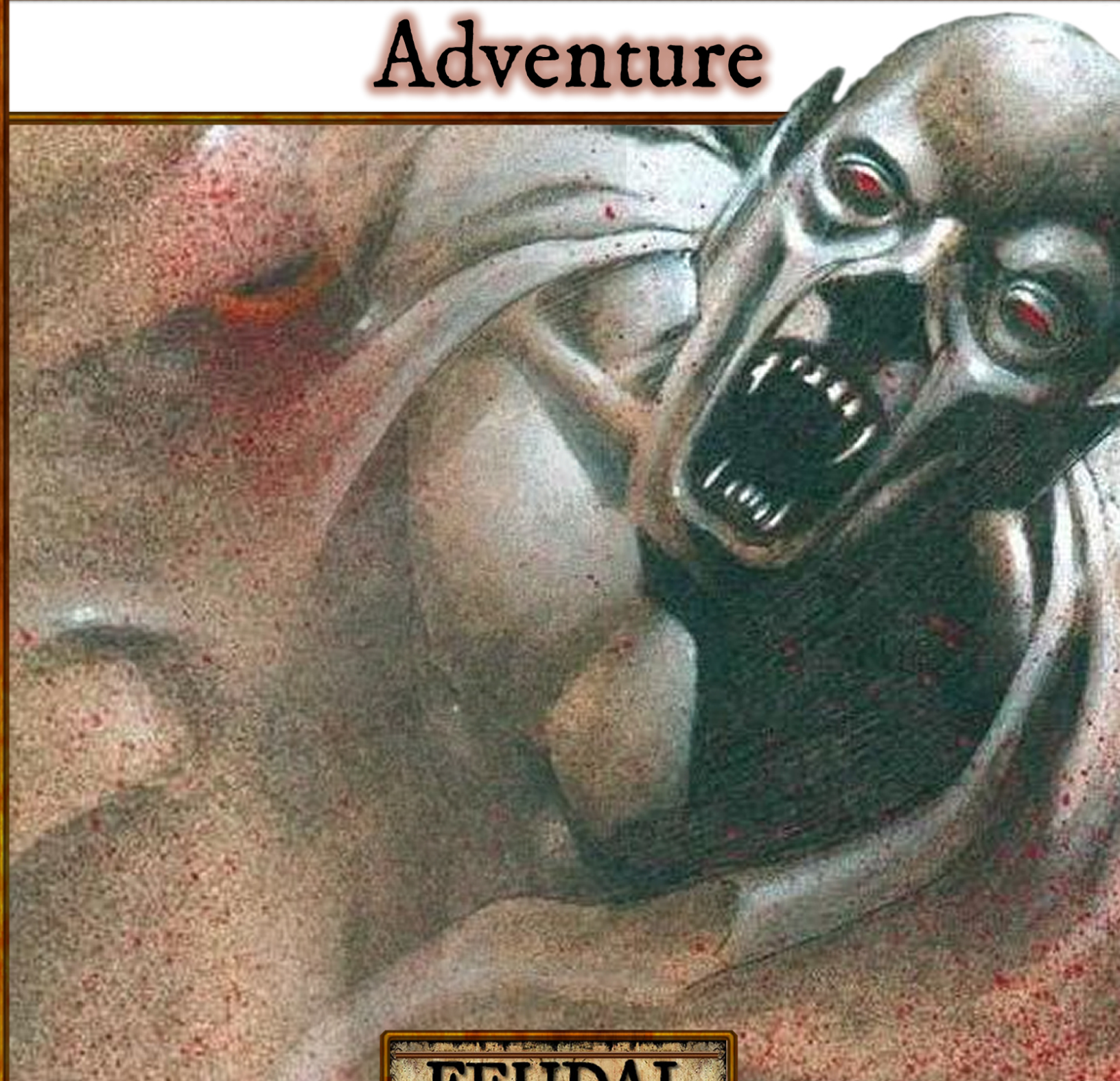


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THREE DAYS UNTIL DAWN

Adventure



LEVELS 4TH-5TH



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The Adventure



Michael Gullbrandson

• • • **THREE DAYS UNTIL DAWN** • • •

A HORRIFIC FIGURE crawls from the dark caves of Ash Mountains in search of a new dwelling.

“Three Days Until Dawn” is an adventure designed for four to five 4th level Player Characters and should escort them to 5th level. Although designed for the *Feudal Lords Campaign Setting™*, this adventure is easily adaptable for any setting.

THE ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Even in a deathly sleep, Iago the Black still dreams. Though as of late, when the world awakens and the vampire closes his eyes for the brief interlude before feeding, haunting premonitions grip his hungry heart. Perhaps a foul creature, more sinister than Iago, stirs and the vampire feels his haven in Ash Mountains is no longer safe or Iago feels he now has claim over the village of Drusholden.

Whatever the reason, Iago the Black and his entourage returns to his childhood home. He looks for an entrance into the Faerie Realm, rumored hidden in Drusholden away from mortals’ prying eyes. The village is the place he first drank immortal blood and where the lord, Sir Arthur Dunclin nearly ended his unlife. Iago also believes only in the Faerie Realm, a place that seemingly offers genuine immortality, is he truly safe. The vampire must be careful this time or else all is lost.





DEVELOPMENTS

Iago the Black, a vampire over two hundred years old, wishes to return to Drusholden Shire. His childhood village lies nestled in the hills between the woods of Eloë Castle and River Bottom. The undead menace initially plans to claim the ancient druid sanctuary beneath Hilltop Church as his new personal gravesite. He believes this is the portal into the Faerie Realm and the tomb of Sir Arthur Dunclin. However, until Iago can spend three consecutive days resting at the new site, the vampire remains weakened and at half normal hit points.

THE ADVENTURE

SYNOPSIS

The PCs travel upon the road toward Border Keep to discover a great fire consuming Eloë Forest. These trees provide the livelihood for Drusholden. As characters fight the fire, they find a few survivors in a deep and mysterious coma-like slumber. Coupled with a few more clues and old regional folklore, PCs discover a vampire walks among them. They have only three days to lift the undead siege beleaguering Drusholden, discover the exact location of the fairy portal, and vanquish Iago the Black before he makes Drusholden his permanent home.

PREPARING FOR THE ADVENTURE

This adventure assumes characters travel westward along the road to Border Keep or eastward toward Seven Arrows.

However, the following hooks and quests can further draw in PCs for a more personal connection.

DISGUISED MERCHANT

The halfling merchant, Brandle Burpsy, is really a dark one called Glum. Although it might be possible for PCs to discover his disguise with a passive Perception check, instead give the halfling merchant a few defining features that characters quickly notice. When characters finally encounter Glum in another disguise, his quirky nature gives him away. For example, perhaps Glum constantly burps. Coupled with the name Burpsy, this proves amusing for characters until they encounter another halfling that also frequently belches.

BLOODWOOD TREES

These trees produce a thick red resin that, when refined, produces a fine lacquer used in coating leather armor and the famous Welhan yew bows made in Seven Arrows. Furthermore, in times of war, the stout wood makes superior battering rams.

QUEST: THE PLAGUE MERCHANT

A halfling merchant hires PCs to carry a shipment of blankets to Drusholden village. Brandle Burpsy sold the blankets below wholesale to Sir Dunclin the Aged, absent lord of Drusholden. The lord wishes them delivered to Hilltop Church for distribution amongst his peasants. The merchant pays them 25 gold each and they can keep the horse and cart as part of the payment.

However, unbeknownst to Sir Dunclin and the PCs, the merchant is actually an agent of Iago and the blankets carry the disease filth fever (see rat entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL). The hoary vampire hopes the diseased blankets and the forest fire will drive villagers from Drusholden allowing him the time he needs to search the village freely for the Faerie Realm portal and the tomb of Sir Arthur Dunclin.

Major Quest XP: 875 XP and a treasure parcel if PCs destroy the blankets, take care of the disguised merchant, and find out who is truly responsible.

QUEST: THE BLOODWOOD HERETIC

Soon after the fire, many peasants blame both the tragedy and the mysterious coma inflicted on the survivors upon Harold Fainword, a local sage. It is no secret that the young Harold possesses an arcane book and dabbles into the occult. Though innocent, unless characters convince villagers otherwise, Harold burns at the stake as a heretical witch.

If saved, Harold might prove useful in his vast historical knowledge of the area.

Minor Quest XP: 175 XP if the PCs save Harold.

TREASURE PARCELS

This adventure uses the treasure parcel system found in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE. We encourage you to insert appropriate





treasures that fit with the wishes for your individual gaming group.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Despite the name, this adventure takes place in a period of four days, beginning with the first encounter. Although PCs can still complete the adventure after the fourth day, it proves difficult since Iago will regain his strength. As soon as PCs start down the road with a horse drawn cart filled with blankets and understand their motivation for adventure, begin with the first encounter, labeled *Bloodwood Fire*.

BLOODWOOD FIRE

The PCs travel either west or east along an old crumbling path of the Romas Empire. The road proves tortuous to the horse drawn carriage as the beast of burden constantly throws a shoe and a wheel is about to splinter. However, once within close eyesight of Eloë Forest, something distracts them from their traveling woes:

Smoke snakes upward from a thick grove of dark red trees as a blazing fire licks across the ground. Peasants from the nearby village of Drusholden run toward the flaming beast in hopes to quench the fire before it becomes a raging inferno.

Encounter: *Bloodwood Fire* (see page 13).

Afterward: When the encounter is finished, return here.

Many villagers profusely thank each PC who helped by offering them shelter for the night while they fix their cart. Eloise Mercier also explains the importance of the bloodwood trees (see sidebar).

THE BIT OF CLOTH

This is a bit of cloth unintentionally left behind by Iago. He still proudly wears the brigandine leather jacket he wore when serving under Lord Roger Dunclin as a lad two hundred years ago. Coupled with age and the harsh environment of Ash Mountains, the garment deteriorates.

Throughout the adventure, you can have players track the movement of Iago by leaving pieces of this garment behind. During the final encounter, players witness the armor and realize he is the true threat.

DRUSHOLDEN

Built to harvest the bloodwood sap for Welhan bowyers and fletchers in Seven Arrows, Drusholden is a small, sheltered community.

Population: 100; another 50 live on scattered farms. Humans with a few half-elves and even fewer halflings live in the area.

Government: Sir Elbert Dunclin the Aged (not in residence). John Reeve handles disputes and collects taxes. Peter Seneschal maintains the crumbling manor house.

Inns: Ruth Tanner has two rooms for rent over her husband's leather workshop.

Church: Thomas Parish runs Hilltop Church that overlooks the town.

Sage: Harold Fainwood.

Development

Once everybody catches their breath and discovers the mysterious coma-like slumber befallen their fellow neighbors, the peasants conclude that someone intentionally started the fire. They immediately march toward the hovel of Harold Fainwood.

Some characters might feel they may or may not have time to search the area. However, those deciding to take a minute or two to snoop around, have them make a Perception check.

Perception Check

DC 7: A bit of old, ragged leather hangs snug on a tree branch. It is stained green with crude remains of a partial coat of arms.

History Check

DC 12: If it were not for the age of the garment, it bears striking resemblance to the coat of arms of Sir Dunclin, Lord of Drusholden.

DC 17: It might be from a leather tunic of what a simple soldier might wear.

DC 19: The crest depicts, not the coats of arms of Sir Dunclin, but that of his ancestor, Sir Roger Dunclin, 1st Earl of Eloë Castle. Roger Dunclin fought against the Thirteen Tyrants nearly two hundred years ago during the Siege of Ash Mountains. He never returned. His son, Arthur became lord of Drusholden.

DC 12: Tracks outside the area of the fire indicate a struggle between the harvesters and a lone humanoid. The tracks lead toward Drusholden, but soon disappear completely as if the creature vanished in thin air.

Streetwise Check

Those unable to make sense from the partial coat of arms, a Passive Streetwise (DC 10) might suggest looking for the local sage, church records, or even the vacant manor house of Lord Dunclin.





Heal Check

Heal checks automatically fail when characters attempt to revive the comatose victims. It seems no natural or divine healing will awaken the men from their deep slumber.

Nature or Religion Check

DC 25: This deathlike coma is indicative of what happens prior to the awakening of a newly risen vampire spawn (see the vampire entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

THE BLOODWOOD HERETIC

Whether they are curious or recognize an innocent man might burn, PCs hear and witness the following as peasants clamor toward the village:

- ❖ *“Nothing good comes from a young man that buries his nose in ancient scribbling instead of tending the lord’s land.”*
- ❖ *“Not even Father Parrish can even read those mystical rubbings that boy makes.”*
- ❖ *“I heard he consults with the ghosts of Eloe Castle, he does.”*
- ❖ *“I am sure those are no ghosts, but demonic whispers he listens to.”*
- ❖ *“If it’s not Eloe Castle he’s after, then it’s deep in the old pagan hill that the church sits atop.”*
- ❖ *“Well, I am going to burn those fragment of parchments he keeps and if tries to stop us this time, I will burn his house to the ground. And I don’t care if he’s in or out.”*
- ❖ *“Yes. Let him pay for the fire and the arcane coma he’s put on the lads.”*

Encounter: *The Bloodwood Heretic* (see page 15).

Afterward: When the encounter is finished, return here.

Development

Harold might prove a useful ally should characters attempt to help him by either disbanding the mob or help put out the flames burning his house. Though he is the local sage, Harold does not have many books to rely upon. Instead, he points toward locations where characters might find the information they seek: Hilltop Church, Dunclin Manor House, and the ruined peasant house.

The next time PCs look for Harold, he is nowhere in the village. Should characters inquire about his whereabouts, they hear the following rumor:

“I told you lot he was no good. A pale soldier, ne’er seen the likes of ‘im in these parts, collected the boy. I ‘eard the soldier say something ‘bout the graveyard at the foot of Hilltop Church.”

What did the soldier wear?

“Well, I didn’t look much, since he gave me shivers up and down me spine, but I did see he wore dirty green armor – you know, leather with studs – the kind soldiers wear. If you ask me, it seemed to fall apart in his hands.”

Did you not find that odd?

“Everyfing is odd with that boy, if you ask me. Reminds me of a tale about another boy in this village who tended to his dreams more than his fields. Half-heart, I think they called ‘im.”

Do you remember that tale?

“Who me? Nah, I gave up such stories to my youth. They don’t feed me gullet, do they?”

LOCATIONS

Over the period of three days, PCs search the following locations for clues. These locations are in no particular order.

HILLTOP CHURCH

Once a pagan druid site, the small parish church overlooks Drusholden from the top of a modest hill. A graveyard lies to the south at the bottom of the hill surrounding several old barrow mounds.

PCs might venture here to deliver the blankets, look for clues concerning the torn leather fragment, or filth fever.

Characters with the proper skills and a successful passive or active check know some general information that might prove useful.

History or Religion Check

If characters gained Harold’s confidence, they receive a +2 bonus modifier to their History skill checks.

DC 12: It is common practice for the church to build on old pagan sites. This prevents pagans from using the sacred place as well as associating the church with the site.





DC 17: The name Drusholden is a derivative of druid's hold. Many sages believe pagan druids made their final stand almost 600 years ago on the hill where the church now rests.

DC 19: Some old documents suggest that the mysterious eladrin or elusive elves held strong ties to this place long before pagan druids. A rumor claims ancient guardian spirits watch over the hill.

Once characters climb the winding stairs leading to the church, they meet Pastor Thomas Parish. Glum is also present disguised as an altar boy rummaging through documents and other papers near the altar. Astute characters might see through their disguise or find fault in their behavior with the proper passive skills.

Perception Check (Outside the Church)

DC 7: *From on top of the small hill you see the graveyard below and it appears in a state of shambles. Crows flock to the area and it looks like someone plundered a few of the graves.*

Perception Check (Inside the Church)

DC 10: *A subtle smell of sweet lacquer lingers in the air. A red hue covers the stained glass windows.*

DC 12: *Red sap coats a wooden bucket and a horsehair brush.*

Insight Check (Inside the Church)

DC 17: *The youthful altar boy resembles the halfling merchant whom hired you only yesterday. Looking closer, you are not sure if the creature is a boy, a halfling, or something else entirely.*

DC 19: *Thomas Parish feels uneasy near the grand windows of the church.*

Role-Playing

Glum and the vampire spawn avoid any direct questions with vague answers or try to change the subject. They wish characters to unpack the blankets and leave the village all together. However, they will attack should PCs press them or trap them into a verbal corner.

Encounter: *Hilltop Church* (see page 16).

Afterward: When the encounter is finished, return here.

Development

With the vampire spawn and Glum no longer present, characters are free to search the church.

Perception Check

DC 7: Many scrolls, loose parchments, and two old tomes rest in a dusty corner within the altar. The titles of the books are *Marriages* and *Deaths*. PCs thumbing through the documents find a few tidbits of information that might prove useful.

DC 12: A scrap of torn leather (see the *Bit of Cloth* sidebar for more details).

Book of Marriages

PCs discover the partial heraldic symbol depicted on the bit of torn leather. It belongs to Sir Roger Dunclin. Also of interest, Sir Roger married Lady Elithir whose heraldic symbol is a beautiful hound covered in runes.

History Check

DC 17: The heraldic hound symbol reveals that the bearer of the crest is an eladrin, elf, or half-elf. The symbol also represents a guardian of fey secrets.

Streewise or History Check

DC 19: Lady Elithir was an eladrin. Her presence passed into legend after Sir Arthur Dunclin, the half-elf, died without an heir. Though treated as a commoner by her peers because she was not human, she totally enraptured the young Sir Rodger as a boy as they often played together in the hedge maze surrounding Dunclin Manor.

Only Lady Withow, wife of Sir Arthur, truly befriended her after news of the death of Sir Rodger. She lingered here for a little while until the death of her son before disappearing.

Book of Deaths

PCs find this book after a quick search of the Church or by investigating the pile of parchment that Glum rummaged through just prior to their visit. Listed below are a few entries from the old parish priest dating back nearly two hundred years.

Death of George Lascow

936 – After much deliberation, the shire reeve ordered the immediate death of George Lascow, squire to Sir Arthur Dunclin, after his fall into a death-like coma. An executioner from Eloë Castle performed the beheading and I undertook the





duty of burning the body. *Great Spirit, watch over him.*

Personal note: As I write this, I see the glow of flames consuming the old peasant house of Iago Half-heart. Initially my thoughts run toward ignorant superstition from a peasant mob, but after what I witnessed this evening, I am not so sure that they are in the wrong.

This serves as a slight clue of what characters should do with the death-like coma victims found during the *Bloodwood Fire* encounter.

Death of Sir Arthur Dunclin

936 – Even years after the fall of the Thirteen Tyrants, tragedy still follows the small town of Drusholden. Iago the Black, as he calls himself now, publicly murdered Sir Roger Dunclin this afternoon after laying siege to Dunclin Manor House.

Death of Sir Arthur Dunclin plus one day: I find it hard to write, and I tremble as I recall these recent events, but Sir Arthur Dunclin awoke from the dead early this evening just after sunset and launched himself at me. I am here and sound to write this entry, but the young lord is not.

I immediately called upon his widow, Lady Withow, this evening and we discussed the impossible notion of burying Sir Arthur in concentrated ground after these events. To my surprise, she did not object. Instead, she requested the body brought to Dunclin Manor. I am sure the recluse mother of Arthur spoke to the young lady about this matter.

Again, this entry serves two purposes. First, it might drive characters to investigate Dunclin Manor. Secondly, it offers insight of what will happen to the comatose victims should characters decide not cut their heads off. They will instead rise as vampire spawn.

Death of Iago Half-heart

936 – Truly a tragic tale. What I write here is what I relayed to the royal coroner, Sir Gregory Kingshand earlier this afternoon about the inquiry of the murder of Sir Arthur Dunclin, son of the bold Sir Roger Dunclin. I also write this entry to commemorate what was once Iago Half-heart, for the man I saw today is unknown to me now.

The youthful peasant farmer, who dreamt of glory and the immortality from the lips of a bard, went to war with Lord Roger Dunclin as an

untrained foot soldier, like many young men of the village, to fight the Thirteen Tyrants. Many returned disheartened by the things seen at the siege, but for young Iago. He claimed that upon the death of Sir Roger Dunclin, the lord bestowed Iago with knighthood.

No witnesses came forward to substantiate his claim; therefore, it fell upon deaf ears. In a rage, Iago left Drusholden.

However, he returned several years later as a man filled with experience from the road, a changed man seeking to fulfill his destiny. Iago . .

Glum tore the rest of this entry and ate it.

HILLBOTTOM GRAVEYARD

Curious PCs might venture into the graveyard following their visit to the church or further investigate the workers' order found at Dunclin Manor. They might also look for Harold here or hear from a villager that someone looted several graves.

Save for a few, most of the plundered graves are empty of bodies. As he looked for the grave of Arthur Dunclin, Glum took the bodies he unearthed and hid them at Dunclin Manor in the outlying buildings. Iago used a dark ritual to animate them into zombies to protect his newly created vampire spawn.

Encounter: *Tomb Scavengers* (see page 19).

Afterward: When the encounter is finished, return here.

Development

Should PCs look for Sir Arthur's sarcophagus within the tomb, they will not find one. If interested, they do find a sarcophagus for Sir Rodger, but it is empty. His body never returned. Furthermore, once inside the barrow tomb, characters find an inscription on the far wall, etched in stone. It reads:

In Memoriam of Sir Arthur Dunclin

My house is not quiet, yet I am not loud; but for us fates fashioned us together.

I am the swifter, at times the stronger; but my house more enduring, lasting much longer.

At times, I rest, yet my dwelling still runs; but within it, I lodge as long as I live.





Nevertheless, should we two be severed, my death will surely come.

*With all the love there is, your mother,
Lady Elithir*

This is actually a riddle and the answer, “fish in water”, refers to the stone fountain at the center of the hedge maze near Dunclín Manor. It serves a second purpose within the tomb, as the fountain is the entrance to the final resting place of Sir Arthur. It is also an analogy of the love shared between Lady Elithir, her husband, and later with her son.

DRUID SANCTUARY

A Perception check (DC 17) while within the barrow tomb discovers a secret passage behind the inscription revealing an ancient druid sanctuary.

Encounter: *The False Gravesite* (see page 21).

Afterward: When the encounter is finished, return here.

Development

If they manage to find and save Harold, he believes the following information:

“He calls himself Iago the Black. He is looking for a new gravesite to entomb himself and the place he wishes to occupy is the burial place of Sir Arthur Dunclín. For some reason, Iago feels this place holds some power over time and possibly true immortality. He thought this area to be the resting place of the young lord, but it seems he was mistaken.”

THE RUINED VILLAGE

This burned out section of Drusholden was once the birthplace of Iago. PCs might visit this place after their meeting with Rumblebump (see below), look for Mimdy, or search for a clue into the childhood life of Iago.

Characters locate Mimdy quite easily as she seeks out those who visit the area. The old human is the true lore master of the village and may provide clear insight or answer most questions characters may have concerning the shrouded history surrounding Iago. She also helps characters with clues to answer the riddles presented throughout the adventure.

In addition, many know Mimdy for her great healing ability. Each day, a character may seek her out to regain one healing surge. Only one character may regain a healing surge per day.

Finally, the haggard witch gives one character an old signet ring bearing the crest of Lady Elithir. She explains that it will help them locate the final resting place of Sir Arthur should they seek it out.

DUNCLIN MANOR

Clues from Hilltop Church or its graveyard might lead characters to visit Dunclín Manor. In addition, they might seek John Reeve here and their reward for helping with the fire.

As characters approach, read or paraphrase the following:

Dunclín Manor, upon first viewing, is simple in shape and design, but belying its true intention: it served as a defensive bastion. Once a wooden wall made from sturdy bloodwood trees repelled attackers or protected villagers from barbarian raids, but now no evidence of such a wall exists.

Although it is quite evident that the present Lord of Dunclín does not reside here nor does it serve as a stronghold, a small staff seemingly maintains the grounds and manor house for it is well groomed.

1. The Outlying Buildings

These buildings once served as homes for the gardeners and other peasants that worked the immediate land near Dunclín Manor. The encounter characters face in this area depends on the time of day they investigate.

Day – Encounter Level 4 (877 XP)

Iago slowly collects a horde of zombies to protect his vampire spawn during the day inside the homes. The vampire lord plans to overrun the village with the zombie horde should his other strategies fail to drive peasants away (see the zombie entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

2 Corruption Corpses

3 Zombies

4 Zombie Rotters

The zombies attack as soon as characters investigate the buildings.

Perception (DC 12)

Something appears buried beneath the dirt floor of each house. Characters that investigate further discover shallow graves containing vampire spawn. Once exposed to the sunlight coming in





through the thin parchment windows, they shriek and crumble into darkened ash.

Treasure: One family had a silver serving dish and a few choice pieces of silverware (250 gp) or similar treasure parcel.

Night – Encounter Level 5 (1,127 XP)

Iago transformed each of the manor servants into vampire spawn. They sleep during the day beneath the dirt floor in the outlying buildings (see the vampire entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

As above plus:

5 Vampire Spawn Fleshrippers

The zombies and vampire spawn attack as soon as characters investigate the buildings.

Treasure: Same as above.

2. The Manor House

Much of the manor house is devoid of life since Iago ransacked the area looking for the secret burial spot of Arthur Dunclin. Characters must successfully navigate using a skill challenge to find either clues or possible death as they search the premises.

Encounter: *House of Bats* (see page 23).

3. The Hedge Maze

The secret entrance into the Faerie Realm, thus into the Tomb of Sir Arthur Dunclin, is in the center of the hedge maze. Lady Elithir took many protective measures to guard the entrance.

Encounter: *Daggers and Thorns* (see page 27).

Afterward: When the encounter is finished, characters reach the center of the hedge maze (see immediately below).

A. The Fountain

Characters that navigate the maze enter into its center where a secret pass phrase and several creatures guard the entrance.

Encounter: *Fountain Guardians* (see page 28).

Afterward: Return here when the encounter is finished.

Development

Along the rim of the fountain, etched in stone, a riddle reads:

A man who orders its construction makes no use of it until a time when he does not know he uses it.

The answer is a “tomb” and designed such to lead characters to the graveyard if they have yet to garner the pass phrase to enter into the Faerie Realm. Iago figured this riddle out, which initially led him to believe the secret gravesite of Sir Arthur Dunclin lay beyond the tomb beneath Hilltop Church.

Once characters use the correct command phrase, “A fish in water”, read or paraphrase the following:

Water sprays from the bronze fish as it spins in a circular pattern dousing the edge of the garden. Along the circumference, rapidly bursting from the ground, colorful mushrooms grow at incredible speed binding each of you into a giant faerie ring.

As the mushrooms grow, the sky disappears replaced by a shadowy, encapsulating twilight. The hedge maze recedes into the earth as the towering Dunclin Manor crumbles into dust.

When the dust clears and your eyes adjust to the fog and twilight, you realize you are in the Faerie Realm. Where Dunclin Manor stood, a gothic tomb bedecked with stone faeries and fey-like creatures solemnly stands in a shrouded and mysterious forest.

The fountain that brought each of you here remains excluding the bronze fish and the riddle along its rim. The fish is now in the stone pond beneath the water and the verse reads, “Alive but without your breath, as cold in life as in my death; never thirsty though I always drink, I dress in mail but never clink.”

The answer “fish” or “fish out of water” returns characters from the Faerie Realm. Relatives of Lady Elithir etched this into the fountain as a reminder for her that her love with Roger Dunclin was temporary. That here, in the Faerie Realm, the eladrin lady was a mere fish in a stream, but in the other world, she was a fish out of water – always destined to eventually return home.

Encounter: *Final Confrontation* (see page 29).

Afterward: Proceed to the conclusion.





Conclusion

Lady Elithir thanks characters for preserving the memory of her son, Sir Arthur Dunclin by not letting Iago desecrate his tomb. She still does not know why, Iago felt compelled to return home and wonders if it might have something to do with her husband, Sir Rodger Dunclin, and his final words to the lad.

As a reward, Lady Elithir emerges from the Faerie Realm and talks to Sir Elbert Dunclin the Aged, current lord of Drusholden. Through her influence, Sir Elbert allows characters to use Dunclin Manor in his absence as long as they do not participate in illegal practices and occasionally help pay for expenses needed for maintaining the keep.

Furthermore, with the parish priest dead, Sir Elbert might see fit to appoint the cleric or paladin of the group to the position.

IF CHARACTERS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL

It is quite possible for character to find they cannot yet defeat Iago, especially if he is able to regain his strength. If this is the case, Iago and his agents become recurring villains until they are strong enough to return and defeat the vampire.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

From the village of Drusholden, you might use the suggestions below to create further adventures.

- ❖ While clearing the druid sanctuary for use as a catacomb or for food storage, workmen discover a secret entrance delving even deeper into the earth.
- ❖ Elves threaten the security of Drusholden when they refuse peasants to extract the sap from the bloodwood trees.
- ❖ A Darcadian prince plans to invade into these lands, but first wants to hurt any countermeasures by sacking Drusholden and Seven Arrows. The prince wishes to destroy the two villages responsible for the construction of the powerful Welhan longbows.

ADVENTURE PATH

Although designed as a standalone adventure, it may also serve as a first adventure of a campaign of

your own devising. Perhaps Lady Elithir wishes characters to find the whereabouts of her late husband. Is he dead or a vampire himself? With a little imagination, the possibilities are endless.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

The following magic item allows Game Masters to give further ambiance to the small area. You may allow characters to purchase this weapon in Seven Arrows or place it as part of a treasure parcel.

Welhan Weapon			Level 3+		
<i>A well-placed shot from this fine yew bow marks a lasting impression upon your foe.</i>					
Lvl 3	+1	680 gp	Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp
Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	285,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	1,125,000 gp

Weapon: Longbow
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, and ongoing 5 damage
Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when you hit with the weapon. The weapon damage die is 1d12 instead of normal.
Level 13 or 17: The weapon damage die is 2d6.
Level 23 or 28: The weapon damage die is 2d8.
Special: A character can only create or purchase this item at Seven Arrows.





Events

Throughout the adventure, several events take place over the three-day period characters search for Iago and the lost tomb of Sir Arthur Dunclin.

DAY ONE

The following events take place the first day after the forest fire. At the end of this day, Iago discovers the secret location of Sir Arthur's tomb and stays his first night at the new personal gravesite.

DISEASED BLANKETS

If characters did not contract to deliver the blankets to Drusholden, Glum is able to get a few unsuspecting merchants to do his bidding. The merchants distribute them throughout the day to villagers and establishments providing rooms for rent.

Characters spending the night in Drusholden encounter filth fever (see the rat entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL). Those affected awake on Day Two with noticeable symptoms of the disease.

Role-Playing

Characters easily see the merchants passing around the blankets. If confronted, the merchants boast about the easy money.

VAMPIRE SPAWN

If characters did not discover the fate of what would become of the laborers found during the *Bloodwood Fire* encounter, they arise as vampire spawn at sundown. Unless stopped, they move about the village terrorizing and killing the townsfolk.

Encounter Level 1 (250 XP)

If the vampire spawn priest and Iago are still alive, they join the fight at the start of the second round (see the vampire entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

5 Vampire Spawn Fleshripper

DAY TWO

The following event takes place the second day after characters arrived in Drusholden. At the end of this day, Iago stays his second night at his new personal gravesite.

EVACUATION

Cernya and Cierra arrive into town disguised as Captain Gaines and Sergeant Mullen. They tell the villagers that Darcadian troops are in the south and moving northward. They direct villagers to gather their things and evacuate to Borderkeep. The villagers do as told unless characters get involved.

Encounter Level 1 (300 XP)

The vampire lord hopes this rouse evacuates the village. As a Game Master, feel free to add zombies or vampire spawn to the encounter should characters attack. They appear as soldiers organized at the edge of the town (see the doppelganger entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

2 Doppelganger Sneaks

DAY THREE

The following event takes place the third day after characters arrived in Drusholden. At the end of this day, Iago stays his third and final night at the new personal gravesite.

ZOMBIE HORDE

Either the doppelganger twins or Glum unleashes the undead force upon the village in hopes to drive the villagers away or distract the characters.

Encounter Level 4 (877 XP)

Iago slowly collected a horde of zombies to overrun the village should his two previous strategies fail to drive peasants away (see the zombie entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

2 Corruption Corpses

3 Zombies

4 Zombie Rotters





BLOODWOOD FIRE

Encounter Level 4+ (875+ XP)

SETUP

Fire engulfs a grove of bloodwood trees. Iago the Black set the fire after draining blood from five harvesters while dominating the last one to help prevent villagers from fighting the blaze. Featured in this encounter are the following creatures (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL):

1+ Human Berserker (dominated; no save)

Iago the Black, Weakened Vampire Lord

At the beginning of the encounter, PCs at the edge of the grove only see the fire and smoke. Characters moving into the blaze to fight the fire see the following with their passive Perception:

Perception Check

DC 0: *Fire quickly consumes the brush and slowly licks up the trees. The hot flames blacken the bark and red sap pours from trunks as if the trees bleed.*

One villager calls out, "Look for survivors. John Redsap harvests this area with a few of his neighbors."

DC 12: *A survivor moves from the woods, somewhat blackened from soot and flames. He stumbles forward with a firm grip on his handaxe as he leaps upon you with a mad glint in his eye.*

DC 30: *Beyond the flames, blurred by intense heat stifling the air, a vague humanoid lurks in the shadows and watches your movements.*

Insight Check

DC 17: *The raging harvester seems stiff in his movement. He is dazed as if being compelled to attack.*

Once the encounter begins, each character involved transporting the disease-ridden blankets must make a saving throw or contract filth fever (see rat entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

TACTICS

Iago lingers in the background watching the action unfold. He remains protected from the blazing wall of fire swallowing the area. However, if PCs attempt to attack, manage to beat back the fire, or rush toward him, Iago simply retreats turning into

mist. The dominated harvester thrusts himself at vulnerable characters trying to focus their attention on the fire. Should the dominated harvester fall, Iago dominates another peasant as soon as his power recharges.

FOREST FIRE SKILL CHALLENGE

You move into a burning forest filled with suffocating smoke and flames armed with water buckets and knowledge of natural hazards to help quench the fire. All the while, you look for survivors.

Setup: To put out the fire before it gets out of control.

Level: 4 (700 XP)

Complexity: 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures).

Primary Skills: Athletics, Endurance, Nature, and Perception.

Athletics (DC 7): At least one character must make an Athletics check each turn to run back and forth carrying buckets of water to help fight the fire. Using this skill does not tally a success or failure, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's Nature check.

Endurance (DC 12): At least one character must make an Endurance check each turn to deal with the exposure to intense heat. A failed check indicates that each member of the group loses one healing surge, in addition to counting as a failure. If a character no longer has a healing surge, they suffer ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Nature (DC 12): At least one character must make a Nature check each turn to direct others in the best offense to fight the forest fire. A failed check indicates that each member of the group loses one healing surge, in addition to counting as a failure. If a character no longer has a healing surge, they suffer ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Perception (DC 7): *You notice an unconscious survivor lying helpless amongst burning foliage.* Using this skill does not tally a success or failure, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's Perception check.

Success: Characters manage to quell the forest fire and keep it from spreading.

Failure: The bloodwood grove, the livelihood of Drusholden literally goes up in smoke. Sir Dunclin will need to petition the king to open further portions of the Royal Forest of Eloë that contain the rare trees.



AREA FEATURES

Illumination: Bright light. Although night approaches, the blazing fire provides more than enough light.

Trees and Brush: Several burning bloodwood trees and bushes provide cover and concealment. However, a character ending their turn adjacent to a blazing tree or in burning brush receives 5 fire damage.

TREASURE

Characters successful in putting out the fire receive a hearty thanks and promise of reward from the village reeve, John. He must explain the situation to Peter, the seneschal of the manor house, and gain permission to access the accounts. John tells characters to give him a day and that Ruth Tanner has two rooms available over her leather shop.

Characters failing the challenge receive no treasure, but many villagers still greet them with thanks. Ruth Tanner offers them a place for the night should they decide to stay.





BLOODWOOD HERETIC

Encounter Level 1 (525 XP)

SETUP

A mob of peasants marches upon the house of Harold Fainwood to burn his supposedly heretical writings. Although not intended as combative adversaries for PCs, this encounter features the following creatures (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL):

20 Human Rabble

At the beginning of the encounter, PCs stand outside the wattle and daub house of Harold Fainwood. Should characters choose not to interfere or otherwise fail the task, the mob burns the house down as Harold flees into the woods. Otherwise, characters begin convincing the mob this is not the right course of action.

MOLLIFYING A MOB SKILL CHALLENGE

The PCs confront a mob of people intent on destruction. Completely outnumbered and overwhelmed, PCs stand fast to try to placate the crowd before things get worse.

Setup: PCs must convince the mob to disperse without causing any destruction.

Level: 3 (525 XP)

Complexity: 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures).

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate.

Bluff (DC 12): You try to turn the attention of the mob away from their immediate concerns to an unimportant or nonexistent issue. Other characters may aid a lead character using this skill.

Diplomacy (DC 12): You try to show the rashness and repercussions of the situation. Other characters may lend aid to a lead character using this skill. The first use of the Intimidate check closes off this approach.

Insight (DC 12): You entreat to the very peaceful nature of individuals within the mob. The first use of the Intimidate check closes off this approach.

Intimidate (DC 17): You use forceful tactics and threats to get the mob to disperse out of fear. On a failure, each member of the group loses a healing surge as a few individuals of the mob push back.

Success: Characters convinces the mob to disperse peacefully.

Failure: The mob puts forth its might and acts on its intent to cause destruction and harm.

ROLE-PLAYING

Harold is too busy gathering supplies and precious documents than to aid in his own defense. Even if characters found proof or argue facts, many suspicious villagers retort with the following comments:

- ❖ *“Who cares about some green piece of scrap leather (referring to Iago’s bit of cloth)? If it is old as you say it is, it only proves Harold summons the dead from their grave to do his bidding.”*
- ❖ *“No natural means short of a miracle will awaken those men from their sleep. It must be demonic magic from Harold.”*
- ❖ *“A vampire, you say? Vampire spawn, you say? What myths do you speak of? Demons and devils walk among us and you speak of vampires.”*

FAILURE

Characters can try to put out the fire using the forest fire skill challenge presented in the *Bloodwood Fire* encounter. This will ease Harold enough to approach them at night and offer any aid he can.

TREASURE

If characters prove successful, Harold rewards them with one *potion of healing* and a *comprehend languages* ritual scroll or similar treasure.

AREA FEATURES

Illumination: Although nightfall set in, the peasant mob provides bright light from their torches.

HILLTOP CHURCH

Encounter Level 5 (1,100 XP)

SETUP

Characters see through the paltry disguise of the vampire spawn or Glum and move to attack. This encounter features the following creatures (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL and D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE for templates):

Thomas Parish, Vampire Spawn Fleshripper
Glum, Dark Creeper (Rogue Template)
2 Phantom Warriors (Bodyguard Template)

Neither Thomas nor Glum initiates the combat unless they feel the characters know too much about their presence in Drusholden. However, should PCs act; they soon find they have more adversaries than they initially thought.

Two old guardians exist to protect the parish priest. This ancient ritual ensured survival of the pastor should pagan warriors return seeking destruction of the church and its occupants. The spirits do not associate between good and evil, but relentlessly guard the existing church preacher.

Iago knows of the old spirits and thus drew Thomas away from the church before turning him into a vampire spawn. Afterward, the vampire lord shared the information with his allies.

TACTICS

Thomas avoids any sunlit squares allowing the phantom warriors to shelter him against attacks. However, his urges soon fail him, as he will concentrate his attacks on the first bloodied enemy.

Glum uses his dark step ability to quickly strike against vulnerable opponents. Though the spirits do not protect him, Glum seeks shelter behind them as he throws daggers. Once bloodied, however, Glum will attempt to retreat (through a stain glass window if needed) to live and fight another day.

The phantom warriors use their bodyguard abilities fully and protect Thomas Parish from harm.

Phantom Warrior **Level 4 Elite Soldier**
Bodyguard Template XP 350

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +3; darkvision
HP 84; **Bloodied** 42
AC 20; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 17
Saving Throws: +2
Speed 6, fly 6 (hover); phasing
Action Point 1

⊗ **Phantom Sword** (standard; at-will) +
Necrotic

See the phantom warrior entry in D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL

Notes: _____

Phantom Tactics

See the phantom warrior entry in D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL

Notes: _____

Indomitable Presence

See the bodyguard template entry in D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE

Notes: _____

Shield Bearer

See the bodyguard template entry in D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE

Notes: _____

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common
Str 14 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+2)
Con 12 (+3) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 14 (+2)





Glum, Dark Creeper Level 4 Elite Skirmisher
Rogue Template XP 350

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +4; darkvision
HP 100; **Bloodied** 50
AC 18 (21 vs. opportunity attacks); **Fortitude** 15,
Reflex 19, **Will** 15
Saving Throws: +2
Speed 6
Action Point 1

⊗ **Lifedrinker Dagger** (standard; at-will) +
Weapon
+11 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage; See the dark
creeper entry in D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL
Notes: _____

↖ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) + **Weapon**
+10 vs. AC; See the dark creeper entry in D&D
4E MONSTER MANUAL
Notes: _____

☞ **Killing Dark** (when reduced to 0 hp)
See the dark creeper entry in D&D 4E
MONSTER MANUAL
Notes: _____

Combat Advantage
See the dark creeper entry in D&D 4E
MONSTER MANUAL (also see sneak attack
below)
Notes: _____

Dark Step (move; at-will)
See the dark creeper entry in D&D 4E
MONSTER MANUAL
Notes: _____

First Strike
See rogue class feature in D&D 4E PLAYER'S
HANDBOOK
Notes: _____

Sneak Attack
+2d6; See rogue class feature in D&D 4E
PLAYER'S HANDBOOK

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common
Skills Bluff +8; Stealth +11; Thievery +11
Str 11 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+4)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 13 (+3) **Cha** 13 (+3)

Equipment Dark clothes, 10 daggers, and a
lifedrinker dagger.

AREA FEATURES

Illumination: Dim light. After his transformation, Thomas did as much as he could to darken the stain glass windows.

Stained Glass Windows: The vampire spawn painted these windows with a red sap stain. However, characters can easily destroy or break through them to allow sunlight into the church or escape.

Stain Glass Window Level 1
HP 5
AC 5 **Fortitude** 10, **Reflex** 5
Break Strength check (DC 5)

TREASURE

You may use the following instead of a treasure parcel. Glum carries a *lifedrinker dagger* comprised of dark material known as shadowsteel. Otherwise, it is a austere weapon. It is his most prized possession and thus never uses it as a throwing weapon.

See the lifedrinker magic weapon entry in D&D 4E DUNGEON PLAYER'S HANDBOOK.

GAME MASTER'S NOTES

The current game license restricts Alea Publishing Group in what we can provide for our customers. Therefore, we provided extra space so Game Masters can conveniently jot down needed information before the encounter.



Hilltop Church



Priest's Quarters

Entrance

Entrance into the Belltower

Entrance into the Priest's Chamber



The benches are difficult terrain

Entrance (not shown)



TOMB SCAVENGERS

Encounter Level 3 (800 XP)

SETUP

The reckless digging by Glum to locate the true tomb of Sir Arthur Dunclin left many exposed bodies. Up until now, the only scavengers here are crows, but that soon changes. This encounter begins once characters pass through the gates of the Dunclin family plot. The following trap and creatures present themselves here (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL and D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE):

4 Gray Wolves

Elite Magic Crossbow Turret Trap

Read the following as characters enter this place:

As you enter the graveyard, a sudden chill sneaks up your spine. Many of the older graves appear recently plundered. Crows settle on top of headstones and barrow mounds picking at the exposed bone and decaying flesh.

Even the great barrow mound at the base of the hill seems disturbed as its stone door opens into darkness. A flagstone gateway coupled with a small rock wall and immense gothic statues depicting grotesque imps did not deter scavengers from looting this area as well.

Perception Check

DC 7: *Two small lumps of dry, broken clay, one vaguely humanoid, lay scattered across the ground.*

These two homunculi once guarded the control panel for the trap. Glum quickly dispatched them.

DC 17: *Small crossbow bolts, embedded deep in the soft ground, litter the area as if combat ensued once someone discovered the desecrators.*

Glum set off the trap that guards the Dunclin barrow mound, but quickly found the hidden control panel and killed its guardians.

DC 22: *The flagstones directly beneath the gate, on top of the rock wall, and throughout the Dunclin family plot, are actually pressure plates.*

DC 27: *The jaws of two stone imps, on either side of the barrow entrance, hang abnormally low and look as though constructed to pepper the area with crossbow bolts.*

DC 27: *A hidden control panel sits deep within the stone frame of the barrow tomb entrance.*

Well designed, the trap does not target animals or trigger when they or any member of the Dunclin family approaches. Also, remember that this is an elite trap, so increase all DCs by 2.

Read the following as characters pass through the gates or over the rock wall:

An immediate growl alerts you to larger scavengers as four wolves emerge from the surrounding forest. The smell of bones and decaying flesh attracted these beasts to an easy meal, but it looks as though your presence changed their mind. The pack surrounds your group as they prepare to pounce.

TACTICS

At first, the wolves avoid the trapped area, but quickly learn they are not the targets. Once this becomes evident, they press the attack. Two will easily jump the small rock wall attempting to surround the PCs and attack weaker party members remaining in the rear.

AREA FEATURES

Illumination: Bright Light.

Small Rock Wall: A 3-foot rock and flagstone wall surrounds the Dunclin family plot. It provides cover for those on the other side. A character needs a successful Athletics check (DC 10; DC 5 with a running start) to jump over the wall.

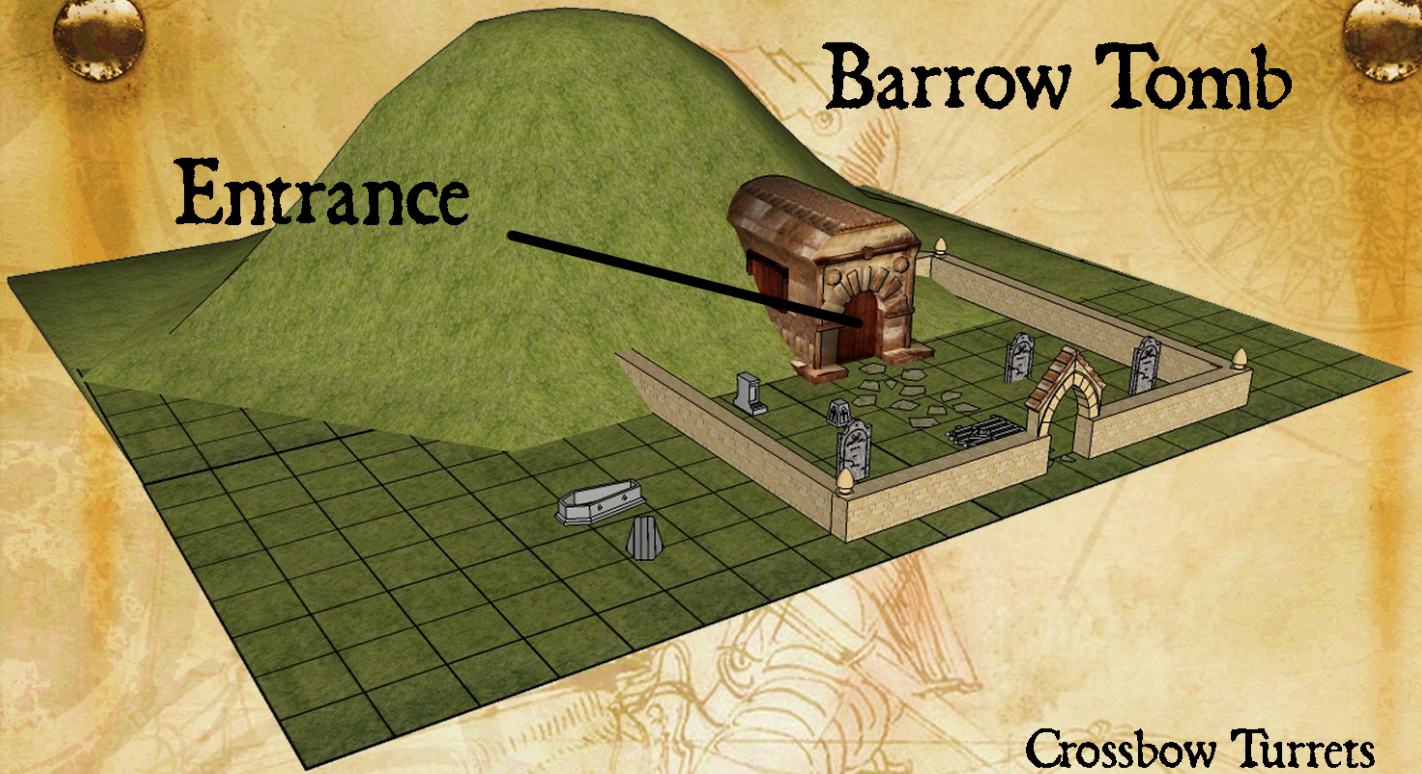
Headstones: These provide cover for those standing behind them.

TREASURE

A quick search of the area reveals a small pouch containing a treasure parcel. Glum accidentally dropped this pouch during his encounter here. Should he later witness characters with a part of the parcel, he waits until night to try to retrieve it from them.

Barrow Tomb

Entrance



Crossbow Turrets



Pressure Plates





FALSE GRAVESITE

Encounter Level 5 (1,175 XP)

SETUP

After Glum discovered the secret entrance into the druid sanctuary, he promptly informed his master. Believing this to be the final resting place of Sir Arthur, thus the area to become his personal gravesite, Iago took Harold here hoping to garner more information. Afterward, Iago planned to make Harold into another spawn to guard the barrow tomb. The following trap and creatures present themselves here (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL and D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE):

2 Wraiths

1 Mad Wraith

1 Elite Pendulum Scythes Trap

Read the following as characters enter this place:

Stale air rushes out of the large chamber as empty eyes bear down upon you from hundreds of skulls embedded in the cavern walls. A pale soldier, decrepit with sunken eyes and wearing shredded brigandine armor, paces frustratingly oblivious of the many druid relics.

Harold lies on the floor, huddled in a ball, and frightened by his captor and this chamber. Both look your direction, but only Harold seems thrilled by your presence. The soldier ignores you for but a moment before he attacks, mumbling to himself, "If this place is not where he dwells, where must it be? Ah, the riddle, it is the answer."

Weakened and bloodied since he has yet to create a new personal gravesite, Iago will not tally here long. It is important to stress his condition to the PCs. Also, Iago understands the complexity of the trap and he avoids triggering it as well as the rows the pendulum scythes glide across.

Perception Check

DC 27: *A large stone skull embedded by gnarled tree roots at the opposite end of the chamber houses the control panel in each of its eyes.*

After the second round of combat, when the druid spirits enter the chamber, Iago spouts: *"We accomplish nothing here save for angering the spirits guarding this place. It looks as though you gave young Harold a reprieve should you all*

survive." Iago, then uses his mist form ability and moves to escape. Iago then dominates Harold to leave the chamber and close the secret entrance trapping PCs in the sanctuary to deal with the wraiths.

TACTICS

The wraiths immediately surround the group as they phase into the chamber from the skull-lined walls. Knowing the origin and mechanic behind the trap, they also avoid rows where the scythes emerge or simply hover over the rows as the blades pass beneath them.

AREA FEATURES

Illumination: Dim light. A torch burns near Harold's feet.

TREASURE

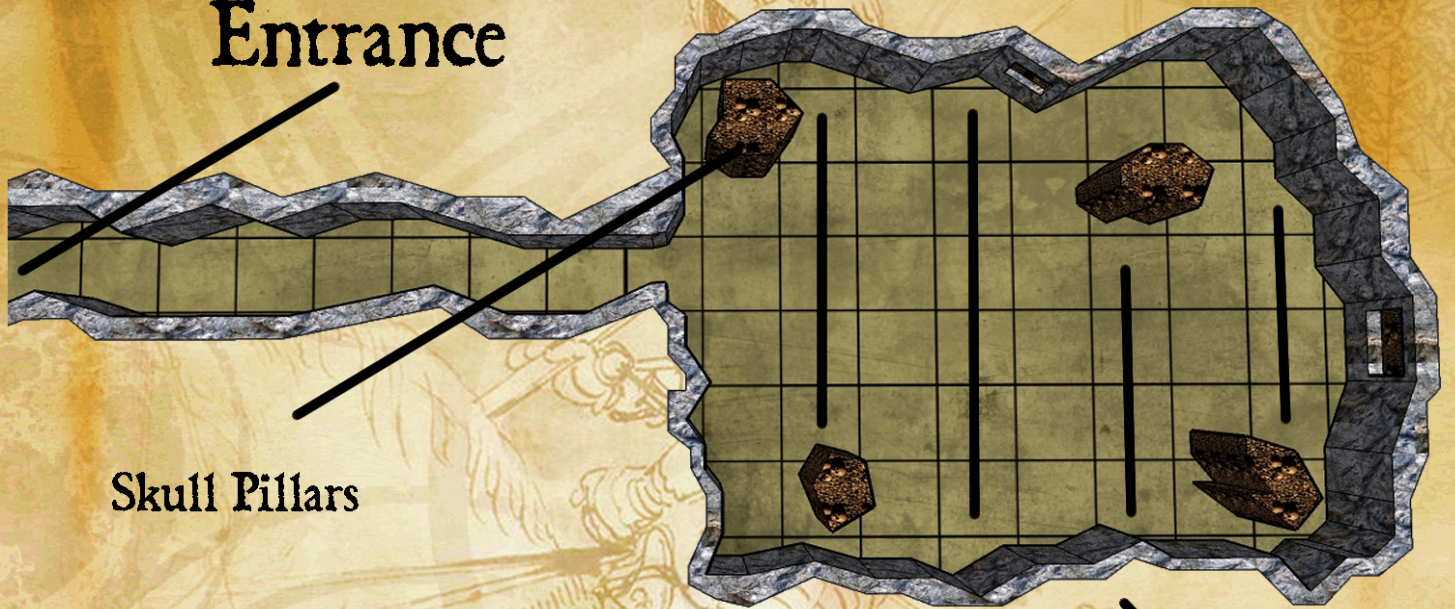
Treasure Parcel Suggestion: Coins totaling 30 gp lay out across the floor. Located in the mouth of the stone skull is a gold ring with numerous jade leafs circumnavigating the band (100 gp) and a *belt of sacrifice* wrapped around a stone tongue.

ORDER OF EVENTS

If characters find the tomb on the second or third day, Iago is not here and Harold is a vampire spawn that guards the barrow tomb. After characters search the area, they find a piece of green brigandine leather.

Barrow Tomb

Entrance



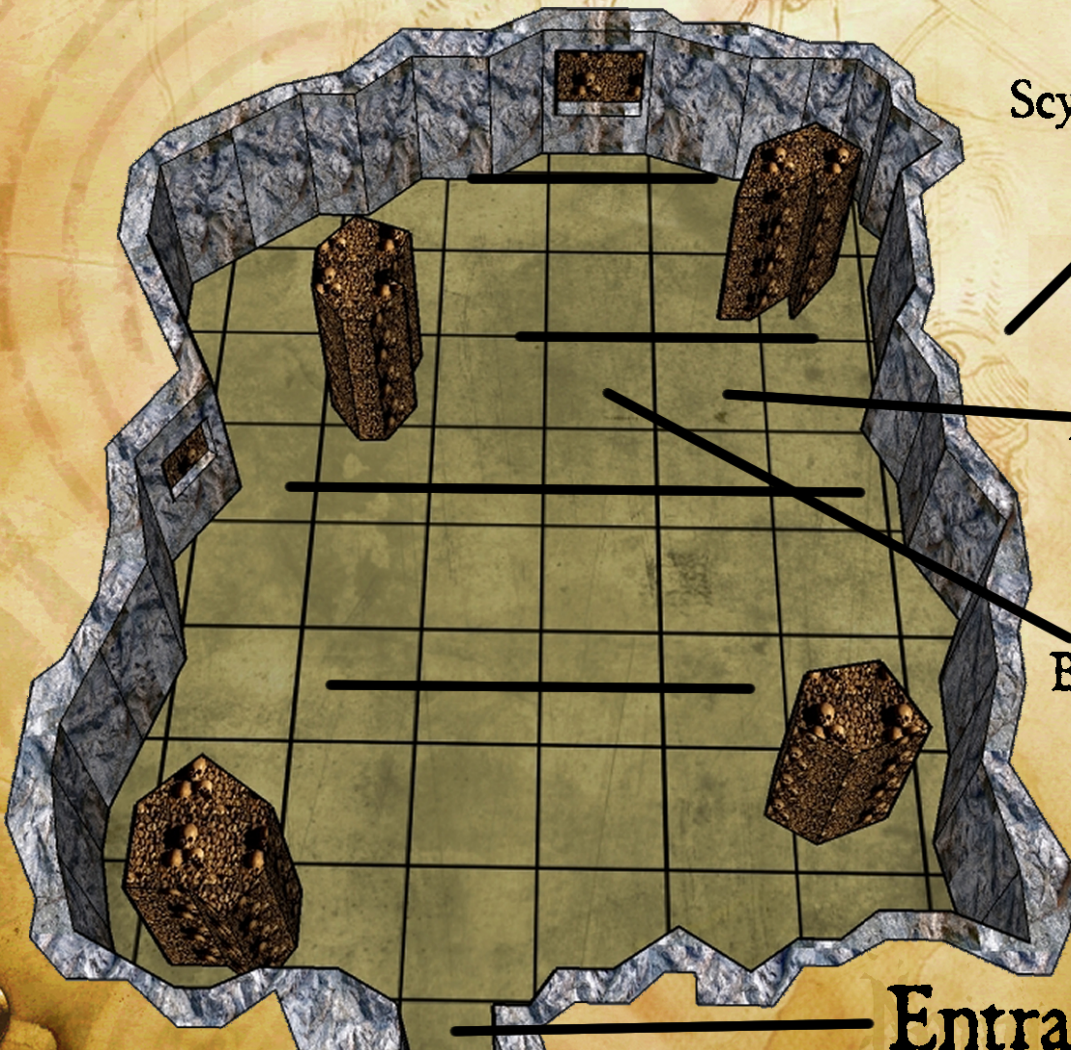
Skull Pillars

Scythe Trap Rows

Iago Begins Here

Harold Begins Here

Entrance





HOUSE OF BATS

Encounter Level 2+ (700+ XP)

SEARCHING DUNCLIN MANOR

SKILL CHALLENGE

PCs find the house seemingly deserted; no servants bound down its halls nor does Peter Seneschal, head of the household staff. Inquisitive PCs search the rooms for clues.

Setup: To find the clues within the manor before thwarted by traps or agents of Iago. Each failure triggers a minor encounter.

Level: 4 (700 XP)

Complexity: 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures).

Primary Skills: Arcana, History, Insight, Perception, Stealth, and Thievery.

Arcana (DC 17): PCs search for arcane clues that might connect the manor house with Lady Elithir and the Faerie Realm. If characters befriended Harold, they receive +2 bonus to their Arcana checks.

History (DC 12): Many historical artifacts fill the manor house. PCs find interesting items that might shed light on the motivations of Iago and his previous dealings with the Dunclin noble family. If characters befriended Harold, they receive +2 bonus to their History checks.

Insight (DC 17; 12 if PCs already read the inscription at the family tomb): PCs try to get a feel for family members and their point of view by gazing over personal possessions.

Perception (DC 12): Using this skill does not tally a success or failure, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's skill check. In addition, the first success reveals that others are present throughout the manor while a second success finds Rumblebump, a quickling zephyr.

Stealth (DC 17): Not immediately noticeable, a few unsavory denizens lurk the halls and staircases of Dunclin Manor.

Thievery (DC 17): PCs use their skill at unlocking secret compartments or chests that might hold vital information.

Success: Characters find all the clues regardless of the necessary skills needed to find them.

Failure: In addition to the minor encounters for each individually failed skill check, PCs failing the skill challenge face Iago the Black. The vampire lord discovers their presence and confronts characters for three rounds before making his escape.

CLUES

With each success, read one of the following clues correlating with the skill used. Also, feel free to create your own clues should PCs feel stymied as to what direction to go.

Arcana or History

A shield bears a heraldic symbol depicting a hound covered in mystical runes. You believe it has some connection with the Faerie Realm. Furthermore, the runic hound represents guardianship. Whoever bore this crest was a steward of a vital secret.

This is the crest of Lady Elithir. She is the steward of the Faerie Realm portal located at the center of the hedge maze.

Arcana

Many markings denote more than a passing interest into the world of fairies and fey folk. One such tapestry depicts a forest doused in twilight inhabited by sprites and other intriguing mythical creatures.

History

A tapestry depicts a confrontation that took place in Drusholden dating back nearly two hundred years. It celebrates the victory of Lord Arthur Dunclin, son of Roger Dunclin, over a powerful adversary who feasts on blood. It is also a memorial to the young lord, for it looks as though he suffered a mortal wound.

However, in another scene, his mother takes his body to a place showered in twilight, surrounded by fanciful creatures. In this delightful forest, he lives on.

If characters already encountered Iago at the Dunclin Tomb, then they recognize him as the enemy of Lord Arthur in the tapestry.

History or Thievery

Inside a small box, a two hundred year parchment, partially torn from a diary, reads the following, "I must know where Iago sleeps. The vampire must be discovered before he slumbers a third night. Otherwise, when I finally find and confront him, his reinvigorated strength might prove fatal for me and the village."



Insight

Within a solar, various embroidery tools sit in a comfortably worn chair facing the window. From this vantage point, one can easily see a fountain of some sort within the center of the hedge maze adjacent to the manor.

Insight

An endearing memento carefully etched in the wood frame of a doorway reads, "Though many may disapprove, it is only for Elithir that I move – Roger Dunclin."

Stealth

You manage to sneak close enough to several creatures speaking in hushed tones on the other side of a door.

"I demand to know, my servant, who guards my childhood home?"

"A pagan druid, mi lord. A woman called Mimdy."

Iago is talking to a henchman. If PCs have yet to visit the graveyard and pagan tomb, use the following response:

"A pagan eh? She might have some useful information pertaining to the pagan tomb Glum discovered at the base of Hilltop Church."

If PCs visited the graveyard and, more importantly, the hidden pagan tomb, read the following response:

"Ah, yes – she proved no use to me. Sir Arthur Dunclin is not buried there as I initially suspected."

PCs might wish to confront Iago. In addition to the vampire lord, the room also contains a human guard and two shadow hounds (see the hound and human entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

Stealth or Thievery

A sleeping hound, bundled in shadows as dark as a moonless night, guards a saddlebag bearing some message of importance. After relinquishing the

MAPPING DUNCLIN MANOR

There are no interior maps to Dunclin Manor. The main reason is to give a fluid feel as characters move into and out of rooms without worrying where players have their miniatures. However, for the minor encounters, it is best to make an impromptu map to fit your gaming style.

object, you read the following letter, "Iago, my sister and I fully observed Captain Gaines of Borderkeep as instructed. We will return in time to be of some use should your plans to drive the villagers of Drusholden away fail. Cernya and Cierra."

Cernya and Cierra are doppelganger twins and agents of Iago. They return to Drusholden beginning on Day Two as one of them disguises herself as Captain Gaines as a secondary ploy to evacuate Drusholden.

Thievery

In a secret compartment bearing the crest of a runic hound, you find a small parchment detailing an order for stone artisans to inscribe a passage within the interior of the Dunclin Tomb.

Thievery

A brief diary entry dating back a couple hundred years reads, "My life upon this world is at an end. No longer do I find solace as I find myself once again lost - a fish out of water. My good family knew this eventuality would come to my heart."

FAILURES

A few dangers exist within Dunclin Manor that might hamper or pose obstacles for characters. For a failed skill check, PCs have a minor encounter listed below.

GLYPH OF WARDING TRAP (300 XP)

Placed by Lady Elithir, these wards protect the keep against intruders. In addition to the Dunclin family, they do not harm animals or beasts, servants, or villagers of Drusholden (see traps in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE).

SPAWN AND THRALLS (550 XP)

Peter Seneschal and John Reeve, now vampire spawn, discover the PCs and move to attack along with their thralls (see the vampire and human entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

- 2 Vampire spawn
- 3 Human guards





NETHER HOUNDS (750 XP)

A few shadow hounds guard the premises lurking in shadows ready to pounce on unaware intruders (see the hound entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

3 Shadow hounds

The hounds attack by teleporting adjacent to the PCs using their *shadow ambush* power. This surprises PCs unless they make a successful Perception check (DC d20+10).

RUMBLEBUMP

Read or paraphrase the following once PCs successfully make two Perception checks during the skill challenge:

A small, lithe fey-like creature rummages about the room, sniffing chests and walls, while chewing and eating parchment. He bounds across the furniture and tables with incredible ease and speed. A plain short sword precariously hangs from its belt.

In one quick, blurring motion, its eyes bore into you as it springs to a window ledge while drawing a sword poised to strike. It hisses in displeasure about its discovery. "Mumble, bumble, quickly speak or croak or you'll find a witch that binds me will promptly slit your throat."

Role-Playing Rumblebump

The quickling zephyr purposely evades any direct questioning. Rumblebump is not here to provide definite answers for PCs but possibly lead them to Mimdy, whom he is bound. A few possible questions and answers are below.

What is your purpose here?

"Binding, finding, eating, retreating, it is a tomb soon to loom that I toil to foil."

What are you searching for?

"I search for this and that in a house of bats before parchment and clues unveil a young knight's tomb. Before the third sun sinks down, I must find these things for I am bound."

Who binds you?

"The old witch, Mimdy, with the large hump, she is the hag that binds Rumblebump."

Where does Mimdy live?

"In the burned village where the bat was born, tattered and torn, she lives there all forlorn."

Any villager can point the PCs toward the burned out village should they ask. He is a murderous little fey, but cannot attack unless attacked first. Should PCs feel compelled to attack Rumblebump, he gleefully leaves with his *blinding speed* ability, but not before sticking the closest adversary with his sword (see the quickling entry in the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL).

AREA FEATURES

Illumination: Dark and foreboding. If characters investigate the manor house during the day, they find each of the windows hastily covered by tapestries or boarded up. A DC 16 Strength check is necessary to rip the boards from the windows. Each boarded window has an AC 8, Reflex 8, Fortitude 8, and 10 hit points.

Doors: The manor house has reinforced doors. A successful DC 20 Strength breaks down a door. These doors have an AC 5, Reflex 5, Fortitude 10, and 30 hit points.

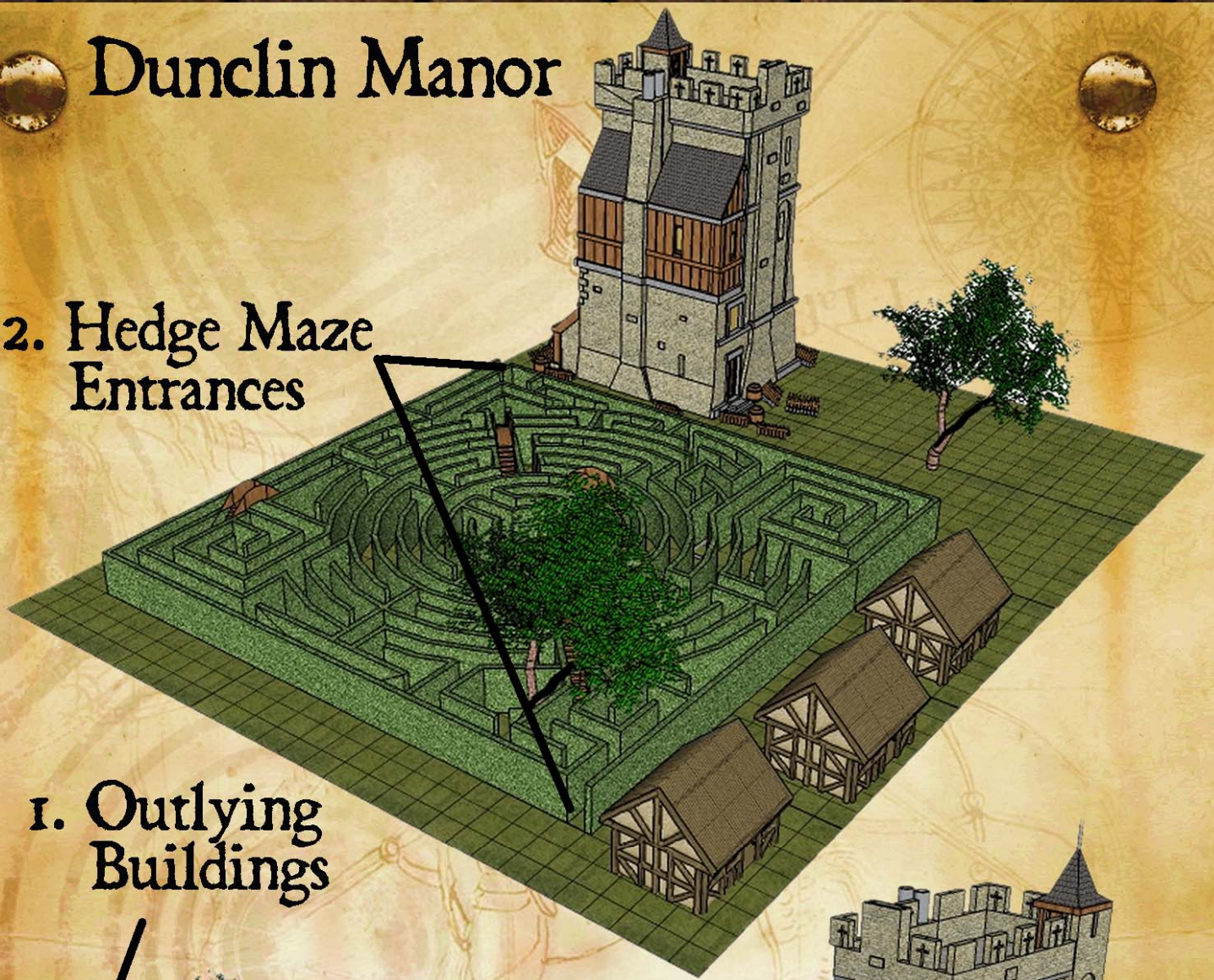
TREASURE

Treasure Parcel Suggestion: If characters meet Rumblebump, during the conversation the quickling zephyr glimpses a small, insignificant, trinket worn by one of the PCs. He quickly offers them to trade it for a small leather pouch containing four jade stones (100 gp each) and 70 gp.

However, should characters fail to interact with the fey; the last successful check reveals a small chest containing the above items.

Dunclin Manor

2. Hedge Maze Entrances



1. Outlying Buildings



3. Manor Entrance



DAGGERS AND THORNS

Encounter Level 1+ (525+ XP)

SETUP

After Sir Arthur Dunclin died, his mother, Lady Elithir, buried him in the Faerie Realm just beyond its entrance located at the center of the hedge maze. She burned the original hedge maze and replaced it with a daggerthorn briar maze to protect the portal into her twilight world.

Perception Check

DC 0: *The hedge maze has dagger-like thorns protruding and twisting in every direction.*

DC 12: *A few thorns cling to a small green piece of leather. It looks as though someone tried to push through the hedge walls unsuccessfully.*

DC 17: *You notice burned out torches and a few fire pits near the entrances of the hedge maze revealing a failed attempt to burn the brush.*

Nature Check

DC 24: *This a bloodthirsty daggerthorn briar.*

NAVIGATING THE HEDGE MAZE

SKILL CHALLENGE

PCs lurk within the hedge maze to find the Tomb of Sir Arthur Dunclin or meander in through sheer curiosity.

Setup: To reach the center before becoming lost.

Level: 4 (XP Varies; see below)

Complexity: The complexity depends on the clues gathered or previous sites PCs visited.

PCs explored Dunclin Manor, Hilltop Church, Druid Sanctuary, and the Burned Village: 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures; 525 XP).

PCs explored Dunclin Manor, Druid Sanctuary, and the Burned Village: 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures; 700 XP).

Any other circumstance: 5 (requires 12 successes before 6 failures; 875 XP).

Primary Skills: Arcana, Endurance, Heal, Nature, Perception.

Arcana (DC 17): Empowered by energies of the Faerie Realm, the hedge maze moves and shifts once someone enters. The Arcana skill aids in navigating through these pitfalls. Using this skill does not tally a success or failure, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's Nature skill check.

Endurance (DC 17): At least one character must make an Endurance check each turn to deal with exposure to daggerthorn briar. A failed check indicates that each member of the group loses one healing surge, in addition to counting as a failure. If a character no longer has a healing surge, they suffer ongoing 5 damage or ongoing 10 damage if bloodied (save ends).

Heal (DC 12): Using this skill does not tally a success or failure, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's Endurance skill check.

Nature (DC 17): At least one character must make an Endurance check each turn to navigate through the daggerthorn maze. A failed check indicates that each member of the group loses one healing surge, in addition to counting as a failure. If a character no longer has a healing surge, they suffer ongoing 5 damage or ongoing 10 damage if bloodied (save ends).

Perception (DC 12): Using this skill does not tally a success or failure, but instead provides a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's skill check.

Success: Characters navigate through the daggerthorn maze and reach its center.

Failure: Once a character rolls the last failed result, the PCs find an exit by discovering they are at one of the two maze entrances.

ESCAPING THE MAZE

Any character breathing a wish to be out of the maze immediately results in a failure outlined above.

AREA FEATURES

Illumination: The area has bright light if characters venture into the maze during the day. Otherwise, the maze produces an eerie twilight glow providing dim light once characters enter the maze.

Daggerthorn Maze: Characters trying to push through the thorns, attack the thorns, or attempt to somehow go over them, find themselves attacked by the daggerthorn briar (see traps in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE).





FOUNTAIN GUARDIANS

Encounter Level 4 (975 XP)

SETUP

The maze houses many rat swarms that feed off animals caught in the daggerthorn briar. The vine horror spellfiend was once known as Thomas Magus, a shadow warlock and minion of Iago the Black. Iago sent Thomas to investigate the area a few days before he arrived. Unfortunately for the magus, he succumbed to the daggerthorn briar and his connection to shadow magic gave life to the vine horror. The following trap and creatures present themselves here (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL and D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE):

- 1 Vine Horror Spell Fiend
- 3 Rat Swarms
- 1 Daggerthorn Briar Trap

Read the following as characters enter this place:

A fountain depicting a bronze fish, now tarnished, leaping from the water surrounded by fairies sits in the circular center of the hedge maze. Vines choke the stone fountain and spread across the lush ground.

Perception Check

DC 12: *You hear squeaks and chattering of small critters that lurk in the surrounding foliage.*

DC d20+12: *A few vines twitch and twitter, while one moves around your foot.*

PCs failing this Perception check begin the combat round surprised.

TACTICS

The rat swarms attack one round after the vine horror reveals itself. The swarms are too small to attract attention of the daggerthorn briar. The vine horror spellfiend uses its *lashing vine of dread* ability to push targets into the daggerthorn briar. PCs must make an immediate saving throw or enter into the briar. Those that do succeed stop adjacent to the thorny trap.

AREA FEATURES

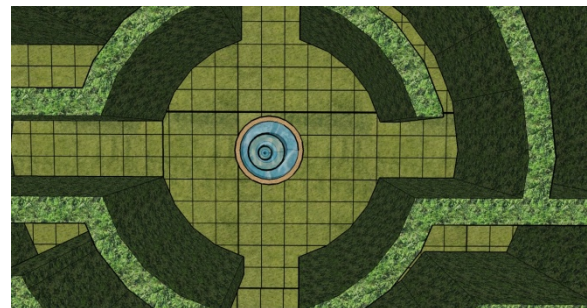
Illumination: The area has bright light if characters venture into the maze during the day. Otherwise, the maze produces an eerie twilight glow providing dim light.

Fountain: The fountain is a five-foot tall structure made of stone and tarnished bronze. Up to two characters can stand along the rim of the fountain with a successful Athletics check (DC 10). Rat swarms ignore PCs balancing along the stone lip.

Daggerthorn Maze: Characters trying to push through the thorns, attack the thorns, or attempt to somehow go over them, find themselves attacked by the daggerthorn briar (see traps in the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE).

TREASURE

Entangled deep within the vine horror is a treasure parcel.





FINAL CONFRONTATION

Encounter Level 5 (1,000 XP)

SETUP

Once characters enter into the Faerie Realm, the sisters Cernya and Cierra, doppelganger agents of Iago, await them unless already dealt with. Both in disguise, they first attempt to use trickery to rid themselves of the characters. The following creatures present themselves (see the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL and D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE):

Cernya and Cierra, Doppelganger Sneaks
Iago, Weakened Vampire Lord

Read the following as characters enter this place:

A gothic tomb of crumbling stone, intertwined with thick roots of oak, peacefully rests in a clearing bathed in bright, greenish light. Two figures appear in the faerie twilight before its doors: one stands in triumph as the other lies motionless, apparently lifeless.

The conquering cladrin wipes brackish blood from her blade as she motions for you: "The deed is done. Iago is no more. I thank you for your courage to come here to deal with this monster and protect the resting place of my son, Sir Arthur."

Cernya disguised herself as Iago and now feigns death. Her sister, Cierra, poses as the cladrin,

Lady Elithir. Characters might have a few questions:

How did you know?

"Mimdy, the old witch, informed me about the sinister dealings at Drusholden."

Perception Check

DC 25: *Despite what Lady Elithir claims, Iago moves ever so slightly. The creature is not dead after all.*

Insight Check

DC d20 + 10 (Cierra): Cierra has no proper references of Lady Elithir to base her appearance save for some portraits located throughout Dunclin Manor. *Part of Lady Elithir shifts and blurs when she moves. You catch glimpses of white hair and skin. Occasionally, her pupils completely disappear. It is apparent she is not whom she claims to be.*

DC d20+30 (Cernya): Since Cernya travels with Iago, imitating his mannerisms and appearance is almost second nature. However, an insightful character might see through the ruse. *Though completely still, you catch shimmering variations upon Iago's skin revealing that this creature is not the vampire you seek to destroy.*

TACTICS

Cierra tries to get characters to leave by rewarding them with treasure for their "courage." However, if characters foil their deception, they immediately attack fighting to the death. If characters do not see through Cernya's disguise, she continues posing as Iago. Only a few moments after her death will it become apparent that she is not the vampire lord.

TREASURE

Treasure Parcel Suggestion: Cernya carries a silver-plated dagger (250 gp) and a pouch containing 120 gp. Cierra has two *potions of healing*.

IAGO THE BLACK

SETUP

Soon after the demise of the sisters, Iago emerges from the tomb. Read or paraphrase the following:



A gaunt, pale figure steps from the darkened entrance bearing the guise of a common foot soldier nearly two hundred years of age. He gives you a momentary grimace before twisting his expression into a smile.

“I am lord of Drusholden, granted to me by right of Lord Roger Dunclin nearly two hundred years ago. Be fully aware, I will retreat no further and I will not grant mercy. Too much is at stake.”

LADY ELITHIR

Lady Elithir, informed of the deeds of Iago through Mimdy, makes a brief appearance to aid characters as Iago launches his attack. Read or paraphrase the following:

From dusky shadows, bright, green leaves stir in a whirlwind as a slender silhouette of an eladrin maiden appears. “Iago,” she gently calls, “you shall feel my sadness.”

She unclasps a pouch, pulls out a sparkling glass bottle, and slips her hand over the stopper unleashing the contents. The vial contains the tears of her loss, pain, and suffering she endured in the mortal realm. Her tears dissipate once released as a chill numbs the air. A misty vapor crystallizes about your chosen weapons.

Each weapon and implement the characters wield gains a +5 bonus to attack rolls until the end of the encounter. Even weakened and with the aid of Lady Elithir, Iago still proves a strong adversary.

Although Lady Elithir, a fickle fey of chaos, wants Iago to pay for the ruin he caused in her life, she offers no more help. Besides this gesture of assistance, she leaves Iago’s fate to the characters. She is patient and recognizes, should they fail, that another chance for vengeance will come when time allows.

TACTICS

Iago planned on the sisters’ ruse to rid some characters of their daily or vital encounter powers. He believes attacking them swiftly, after the demise of the sisters and before they take a short rest, is his best chance for victory. If characters retreat, he will not pursue because of his weakened state, and frankly, he underestimates their abilities through sheer arrogance.

