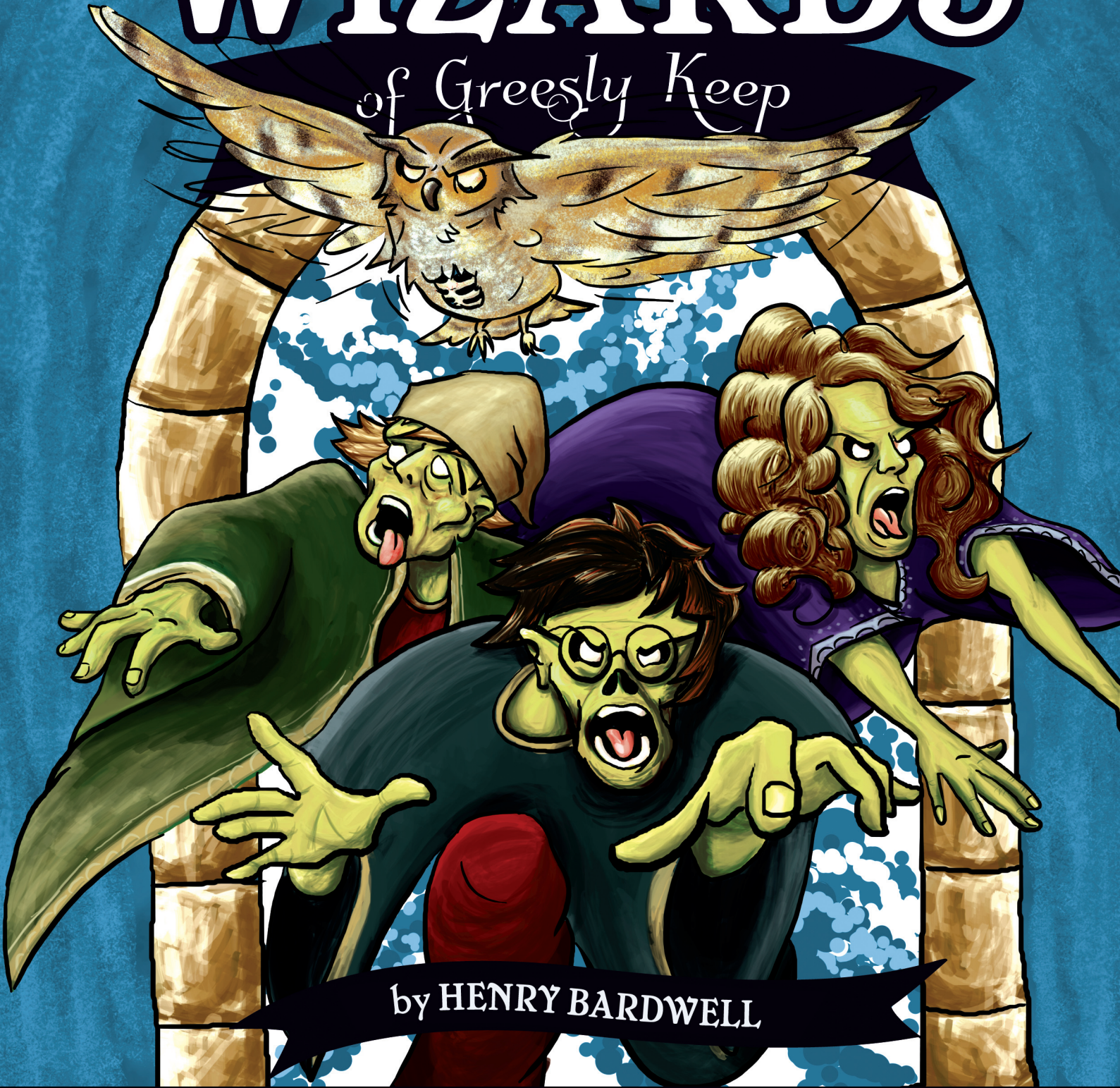


THE ZOMBIE WIZARDS

of Greesly Keep



by HENRY BARDWELL

A D&D 5e adventure for four to six players of second to third level

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Part 1: Introduction

High up in the mountains, the wizards of Greesly Keep have trained generations of new magic users in secret. Only the best and the brightest young minds were admitted to their exclusive academy — or, if not the best and brightest, at least the richest and most well-connected.

That is, until something went terribly wrong.

Some time ago, the residents of the neighbouring town of Mumbleton heard a tremendous explosion followed by a ghastly moaning emanate from Greesly Keep. Since that day, the wizards and their apprentices have remained locked up in their craggy home.

The townsfolk have also noticed a black cloud has appeared over Greesly's tallest tower. And the cloud is growing.

That's never a good sign.

What follows is an adventure influenced by a famous series of novels about a boy wizard. The action takes place in a haunted magic academy.

This adventure is designed to provide a challenge for four second-level characters over two to three sessions of four hours each. There are a couple scenes that may not be appropriate for younger players but they can be easily modified.

What's Gone Wrong At Greesly Keep?

Byrdus Ryffydphorth, Headmaster of Greesly Keep (and this adventure's boss monster), has been dabbling in conjuration and necromantic magics. He completed a ritual that opened a portal to a realm of indescribable power but he was not skilled enough to control the spells involved. Now, a strange entity from beyond the portal is using the headmaster's animate, mummified corpse as a battery to expand the portal so that it can bring its domain of pure necromantic power into the world of the living.

A side effect of all this is that the professors of Greesly Keep have transformed into nothics while the staff and students have been turned into ghouls, spectres and brainless zombies.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

- Explore the town of Mumbleton and meet the crow woman, **Franny Gawynt**.
- Travel to Greesly Keep via the mountain trail.
- Enter through the front gates. Battle the **Zombie Griffons**.
- Explore the Dining Hall and Kitchen. Battle the **Ghoul Chef, Zombie** and **two Skeletons**.
- Explore the Library and battle **two Zombies** and the **Spectral Librarian**.
- Travel up the Spiral Stair while dodging and/or fighting the **Haunted Portraits**.
- Battle the **Corrupted Sorting Cloaks**.
- Enter the Dormitory in one of the four faculties. Defeat the **Zombie Apprentices**.
- Pass through the Classrooms and deal with the **Mephit Servants** and the **Ghoul Teaching Assistant**.
- Explore the Faculty Offices and save **Professor Chloriddax** from her **Nothic** tormenter.
- **Boss Fight:** Defeat the **Apprentice Zombies**, their **Zombie Owl** and **Headmaster Ryffydphorth** thereby closing the portal.
- Escape the crumbling Greesly Keep.
- Travel back to Mumbleton and learn its horrible secret.

Adventure Objective

The party must travel to Greesly Keep, battle their way through the undead denizens within, slay Headmaster Byrdus Ryffydphorth and close the portal. But time is ticking. If the portal isn't closed soon, its expansion will be unstoppable and it will turn the surrounding valley into a wasteland of corrupt magic.

The Setting: Greesly Keep & Mumbleton

In stories and song, Greesly Keep is a dilapidated wooden, wizards' tower in the middle of nowhere. As the players discover, it is actually a mountain castle with stone towers, arched doorways, stained glass windows and gargoyles that are at once terrifying and also a little hilarious. Inside its walls, a faculty of wizards have been secretly teaching the arcane arts to the most magically talented young people in all the realm (and, more importantly, those from the wealthiest families).

In other words, Greesly Keep is everything you could hope for from a secret wizarding academy for gifted children. Or it *was*, anyway.

There are shortcuts a party might find so they can avoid some combat encounters.

- Exploring the Visitor's Library, Kitchen, Classrooms and Faculty Offices are optional.
- In Mumbleton, the Green Grocer has a secret route all the way up to the Kitchen, thus avoiding the fight with the Zombie Griffons.
- There is a secret passage in the Library that leads to one of the school's Dormitories (thus avoiding the Haunted Portraits, the Corrupted Sorting Cloaks and some Apprentice Zombies).

NPCS IN THIS ADVENTURE

- Franny Gawynt, human druid and crow keeper
- Nelinda and Brobart Tawattle, half-ogre innkeepers of the Obvious Owlbear Tavern
- Mister Topper, human owner of the Dueling Unicorn Inn
- The Green Grocer, halfling owner of The Green Grocery
- Philomel, half-elf owner of Philomel's Phine Philtres
- Nurtolipher Orbanger, human smith of Nurtolipher's Iron Implements
- Mullion Due, human owner of Mullion's Horse Hotel
- the ghost of Professor Hyannia Chloriddax

NEW MONSTERS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

- Zombie Griffons
- Haunted Portraits
- Zombified Wizards' Apprentices
- Enervated Zombies
- Zombie Owl
- Mummified Headmaster, Byrdus Ryffydphorth

Across the valley from it, there is Mumbleton, a quaint little alpine village where the faculty and students of Greesly Keep can buy supplies, have a few drinks and escape the school's grueling schedule. The locals are cheerful and quirky. The shops are tidy and well-stocked.

It would all be perfect and wonderful except nothing is quite what it seems.

Wherever you set this adventure, Mumbleton and Greesly Keep should be like the setting of that famous boy wizard novel — ie, a secret unknown to most of the world.

The wizards of Greesly Keep work very hard to keep information about their academy and the town of Mumbleton from becoming common knowledge. Graduates are sworn to secrecy and students' families are compelled to stay mum thanks to enchanted fine-print included in contracts they were "encouraged" to sign.

Merchants and bards who trade in Mumbleton earn huge profits there and thus it is in their best interest to keep the town for themselves. They also find that if they do try to tell anyone about Greesly Keep and Mumbleton, they are encouraged by a subtle magic to keep the secret.

However, despite the best efforts to keep things hush-hush, word has leaked out now and then. Wildly inaccurate tales of Greesly Keep have made their way into comic songs and rhymes. Most people consider the stories to be nothing more than children's fables, but there are a few sages and adventurers who suspect there might be some truth lurking within those silly verses.

Getting The Party Involved

Here are some options for how to get your PCs on course to Greesly Keep:

- **Spies Heard About A Mysterious Keep:** A local noble has learned from his spies that the regional wizards' guild has lost contact with a place called "Greesly Keep." The spies don't know what that means or how long it has been since last contact. They only know the information was considered important. The noble hires the party to investigate. He furnishes them with a map to the Keep which his spies intercepted.
- **Missing Caravan:** A wealthy merchant who maintains a secret trade with Mumbleton has lost contact with a caravan in her employ. She hires the party to find out what happened and gives the party rough directions to the town. She seems unwilling — or unable — to share more information than that. How strange.
- **Acceptance Letter:** A wizard or sorcerer in the party receives a message from a local wizard's guild saying they've been accepted for a special training session at Greesly Keep. ("Curious... I don't recall applying for special training.") The message explains how Greesly Keep is an exclusive school of the arcane arts. It also includes directions on how to get to Mumbleton.
- **Dead Crow:** Someone in Mumbleton has been sending out messenger crows seeking help from the larger wizarding world. (As the party soon learns, that someone was Franny Gawynt.) One of these crows succumbed to the zombie curse emanating from Greesly Keep. The PCs find the zombie crow stranded on the ground, unable to fly and in an extremely murderous mood. They notice it has a note tied to one of its legs. The note contains enough information to set the party on the path to Mumbleton.
- **Zombies On The Loose:** A town the party is relaxing in is attacked by a small group of zombies. The creatures are easily defeated but where did they come from? The locals enlist the party's aid to find out the source of this undead scourge. The trail leads them up into the mountains to Mumbleton.
- **Surprise! A Town!** The party is stomping around in the mountains and they stumble into Mumbleton and get tangled up in its troubles. These things happens.

Regardless of how the party is set on the path to Greesly Keep, they should be given directions to get there and possibly even a map of which roads to take.

Rumours And Stories

Despite the wizards' best efforts to keep Greesly Keep a secret, some rumours and stories have managed to leak out. Any party members with proficiency in History or Arcana can make a check on one of those skills to see if they've heard any of them. Bards, wizards and sorcerers roll on the table normally. All other classes roll with disadvantage.

If the party seeks out information before departing for Greesly Keep, sages or other sources of information roll on this table with advantage.

- | | |
|-----|--|
| <11 | Greesly Keep is a fabled wizard tower said to be somewhere up north in a pine forest in the mountains, far away from any human settlements. Or maybe, it's in the middle of a swamp. Either way, it probably isn't real. |
| 11 | Greesly Keep is the subject of amusing bard rhymes that are popular in rural communities but almost unknown in major cities. These rhymes are children's tales about the comically crazed wizards of Greesly Keep and their bumbling fights with trolls and giants. In the stories, Greesly Keep is a crooked, dilapidated tower. It's so small, there isn't room in it for the wizards' beards which trail out the windows and flutter in the wind like linens hung out to dry. The wizards bicker among themselves constantly and while their magic is powerful, they squander it satisfying their greed and laziness. The wizards usually prevail against the trolls and giants at the ends of the stories but only through luck, never through their own skill. |
| 12 | There are some stories, darker stories, where the wizards are less comic and more sinister. In those tales, the wizards are said to spirit away children they think are clever and then charge the parents enormous tuitions to train their children in the wizardly arts — these children are never seen again. In one story, a girl named Velora is taken from her parents by the wizards of Greesly Keep who promise them that she will be returned to her village a powerful healer. Velora arrives at the tower and, instead of being taught magic, is put to work cleaning the tower, fixing meals, and acting as the wizards' servant. Thanks to the guidance of a mistreated cat, she learns spells from the books the wizards leave lying around and uses her newfound magic to set the wizards against each other. In the ensuing conflagration she is able to escape and return home. |
| 13 | In remote areas where folk have heard these darker tales, if parents ever have children who show some talent with magic, they will hide those children away out of fear the wizards of Greesly Keep will come for them. Those kids grow up to be sorcerers. |

14 The reason Greesly Keep was founded so far from civilization is because the wizards are so powerful and so chaotic they are also quite dangerous. There are stories of Greesly wizards killing or cursing people for the smallest of slights.

15 Greesly Keep isn't just a story. And it isn't a dilapidated tower for a few mad wizards. It's where the most talented children — or those from the most wealthy families — are trained in the magical arts. Wizard guilds and nobles who've heard of it (and hope to send their children there someday) have never dared confirm those rumours.

16 There is said to be a hamlet near Greesly Keep where the wizards buy food and relax. Few people visit this hamlet. There are bards who have played in the inn there and the tips they earn are enormous. All who visit this town are sworn to secrecy about its location.

17 The stories of talented children being stolen away and taken to Greesly Keep are true.

18 Wizards do not like to acknowledge this but Greesly Keep was likely founded long before the wizard guilds that operate in the region. Greesly Keep may even predate the earliest settlements in the area.

19 Several renowned wizards in the area are graduates of Greesly Keep. You can tell because Greesly graduates wear small silver pins depicting a pair of fighting animals.

20 The silver pins worn by Greesly graduates are not magical. They're trinkets. But if a Greesly graduate ever encounters a commoner in possession of such a pin, they will take it back and then deal with the person in a most unpleasant, and likely fatal, manner. As such, merchants who understand what the pins are won't buy them and may even alert the local wizards' guild if someone tries to sell one. There are thieves guilds who would pay dearly to get their hands on such a pin.

21+ Merchants who have done business with Greesly Keep say they've heard there is a secret way into the wizarding school and that someone in the nearby hamlet knows where the entrance is.

Getting To Greesly Keep

Finding the valley in which Mumbleton and Greesly Keep reside is nearly impossible without directions or a guide.

The PCs should know the way either because they've been given directions or a rough map.

The route to Mumbleton forks off from a main road. It's a non-descript trail up into the mountains and through a forbidding pine forest. The trail leads uphill for most of a day, through a maze of back roads. Without the directions or map that they have, it is obvious the party would get lost in the forest.

Eventually the trail opens before a massive cliff face through which a wide tunnel has been cut.

There is an iron post next to the tunnel entrance and hanging from it there is a sign that reads, "To Mumbleton."

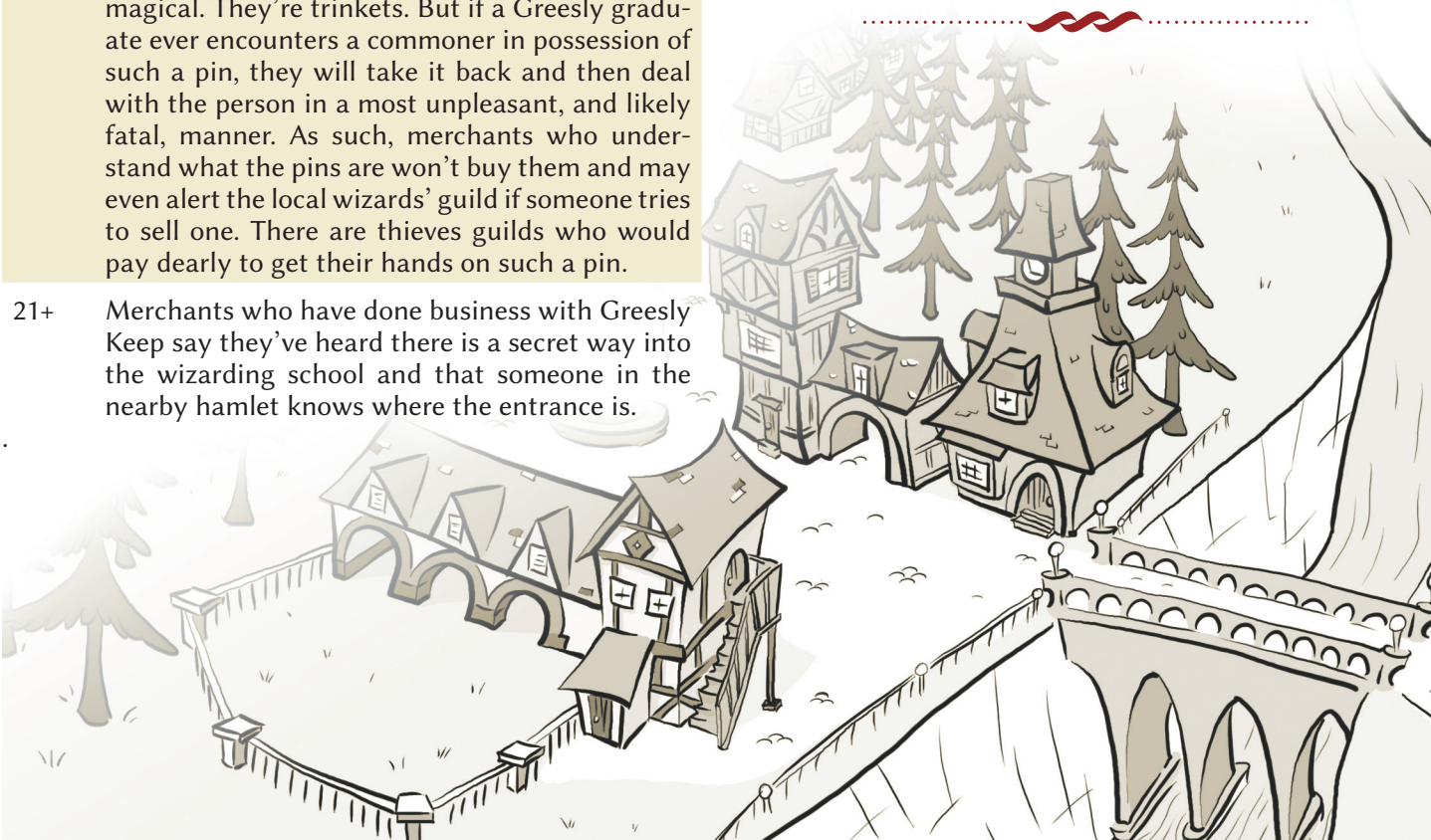
Descent To Mumbleton

When the PCs emerge from the other end of the tunnel, hand them the Mumbleton Players' Map (page 39) and read the description below:

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖


As you emerge from the tunnel you look down upon a wide valley, bordered by tall, grey crags on every side. The road you are on continues down, snaking back and forth along the mountain side until it heads north and then sharply turns west where it crosses a wide stone bridge spanning a deep mountain gorge. Far below, you can make out the churning waters of a fast flowing river.

After the bridge, the road ends in a small picturesque town hiding among the pine trees, no doubt the "Mumbleton" from the road sign.



Part 2: Recent Events In Mumbleton

When the party first enters Mumbleton, read aloud...

..........
Surrounded by pine forests and jagged granite crags, Mumbleton sits on a plateau, high above a rushing river.

Mumbleton's roads are cobbled. The buildings are built from rounded stones and thick timbers and they have tall, peaked roofs covered in slate tiles or cedar shakes. Crooked chimneys rise above the town. Green and grey mosses creep up the edges of most buildings. Doorways are carved with the figures of happy animals wearing clothes. Windows are round and covered with many-paned glass. Balconies lean out over roadways and are decorated with flower boxes. Business signs are painted on wooden plaques that swing from wrought-iron brackets.

Level ground is limited in Mumbleton, so the buildings have been built quite close together. But this gives the impression of coziness, not crowding.

To the north, on a hill that rises above the town, you make out a dilapidated wooden tower. A flock of black birds circles its pointed roof.

Farther away to the northeast there is a massive stone keep built onto the side of an especially mighty crag. You notice, above the highest tower of this mountain castle, a roiling black cloud looms and occasionally emits sparks of lightning.

..........

The "Incident"

The party soon learns from Franny Gawynt that, some time ago, there was a terrible explosion up at Greesly Keep. After it, the faculty and students who were in Mumbleton left town and returned to their school.

There has been no contact with anyone from Greesly Keep since.

For details of The Incident, refer to the **The Crow Woman section**.

Out And About In Mumbleton

Franny Gawynt is watching the road for newcomers and rushes down from her tower to meet the party when they arrive. Thus, no matter where they make their first stop, she will burst in upon the PCs in short order.

Franny should serve as the primary source of exposition and a tour guide for the party.

If someone casts *Detect Magic*, they find that absolutely everywhere and everyone in Mumbleton reeks of magic.

If someone casts a spell or uses an ability that detects or locates undead, they discover that everyone in Mumbleton is undead (see **Mumbleton's Big Secret**.)

The People Of Mumbleton

Mumbletonions (pronounced: mum-bull-TUN-yuns, not mum-bull-TONE-ee-uns!) are a pleasant and welcoming people (except where noted). They cheerfully greet the party and gladly explain that, yes, theirs is a secret village that serves a nearby wizarding academy; no, they aren't wizards themselves nor especially magical at that; and, yes, the stone castle against the side of that mountain there is *The Greesly Keep* that maybe you've heard about in story and song.

If the party asks about what's going on with Greesly Keep and why there's a magical storm cloud hovering over its tallest tower, the townsfolk wave the question off with a dismissive, "That? Oh, just wizard stuff. Nothing to worry about. They're always up to some kind of hocus pocus," or words to that effect.

It should become quickly apparent, however, that something is wrong with the people of Mumbleton. All of the named NPCs and many other townsfolk besides have been magically modified in some permanent way. The innkeeper has rabbit ears, the tavern keepers have been fused together, the grocer has been tinted green, etc. These changes have all been wrought by wizards or apprentices from Greesly Keep. Sometimes as revenge for a perceived slight. Sometimes as a cruel prank.

The villagers' responses to questions about their unique physiologies vary as noted. Some appear more vexed by the situation than others. All of them are highly reluctant to say anything about their modifications.

In truth, all the villagers are secretly terrified of the wizards and are tormented by the changes that the wizards have committed upon them, their friends and family. But they don't want to say anything negative out of fear of much worse being done to them.

Thus, on balance, the townsfolk are happy the Greesly wizards are gone. Sure, they profited off the school. But this absence is a welcome respite. As for the explosion and the dark cloud, most townsfolk figure it's "wizards' business" and the longer it keeps Greesly Keep occupied, the better.

Mumbleton's Big Secret

Everybody in Mumbleton —including Franny Gawynt and her crows — is dead and has been dead for months. In fact, the entire town was reduced to rubble shortly after The Incident. The people the party interacts with are corporeal ghosts living out the days after the Incident over and over again, the buildings the PCs visit are just apparitions imbued with substance by the latent magics that have seeped into the ground around Greesly Keep.

Unless the party casts some kind of magic to detect or locate undead, there should be no way for this secret to be revealed until the end of the adventure. However, the people of Mumbleton are unaware of their condition and also unaware of how much time has passed since they died. As such, they will be vague about details like how long ago the explosion happened at the Keep and how long it has been since they have had contact with the outside world.

What Really Happened After The Explosion

Several nights after the explosion, many of the wizards *did* return to Mumbleton, but they'd been transformed into undead creatures suffused with wild magical energy. Younger apprentices came back as zombies able to cast random spells. Senior students were ravenous ghouls. There were even a few professors who'd changed into nothics. The horde descended upon the town in the dead of night and slaughtered the inhabitants in a mindless, undead frenzy. At some point, a fire was accidentally set which consumed the entire town.

Most of the undead students and nothic masters were destroyed in the conflagration. A few escaped and they will terrorize nearby towns and villages for years to come.

Who is Byrdus Ryffydphorth?

Headmaster Byrdus Ryffydphorth is the cause of all the trouble at Greesly Keep. But the Mumbletonians and the PCs don't know this at first.

According to the townsfolk, Ryffydphorth is a father figure to all the young people who come to Greesly Keep to learn the arcane arts. His long grey beard and floppy red hat, his robes decorated with half-moons and stars, his pockets full of jellied candies, are a source of joy to all students. Everybody likes him.

But, behind the warm smiles and kindly words, there lurks a duplicitous criminal who murdered his way into the headmaster's office.

An abjurer by training, recently, he's abandoned that field of study and has tricked his students and colleagues into helping him rip open a hole in the fabric of reality. Why? Out of curiosity and a desire for raw arcane power, mostly. He also hoped the powerful entity he contacted beyond the portal would grant him eternal life. But turns out the only immortality he'll achieve is of the "lives on in infamy" sort, because the whole tapping-into-a-realm-of-necromantic-magic thing proved fatal for him early on. Now he's just a barely sentient, undead battery serving the purposes of that inscrutable being from beyond.

Of course, the people of Mumbleton know none of this. To them, the Headmaster of Greesly Keep is a kindly, if distant, figure. They know that he specialized in protection and shielding magic and because of this, many people are inclined to think the best of him.

"Always looking out for people, keeping 'em safe," they say.

Thus, if the party asks about the Headmaster in Mumbleton, the overall impression should be positive. Ryffydphorth was never part of the cruel or vindictive pranks that other wizards committed against the townsfolk. And, he was the one who punished Greesly students who got out of hand. Only Franny Gawynt and Nurt, the village smith, suspect he must be hiding something behind his kindly exterior.

The Crow Woman

THINGS FROM FRANNY GAWYNT, THE CROW WOMAN:

- BACKSTORY ON WHAT HAPPENED AT GREESLY KEEP
- A GUIDED TOUR AROUND MUMBLETON
- A BASIC MAP TO THE ENTRANCE OF GREESLY KEEP

Franny Gawynt is a stumpy woman in her fifties. She wears a puffy black dress, has crazed black hair and a wide-brimmed, black hat.

Beneath her skirt, Franny hides the fact that her feet have been changed into crow feet. She keeps them wrapped in burlap and will not show them to the PCs. The party should only ever notice her feet if for some reason she is knocked down.

Franny tends to the crows in the Crow Tower. These are message birds imbued with enough magic smarts that they can carry messages between Greesly Keep and other wizarding outposts. Whenever Franny is outside, crows perch on nearby eaves and trees. They caw in a friendly manner and hop on the ground around her. When they draw close, she gives them dried berries she keeps in a pocket.

Unlike many in town, Franny is unwilling to dismiss or celebrate the storm cloud gathering over Greesly Keep's main tower. And as much as she is relieved the wizards and their apprentices have left town, she is unnerved by the length of their absence.

She says she has sent out many messenger crows begging other wizarding outposts and guilds for help but, so far, no one has come to Mumbleton's aid. She admits that when she saw the party entering town, she hoped they would turn out to be a crack team of arcane problem-solvers from a wizards' guild. But, as they aren't, they'll have to do, whatever they are.

Clearly, she tells them, fate has brought them to her.

She urges the party to investigate Greesly Keep and she won't take "no" for an answer.

OTHER THINGS THAT FRANNY GAWYNT TELLS THE PARTY...

- "Greesly Keep has been locked up tight as a fox's jaw around a chicken's neck. Been like that a while now. Gates closed, no comings or goings. My crows won't go near it, no wonder. There's some foul magicking going on up there. You can tell by that little cloud fitzing and banging above the tower. Dead giveaway, that. And it's getting bigger."
- **"All started with an explosion.** One day, everything was fine. Wizards were in town same as always, drinking pints at The Owlbear. Then, *BOOM!* Sound like a year's worth of thunder all at once. Followed by this groaning like a choir of bears singing about all the salmon that ever escaped their claws. Only louder. Much louder. Goes on for a while. Then it was quiet. Nobody talking. Shut my crows' beaks for a full minute, so that's an upside. Meanwhile, the wizards were all looking at each other, their eyes heavy with meaning, if you know what I mean. One of the apprentices looks

all scared and **squeaks something about a “cobalt throne.”** A professor hushes him up. Then the lot of them paid up and friggid off. Trudged up to Greesly, somber and grim. I tried asking old Naggulstaff what was what and did he mind explaining to us Mumbletonions, neighbours and friends of Greesly Keep for generations, what madness they’ve loosed upon the world and he muttered how it’ll be fine and **the Headmaster had everything under control.** Then he went on his way, the twit. Haven’t seen beard nor baldspot from any of them since.”

- **“We’d known for ages something was up long before the explosion.** The wizards hadn’t been acting their usual, lusty selves when they came a-visiting. More whispering in corners. More arguments over magicky gobble-di-gook. Words like ‘madness,’ ‘power,’ ‘transcendence’ and ‘tampering with forces that cannot be controlled’ coming up in conversation more than we’re used to, followed by shushings and checking to see if any of us rustics were listening in. We were, of course. Can’t live in the shadow of a wizard school and not learn to keep half an ear open for plots and connivances.”

- “I’ve a telescope up top of my crow tower. I can tell you that **there’s something on the loose in the main courtyard.** I can see it stalking now and again past the gates. We’ve all heard about there being some kind of guardian they keep up there to be let out only in times of great danger. Hasn’t been any great danger in all my years so I don’t know how people know about that, but there you go. Clearly, now’s the time for unleashing one’s guardians.”



- **“All the action seems to be in the main tower, the one their Grand Hall’s supposed to be in.** Cloud just hangs above it. And at night, there are lights flashing from the windows and lately, when it’s dark, you can sometimes see streams of green light rising up from the tower’s peak like glowing smoke. And then last night, we heard that moaning again. Right after the midnight bell. Sounded just like before only, maybe it was more... *urgent* this time.”

- “I tell you, this thing they’re doing up there is building to a climax. **Any day now whatever’s coming will arrive.** Maybe even tonight. And we’ll all be worse for it, I guarantee. That’s why I need you folks to go up there and see what’s going on. For whatever reason, no one’s answering my messages. There is no other help on its way. Not in time, anyway. I need you to get up there and warn us if it looks like we should be evacuating. Or you could just, you know, put a stop to it. Whatever it is. Slap some sense into that headmaster.”

- **If the party asks why no one in Mumbleton has gone up to investigate...**

“We are not a daring lot. Not equipped to go poking about up where danger abounds. And besides, we’ve all learned what happens when you stick your nose in wizard business. But you? You have that lesson yet to learn. So, no reason to fear, eh?”

- **If the party asks what to expect in Greesly Keep...**

“Never been in the Keep myself. Not many of us have. Every spring, there’s the Equinox Planar Conjunction Festival, they call it. We call it Wizards Day. Mumbletonions are invited up to the courtyard for performances and games. We have to provide the food, of course. Then at night there are fireworks. Quite a nice show they put on. But no one’s allowed into the building. A few have managed a quick peak over the years. The grocer’s been up, I hear, to drop off food though I’ve never seen him walking up that way. Myself, I can show you what little I do know.” **She gives the party a hand-drawn map.** (See player hand-out on page 41.)

- **If the party asks if there’s anyone in town who might be able to help or if there are places where they can get supplies...**

“You’d think a town like ours would have wondrous items and enchanted weapons for sale aplenty but we don’t. ‘Up There’ doesn’t want things to get too fantastic ‘Down Here.’ Picturesque but mundane, that’s Mumbleton. Philomel may be able to help you but her stock and trade is mainly love potions and the like. That’s the one kind of magic that the Greesly wizards know nothing about. Of course, Philomel’s as ignorant as they are. She’s lovely. But a

fake. What she sells is mostly mashed up animal guts floating in tea. And she charges dearly for it.”

- **If the party asks what’s in it for them if they help...**

“Was a time when good deeds were reward enough,” the old woman grumbles. “Heroic types wandering the hinterlands helping poor folk in need and all that. But if gold and glory’s what you’re after, know that Greesly Keep isn’t just a school for talented children, it’s a school for *wealthy* children. Those wizards are making a fortune. And that means shopkeepers and merchants down here are making a fortune too. When there’s trade going on with the Keep, that is. Which there isn’t now. So I think you’ll find that if you can lift the dark cloud that hangs over Greesly Keep — figuratively *and* literally — there’ll be more than enough gratitude to go around.”

Part 3: The Sights Of Mumbleton

1. Duelling Unicorn Manor

THINGS TO GET FROM THE DUELING UNICORN INN:

- A COMFORTABLE ROOM FOR THE NIGHT
- INFORMATION FROM THE GUESTS ABOUT THE TOWN


.....✧ READ ALOUD ✧.....

FROM THE OUTSIDE

This is a wide, five storey building. It's basically a triangle as the base of its slanted roof nearly touches the ground. The top storey has only a little oval window. The rooms on the next two storeys have narrow doors that open onto broad, common balconies. All of the external woodwork on the building is painted with curling vines and bright flowers. The grand front entrance is decorated with two, massive wooden unicorns that are rearing up on their hind legs and seem to be engaged in combat above the front door.

INSIDE THE LOBBY

The lobby is all polished wood decorated with antlers and deer heads. There are landscape paintings and tapestries that depict unicorns. There are well-worn red rugs on the floor. The lobby is very quiet and lit by candles and a large fireplace. A wide staircase leads up to the second floor which is open to the lobby. Arrayed around the fireplace are deep, comfortable looking chairs. In a few, there sit well-dressed women and men smoking pipes and talking quietly. The innkeeper stands behind a long counter. He is a human dressed in a fine satin vest, pressed white tunic and black pants.

..........

Rooms at the inn are 5gp per person. The price is high but all the rooms are lavish. There are no other inns in the town so if the party wants something cheaper they will have stay in the stables or camp outside Mumbleton.

The innkeeper is named Mister Topper and he greets the party personally. He is pleasant though a little standoffish if the party asks too many questions.

The PCs immediately notice that Mister Topper does not have normal human ears but rather he has long jackrabbit ears which he keeps pulled back like ponytails and ties behind his head with a black satin bow.

If asked for details about his ears he clears his throat and asks that they return to discussing business.

Mister Topper is also unwilling to trade in gossip or any useful information. If pressed, he says, "I have learned my lesson about the importance of discretion," and then he gestures at his ears. He then directs the party to the Obvious Owlbear where "lips are looser."

The inn is almost empty. There are very few other guests. The men and women relaxing in the lobby are merchants from far and wide who have finished their business in town. Some of them have decided to stay in Mumbleton

PLAYING FRANNY GAWYNT

You don't have to read all the above dialogue word-for-word if you don't want to. Those quotes are provided to give you an idea of how Franny might speak. And from those passages, you can glean all the vital information that she knows and share it with the PCs during conversation. The points that are in bold are especially important.

Franny isn't just the exposition dump character. She should also be the PCs' tour guide and main point-of-contact in Mumbleton, introducing them around and hustling them along toward Greesly Keep. If the party thinks they might not be powerful enough to investigate the wizarding academy, she will express total faith in their abilities and say things like, "I see a spark of something in you."

Ideally, she should become someone the PCs consider to be a friend. And that way, when the tragic truth of Mumbleton is revealed at the end, the party will feel the loss more strongly. <wicked DM laughter>

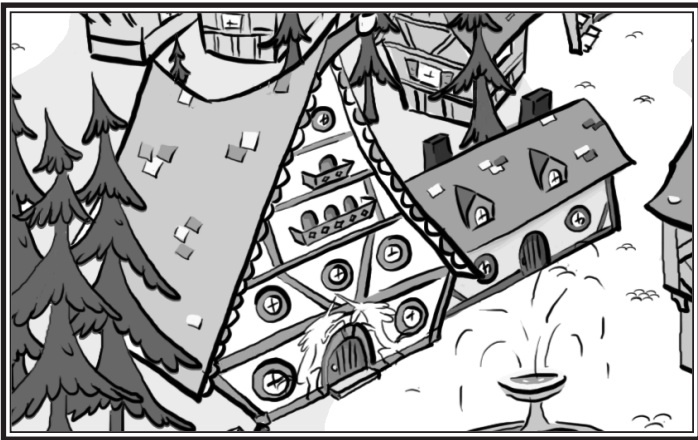
WHAT FRANNY GAWYNT WILL DO NEXT:

- She urges the party to leave for Greesly Keep as soon as possible. If the party is tired or injured, she will reluctantly suggest they stay a night at the Duelling Unicorn then depart in the morning.
- If the party decides to explore the town and talk to the locals, she will accompany them, all the while berating them about how time's a-wasting.
- She will tell them that to get up to Greesly Keep, the party will have to walk up the path used by students as the "gondola" used by the faculty is no longer working. She can explain how the gondola was powered by earth elementals who disappeared after the Incident.
- When the party is ready to head up to Greesly Keep, she will accompany the party to the base of Mount Hood. She cannot be convinced to travel up to the Keep. She will explain that she has no skill at fighting and that she only knows the few spells she needs to do her job. If the party takes the secret train under the Green Grocer's, Franny will not go with them.
- She will tell the party that once they are in the Keep they should pass through the foyer then go up the stairs. After that, from what she's heard, they will need to pass through the dormitories and classrooms to get to the main tower. The Grand Hall is inside the main tower and she stresses that the main tower is where the worst of whatever bad is happening.

for a while as a bit of a holiday. Some talk about how they were planning to leave but found the company so delightful that they will remain an extra night.

The PCs notice that the merchants are very well dressed. Their clothes and jewelry are much finer than they would expect to see on a trader. If asked about this, the merchants smile slyly and mention how trade with Mumbleton is very profitable and that's why they keep it secret.

If the merchants are questioned about the strange goings on at Greesly Keep, they say they've heard about that but dismiss it as the usual Mumbleton craziness. "It's a colourful place. Always some strange thing happening here. It's why I keep coming back, truth be told." Beyond that, the merchants know no more about what's going on than the party does.



If the party is in Mumbleton in search of a lost merchant caravan, this is where they find the caravan master. The caravan master is relaxing in the lobby and explains that she decided to take a bit of a holiday. The party notices that something is not quite right about the caravan master's responses. It appears as though she has been charmed and actually has no intention to leave, ever.

2. The Obvious Owlbear Tavern

THINGS TO GET FROM THE OBVIOUS OWLBEAR TAVERN:

- FOOD AND DRINK
- INFORMATION ABOUT THE GREEN GROCER'S SECRET ENTRANCE TO GREESLY KEEP
- WIZARD CLOAKS

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

FROM OUTDOORS

Grafted onto the north side of the Dueling Unicorn, there is a long low rectangular building. Its roof is thatched. Round stained glass windows are set into its white plaster walls. Cheerful clouds of wood smoke rise from its two stone chimneys. The sound of music and laughter emanate from inside. The sign that hangs over its low, arched wooden door depicts an owlbear dressed in a floppy hat and

a cloak only big enough to cover its shoulders. It is sitting at a round table and hoisting a mug of frothing ale. Above the painted scene is written, "The Obvious Owlbear."

FROM INDOORS

You enter a crowded and raucous common room. Round wooden tables are arrayed about, nearly every one surrounded by happy revellers. There are fireplaces against the far wall, pots of stew bubbling merrily in each.

The tavern patrons are mostly humans. Looking up, you notice that even though the ceiling here is not high, there is a smaller second floor that is open to the main level and protected by a wooden rail. This second level is the exclusive domain of the smaller kindreds. Dwarves and halflings and even a few laughing goblins are up there, waving their drinks in the air and singing.

Several chandeliers made from old cart wheels hang from the ceiling. A sleeping kobold is sprawled upon one of them, snoring loudly.

There is a long, tidy bar along one end of the tavern. Behind it, there are two hulking, snaggle-toothed people: a man and a woman. They stand side-by-side, one drawing mugs of ale from a keg then handing it to the other who then hands the drinks out with a smile to waiting patrons.

..... ❖
The tavern keepers are half-ogres, Nelinda and her husband Brobart Tawattle. They stand side by side behind the bar when the PCs enter. They are laughing and trading stories while passing drinks to their customers. They seem friendly and not at all "ogreish." When they step out from behind the bar, it is revealed that their torsos join at the waist and they share a pair of stocky legs.

If the Tawattles are asked why they share a pair of legs, they explain, "Oh, they used to joke that we're joined at the hip and, well, here we are. Closer than ever. And happier than ever, aren't we dear?"

The Tawattles *seem* friendly to the party but, they're tavern keepers, that's their job. To make them *actually* friendly, the party needs to buy an extremely fine meal and at least three drinks per party member. Buying a round of drinks for the whole tavern works too. Also, the PCs will have to provide some kind of entertainment; though the Tawattles prefer performances that involve dancing, music and the like. They are unimpressed — even hostile — towards demonstrations of any magic.

The Tawattles are immune to charm magic of third level or lower. And they know that a charm spell has been cast on them if it is a first level spell or a cantrip.

The Obvious Owlbear patrons are only too happy to talk to the party. They confirm everything that Franny Gawynt has said about what happened on the day of the Greesly

Keep explosion. They don't believe it's anything to be worried about, however. The standard answer is that wizards are inscrutable creatures and it's best not to question what they're up to.

A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that the people in the Obvious Owlbear are so joyful and friendly because the wizards have locked themselves up in the Keep. They see the departure of the wizards as a reason to celebrate and aren't going to look a gift horse in the mouth.

GETTING HELP

If the party mentions they plan to go up and investigate Greesly Keep, the standard response is, "Why would you want to do a foolish thing like that for?" but no one tries to stop or dissuade them.

The people in the Obvious Owlbear will not volunteer to help the party directly in any way.

But, if quizzed about "the Incident," the tavern patrons remember being unnerved by how quiet the Greesly wizards became after the explosion. And a few patrons also remember one of the wizards remarking about a "Cobalt Throne." Other patrons remember the remark being, "Kobold Throne" and will argue "cobalt" is ridiculous because who would make a throne out of cobalt? What is cobalt anyway? And since kobolds probably *have* thrones, if there were kobolds near Mumbleton who had set up a throne, well, you could see how that might be worrying.

If any of the PCs ask if there is another way into Greesly Keep beyond storming the front gates, someone in the tavern says, "I seem to remember something about the grocer knowing something about that. I know he supplies their dining room but I've definitely never seen him go up there by any of the usual ways."

WIZARD CLOAKS

If the party spends some time (and money) at the Obvious Owlbear, and if they succeed at making the Tawattles friendly to them, and if the explosion or Greesly Keep comes up in conversation, the half-ogres will mention that after the incident, "The wizards left town so quickly, they even left their cloaks behind."

The Tawattles have several wizard cloaks — coincidentally, the same number as there are PCs. If the party wants to buy them, the tavern keepers are willing to sell them for 15gp each. These cloaks can be used to get past the Haunted Portraits in Greesly Keep's foyer (8. **Up The Main Staircase.**)

3. PHILOMEL'S PHINE PHILTRES

THINGS TO GET FROM PHILOMEL'S PHINE PHILTRES:

- OVERPRICED HEALING POTIONS
- HOLY OIL
- LOVE POTIONS THAT DON'T WORK (IF, FOR SOME REASON, YOUR PLAYERS THINK THESE WOULD BE OF USE)

.....❖ READ ALOUD ❖.....

FROM INDOORS

This is not only the tidiest alchemist's you have ever seen, it may be the tidiest *shop* you have ever seen. Elegant round tables are arranged about the store and finely crafted shelves line the walls. On every surface, there are delicate glass vials artfully displayed along with decorations made from flowers and cut paper. A counter stands opposite the entrance. Behind it, a black, velvet curtain covers the entrance to the back rooms.

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When the party enters, a bell chimes over the door. After a few moments, Philomel glides into the store. She's surprised to have customers as the wizards have been gone for some time and apprentices make up the bulk of her clientele. A **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that she looks genuinely relieved that the people in her shop are strangers and not her usual customers.

Philomel appears to be a normal half-elven woman. She wears a fine, white, silken robe and her black hair is kept up in an elaborate architecture of knots and twists. The sleeves of her robes are long and flared and completely cover her hands. As soon as the party observes her handling any of her products they'll notice that instead of fingers, Philomel has 10 thumbs on each hand (yep, that's 20 thumbs total). If asked about this, she waggles her digits in the air and replies, "They call people who are clumsy 'all thumbs' but I don't think I've dropped a thing since I got these little miracles."

The bulk of Philomel's wares are small vials of love potions. She has an entire wall of them. These are, of course, useless. But prices for them start at 75gp for a half-ounce of her weakest tonic: The Friends Ozone Spray (it does not come with a guarantee). At more reasonable prices, she sells ointments and potions that claim to clear up bad



skin, reverse baldness, turn eyes blue, improve romantic performance, build muscle, trim the waistline, expand the bust-line, give one a sonorous singing voice, whiten teeth, restore teeth, remove unsightly body hair and make the imbibor a decent poet. These are only minimally effective. On the mundane side, she sells reasonably priced colognes, perfumes and manuals on how to woo young lads and ladies.

THE ONLY THINGS OF REAL VALUE

If the PCs make Philomel friendly to them and if they ask her if she has anything that might help with their investigation of Greesly Keep, she shows them her “behind the counter” inventory: four Potions of Healing (Common) priced 80gp each and a **polished wooden box containing six vials of Holy Oil** she’s selling as a set for 200gp or 40gp a vial. She tells them that the oil may prove useful should the party encounter anything “uncanny.”

Any reasonable attempt to haggle with Philomel should eventually get her to drop her prices by half.

HOLY OIL

When applied to a weapon, it gives the weapon the magical property against fiends and undead. It does not enhance to-hit or damage. Application requires an action. Wears off after one combat. Loses potency after being on a weapon for a half hour. Each vial holds two applications of Holy Oil.

4. THE GREEN GROCER

THINGS TO GET FROM THE GREEN GROCER:

- REASONABLY PRICED PRODUCE
- ACCESS TO GREESLY KEEP’S SECRET KITCHEN ENTRANCE
- A SECRET WAY INTO THE GREESLY KEEP KITCHEN

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

FROM OUTDOORS

This is a narrow green, wooden building, the front of which opens outward. The inside of each of the two broad doors have racks affixed to them on which are stacked boxes of fruit and vegetables. There are more shelves of produce filling the inside of the building as well.

The produce does not seem to be in the greatest shape. There is nothing obviously rotten for sale but much of it looks over-ripe.

The halfling proprietor stands outside, surveying the street. He is completely green: His clothes, his boots, his skin and even his hair.

..... 

During the day, the Green Grocer can usually be found standing outside his shop, minding his racks of fruits and vegetables. He is a male halfling who is all green including his hair, his skin, and his eyes. As far as anyone in Mumbleton knows, he never speaks though whether this is because he is unable or because he chooses not to is a

mystery. He will respond to any request for provisions by producing the item and then ask for payment by holding up fingers for the number of silver pieces he expects. He will respond to other questions with nods, head shakes and shoulder shrugs (mostly shoulder shrugs). If a character asks him to write out a reply he will emphatically shake his head.

If anyone asks about why he is green, he will shrug his shoulders but on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** characters will notice a rage simmering behind his eyes. If the party presses him too hard on this, he will shove them away and close up the front of his shop.

If the party asks the Green Grocer about a secret way into Greesly Keep — and if they have done nothing to



anger him — he will gesture for them to follow him into his shop and close the front behind them. He will take the party past the shelves stacked high with fruit and vegetables into a square, windowless room in the back. He shoves several wicker baskets full of melons against a wall then presses a finger into a knot on a wall causing the floorboards in the centre of the room to fall away and reveal a spiral staircase down to the Mineshaft.

THE MINESHAFT

The stairs from the Green Grocer end in a wide stone room. A **DC 12 Intelligence (History) check** on the origin of the stonework reveals that the room must have been excavated by magic. Several wooden crates are stacked up here.

On one side of the room there is a series of six, linked minecarts sitting on track that leads into a dark, stone tunnel. The Green Grocer sits in the rear cart and gestures for the party to climb into the carts in front of him.

Each cart can seat two medium humanoids comfortably.

When everyone is seated, the Green Grocer pulls a lever that extends from the ground next to his cart. A spring device then shoots out from the wall behind and pushes the train of carts down the tunnel at a breakneck pace.

The tunnel is pitch black and the cart travels along a twisting, roller-coaster route. They are moving so fast and the walls are so close by, it is obvious that any attempt to jump free would be fatal. While travelling, each character must make a **DC 11 Constitution save** to avoid throwing-up from motion sickness.

After 15 minutes of barrelling through the dark, the train emerges into a meadow in the valley far from town. It slows as it approaches a wooden unloading platform covered with a broad flat roof upon which grass grows.

The train clangs to a stop when it hits a big block of stone that marks the end of the track.

The Green Grocer exits the cart and guides the party along a cobbled trail that ends at a blank stone wall at the eastern base of Mount Hood. With one hand the Green Grocer sweeps aside the stone as though it were a curtain, revealing a stone hallway that leads to a room lit by magic lanterns. There is a wooden platform in the centre connected to a vertical track that stretches up into the mountain – it’s an elevator that leads up into Greesly Keep.

There is a crank on the platform. The Green Grocer mimes that the party should step on the platform and turn the crank.

The platform has a railing around the outer edge (for safety!) and holds six medium humanoids. When the crank is turned, the platform rises up into a long vertical tunnel. To reach the top the PC working the crank must make four **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) checks**. If the PC fails two or more checks, they become afflicted with one point of exhaustion at the top. Characters can switch cranking duties after a failed check to avoid this penalty.

The Green Grocer will not accompany the party on the platform. Instead, he leaves after waving goodbye.

When the elevator gets to the top, the platform raises up the trapdoor in the Greesly Keep Larder (**5. The Larder**). If the party is so large it had to leave some characters behind, one character will have to work the crank to go back down and pick up the rest of the party. There are no Strength checks required to take the platform back down.

When escaping Greesly Keep, if the party hopes to return to Mumbleton via the minecart, they find that the Green Grocer left the train for them. It can be activated by pulling a lever next to the track.

5. NURTOLIPHER’S IRON IMPLEMENTS

THINGS TO GET FROM NURTOLIPHER’S IRON IMPLEMENTS:

- MUNDANE WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION
- INFORMATION ABOUT FIGHTING INCORPOREAL UNDEAD
- PASSPHRASE TO GET PAST THE HAUNTED PORTRAITS

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

FROM OUTDOORS

Outside, beside the sturdy stone building, there is a forge, anvil, barrels of raw ore and several tables heavy with iron tools. A lean, muscular man is hammering on the red hot end of what looks to be a garden hoe in progress.

..... ~~~~~

Mumbleton’s smith is Nurtolipher Orbanger (he goes by “Nurt”). He is a lean but muscular man with an extra set of arms at his mid-section. He can twist himself so the arms

are oriented behind him or in front and he can control his extra arms such that they can perform tasks independent of his upper arms. If asked about his extra arms, he says, “They said I should get more done in a day. Now I do.”

Nurt is taciturn and unfriendly. While he won’t say anything negative about the wizards of Greesly Keep, his disdain for them is not difficult to read on his face.

Nurt can sell mundane weapons and ammunition at the usual *Players’ Handbook* prices. He does not have any magic items in stock.



GETTING HELP

If the party can avoid making Nurt angry and he hears they are planning to investigate the Keep, he mentions that he did some adventuring in his youth. He tells the party that when zombies are about, there could also be other types of undead like spectres and ghosts. He informs them that mundane weapons aren’t as effective against those creatures.

Despite his stern exterior, because of his adventuring past, Nurt likes to hear heroic stories. A PC can attempt to make him friendly to the party by sharing tales of their exploits and, in the process, succeed on a **DC 13 Charisma (Performance) check**. This only works if the PC focuses on how the party succeeded in their adventures through grit and determination. If magic or spell-casting is mentioned, Nurt becomes obviously disinterested and even more hostile.

If the party succeeds at making Nurt friendly, he says just before they leave, “Hey, the Long Beards hired me for a job once. Needed some iron mended on one of their rain gutters. Couldn’t be bothered to do it themselves. I was up there two days. Didn’t see much. But for the stairs in the lobby, the pass-phrase is, ‘Be still old masters, let our guest in.’ I wasn’t supposed to hear that but I did.”

6. MULLION DUE'S HORSE HOTEL

THINGS TO GET FROM MULLION DUE'S HORSE HOTEL:

- SAFE LODGINGS FOR THE PARTY'S HORSES
- INFORMATION ABOUT THE MOUNT HOOD GONDOLA

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

FROM OUTDOORS

This is a broad, single-storey building. The front door is extra wide and extra tall and stands open. The windows are quite large and uncovered by glass. There are window boxes under each from which grasses and wildflowers grow. From several windows, horses are peaking out and chewing on the contents of their window boxes.

FROM INSIDE

There are two counters when you first enter, one human height and, next to it, one about knee level. On the lower counter, a big book lays open and several hoof prints have been stamped on the exposed pages. Instead of the usual gates, the entrances to individual stables are doors like in a human inn.

Everything in Mullion Due's Horse Hotel is built to accommodate his equine customers.

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖



Before Mullion Due enters a room, the party's nostrils are assaulted by an odour like several barrels of perfume that have been spilled on the floor. When he approaches, the smell becomes stronger. The smell is so intense it causes the PCs eyes to water.

Mullion Due doesn't seem to notice at all.

Due is a lanky human with shaggy brown hair. His tunic and trousers are exceptionally fine and much cleaner than you'd expect from someone who works around horses all day.

Mullion can stable up to six horses for one week for 5gp. Every horse or pack animal above six will cost an additional 10sp.

ABOUT THAT GONDOLA

If the PCs ask about Greesy Keep, the only thing Mullion can tell them is that since the gondola broke down, there is no way to transport horses up there — the trail up Mount Hood is simply too narrow and treacherous.

If the party asks about the gondola, he tells them that there used to be a machine that moved entire rooms worth of people and supplies up the side of Mount Hood. These "rooms" dangled from metal cables and would take Greesy Keep's faculty and staff to town and back (while lower-year students had to walk along the narrow mountain path "to build character"). The rooms on this "gondola" were big enough to carry eight people comfortably at a time or one person and a horse. The gondola was powered by "massive, moving stone statues" (ie, earth elementals). But after The Incident, Due says those moving statues disappeared and now the gondola is stuck up at the Keep.

7. MISS RATTIGAL'S FINE TEA SHOPPE

THINGS TO GET FROM MISS RATTIGAL'S TEA SHOPPE:

- THIS IS AN EMPTY LOCATION EXCEPT FOR...
- THE SWAMP TEA CURSE WHICH AFFLICTS ANYONE WHO TRIES TO BURGLE THE SHOP

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

FROM OUTDOORS

This tall building has been painted pink and decorated with delicate white trim. Out front, there is a wooden porch surrounded by a low railing. Planter boxes overflowing with bright flowers are arranged about the building.

All the windows are dark. The front door is closed and there is a note tacked on it.

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

There is a closed sign hung on the door of Miss Rattigal's shop and below it a note that reads, "At the Owlbear. Back soon."

If a character breaks into her shop, they find it is a lovely place where people can buy bags of loose tea or sit and drink hot tea and eat biscuits. There is a box behind the counter containing 35gp and nothing else of interest in the building (unless the PCs are interested in tea).

For breaking into Miss Rattigal's Fine Tea Shoppe, the character(s) soon discover they are afflicted with the Swamp Tea Curse (no, there is no saving throw). This makes everything they eat or drink taste like Spagule's Swamp Tea, a bitter blend of such foulness that it robs all the joy from mealtime and gives the victim bad dreams. For as long as the Swamp Tea Curse is in effect, the afflicted PC looks tired and weak and whenever this PC heals up during a long rest, they will not be restored to full HP, but rather to max HP minus one. Healing spells and hit dice can still restore the character to max HP, however.

The curse dissipates after one month but can be reversed earlier with a *dispel magic* or *lesser restoration* spell.

Part 4: Greesly Keep

If the party takes the mountain trail up to Greesly Keep, Franny Gawynt accompanies them part of the way. She leads them along the road north out of town, down into the valley and over a covered bridge spanning the Brootwaggle River. The road ends at the empty base gondola station. From there, a well trod path forks off and enters a narrow, sloping trail that snakes up the side of Mount Hood.

Franny will go no further but she promises to wait for them in the gondola station until they return.

The trail up the mountain is narrow but quite safe. Ropes have been strung between metal loops hammered into the rock face to provide a convenient hand-hold in any treacherous areas.

At the top, the mountain path joins up with a cobbled road that leads from the top gondola station to the gate of Greesly Keep.

Greesly Gondola Station

This is a platform where people can board and exit the swinging gondola cars. There are benches for waiting passengers. Heavy cables extend up through a slot in the roof. At the back of the platform there is a fenced-off area where the cables loop around an enormous metal wheel. On either side of the wheel there is a crank. These were operated by earth elementals when the gondola was working. If the PCs attempt to turn the crank, they find that it is immovable.

There is a twin of the gondola station at the top of the mountain, outside the gate to Greesly Keep.

There is only one gondola car and it is currently at the top of the cable.

Inside Greesly Keep

Once the PCs enter Greesly Keep, whether passing through the Courtyard or up through the secret elevator, they find the interior is sumptuous and comfortable. For generations, the wizards have been charging their students' families obscene tuitions and have blown that gold on rich food and exotic liquors, fine silverware and tableware, thick rugs, overstuffed chairs, flattering portraiture, gilded statues, magic-powered lamps, tapestries embroidered with golden threads, velvet curtains, silk linens and pillows stuffed with owlbear down.

Except where noted, that luxury has not faded in the wake of the chaos the Headmaster has created. Many of the faculty and students who were transformed into monsters have fled the building. The rest have been absorbed by the ritual itself. That means there is no need for wandering monster encounters inside Greesly Keep (unless you want to throw a few in, in which case, see the sidebar). Thus, when an area is cleared, the PCs should be free to rest without interruption.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

If you want to boost the adventure's difficulty, roll a d10 for every half hour the party rests in Greesly Keep (or use a d8 or d6 for greater odds of an encounter). On a 1, roll 2d4 on the table below.

2	1 spectre
3	2 ice mephits
4	1d4 dust mephits
5	1d6 zombies
6	1d4 zombie apprentices
7	2 ghouls
8	1 nothic

For flavour, give the zombies and ghouls some kind of position within the school. Zombies would typically be first or second year student wizards or support staff — caretakers, dorm monitors, library assistants, carpenters. Ghouls could be instructors, teaching assistants or upper class students. Dress them appropriately.

The nothics roaming Greesly Keep and its environs were formerly masters of various departments — so, highly skilled wizards who were involved in the Headmaster's plans from the beginning. They were perverted into their present form through contact with the realm of twisted magic that the ritual has unlocked.

1. The Courtyard

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 2 ZOMBIE GRIFFONS

♦ READ ALOUD ♦

The walls around the Greesly Keep grounds are made of grey stone and stand well over three storeys tall. The gate is made from massive tree trunks carved into corkscrew patterns. There is no obvious mechanism for raising and lowering the gate. Built into the bottom right and left of the gate are wooden doors, large enough to permit people to pass without opening the gate itself.

Inside the walls, the courtyard is a massive open area where students could study outdoors and where sports could be played. It is a square area roughly 230 feet wide. There are cobbled paths through the courtyard and eight circular garden plots from which a tall tree grows from each. The main feature of each of the eight gardens is a marble statue of scholarly wizards.

The main door into Greesly Keep lies directly across the courtyard from the gate. There is a wide marble staircase that leads up to the door. Lying on the top stair is a massive griffon. Something doesn't look quite right about this creature.



Opening and closing the gate is beyond the PCs' abilities as it involves special spells only Greesly's gatekeepers know. The two doors in the base of the gate, however, are unlocked, making it easy to enter the courtyard.

Though the walls around the courtyard are tall, they are mainly there to protect the area from alpine winds. They would not withstand much of an attack from without as they are only a few blocks thick. The ramparts atop the walls are more for enjoying vistas than for defence.

The walls are supported on the interior side by ornate arches. And there are spiral stairs up to the ramparts.

Opposite the gate, there is the main door into the Keep; it is the only way in or out of the building from the courtyard. The windows flanking the Keep door are quite high off the ground and made of enchanted stained glass strong enough that they cannot be broken by mundane means.

ZOMBIE GRIFFONS

On a successful **DC 11 Wisdom (Perception)** check, the party recognizes from afar that the griffon lying on the Keep steps is a zombified creature.

This griffon may look like it is resting but it is actually watching the gate tirelessly and cannot be surprised.

If the party approaches through the gate and makes their way across the courtyard, a second Zombie Griffon immediately falls on them from a ledge above the gate.

If the party is on the lookout for an ambush from above or if a character makes a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check**, the party can avoid a surprise round from this second Zombie Griffon.

These creatures are quite large and terrible but they are also extremely slow. Thus, if the party is ambushed right at the gate, the Zombie Griffon on the steps will need three rounds to rise and slowly fly across the courtyard.

2. The Foyer

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

This is a large circular room with a stone floor and a very high ceiling. On either side of the door and along the wall there are regularly spaced lanterns hanging from wrought-iron brackets. They give off a bright, magical glow that does not flicker.

Near the entrance, there are several empty stands for birds of prey. The floor beneath them is piled high with owl pellets and droppings.

Across from the entrance there is a grand stairwell that curls up to the second level. Portraits are hung on the wall all the way up the stairs. They depict distinguished men and women in various poses.

There are four long tapestries hanging on the walls which depict anthropomorphized animals engaged in strange activities.

On the east side of the room, there is an archway, above which are carved the words, "The Xambolitan Frazoll Memorial Dining Hall." On the west side, there is a closed wooden door. Above it, there is carved, "The Surbodon Mungdalabad Visitor's Library."



The front door of the Keep is unlocked and not trapped. There is a peep-hole window in the door at about eye level that is covered with a smaller door. If the party enters the foyer after sneaking into Greesly Keep through the secret tunnel in the Kitchen, they can peer out through this window and see the Zombie Griffon perched above the gate. After a moment, the Zombie Griffon at the door will rise up and look directly at them and shriek. The Zombie Griffons cannot open the door.

Along the foyer walls are shiny brass brackets from which hang lanterns. These are magical ever-light lanterns. They are in every hall and room of the building. They immediately stop functioning if they are removed from their hooks as the brackets are essential to their enchantment.

Looking through the archway into the dining hall, the party can see that the room has been destroyed: tables have been knocked over and chairs have been upended or smashed.

If the party takes a moment to examine the tapestries on the walls, they discover that each is decorated with two animal scenes — the top half oriented the right way up, the bottom scene oriented upside-down. The animals in all the scenes are anthropomorphized; that is, they walk bipedally and have hands. The scenes are as follows:

TAPESTRY 1

Top: A richly dressed crow-person walks through a village. One hand holds a mask of a human face up to his face. Bright coloured beams shoot from the other hand. The villagers are delighted by the display.

Bottom: A moth-person sits on a pillow holding a crystal orb in one hand and a playing card in the other. The night sky hangs behind the moth-person with all the constellations traced out between the stars.

TAPESTRY 2

Top: A cat-person stands in the middle of a white circle around which are written strange sigils. Outside the circle, demons and fey creatures dance.

Bottom: A person with the end of an earthworm for a head sits atop a tombstone. It wears a long red cloak and is holding hands with skeletons on either side.

TAPESTRY 3

Top: A fox-person in rich robes holds a human woman in an amorous embrace.

Bottom: A lizard-person wreathed in flames walks through a battlefield. There are ruined buildings and charred corpses on every side.

TAPESTRY 4

Top: A dolphin-headed person sits in a circular garden surrounded by a high stone wall. Outside the wall, a besieging army stands about, idle.

Bottom: An octopus-person sits on a throne in an underwater palace. It takes a moment, but you realize that everything in the throne room — the columns, the furnishings, even the throne — are formed by the twisted shapes of other sea creatures.

These tapestries are mainly for colour so you might want to discourage the party from getting too hung up on the details. The clues they contain are mainly around what schools of magic each of Greesly Keep's four faculties comprise (in order as listed above: illusion and divination, conjuration and necromancy, enchantment and evocation, abjuration and transmutation). The party might find this useful when they have to choose which faculty to explore as some are more difficult to navigate than others. The Apprentice Zombies in the Department of Discord Management have spell-like powers that are more dangerous than the illusion and divination powers in the Faculty of Occult Analysis, for instance.

If the PCs approach the stairwell, they discover that the portraits are haunted — an encounter warranting its own entry: **8. Up The Main Staircase.**

3. The Xambolithan Frazoll Memorial Dining Hall

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The dining hall is a wide arcing room that takes up much of the east side of this floor. There are several stained glass windows that would look out onto the courtyard here but the designs upon them obstruct the view and even when the sun is out keep the space quite dim. The room is furnished with finely crafted credenzas, round tables and well-padded chairs, all of which have been knocked over and scattered about.

On one wall, the words, "Hail The Cobalt Throne" are crudely written in brownish-red letters, as though smeared there by someone's palm.

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

This room is unoccupied and there is very little of value here. The serving dishes have been smashed and the silverware has been strewn across the floor.

If the PCs check the writing on the wall, they discover the "paint" used is some kind of stew and not blood.

If the party takes the time to gather up the silverware, they estimate it can be sold for about 20gp. It is very bulky, however. And unless hours are spent carefully wrapping each piece, whoever carries the silverware **rolls Dexterity (Stealth) checks** with disadvantage due to the jingle-jangle of the load.

4. The Horrific Kitchen

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- GHOUL (MM)
- 2 SKELETONS (MM)
- 1 ZOMBIE (MM)

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The kitchen is a broad, squarish room with a large fireplace against one wall and long tables and benches where the cooks prepared food. Along the north wall, there are a series of hooks for hanging meats. There are human bones piled up on the floor by the fireplace.

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

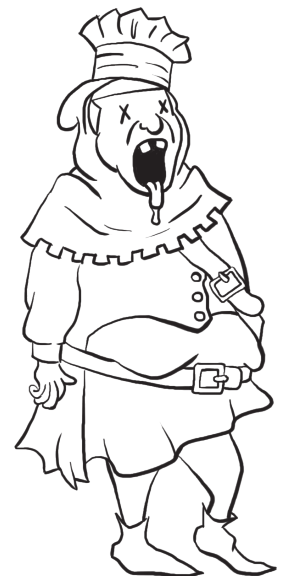
When the party enters, they interrupt the Ghoul Cook. It has been capturing, butchering and devouring the zombified kitchen staff and other Greesly servants. **The Ghoul Cook is a standard *Monster Manual* Ghoul** dressed up in a blood-smeared, white apron, a puffy hat and brandishing two long knives. He is in the process of butchering a human corpse that is lain out on one of the tables. At the sight of the party, the Ghoul Cook drops his knives and attacks with his foul claws.

As it does, the corpse it was butchering turns its head, looks at the PCs, lets out a hungry moan, rises from the table and lumbers toward them. This partially butchered corpse is a ***Monster Manual* zombie** and it attacks on the second round of combat. **As it the Ghouls has already damaged it, this zombie only has 15 HP.**

The bones piled by the fire are what's left of the ghoul's last few meals. Two of the bone piles retain enough necromantic energy that they can rise up as **two *Monster Manual* Skeletons**. The sound of battle causes the piles to shift and move. By the end of the second round of combat, they are identifiably skeletons. They attack on the third round of combat. These skeletons are unarmed and unarmoured.

Their AC is 12 and they attack with their hands: **Bony Fists. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 1 (1d2) bludgeoning damage.**

There is little of value in the kitchen. The food is either moldy or rotten or of uncertain origin. The knives and other kitchen utensils are worthless.



5. The Larder

- ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES
- SECRET ELEVATOR OUT OF GREESLY KEEP

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

This room is icy cold. Foods of all different sorts are stored on the shelves lining the walls. There are nine barrels arranged in a square in the middle of the floor.



The Greesly Keep larder is unnaturally cold because there is a block of ice from the Para-elemental Plane of Ice in the back. This ice is extremely durable and could take up to a year to melt away. Touching it with bare skin causes 1d4-1 cold damage on the first round, rising to 1d6-1 on the second, 1d8-1 on the third and so on up the dice until it caps at 1d20-1 cold damage on the sixth round and beyond.

The barrels in the centre of the room cover the elevator down to the base of the Mount Hood (where there is a trail to the Green Grocer's minecarts.) When the elevated platform enters this room, the trapdoor rises up above it, pressing the barrels against the ceiling. If the elevator isn't there and the barrels are moved aside, the trapdoor can be lifted open to reveal the chute down to the base of Mount Hood and the tracks on which the platform is raised. There is a crank on one of the tracks that can be used to raise the platform if it is at the bottom. This takes about 20 minutes to complete.

6. The Surbodon Munğdalabad Visitor's Library

- ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES
- 2 ZOMBIES
 - 1 SPECTRE
 - SECRET DOOR

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The library arcs around the west side of this tower. Two rows of tall bookshelves project out perpendicular to the walls. The shelves are made of dark oak. Between the two rows of stacks, there is a row of tables around which comfortable looking chairs are set. The only windows in the room are high up in the outside wall and very narrow but the room is still well lit as there are magic lanterns on the tables and hanging from the ends of the bookshelves. There are two robed figures nearby, sitting at the study tables, their heads hanging over open tomes.



The robed figures were visiting scholars in life but are now **two Monster Manual Zombies** dressed in hooded robes. They rise and attack the party moments after the library door opens.

THE SPECTRAL LIBRARIAN

One round into combat, the characters notice a glow from far back in the stacks.

At the end of the next round, they hear someone shush them. If combat lasts to a third round, the shushing rises to a shriek of "Quiet!" as **the Spectral Librarian (a Monster Manual Spectre)** emerges from the stacks to attack the PCs.

If the party decides to follow the spectre's command, they can be quiet enough to appease her by succeeding on individual, **DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) checks**. If she is so appeased, she will nod smugly and float back into the library stacks.

As long as the party remains extremely silent, they can explore the library, unhindered.

Each character actively searching (and not just sitting quietly somewhere) must succeed on a **DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check** for every 10 minutes of searching to remain as quiet as the Spectral Librarian likes. She emerges shrieking "Quiet!" at them on a failed check.

After the first failed Dexterity check, the Spectral Librarian can be mollified one more time if the offending character succeeds on a follow-up **DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check**.

If a PC fails *another* check, the Spectral Librarian loses patience and shouts "That's it!" and streaks towards the character who flubbed the check and attacks. It cannot be settled down again.

The Spectral Librarian cannot leave the library.

Searching the library reveals that the books are historical texts, treatises on politics and philosophy, and books on agriculture, botany and biology. The few on magic do not include any spells; they are defences of the magical arts and books on how to cope when you discover that you or a loved one demonstrates an affinity for magic.

SECRET DOOR IN THE LIBRARY

A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation)** while searching reveals the secret door. If a player says they are specifically searching for secret doors, **the DC drops to 14**. If a player says they are specifically searching for standard secret-door triggers (pulling wall sconces, pulling books that look out of place) they find the secret door on a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check**.

The secret door is triggered by pulling on a copy of a book titled "An Illustrated History Of Doors" which is slightly taller and sturdier than the surrounding tomes. When pulled, a portion of the nearest wall slides away revealing a series of stone steps leading down into a long, narrow passageway (**7. The Secret Passage**).

If the spectral librarian has not been destroyed, triggering the secret door counts as an automatic failed Dexterity (Stealth) check.

There is a lever on the other side of the door that will close it. Closing the secret door also counts as a failed check but the Spectral Librarian will not follow the party into the secret passage.

7. The Secret Passage

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- CORPSE OF A DEAD WIZARD
- ACCESS TO A FACULTY DORMITORY

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

As soon as you step into this passageway, a row of magic lanterns light up along the left wall revealing a tunnel that plunges deep into the rock of the cliff against which Greesly Keep is built. The hall is five feet wide and only five feet tall.

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A **DC 12 Intelligence (History) check** on the origin of the stonework reveals that it must have been built by some kind of magic as there are no tool marks on any surface.

As the PCs pass the midpoint of the passageway, they encounter an area of shadow where the light of the wall lanterns has grown extremely faint. Upon entering this area, any light sources carried by the party dim by 75%. The PCs then spot a winking green glow 20 feet ahead. As they approach, they see many small green glowing eyes moving about in the shadow. If they approach even closer, they see 20 large rats moving over a corpse. The rats rear up and hiss at the party, revealing maws that drip green fluorescence. The rats then flee through cracks in the tunnel walls and the surrounding lanterns flare up to their normal brightness.

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RATS EATING WIZARDS

Little known fact: Beasts that feast upon a wizard corpse may gain magic powers. These particular rats, as they were chowing down upon the body of Bortledum Phugg (a trasmuter whose book on the *Meld Into Stone* spell was very well reviewed), acquired green glowing eyes and a light-dimming ability. They were also imbued with preternatural intelligence (in the 19 to 21 Intelligence range) and with that, became wholly evil.

Unfortunately for these rats, beasts that acquire powers in this manner find the magic is quite short lived. Thus, once the evil, glowing, hyper-intelligent rats retreat into the walls, their fluorescence and enhanced smarts fade within the hour. Their fool-proof plot to take over the world disappears along with them.

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The corpse is the body of a wizard. The side of his head has exploded inward from being struck by a spell.

On the wall opposite the corpse, the words “I am so sorry” are written in blood.

In one hand, the corpse clutches a folded piece of paper that was ripped from a book. On it, the wizard wrote in blood: “BR fools them all. Cobalt Throne comes. Despair.”

In the other hand, the corpse is clutching a *Wand of Magical Missiles* (ie, not the DMG’s *Wand Of Magic Missiles*); a pouch containing 12gp; and a *Pin of the School Of Applied Deviations*.

The wizard committed suicide by firing the wand into his own head.

MAGIC ITEMS

PIN OF THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED DEVIATIONS

A silver pin of a dolphin fighting an octopus with a scroll underneath inscribed with the faculty motto “Cathig Custapermuto”.

The wearer of this pin can pass through the door into the School of Applied Deviations.

To a dealer who knows nothing of Greesly Keep artifacts, the pin is worth a maximum of 7gp (1d4+3 gp) for the silver and craftsmanship. Most dealers who know of Greesly Keep will be terrified of the pin knowing that trading in stolen Greesly artifacts is a serious crime — such dealers will not purchase or even touch the pin and may alert the authorities that the party has one after they have gone. Extremely daring and unscrupulous dealers — say, from a thieves’ guild — would be very interested in getting their hands upon such a pin as it would be a valuable accessory for a thief or spy wanting to pose as a powerful wizard. Thus, a knowledgeable thieves guild agent would pay between 250 and 350gp.

WAND OF MAGICAL MISSILES

Fires up to three missiles a round (DAM 1d4+1 each) as from the *Magic Missile* spell. It is charged up with 21 missiles. This wand does not recharge.

WHERE DOES THE SECRET PASSAGE END?

The secret passage eventually turns to the east and opens into a small, round room. In the centre of this room, there is a wrought-iron, spiral staircase that rises up and stops at a wooden trapdoor in the ceiling. The trapdoor cannot be opened. There is a lever next to the staircase that can be shifted along a slot into four positions. It has a red button on its handle.

Moving the lever into one of the four positions and pushing the red button, activates a powerful spell that shifts space above the building and opens the stairwell into a broom closet in one of the Greesly Keep faculties.

Next to each possible lever setting, there is a coat of arms. These correspond to the four faculties.

When the PCs select a faculty by moving the lever, a terrible grinding sound of metal gears fills the room. After a few moments, the noise stops and the trapdoor in the ceiling slides away revealing that the stairway continues up a dark shaft into the broom closet in the selected faculty (see **12. Broom Closet**).

For more on the faculties, go to **The Four Faculties Part One** and **Two** sidebars.

THE FOUR COATS OF ARMS ARE:

1. A red poppy flower foreground before vertical yellow and grey stripes, held up by a crow and a moth — leads to the **Faculty of Occult Analysis**.
2. An iron spade before black and red checkerboard, held up by a cat and a worm — leads to the **College of Aetheric Engineering**.
3. A silver lyre before a burst of gold points against a burgundy field, held up by a fox and lizard — leads to the **Department of Discord Management**.
4. A black tower foreground against a crooked line that splits a white top from a blue bottom, held up by a dolphin and octopus — leads to the **School of Applied Deviations**.

8. Up The Main Staircase

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES
 • HAUNTED PORTRAIT GAUNTLET

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The staircase to the level above follows the east wall, twisting counterclockwise up and over the dome of the foyer ceiling. It is carved from the same stone as the walls of the Keep and is extremely large. Each step is 13 feet wide and four feet deep at its deepest end. A stone balustrade curls up the open edge. The baluster at the base of the stair is carved to look like a gargoyle with a comically large grin and feathered wings; its arms reach above its head and hold aloft a glass globe, one foot in diameter, that gives off a bright yellow glow.

There are dozens of paintings hung on the wall along the stair. These are portraits of late Greesly wizards, some posing in drawing rooms next to globes and astrolabes, others outside with hunting dogs or before gazebos, mountains or ornamental lakes.



When the characters approach the stairs, the figures depicted in the painting reveal themselves to be animated apparitions that struggle to escape their paintings and attack the characters. The Haunted Portraits are the guardians of the inner domains of Greesly Keep. The closer the party draws to the stairs, the farther these figures can stretch from their frames. They grow long and twisted and while they are tethered to their painting at their base, they can, with ghostly effort, stretch across the entire width of the stair if need be.

Characters who set foot on the stairway are instantly attacked by 1d2 Haunted Portraits. Looking up, the party will see that there are 33 haunted paintings between them and the next level. There are a few ways to get past them.

WIZARD CLOAKS

The Haunted Portraits ignore anyone wearing an official Greesly Keep wizard's cloak. There are none in the foyer, library, dining room or kitchen. But, after the Incident, several were accidentally left behind in Mumbleton and were available for purchase from the Obvious Owlbear tavern keepers. Any PC wearing one of those cloaks can walk up the stairs as the Haunted Portraits are normal, not-haunted paintings.



HAUNTED PORTRAIT APPEARANCE GENERATOR — 5D12

Roll	Age/Gender	Apparel	Noteworthy Thing	Carrying	Background
1	Young man	Rich red robes	Long beard	Staff	Castle walls
2	Young woman	Hooded blue robe	Goatee	Rod	Fireplace
3	Mid-aged man	Ermine trim cloak	Crazy hair	Wand	Forest
4	Mid-aged man	Hunting tunic, pants	Long nails	Dead rabbits	Mountains
5	Mid-aged woman	Checked tunic, hose	Long nose	Severed head	Library
6	Mid-aged woman	Pointed cap, robe	Big moustache	Sword	Library
7	Old man	Floppy hat, robe	Screaming	Open book	Field of battle
8	Old woman	Floppy hat, tunic	Made of shadow	Carrot	Cathedral
9	Ancient man	Pointy collared cape	Animal head	Shield	Ocean
10	Ancient woman	Shadowy cloak	Lobster claw hand	Pet	Alchemy lab
11	Uncertain	Toga	Tentacle	Mace	Another portrait
12	Uncertain	Nothing	Contortionist pose	Pipe	Hellscape

THE PASS PHRASE

The Haunted Portraits can also be rendered temporarily inactive by uttering the pass phrase learned from Nurt, Mumbleton's smith.

That phrase is, "Be still old masters, let our guests in."

SMOOTH TALKING

While the portraits gibber and moan and gnash their teeth at the party, they are actually capable of speech.

The portraits *can* be reasoned with or tricked into letting the party upstairs. But as the portraits are tasked with protecting the upper levels, they are very unfriendly to anyone without a cloak trying to pass them by and are therefore predisposed to attack. The party will have to come up with a heroically convincing lie or argument to be allowed up the stairs.

If they do come up with a good line of smooth talk, the PCs have to succeed in a contested skill check: the spokes-PC's **Charisma (Deception or Persuasion)** versus a Haunted Portrait's **Wisdom (Insight) of +4**.

Note: The Haunted Portraits roll with advantage against any Charisma (Deception / Persuasion) checks and Intimidation does not work against them.

The portraits at the bottom of the stair are the oldest and thus carry the most authority among the other paintings. Thus, if the PCs convince one or two portraits at the bottom to let them pass, the rest *should* let them by.

However, the Haunted Portraits are quite unruly. If the party strikes a deal with the portraits on the ground floor, as they climb the stairs, roll 1d12. On a 1, 1d4 nearby Haunted Portraits go rogue (over the protestations of their fellows) and attack the party.

The Haunted Portraits are not actually haunted by the spirits of the wizards they depict. But they *think* they are. As such, once the party gets them talking, they behave as haughty old professors though they have no memories of their life to draw upon.

RUNNING UP THOSE STAIRS

PCs who try to run up the stairs can reach the top after making at least three successful **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks**.

A success on one of these checks means the PC makes significant progress. A failure means the PC is waylaid by the portraits and didn't make it very far.

Regardless, when a PC ends a turn on the stairs, 1d2 Haunted Portraits stretch from their frames and attack the PC. (This does not happen after the final successful check as this represents the character reaching the top.)

The PC rolls a new initiative for each of these encounters. If the check to climb the stairs was successful that round, the character gets +1 on the initiative roll. If the check was a failure, the character rolls initiative at -1.

When fighting a Haunted Portrait, characters can use their action to Disengage and use their movement to continue up the stairs and thereby carry on to the next

Athletics or Acrobatics check. Therefore, with a few lucky rolls, it is possible to get all the way to the top of the stairs without ever having to engage in combat with a Haunted Portrait.

The stair's magic makes it impossible to cheat around the minimum three checks — the stairs will stretch and multiply for anyone who does. Thus, the Dash action is useless. PCs using the Dash action still have to make three successful ability checks to reach the top (and they don't have the option Disengage when using Dash as their action).

Similarly, using a *Haste* spell or a magic item that boosts speed might help with initiative rolls but the PC still must succeed at at least three skill checks to reach the top.

If the party runs up the stairs together, have them roll their checks together. Group characters who succeed on their checks on the same stair. The stairs are large enough that two party members can stand on a stair and fight together. If more than two party members are together, consider them to be standing on two adjacent stairs and then they must fight 2d2 (ie, 2 to 4) Haunted Portraits.

After making three successful checks, the PC reaches the next level and is clear of the Haunted Portraits.



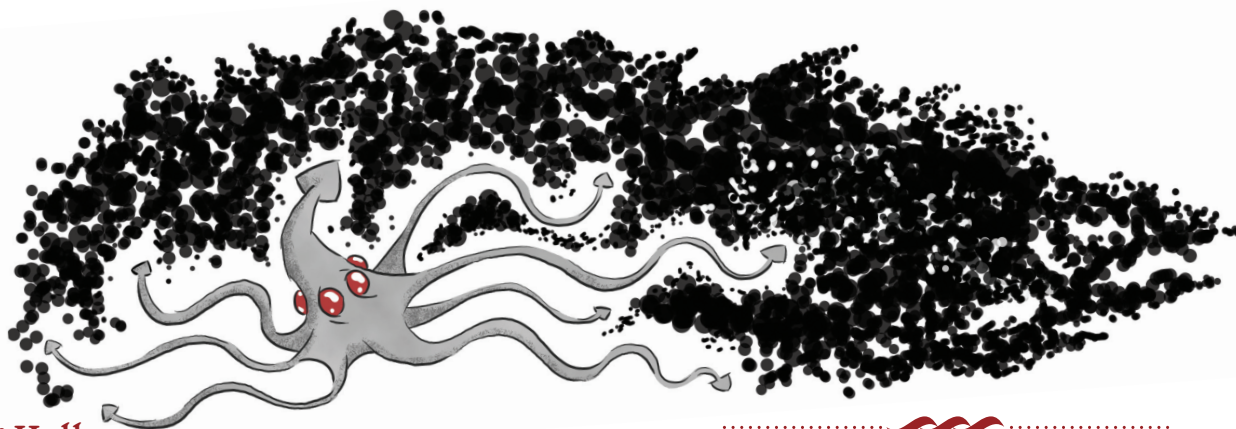
The order of operations for a PC running up the stairs looks like this:

- 1 Attempt a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**.
- 2 If that was your third successful check, Yay! You made the next level! You're in the clear! Otherwise...
- 3 Oh, no! You're still on the stairs and you're being attacked by 1 or 2 Haunted Portraits! Roll initiative.
- 4 If you won initiative, you can Disengage and run up the stairs again (go to 1). Or you can fight (go to 7).
- 5 You lost initiative! The Haunted Portrait(s) attacks! When it's done, go to 6...
- 6 Now it's your turn. You can Disengage and run up the stairs (go to 1). Or you can fight (go to 7).
- 7 Attack a Haunted Portrait.
- 8 If you defeat the Haunted Portrait(s), run up more stairs (go to 1). Otherwise, keep fighting. (Remember, you can always Disengage on your turn.)



If you want to describe the portraits the PCs encounter in detail, find inspiration by rolling 5d12 on the **Haunted Portrait Appearance Generator** (previous page).

Once the characters have reached the top of the stairs, they will be at the south end of **9. Sorting Hall**.



9. Sorting Hall

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 4 CORRUPTED SORTING CLOAKS (DARKMANTLES, MM)
- ACCESS TO THE FOUR FACULTIES

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The stairs end in a broad hall with a high vaulted ceiling decorated with billowing drapery. The floor is covered by a well-worn carpet with a dizzying pattern of geometry-defying shapes. Larger-than-lifesize paintings of wizards battling dragons, undead armies and other foes hang along each wall. These portraits are not haunted.

Evenly spaced along the hall are archways, two on each side. They resemble doorways except that they are only a foot deep and end in blank stone walls. Around the inner fringe of these arches, there are wickedly sharp, conical protrusions that look very much like fangs.

There is a coat of arms and a slogan carved into the stone above each arch

The hall ends at curved, raised area that appears to be a stage. There are stained glass windows against the curving end wall. Four ornately carved wooden chairs form a semicircle. The chairs face a slender wooden podium that holds up a thin book.

The book lies open.

..... ❖

The archways along each wall are magically sealed doors into each of Greesly Keep's four faculties. The coats of arms reveal the names of the faculties, their logos and symbols. They do not reveal the magic schools that are taught in each faculty, the PCs have to figure those out for themselves.

The slogans are in an ancient arcane language. To translate them, a character must succeed on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check**.

If a character tries to step through a faculty arch without a pin or before dealing with the Darkmantles, the rows of teeth in the arch tremble and start to close in on the character. If a character tries to push on the wall that seals the entrance, the teeth snap shut. The character must succeed on a **DC 14 Dexterity save** to get out of the way of the teeth or take 9 (2d6+3) piercing damage on a failed save.

THE FOUR FACULTIES PART ONE

Where each of the four archways leads is listed below along with a description of the faculty coat of arms and slogan. The schools of magic taught in each faculty are also included but these should not be shared with players.

DOOR 1: FACULTY OF OCCULT ANALYSIS

Coat of Arms: red poppy flower foreground before vertical yellow and grey stripes, held up by a crow and a moth

Slogan: Umbraverum Grex
[That which is hidden is true]

Magic schools: illusion & divination

DOOR 2: COLLEGE OF AETHERIC ENGINEERING

Coat of Arms: iron spade before black and red checkerboard, held up by a cat and a worm

Slogan: Phasmobestor Dytribia [The spirit must move]

Magic schools: conjuration & necromancy

DOOR 3: DEPARTMENT OF DISCORD MGMT

Coat of Arms: silver lyre before a burst of gold points against a burgundy background, held up by a fox and lizard

Slogan: Ludus Profligorapto [In fire, rapture]

Magic schools: enchantment & evocation

DOOR 4: SCHOOL OF APPLIED DEVIATIONS

Coat of Arms: black tower against a crooked line that splits background between a white top and blue bottom, held up by a dolphin and octopus

Slogan: Cathig Custapermuto [Change is strength]

Magic schools: abjuration & transmutation

..... ❖

There are only two things that can unseal a faculty arch. First, a faculty pin worn somewhere on a character's clothing will cause the appropriate archway to open for them when they approach. These pins are only granted to students and faculty who have gone through a sorting ceremony.

DARKMANTLES

The second way is to be sorted. This process is described on the pages of the book lying open upon the podium. If a PC steps up to the podium and reads the open page, you can hand them the “Sorting Procedure” player handout or read the sorting procedure text aloud, as follows:

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

Congratulations, you have been selected as a new student of Greesly Keep, the most illustrious and most exclusive academy of magic studies ever to be established in the mortal realm. This means you are an individual destined to make a mark upon the wider world. You need only the education and refinement that Greesly Keep offers. You must be eager to get started.

But right now, the most important thing to keep in mind is this:

Do not be afraid. You are about to be sorted.

At Greesly Keep, we tailor our education to fit *you*. To do that, we need to know what kind of talents are locked within you, what untapped skills you contain. And when we learn what *we* need, we will know which of our four faculties is best suited to *your* need.

That’s why, climbing about on the ceiling high above your head, there are four cloaks — hoods, really — that are examining you. They may look like articles of clothing but they are living creatures who have served Greesly Keep for many years. Right now, they are reaching out with their minds and tasting the arcane energies that you exude. In a few moments, the cloak that finds you the most interesting will drop upon your head.

When it does, it is important that you do not panic. It may feel like it is feeding upon you, that it is suckling away some of your magic energy. In a sense, it is, but don’t try to fight it off.

Instead, you will have to walk down from the podium and into your new life. Don’t worry. The sorting cloak is there to help you, it will show you the way by urging you in the correct direction. Some new students find the sensation unnerving, like being licked by several large ungulates, but it is completely normal.

Once you are absorbed by a sorting cloak, one of the archways and the faculty beyond it will open for you. You will receive further instructions once you are on the other side.

Again, congratulations and welcome to Greesly Keep. Do not be afraid. You are about to be sorted...

..... ❖

The Sorting Cloaks referenced in the book are — or, rather, *were* — intelligent items of clothing that have been in service to Greesly Keep for generations. Unfortunately, they’ve been corrupted by the evil magic loose in the academy and transformed into Darkmantles; the only difference between these Corrupted Sorting Cloaks and *Monster Manual* Darkmantles is their hide retains streaks in the colours of the faculty they represent. One is streaked yellow and grey for Occult Analysis, one is black and red for Aetheric Engineering, one is gold and burgundy for Discord Management and the last is streaked white and blue for Applied Deviations.

When a PC steps up to the podium and reads the book, the Corrupted Sorting Cloaks/Darkmantles start to move into position above them. The draperies that hang from the walls and ceilings make spotting the Darkmantles very difficult. Roll 1d4 to determine which faculty’s Darkmantle selects the PC.

If the PC at the podium looks up before reading to the end of the “Sorting Procedure” text, that PC spots the Darkmantles and avoids a surprise round.

The PC can step to the side, the Darkmantle drops to the ground nearby and combat begins with initiative.

If the PC does nothing before reading to the end of the passage, one Darkmantle drops from hiding and gets a surprise round as an unseen attacker (ie, an attack round with advantage, giving it a chance to engulf the PC on a successful hit).

Regardless, the Darkmantle’s next action after dropping and trying engulf the PC is to activate its *Darkness Aura*.

One round after the first Darkmantle descends, the remaining Darkmantles drop onto other characters.

..... ❖

At this point in the adventure, four Darkmantles could prove to be a deadly challenge for a lower level party (say, four 2nd level characters). Reduce the number of Darkmantles by killing some of them off. Dead Darkmantles would have died of starvation and their withered corpses dangle from the ceiling like empty cocoons. They can be retrieved by a resourceful party and used to travel to a desired faculty. But the party really only needs one Darkmantle carcass to go forward.

..... ❖

Once they’ve been dispatched, the Darkmantle carcasses can be worn to pass through the faculty arches and enter **10. The Apprentices’ Common Room** of the appropriate faculty.

When a PC wears a Darkmantle carcass and approaches the archway that corresponds that Darkmantle’s colouring, the stone fangs retreat into the arch and the wall melts away revealing a hall to the faculty beyond.

To get more than one party member through an arch, the party can toss a Darkmantle carcass back and forth through the arch. Or a carcass-covered character can stand in the arch and hold it open. (When the school was functioning, using Sorting Cloaks or faculty pins to sneak

in friends from outside your faculty was a serious violation of school rules.)

Alternately, the characters can split up and explore different faculties (however, this is *really* not advised).



THE FOUR FACULTIES PART TWO

The different faculties in Greesly Keep are nearly identical. The layouts follow the same pattern: Common Room, Dormitory, Corkscrew Stair, Classrooms, Faculty Offices. From there, each faculty exits into the Lobby outside the Grand Hall.

Combats will go differently depending on the faculty the party explores. The **Zombie Apprentices** cast spells appropriate to their faculties, different **Mephits** rampage through the Classrooms and the **Ghoul Teaching Assistants** have different powers.

Beyond that, the differences between faculties are cosmetic: different textbook titles, different room furnishings.

If the party splits up to explore different faculties, combats could get repetitive. You may want to vary the encounters in that case. Or you could gently nudge the PCs to stay together. Easiest way to do this is have only the first faculty archway tried open. The others won't work because the group is considered collectively "sorted" by the Keep's magic.



10. The Apprentices' Common Room

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 7 APPRENTICE ZOMBIES
- MAGIC TEXTBOOKS

The first room in each faculty wing is a common area where students would socialize and study. These are spacious and comfortable and include game tables, a fireplace, bookshelves and seating. However, the common room for each faculty looks different. The themes are as follows:

OCCULT ANALYSIS

Pictures on walls depict moving scenes. On games tables are semi-transparent, moving game pieces on shifting, realistic game environments. Looking up at the ceiling, it appears open to the milky way with comets and fiery orbs. All these are illusions. There are also real divination card decks, astrolabes and crystal balls.

AETHERIC ENGINEERING

Decorated with stuffed ravens and animal skulls. A complete humanoid skeleton stands in a glass display case, it has notably pronounced canines. Everything is dust covered and dark. The carpet is black with a red conjuring circle and star design. Pictures depict cute devil figures gambolling in cartoonish hellscape.

DISCORD MANAGEMENT

The fireplace sits in the room's centre and is a circular slab of polished marble with a hole in the middle from which a jet of blue flame shoots. Chairs are deeply reclined and float a couple feet off the ground. The few textbooks in the room have been set on tables artfully and feature more illustrations than words. There is a simple table against one wall atop which there are decanters of various liquors. The walls are white and simple paintings hang on them: a red dot against a field of blue, three stripes of colour, a white brush stroke against a black background, that sort of thing.

APPLIED DEVIATIONS

Everything here seems comfortable and normal — like a cozy reading room in a library — until you notice, on a **DC 10 Wisdom Perception check**, that every item in the room is made from the distorted form of some creature. Chairs, tables, shelves, tankards and pieces of art, are all made from stretched and twisted organisms. The creatures used this way are clearly animal — there are, mercifully, no humanoids thus transformed — but it can be difficult to tell which animals exactly. After a few moments, it becomes clear that most of the furniture is still alive. It's domesticated and quite happy to see the party.

Seated in the common room are **3 Zombie Apprentices** which rise and attack the party immediately. The sound of combat alerts **4 more Zombie Apprentices** from the Dormitories of the battle and these reinforcements enter the Common Room and attack after two rounds of combat.

Searching the room reveals many common card, dice and board games about.

And as this is where apprentices spent much of their time studying, there are also several textbooks left out. (If the PCs investigate the textbooks, there are rules on how to handle them and how to generate random titles in **Appendix A: The Textbooks Of Greesly Keep**.)

11. Dormitories

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 2 TO 12 ZOMBIE APPRENTICES
- MAGIC TEXTBOOKS
- THE SUICIDE



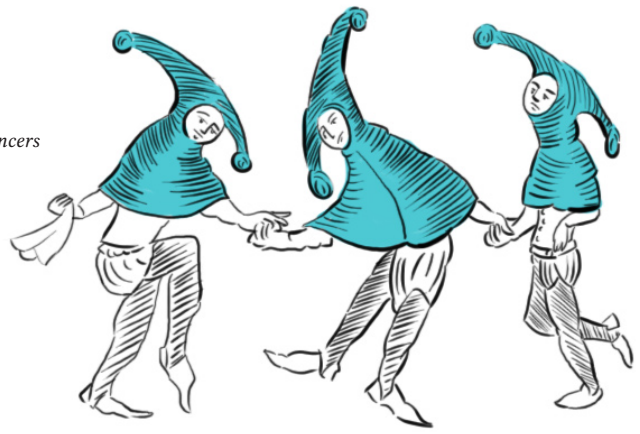
This is a long narrow hall. On each side, there are four open doors that lead into rooms; moans and growls emanate from them.



There are eight rooms off this hall, four on each side. These are the dorm rooms that once housed this faculty's apprentices.

Seven of the doors are open. There are **2d6 Zombie Apprentices** randomly distributed among these seven

Fig. 1 Morris Dancers



dorm rooms. They are banging about and moaning but are unaware of the party’s presence. The doors to the dorm rooms are open but with successful **DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) checks**, the doors can be closed, thus sealing the zombies in their rooms without them attacking.

Inside each dorm room, there are two bunk beds, a wardrobe and a bay window.

Looking out the windows reveals that the rooms are many floors higher up than expected. At this point, the party should feel as though they have travelled up two, maybe three storeys, but looking out the windows they see that they are now 15 storeys or more in the air. This is the result of the space warping magic that the Greesly wizards have built into their towers.

The north view is Mount Hood, the south view is of the valley below the Keep.

The rooms are not particularly well stocked with treasure. The wardrobes contain various articles of clothing you’d expect to find at a wizarding school: robes, pointy hats, boots. None of which are valuable. You can also place a few textbooks here. (For more on textbooks, see **Appendix A: The Textbooks of Greesly Keep**.)

THE SUICIDE

The door to the eighth room is closed and locked. If the party breaks in, they find one of two scenes. Choose the one best suited to your party

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

THE EXTRA GRIM VERSION

The smell of decay in this room is almost unbearable. The bunk beds and floor boards are saturated with dried gore. Three apprentice corpses lie in their beds. They were clearly murdered and then decapitated. The bodies reek and the room is filled with flies. A fourth body hangs from the neck, the noose made of sturdy rope tied to a rafter. Nearby, a chair lies on its side.

THE LESS GRIM VERSION

This is a normal dormitory room. It is empty and undisturbed save the window has been smashed out.

..... ❖

In the Extra Grim Version, the hanged apprentice murdered his roommates in their sleep and afterward beheaded them so they couldn’t be restored to life as zombies. He then committed suicide.

In the Less Grim Version, the apprentice flung himself from his dorm window. The party will be able to spot his destroyed, unmoving body on the rocks far below.

In either case, the apprentice left behind a note on his desk. It reads:

..... ❖

*Father,
I have failed.
You told me never to flinch in my studies, to follow whatever twisting path our instructors revealed, no matter how dark or forbidding. But the chasm to which the Headmaster leads us flows over with horrors I could not before imagine. Those who follow him to the brink have been afflicted with a single-mindedness that subsumes their very nature.
He promised transcendence. I see now that all he offers is death... and something worse.*

So much of Greesly Keep has been turned to Headmaster Ryyfydphorth’s dark purpose that flight is not an option. But there is something else...

Father, I have learned so much these past two years. Things you could not have anticipated. In these hallways of horror, I discovered that my own heart turns toward the light. Even if I were to flee and return to your dread tower, I would not be the “Little Dark Magician” of whom you were so proud.

I no longer delight at the thought of commanding an orcish legion and enslaving our halfling neighbours. I doubt I would find the solace in operating the engines of pain in your dungeons that I once did.

I will dispense with the circumventions and lay bare my soul: I discovered morris dancing, Father. It was a physical education elective but I excel at it. Before Professor Dlobomb transformed into a ghoul and attempted to devour our class, he said that when the silks were in my hands I moved like unto an angel.

I found joy and purpose. But I know you can never understand. Let alone, accept.

And so I die.

Your son,

Prince Smagdar Bloodfist III

..... ❖

12. Broom Closet

If the party did not travel via the secret door in the Library then this is an ordinary broom closet filled with brooms, mops, buckets, soap and rags. If the party did follow the Library’s secret passage to access a faculty, then this is the broom closet they arrive through.

13. The Corkscrew Stair

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The centre of this large, round room is dominated by a massive, wooden spiral staircase. Unlike other stairs that just stand there waiting for someone to climb them, this one slowly turns, endlessly corkscrewing upward. Steps magically appear from the floor and by standing on one, you will be transported up to a higher level.

..... 

The Corkscrew Stair is basically a round, magic-powered escalator.

A brass plaque on the wall next to the stair has an arrow on it pointing up; next to it is written, “To Classrooms, Faculty Offices & Grand Hall.”

If the party steps on the Corkscrew Stair, after a few moments they approach the next level up and another brass plaque, this one has a horizontal arrow on it that points off the stairs next to the words, “To Classrooms” and an up arrow next to the words, “To Faculty Offices and Grand Hall.” If the party gets off on this level, they are at **14. The Classrooms**.

If they carry on upwards, they will arrive at the final floor and a brass plaque that reads “To Faculty Offices & Grand Hall.” Getting off here leaves the party at **15. Faculty Offices**.

The stairs continue upward, disappearing magically into the ceiling. Any character who (foolishly) remains on the stairs hoping to see what happens when they hit the top, must make a **DC 15 Strength save** as the stairs below crush them into the ceiling. On a failure, the character takes 2d10 damage, half damage on a success. Regardless of the result, the character is spit out onto the floor of the Faculty Offices level.

As for going down the stair, when the school was functioning, the Corkscrew Stair would be set to up or down depending on the time of day. It is currently stuck on up. So, to descend the Corkscrew Stair, a character will have to run faster than the stairs are coming up. This requires a successful **DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check** to make it down a level. Characters can re-roll a failure but will incur one point of exhaustion for every failed attempt.



14. The Classrooms

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 2 TO 3 MEPHITS (DUST, ICE, MUD, SMOKE; MM)
- 1 GHOULISH TEACHING ASSISTANT (MM)

..... ❖ READ ALOUD ❖

You are in a wide hallway. There are windows along the south wall that look out over the valley. There are four open sets of double doors along the north wall. There are brass plaques next to each set of doors.

There is wicked laughter, the sounds of destruction (smashing bottles, breaking wood, tearing fabric) and a horrific moaning coming from one of the rooms ahead.

..... 

There are four identical classrooms off this hall. What was last taught in the rooms is written on the brass plaque next to each door.

In one of the classrooms (roll 1d4 to determine which), a group of mephits are tormenting a Ghoul wearing an academic’s robe and a mortarboard — this creature was an assistant to one of the faculty’s masters. The Mephits are flitting just out of the Ghoul’s reach, throwing furniture, glassware and books at it and shouting things like, “Fetch me my books!” “Why don’t you clean those exploded guts off the ceilings!” “Time for target practice! How about YOU stand against the wall!”

The mephits are shouting orders and insults that they’ve been on the receiving end of for centuries. Generations back, they’d been summoned to work as helpers for the instructors and as subjects of experimentation for students in this faculty.

Now that all the professors have disappeared, the spells holding the mephits in servitude have faded and they are taking out their revenge by smashing everything of value and by tormenting this former teaching assistant.

Unfortunately (for the party), at some point, the Mephits hurled a bunch of random potions at this Ghoul Teaching Assistant and as a result it now exhibits strange magical powers (it’s otherwise a normal *Monster Manual* Ghoul).

The Mephits and Ghoul are thoroughly focused on their conflict and the party can slip past by succeeding in a contest of their **Dexterity (Stealth)** against the Mephit’s **Wisdom (Perception)** — unless they are exploring the Faculty of Occult Analysis in which case, the Ghoul’s *Uncanny Senses* alert it to the party’s presence.

If the PCs gets involved in the fight, the Mephits and Ghoul are not friends, and the party can take sides.

RUSHING TO THE GHOUL’S DEFENCE

If the party rescues the Ghoul Teaching Assistant by defeating the Mephits first, the Ghoul will immediately turn on them. Ghouls are semi-intelligent and retain some memories from their lives. This one was a course instructor and assistant to a professor but it is thoroughly over-

whelmed by its desire for human flesh. As it attempts to devour the party, it will say things like, “Your papers-s-s... Your papers-s-s are laaa-a-ate. The due date was in the course s-syllabusss-s-s. I must dock... marks-s-s.”

TEAMING UP WITH MEPHITS

If the party takes the Mephits’ side and defeats the Ghoul first, the Mephits won’t immediately attack them. They’re open to conversation though their initial attitude toward the PCs is neutral (leaning toward hostile because: Mephits). However, if the party finished off the Ghoul in a particularly funny or flamboyant way, the Mephits will be friendly to the PCs (though, laced with hostility, Mephits don’t do gratitude).

Now that the Mephits have been released from servitude, they simply want out of Greesly Keep. The Mephits explain that when they were not being used by a class, a professor would paralyze them with a magic wand (one of the first things the Mephits destroyed) and then put them in glass jars in a closet. They note that they were awake and aware of time passing when they were paralyzed.

At some point in the last few days, the Mephits were in their jars when the paralysis wore off and they were able to escape. The Ghoul wandered into the room more recently.

Due to the long stretches they spent imprisoned, they don’t know much about what has been going on in Greesly Keep. What they do know, they’ll happily share:

- Some time ago, professors started taking the Mephits out of storage to help with a “Special Project.” Sometimes those sessions involved zombification of recently deceased students, sometimes the opening of small planar portals. One Mephit says this started months ago, another insists it was years.
- Often these sessions were supervised by someone called “Headmaster” who always wore a floppy red hat.
- More recently, the red hatted one stopped coming around. Students whispered that he was dead but also that he was still “giving orders.”
- The last few times the Mephits were out, the students looked more scared than usual. Once, several zombified students burst into a room and killed some of their living fellows. “Serves them right, the little bastards.”

The party can try to convince the Mephits to become their allies but they will have to come up with a more convincing offer than, “Help us and we’ll help you get out of Greesly Keep.” The Mephits know they can just smash a window and they’ll be free.

If they succeed at making the Mephits their allies, note that they’re treacherous creatures who may agree to help the party and then backstab them on a whim.

If the Mephits stick with the party to the end of the adventure, they will abandon the party as soon as they are free of the Keep. They cannot be convinced to stay on longer.

The class names, type of Mephits and magic Ghoul powers the party encounters differ depending on the faculty the party is exploring:

FACULTY OF OCCULT ANALYSIS

- **Classrooms:** Advanced Meta-optics, Chimeric Actualization, Comparative Prognosticatory Practice, Ontological Reorientation Workshop
- 2 Dust Mephits (named Dusty and Filth)
- **Ghoul Teaching Assistant’s powers:**
 - **Uncanny Senses.** It senses the presence of living creatures and will make its way towards them.
 - **Minor Mirror Image.** Two duplicates of the Ghoul appear and mimic its actions. Randomly determine whether an attack against the Ghoul targets the real Ghoul or one of its duplicates. When a duplicate is hit, it winks into nothingness.

COLLEGE OF AETHERIC ENGINEERING

- **Classrooms:** Meta-ethics of the Working Aetheric Engineer, Quiddity Transit, Survey of Planar Taxonomies, Living With The Unliving
- 3 Mud Mephits (named Muck, Sludge and Slop Boy)
- **Ghoul Teaching Assistant’s power:**
 - **Ghostly Grasping Hands.** Ghostly arms reach up from the floorboards in a 20’ square. A creature in the area when it casts the spell must succeed on a **DC 12 Strength saving throw** or be restrained by a ghostly hand until the spell ends. Creatures that succeed find the terrain difficult and can only traverse it at half movement. A creature restrained can use its action to make a Strength check against DC12, on a success, it frees itself. Note: The ghoul is no friend of the mephits and the Ghostly Grasping Hands will affect them as well if they fly low enough over the hands. Can activate this ability once per day, lasts 1 minute

DEPARTMENT OF DISCORD MANAGEMENT

- **Classrooms:** Offensive Charm Or Agreeable Malice, Creative Entropy, “Impel” Starts With “I”, Combustion And Its Consequences
- 3 Smoke Mephits (named Ick, Soot and Smoggy)
- **Ghoul Teaching Assistant’s power:**
 - **Fiery Bane.** Each round while cast, the Ghoul chooses a target who must make a **DC 12 Charisma save**. On a success, the character is wreathed in a fiery halo but suffers no damage. Opponents get advantage on attacks against the affected creature. On a failed save, the character takes 1d4 fire damage and if it attacks or makes an ability check

that round, it must roll 1d4 and subtract that number from the check. The Ghoul will shift the effect to a random character each round; the Ghoul puts this effect on a player character in the first round but it is no friend of the smoke mephits and after that first round, the smoke mephits become potential targets of the Fiery Bane effect. Can activate this ability once per day, lasts 10 min.

SCHOOL OF APPLIED DEVIATIONS

- **Classrooms:** Hands On Mutation, Exorcism: Step By Step, Theory of Flux Control, Aegis & Anonymity: Coping with Being Undervalued
- 2 Ice Mephits (named Frosty and Miss Frigid)
- **Ghoul Teaching Assistant's power:**
Grabby Skin. When cast, the ghoul's flesh grows bloated and gross and hundreds of little grabby ghoulish baby arms protrude from it. The Ghoul's AC increases by 2 as the arms protect it by swatting away weapons and absorbing magic effects. Also, when struck by a weapon, the attacker must make a **DC 12 Strength check**. On a fail, a hand has grabbed their weapon. On the next round, they must make another Strength check to free their weapon and that will be their action. Can cast one time and lasts 10 minutes.

The classrooms and student lounge are bereft of treasure. Whatever potions, items or reagents were stored there were destroyed by the Mephits some time ago.

15. Faculty Offices

Above the archway entering the faculty offices wing, there is a brass plaque which reads, "Important: Faculty privacy is sacrosanct. Professor offices are sealed to students except during consultation periods.

There are eight doors along each side of this hall with name plates next to each. (If the PCs examine the plates, you can generate random professor names with **Appendix B: Random Wizard Names**.)

The doors are all locked and cannot be opened through mundane means.

One door has been torn to pieces. When nearing this smashed door, the character who makes **the highest Wisdom (Perception) check** is the first to hear the far-off sounds of a woman shouting indignantly.

Atop the pile of broken door pieces, there are three brass plaques: The first reads, "Professor Chloriddax," the second reads, "Deceased," and the third reads, "Danger: Malevolent spiritual energy present. Access forbidden."

Beyond the smashed door, there is a stone stairwell that heads steeply upward.

The stairway leads to **16. Professor Chloriddax's Office**.

16. Professor Chloriddax's Office

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 1 NOTHIC (MM)
- GHOST OF PROFESSOR CHLORIDDAX (MM)

.....❖ READ ALOUD ❖.....

The stairs end at a small open door beyond which there is a round room, 30 feet in diameter.

The walls are covered in book shelves broken up by four slender windows, their glass panes arranged in chaotic patterns.

Torn up books and broken antiques lie all over the floor, seemingly flung from the shelves.

Magic globes hang from chains dangling from the domed ceiling, 30 feet above, but only a few of them cast light. Most are broken and even the ones that function only glow faintly.

There are small tables and comfortable-looking chairs near the door. On the far side of the room, there is a desk piled high with animal skulls, stuffed birds in brass cages, jars of strange-looking roots, chunks of petrified wood, maps, astrolabes and several books, one of which — the largest — lies open.

..........

A woman stands behind the desk. She is dressed in yellow tunic and pants over which she wears a floor-length gray coat. Her hair is straight, long and white but her face does not look especially old.

Her skin has a bluish tint and she is also slightly transparent.

This is the ghost of Professor Hyannia Chloriddax, Finder Of Lost Things. She seems very angry but not at the party. In fact she is not even looking at them. Rather she's shaking a fist at a figure atop one of her bookshelves that is difficult to make out in the shadows. "Tormenter!" she shouts. "Begone! You've done enough damage! Shoo! Or I will drain your blood for ink and bind a book with your hide!"

The creature atop the bookshelf is a Nothic that was once an instructor of enchantment magic named Professor Vludimode. Even though the Nothic still wears the tatters of Vludimode's academic robes and his trademark green, tricorn hat, it does not remember who it was before its transformation into an aberration. It is only in the office because it was drawn to the ghostly energy emanating from Professor Chloriddax and the arcane power stored in her library. Like all Nothics, this one is vaguely aware that there may be some way to dispel its cursed nature and this room is the latest place it has come to search for such a cure.

Unfortunately for the Nothic, it disturbed Professor Chloriddax and the two creatures have been locked in a stalemate for several days. Neither is particularly inclined toward combat and when they bubble over into conflict, they find that their powers are not particularly effective against one another. So, the Nothic has lurked about, pull-

ing books off shelves, smashing antiques while the Professor yells at it to get out. Every so often, the Professor's temper boils over and they begin fighting again.

GETTING INVOLVED

Neither the Nothic nor Professor Chloriddax are paying attention to the door so, if the PCs want to avoid a complication, they could turn around and walk away without getting involved in this conflict. But if the party makes their presence known, two things happen: First, Professor Chloriddax turns to them and says, "Finally, exterminators! I've been calling for days! I have a vermin problem!"

Second, this Nothic has the telepathic ability and immediately sends a message into the minds of the entire party. "She cursed us all!" it transmits in a chilling, inhuman whisper.

The Nothic is lying, of course.

In fact, it cannot remember that it was actually the Headmaster's mad ritual that transformed the school into monsters. But, it looked at the party, recognized them as strangers to Greesy Keep — likely heroic do-gooders — and gambled that they could be tricked into leaving it alone and fighting the ghost.

Once the Nothic has communicated with the party, Professor Chloriddax will say, "What? Why are you looking at me like that? Is that thing telepathic? It's telepathic, isn't it? What did it say to you?"

Characters can attempt contested Insight checks against the Nothic & the Professor's Charismas.

ATTACKING PROFESSOR CHLORIDDAX

If the party attacks Professor Chloriddax, she dodges on the first round and says, "Why are you siding with that creature? Are you insane? I assure you, whatever that thing said, it's lying!"

Professor Chloriddax's ectoplasmic form has also taken some damage from the Nothic and **her current HP is 32**.

And, unlike most ghosts, **Professor Chloriddax's Intelligence is 17**.

While she knows she is a ghost she is not entirely comfortable with that development and thus does not use her full range of ghostly abilities. She cannot float, for instance, as she hasn't mentally overcome the notion that gravity holds her to the ground. Also, she finds her *Possession* ability to be distasteful and will only use it as a last resort if her HP drop below 15. Similarly, she finds her *Horriifying Visage* ability to be unbecoming and will not use it until she's spent two rounds fighting the party while protesting her innocence.

She has no such qualms about using her *Withering Touch*, however.

The Nothic will help the party against the Professor.

If they are successful and defeat her, the Nothic will negotiate with the party and propose an alliance. It will make liberal use of its *Weird Insight* power to play on the characters' good natures. The Nothic is very hungry and craves flesh, however, and once the party leaves with it, it will find a way to lure the character with the lowest Constitution away and attack.

ATTACKING THE NOTHIC

If the party attacks the Nothic, it has already sustained some damage from recent fights with Professor Chloriddax and **its current HP is 28**.

Professor Chloriddax will not help the party against the Nothic but she will shout encouraging words or chastise them if they cause more damage to her office.

If the party defeats the Nothic, Professor Chloriddax will be extremely grateful. She explains that the creature has been lurking around her room, coming and going for days, stealing or destroying her books and basically making a mess of the place.

PROFESSOR CHLORIDDAX'S STORY

Once they've dispatched the Nothic, the Professor is happy to talk with the party. She can tell them:

- In life, she was a diviner of considerable skill. She looks down at her transparent form and sighs, "Didn't see this coming."
- She was poisoned by Byrdus Ryffydphorth because she discovered his plan to take over the school and was going to expose him.



Obviously, Professor Chloriddax's information is several decades old. She isn't aware that 30 years have passed since she was murdered, Ryffydphorth's plot to take over the school was successful and he's since moved on to a new sinister plot.



- Byrdus Ryffydphorth seems like a wonderful and kind wizard but he is actually calculating, ambitious and thoroughly evil.
- Ryffydphorth became an abjurer because he's a coward, not because he cares about people and wants to protect them. As a young, wandering wizard, he was renowned for taking up with parties of adventurers, heading out on dangerous quests and being the only one to return, always loaded down with loot.
- She was poisoned with Thelaquince's Vicious Ink. It gets into the victim's system when the words it was used to write are read. There is no antidote. A single ounce costs a fortune.
- After she was murdered she found herself in her office as a ghost. She doesn't know why.
- Her office was locked up and magic wards were placed on the door to keep her trapped inside and curious students out. She suspects this was done by Ryffydphorth to keep her ghost from exposing his crimes.
- She recognizes the Nothic's hat and remembers Vlodimode as a young, up-and-coming enchanter in the Department of Discord Management.

- The Professor will ask someone to fetch her a book off her shelves titled *Aberrants Among Us*. After consulting it, she can tell the party how Nothics are formed by tampering with obscure, powerful magics. (See the *Monster Manual*) She notes, though, that the transformation process is very slow, usually taking many years of personally mucking about with forbidden powers.
- **If the party explains what's happened to Greesly Keep:** The Professor is devastated to learn so much time has gone by. She says it wouldn't surprise her if Ryffydphorth were tampering with unspeakable powers he couldn't control, especially if he had a school-full of naive students and ambitious professors he could trick into suffering the consequences of his power grab.
- **If the party asks about the Cobalt Throne:** She says she vaguely remembers something about that and asks someone to fetch her *The Aldones Manuscripts* and points to a high shelf. The book is not there. After some searching, what is left of the book is found among the litter on the floor. "Strange," says Professor Chloriddax. "I wonder if the thing-that-was-Vludimode intended to destroy this book." She rustles through the pages until she finds a particular fragment and says, "The Aldones Manuscripts include transcriptions of stone tablets found in a cave in the Noohl Highlands. They were written in an ancient language that I can't read very well but I can translate this part..."

...untethered, the rogue moon hurtles through mindless void where black suns rise over fields of salt and dead tides. The rogue moon, where, among basalt towers and blighted trees, the banished Pope of Bone and Dust sits upon its Cobalt Throne and dreams of home. A whispered bargain drifts through trackless space, 'Open the door and my kingdom is yours...'

THE PROFESSOR'S BOOK

Before she died, Professor Chloriddax had been working on a book she'd titled, "An Encyclopedia Of Lost Things Found." It is a journal of her journeys around the Known World seeking out lost artifacts and solving baffling mysteries. She had only just begun the work when Ryffydphorth murdered her but she has continued the project in death. Unfortunately, while she is strong enough to pick up a quill and turn the pages of the book upon her desk, her ethereal form is too weak for her to haul out another heavy, blank tome from storage. As a result, she's been writing in the same book for the last 30 years, her scrawl getting smaller and smaller. And as her connection to the material plane weakens, her handwriting has become more and more alien and incomprehensible.

The book that lies open on her desk is that encyclopedia she's been working on. If the party looks it over, they will find the pages crowded with unreadable scrawls. Professor Chloriddax is unaware of the problem and the book is her most prized possession. Commenting on its illegibility or insulting her work is a very good way to turn her against the party.

REWARD FOR DEALING WITH THE NOTHIC

After explaining who and what she is, and speaking with the party for a while, she suddenly remembers to give them a reward for helping her. She directs them to a copper bowl on a shelf behind her and tells them they can take it. From the reverent look on her face when a character handles the bowl, the object is clearly very precious to her. It is a **Bowl Of Discarded Bits And Bobs**. She explains that she found it many decades ago while she was exploring the ruins of the Shrine of Saint Tilly, the protector of sentimental fools.

BOWL OF DISCARDED BITS AND BOBS

A humble looking bowl of hammered copper about eight inches across and three deep. It is decorated with small etchings that depict the phases of the moon. If the bowl is taken outside on a clear night during a full moon, then held aloft and shook, it fills with 100 copper coins from all over the known world. Some of the coins are old, some are new. Some are from empires that disappeared long ago. But each coin is only worth 1cp. Buried within the coins there is also one "lost little thing." Roll on the trinket table in the *Players Handbook* to find a suitably small, worthless item. Each lost little thing found in the bowl is a misplaced item of sentimental value to someone — maybe someone long dead, someone living far away or someone the party will eventually encounter. It is also said that once in a blue moon something very special falls into the bowl. When rolling on the trinket table, if you roll a 100, the lost little thing turns out to be a magic item. To find out what item it is, roll 1d12 on the table below:

1	Ring Of Feather Falling
2	Ring Of Jumping
3	Ring Of Protection
4	+3 Sling Bullet
5	Brooch of Shielding
6	Brooch Of Fear. This is a small cameo brooch carved with the silhouette of a monstrous face. The brooch has same powers as a Wand Of Fear.
7	a single Bead Of Force
8	Medallion Of Thoughts
9	Necklace Of Prayer Beads
10	Silver Raven Figurine Of Wondrous Power
11	Pearl Of Power
12	loun Stone of Insight — after this appears, the Bowl Of Discarded Bits And Bobs cracks, its magic dispels and it is now worthless

WORKING WITH THE PROFESSOR

If the PCs gain her friendship, Professor Chloriddax can be convinced to leave her office, though she will be reluctant to do so. She would relish a chance to get even with the Headmaster, so the PCs can use that as incentive.

She will be limited help in the final battle as the Headmaster and his Zombie Apprentices are immune to necrotic damage and the frightened condition. But she could be useful as a scout or a distraction — and she can possess the bodies of zombies if the PCs know about this ability and can convince her to use it. (She won't volunteer to do this because, "Yuck, zombies.")

FUN WITH PROFESSOR CHLORIDDAX

If you have a player who might be interested in giving up control of their character for a bit, you could throw an extra complication into the close of the adventure by having Professor Chloriddax possess that player's character. (Dunh dunh duuuuuunh!)

The Professor is not evil and she considers possession to be unseemly. But once the Headmaster is defeated and Greesly Keep starts to crumble, she will realize that her Encyclopedia Of Lost Things Found is about to be destroyed. That's all the motivation she needs to try possessing someone.

When she does, have the character she targets make a d20 roll without explanation. This is a **Charisma save against DC 13**. You can tell the player they feel a pressure in their mind but they don't know from where it comes. If the PC fails the save, Professor Chloriddax fades away and takes the character over.

She is smart enough to imitate the character she has possessed. So, if any party members become suspicious, she rolls with advantage in any contested rolls to determine her true identity.

Find a sneaky way to inform the player who's character has been possessed that they are now playing as Professor Chloriddax in their character's body. You could pass the player a note that reads, "You have been possessed by Professor Chloriddax. She is impersonating you so carry on normally except that you absolutely *must* return to her (your) office and grab her (your) journal from off her (your) desk."

Professor Chloriddax will not leave Greesly Keep without her journal even if it will risk the life of the body she inhabits. There is enough time to stop at the office and get the journal before the Keep collapses — providing the party doesn't waste time arguing or fighting.

But it will mean that escaping is a closer shave than if they'd just fled immediately. (See, Escaping Greesly Keep).

17. The Lobby

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

• 12 ZOMBIES, ENERVATED

Over the door at the end of the Faculty Offices hall the words "Grand Hall" are carved.

The door is large and round and has a large latch in its middle. When it is turned there is a grinding noise and the air seems to change. That's the magic activating and rearranging the hallways of Greesly Keep so that this particular faculty wing will open into the Lobby outside the Grand Hall.

After a second, the noise subsides and the players can feel that the door is unlocked and can be swung open (into the hall where the party is). When the party looks into the next room...

❖ READ ALOUD ❖

The lobby is a broad, elegant room. It stretches up several stories and magic chandeliers on long chains hang from the ceiling and fill the room with a warm light.

Ornately carved and painted pillars hold the ceiling aloft. Many well-stuffed chairs have been arranged about for the comfort of those waiting for whatever event will be held in Grand Hall beyond.

All about the lobby, there lay the dried husks of former students and faculty. Only their clothing remains intact.

Directly across the lobby, there are massive double doors. They are flanked by tall, well-trimmed potted plants. Pressed up against those doors is a horde of 10 zombies. They are moaning and pawing at the wood, seemingly trying to claw and chew their way through to the other side.

These zombies look much more drained of life than any of the others you have encountered. They are almost skeletal and their flesh is so dried out it looks like paper.

These Enervated Zombies have been all but drained of life and magical energy. They were then dragged out and abandoned in the lobby. They barely cling to undeath.

They take no notice of the party when they enter the lobby. They are 100% focussed on getting back into the Grand Hall. The party will not alert the Enervated Zombies to their presence providing they succeed on **DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) checks**.

Attacking the Enervated Zombies or setting them on fire will cause them to turn away from the door and engage the party.

When an Enervated Zombie is defeated, it crumbles to dust.

18. The Grand Hall (Boss Fight)

ENCOUNTERS & IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES

- 4 APPRENTICE ZOMBIES
- 1 ZOMBIE OWL
- MUMMIFIED HEADMASTER BYRDUS RYFFYDPHORTH
- PORTAL TO REALM OF TWISTED NECROMANTIC MAGICS

.....✦ READ ALOUD ✦.....

The Grand Hall occupies the whole of Greesly Keep's main tower and is open to the rafters high above. It is a massive space with heavy, tapestries along the side walls; they're hung four storeys up and their fringed ends touch the floor. Each depicts a different item of wizardly practice: a wand, an orb, a staff, a dagger, a flask, etc.

The gallery is filled with pews in four sections.

At the front there is a stage behind which there is a massive stained glass window. It depicts several wizards at the bottom wrestling an orb of energy from a massive creature at the top. The creature resembles a stylized sun except that the circle is a sinister face and the rays are human arms.

A mummified figure is on the stage, sitting slumped in a high-backed chair. Strange sigils are painted on the bandages that cocoon his body. They've fallen away from his necrotic and shriveled face. His lips have shrunk away from his teeth and his eyes are crinkled and empty. In one hand he holds a wooden staff. This must be Byrdus Ryffydphorth for atop his head he wears the Headmaster's trademark, floppy red hat.

A glowing stream of green energy rises from the mummified Headmaster's head and wisps up like smoke. It seems to be feeding a pulsing disc of magic floating 40 feet above the gallery.

It's a throbbing circle of arcane ugliness, fringed with what appears to be pulsing, live tissue and smoke. Through it, you see a realm of storms and ash. Trees of polished bone claw at a yellow sky. Basalt towers sit half buried across a desert landscape. Black lightning cuts the sky. Thunder, howling wind and a low moaning emanate from the portal. You can hear a rumbling voice like say, "Soon!"

In the pews below, bathing in the unholy vision the Headmaster conjured, four zombie apprentices stand, their arms raised, their heads tipped upward. They're chanting, "Bow before the Cobalt Throne, the Dead Pope in his tower."

A white owl sits on one of these zombie's shoulders. Many of its feathers have fallen out in clumps. One of its eyes is missing and its beak hangs open. The owl seems uninterested in the strange rite. Its head turns slowly, scanning the room.

..........

The Zombie Apprentices and the Headmaster do not become immediately aware of the party when they enter the Grand Hall. The Apprentices are facing away from the doors and too intent on the portal forming above them. Meanwhile, the Headmaster is sluggish and barely even sentient anymore.

THE ZOMBIE OWL

The Zombie Owl is watching everywhere. It's head is slowly spinning in a circle. If they are trying to sneak into the room, they will have to be careful to move when its gaze is not directed at them otherwise it will attack.

If the party rouses the Zombie Owl, it takes flight and heads toward whomever it first spotted while letting out an unnatural screech that alerts the Zombie Apprentices to the party's presence.

Once it stirs, the Zombie Owl will harry the party relentlessly, not letting up until it is destroyed.

THE ZOMBIE APPRENTICES

After hearing the Owl, it takes the Zombie Apprentices a full round to shift their attention from the portal and attack the party. **There is one Zombie Apprentice from each of the four Greesly faculties.** These are the school's four most-gifted students and the Headmaster's favourites.

Zombie Apprentices always prefer to use their Slam attacks if there is a target within melee range. If there isn't, they use one of their spell-like effects and move their full movement towards the closest PC.

Typically, Zombie Apprentices pick the spell-like effects they're going to use randomly. But as these were Greesly Keep's four most talented apprentices in life, you can if you wish boost the difficulty of the encounter by selecting spell-like effects for them.

HEADMASTER BYRDUS RYFFYDPHORTH

At first, the Headmaster does not attack the party. His essence is being drained away through a dimensional portal so he has other things occupying his rapidly dissolving mind. He will instead let the Zombie Apprentices deal with the party unless he is attacked directly.

Once the Zombie Apprentices have been dispatched, however, the Headmaster will struggle to his feet and engage the party.

His first move is to use his staff to cast *Hold Person* on the nearest party member. The second spell he casts will be *Shield* unless there is a compelling reason not to.

After that, he slowly makes his way toward the party (he never uses the Dash action). He casts spells from his staff on his turn until he is close enough to use his *Life Drain* ability.

If he falls to 10HP or less, he uses an action to crack his staff in half, thus restoring 10 (2d8+2) HP.

If Professor Chloriddax is allied with the party and successfully uses her possession ability on the Headmaster, the PCs hear her shriek ring through the hall as her soul is ripped out and drawn up into the portal, gone forever.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Distorting Space. As soon as anyone in the party steps more than 20 feet into the Grand Hall, the space the Grand Hall occupies stretches by 40 feet (**see map**). Missiles or spells fired across this barrier do not trigger this effect.

Discouraging Whispers. Each round, one random character hears whispers about how weak they are, how hopeless their situation is and how much they will be made to suffer once the Cobalt Throne enters their world.

Stained Glass Window. If the window at the back of the Grand Hall sustains 20 damage, it breaks. If it is daytime, it admits enough light to trigger the Headmaster's *Sunlight Sensitivity*.

BOOSTING THE DIFFICULTY

Boss fight feeling insufficiently boss? Fill the pews with the immobile, drained corpses of Greesly apprentices.

Then occasionally (say once every third round or so) have the portal emit a pulse of necrotic energy that reanimates 1d4 of those corpses into *Zombie Apprentices*.

CLOSING THE PORTAL

The portal is drawing the last few bits of energy from the Headmaster's body that it needs so it can open fully. Without him, the portal doesn't have enough energy for the process to continue; thus, once the party destroys the Headmaster, the portal grows unstable and collapses.

As it starts to close, the PCs hear a terrible voice shout as though next to their ears, "Worms! I know the taste of your minds and will feast upon them in time."

With that, the portal snaps shut which sends out a thunderclap of magic energy that causes Greesly Keep to start to collapse.

Any remaining zombies fall to the ground lifeless. Similarly, any other creatures left in the Keep disappear or drop dead. The magic of Greesly Keep has been terminally disrupted. Doors function for the time being but things like the Haunted Portraits in the Foyer have reverted to being mundane paintings, the Corkscrew Stair just a stair.

The party has a small amount of time to find a way out of the building before they are crushed.

ESCAPING GREESLY KEEP

Each character can take two free actions in the Grand Hall before fleeing the building — actions such as, "I loot *Zombie Apprentice 1*" or "I cast *Cure Wounds* on X."

After those two free actions, debris starts to fall from the ceiling and narrowly misses the party (which should signal that it's time to move).

If the party leaves after these two free actions and re-traces their path through the building without taking any detours, they will just manage to get out unscathed.

For every extra action beyond those two free actions, however, the party's escape will become more dangerous.

As the party nears the exit, roll to hit random PCs with hunks of falling debris, one chance to hit a party member for every extra action they took beyond the free ones.

Longer detours — such as gathering up Professor Chlo-riddax's encyclopedia — count as multiple extra action.

Treat the falling debris as an attack, like so...

Falling Debris. +4 to hit, one target. *Hit:* 2d6+2 bludgeoning damage.

Instead of just keeping a tally of extra actions, a nice visual is to set a d20 aside each time the party strays from their main goal of fleeing the Keep. Then when it's time to start rolling to hit them with falling rocks, use those dice up one at a time.

THE FASTEST ROUTE OUT

The party can attempt to flee by jumping out the stained glass window. To do this, they must break it first by dealing 20 damage to it.

While the Grand Hall tower stands on the edge of a cliff — falling from which is guaranteed to be fatal — there is a narrow ledge just 20 feet below the window that the party can jump down to. From there, they can scramble their way around the outside of the Keep wall and join back up with the path down Mount Hood.

TREASURE... IT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR

If the party takes the time to loot the bodies of their opponents, they find:

Occult Analysis Apprentice Zombie

- pouch containing 15gp (3d10)
- Occult Analysis faculty pin
- Dunking Chestnut

Aetheric Engineering Apprentice Zombie

- pouch containing 15gp (3d10)
- Aetheric Engineering faculty pin
- Winged Anklet

Discord Management Apprentice Zombie

- pouch containing 15gp (3d10)
- Discord Management faculty pin
- Funny Bone

Applied Deviations Apprentice Zombie

- pouch containing 15gp (3d10)
- Applied Deviations faculty pin
- Handy Sewing Kit

Headmaster Byrdus Ryffydphorth

- pouch containing 30gp (2d10+20)
- Byrdus' Patented Staff of Spells (if unbroken)
- Crooked Dagger (dagger +1)
- Barrier Salts

The rest of the bodies strewn about the Grand Hall have no treasure of worth and searching them makes escaping Greesly Keep more dangerous (you can add danger tokens if you're tracking the escape that way — see Escaping Greesly Keep).

MAGIC ITEMS

BARRIER SALTS

A bag of white, salt-like crystals. When poured in a circle, those inside are protected by a *Protection From Evil And Good* spell and a *Sanctuary* spell for one hour or until the circle of Barrier Salts is disturbed, **Spell DC of 15**. Usually, if any combat occurs across the circle, that will be enough to disturb the circle. The circle must be at least 5 foot in radius. Bag contains enough crystals to make six 5 foot radius circles or three 10 foot radius circles.

BYRDUS' PATENTED STAFF OF SPELLS

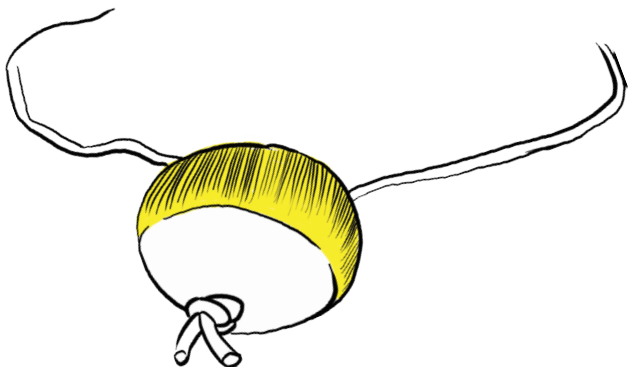
After attunement, a spellcaster can use the staff to cast the spells *Chromatic Orb*, *Color Spray*, *Grease*, *Hold Person* (concentration), *Ray of Sickness* or *Shield*. Each spell can be cast one time in a 24 hour period. At dawn, the staff recharges 1d4-1 of the spells that were cast, recovering the spells in alphabetical order. If all six spells are cast in a day or if the staff is ever exposed to direct sunlight, roll 1d6 and on a 1 the staff turns to ash. The staff must be exposed to air to be used so it cannot cast spells while wrapped in cloth. Spells cast from this staff have a **Spell DC of 14** and a spell attack bonus of +5.

CROOKED DAGGER

The blade of this weapon bends back and forth at sharp angles so that it looks like a lightning bolt. The iron pommel is decorated with a carving of an angry human face. It is a +1 dagger (+1 to attack and damage) and its edges are silvered.

DUNKING CHESTNUT

This is a necklace with a dried out chestnut on it. The cord is made of a humble, thick string. When the chestnut is dunked in a drink, it has the effect of a *Purify Food & Drink* spell on this one beverage. The chestnut can be used twice a day on up to a litre of liquid per use. The chestnut shrivels up and loses its potency after one year.



FACULTY PIN

A silver pin depicting a fight between the two animals that represent the conflicting schools that make up a faculty. The faculty logo is etched into a scroll beneath the fighting animals.

The only magic on the pin is to activate the appropriate faculty door — but with Greesly Keep destroyed, this no longer works.

To a dealer who knows nothing of Greesly Keep artifacts, the pin is worth a maximum of 7gp (1d4+3 gp) for the silver and craftsmanship. Most dealers who know of Greesly Keep will be terrified of the pin knowing that trading in stolen Greesly artifacts is a serious crime — such dealers will not purchase or even touch the pin and may alert the authorities that the party has one after they have gone. Extremely daring and unscrupulous dealers — say, those connected to a thieves' guild — would be very interested in getting their hands upon such a pin as it would be a valuable accessory for a thief or spy wanting to pose as a powerful wizard. Thus, a knowledgeable thieves guild agent would pay as much as 100gp.



FUNNY BONE

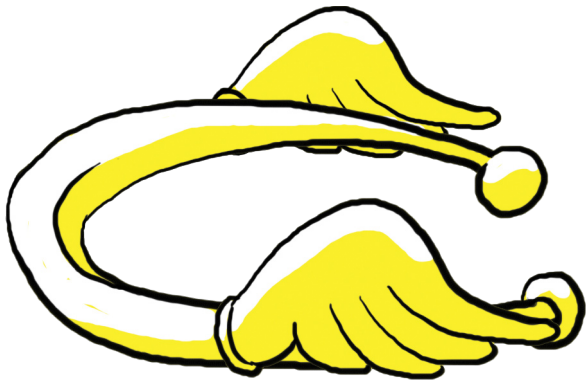
A human finger bone on a thin chain loop. Worn by looping the chain around a middle finger. When the bone is held concealed within a palm, it emits a *Shocking Grasp* spell on whomever the holder shakes hands with. (It's like a deadly Joy Buzzer.) Contains 3 charges. Does not recharge.

HANDY SEWING KIT

A bone needle kept within a fold-over leather wallet. When activated, the bone needle floats in the air then flies to an indicated piece of clothing and repairs any tears or holes as per the *Mending* cantrip. To activate, hold the needle over the article of clothing needing repair and mime sewing with it. Can be used once per day at sundown.

WINGED ANKLET

A sturdy loop of silver open on one end, to be worn about an ankle. Has two little wings sticking out on opposite sides. When a wing is snapped off, the anklet will cast either *Expeditious Retreat* or *Feather Fall* on the wearer (and just the wearer in the case of *Feather Fall*). Becomes a mundane anklet when both wings are gone.



AFTERMATH

The various faculties and wings of Greesly Keep existed in magically superimposed states. As a result, much of the space contained within the building compresses into nothingness once the spells that held the building up collapse.

This means there won't be anything of value to recover from the rubble.

PROFESSOR CHLORIDDAX

If the party convinced Professor Chloriddax to join them against the Headmaster (and if you decide to keep things simple and *don't* have her try to possess any of the party — see **Fun With Professor Chloriddax**) she will not continue with the party for very long.

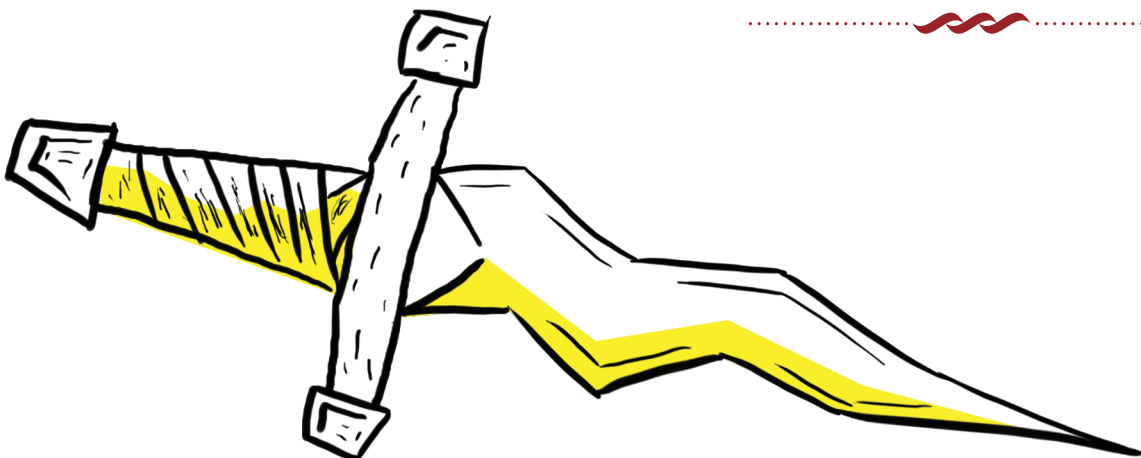
She stays with the PCs only until they are out of danger but then says, "I think that's it. I'm feeling a lot of closure right now. It's time I was going."

If the party rescued her encyclopedia for her, she tells them to keep it and donate it to a library somewhere.

After that, she says her farewells and walks off into the distance, fading into nothing as she does.

If Professor Chloriddax *did* possess one of the PCs, her motivation from this point onward is pretty benign: She just wants to find a quiet, safe place where she can work on her book and she will hold on to the body she's taken over as long as she has to to get that.

Even if you have a player willing to role play as Professor Chloriddax in their character's body, you should probably start dropping hints that the character is not quite right.



19. LEAVING THE KEEP

If the party returns to Mumbleton via the mountain path, they are met by Franny Gawynt when they reach the base of Mount Hood. She says she had been waiting for them in the Gondola Station.

She expresses delight and relief to see the party return and outright joy when she hears the Headmaster has been destroyed.

She directs the party toward town saying that news of Byrdus Ryffydphorth's demise and the destruction of Greesly Keep will bring contentment to the townsfolk.

As the party follows the trail back to town, Franny Gawynt falls behind.

When the party returns to Mumbleton, they discover it's an ashen ruin. There are only burnt and rotted corpses in the buildings. Even the crows in the roost lie dead.

At this point, they discover that Franny Gawynt has disappeared.

If they search the remains of the Crows Roost, they'll find her corpse buried among the rubble.

The town and all its inhabitants have been dead for many months.

If the party brought horses and stabled them with Mulsion Due, they are still there, tied to a burnt stump of a hitching post, underneath a roof that seems about ready to collapse. The horses appear to be happy and well-fed. Any gear left with the horses is intact. Any gold spent at the shops or in the tavern is gone.

BEHIND THE SCENES: WHY DESTROY MUMBLETON?

The Zombie Wizards Of Greesly Keep was originally planned as a Halloween adventure where the PCs visit a mysterious village in the mountains then travel to a haunted castle and deal with zombies, ghosts, ghouls and a portal to a hell dimension. And then the punchline was that, once they drive the evil from the castle, they return to discover that everybody in the mysterious village was a ghost all along. *Dunh-dunh-dunhhhhh!*

It's supposed to be an EC Comics/Outer Limits/Hammer Horror style ending.

Part 5: New Foes

HAUNTED PORTRAIT

MEDIUM UNDEAD, CHAOTIC EVIL

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 17 (3d8+3)

Speed N/A.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Insight +4

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Abilities

Guardian's Insight. If a PC is trying to talk his/her way past a Haunted Portrait to whatever it is guarding, the Haunted Portrait rolls with advantage against any Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) checks. The Haunted Portrait cannot be Intimidated.

Stretchy. The Haunted Portrait can't ever leave its painting but it can stretch itself up to 30ft out of the painting on its turn and attack.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the Haunted Portrait has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Actions

Chilling Attack. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d6 + 1) necrotic damage, and the target cannot regain HP until the start of its next turn. If a character dies from this attack, he/she is sucked into the painting with the Apparition and becomes a figure in the background. A Greater Restoration spell cast on the painting will pull any background characters trapped within to the real world where they will be unconscious with 1 HP until healed.

HEADMASTER, BYRDUS RYFFYDPHORTH

MEDIUM UNDEAD (AUGMENTED WIGHT), NEUTRAL EVIL

Armor Class 12 (heavy wizardly robes, tough bandages)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +4

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Arcane

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Abilities

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the Headmaster has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The Headmaster makes two 2-handed quarterstaff attacks or it can cast a spell from the staff in place of one quarterstaff attack. It can use its Life Drain in place of one quarterstaff attack.

Staff Of Spells. He can only cast the spells in his staff. If the Headmaster reaches <15 HP, he uses an action to crack the staff over his knee, releasing the raw magic energy stored within. All creatures within 5ft of the Headmaster take 1d4 fire damage or, on a successful DEX save vs DC 14, no damage. The magic energy from the staff is sucked up into the portal but passes through the Headmaster first, restoring 10 (2d8+2) HP. He will then fight with the broken staff pieces.

Spells (can use each spell 1x; Spell DC 14, +5 spell attack): Chromatic Orb, Color Spray, Grease, Hold Person (concentration), Ray of Sickness, Shield

Life Drain. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the Headmaster's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The Headmaster can have no more than twelve of these zombies under its control at one time.

Quarterstaff (Staff Of Spells). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Broken Quarterstaff. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

ZOMBIE APPRENTICE

MEDIUM UNDEAD (AUGMENTED ZOMBIE), NEUTRAL EVIL

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8+9)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (0)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Abilities

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Random Magic. Apprentice zombies are still suffused with magical energies and thus can emit erratic spell-like effects. When a Zombie Apprentice cannot slam a target, it uses a random ability drawn from the table related to its faculty.

1d4 Occult Analysis

- Blinding Beam.** A beam of colourful lights shoot from its fingertips and strikes a random PC in the eyes. On a failed DC 10 Constitution save, the targeted PC is blinded until the zombie's next turn. Duration 1 round. Range 30 ft.
- Disguise Zombie.** The zombie changes its appearance. Roll 1d4 to determine how: 1—Random PC; 2—Another zombie; 3—Itself, but before undeath set in; 4—A tall, handsome wizard.
- Unnerving Image.** An unmoving, silent illusion depicting the zombie mauling a random PC appears halfway between it and the PC depicted.
- Zombie Insight.** The zombie's eyes flash blue as it gains a vision of how the PCs will move. On its next turn, the zombie gains advantage on one melee attack against any PC.

1d4 Aetheric Engineering

- Caustic Belch.** Zombie belches acid at one PC. Targeted PC must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity save or take 1d4 acid damage. Range 40 ft.
- Cloud of Flies.** Dozens of flies fly from the zombie's hand and swarm the head of a random PC. The targeted PC has disadvantage on attacks and ability checks. The flies disperse after one round. Range 60 ft.

- Grasp Of The Grave.** If the zombie hits with a melee attack on its next turn, the targeted PC takes an additional 1d4 necrotic damage.
- Fiery Fingers.** Harmless flames appear at the ends of the zombie's fingers until its next turn.

1d4 Discord Management

- Drowsy.** A random PC becomes fatigued. Target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution save or have disadvantage on all ability checks until zombie's next turn. If the target takes damage before the effect ends, the drowsiness effect is dispelled. Duration one round. Range 40 ft.
- Fiery Blast.** A blast of flame launches from the zombie's hand at a random PC. Target must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity save or take 1d6 fire damage. Range 60 ft.
- Icy Blast.** A beam of cold launches from the zombie's hand at a random PC. Target must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity save or take 1d4 cold damage and be slowed to half speed for one round. Range 30 ft.
- Pals.** A random PC looks at the zombie and thinks, "Hey, under different circumstances, that's a zombie I could've been friends with." It doesn't stop the PC from attacking or anything. But the PC may feel a twinge of regret if the zombie is felled. Duration 1 hour. Range 100 ft.

1d4 Applied Deviations

- Rubbery Hide.** The zombie's skin becomes elastic. PCs doing bludgeoning or slashing damage to the zombie must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity save or drop their weapon when it springs back after the hit. Duration 1 round.
- Targeted Ward.** A sigil of warding appears in the air between the zombie and a random PC. Until it fades, the zombie is resistant to all bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage dealt by the targeted PC. Duration 1 minute.
- Tidying Up.** The zombie's clothing is suddenly clean and mended and all filth and dirt on any surface within a 10 ft radius disappears.
- Zombie Armor.** A shell of green light appears around the zombie. Until it fades, the zombie's AC is 13. Duration 1 minute.

Treasure

On one of the first Zombie Apprentices defeated, the party finds the **Love Letter** (see Player Handout: Love Letter) and a vial containing one of Philomel's ineffectual love potions. In addition, each Zombie Apprentice carries a pouch containing 2d10+5gp.

ZOMBIE, ENERVATED

MEDIUM UNDEAD, CHAOTIC EVIL

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 18 (4d8)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Abilities

Just Get It Over With. If damage reduces the zombie to 1 or 2HP, it must make a CON save vs DC 5+Dam taken (or vs DC 10+Dam taken if radiant damage). On a fail, the zombie drops dead.

Actions

Limp Slap. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

ZOMBIE GRIFFON

LARGE UNDEAD, NEUTRAL EVIL

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 45 (5d10 + 20)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.*

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws WIS +0

Skills Perception +1

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Abilities

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0HP, it must make a CON save vs DC 5+Dam taken (unless the Dam is radiant or from a critical hit). On a success, the zombie drops to 1 HP instead.

Undead Flight. Max flight speed is 40 ft. Zombie Griffons fly slowly and directly toward their target. They do not gain altitude to dive at a target.

Actions

Multiattack. The griffon makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

ZOMBIE OWL

TINY UNDEAD, CHAOTIC EVIL

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d4)

Speed 5 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	10 (0)	10 (0)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Abilities

Flyby. The owl doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0HP, it must make a CON save vs DC 5+Dam taken (unless the Dam is radiant or from a critical hit). On a success, the zombie drops to 1 HP instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The Zombie Owl can make 2 talon attacks.

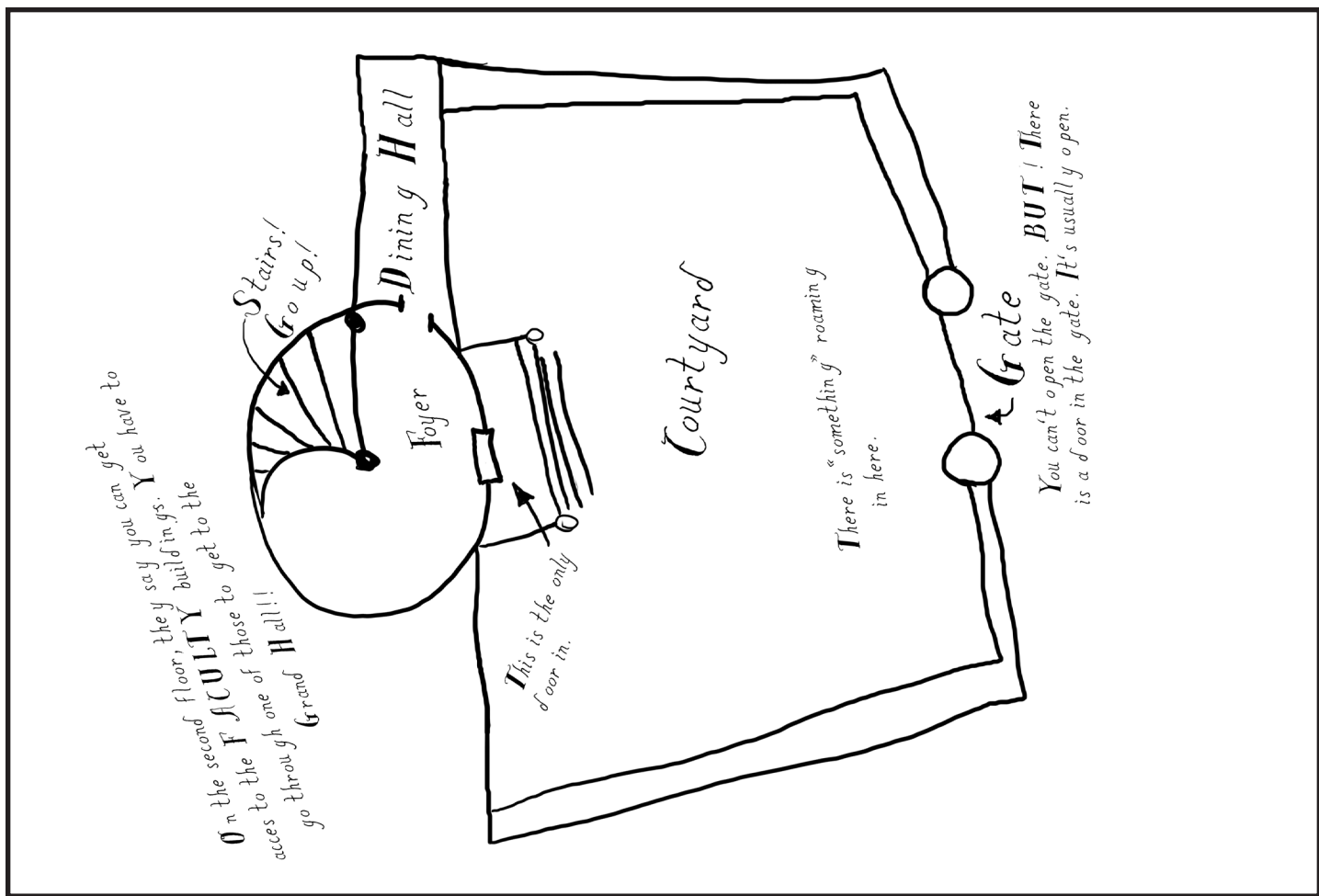
Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage.

A map of Mumbleton & its environs





MUMBLETON PLAYERS' MAP



FRANNY GAWYNT'S HANDDRAWN MAP OF GREESLY KEEP

*...untethered, the rogue moon
 hurtles through mindless void where
 black suns rise over fields of salt and
 dead tides. The rogue moon, where,
 among basalt towers and blighted
 trees, the banished Pope of Bone and
 Dust sits upon its Cobalt Throne
 and dreams of home. A whispered
 bargain drifts through trackless
 space, "Open the door and my
 kingdom is yours..."*

ALDONES MANUSCRIPT FRAGMENT
 AS TRANSLATED BY PROFESSOR
 HYANNIA CHLORIDDAX

Congratulations, you have been selected as a new student of Greesly Keep, the most illustrious and most exclusive academy of magic studies ever to be established in the mortal realm. This means you are an individual destined to make a mark upon the wider world. You need only the education and refinement that Greesly Keep offers. You must be eager to get started.

But right now, the most important thing to keep in mind is this: Do not be afraid. You are about to be sorted.

At Greesly Keep, we tailor our education to fit YOU. To do that, we need to know what kind of talents are locked within you, what untapped skills you contain. And when we learn what WE need, we will know which of our four faculties is best suited to YOUR need.

That's why, climbing about on the ceiling high above your head, there are four cloaks – hoods, really – that are examining you. They may look like articles of clothing but they are living creatures who have served Greesly Keep for many years. Right now, they are reaching out with their minds and tasting the arcane energies that you exude. In a few moments, the cloak that finds you the most interesting will drop upon your head.

When it does, it is important that you do not panic. It may feel like it is feeding upon you, that it is suckling away some of your magic energy. In a sense, it is, but don't try to fight it off.

Instead, you will have to walk down from the podium and into your new life. Don't worry. The sorting cloak is there to help you, it will show you the way by urging you in the correct direction. Some new students find the sensation unnerving, like being licked by several large ungulates, but it is completely normal.

Once you are absorbed by a sorting cloak, one of the archways and the faculty beyond it will open for you. You will receive further instructions once you are on the other side.

Again, congratulations and welcome to Greesly Keep. Do not be afraid. You are about to be sorted...

Father,

I have failed.

You told me never to flinch in my studies, to follow whatever twisting path our instructors revealed, no matter how dark or forbidding.

But the chasm to which the Headmaster leads us flows over with horrors I could not have before imagined. Those who follow him to the brink have been afflicted with a single-mindedness that subsumes their very nature.

He promised transcendence. I see now that all he offers is death... and something worse.

So much of Greasly Keep has been turned to Headmaster Ruffydphorth's dark purpose that flight is not an option.

But there is something else...

Father, I have learned so much these past two years. Things you could not have anticipated. In these hallways of horror, I discovered that my own heart turns toward the light. Even if I were to flee and return to your dread tower, I would not be the "Little Dark Magician" of whom you were so proud.

I no longer delight at the thought of commanding an orcish legion and enslaving our halfling neighbours. I doubt I would find the solace in operating the engines of pain in your dungeons that I once did.

I will dispense with the circumventions and lay bare my soul: I discovered morris dancing, Father. It was a physical education elective but I excel at it. Before Professor Dombord transformed into a ghoul and attempted to devour our class, he said that when the silks were in my hands I moved like unto an angel.

I found joy and purpose. But I know you can never understand. Let alone, accept.

And so I die.

Your son,
Prince Smagdar Bloodfist III

Pantomel, my beloved,

It has been three days since I have been able to leave this dreary keep and entwine myself in your many, supple arms. I grow lonely, my love. I yearn for you.

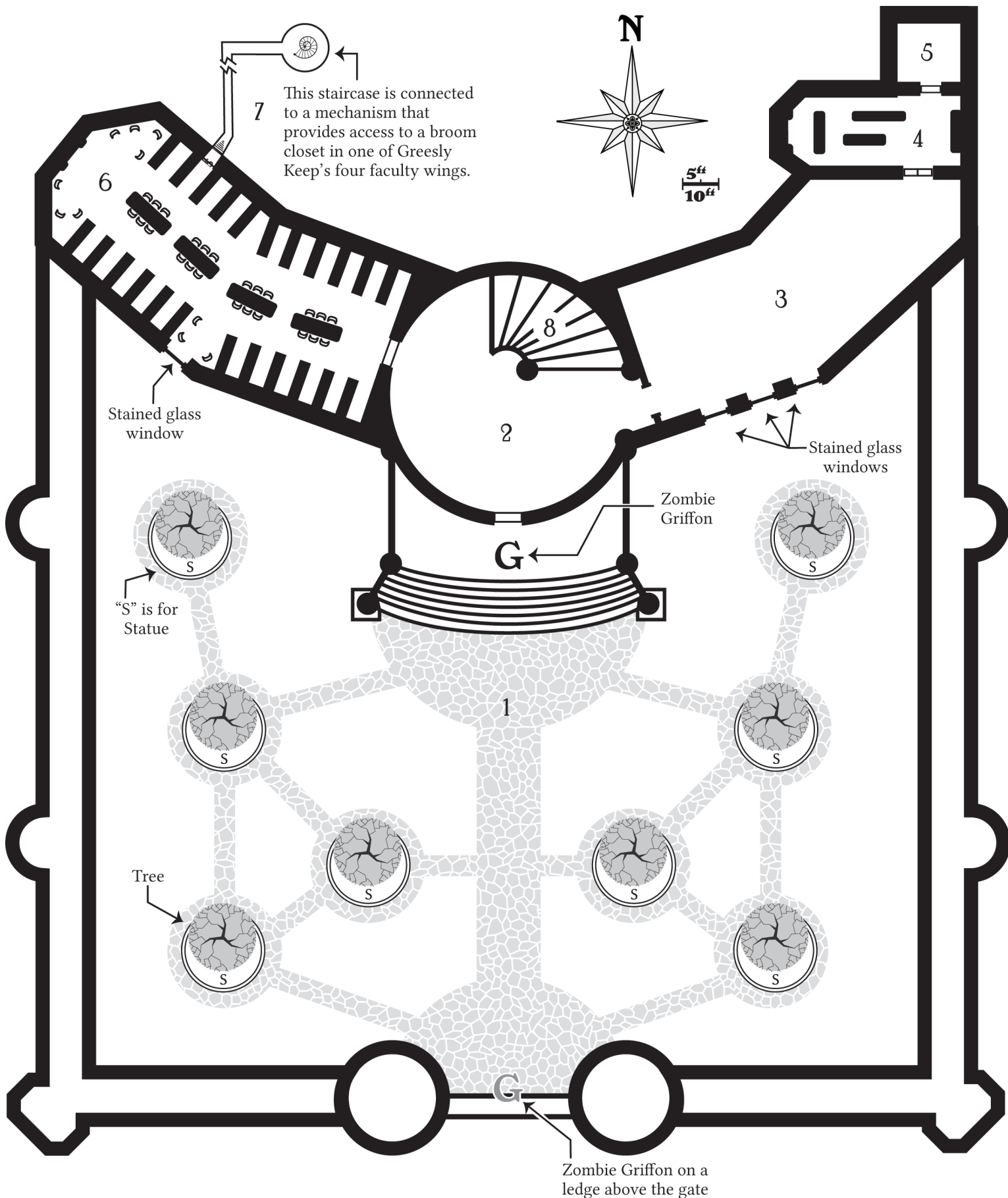
To address the owlbear in the room: Though I know our destinies are bound together, it is tragic that your father stands between us. You must press upon him that he cannot obstruct Fate and go unmolested. I have secured your forgiveness – and your apology – I do not understand why he hinders us so. If it is my wrath he fears, I have promised not to let my anger overwhelm me any more and that is a promise I intend to honour. Tell your father he can take that to the bank.

I know you can convince him. It is for us and our glorious future that you must prevail.

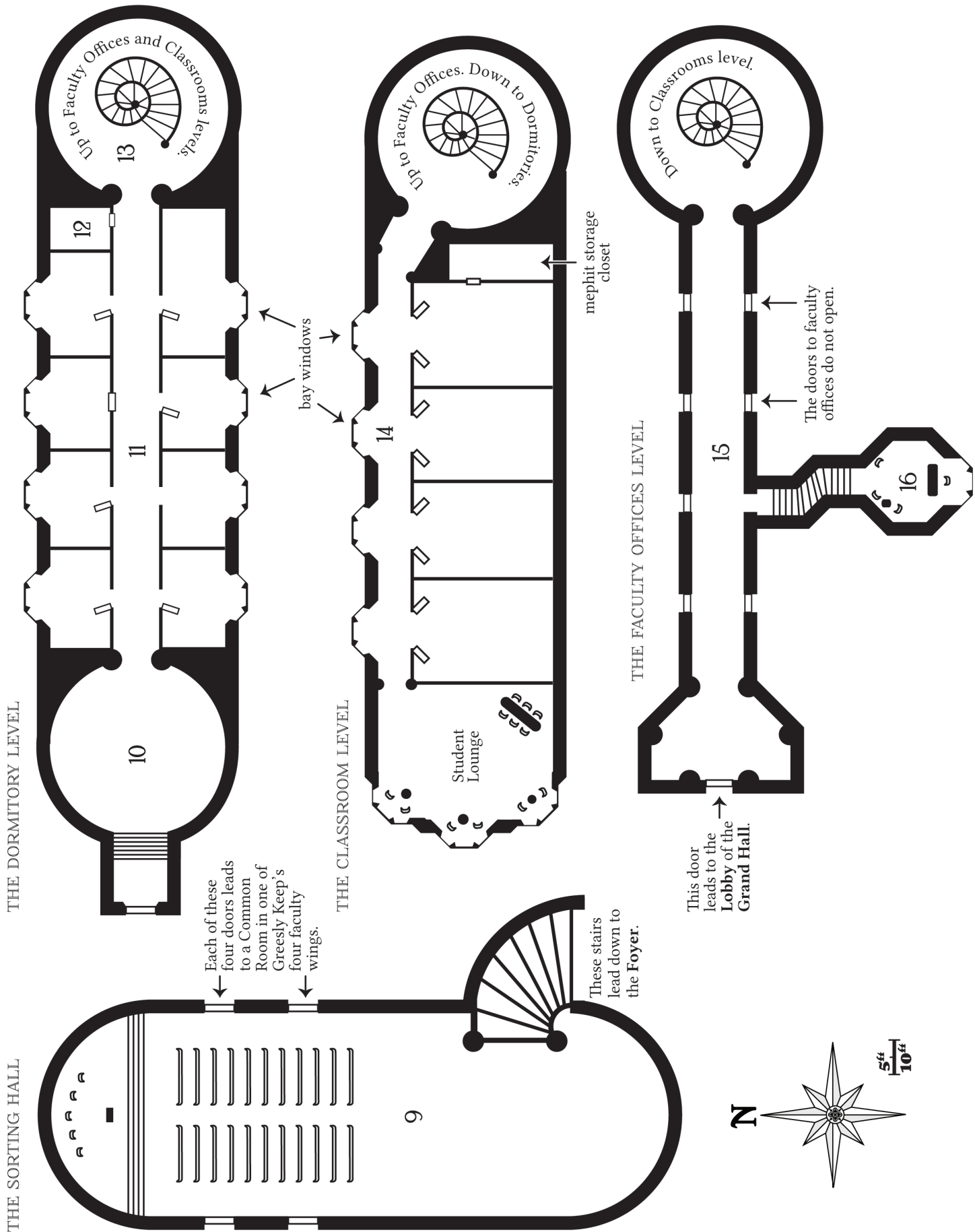
My adored one, I write this not knowing how I can transmit this letter of love to you as the Headmaster's plan to elevate the school continues. He says that we will all benefit immensely from the advanced instruction we'll receive once he establishes a link with the other keep. Though I must confess I find his speeches rather less convincing now that he has died. You would think he would take his responsibilities to keep the student body informed more seriously. Our parents are paying a great deal of gold in tuition.

Ah well, my father will be impressed that I have not only graduated from Greesy Keep with honours but that I have also completed the Advanced Program as well. My inheritance will be secure.

Long may the Cobalt Throne stand.
Wallatat Merdillo, your forever love



GREESLY KEEP: COURTYARD, FOYER, LIBRARY, DINING HALL, KITCHEN

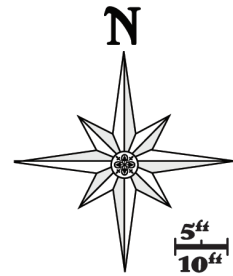
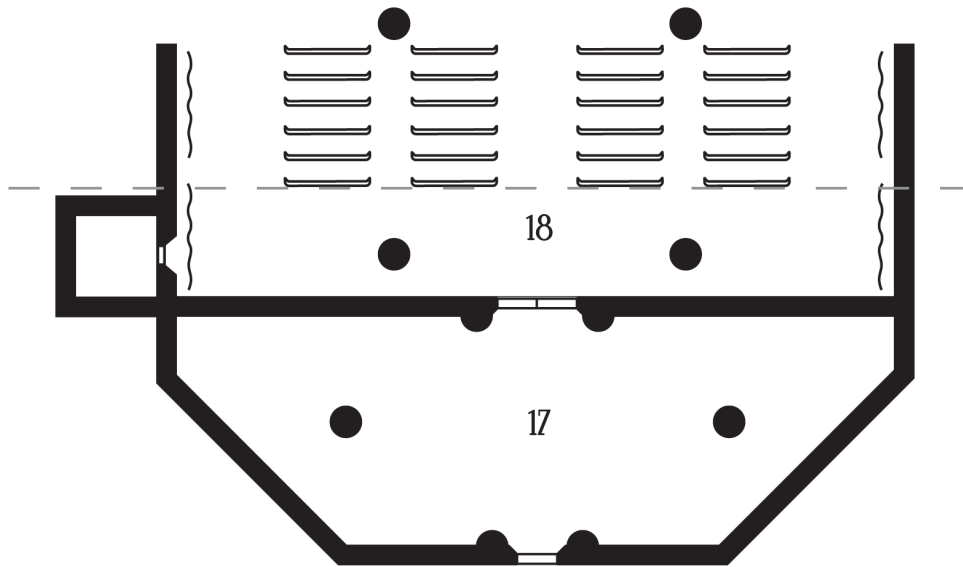
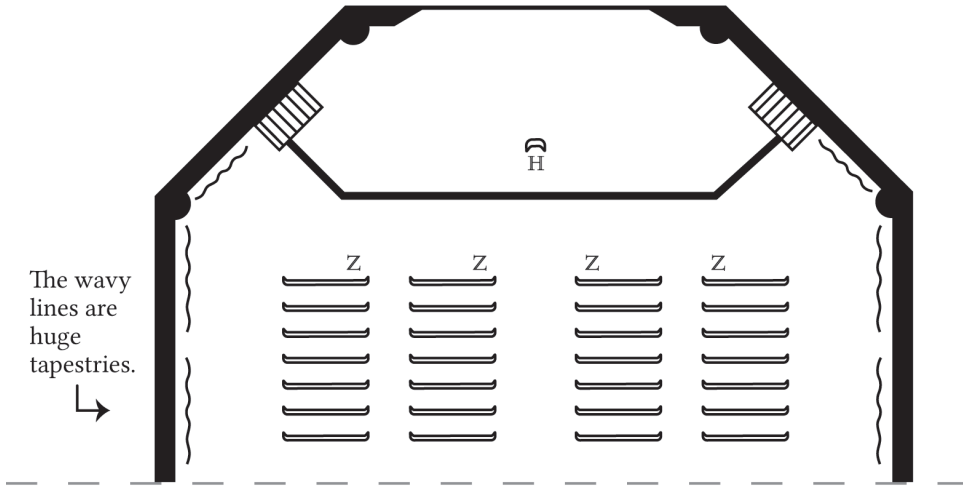


GREESELY KEEP: SORTING HALL, DORMITORY, CLASSROOMS, FACULTY OFFICES

THE GRAND HALL

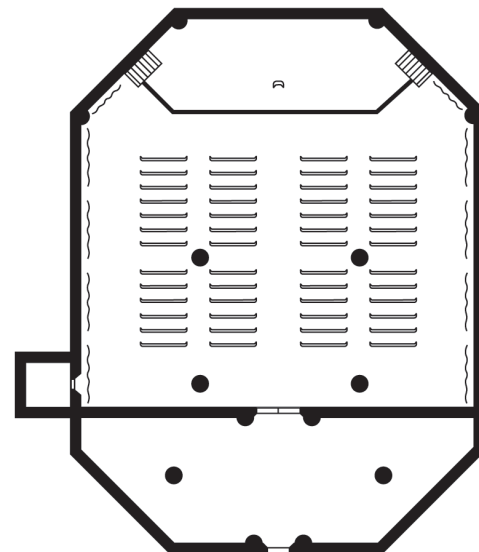
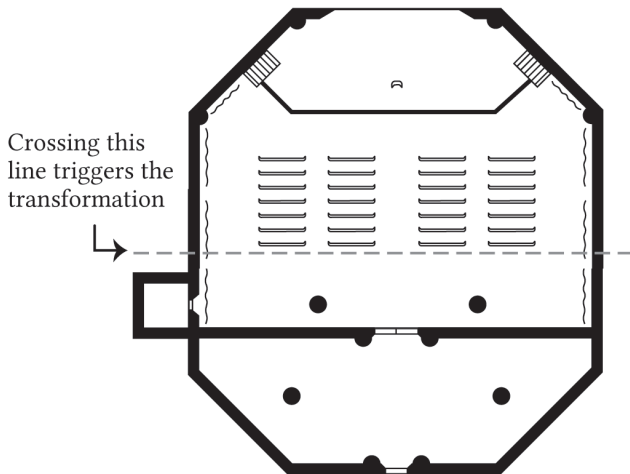
There are Zombie Apprentices at the Zs. Headmaster Ryffydphorth is seated on a throne chair at H. The portal floats high above his head.

The Grand Hall magically warps to grow bigger when the PCs advance into the room. Make a stretching map of the room by laying out the two images at left on separate pieces of paper. Cut off the top piece at the dotted line and lay it over the bottom map, lining it up on the remaining dotted line. When the PCs cross the line, they stay in the bottom part of the map but their adversaries become further away from them.



BEFORE TRANSFORMATION

AFTER TRANSFORMATION



GREESLY KEEP: THE GRAND HALL

Appendix A: The Textbooks of Greesly Keep

Roll on these tables for random textbook titles. For the title's start and end, roll 2d20 on the **Parts One And Three** table. Get the second part from **The Middle Bit** table using the column for the faculty the book was found in. When a result calls for a <NAME>, roll on the **Author** table.

To keep things simple, use the books strictly for colour by saying they are only useful to a student who spends years in active study under the supervision of a scholar.

Alternately, you could treat the textbooks as treasure. In this case, a wizard who studies a pile of related textbooks (ie, from one faculty), every night for one month might learn one random 1st or 2nd level spell that they could write into their spellbook. To successfully learn the spell, the wizard must succeed on an INT (Arcana) check at the end of the month of study; the DC is 20 minus the number of textbooks in the pile (to a maximum of 7 books). The spell has to be taken from an appropriate school. After attempting to learn the spell, the wizard can glean no new insights from those books. Such textbooks would be worth 1d20+10gp each to a wizard or to a bookseller who specializes in magic tomes.

TEXTBOOK TITLE, PARTS ONE AND THREE

Roll	First Part	Third Part
1	Studies in	Praxis
2	Introduction to	Categorization
3	A Survey of	Analysis
4	Comparative	and You
5	A Practical Guide to	Illustrated
6	Innovative	in Society
7	The Little Encyclopedia of	Practice
8	A Systemic Approach to	Innovations
9	Fundamentals of	the <NAME> Way
10	The Idiot's Guide to	a Grimoire
11	Case Studies in	Disruption
12	Profiting from	Investigation
13	The "Abracadabra" of	Study
14	A Multiversal Perspective on	in the Real World and Elsewhere
15	The	Annotated
16	Thaumaturgic Topics in	an Idiot's Guide
17	A Diabolic Approach to	Philosophy
18	<NAME>'s	Control
19	A <NAME> Approach to	Management
20	<NAME>'s Guide to	<none>

TEXTBOOK TITLE, THE MIDDLE BIT

Roll	Occult Analysis	Aetheric Engineering
1	(the) Occult	Planar Behaviour
2	Horoscopic Patterns	Negative Energy
3	Haruspicy	Antispirit
4	Mimetofabrication	Phasmomentum
5	Confabulation	Aetherotransit
6	Chromatic Manipulation	Sepulchral Environment
7	Metanature	Fiendish Interactions
8	Parasense	Mortuary Theory
9	Chimerocrux	Astral Inertia
10	Hyperreality	Cadaver
11	Foreknowing	Morbid Aesthetics
12	Dementonature	Binding Invocation

Roll Discord Mgmt Applied Deviations

Roll	Discord Mgmt	Applied Deviations
1	Glamour	Mutability
2	Intrigue	Flux
3	Fascination	Physical Rearrangement
4	Bewitching	Interchangeability
5	Rapture	Deviant Physiologies
6	Combustion	Aberrant Biology
7	Potence	Proactive Defence
8	Vitality	Banishment
9	Control	Barrier
10	Conflagration	Shielding
11	Toxicity	Immunity
12	Destruction	Inoculation

TEXTBOOK AUTHOR

Roll	1st	2nd	Roll	1st	2nd
1	Genti-	-gonn	6	Nurdi-	-phaz
2	Zotto-	-plat	7	Bondi-	-om
3	Jorri-	-nundro	8	Qua-	-trop
4	Xundra-	-max	9	Mumpi-	-fly
5	Plakta-	-fard	10	Fyra-	<none>

Appendix B: Random Wizard Names

Maybe your PCs decide to examine every sign next to the doors in the Faculty wing? Maybe they're searching an apprentice zombie's cloak and the zombie's mother stitched the zombie's name on the collar? Maybe you want to populate a bit of Greesly Keep backstory you're improvising? You can use the table below to quickly generate some sufficiently odd and wizardly sounding names.

1d20	1st part	2nd part	3rd part
1	Gyyd-	-odur	-zy
2	Preeffoo-	-zaam	-ix
3	Ymi-	-zox	-ora
4	Xebla-	-mort	-oom
5	By-	-draz	-zzz
6	Qo-	-cant	Master Of The Art
7	Oo-	-poro	Esquire
8	Maxi-	-lum	The Puissant
9	Heffa-	-joop	The Resplendent
10	Numa-	-zuz	The Corpulent
11	Vi-	-goff	The Justified & Ancient
12	Shikka-	-nogg	The Ascended
13	Tlam-	-fitz	Of The Five Lies
14	Zeru-	-void	Of The Yellow Horrid
15	Hammu-	-zort	Of The Ephemeral Uz
16	Ey-	-pwaz	Of The Nightmare Court
17	Atza-	-yugg	<none>
18	Nunzi-	<none>	<none>
19	Yugy-	<none>	<none>
20	Barve-	<none>	<none>

Afterword

Zombie Wizards of Greesly Keep was supposed to be a short, one-off Halloween adventure for the group I usually DM – two to three short encounters and *boom*, a boss battle and done. But I started writing and things kind of spun out of control.

Most of the text is set in **Linux Libertine** and **Linux Biolinum**. Other typefaces used in this document are **Bergamot Ornaments**, **Cheboygan**, **Gotica Bastard** and **Foglighten**. Writing, layout and art by me.