

The Zombraire's Estate

by Russ Westbrook

A Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game Adventure

Release 1

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Introduction

This adventure module, part of the Adventure Anthologies series, is for use with the **Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game** rules, and is intended for 3-6 characters of levels 2-5. If you don't have the Basic Fantasy RPG core rules, please visit www.basicfantasy.org and download a free copy.

Background

Long ages ago, when the village near the marsh was settled (on order of the king, being all villagers were disgraced and exiled refugees), a family of Magic Users known as the Wrenwalds served as the settlement's overlords. The Wrenwalds weren't particularly good or kind, but they did protect the villagers from the ravages of the marsh's beasts, and as long as the heavy and oppressive taxes rolled in, nobody died from Magic Missile. One day in the reign of Lord Justin Wrenwald III however, this all came to an end. One night while the family reveled with friends, the Swamp Witch Julieann demanded entrance as an honored guest. Seeing the ugly Hag (and fearing not the stories of her horrible power) the lord laughed in her face and ordered her put off the grounds. For this insult the Swamp Hag cursed the family, and horrible magics rose from Dark Realms. Many simply died; others transformed into living death, and the very estate itself took on the taint of Evil. A few villagers who served on the grounds escaped to the village to tell the awful tale, and since that night the villagers have avoided the grounds like the plague. It is said the ghosts of the dead still haunt the grounds, and the sounds of life can be heard from within, but that if anyone goes there, they never return. The current governor has done nothing to alleviate the people's fear of the old ruin, and has decreed that anyone going to the ruins and not returning shall be deemed a suicide.

Plot Hooks

1. All their lives the young PCs have been warned about the haunted estate, and strictly forbidden to ever go there. The family farm is threatened by the looming prospect of yet another bad crop and back taxes. Maybe the PCs could save their

parents land if they snuck into the haunted ruins? After all, one of their friends swears blind that the old estate's hen house still functions, and more than that, the chickens lay golden eggs! Could this rumor be true?

2. For whatever reason, the party is in the debt of the nearby assassin's guild. To pay off the debt, the assassins "offer" them a job: they want a pail of milk from the ghost's dairy. They don't say why, and they don't like questions, but they expect to meet the PCs in two days time with the goods being in hand.

3. The local healer can't cure a noted villager who is dying of an ugly disease. The man is considered saintly in the village, and many will mourn greatly his death. Rather than accept defeat, the healer hires the party to go to the graveyard of the old ruins; according to legend, Lord Wrenwald II was a great healer himself, and was buried with a powerful staff which might save the victim. Unfortunately, time has washed all the markings off the sarcophagi, and the area is known to be haunted; but for 50 gp. apiece maybe the PCs would do this for the good of the village?

4. The Swamp Hag Julieann has taken children from the village. When the elders sent a delegation to her cave to ask why and to beg their return, Julieann replied that the ghost of Lord Wrenwald III sent agents (his trained stirges, though she doesn't tell them that) to steal a golden staff from her he knew she held in sentimental value. Julieann wants the petty villagers to get it back for her, if they want to see their precious children again. As it was the Swamp Hag which cursed the manor in the first place, maybe the men of the village would be better off challenging the "ghost" rather than the witch...

5. The PC's religious, clerical or paladinic order have had enough of Wrenwald for whatever reason, and its time for this shrine of evil and all its foul inhabitants to go! Sic em' boys!

Area Key

1. The road to the estate is rutted and grownup, with little sign of traffic. It is three miles to the abandoned property through a light woods, which become more unhealthy looking and dead the closer one comes to the ruin and strays from the village. The last mile of the trek is marshy, with the accompanying problem of biting insects. Sick looking black birds live in the trees near the estate, and eye the party hungrily. Near the ruins itself the trail splits, with a smaller path leading deeper into the bog around behind the estate, ending at the iron gate of the holding's ancient cemetery.

2. The road ends in a gap in the estate's walls, where a dirty circle shows the former entrance. An old cart rests in the circle, and the bones of three dead men lay at twisted angles about the cart, along with a dead mule. From the looks of their clothing and the moldered remains in the cart, they were some kind of cloth merchants. When the party draws near, they animate and attack. The three human skeletons have dirty staves.

3 Skeletons: AC 13, half damage from edged weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 1, #At 1, Dam 1d6, Mv 40', Sv F1, MI 12

HP 4 4 P ' 4 4 4
4 4 44

1 Skeletal Mule: AC 13, half damage from edged weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 2, #At 1, Dam 1d6, Mv 40', Sv F2, MI 12

HP 12 1 2 ,1 2 , 2 2

3. This stone wall surrounds the property, and while old and moss-covered, it appears relatively intact. It rises to 15 feet in height, and a ladder in the northwest corner gives access to its crenelated battlements. Bric-a-brac litter this walkway, as well as an occasional skeletal arm or skull.

4. This garden is a horrifying sight to behold. The plants here are being tended by 7 zombies- 4 female, 1 male, and 2 children- who will shamle over towards any living beings they see (and they are capable of seeing most of the courtyard) and attack. They have old rusty hoes. The plants are growing, but they are dead- undead plants growing from the ground growing rotten fruit. Flies buzz all about this ever putrefying yet ever growing mass of tangled plant "life", and the smell of rottenness permeates the whole of the property. Anyone foolish enough to eat of this undead growth must save vs. Poison or die, and rise as a zombie under the Zombraire's control the next day.

7 Zombies: AC 12, half damage from blunt weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 2, #At 1, Dam 1d8, Mv 20', Sv F1, MI 12, always lose initiative in combat

HP 10 1 0 w 0 w a
10 1 0 0
10 1 0 0
10 1 0 0
10 1 0 0
10 1 0 0
10 1 0 0

Any battle here which is excessively loud, in the GM's opinion, will be heard by the Zombraire at Area 8 (e4). He will be annoyed, and release the Stirges at Area 8 (e3) to deal with his unwanted guests; these will descend from the manor and aid the zombies. If this occurs, the Zombraire will not be surprised by the party later on.

5. This stone well gives off a foul stench, and anyone who uses its bucket and wench to draw liquid from it will find it to be a putrefied sludge. Anyone foolish enough to ingest such a revolting sludge suffers a level drain as if touched by a wraith, and if slain by this returns as one the next night. Leaning against the well is a skeleton in rusty chain armor with a rusty sword and broken spear. A short sword pierces his breast. The short sword looks old and dirty, but is actually a magical **shortsword +1, +2 vs. elves and fairies**.

6. This is an old stone barn with rotten wooden double doors. The thatched roof of the barn is rotted through in many places, and hordes of

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mice play here and there. The floor is of packed earth, and the walls hold pegs with many and various farm implements- none of any value or worth anymore except maybe to be grabbed and used as a makeshift club. In the southwest corner of the barn, there are piles upon piles of dead looking seeds of many and various types: These seeds are in fact undead, and when sown upon the estate grounds can grow dead and decaying vegetable unlife such as in the garden at area 4. These piles magically regenerate slowly due to the curse upon this place; they will never run out. If the seeds are taken from the estate, they turn to dust; however, if buckets of this dust are liberally sown onto healthy crops, it will kill them and render them undead like in area 4, and capable of producing zombies. Anyone ingesting these seeds must save vs. poison or die, and the next day raise as a zombie under the Zombraire's control.

In the northwest corner of this building a moldering stack of ruined hay sits with a pitchfork stuck in it. The "pitchfork" is actually a **trident +1** (treat as a spear), but its head cannot be clearly seen in the hay. The pile is infested with several colonies of rot grubs (a total of 16 of the little wiggles live in the pile), and anyone touching the hay has a 35% chance per round to encounter 1d3 of the little monsters.

16 Rot Grubs: AC 11, HD 1 hp, #At 1, Dam death in 1d4 turns unless flame or cure is applied, Mv 10', Sv F1, MI 12 (*note: each checkbox below represent one grub*)

HP 16 11111

Five stalls fill out most of the building. These are made of rotten wood with decaying gates, and rise to 5 feet high with wide spaced slats. Each of these stalls has an undead cow in it; three are skeletal and two are zombies. These creatures will attack any living being which comes close to them, but won't attack until approached. The cow zombies still give milk- a grayish foul smelling liquid which if drunk drains a level like a wraith; anyone slain by this milk rises the next night as a wraith. Milking both of these cows are two female zombies each, who are collecting the milk into buckets. One of these buckets is silver, and worth 30 gp. Four other zombies, three men and a child,

mill about the barn. The formerly human zombies will drop what they are doing and attack any living being they perceive within the barn.

8 Zombies: AC 12, half damage from blunt weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 2, #At 1, Dam 1d8, Mv 20', Sv F1, MI 12, always lose initiative in combat

HP	10	1	0	W	0	W	A
	10	1	0		0		
	10	1	0		0		
	10	1	0		0		
	10	1	0		0		
	10	1	0		0		
	10	1	0		0		
	10	1	0		0		

2 Zombie Cows: AC 13, half damage from blunt weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 3, #At 1, Dam 1d6, Mv 30', Sv F3, MI 12, always lose initiative in combat

HP	16	1	6	W	6	W	A	6	W	A
	16	1	6		6			6		

3 Skeletal Cows: AC 13, half damage from edged weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 2, #At 1, Dam 1d6, Mv 40', Sv F2, MI 12

HP	12	1	2		2		2
	12	1	2		2		2
	12	1	2		2		2

7. This pen is made up of a slatted three-foot high wooden fence which is well decayed, and the southern stone wall of the barn. A gate gives entrance, and within, a colony of 30 zombie chickens have their lair. A rotten wooden chicken coop stands in the southern area, and the chickens mill from within to the yard, with 3-30 being visible to the PCs at any one time. These foul undead aren't terribly aggressive, but they will move 5 feet or so to peck at any living being within reach. They WILL become aggressive however, if they perceive any living being enter the chicken coop. Within, there are 30 little nests, 14 of which have a varied number of highly smelly rotten eggs. In two of the other nests however, there are good-looking eggs (for a total of 6), and

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these are filled with liquid gold (worth 100 gp, each), a valuable but highly fragile treasure. These are pressed down in the straw and feathers however, and must be searched out.

30 Zombie Chickens: AC 12, half damage from blunt weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD ¼, #At 1, Dam 1, Mv 40', Sv F1, MI 12

(Note: These creatures do not automatically lose initiative. Due to their small size, they are turned as skeletons.)

HP	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2

8. This stone house must have had an elegance in former times, but now it sits forlorn with all its windows solidly boarded up. The windows beneath the boards are mere arrow slits anyway; even a skinny Halfling cannot fit through them. The DM can assume all the rooms have some, except for areas d & e (the lower level). The ceiling of thatch is well decayed, letting in the elements in many places. In the northeast corner, a high bell tower rises out of the structure, and the windows in the higher levels of this tower aren't boarded. The doors are of wet, moldy wood, and the floors within are of flagstone. Each room has sconces for torches, but these contain only burnt sticks from eras long ago. The ceiling is 8 feet high, except in area(s) "e", where the ceilings are 15 feet high.

8 a. This hall is dominated by two long mead tables with benches. A fireplace stands on the north wall, and tapestries in various states of decomposition hang from all the walls. On the east wall is a large and heavy portrait of three generations of the Wrenwald family in happy times which has escaped times ravages, and now would be worth 250 gp. Below this is a podium placed to address the tables, and on it is a brass gavel worth 15 gp. The skeletons of 15 people are splayed about this chamber, intermeshed with old filthy wooden goblets and plates and rusty knives. These corpses are merely dead; they do not rise. However, the chamber is haunted by a wraith. One round after the PCs enter this chamber, its maniacal laughter will be heard echoing throughout the stone room, and then the next round it will emerge from the fireplace and sweep about the chamber to attack, laughing all the while. If the fireplace is later searched, a ledge within will be found which houses a dwarf's skull set with two emeralds for eyes (worth 250 gp apiece).

Wraith: AC 16, magical weapons needed to hit, HD 4, #At 1, Dam 1d6 + level drain, Mv Fly 80', Sv F4, MI 12

HP	15	1	5	5	5
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8 b. This ancient kitchen was well equipped in its day, but now stone mills, cupboards, utensils and ovens are overrun with destroying mice, roaches, spiders, and other vermin. No matter how long they search, nothing of value will be found in this room.

8 c. This master bedchamber contains its own northern fireplace, a draped master bed, a writing table, a wardrobe, and a night table. All the furniture is in moderate condition, old, worn, and faded, but usable. On the writing table is a quill and ink, and five parchments. Three of these are uncompleted spells, but one is a Sleep scroll, and the other is a Shield scroll. A silver candlestick holder sits beside the parchments, worth 15 gp. A fancy pair of gnome-made spectacles are on the night table, worth 50 gp. The wardrobe contains faded garments from a long forgotten era, none of any value. This chamber is currently being cleaned by four skeletons dressed in tattered

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maid's outfits carrying filthy rags and feather dusters. These will attack any living beings they encounter.

4 Skeletons: AC 13, half damage from edged weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 1, #At 1, Dam 1d6, Mv 40', Sv F1, MI 12

HP	4	4	P	'		4	4	4
	4	4	P	'		4	4	P

8 d. This hidden chamber (accessible only via secret wall panels) is a mage's library. The walls are lined with shelves, and two tables with chairs sit in the midst of the chamber. Everything is coated in the dust of the ages, however; it appears this chamber hasn't seen guests in a very long time. On one of the tables a glittering crystal ball sits; it is however cracked, and totally devoid of magic or value. Hundreds of books line the shelves- unfortunately, should they be handled, they crumble to dust. Many of their faded titles look valuable and important, but their contents are now lost to history. There is a curse that remains however. Anyone who is not the Zombraire who touches one of these volumes must make a save Vs. spells, or suffer the curse of having their heads be remade as that of a donkey, and growing a donkey's tail as well!

8 e. This is another chamber accessible only via secret panel. This is the lowest chamber of a four-story tower, with a set of stone stairs running along its walls connecting its levels. The floors are of wood higher above, and each ceiling is 15 high. This level is a private commode, with a wooden structure over an out-pit. The chamber smells awful, yet the smell is old and musty with age. Laying on the wooden structure are a few (4) scrolls of esoteric philosophy written in the gnomish tongue, which might bring 15-25 gp. from the right collector. Within the ancient pit full of putrefying offal, 10 feet down, just the tip of something golden can be seen if a light is shown within. This is just the last tip of a finely carved staff of gold, worth 1000 gp. for its metal and artistry. This prize must somehow be worked up out of the sucking mire however, and therein lays danger. A slip could cause someone to fall in; and as such the muck works much like a quicksand. Those who fall in have only 3 rounds plus their Dex. modifier to be extracted, before they sink totally

(and most likely irretrievably). Also, the pit is home to 20 rot grubs, and 2-8 will swarm anyone who enters the mire. Anyone who merely places an appendage in the goo will be attacked by 1-3 of the deadly vermin.

20 Rot Grubs: AC 11, HD 1 hp, #At 1 bite, Dam death in 1-3 rounds unless grubs are destroyed, Mv 5', Sv F1, MI 12

Note: Each box below represents a single grub.

HP	20	2	0	e	0	0	0	0	f	0	f	e
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More detailed information about rot grubs can be found in the supplement "New Monsters" available on the basicfantasy.org website.

8 e2. This level contains a table and three rickety chairs, and a series of old rusty instruments for navigation. They are useless now, but speak of a time when this room must have seen much deliberation. The walls are covered with tattered yellowed maps of the world. Most of their information has faded away, but what secrets they must once have held! Nothing of value is in this room. The windows of this chamber are open to the outside.

8 e3. This room was obviously an alchemist laboratory once, but the tables are broken and overturned, and almost all the glass work is broken. Interesting stains and acid burns can be seen here and there. A very large bird cage sits in the middle of this chamber; it is the home of a flock of seven stirges the Zombraire keeps as trained pets. They can deliver messages for him, and serve as his spies, for one of the dark gifts the Zombraire possesses is that in ancient times past dark forces gave him to understand the chattering of stirges and to be able to speak to them in a rudimentary fashion. The cage isn't locked. The stirges will attack if the cage is opened. They will also squawk loudly upon the entrance of any intruders (alerting the Zombraire above), and will not simply be fish in a barrel to be killed; anyone who tries to skewer them with anything short of a spear will also be open for a counter swipe with their proboscis.

Buried in the debris are 3 potions, well buried and hidden. These concoctions are hardly treasures however; they have been left here for invaders to

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find. They are pink, green, and purple liquids, and each if ingested requires a save vs. Spells or the drinker suffers a curse. The pink potion causes Wererat lycanthropy (to be discovered at the next full moon). The green potion causes a chronic gastro-intestinal disease. The purple potion causes to drinker to age 20 years.

7 Stirges: AC 13, HD 1*, #At 1 bite, Dam 1d4 + 1d4/round blood drain, Mv 10' Fly 60', Sv F1, MI 9

HP	5	5	P	5	5	P	'5
	5	5	P	5	5	P	'5
	5	5	P	5	5	P	'5
	5	5	P				

8 e4. This room is where the Zombraire which was Justin Wrenwald III will be found (this is the "ghost" all the villagers fear). Two very large windows open to the north and east, but this cannot be seen because a permanent illusion spell hides the existence of any windows on this level at all. The roof here rots like everywhere else in the forsaken house. Inside is a telescope (quite bulky, but worth 2000 gp. to a sage or other knowledgeable type), a table covered with parchments with scrawled astrological notes and mystic symbols, a umbrella case full of rusty implements of torture, and manacles hanging from the rafters which could imprison up to four occupants (the Zombraire has the keys on his belt). Lord Wrenwald may speak to the party, but he will never surrender, and will fight intelligently to the death. Hidden in the rafters (found as a secret door) is the Zombraire's spell book, which contains Magic Missile, Floating Disk, Protection from Good, and Continual Light.

1 Zombraire: AC 14, half damage from blunt weapons, 1 pt. per hit from arrows, bolts, or sling stones, HD 3, #At 1, Dam 1d8, Mv 20', Sv M2, MI 10

Spells: **magic missile, protection from good, mirror image**

Items: **wand of illusion** (7 charges), ring of keys, ruby **ring of protection +2**

HP 18 1 **g** 8n **g** 8n **g** 8n

9. This area is a graveyard surrounded by a wrought iron fence. The gate is padlocked with a rusty (but sturdy) padlock and chain, and all

within is swamp. The actual bounds of the graveyard go off the map, and the leaning, fallen, and broken tombstones account for nearly 40 graves within. Here and there a coffin has resurfaced, and shows signs of having been chewed into. Nothing of value lays within the common graves. There are three above ground vaults however. These would require breaking into using 60+ Str. points and crowbars, but they do contain things of interest. These are labeled and detailed below.

A warren of giant rats honeycombs the swampy ground here. Each place an "x" marks the map, there is a concealed warren entrance. These tunnels are too small for even a Halfling to fit into, but they contain twenty-six giant rats. Any loud noise or strenuous activity will bring 1-6 of the critters from random tunnels to investigate, and the monsters are hungry. If this leads to further noise, it will also lead to further rats..... If the party makes a HUGE amount of noise here, the Zombraire will spot them, and send his flock of stirges to deal with trespassers as well (see areas e3 & 4).

26 Giant Rats: AC 13, HD 1½, #At 1 bite, Dam 1d4 + disease, Mv 40' Swim 20', Sv F1, MI 8

HP	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
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	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

9 a. This stone chamber contains the remains of a male and female, dressed in ancient apparel. The woman's jewelry is worth 700 gp.

9 b. This stone chamber contains the remains of a male and female, also dressed in ancient regalia. The male holds a Staff of Curing (with 9 charges

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left), while the female's jewelry is worth 400 gp. Both are coffer corpses however, and will spring to life if they or their property is disturbed.

2 Coffer Corpse: (AC: 8/hit only by +1 or better MV: 6 HD: 2 HP: 8 each #ATT: 1 DAM: 1d6, +1d6 strangulation each round thereafter Source: FF)

9 c. This chamber contains the body of a woman. She is dressed regally, but has no treasure. Trapped within the stone box however is a shadow, which will attack its liberators, surprising on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6.

Shadow: AC 13, +1 or better weapon to hit, HD 2*, #At 1 touch, Dam 1d4 + 1 pt. Strength loss, Mv 30', Sv F2, MI 12

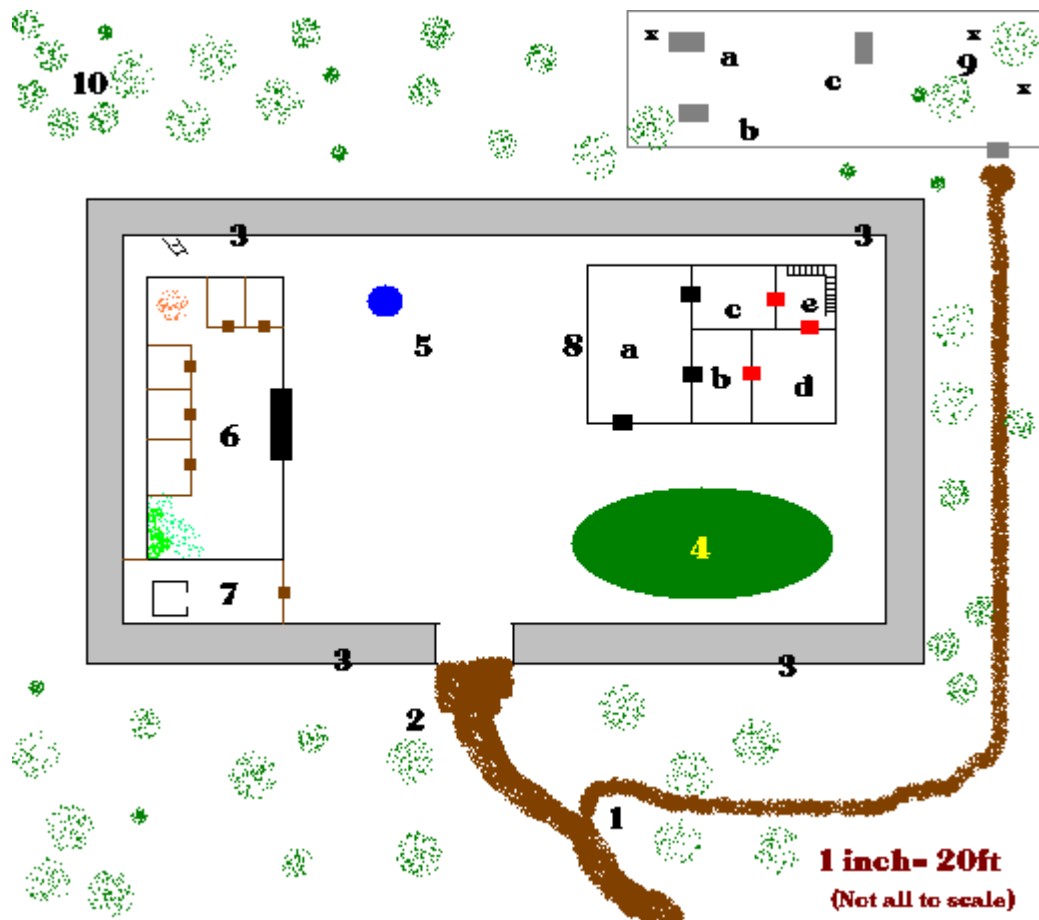
HP 8 8 88 P

10. At this point in the swamp, a forlorn Dryad-Tree stands. The curse on the area hangs over the tree, and the dryad within is effected by the curse so that she is slowly turning to evil, although she is fighting the change. Her name is Luacia, and if she discovers the presence of the PCs, she will send a raven to summon them so she can beg them to slay all the undead and so set her free from the curse (at least she believes this will end the curse; whether it will or not is up to the GM). Luacia is able to cast spells as a 3rd level cleric, and is prepared to cast one **cure light wounds** and one **bless**. She will offer her help if the party will promise to destroy all the foul walking dead (although she will not leave her tree area). She will seem beautiful, yet cold and vindictive. She possesses no treasure.

Dryad: AC 15, HD 2*, #At 1, Dam 1d4 or charm, Mv 40', Sv M4, MI 6

HP 7 7 77 P

Map



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