs and wields barbed needles trailing thread in its five arms.



When the PCs enter the room, read:

Wisps of thread, hooked chains bearing haunches of meat, and pools of blood fill this natural cavern. Hulking humanoid stand in the shadows.

TACTICS

The golems and slipperies converge on the adventurers, while the Grim Tailor emerges from his corner to tie up and tuck away adventurers for later experimentation.

Grim Tailor (T)	Level 13 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (living construct)	XP 800
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +13; darkvision
Snagging Thread aura 1; enemies starting their turns within the aura are slowed until the start of their next turns.	
HP 126; Bloodied 63	
AC 29; Fortitude 25, Reflex 28, Will 23	
Speed 7, climb 3 (spider climb)	
⊕ Needle (standard; at-will)	
+20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). Targets take a -2 penalty to saving throws against this slowed condition.	
⊕ Expert Stitch (standard; at-will)	
Slowed targets only; +18 vs. Fortitude; target is restrained (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target is immobilized (save ends). Targets take a -2 penalty to saving throws against this restrained condition.	
⊕ Tuck Away (minor 1/round; at-will)	
The Tailor enters an adjacent restrained creature's space and pulls the target onto its back. The target takes a -2 to attack rolls the Tailor while it is tucked away. Whenever the Tailor moves, the target moves with it. When the target is no longer restrained, it escapes into an empty adjacent square.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +12, Stealth +18	
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 24 (+13) Wis 14 (+8)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 18 (+10) Cha 12 (+7)
Equipment spools of multicolored thread, needles	

2 Flesh Golems (G)	Level 12 Elite Brute
Large natural animate (construct)	XP 1,400 each
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +5; darkvision
HP 304; Bloodied 152; see also <i>berserk attack</i>	
AC 26; Fortitude 29, Reflex 21, Will 22	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6; can't shift	
Action Points 1	
⊕ Slam (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC (+18 while bloodied); 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
⊕ Double Attack (standard; at-will)	
The flesh golem makes two slam attacks.	
⊕ Berserk Attack (immediate reaction, when damaged by an attack while bloodied; at-will)	
The flesh golem makes a slam attack against a random target within its reach.	
⊕ Golem Rampage (standard; recharge ☞ ☞)	
The flesh golem moves up to its speed plus 2 and can move through enemies' spaces, provoking opportunity attacks as normal. When it enters a creature's space (ally or enemy), the golem makes a slam attack against that creature. The creature remains in its space, and the golem must leave the space after it attacks. The golem must end its rampage in an unoccupied space.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 20 (+11)	Dex 7 (+4) Wis 8 (+5)
Con 22 (+12)	Int 3 (+2) Cha 3 (+2)

4 Slipperies (S)	Level 11 Minion
Medium natural humanoid (living construct)	XP 150 each
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +9; darkvision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 25; Fortitude 20, Reflex 25, Will 23	
Speed 7	
⊕ Goopy Attack (standard; at-will)	
+16 vs. AC; 6 damage and slide the target 1 square.	
⚡ Slimy Death (when reduced to 0 hit points) ⚡ Zone	
Close burst 1; the burst creates a zone of slime that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any creature that ends its movement within the zone is slowed until the end of its next turn.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +16	
Str 12 (+6)	Dex 22 (+11) Wis 18 (+9)
Con 8 (+4)	Int 6 (+3) Cha 8 (+4)
Description This creature is a mess of goopy flesh.	

RESCUE?

Encounter Level 11 or 13 (3,200 or 4,600 XP)

SETUP

Amalgamation (A)

Patriarch (P)

4 flesh spiders (S)

Festuard il'Sook (F)

These chambers serve as the Patriarch's lair and the home of his queen, the shuddering horror that is the Amalgamation. Here one also finds the sycophantic flesh spiders, which are horrific spawn that feast on the Amalgamation's leavings. Festuard il'Sook avoided being dissected and remade into one of the Patriarch's mockeries through his wit and cunning. He has not yet seduced the Patriarch but he might if the mad eladrin changes his mind about il'Sook's fate.

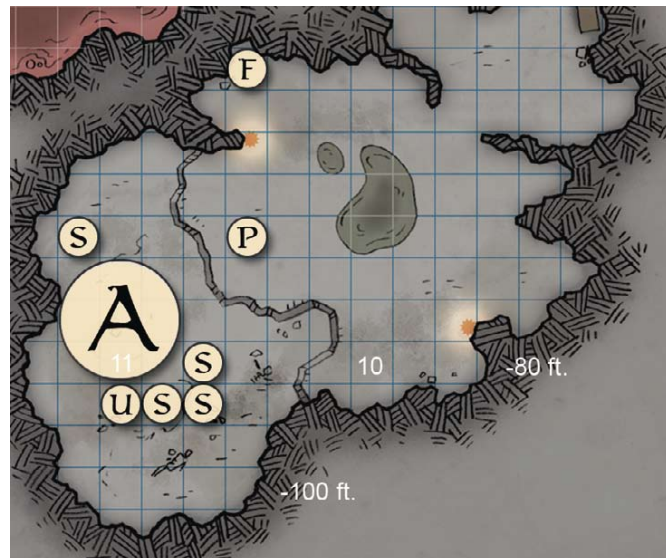
With this area's nearness to room 10, the Patriarch knows the adventurers are nearby. His madness prevents him from helping the Grim Tailor, for he places the wellbeing of his beloved queen above everything else.

If the PCs choose to include Festuard in the battle in this encounter, the higher of the two numbers listed above for the encounter level (and XP) are the ones that should be used. Otherwise, if the PCs brush off Festuard's fear as being selfish (and try to ignore his attack as listed in "Tactics" below) use the lower of the two numbers.

When the PCs enter this room, read:

A crude stair descends a few feet into a wide natural cavern. Clear slime clings to the walls and hangs in ropes from the ceiling, while something awful bubbles in a pool at the room's center. Beyond this chamber, the cavern drops away to a lower level where you see a massive female form, with pale skin, speckled in green blotches and crisscrossed with throbbing veins. Its multicolored hair hangs in knots and its face is a horror, being a dozen eyeless faces stitched together around a wooden frame. What's worse is that several fleshy creatures crawl across its shuddering bulk, sipping at pools of corruption collecting in its dimples.

Before this spectacle stands an aged eladrin male, whose long white hair has turned yellow with age, wearing a stained apron overtop a puce shirt. He trembles with rage, and his insane eyes rise to peer at you through brittle locks. He speaks, sending brown spittle into the air, "You dare? You dare?"



Perception Check

DC 20: *Huddled in a corner is a frightened young man with smooth skin, fine features, and red lacquered nails. There can be no mistake: He is Festuard il'Sook.*

TACTICS

The Patriarch attacks at once, charging the lead character, while the flesh spiders drop off their matron and join father in his struggle. The sudden violence agitates the Amalgamation, and she waddles forward, squirting foulness with every step. Fearing for his life, Festuard uses *charming kiss* on the closest adventurer and uses that character to cover his escape.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The Patriarch carries an everburning torch that shines bright light in a 5-square radius. Otherwise, the room is dark.

Ceiling: The ceiling stretches 20 feet overhead at the upper level and 40 feet at the lower level.

Stairs: Crude earthen steps descend from room 9 to room 10. Spaces containing stairs count as difficult terrain.

Corrosive Muck: In the center of room 10 is a pool of corrosive muck. Characters entering or starting their turns in a square containing corrosive muck take 10 acid damage and are slowed until the start of their next turn.

Treasure: The Patriarch offered up his treasures to his bride and they are ignored and trampled in the filth of room 10. The treasure includes 20 pp, 4,303 gp, 8,970 sp, and a level 15 magic item. ✕

4 Flesh Spiders (S) **Level 11 Minion**
 Medium natural animate (living construct) XP 150 each

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +6; darkvision
 HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 27; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 20
Speed 8, climb 4 (spider climb)

⊕ **Slobbering Fangs** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**
 +16 vs. AC; 5 damage (7 damage with combat advantage).

Evasive Scuttle (immediate interrupt, when the target of a melee or close attack; encounter)
 The flesh spider shifts 4 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common
Skills Stealth +16

Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 22 (+11) **Wis** 12 (+6)
Con 11 (+5) **Int** 6 (+3) **Cha** 4 (+2)

Amalgamation (A) **Level 15 Brute**
 Huge natural animate (blind, living construct) XP 1,200

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +9; blindsight 10
Stench (Poison) aura 1; enemies that enter or start their turns within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls.
 HP 183; **Bloodied** 91; see also *fragile construction*
AC 27; **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 24
Saving Throws +2 against ongoing damage
Speed 5

⊕ **Tide of Flesh** (standard; at-will)
 Reach 3; +18 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage.

⚡ **Fearsome Backhand** (when first bloodied)
 Close burst 2; +18 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage, and the amalgamation makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +16 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 10 damage, and push the target 8 squares and knock the target prone.

Fragile Construction (while bloodied) ♦ **Acid**
 At the start of the amalgamation's turn, it takes 10 acid damage, and each creature within 2 squares also takes 10 acid damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –
Str 25 (+14) **Dex** 14 (+9) **Wis** 15 (+9)
Con 23 (+13) **Int** 3 (+3) **Cha** 6 (+5)

Festuard il'Sook (F) **Level 12 Elite Controller**
 Medium immortal humanoid (devil, shapechanger) XP 1,400

Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +11; darkvision
Allure (Charm) aura 1; all creatures within the aura take a -2 penalty to Will.
 HP 230; **Bloodied** 115
AC 26; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 26
Resist 20 fire
Saving Throws +2
Speed 6, fly 6
Action Points 1

⊕ **Corrupting Touch** (standard; at-will)
 +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.

⚡ **Charming Kiss** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Charm**
 +17 vs. AC; on a hit, Festuard makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +16 vs. Will; the target cannot attack Festuard, and if the target is adjacent to Festuard when he is targeted by a melee or ranged attack, the target interposes itself and becomes the target of the attack instead. The effects last until Festuard or one of his allies attacks the target or until Festuard dies.

If the target is still under the effect of this power at the end of the encounter, Festuard can sustain this effect indefinitely by kissing the target once per day. Festuard can affect only one target at a time with his *charming kiss*.

⚡ **Dominate** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Charm**
 Ranged 5; +16 vs. Will; the target is dominated until the end of Festuard's next turn.

⚡ **Second Thoughts** (immediate interrupt, when targeted by an attack; at-will) ♦ **Charm**
 Ranged 5; attacker only; +16 vs. Will; the target is dominated until the end of Festuard's next turn.

Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ **Polymorph**
 Festuard can alter his physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique creature (MM 280).

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Insight +16, Stealth +10
Str 12 (+7) **Dex** 19 (+10) **Wis** 20 (+11)
Con 11 (+6) **Int** 16 (+9) **Cha** 23 (+12)
Equipment fine clothing

The Patriarch (P) **Level 12 Elite Skirmisher (Leader)**
 Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 1,400

Initiative +14 **Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision
Swirling Madness (Fear) aura 1; the Patriarch makes a mind rend attack against each enemy that starts its turn within the aura.
 HP 244; **Bloodied** 122
AC 26; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 21
Saving Throws +2; +7 against charm effects
Speed 6; see also *fey step*
Action Points 1

⊕ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 +17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage, and if the Patriarch is marked, end this condition.

⊕ **Mind Rend** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fear**
 +15 vs. Will; the target is dazed until the end of the Patriarch's next turn.

⚡ **Flesh-Splitter** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 Make a longsword attack against two targets. The Patriarch can shift before or after each attack. If both attacks hit, both targets are slowed (save ends).

⚡ **Haunted by the Past** (standard; recharge [2] [2]) **Fear**, **Psychic**
 Close burst 3; targets enemies; +15 vs. Will; the target is dazed (save ends). *First Failed Saving Throw*: The target is dominated instead of stunned (save ends). *Aftereffect*: The target takes 10 psychic damage.

Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
 The Patriarch teleports 5 squares.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +20, Heal +10, History +15
Str 13 (+7) **Dex** 22 (+12) **Wis** 8 (+5)
Con 18 (+10) **Int** 25 (+13) **Cha** 13 (+7)
Equipment stained robes, longsword, everburning torch

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert J. Schwalb contributed design to such books as the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Player's Guide*, *Draconomicon I: Chromatic Dragons*, *Manual of the Planes, P2: Demon Queen's Enclave*, *Martial Power*, *Player's Handbook 2*, *EBERRON® Campaign Guide*, *EBERRON Player's Guide*, *Divine Power*, *Adventurer's Vault 2*, *Draconomicon 2: Metallic Dragons*, *Primal Power*, as well as numerous articles for *D&D Insider*. Robert lives in Tennessee.