

OMNIPRESENCE

01

Necromancer, Spirits, Quest, Village

In an attempt to make him invincible, a necromancer botched a ritual on her brother, scattering fragments of his soul, haunting the world as confused/belligerent spirits that must be brought back to reverse the spell.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The necromancer asks the PCs to help her get rid of a number of ghosts with the help of an artifact.
- The PCs encounter a malevolent spirit, when the necromancer appears with a strange artifact.

Encounters:

- The necromancer hands the PCs the artifact that can trap spirits when their focus object—one connected to strong emotions—has been located.
- A poltergeist starts to throw candles around a chapel, setting benches on fire. Focus: holy book.
- A formerly happy family fights each other, even physically, with glowing eyes. Focus: family's baby.
- All glass shatters when a banshee's cry shrieks through the marshlands. Focus: well in the swamp.
- A house's walls bleed, portraits cry, furniture shatters. Focus: skeleton between the walls.
- After collecting all four spirits, the necromancer starts the ritual, restoring her brother.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The brother's soul has a presence that wasn't there before.
- The brother is now immortal, and is up to no good...

SIDEQUEST DECKS:

HORROR FANTASY

Looking for fantasy adventure ideas with a touch of necromancy or a dab of grave dirt? Try **Sidequest Decks: Horror Fantasy**. Each card is a dynamic adventure!

These cards are perfect whether your PCs are in a demi-plane of dread, you want a Halloween themed one-shot adventure, or you want to string several mini-adventures together into an undead focused campaign.

Draw a card for an adventure outline. The outline includes backstory, ways to get the PCs involved, encounter possibilities, and follow-up ideas. The other side of the card is the most important map for that adventure. Use maps from other cards as needed.

Use them to stock a hex crawl, develop a side trek on the fly, or chain some together for an entire campaign!

Writing:

Richard Crookes, Misha Handman, Tim Höregott, Fil Kearney, Joe Wetzel

Cartography:

Keith Curtis

Editing:

Beth Mercer, Joe Wetzel

THE COST OF SAFETY

03

Ghosts, Sacrifice, Wilderness, Village

A mountain village sacrifices travelers in a ritual, turning their ghosts into defenders against the monsters in the woods.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are hired to find someone last seen heading into the mountains.
- The PCs encounter glimpses of a tormented ghost, who begs them to free him before vanishing.

Encounters:

- A dire lizard attacks the party; it bears mysterious patches of weakened skin from ghostly attacks.
- The town's innkeeper claims that the person the PCs are looking for went into the northern woods in search of treasure and never returned.
- The sheriff tries to get the PCs to leave, offering them supplies at a low cost "as thanks for good works".
- A pair of missing travelers are being held by a few thugs in a remote cabin. The villagers plan to sacrifice them at the new moon.
- The ritual site is a set of standing stones up the mountain; ghosts materialize to attack the PCs, but will be freed if the well is destroyed.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- With no one to kill them, the forest's beasts begin to spread into the surrounding region.
- A fanatical cult steals the secret to creating these ghosts, and intends to raise its own army.

A POISONED CAIRN

02

Dark Druids, Magic, Revenge

A group of dark druids has arisen deep in the moors and have started corrupting the cairns nearby. The creeping corruption must be stopped before it spreads too far, or spawns abominations.

Getting the PCs Involved:

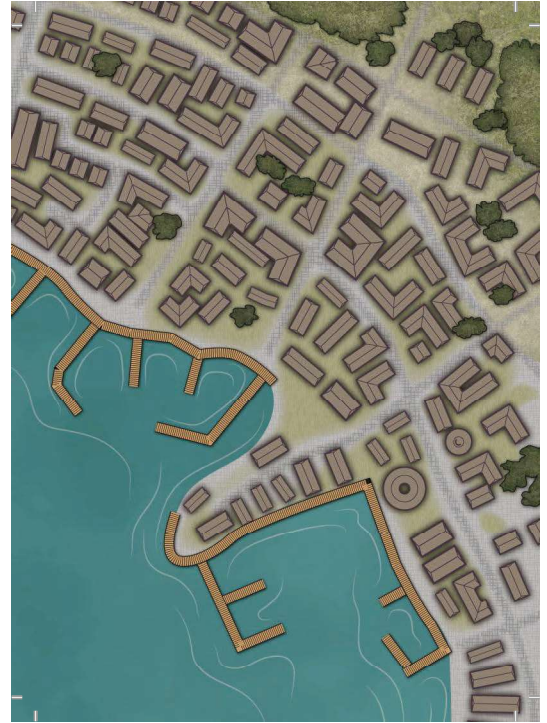
- A local druid asks the PCs for help as he has found several defiled cairns.
- PCs who are rangers or druids feel drawn to one of the defiled cairns.

Encounters:

- The PCs find a cairn with evil symbols daubed all over it and the plants nearby all dead.
- As they approach another cairn, the plant life is much less dead but more corrupted. As they get closer to the stones, the plants attack!
- One cairn is found uncorrupted, but one of the dark druids is performing the rite. If the PCs attack, he summons elementals from the earth to defend him.
- Another cairn is found corrupted, with the ground beneath it bulging upwards. An abomination erupts from beneath and moves to attack!
- At the center of the pattern of corrupted cairns the remaining dark druids are found performing a ritual on an abomination. They are making it more powerful!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why these cairns in particular?
- Could other abominations have been birthed?



MISLED VENGEANCE

05

Revenge, Ghost, Town

A tormented spirit seeks revenge for her daughter's death – but the daughter drowned in an accident, and the spirit is killing innocent people.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- One of the PCs bears a resemblance to the daughter, and the ghost keeps manifesting near her.
- The PCs are hired to calm the spirit by someone who survived the ghost's first attack.

Encounters:

- The ghost appears and sets fire to the inn where the daughter worked.
- The ghost creates a storm to try drowning the ferry operator and the person he is transporting.
- The ghost summons a fog and appears within it, sending out waves of frost to kill a lord's drunken son who once showed interest in the daughter.
- Someone in town starts claiming that the ghost must be right, and raises a mob against survivors of the ghost's attacks.
- A traveling charlatan offers to conduct a séance to "discover the guilty party", but will simply pick someone at random.
- The daughter's bones are still lost, and finding and interring them will help calm the spirit.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- A loved one of the dead woman believes that she was right, and wants revenge on the PCs.

THE DEMON HUNTER

04

Deception, Possession, Demon, Village

A man who hunts terrible demons is passing through the area, but the demons have corrupted him and made him paranoid and vicious.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The demon hunter hires the PCs to help him defeat a nest of possessed demons.
- The PCs meet a distraught farmer who claims the hunter is about to wipe out an innocent town.

Encounters:

- The PCs encounter a possessed raven, who mocks them and then seems to attack. When defeated, it vanishes without a trace, leaving no wounds.
- The PCs encounter a demon that, if killed, is revealed as a possessed farmer. The demon hunter claims that the farmer was innocent and the PCs were tricked.
- The hunter attacks an innocent family, and claims they were demons who used magic to remain hidden.
- The demon hunter uses a cursed holy symbol, which wracks the PCs with pain; he believes this proves them to be possessed, and attacks.
- The demons that were manipulating the hunter manifest if he is slain or purified through holy rites, and use their powers to confuse and enrage the town.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The demons seek revenge on the PCs for ruining their fun, using illusions and deceit to endanger innocents.

THE VICTIM'S CURSE

07

Demon, Possession, Murder, Quest, Inn

The PCs come to a remote inn, which is attacked by a murderous demon that can possess anyone who injures its previous host.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs arrive at the inn and see a traveler and a noble fighting, both hurt. The traveler dies.
- The PCs interrupt a brawl at the inn. They are forced to pick a side.

Encounters:

- The nobleman attacks the innkeeper's wife in public. Several NPCs join the PCs in fighting him; one of them kills him.
- An NPC who fought the nobleman wakes at night and tries to strangle a sleeping PC. If not killed, the PC remembers only nightmares of a grinning face.
- A PC who wounded a previous host has the same nightmares. If the PCs can't shake the dreams, they wake to find themselves about to murder someone.
- The demon attempts to jump between two NPCs, to trick each into believing the other is trying to kill them.
- The PCs find notes that the noble brought and the demon hid, about a binding ritual; it needs rare herbs that grow on the mountain.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The demon is banished, but the PCs must travel in search of a more permanent exorcism.

RAT KINGS

06

Lycanthropy, Mystery, Town

A cult of wererats is infiltrating town, spreading disease and taking over key officials one by one.

Getting the PCs Involved:

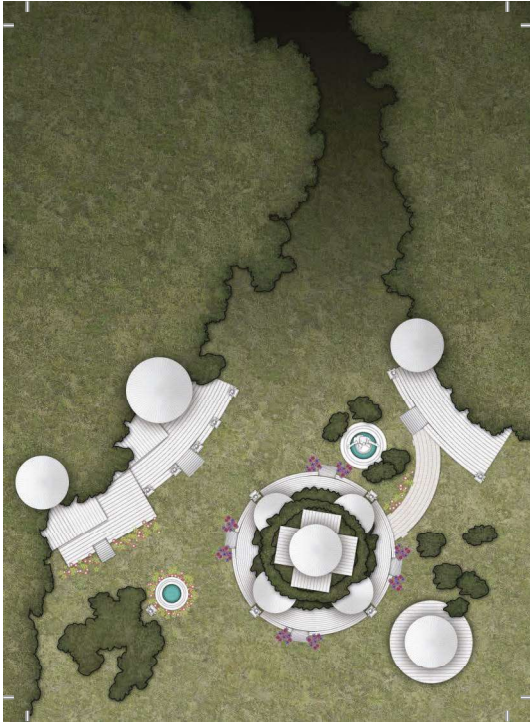
- The PCs arrive to investigate a mysterious plague suspected to be magical in origin.
- The PCs know a local who asks for help, then abruptly stops communicating.

Encounters:

- The local priest is struggling, trying to care for afflicted townsfolk, but the wererats fear him and are giving the temple a wide berth.
- The town's deputy is paranoid and jumpy. The PCs can persuade him to tell them that the sheriff started acting odd after the last new moon. He is abducted if they leave him alone for an hour.
- The PCs are attacked by a swarm of rats that pour out of an abandoned home. Their bites carry plague.
- The mayor is officially in seclusion mourning his wife. He is actually under guard, and is nearly finished turning into a wererat, and will succumb by nightfall if not saved.
- A prominent merchant who took sick and refused the temple's aid became a wererat, and is preparing to ship rat-infested grain to several surrounding villages.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The wererats came from somewhere. How many towns are under their sway?



THE PRICE OF GRIEF

09

Murder, Supernatural, Village

There have been a number of murders of people by their loved ones who afterwards claim not to know what they did. The cause is a grief spirit that possesses them and feeds on the anguish caused.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs witness someone kill a loved one and then be shocked when he realizes what has happened.
- They hear rumors about a spate of killings, and a reward for solving them.

Encounters:

- A man is being dragged to trial, he is wracked by guilt but claims he doesn't remember killing his wife.
- The tavern is filled. Some people seem grief stricken and some seem strangely emotionless as if suffering from a kind of emotional vampirism.
- They witness a mother attempting to kill one of her kids. If they stop her, the spirit is violently expelled.
- As the spirit starts to run out of potential victims it tries to keep feeding by driving the village into an orgy of violence, setting families against each other and leaving just one alive.
- The spirit tries to pit the players against each other unless they can drive it off.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why was the grief spirit drawn to this place?
- Adventurers often cause strife and the grief spirit may choose to shadow them.

DARK SOUL OF THE WOODS

08

Creeping Evil, Summoning, Forest

The elves tried to summon a spirit to defend the forest from invaders. However, it was mis-summoned and was without pity or mercy and dangerously powerful.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are on the edge of the forest when an elf staggers in with a wound from which bark is spreading. The elf whispers "It Comes!" before turning to wood.
- The local lord who trades with the elves becomes concerned and sends the PCs.

Encounters:

- While investigating the edge of the woods, the PCs are ambushed by bark covered, possessed elves.
- The PCs find an empty elven village, scattered with wooden elf statues fleeing from the forest's center.
- The PCs find several elves tied with vines to trees. They are slowly being covered by bark and guarded by possessed elves. If rescued, they have useful information.
- Pushing deeper into the forest, more bark-covered elves attack, backed by warped tree spirits.
- They find the heart of the forest: blackened and terrifying. They also find a demonic tree-wraith.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why did the elves summon the tree-wraith to protect themselves?
- What seeds could an evil tree spirit plant?

ENSORCELLED SAVIORS

11

Enchantment, Witches, Village, Woods

A village asks the PCs to kill a terrible witch in the nearby woods. When they reach her, however, the witch breaks an enchantment on them claiming the villagers are evil. Who is telling the truth?

Getting the PCs Involved:

- They see a poster in a nearby village offering a reward for someone to kill the witch.
- The PCs feel strangely drawn towards the village.

Encounters:

- When the PCs enter the village, everyone is pleased to see them, plying them with drink and food. Villagers explain that the witch has been a threat for a long time and offer rewards for defeating her.
- The forest paths towards the witch's house seem threatening and twisted, something is hunting them.
- As they reach the witch's house, she attacks, but only to subdue them, then feeds them a potion that reveals her to be nothing more than a young woman.
- She heals them and explains that the village is actually an evil cult that she has been combating with her white magic.
- She returns with them to the village, which looks more threatening. Both demand the PCs destroy the other!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If they killed the witch, the villagers could be revealed as evil or vice versa.
- How did the feud actually start?

STOLEN BODIES

10

Investigation, Grave Robbing, Alchemy

Reaching a settlement, the PCs find it in an uproar over the local graveyard robberies. However, the robbers are alchemists who are keeping the village healthy by using an elixir made from the corpses.

Getting the PCs Involved:

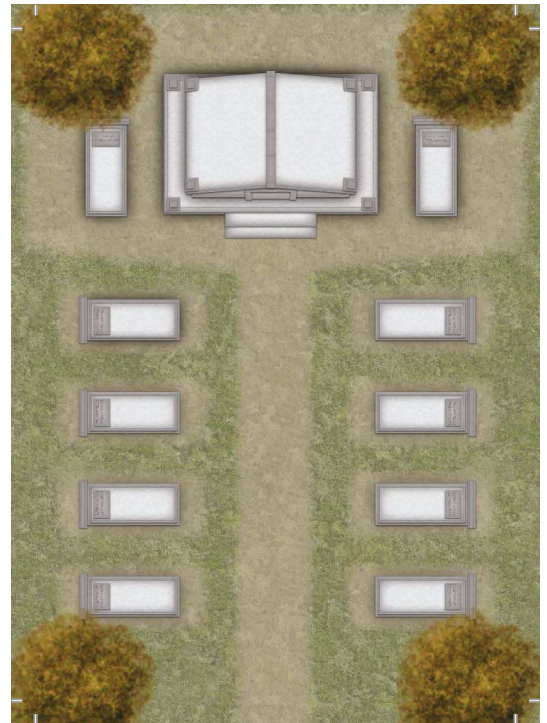
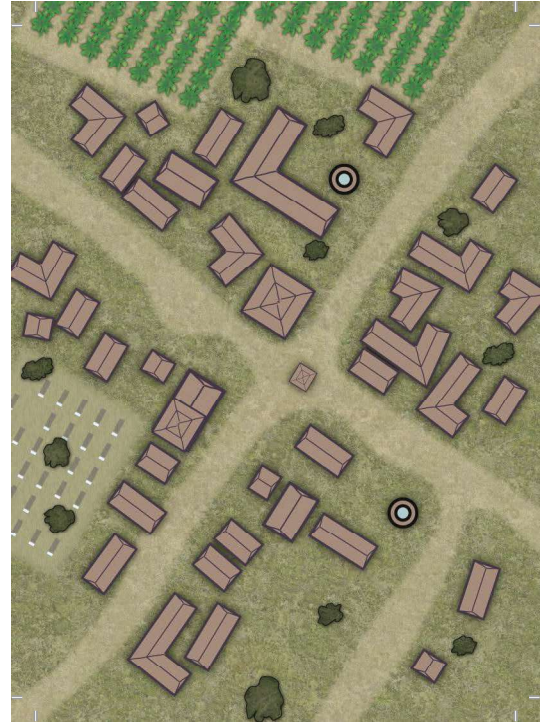
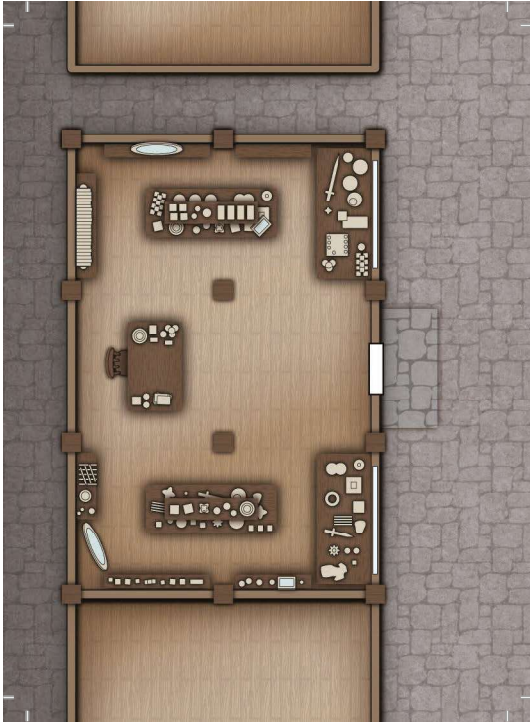
- A nearby village asks the PCs to investigate their strangely healthy neighbors.
- They visit the village and are asked by the priest to investigate the grave robbing.

Encounters:

- At lunchtime, a bell rings and all line up to receive a draught of yellow glowing liquid from two alchemists who look concerned when they spot the newcomers.
- The locals are incensed that their graveyard has been pillaged and its remains disturbed. They mutter that similar things were a problem in nearby graveyards.
- The PCs stake out the graveyard and spot two robbers, but they use smoke bombs to escape.
- The alchemists live in an old farmhouse that is booby-trapped and protected with alchemical concoctions. Here, their equipment is distilling the gold liquid from the skulls of the plundered bodies.
- If cornered, the alchemists surrender. The PCs must argue with the council. Did the robbers harm anyone?

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why were the alchemists experimenting here?
- What happens as people stop taking the elixir?



NO CHARITY HERE

13

Ghost Story, Investigation, Revenge, Village

Years ago, villagers caused a woman and her child to die by cruelty and neglect. Now their ghosts are taking their revenge, and the PCs must choose to either punish the guilty or end the haunting.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The woman's ghost appears and asks for help.
- A villager calls the PCs in to try for an exorcism.

Encounters:

- The village is subdued and although the villagers will talk about the haunting, none will discuss the cause.
- As the PCs investigate the village a child keeps appearing ahead of them and seems to be leading them to a ruined hovel on the outskirts.
- The villagers will admit that a woman lived there with her child. They mistreated her because the father of her child was a foreign soldier.
- The PCs witness deadly hauntings on several villagers. It becomes obvious that the dead were involved in a campaign to ruin the woman's life.
- As villagers are being killed, either the ghosts need to be laid to rest or the villagers need punishing. The ghosts' bones are buried in a shallow grave near their house, but if reburied properly the spirits might rest.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Having gained a reputation for defeating hauntings, another village approaches them.
- Perhaps some villagers want revenge on the PCs.

MIRROR, MIRROR

12

Mystery, Murder, Demon, City

A cursed item has come to the city, and now a demon stalks all of the reflective surfaces nearby. Victims have been found locked in expressions of terror in front or they have just disappeared.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The city is offering a reward for anyone who can solve the mystery.
- One of the PCs sees the demon in the background of his or her reflection, and it sees the player.

Encounters:

- The PCs investigate the murders, and in each place a reflective surface is shattered.
- In the streets, a lunatic runs from shop to shop breaking or smashing anything reflective, screaming that something is coming to get him. If the PCs chase him, they see him get dragged into the glass of a window before it shatters.
- The demon begins to stalk a PC, appearing in the PC's mirror, or even the blade of his or her weapons.
- They find the mirror in a curio seller's shop; the owner is a willing demon thrall and the mirror's defender.
- If it is losing, the demon is willing to break any deal it can make.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- How did the demon-mirror come to be in the city?
- If defeated, the demon may hold a grudge.

A LAST JOURNEY

15

Necromancy, Demon, Journey

In an area infested by evil, the PCs must escort a corpse lying in repose to a sacred burial ground where it will be safe. The journey will not be smooth.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A PC's friend or relative died. The body must be buried to prevent the deceased from rising again.
- The PCs come across a funeral procession that needs their protection.

Encounters:

- A band of vampires attacks the procession to feast on the body and its protectors.
- A necromancer sends her walking dead after the procession to gain access to the fresh body.
- A body-snatcher demon temporarily possesses another body guard and jumps from victim to victim through touching, trying to reach the corpse.
- Specters appear, trying to draw the body's soul out to become restless like them.
- A thick fog hides how a witcher tries to walk off with the body by exchanging it with a mud puppet.
- Reaching the burial grounds, the service needs protection from cultists trying to stop the soul's rest.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Later, the PCs encounter the priest as a risen body – he protected so many, but not himself.
- One night, one of the PCs' companions is exchanged with a mud puppet – the witcher's circle is not dead.

THE EMPTY HALL

14

Ghosts, Sinister, Mansion, Wilderness

In the wilderness, a mansion stands in the grips of a masquerade ball. It is an echo of the past, and the PCs must solve the mystery to escape.

Getting the PCs Involved:

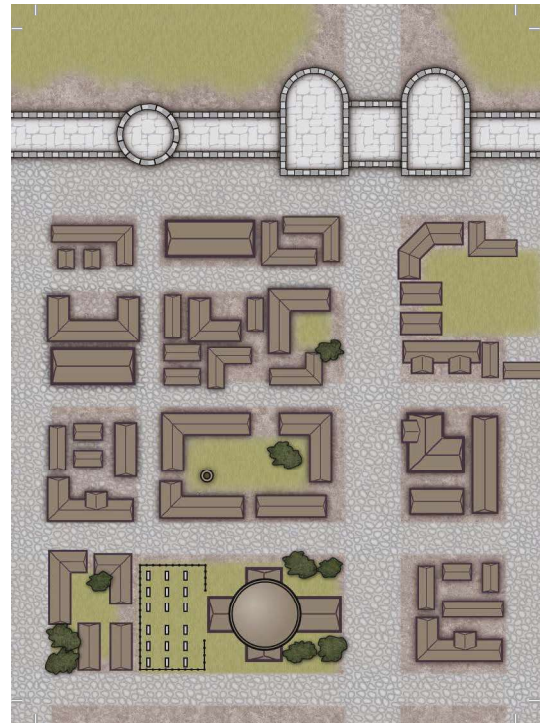
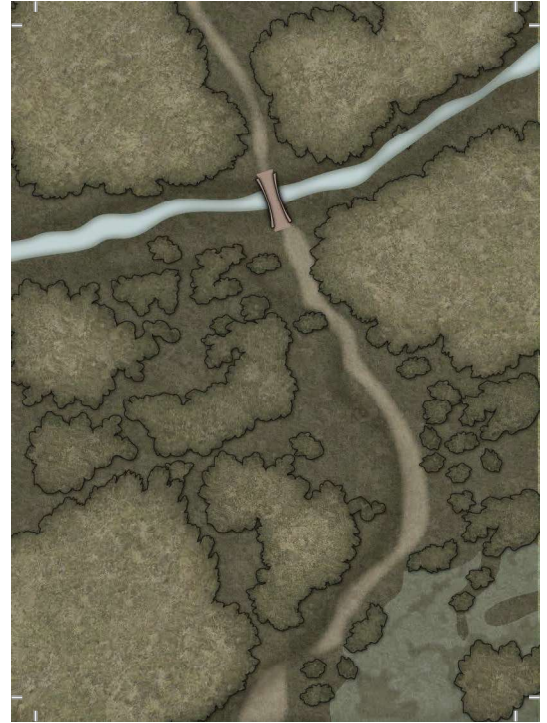
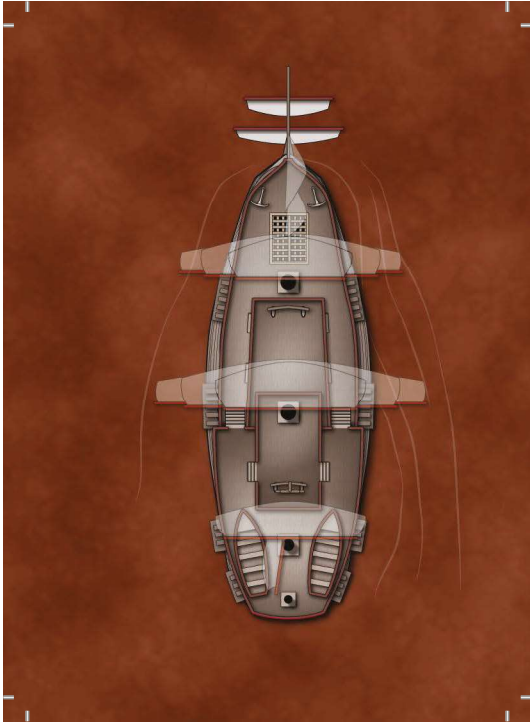
- They receive a strange masquerade ball invitation.
- Traveling through, the PCs stumble onto the ball.

Encounters:

- The PCs arrive and are asked to choose a mask, each with its own hidden meaning. As they enter the manor, however, they see a flash of it as a ruin and the floor covered in masked skeletons.
- A guest is found murdered, but the others do not seem concerned, commenting instead on the artistry of the killing. A flash of the ruined manor shows a skeleton where the corpse lies.
- The party continues with more deaths and the guests wonder who has been selected as the hunters. It becomes obvious to the players that they are cultists, willingly giving up their lives to power a rite.
- The PCs start searching for the hunters. The flashes of masked skeletons help to eliminate people.
- The PCs corner the hunters and unmask them; the spell ends, revealing a ruined corpse-strewn manor.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- What was the rite for?
- The PCs saw the hunters' faces, and those people are now in positions of power.



DARK WOODS

17

Supernatural, Suspense, Wilderness

The PCs try to get through dark woodlands – but the forest's inhabitants are hungry...

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs' destination lies opposite the dreaded forest.
- The PCs travel overland, and through navigational errors find themselves in the woods.

Encounters:

- Hungry, panicking wolves flee something, crossing paths with the PCs. Desperate, the animals attack.
- Spirits try to lure the PCs into the swamp with illusions of shining treasures. They don't necessarily try to drown the PCs though – rather, they are leading the PCs to the spirits' own resting places.
- Trees made of bones scratch and claw for the PCs, trying to grind them between their bloody trunks.
- The PCs find traces of a house walking on clawed legs. Later, the house hunts them, trying to swallow them into its fireplace.
- A headless rider, as black as the night around him, dashes through the forest and attempts to behead the PCs from the shadows.
- The Childeater, a huge magical being responsible for the horrors in this forest, poses as a group of helpless children to get the PCs close.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The Childeater is only one of a family of similar beings, twisting their surroundings.

BLOOD RED SEA

16

Journey, Shapeshifter, Transformations, Ship

A ship crossing the blood-red waters of a cursed inland sea is infiltrated by evil creatures from beneath the waves, trying to take as many passengers underwater as possible – even if that means crashing the ship.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are aboard the ship and notice odd events.
- The PCs are on another ship and notice help signals from the infiltrated one.

Encounters:

- A gentleman, clearly out of his senses, approaches the railing, asking other people to join him.
- A passenger is seen drifting next to the vessel. If retrieved, they find the body drowned and gnawed.
- The ship changes course, heading towards a rocky island. The captain has been replaced by a shapeshifter.
- More and more passengers start to look odd – their skin is wet, their eyes huge. And some have gills!
- A beautiful glowing beneath the waves draws more passengers dangerously close to the railing, and the PCs find it hard to resist as well.
- Out of water leaking into the ship, scaled arms try to drown their victims.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- There is a whole dark kingdom of Drowners beneath the lake that must be fought.
- One of the survivors is a shapeshifted Drowner.

FULL MOON

19

Lycanthropy, Mystery, City

In order to keep their kin permanently transformed, a werewolf has performed a ritual to keep the whole area perpetually covered in full-moon night.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A PC's relative inflicted with lycanthropy suffers out-of-schedule transformations and asks for aid.
- A priest finds several ritual paraphernalia missing and hires people to investigate.

Encounters:

- The PCs learn from an assistant that one of the local physicians has been turned recently.
- The next morning, the sun doesn't rise. The full moon stays in the sky.
- A pack of werewolves attacks the city, carefully picking out the weak, old, and sick.
- The city's inhabitants run out of firewood, but cannot go into the woods to chop new.
- The full moon grows, and the wolves with it.
- The PCs find the ritual site. But destroying it doesn't let the moon set, as it is focused on a talisman.
- The wolves, maintaining a wild intelligence even transformed, establish a terror regime of the wolves.
- The PCs notice the physician's assistant among the wolves – wearing a talisman.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- It turns out the whole country has been affected by the ritual, turning it into a realm of night creatures.

EMPTY

18

Mystery, Suspense, Town

The PCs enter a town that is completely empty. Mysterious activities finally lead to the conclusion that all inhabitants are trapped in the underworld reflection of that very town and need to be rescued.

Getting the PCs Involved:

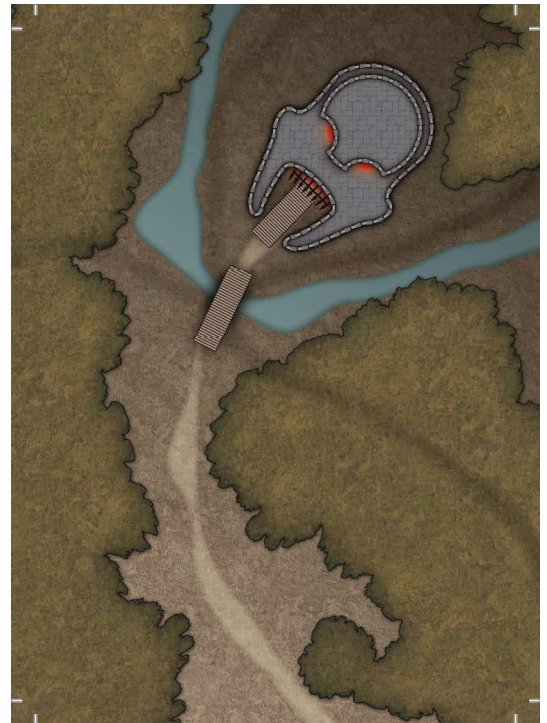
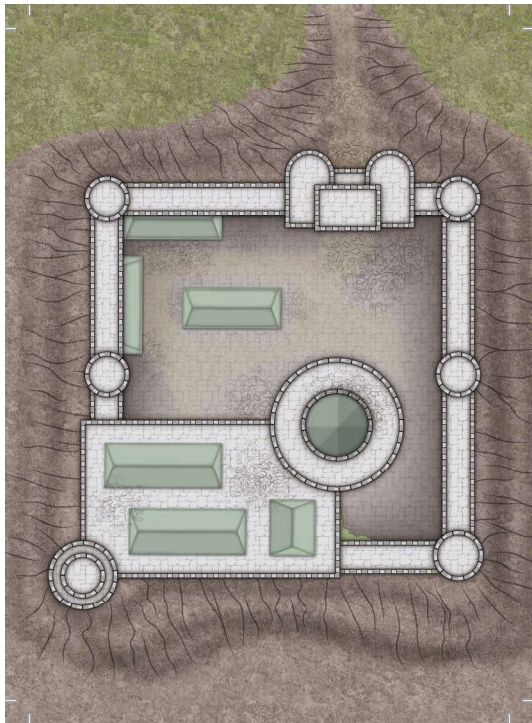
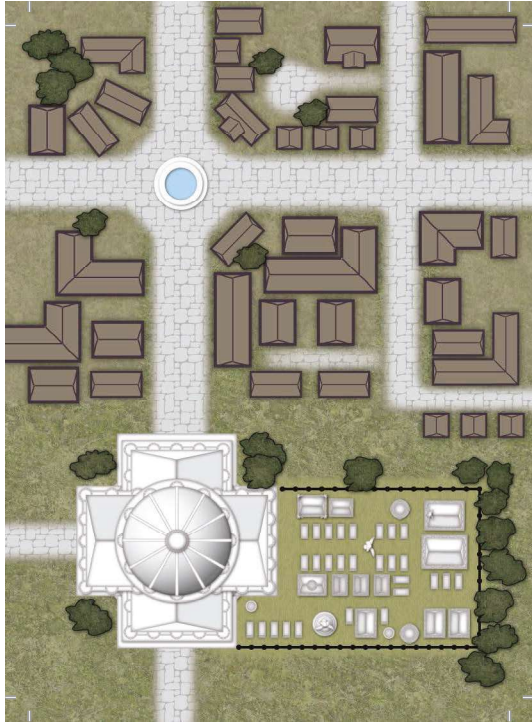
- The PCs visit the town on business, but find it empty.
- A relative makes a mysterious call for help.

Encounters:

- From the corners of their eyes, the PCs notice terrified faces in all reflective surfaces.
- The PCs are attacked by items flying through the air – non-lethal, but painful attacks.
- A person claiming to be a survivor of a nightly disappearance turns out to be an impostor – the person he or she is pretending to be is long dead. Confronted with lying, the person attacks.
- Whispers in the wind can be heard, trying to lure the PCs into the depths of the graveyard catacombs.
- Ink blots appear in several places, spelling the same phrase on paper, walls, and clothing: "SHATTER IT".
- The cemetery catacombs house a huge smoke mirror that grants a look into the underworld. Shattering it releases the townspeople trapped on the other side.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The portal can be used both ways – and there is no way to reliably close it.
- The mirror owner must be found.



PIECES OF BEYOND

21

Interdimensional, Creatures, Artifact, Town

A rift to another dimension has been opened, and beings and matter of unknown type have escaped. Everything must be shoved back in to seal the rift.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- One of the PCs opens the rift by accident when operating a strange artifact.
- The PCs are tasked to find the cause of otherworldly oddities pestering an area.

Encounters:

- Burning through the skin of the victims, chunks of cauterizing strange matter inflict people in a church. The chunks must be carefully returned to the rift.
- A field has been overgrown by throbbing thorny blood red plants curling around people's ankles.
- Three bear-sized predators made of strange matter roam the lands.
- An unsettlingly slender humanoid inspects its surroundings with almost childlike naivety and touches everything with its long, sharp fingers. It cannot understand the PCs, but must be convinced to return through the rift.
- An otherworldly book has appeared in a library, and it writes everything down that is said in its presence. Whenever something rhymes, it becomes true.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The creator of the artifact sees his or her biggest life achievement destroyed and seeks revenge.

IT'S CLOSE TO MIDNIGHT

20

Undead, Possession, Graveyard

On All Hallows' Eve, ghost knights from the underworld abduct the souls of the deceased to drag them to hell. They must be tracked down and stopped before the gates to the Other Side close for another year.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- At a funeral, the PCs witness the unholy soul theft.
- A medium receives cries for help from the dead.

Encounters:

- An ancestor shrine is haunted by demonic apparitions that twist all devotional paraphernalia into bloody spines, rusty weapons, and glowing bones.
- Possessed by a panicking ghost, a person hysterically screams and runs. The first death knight appears and tries to take the soul.
- A séance performed on a market place goes wrong, when the medium suddenly spits fire and recites the names of all souls lost to hell backwards.
- The approach of the second death knight is heralded by bloody footprints appearing out of nowhere, following people about to die by strange accidents.
- A person dies, and the PCs are confronted with the second death knight who is trying to fetch the soul.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Once the death knights are dead, the souls are able to proceed to the next. But hell twisted them forever...
- People's approach towards the dead has changed forever. What new customs and taboos develop?

THE HUNT

23

Creature, Chase, Wilderness, Castle/Fort

Chased by a headless rider, the PCs flee to an old castle. The castle itself though is the actual monster, using the rider to lure people in.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- While traveling, the rider chases the PCs, forcing them to retreat until they are inside a castle.
- The PCs meet someone in the forest who asks them to escort him or her to a safe place.

Encounters:

- Trying to crush the PCs, massive wooden teeth protrude from the walls and ceiling of a hallway.
- The PCs notice that, similar to vermicular movement, the hallways twist and change constantly.
- From different surfaces, eyes of various sizes stare at them creepily. If hurt, they cry tears of acid.
- The headless rider hangs from the ceiling by half-organic strings, ready to fight if disturbed.
- A big hall begins to fill with an acidic liquid dripping from eyes on the walls to ingest the PCs.
- Protected by layers of twisted wooden and stone furniture, a disgusting organic heart beats, powering all of the structure's horrors.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The castle disintegrates into 1000s of minor demons, formerly united by the heart, to infest the land.
- The rider, held in a terrible stasis, is still alive and wants help to get back his head.

THE ARISTOCRATS IN THE WALLS

22

Undead, Suspense, Curse, Castle

Off to retrieve a valuable heirloom from a seemingly abandoned castle, the PCs meet the estate's former inhabitants – ghouls stalking from the walls.

Getting the PCs Involved:

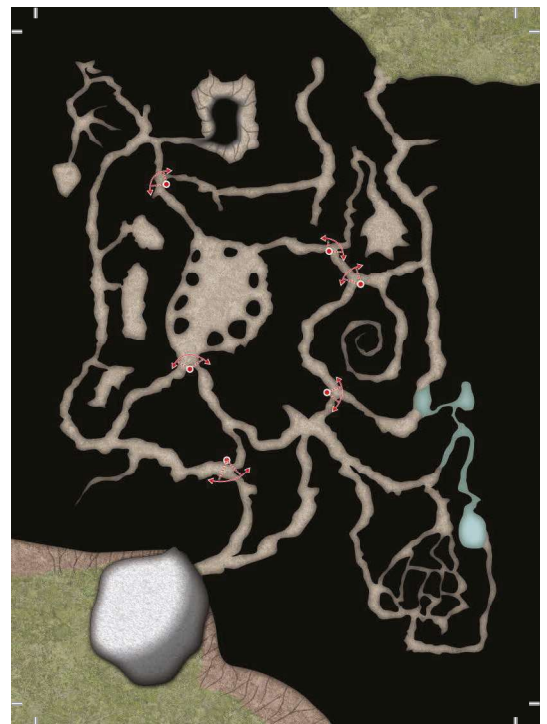
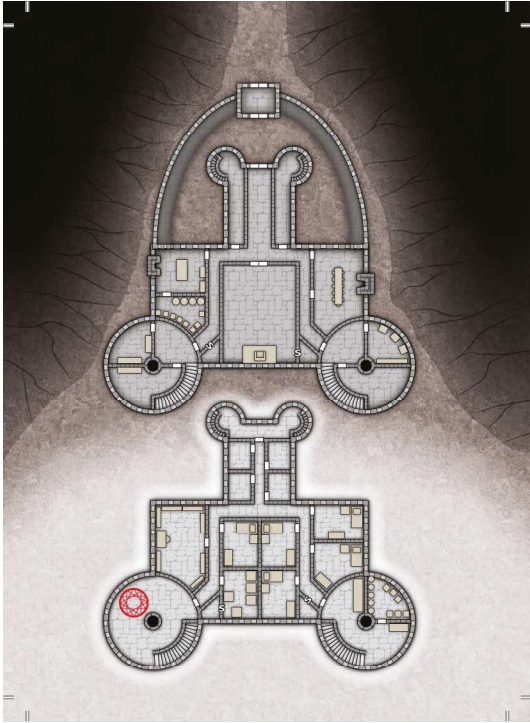
- A PC learns of his heritage and wants the treasure.
- The rightful heir asks the PCs to find the treasure in his or her family's castle.

Encounters:

- While searching for clues on where to find the heirloom, the PCs find a painting showing it resting on a throne of bones in a red-draped room.
- All around them, the PCs hear whispers in the shadows, but they can't find their source.
- Elaborate live traps are set up all over the castle, and PCs might easily stumble into one – or into a trapped, gnawed-off corpse.
- The PCs witness ghouls eating a corpse before escaping to the inside of the walls.
- The PCs discover and travel through the twisted and rancid interstices between walls and floors.
- In the hidden bone-throne room, a pack of ghouls attacks the PCs, viciously protecting its heirloom.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- What if the degeneration curse runs in the blood?
- More family members have escaped and are in different states of mutation. They all want the inheritance, now that it was removed from the castle.



THE FACELESS KILLER 25

Murder, Conspiracy, Supernatural

A killer hired to discredit the PCs is committing murders while using magic to look like them. The PCs must clear their names without being arrested or lynched.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A mob comes to try and hang them for their crime.
- A friend warns the PCs they are to be arrested.

Encounters:

- The PCs must escape from the people trying to capture them without making things worse.
- They investigate the crime they have been accused of and find the victim was someone they have clashed with in the past. They find a witness that swears that it was they who killed him.
- One of their allies sends them a message offering help. But, when they arrive, the killer—disguised as a PC—is attacking their friend.
- The killer escapes still disguised, but as the PCs chase him the mob chases them all! The killer begins doing as much damage as possible, switching shapes between the PCs to cause confusion.
- The PCs corner the killer, and must then persuade the mob of their innocence. The object that allows the killer to change shape would help...

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The item the killer used to change his shape is very powerful, others may now want it.

THE WELL-WROUGHT HEART 24

Wizard, Automata, Castle/Fort

The PCs try to get a mechanical heart back from a mad magician's castle. He revived a corpse with it, the heart now resides in that very corpse's chest.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs find the heart as treasure, but it is stolen from them.
- A mechanic asks the PCs to retrieve the stolen heart.

Encounters:

- A homunculus stumbles the corridors, transporting human body parts from one castle wing to another.
- A narrow flight of stairs abruptly ends in nothingness. Falling into it drops the victim 10 feet, right in front of the castle – headfirst.
- A room has two magical spheres – one raising, one lowering the temperature. Between them is a magical field, preventing passing through. If not destroyed or disenchanting simultaneously, the room's temperature will dramatically rise or fall.
- A room is filled with trees and undergrowth of a dark wood. Mechanical predators stalk from the shadows.
- A lineup of half-corpse automata marches through the corridors, patrolling for intruders.
- The rooftop lab is guarded by a giant sewn from body parts – powered by the mechanical heart.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- On their own now, the automata form their own militaristic society.

THE HUNGERING MAZE 27

Chase, Escape, Caverns

Below the great rock there is a maze that changes constantly and holds within it a great evil. The PCs must try and escape, or defeat the hidden evil.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Someone offers the party a treasure map, but is in fact trying to get rid of them!
- Approaching the rock, the ground falls away beneath them, dropping them into the maze.

Encounters:

- They find themselves in a dark cave; scrawled on the wall in chalk is "It is awake, it is coming! RUN!" In the distance, they hear a creature roar.
- As they enter a large chamber with pillars, the creature enters, and begins hunting them. They must either drive it off or hide from it. Scrawled on the wall is "Hide, Hide, Fighting feeds the maze!"
- The maze shifts with a grinding and crushing of stone, the PCs are in danger of being crushed!
- As they search for a way out, they become sicker and sicker, and small changes in their bodies take place.
- They find the exit, but the creature finds them before they escape. It is the person who wrote the warnings, horribly transformed by the maze's effect.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The great evil wasn't the creature, it was actually the guardian of something worse, and now it is dead.
- How has the maze changed the PCs?

THE SUICIDE TREE 26

Druid, Murder, Suspense, City

Every full moon for a year, a body has been found hanging from the largest tree in a city park. All seem to be suicides, but an evil druid coerced them.

Getting the PCs Involved:

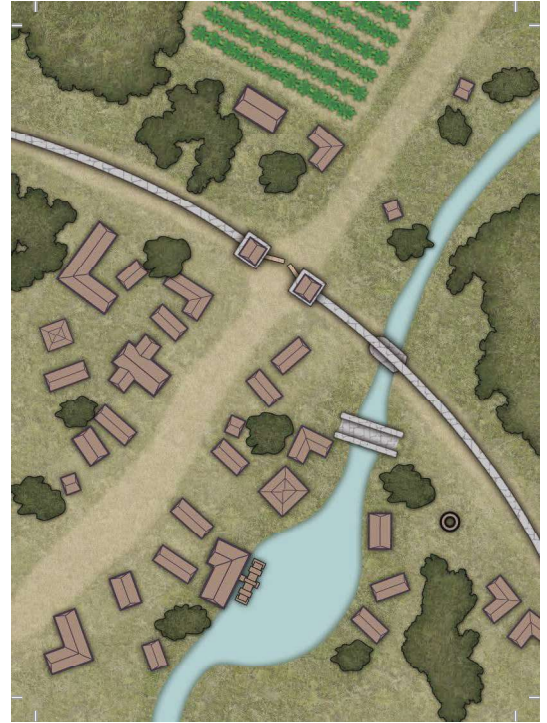
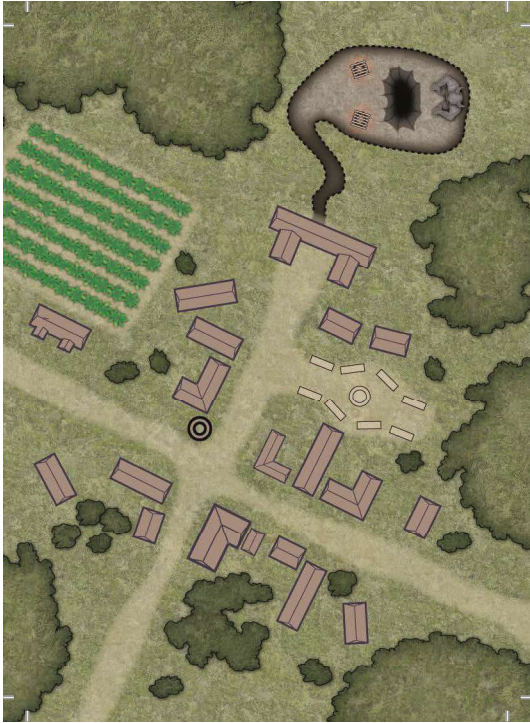
- Dreams of the tree start to afflict one of the PCs.
- The PCs are visited by the wounded spirit of the tree begging them for help.

Encounters:

- The victims' families all say the same thing: they would not have killed themselves. They did, however, all visit a healer before their deaths.
- The healer is revealed to be a friendly druid. As they talk, the druid begins to question them, and chooses one PC to 'bless'.
- At the tree they find the remains of the nooses hanging from the branches and also dark runes in the bark. Twelve of the thirteen have been empowered, which the blessed PC is drawn to.
- In a dream, the blessed PC begins to be pursued by the druid, who kills the PC at the end of the dream.
- On the night of the full moon, the blessed PC sleepwalks to the tree where the druid is ready to sacrifice him or her to slay the tree spirit. The PC's friends must fight off the druid to save the PC.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The tree spirit needs healing, requiring rare reagents.



THE CURSE OF BLACK SHUCK

29

Monster, Mayhem, Terror, Village

Last year the village burned a witch at the stake. Now her revenge, Black Shuck, has appeared in the form of an enormous ethereal hound.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- As they travel, Black Shuck begins to stalk them, forcing the PCs to take shelter in the village.
- The fangs of Black Shuck are powerful reagents for alchemy, and worth a lot of money.

Encounters:

- The monstrous hound bursts in, seizes a villager and drags him or her outside through the wall.
- Outside the villager is found killed, but no sign of the hound. It attacks from under the ground, dragging villagers underneath to suffocate.
- There is a crash from the priest's house and a scream. He rushes out running towards the temple followed by Black Shuck. He makes it to the temple grounds but the hound seems unwilling to enter.
- The PCs must get the other villagers to safety as Black Shuck hunts them through the village.
- With all the villagers in the temple, Black Shuck prowls outside; eventually it attacks, but on holy ground it cannot become ethereal. The PCs must protect the villagers, but also prevent its escape.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Black Shuck is part of a demonic pack. Its kin want revenge for Shuck's death.

THE FEAST

28

Creeping Fear, Festival, Cannibals, Village

Every ten years a village holds a great feast inviting people from all around. Little do the PCs know there is a secret feast and they are on the menu!

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The village sends people out to invite nearby villages to the feast, and the PCs are invited.
- A friend whose sister disappeared at the last feast begs them to find her.

Encounters:

- The visitors are welcomed to the festival, which is like a county fair crossed with an all-you-can-eat buffet.
- A large man is led away by the villagers obviously against his will. He seems drunk but they are strangely insistent.
- The Night Feast begins with a variety of dishes, many of them meat, which tastes strange if someone checks. The people eating the meat seem to become very tired or drunk and are led away by the villagers.
- The PCs follow the villagers leading their victims away and find themselves sneaking into a dark temple beneath the town hall. The walls are hung with butchery implements and carvings of cannibalism.
- Below, they find the villagers sacrificing victims — throwing hearts in a pit as others cook the remains.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The villagers' "God" is actually a demon of gluttony, and unfed it goes on the rampage.

THE PHANTOM STALKER

31

Spirit, Manipulation, Campsite

The PCs are pursued by a killer that only they can see and affect, and which returns every time it is slain.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs have just looted an ancient tomb or crypt.
- The PCs just killed a dark mage and looted her study.

Encounters:

- The stalker appears from the underbrush at night, when the PCs are alone, and attacks them openly. It vanishes when it would otherwise be slain.
- The stalker attacks the PCs in an inn, and afterward they are blamed for any damage.
- Appearing at the edge of a large crowd, the stalker follows the PCs openly but vanishes when they try to close in.
- The stalker slips into the room during a delicate negotiation, and tries to manipulate the PCs into accidentally killing someone present while fighting it.
- The stalker waits until one PC is alone, and then tries to ambush him or her.
- The PCs discover that the stalker can only be put to rest if they can ritually purify an object that they looted, but the PCs have already sold or given it away.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Someone else comes to the PCs, with a story of being attacked by a monster like this. Is he or she telling the truth?

THE BENEVOLENT CULT

30

Murder, Mystery, Investigation, Town

People are being murdered in an occult fashion.

However, it soon becomes obvious that the victims were members of a cult themselves and the killers are trying to prevent a greater evil.

Getting the PCs Involved:

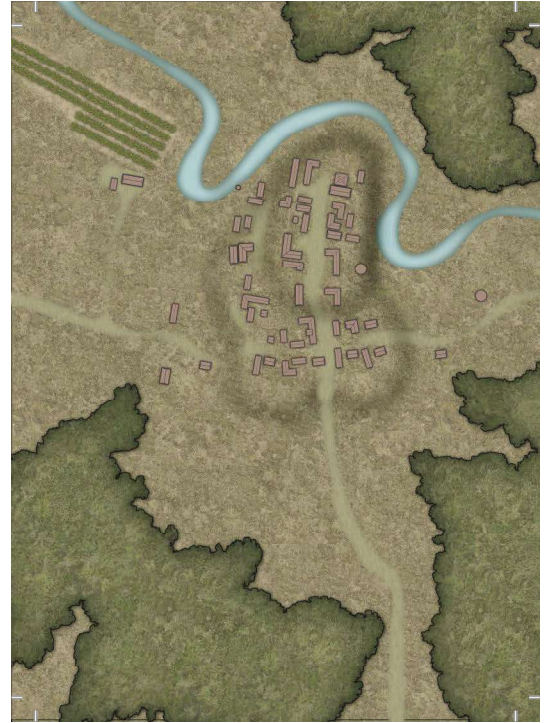
- One of the murders takes place in the street, and they see a black robed figure escaping.
- Having heard of them, one of the villagers asks the PCs to look into the killings.

Encounters:

- Examining a victim, the PCs find the eyes have been removed, and the body has a tattoo of a corrupted symbol. The symbol belongs to a demonology cult.
- Researching the demonologists reveals that the removal of the eyes is related to another cult who kill in that fashion to rob the demons of their power.
- The PCs are contacted by someone wanting to meet, who explains they are part of a group hunting demonologists. The meeting is attacked!
- The demonologists are revealed to be members of the government, and the PCs must find out who else is involved. The benevolent group agrees to help.
- The demonologists begin a ritual in the council chamber. It must be stopped!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The members of the benevolent cult are found murdered, did one of the demonologists escape?



DINOSAUR CEMETERY 33

Undead, Shaman, Village, Wilds

A nomadic tribe returns to land it considers its own to find a village settled on holy land. Eventually they summon the spirits of the land.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs sensed great magic brewing in the village.
- A villager rides into town pleading for help against the tribal attackers.

Encounters:

- The PCs arrive in the village. The party can help heal villager victims of the last raid.
- Villagers describe the zealous raiders. The villagers attempt to repeat what the raiders said. The PCs may recognize words for holy site or cemetery.
- Raiders come again. This time they are easily rebuffed thanks to the party's help.
- Recognizing they need major help, the raiders begin summoning the creatures of the ancient cemetery. The PCs may sense this magical power.
- If the PCs interrupt things early, fewer undead dinosaurs have been awoken by the shaman.
- The chieftain will negotiate, but demands the village's removal and a declaration this area will not be settled.
- If the ceremony was not interrupted, a fearsome number of undead dinosaurs were created.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The chieftain demands help burying the dinosaurs.
- How was the shaman that powerful?

MISUSED LIGHTHOUSE 32

Undead, Necromancer, Port Town, Lighthouse

A nearby lighthouse's keeper has not been heard from lately. Worse, the light seems inconsistent or moved. A necromancer is harvesting dead sailors for an army.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are known to port officials as investigators of unusual events and are paid to look into this one.
- The PCs are attempting to enter the port at night and are thrown off by the incorrect lighthouse light.

Encounters:

- The PCs take a small ship/boat to the island. Fog rolls in. If the ship is shallow, it can almost land; but if not, it wrecks on a reef. (The light is moved, so even if the PCs navigate well, they wreck.)
- Sailor undead from prior wrecks attack the PCs. If the ship wrecked, the water is neck high and combat is difficult. If not, the encounter occurs in waist-deep water (when undead are spotted), limiting movement.
- On the shore, the PCs see the light is magical and coming from a treetop 100 feet from the lighthouse.
- But a trap is in the brush near the light.
- Undead sailors guard the lighthouse. The necromancer will make preparations for a second battle when the guards are encountered.
- The necromancer directs more guards in a second battle, after summoning other forces (if it had time).

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The lighthouse needs a new keeper.

THE GHOST AND THE GRAVESITE 35

Undead, Rest, Farm/Rural

A ghost attempts to free a living but buried body.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- While camping, the PCs hear strange noises from a hill next to a farm.

Encounters:

- The ghost spots the party and attempts to communicate with them. But it cannot speak. The PCs may misunderstand and attack, but the ghost will stay out of range and do its best to communicate. The PCs must find a way to learn the message (charades, lip-reading, etc.).
- The ghost wants the PCs to unearth a recent grave on the hill. Several graves exist for a couple of families. The hill overlooks 3 or 4 farms.
- Upon seeing lights or hearing noises, the farmer and his nearly adult son investigate with pitchforks. They don't want the daughter's grave disturbed.
- The ghost is insistent, and somehow conveys that the daughter is not dead.
- If dug up, the daughter took a poison, but not enough. She can be revived. The ghost is her true love who could not rest if the daughter were to give up her life.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The daughter needs a better reason to live or else she'll try this again.
- Does the ghost have anything else to fix?

THE WAGES OF SIN 34

Lycanthropy, Curse, Village, Wilderness

A vengeful and dying elf druid has cursed the land, and the people there are being turned into monsters.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A request is posted to find and kill a monster in the area, without revealing its source.
- The PCs come to the region looking for someone for an unrelated quest.

Encounters:

- The PCs find a tiny hamlet full of corpses, with three or four ghoul-like creatures wandering around.
- A village has been killing anyone who shows monster traits, and it mistakes the PCs for infected people.
- All of the loggers along one river have turned into boar-people, and are attacking travelers.
- The PCs discover that the curse lies in the ground, and spreads through eating local plants and animals.
- The mayor of a town begs the PCs to help her convince her people to flee, but they are stubborn and won't abandon their land.
- A mountain town wants to flee, but spider-creatures in the woods are eating anyone who tries.
- The druid refuses to lift the curse, as he won't be able to protect the forests. His death will seal it forever.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Refugees from the area strain surrounding towns.
- A dark cult begins deliberately living in the land, treating its transformations as holy.



HUNTING THE RIPPER

37

Mystery, Dark Forces, City

A friend of the PCs is accused of a murder, but a similar murder occurs while he is in custody. He will still be held until fully cleared. Each encounter below is another crime in the spree with a new clue. The quicker the PCs solve it, the fewer the victims.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs investigate on behalf of their friend.
- The victim was also known to the PCs giving them another reason to investigate.

Encounters:

- A new victim with the same wound and found in the same part of town narrows the killer down to someone in that section of town because guards were already stationed on major roads.
- A ceremonial knife of a particular temple was dropped adjacent to the next victim during the struggle.
- About half the temple has an alibi for the next murder. They were on a pilgrimage a day away.
- During the next murder, another large group of temple members was meeting together.
- The killer of the next victim wore an ornate robe.
- The killer turns out to be the second highest ranking priest, who was promised a higher position by dark forces.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The authorities wish to take the killer into custody, but the high priest says it is a church matter.

THE SOUND OF BELLS

36

Mind-Control, Devils, Temple

A temple is secretly run by a devil, who has cursed its bells to drown out the consciences of those who hear it, causing them to fall into a trance in which they act out their worst impulses and then wake with no memory of their sins.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A man is on trial for murdering a neighbor, and begs the PCs to clear his name.
- One PC is part of the temple and is asked to stop by and check on the new acolytes.

Encounters:

- The guard at the town gates harasses and attempts to beat up the PCs; when they meet him later, he doesn't remember them.
- When the PCs enter their inn, the innkeeper is beating a teenage waiter for stealing from the strongbox, which she is denying.
- The temple acolytes are all having terrible dreams of lust and violence, and have mysterious bruises.
- The devil is trying to organize a town-wide prayer session – he hopes to instill horrible thoughts through his speech, and then create an orgy of murder and depravity.
- The devil tries to use the bell to turn the PCs against each other and conceal his crimes.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Who summoned the devil, and what was their goal?

THE PRICE OF YOUTH

39

Cult, Addiction, Temple

Children in town have gone missing. A new cult has begun selling an anti-aging drug. It works wonders, but is addictive and expensive. When someone can't pay, they must help capture a child-relative to supply the special ingredient of the next batch.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A child tells the PCs a friend is missing.
- The PCs notice missing persons ads at the town hall. Although fairly new, most have been torn down.

Encounters:

- The parents of any missing child they hear about don't want the PCs involved.
- The PCs notice a strange symbol at the house of any missing child they visit.
- One missing child's house doesn't have the symbol. If they ask there, the PCs learn the symbol represents a new cult, located at a once-abandoned temple. If the PCs ask others, they find out the same info but they will be ambushed by thugs a short time later.
- Abducting and torturing or mind-reading a cultist will reveal the secret ingredient.
- The PCs must find a way to take out the cult from within or without.
- In a temple secret chamber, a child is seen being magically aged while their energy is captured in a jar.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The cult is already popular in several larger cities.

BLOOD IS THICKER

38

Mystery, Graveyard, Transformed, Village

A grieving father is keeping his daughter, a transformed ghoul, in his basement, and finding victims for her as he searches for a cure.

Getting the PCs Involved:

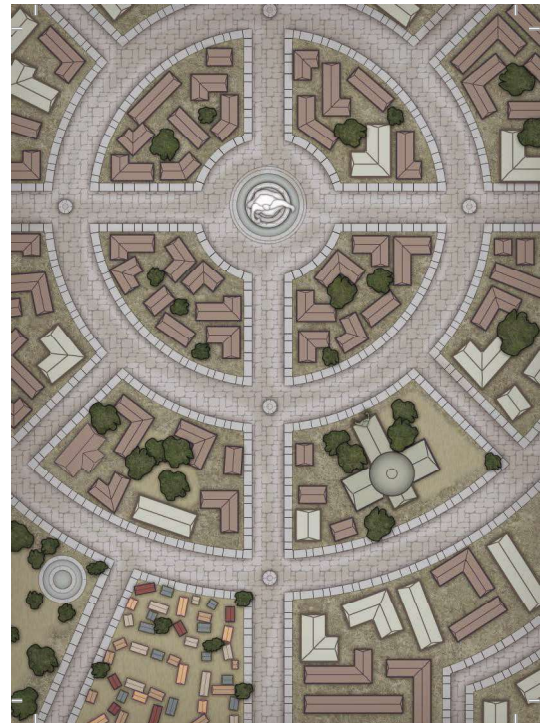
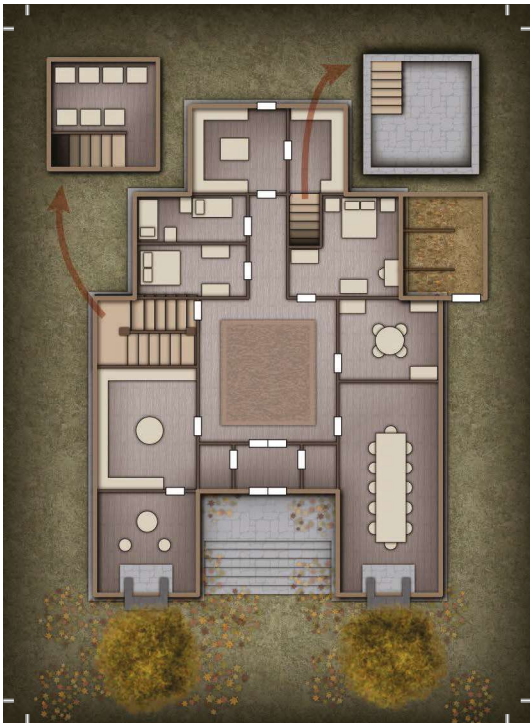
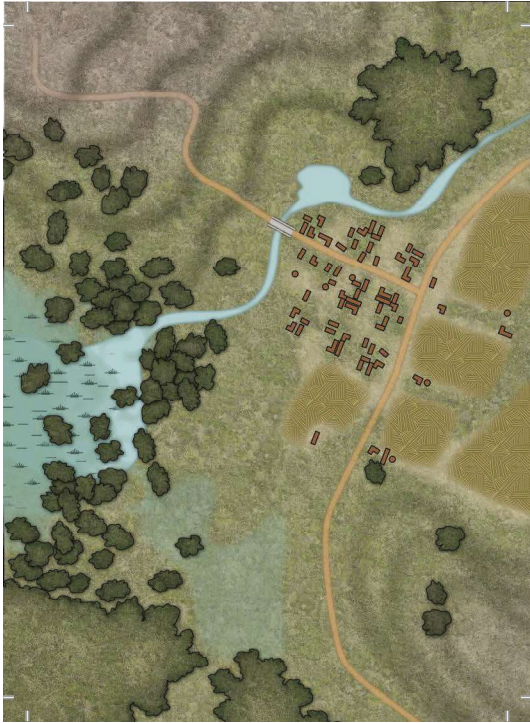
- A traveling peddler hasn't arrived at his destination, and the PCs are asked to find him.
- The PCs are hired to deliver a tome of spells to the innkeeper of a farming village.

Encounters:

- The PCs visit with the local guard, who are dismissive about missing travelers.
- The last two times someone in town died, someone has dug up the bodies; visiting the graveyard reveals tainted earth and unleashes a magic trap that animates the undead to attack the PCs.
- Following a lead, the PCs track through the wood and find human bones that have been gnawed on.
- A merchant arrives with a sealed package for the innkeeper. It contains holy symbols and a supposed relic with no power.
- The innkeeper reveals himself as a minor wizard and tries to kill one of the PCs to feed the ghoul.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Another ghoul is discovered in the same town. Who is creating them, and why?
- One of the people killed by the ghoul returns as an angry ghost, lashing out at the entire town.



NEEDED REST

41

Undead, Ceremony, Trap, Church

A small church appears just when needed, but it isn't what it seems.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are traveling and the small church is a perfect and free place to rest.
- Injured and depleted, the party assumes they can get help at this church.

Encounters:

- From the outside, the church seems decked out with all the appropriate symbols of a benevolent god.
- At the door, the PCs are greeted by the head priest who invites them inside.
- In the main worship area, several church members are praying. In reality, they are disguised undead. The priest explains it is a high holy day, where members are expected to pray throughout the night.
- If a PC needs healing, the priest explains most of his prayers were spent for ceremonies. Until tomorrow, he only has a couple of minor healing spells.
- A couple of lower level priests are spotted by the PCs as they sit with members for a few minutes at a time.
- Soon after midnight, when the PCs are mostly asleep, the undead (priests and members) kick off the holy feast—with the PCs!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Did the church magically transport the PCs to some other location or plane?

COLD HEARTS

40

Vermin, Shaman, Town

An orc shaman has cast a spell of hatred to command every insect and reptile in the area, using them to attack human settlements.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are hired by a town to save it from vermin.
- All the PCs' supplies are ruined by insects, forcing them to go to town for supplies.

Encounters:

- A town is overrun with locusts, who devour the fields and fly at the eyes and throats of anyone outside.
- A massive plague of terrified rats flees from hissing cockroaches who have taken up residence and are biting townsfolk. The rats scratch and bite in their desperation to escape.
- A pair of crocodiles have swum from the swamp, and kill anyone who approaches one road out of town.
- A gang of orc raiders loot a farm and try to kill the farmers, while mosquitoes swarm and drain anyone who tries to help. The insects ignore the orcs.
- The road up into the mountains swarms with snakes.
- The shaman lives in a cave filled with spiders, which attempt to cover and web anyone who enters.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The jewel that allowed the spell to be cast can't be broken, or the spell will return. It needs to be taken somewhere to be ritually purified.

STRANGE GIFT

43

Artifact, Undead, Necromancer, Town

An eccentric wizard has donated a statue to the town. It is corrupting residents in an ever-expanding circle.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A divinely attuned PC feels something odd in the area of the circle.
- The PCs notice a section of town is strangely quiet: No one is on the streets, people keep to themselves too much, etc.

Encounters:

- The PCs might notice that the area is roughly circular and centered at the location of the new statue.
- Or they may look into what is new or different about the area and learn of the statue's recent dedication.
- Each day, the area in the circle grows. The radius expands by a town/city block during the night.
- If the PCs go to the mayor or town council, the leaders don't want to believe the PCs. A large financial gift came with the statue and it must be returned if the statue is moved or damaged.
- The wizard scrys through the statue. If he sees it is about to be destroyed, he will transform all who have spent 24 hours in the circle into undead to defend it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why did the eccentric wizard want to turn the town into undead?

THE LICH HOUSE

42

Necromancy, Traps, Manor

A necromancer has kidnapped a local princess as bait to draw heroes into a trap-filled manor, needing their blood to transform into a lich.

Getting the PCs Involved:

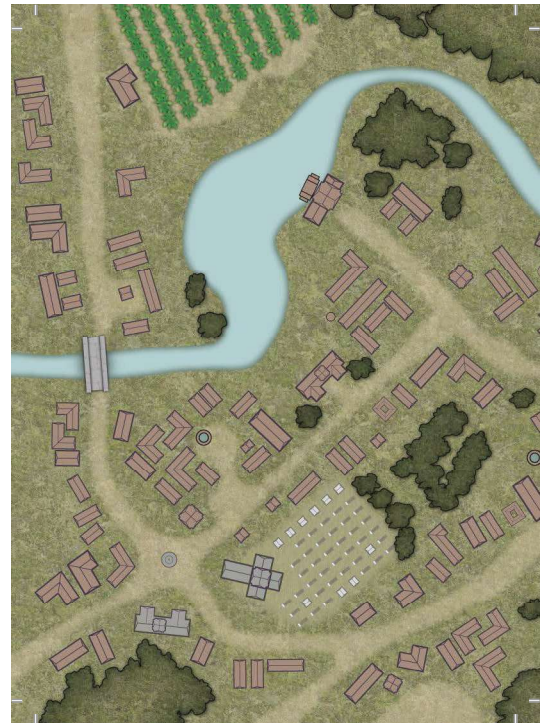
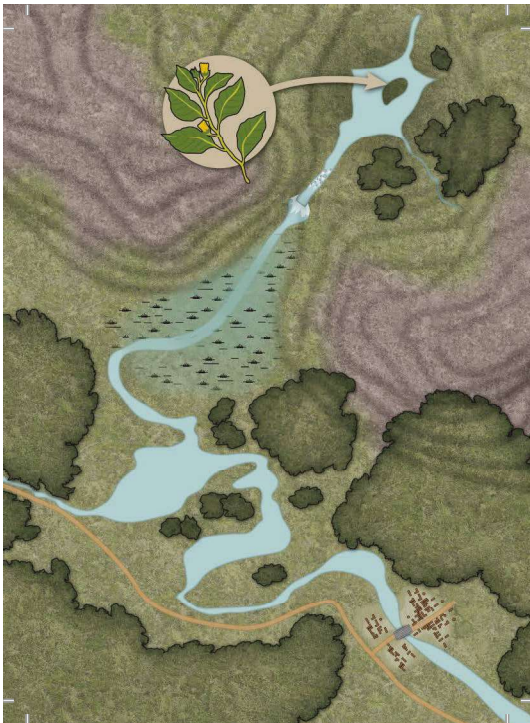
- The PCs are hired by the princess's father, as his own soldiers were beaten soundly.
- The PCs are passing through and hear about the kidnapping from frightened villagers.

Encounters:

- A butler in the front hall explains that the manor's servants were dominated into obedience. He then tries ineptly to kill them.
- The kitchen explodes into flame, and the staff try to keep the PCs inside even as they begin to burn.
- Maids, cleaning around tripwires, try to shove the PCs into them while also begging for help.
- The stables contain maddened zombie horses and an enthralled groom.
- A stairwell is occupied by an invisible ooze.
- The necromancer is in the cellar, behind a ward that uses the life energy of any servants still in the manor to remain impregnable.
- The necromancer is revealed to be working with the princess – both intend to become liches.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The king doesn't believe the PCs, and hires bounty hunters to catch them.



UNDEATH

45

Necromancer, Undead, Graveyard, Asteroid Strike

An asteroid strikes near the graveyard. It “resurrected” the bodies there. Actually, a necromancer was animating the bodies for his army, but the gods sent the asteroid to wipe him out—they missed.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Many people in town who are still awake spot or hear the asteroid as it strikes near midnight. Some people wake others and they investigate.
- The PCs may already be on the scene attempting to thwart the necromancer.

Encounters:

- Was the necromancer struck by the asteroid (but not the cemetery’s residents) or did it miss everyone? If not, the biggest threat is the necromancer.
- The unearthed bodies don’t look decayed. Residents recognize loved ones and don’t want them harmed.
- The necromancer (if still alive) will be directing the bodies to come with him. If the PCs are fighting him, they will attack anyone attacking the necromancer.
- Once the necromancer is defeated, the bodies seem normal and want to pursue normal lives.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Of course, the bodies can’t pursue normal lives. At some point, another force will take control of them.
- There will be more subtle complications: Where will these people live? What about their belongings?

IGNORANCE IS BLISS

44

Demon, Deception, Mob, Town

A demon is trying to redeem herself, but her cast-off sins are turning an innocent into a demon in her place.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are hired by the family of the innocent to discover who is corrupting their relative.
- The PCs are hired by someone suspicious of the mysterious woman who just moved into the area.

Encounters:

- The cursed person is screaming in a demonic tongue, and speaks the demon’s name, letting the PCs research her.
- The demon realizes that the PCs are looking into her and uses illusions to try to trick them into accepting another job and leaving town.
- The PCs see the disguised demon feeding the poor, and the cursed person summons imps to attack her.
- A mob attacks the demon and, when she refuses to fight back, the cursed person transforms into a monster and attacks them. If badly injured, the monster reverts.
- The demon realizes what is going on and asks the PCs to kill her to prevent the curse from spreading – but that sacrifice would complete her redemption and transform the cursed person forever.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Can the PCs find a way to redeem a demon without its evil leeching into everyone around it?

LOVE BITES

47

Undead, Unconventional, Town

A powerful vampire has set his sights on a PC and wants him or her to willingly become a vampire.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Travelers begin recognizing the PCs’ names and saying someone was asking about them.
- The PCs unknowingly “saved” the vampire.

Encounters:

- The vampire isolates and charms one or two PCs, instructing them to find him reasonable and pleasant.
- The vampire enthralls a group of ragged bandits into attacking the PCs—then swoops in to rescue them.
- The vampire tempts the victim with all the ways in which his or her powers could help save people, then leaves the victim to think it over.
- The PCs encounter a town menaced by another vampire, who lost his mind and butchered his family after turning.
- The vampire murders an enemy of the PCs, then delivers the corpse to the victim as a present.
- The vampire secretly hires mercenaries to injure the victim badly enough that he or she will have no choice but to accept being turned.
- The vampire tries to pressure the victim into joining him by threatening his or her family or loved ones.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The vampire’s previous victim, now a powerful vampire herself, comes after the PCs for revenge.

CURE FOR WERE-BEAST BLUES

46

Lycanthropy, Townsfolk, Quest, Wilderness

A friend of the PCs is a were-creature and needs help ridding himself of the curse.

Getting the PCs Involved:

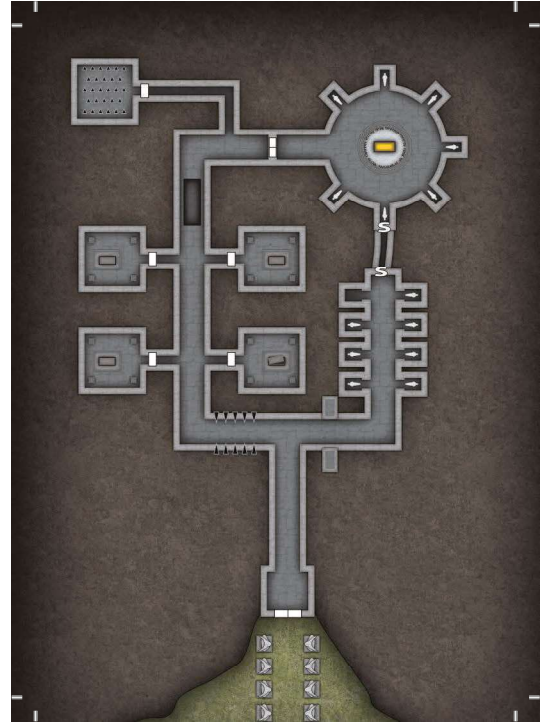
- The friend confides his condition to the PCs.
- The first encounter below occurs suddenly.

Encounters:

- While gathered at an inn or some other social event, a storm ends early revealing the full moon. The cursed friend transforms into a werewolf. He must be subdued.
- Townsfolk come to his house and want to put an end to the curse—and his life.
- A simple spell to cure curses isn’t powerful enough. He has had the condition too long. He must drink a potion made from belladonna.
- The PCs must find someone who knows where it exists or research its location.
- Several random encounters or another sidequest occur while searching for the belladonna. The friend must be kept safe from townsfolk, or safe while with the PCs, as they seek it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Belladonna is a poison... did the cure kill their friend?
- How was the friend infected?



TO FULFILL THE PROPHECY?

49

Curse, Quest, Tomb, Trap

A magical item the PCs have gives them visions. If fulfilled, it will curse the land.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The item is found after defeating a major foe.
- The item tricks someone else into entrusting the more capable PCs with fulfilling the prophecy.

Encounters:

- The item has ancient runes that state if it isn't returned to the tomb of a specific ancient pharaoh by a particular year, everlasting night will occur.
- Researching the year in the runes reveals it to be next month! (The culture that created it used a different calendar.)
- If the PCs require more incentive, the item is able to create realistic illusions of experts or anything it thinks would help.
- Even if the PCs consult someone who discerns the item's true nature, the device can make the PCs hear what it wants them to hear.
- The tomb contains traps and undead guardians. But it wants them to return the device, so the defenses are relatively easy.
- The tomb has several carvings of the end of the world. The event seems to be shiped.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If "successful" the PCs have an even bigger quest ahead of them!

BREAKOUT EXPERIMENT

48

Wizard, Experiments, Creatures, Tower

A wizard has been working on making human/animal hybrids. They're getting out of control.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs have captured creatures for the collector before and are looking for a new commission.
- While traveling, the PCs are ambushed by a human/animal hybrid. It tells them of unspeakable experiments or they follow its tracks.

Encounters:

- If asked what happens to the captured creatures, the wizard says they are used for spell components. It is a shame he must kill the animals, but it serves the greater purpose.
- An animal gets loose while the PCs are visiting. The wizard is adamant it be captured again, not killed.
- A PC with nature or divine attunement feels something is wrong. The PC later gets some mental images of evil, arcane experiments.
- A mass breakout occurs if the PCs haven't yet intervened. One escapee releases many others.
- The PCs must prove to the hybrids that they have good morals or be attacked.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Where will the hybrids live? They are no longer human or animal.
- Does any other wizard have this wizard's notes? Were there collaborators?

WEIRD WATER

51

Fiend, Mystery, Possessed, Village

Fiends have infiltrated the village's well.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are staying the night in the village on the way to a greater adventure.
- A divinely attuned PC has detected a powerful fiend in the area and knows it is in this particular village.

Encounters:

- Everyone who has drunk water from the well is possessed. That may be a few residents or many.
- The possessed try to get people to drink water without being obvious.
- The PCs may use some divine sense to determine if anyone is possessed or evil.
- Via divine or arcane research, the party knows the people can be saved if not slain.
- The PCs can research a ritual to rid the area of the fiends, or try to slay the leader, releasing the others.
- The leader avoids suspicion. Later he trips himself up in unnecessary anger when interacting with the PCs.
- Others will come to the leaders' defense if attacked.
- If the PCs begin a purification ritual, but corrupted villagers interrupt it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- How was the leader infected?
- The water must also be purified before anyone can drink.

AN UNEARTHLY FROST

50

Spirits, Mystery, Area

An unnatural winter has descended on the region in the middle of summer, and everything is dying.

Getting the PCs Involved:

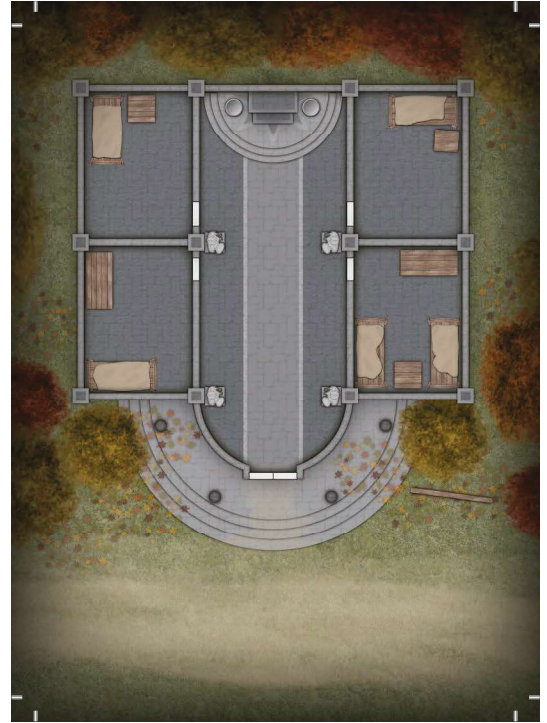
- The PCs are traveling into the area, but heavy snowfall prevents them from leaving.
- The PCs are called into the area by a friend who believes that they can help.

Encounters:

- The PCs are attacked by a pack of confused and starving wolves.
- The local towns are full of starving peasants, who beg the PCs for food and help.
- Icy ghosts rise out of the frozen river and try to tear the PCs apart.
- The PCs learn that the local priest was burned alive in his temple after the town discovered he was sacrificing young people to the river.
- The PCs find the former river spirits in the priest's temple, using the remnants of his artifacts and the souls of his victims to empower themselves and send frost out over the land.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- With the river spirits gone, a hot drought settles over the land, ruining what remains of the crops. Can the balance be restored?
- A cult ships in food to help with the famine, but demands strange oaths of those who wish to eat.



SLEEP TIGHT

53

Suspense, Fiend, Wilderness, Shrine

A fiend has taken control of an old roadside five-room shrine. It stalks those who camp there.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are seeking a place to spend the night when they spot the shrine.
- A friend or group of friends went missing in the area, and the PCs are attempting to find them.

Encounters:

- It is already dusk, so it is hard to see details of the shrine without methodically walking every inch.
- There is a chance a PC (especially a religious one, and/or one who knows something about the shrine) can tell something is not right.
- The fiend is able to squeeze through small spaces (slits under doors, slightly open windows, larger cracks in walls, etc.) It watches the PCs, waiting for one or two to split off.
- It doesn't kill immediately because it needs bodies to implant eggs. If successful, hosts are also subject to limited mind control. (They deny they are infected, say they feel fine, allow the fiend to infect a companion if on watch, etc.)
- It tries to implant all the PCs, if possible. In the morning they "hatch".

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The shrine must be reconsecrated or the fiend may come back.

SPIDER ROT

52

Disease, Mystery, Town

A mystical plague, which spreads via spores that hatch into spiders, is ravaging the area.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are caravan guards, and their caravan is detained at the town's entrance on suspicion of spreading the disease.
- The PCs arrive in town just before the army arrives to quarantine it to prevent the plague from spreading.

Encounters:

- A small mob attacks a group of merchants, accusing them of using sorcery to create the disease.
- Several infected people burst open at the local temple, and spider swarms attack the healers.
- The local sage's tower is a spider nest. The sage who lived there discovered the spiders were spreading from mushroom spores brought by the merchants.
- Guards ask for help blockading the caravan grounds, which have been overrun by spiders.
- The spider-mushrooms are at the heart of the caravan grounds, and the healers need them to develop poisons that will only kill the spider spores.
- The PCs must help keep the local healers alive while they develop the cure.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The mushrooms came in ores from the mountains.
- A nearby lord tries to buy the remaining mushrooms to use as a weapon of war.

DREAMING REALITY

54

Curse, Poison, Disease, Demons

A PC's nightmares become reality.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A PC is overcome by an unusual poison which prevents a restful sleep.
- A vengeful foe with its dying breath curses a PC to never sleep peacefully again.

Encounters:

- The afflicted PC has horrible nightmares whenever he or she sleeps. The sleep is never truly restful.
- After 2-3 days, the PC is ready to do anything to get a restful night's sleep. Fatigue will affect the afflicted PC.
- The PCs may be able to research a cure in a town library, visit a sage, or otherwise learn of some steps to mitigate the poison/curse.
- The initial steps taken don't cure the poison or curse immediately. Instead, the nightmares manifest as various demons or outsiders or evil beasts attacking the PCs.
- Only after all the foes are defeated can the PC rest comfortably and recover from the effects of the fatigue.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If the cause was a curse, the party may want to discover the source of the curse.
- If the cause was poison, the PCs may want to develop a better antidote.