

Quests of Doom 4

Forgive and Regret

By Tom Knauss



FROG GOD
GAMES

Quests of Doom 4

Forgive and Regret

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Table of Contents

Credits	p. I
Forgive and Regret	p. 4
Map Appendix	p. I6
Legal Appendix	p. I8

Forgive and Regret

Forgive and Regret is an 8th-level adventure about unintended consequences. The sins that stained the blighted Wytch Bog more than two centuries ago still linger as the villain who perpetrated a genocidal act longs to free his tortured soul from his undead bonds. In his warped mind, only more violence can garner his freedom, placing the innocent descendants of his long-deceased conspirators — and an entire region — in his crosshairs.

Adventure Background

The wandering folk known as the Viroeni seldom find a warm welcome anywhere they go. Gypsies, vagabonds, thieves, and worse are the epithets hurled at them as they make their way in their endless travels, never stopping anywhere for long. The Viroeni earn a meager living working as tinkers, storytellers, and messengers, moving on in their caravan communities whenever they sense their presence has worn out whatever welcome it may have had in a given area. Long accustomed to persecution, the Viroeni are not, however, prepared for being actively hunted. Nevertheless, the sad history of Foere has seen just that on more than one occasion.

Just over two centuries ago the infamous Archdeacon Bruća of the cathedral-city of Gurbyenne (he that some years later revealed to be a Dark Cardinal of Lucifer and burned at the stake before his own cathedral) issued an *edict of extirpation* for the Viroeni of southern Foere for some, likely falsified, reason. Most of the Viroeni tribes were able to flee the countries in question ahead of the pogrom, but one group encamped within the Barony of Baile found its route of retreat cut off between the Blackrock Mountains to the north and the Principality of Olduvar to the south. They knew that to travel into Olduvar was to face their arrest and probable execution, but to remain in Baile was to court disaster as well. In the end after paying hefty bribes, the Viroeni were able to extract a deal from the commander of Westfort to allow them to sequester themselves along the treacherous borders of the swamplands known as the Wytch Bog until such time as the fervor of the archdeacon's order had died down.

However, the scattered swamp dwellers along the Wytch Bog were not more welcoming of the strangers whose presence promised to stretch already scarce resources to the breaking point. Finally, when it appeared all hope was lost, the Viroeni were approached by one of the local trappers. He was a foreigner who did not feel the same loyalty to the edicts of an archdeacon of Foere that the rest of the locals did, and in him it appeared that they had found a non-hostile, if not exactly sympathetic, ear.

Hamish MacDuncan, a grizzled veteran of distant wars and expatriate of the upper regions of far-off Eamonvale, told the Viroeni matriarch that he knew of a safe path through the accursed bogs that he could guide them on and allow them to escape the confines of the Kingdoms of Foere for the promised freedom of Cailin Lee to the west. A mercenary to the core, though, MacDuncan told them he would do this only if the tribe paid him with all of the gold they had left.

Realizing that a better offer was unlikely to materialize, the matriarch agreed to the deal but promised a curse upon MacDuncan's eternal soul if he betrayed them and turned the Viroeni over to the hostile locals. MacDuncan swore an oath upon a holy book of Vanitthu he had never felt cause to read and promised he would see them delivered away from the folk they sought to flee. He did not tell them, however, that he had taken gold from those same people to remove the gypsy problem from their midst or that no such safe path through the bog, in fact, existed.

Once in the depths of the Wytch Bog, it was a simple matter for the woods-wise veteran to lead the Viroeni astray, cause them to become separated, and use his swampcraft and battle experience to eliminate them in small groups or one by one through treachery or outright murder. When

all was said and done, and the blood-spattered MacDuncan watched the matriarch's lifeless eye seemingly fix its baleful gaze upon him as her corpse sank beneath the waters of a bog, no more than a handful of the Viroeni had made it out of the swamp alive to tell the tale. But four of those handful did not scatter and flee like the rest. Instead they made their own preparations and returned only a few weeks later.

The four sons of the Viroeni matriarch had managed to elude MacDuncan's murderous intent but were unable to stop his massacre of their people. When they emerged from the swamp they swore their bond to one another to see their mother's curse completed. When they returned scant weeks later they were penniless with only the clothes they wore upon their backs to their names — and a new pine coffin carried between them.

The sons found MacDuncan drunk at his isolated home one night when the moon was dark. They set upon the surprised warrior and overpowered him before he could mount a resistance. With thick ropes they bound his coffin closed and carried him deep into the Wytch Bog where he had taken the lives of their kinsmen and women. As MacDuncan sobered up and found himself unable to break free from his confinement, the truth of the situation began to seep into his gin-soaked mind. The last any outside the bog ever heard from him were his muffled cries begging mercy, cursing his captors, and promising eternal revenge. Neither he nor the Viroeni youths was ever seen alive again.

But life — such as it was to become — was not entirely over for Hamish MacDuncan. The Viroeni matriarch's curse, enacted by the vengeance of her sons, came to fruition when Hamish did not rest easy but awoke after only a short time as a vampiric monster. His immersion in the bog waters had not been kind to his physical body, so he emerged as a grotesque *nosferatu*, a foul caricature of the vitality he had known in life.

MacDuncan wandered the depths of the Wytch Bog for decades, just one more facet of its already-old legend. He preyed upon the swamp folk from time to time, but they soon learned to remain indoors after sunset, and their simple swamp cottages proved effective in warding off his depredations as long as they didn't make the mistake to invite him in. In time, these people came to recognize their vampiric predator for who he was and connect his appearance for the foul deeds he had undoubtedly performed in the swamp depths to dispose of the gypsy tribe, but even as that knowledge came to light it was just as quickly hushed up to hide their own complicity in the atrocity that was committed. Until as years and even centuries passed, the vampire Hamish MacDuncan became a bogeyman of the bog (albeit one that most everyone believed in), and the truth of his existence and actions was largely lost to common knowledge and comfortably forgotten by those few who remained aware.

All likely would have remained in this hellish purgatory in which Hamish now existed had he not run across another damned creature of the swamp — the Wytch of the Bog, for which it had been named countless generations ago. What befell in this encounter, none could say, but Hamish left it with the belief that he had found the means of his own salvation, the redemption from his past deeds, and new chance to walk among the living — a chance he intended to take him far, far away from his accursed bog home. The Wytch told Hamish that if he could bring justice to those Viroeni he had murdered so long ago, then his own curse of unlife might be lifted. However, to bring them their justice, Hamish must seek vengeance upon the descendants of those who had first employed him to dispose of the Viroeni refugees.

Even as the Wytch spoke to the *nosferatu*, he saw that the long dead corpses in the bogs where he had dumped them had begun to stir and that the incessant mosquitoes whose eggs hatched in those same pools began to transform into larger, deadlier creatures whom he could command to do his bidding. Hamish had the beginnings of an army and now the means to operate indirectly during daylight hours through his servitor creatures, and a plan began to form in his mind. He didn't even notice when the

Creator's Note

Forgive and Regret is an event-driven rather than a location-driven adventure. Hamish MacDuncan and several other NPCs do not passively wait for the PCs to find them. Instead, they take the fight to the adventurers, using their special abilities and network of spies to locate the unwelcome visitors, monitor their activities, and strike at the opportune moment. It is critical the GM carefully read the descriptions of these major players in the subsequent **Encounters** section and have them take appropriate actions during the course of the adventure. Using this format, it is very possible for the characters to meet Hamish multiple times while the story unfolds. In fact, some of these encounters with the nosferatu may even take place in a social setting, where the competing parties exchange words and not blows.

Wytch took her leave as mysteriously as she had come, nor did he question the absurdity of his own salvation by meting out justice for the Viroeni victims when it was he himself who bore the greatest guilt, rather he was consumed with the thoughts of his escape and new lease on life.

MacDuncan was able to determine that eleven of the swampfolk still living at the edge of the Wytch Bog were direct descendants of those who had hired his despicable services so long ago, so they became the targets of his murderous intent. However, he did not want to tip them off to the pattern of killings and potentially flee the area and beyond his limited reach, constrained as he was by his boggy grave. To that end he unleashed his growing swarm of skeeters indiscriminately upon the unsuspecting folk, creatures capable of attacking in broad daylight and negating any defenses the people had developed against Hamish's own vampiric weaknesses. Within two weeks, the monsters had slain twelve people, including three of the eleven direct descendants he sought. The ensuing carnage also piqued the interest of other dormant, restless spirits now roaming the land, seeking to avenge old grudges against the progeny of the humans who handed them over to an ignominious death and the individual directly responsible for their demise. Practically overnight, the Wytch Bog became a morass of competing desires for vengeance, bubbling over among the sparse settlements along the bog's borders. Soon word of this surge in attacks from the swamp had begun to reach ears as far away as Westfort and beyond. Rumors that might just be capable of drawing in a group of heroes willing to step into the situation and rectify things.

Adventure Synopsis

The sparsely populated wetland known as the Wytch Bog lacks any conventional settlements or government, lying as it does at the boundaries of both the Principality of Olduvar and Barony of Baile yet appealing to neither as a territorial expansion worth pursuing. However the PCs come upon the small settlement, they find that fear overwhelms the handful of hardscrabble residents who have withstood the wicked skeeters' relentless attacks over the last several weeks, driving them exclusively indoors, while mayhem runs rampant across the decomposing terrain. From the moment the PCs enter the Wytch Bog, they immediately command the attention of the terrifying beings who plague this land.

The PCs' subsequent delve into the bog enters a haunted realm populated by shambling corpses, vengeful undead creatures, and pathetic spirits borne from Hamish's genocide. While the PCs' encounters with these abominations are fraught with peril, the lost souls' intense hatred of Hamish may supply them with useful information in their battle against the nosferatu responsible for their creation. Of course, the PCs' intrusion into his domain greatly troubles Hamish, and he uses his spies to monitor their progress through the wetlands in order to strike back against the trespassers.

However, PCs who fight off these attacks gain only a temporary respite, as their vanquished foe retreats to regroup and regenerate. The PCs must locate Hamish's concealed coffin and permanently destroy him while he rests or face his relentless assaults again and again.

Starting the Adventure

The Wytch Bog, which is located in the interior region of the central Kingdoms of Foere, is a desolate wasteland covered in stinking peat bogs, saturated earth, and hardy greenery. Encompassing more than 20,000 square miles of terrain, in the **Lost Lands** campaign setting the vast wetland is bordered by the Blackrock Mountains to the north, the Barony of Baile to the east, and most importantly the keep of Westfort and the neighboring Principality of Olduvar to the south and west. Traveling to the scene of this adventure from any destination other than the nearby Keep of Westfort and the adjacent Principality of Olduvar is a long, hard slog across miles of soggy, barren terrain populated by few inhabitants other than indigenous monsters and the unnaturally animated remains and ghosts of deceased residents and explorers. If the PCs come here from any other location, they are most likely to take the long way around the wetlands and enter the Wytch Bog from the southern border.

Hooks

Considering the reality that the PCs are unlikely to reside within the Wytch Bog proper, the GM must generally rely upon outside intervention to draw the characters into the action. In this case, a concerned third party contracts the adventurers' service for a specific purpose intertwined with the recent events plaguing the region. A government official in Olduvar or Baile or a military official at Westfort may task one of the PCs with the assignment of investigating the strange occurrences in the neighboring wetland and prevent the monstrous incursions from spilling over into their territory. Perhaps a servant of the archdeacon in Gurbyne has found records of Bruca's terrible deeds and made the connection between them and the disturbing whispers beginning to come from the region of the Wytch Bog. If so, the High Church of Foere may think it prudent to dispatch a group of investigators to the region to determine the source of the troubles and to set things aright if possible.

Traveling to the Wytch Bog

Depending upon the characters' starting point, it may take them several weeks to reach the distant region. Prudent overland travelers forego any land-based route through the bog proper and instead take the longer route through more hospitable terrain bordering the mire. During the course of their lengthy journey, the GM may sprinkle in several encounters that coincide with the particular terrain or political entity they currently occupy. For instance, dwarves hailing from the neighboring Blackrock Mountains may cross paths with monsters or people indigenous to that particular environment. For this purpose, the GM may rely upon the random encounter tables found in *Mountains of Madness* and *Fields of Blood* from **Frog God Games**, and *Glades of Death* **Necromancer Games**, or tables found in another sourcebook. Nonetheless, the adventure focuses primarily on specific events taking place in a comparatively small rural area along the southern edge of an immense, roughly oval-shaped wetland that stretches 200 miles from the northwest to the southeast and 100 miles from the southwest to the northeast.

No political entity claims dominion over the Wytch Bog. Almost every vestige of civilization, regardless of how insignificant, abruptly stops at the first tract of boggy soil. However, a number of hardy families have settled this land for centuries and eke out a living as farmers, peat cutters, and eel hunters.

Wytch Bog

After reaching the perimeter of the wetland north of the farthest Olduvari outpost at Westfort, the PCs can finally enter the Wytch Bog.

The Wytch Bog map details the three most noteworthy terrain features. These include the residents' homes, pools of water consisting of a mix of shallow and deep bogs, and typical trees (as described in the "Marsh

QUESTS OF DOOM 4

Terrain” and “Forest Terrain” sections in Chapter 13 of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*).

Regardless of what elements appear in a particular square, the most reliable means of traveling through the bog are by foot or, in the case of high-level adventurers, by air. Mounts and vehicles are probably not viable options, especially through the trackless terrain dominating the region. The soft, spongy earth is too pliable to easily support the weight of Large creatures and drawn vehicles without sinking into the ground. Likewise, the pools of stagnant water are too shallow to keep watercraft laden down with men and material afloat.

Although no formal roads travel through the bog, some trails reinforced in places with elevated planking or half-buried logs are stable enough to withstand the impact of a horse or wagon traverse a winding route across the treacherous ground. These crude paths are found in close proximity to the homesteads spread throughout the southern portion of the bog. Characters who are within 1 mile of any residence have a 25% chance of stumbling across one of these trampled down walkways for every 1,000 feet traveled. In a similar vein, adventurers within a half mile of any residence have a 50% chance of stumbling across the same walkways. Of course, characters who run across one of these crude roads must be able to identify it as such, which requires a successful DC 8 Survival check. As a rule of thumb, one end of the trail always culminates at the home, while the opposite end may intersect with other safe passages through the bog or lead out of the wetland entirely. On the other hand, adventurers who forego these trails and make their way across trackless terrain on foot do so at three-quarters their normal land speed. With the exception of areas containing trees or blanketed by smoke from raging peat fires, the low-lying vegetation and undergrowth grants clear visibility to a range of 6d6 x 10 feet.

Wytch Bog Encounters

Hamish MacDuncan undisputedly lords over his slice of the Wytch Bog, but he is not the only malevolent denizen to stalk this blighted land. The restless spirits of his victims and other foul creatures also inhabit this bleak realm.

Wicked creatures are not the only hazards troubling adventurers who explore this rugged terrain, though. Sinkholes, peat fires, noxious smoke, and marsh gas often give unwary travelers no warnings. Local residents intimately familiar with the region avoid these obstacles. Hence, despite their prevalence, they are noticeably absent from the makeshift paths that crisscross the Wytch Bog.

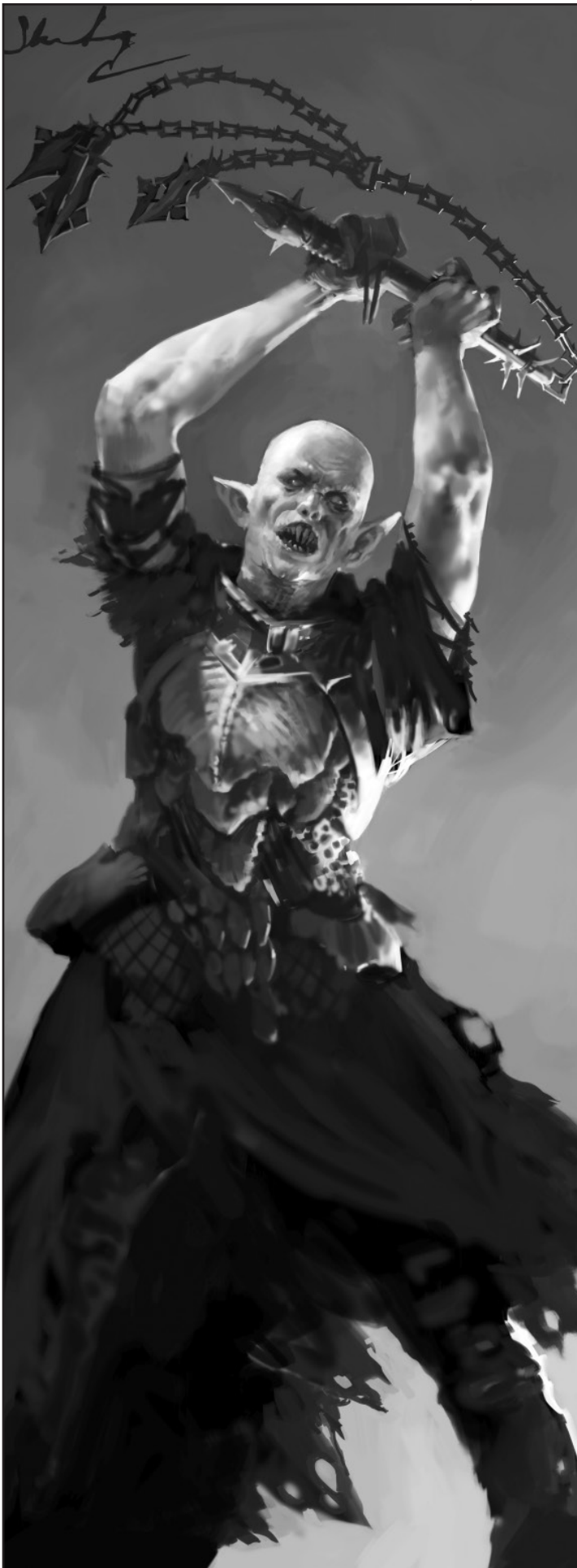
With the preceding considerations in mind, three types of encounters occur within the Wytch Bog — freeform encounters, which detail how adversaries respond to the characters’ actions; random encounters, which are spontaneous incidents occurring anywhere; and set encounters, which take place at a specified location on the map. In this adventure, freeform encounters drive the story forward and are presented first, followed by the random encounters, and lastly the set encounters, which are tied to a specific location.

Freeform Encounters

Instead of passively waiting for the adventurers to discover their lairs and fend off the PCs’ assault on their home ground, Hamish MacDuncan and several other powerful foes actively hunt down the PCs as they venture across their domain. In the nosferatu’s case, his network of animal spies and skeeters continuously keep him apprised of the PCs’ movements. Likewise, the bog’s other malevolent denizens monitor the adventurers’ progress across their respective territories. The subsequent sections separately detail the tactics and actions of the preceding creatures during the course of the adventure.

Hamish MacDuncan (CR 9)

Unlike other intelligent creatures dwelling within the Wytch Bog, the nosferatu moves about the region with total impunity, subject to the restrictions



FORGIVE AND REGRET

of his undead condition. Hamish must remain within the dark confines of his grave (area **G** on the map) or another site completely shielded from the sun during daylight. He has constructed three redoubts (area **T** on the map) spread throughout the area that protect him from the sun's harmful rays, eliminating the urgency to return to his distant grave when dawn approaches. This system of enclosed shelters lets Hamish stay in a remote area overnight without having to cut his travel short to fly back to his grave.

When the sun finally sets for the evening, he emerges into the darkness and surveys the landscape from the skies in his bat swarm form, allowing him to travel at a speed of 4 miles per hour. At this pace, he can reach any of his redoubts in 2 hours or less. His skeeters provide regular updates about humanoid and monstrous activities within his domain. Therefore, he almost certainly learns about the PCs' arrival in his domain on the first evening after their initial appearance, unless they took precautions to move about the area unnoticed. Though *invisibility* seems like the only option to avoid detection, the characters may also create magical or mundane disguises to look like the native residents or creatures Hamish's spies would not consider a threat, such as other small animals. Despite the preceding countermeasures, any action that leaves a trace of the adventurers' presence, such as slaying a random monster or beating back one or more skeeters, immediately commands his interest. Under these circumstances, Hamish conducts aerial surveillance of the Wytch Bog, concentrating his efforts on the humanoid residences scattered throughout the southern portion of his domain, in search of the trespassers and any telltale clues that may point to their current whereabouts. When he finally tracks down his prey, Hamish formulates a plan to dispose of the unwelcome visitors.

As previously noted, Hamish cannot directly combat his adversaries during the day, but the **1d2+1 skeeters** who always accompany him suffer no such restrictions. His monstrous allies closely monitor the PCs' movements and activities while the sun is out. When night falls, one of the winged beasts flies back to **Hamish** to alert him about the day's events, potentially giving the PCs an opportunity to discover the vampire's current whereabouts if someone follows.

Depending upon the PCs' location, Hamish arrives on the scene several hours later to assess his options. If the heroes take refuge inside another creature's residence, Hamish cannot enter that home uninvited. Although he can direct the skeeters to batter down the door and enter the home, he attempts to lure his enemies out into the open. He may accomplish this feat through several different means. For instance, he may threaten to harm the residents' neighbors if the characters refuse to face him or tell the PCs he plans to set the building ablaze. If he feels he is bargaining from a position of weakness, he may appeal to their emotions, telling them he desperately wants to escape the endless curse that torments him. At its core, Hamish's statement is truthful, though he believes his destruction alone cannot achieve the end he desires. In any event, Hamish wants to observe the characters in action against the skeeters before joining into the fray. The grizzled veteran uses the opportunity to assess his adversaries' combat strengths and weaknesses. When the characters first encounter Hamish, the GM may read or paraphrase the following description.

Holes and tears riddle an overcoat hanging from the gaunt shoulders of a bald humanoid figure with pointed ears, rat-like teeth, and filthy, elongated fingers ending in vicious claws. The stench of fetid earth and decay accompanies the creature, yet despite his emaciated appearance, he carries the weight of his heavy flail and dragonscale breastplate with remarkable ease.

Hamish is convinced the PCs' arrival is not a coincidence. Despite this belief, the nosferatu nonetheless questions his adversaries about their motives for traveling to his domain as much out of curiosity as caution before committing fully to their destruction. If attacked, any curiosity about the PCs is exchanged for blind rage.

SKEETERS (1d2+1)

XP 1,200

hp 42

CR 4

HAMISH MACDUNCAN

XP 6,400

Male Uplander human nosferatu fighter (assault pioneer)

8; *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* 4 "Vampire, Nosferatu")

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;

Perception +17

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +8 natural)
hp 96 (8d10+40 plus 8); fast healing 5

Fort +11; **Ref** +6; **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/wood and piercing; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, sonic 10

Weaknesses vampire weaknesses

Speed 20 ft. (30 ft. unarmored)

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d6 +5) or +1 *ominous heavy flail* +16/+11 (1d10 +11/17–20)

Ranged +1 *heavy crossbow* +11 (1d10+1/19–20)

Special Attacks blood drain (1d4 Con and 1d4 Wis), dominate (DC 19), telekinesis (DC 19)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

3/day—*mending*

Str 21, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Alertness^B, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Furious Focus^{APG}, Improved Critical (heavy flail), Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes^B, Power Attack, Second Chance^{APG}, Skill Focus (Disable Device)^B, Skill Focus (Intimidate)^B, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Weapon Specialization (heavy flail)

Skills Climb +9, Craft (alchemy) +13, Disable Device +9 (+11 disable or rig nonmagical traps and devices, and sabotage a mechanical item), Intimidate +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (engineering) +11, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (history) +4, Perception +17, Profession (soldier) +16, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +9, Survival +12, Swim +9; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

Languages Common, Dwarven, Orc; telepathy 60 ft.

SQ engineer training, field engineer, field saboteur, spider climb, swarm form

Gear +1 *dragonscale breastplate*, +1 *ominous*^{UE} *heavy flail*, +1 *heavy crossbow*, 15 +1 *ghost touch* *undead bane crossbow bolts*, *flying ointment*^{UE}, *potion of invisibility*

^{APG} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*

^{UE} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment*

Tactics: When the situation inevitably devolves into a fight, Hamish is fully aware that prepared adversaries are likely to use *protection from evil* and similar spells to prevent him from exerting control over their minds. The cunning undead also realizes the trespassers may use garlic, holy symbols, and mirrors to keep him at bay, though *telekinesis* can potentially be used to wrest these objects from the owner's grasp or simply hurl that opponent into a nearby natural hazard. If he fails in this, he sends the skeeters to deal with that PC while he focuses his attacks on a single target, preferably a lightly armored foe or a spellcaster. He never fights alone and attempts to flank opponents and use Power Attack to batter them. When the PCs slay or otherwise incapacitate his skeeter allies, he changes into a bat swarm and flees deep into the bog, where he moves through the territories of the area's other monstrous inhabitants in the hopes of luring them out against the PCs. If Hamish cannot outrun his pursuers in this fashion, he searches for a subterranean locale he can squeeze into as a spider swarm or centipede swarm to allow his fast healing ability to repair at least some of the damage dealt to him. In the event Hamish is forced to retreat to his grave, his actions are described in area **G** under **Set Encounters** below.

Finding Hamish's Grave

Although the PCs can kill Hamish by forcibly exposing him to sunlight or submerging him in running water, driving a wooden stake through the nosferatu's heart while he rests in his coffin (area **G1**) is the most likely means of destruction. In order to accomplish this goal, the characters must first find his grave. Considering the resources and abilities available to them at their current level, they have a variety of methods at their disposal to discover the secret location. The most straightforward is to follow a defeated Hamish back to his grave after forcing him to assume swarm form. In a similar vein, the characters may also trail one or more of his skeeters in the hope the flying monstrosity leads them directly to the nosferatu's burial place.

Alternatively, they may piece together some of the rumors and clues they gathered during the course of their investigation. These may include their interactions with the geriatric Lycelle Motté at area **D**, young Willem Stuart at area **S** or a chance run-in with **Blowhard** found in the **Random Encounters** section. While none of these individuals can directly lead the characters to Hamish's tomb, the bits and pieces gathered from their stories can lead the adventurers to surmise the terrain features in area **G** are consistent with those described in the tales. They may then monitor the area for at least several hours to confirm or refute their suspicions. Powerful divination spells, such as *divination*, *commune* or *commune with nature*, can also point the characters in the right direction.

When adjudicating what the PCs learn, it is incumbent upon the GM to control the pace of information. When dealing with the adventure's NPCs, the GM must be careful not to give too many or too few precise details about Hamish's grave and his behaviors during one conversation. If the players learn too much too quickly, they can bring the story to a premature ending. Conversely, starving their curiosity can cause frustration and disinterest. Slow and steady is a good adage to keep in mind. Treat information like puzzle pieces rather than a decoder.

Will-O'-Wisps (CR 8)

This pair has little to fear from Hamish MacDuncan. Their alien mindset and bizarre physiology render them immune to many of the nosferatu's attacks, but the converse is also true. Despite the stalemate, the aberrations defer to Hamish's supremacy, taking no actions to directly harm the indigenous humanoids on his lands. However, this restriction never applies to strangers who enter the Wytch Bog. Like Hamish, they are more active at night when their eerie luminescence is most advantageous. In addition, they also rely upon Hamish and the groaning spirit of Eladrian to aid them in their search for terrified prey.

WILL-O'-WISP (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 40 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* "Will-O'-Wisp")

Tactics: The pair uses teamwork, waiting for the PCs to walk across a comparatively dry, peaty area, where they periodically illuminate in order to simultaneously distract and guide the PCs along the supposedly safe path through the bog. During this ruse, one of the creatures acts as a distraction, where it intermittently lights up and goes dark to frustrate the PCs. This will-o'-wisp takes great care to ensure it becomes invisible again at the end of its turn. Meanwhile, its invisible counterpart functions as the literal spark, as its electric touch sets the peat ablaze which, of course, at least momentarily renders the will-o'-wisp visible.

They disregard spellcasters and instead focus their attention on their fellow airborne adversaries and creatures armed with ranged weapons, especially if either potential target can see invisible creatures. When faced with imminent danger, the two monsters flee at top speed in opposite directions. The will-o'-wisps have no treasure and no permanent lair.

Eladrian the Groaning Spirit (CR 7)

At first blush, it appears this undead spirit holds a significant combat edge over Hamish MacDuncan, but the calculating nosferatu has fifteen proverbial aces up his sleeve in the form of his *ghost touch undead bane crossbow bolts*. When their paths first crossed years ago, the newly created pair of undead combatants squared off against each other for supremacy over the region. Eladrian prevailed in their initial encounter, forcing the nosferatu to flee to his grave. However, the insubstantial spirit's inability to grasp physical objects prevented her from finishing the deed. Hamish regenerated the following evening, and in a well-planned rematch several nights later, the sullen elf spirit felt the burning sting of the vampire's enchanted crossbow bolts. From that moment forward, the pair settled into an unspoken truce. Eladrian accepts her adversary's supremacy and instead focuses her wrath on sentient, living creatures who wander into the Wytch Bog.

GROANING SPIRIT

CR 7

XP 3,200

The Tome of Horrors Complete 357

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., lifestense; Perception +20

Aura fear (30 ft., DC 19), unnatural aura (30 ft.)

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 85 (10d8+40)

Fort +7; Ref +6; Will +10

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal;

Immune cold, electricity, undead traits; SR 18

Weaknesses vulnerability to dispel evil

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +11 (1d8 plus chill touch)

Special Attacks keening

Str —, Dex 17, Con —, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 18

Base Atk +7; CMB +7; CMD 24

Feats Ability Focus (keening), Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)

Skills Bluff +14, Fly +24, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (religion) +16, Perception +20, Sense Motive +20, Stealth +16

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan

Chill Touch (Su) Damage caused by the groaning spirit's touch attack is considered negative energy and sends a chilling cold through an opponent's body. Any creature touched must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or suffer 1 point of Strength drain. Groaning spirits are the bane of other undead, and any undead they touch (except other groaning spirits) must succeed on a DC 19 Will save or flee in fear for 2d6 rounds. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Keening (Su) Once per day, at night only, a groaning spirit can release a death wail audible to a range of 1 mile.

All creatures within 30 feet that hear this must make a successful DC 21 Will save or be affected as per the wail of the banshee spell. Those that make their save still take 3d6+7 points of damage. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 bonus from the groaning spirit's Ability Focus feat.

Lifestense (Su) A groaning spirit can sense all living creatures up to 5 miles away.

Vulnerability to Dispel Evil (Ex) If a dispel evil spell (the second effect requiring a touch attack) is used against a groaning spirit the creature must succeed on a Will save (DC 15 + caster's relevant ability score modifier) or be destroyed immediately.

Tactics: The vengeful spirit attacks only living sentient creatures who venture a quarter mile beyond the northernmost swamp dweller residences.

FORGIVE AND REGRET

Eladrian can move about during the day, but she prefers attacking at night when she can use her keening ability. Whenever she spots a suitable target during the day, she follows her prey from a distance and waits for darkness. She then swoops down from the skies and unleashes her keening to affect the greatest number of targets. In addition to withstanding her wail, her adversaries must also stave off her fear aura. She then wades into combat with her incorporeal touch attack. She never retreats and continues fighting until destroyed.

Random Encounters

In contrast to the freeform encounters described above, the random encounters appearing here are spontaneous events that happen by chance rather than as the result of deliberate actions taken by an intelligent being. The characters have a 20% chance per mile traveled in the Wytch Bog of participating in one of the following encounters. If the PCs travel along a path made by the residents, there is no chance of stumbling across a terrain hazard. In addition to the encounters presented below, the GM may supplement them with random encounters from the **Appendix** section of this book, a random wetlands' encounter table from another source, or other encounters the GM creates appropriate to the situation.

Aerial Assault (CR 7)

These monsters continuously soar above the decaying landscape in search of more victims. The marginally intelligent creatures indiscriminately attack anyone they see on the ground. They use their Death from Above feat, granting the monsters a +5 bonus on their attack roll while diving. They continue the assault until they kill their opponents or their opponents slay them.

SKETERS (3)
XP 1,200
hp 42

CR 4

Beast or Famine (CR 8)

While the Wytch Bog teems with the malevolent spirits and animated corpses of Hamish's long-dead victims, **3 bog beasts** also stalk the desolate wetlands in search of game creatures and human prey. At first glance, the oafs look as though they would be no match for any of the undead haunting the Wytch Bog. Despite their physical strength, they are susceptible to fear effects and have a limited ability to harm flying and incorporeal opponents. Hamish uses the barely intelligent creatures to do his work during the daytime for tasks the skeeters are unsuitable to perform.

If the PCs encounter the trio near a residence, the monsters keep a watchful eye from afar then attack after the PCs have set out again.

BOG BEASTS (3)
XP 1,600

The Tome of Horrors Complete 73

N Large monstrous humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; **Perception** +10

CR 5

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+8 natural, -1 size)
hp 52 (5d10+20 plus 5)
Fort +5; **Ref** +4; **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 (1d6+5 plus disease)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+7)

Str 20, **Dex** 11, **Con** 18, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 21

Feats Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Intimidate +9, Perception +10, Survival +5; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival

Disease (Ex) Filth fever: Claw—injury; save Fortitude DC 16; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Tactics: The bog beasts attack in a mad frenzy, lashing out at the PCs with their claws. If they slay one of the adventurers, they drag that individual away from the battle for later consumption. They fight ferociously, as long as all three are still alive. If one of the brothers falls in combat, the others flee when they reach half their normal hit points; if two have fallen, the remaining bog beast flees if possible. Otherwise, it begs for its pitiful life. The trio barks out indecipherable grunts throughout the combat.

Bog Fish (CR 5)

Unlike most of his kin, **Blowhard** the grodair prefers exploring the vastly more interesting—in his opinion, at least—shallower channels and patches of soggy earth within the Wytch Bog to deeper waters and jagged coastlines. Though his exact age is unknown, many humanoid residents insist stories about the odd creature reach back through the generations and may even predate Hamish's arrival on the scene. The nomadic beast aimlessly meanders across the land, haphazardly displacing immense volumes of water during the course of his random travels. The domain's denizens avoid the generally docile-but-absentminded grodair. Blowhard leaves an unmistakable trail of shallow bogs and saturated ground in his wake, leading explorers who succeed on a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check to notice an unnatural cause for the soaking trail.

BLOWHARD
XP 1,600

hp 66 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* 3 "Grodair")

CR 5

Development: Blowhard blissfully frolics about in his muddy pool, oblivious to everything going on around him. If the PCs attack the grodair, he fights back with his water blast ability and then engages the characters in melee combat. Otherwise, adventurers who approach the creature in a non-hostile manner encounter an optimistic and shortsighted conversationalist—provided the parties share a common language.

Blowhard has a terrible short-term memory, so he constantly forgets the PCs' names or the overall gist of their discussion. However, the grodair's long-term recollection dramatically improves when asked the right questions. He expresses reservations in regards to talking about Hamish, yet if the speaker succeeds on a DC 17 Diplomacy check, the magical beast laments the resident nosferatu has physically deteriorated over the years. He admits he was not present when Hamish perpetrated the massacre centuries ago, but he warns PCs that the restless spirits of many victims haunt the brackish ponds in the Wytch Bog. Blowhard also recalls he once saw Hamish transform into a swarm of centipedes after a hard-fought battle and then crawl through an old, hollowed out tree stump and into what he presumed was a subterranean cyst adjacent to a pond. After this utterance, the easily distracted grodair realizes he divulged too much information and refuses to say anything else about Hamish or where this incident took place. PCs who successfully intimidate Blowhard or magically compel him to go into greater detail about that particular event are disappointed to learn he cannot remember the precise location other than somewhere in the Wytch Bog.

Broken Soul (CR 8)

Years of abuse at the hands of her husband battered the youthful **Leila Dumaio** into a broken husk. The loving mother refused to risk harming her daughter, Emma, by leaving her behind with her tyrannical father or by fleeing into the untamed Wytch Bog with the small child. The situation remained unchanged until 2 weeks ago, when skeeters descended from the sky and attacked the young girl just outside her door in broad daylight.

QUESTS OF DOOM 4

Suddenly robbed of the only source of joy in her life, the distraught mother came to the conclusion that some god had cursed her to endless suffering. She embraced agony in the same manner she once held her only child, transforming her into a broken soul.

She turned her wrath toward the man who subjected her to immeasurable torment and began to lace his meals with certain poisonous herbs she gathered in the swamp. Overcome with violent convulsions and continuous spasms, Leila's husband eventually took his own life. Free from her weighty yoke, the broken soul abandoned her home to wander through the Wytch Bog on her quest to bring misery to all who cross her path. The woman lacks any stealth and possesses little knowledge on how to survive in the wild, thus virtually guaranteeing that the characters get the drop on her. In the unlikely event Leila spots the PCs first, she casts *youthful appearance* to alter her looks. It takes a successful DC 10 Perception check to spot her, and a successful DC 15 Stealth check to avoid her notice.

Tactics: When the PCs first see her, they must resist her baleful gaze special attack. The newly born broken soul retains some of her mental faculties despite the intense pain wracking her shattered body. Leila lies about the effects of her baleful gaze. She claims foul magic taints the land causing her current appearance. If the ruse works, she tells the adventurers she barely survived an attack by flying monsters that took the lives of her daughter and husband. If the PCs take her bait, Leila nonchalantly tries to place her hand on one of their shoulders in an apparent gesture to seek comfort. Her real goal is to catch that individual flat-footed with her torturous touch special attack. Regardless of whether she succeeds or not in any of the preceding ploys, the vicious monster then unleashes her agonized wail special attack when the PCs see through her charade.

Leila prefers to rely upon her torturous touch attacks, alchemist bombs, and *necklace of fireballs*. If she gets an opportunity, she bolsters her defenses with her *potion of mage armor* and *shield* extract. The monster can provide no additional useful information about Hamish or the Wytch Bog in general. If reduced to less than one-quarter her normal hit points, Leila attempts to flee. Up until then, she revels in inflicting as many opponents as possible with excruciating pain.

LEILA DUMAIO XP 4,800

CR 8

Female human broken soul alchemist 5/expert 3 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4* "Broken Soul," *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide* "Alchemist")
CE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +0; **Perception** +6

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural)
hp 59 (8d8+16 plus 8)
Fort +9; **Ref** +5; **Will** +5; +4 vs. poison
DR 5/—; **Resist** acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5, sonic 5

Speed 20 ft.

Melee torturous touch +4 touch (2d6 plus 1d5 Dex damage and convulsions)

Ranged bomb +6 (3d6+3 fire)

Special Attacks agonized wail (DC 13), baleful gaze (DC 13), bomb 10/day (3d6+3 fire, DC 15), torturous touch (DC 13)

Extracts Prepared (CL 5th, concentration –8, melee touch +4)
2nd—*barkskin*, *detect thoughts* (DC 13), *vomit swarm*^{APG}
1st—*cure light wounds*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield*, *youthful appearance*^{UM}

Str 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 15, **Int** 16, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14

Feats Brew Potion, Diehard^B, Endurance^B, Extra Bombs^{APG}, Extra Discovery^{APG}, Great Fortitude^B, Iron Will, Master Alchemist, Point-Blank Shot, Toughness^B

Skills Appraise +8, Bluff +7, Craft (alchemy) +16, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +6, Heal +8, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +11, Perception +6, Profession (herbalist) +7, Sense Motive +7,

Spellcraft +14, Survival +6, Use Magic Device +8; **Racial**

Modifiers +8 Intimidate

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +5, identify potions), discoveries (concentrate poison, smoke bomb [5 rounds], stink bomb), extract, mutagen (+4/–2, +2 natural, 50 minutes), poison use, swift alchemy

Combat Gear *necklace of fireballs (type III)*, *potion of mage armor*, *potion of neutralize poison*, antitoxin, alchemist's fire, belladonna poison, 2 doses of oil of taggit poison, wolfsbane poison; **Other Gear** 14 gp

Agonized Wail (Su) As a standard action, a broken soul can emit an agonized wail that inspires terror in those who hear it. All creatures within 120 feet must succeed at a DC 13 Will save or become shaken for as long as they remain within 120 of the broken soul. A successful save renders a creature immune to that broken soul's agonized wail for 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect.

Baleful Gaze (Su) Any creature within 60 feet of a broken soul must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Strength, Constitution and Charisma drain. Whatever the result of the saving throw, the creature cannot be affected by the same broken soul's baleful gaze again for 1 minute.

Torturous Touch (Su) A broken soul can make a touch attack to cause hideous, painful wounds to rip open in the target's body. This touch deals 2d6 points of slashing damage and 1d6 points of Dexterity damage and causes the touched creature to fall prone in a fit of convulsions and be dazed for 1d4 rounds. A successful DC 13 Fortitude save negates the Dexterity damage and the convulsive fit.

^{APG} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*

^{UM} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Magic*

Burning Bush (CR 5)

Peat fires are a constant danger in the Wytch Bog. The slowly simmering conflagration can rage for decades, generating massive plumes of choking, black smoke that obscure vision and impairs breathing. The flames alone pose a significant hazard to adventurers. However, when the intense heat chars the leaves and branches of the poison sumac shrub, the pairing makes for a deadly combination. The burning residue irritates the lining of the lungs as well as the skin, making for a very painful and unpleasant experience. To make matters worse, the dense smoke makes it difficult to locate the fire's source through the haze. It takes a successful DC 25 Perception check to determine a shrub stands in the middle of the roaring blaze. If a PC can see the poison sumac shrub, it can be identified correctly with a successful DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check or appropriate Profession check, such as gardener or herbalist. The poison sumac's smoke extends to a maximum range of 200 feet downwind and a mere 50 feet upwind. It reaches a maximum range of 100 feet everywhere else.

Giant Trouble (CR 8)

The recent arrival of a nomadic marsh giant has changed the power dynamic of this portion of the Wytch Bog somewhat. Despite his enormous size, the marsh giant moves through the bog with tremendous agility. The giant is a natural hunter who can be detected only with a successful DC 24 Perception check. Likewise, he is particularly adept at spotting a potential meal, so it takes a successful DC 22 Stealth check to move past him unnoticed. When he spots potential prey, the giant conjures a *fog cloud* around his foes' allies and then hurls a rock at his chosen target before wading into melee. Slain foes are carried deeper into the bog where he can devour the meal at his leisure, using *fog cloud* to cover his escape. If the PCs thwart his plan to divide and conquer, the savage giant fights until reduced to one-third his normal hit points, at which time he attempts to flee, using *fog cloud* to cover his route.

Set Encounters

Restless Souls (CR 8)

The ghastly reminders of Hamish's infamous deed are visible throughout the Wytch Bog. Stray bones, personal mementoes, and shreds of clothing line the edges of most stagnant ponds in the accursed parcel of wetlands. These objects, however, can never fully reveal the abject terror the victims experienced during their final moments. These raw emotions stir the dead back into existence as undead monstrosities. In this case, **4 swamp mummies** rise from the peaty graves to batter the living. Their unearthly moaning frightens off the indigenous animals in their surroundings, leaving that particular stretch of wetlands even more barren than normal. They focus their attention on slaying any living creatures who cross their paths. The mummies move across the bog with remarkable ease. It takes a successful DC 21 Perception check to notice them, while the PCs must succeed on a DC 23 Stealth check to avoid detection. The swamp mummies attack on sight.

SWAMP MUMMIES (4)

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 52 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 5* "Mummy, Swamp")

Tactics: In melee, they surround and gang up on one opponent in an attempt to beat their target into a bloody pulp. If they succeed, they attempt to drag fallen foes into one of the many peat-filled ponds in the vicinity to let them join in their undeath. The swamp mummies fight until destroyed.

Treasure: One of the monsters wears a lapis lazuli necklace worth 250 gp, and another keeps four pearls each worth 100 gp in a weathered pouch wrapped around an exposed rib. Finally, one carries a brand new *chime of opening*.

Sink, Sank, Sunk (CR 4)

Sinkholes are a constant menace in the wetlands, and the Wytch Bog is a prime example of the danger these hazards present to travelers. It takes a successful DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check to determine if a particular area is conducive to the creation of sinkholes, and a successful DC 18 Survival check to spot one before entering the dangerous, unstable terrain. Characters who fail to notice the sinkhole walk 1d6 feet past the edge before the ground gives way and tumbles into the subterranean abyss unless the creature succeeds on a Reflex save (DC 15 +1 per foot past the sinkhole's edge). It is possible for two or more creatures to simultaneously fall into the same sinkhole. In this adventure, sinkholes measure 20 feet in diameter and descend to a depth of 60 feet, thus dealing 6d6 points of falling damage.

Snake, Rattle, and Crawl (CR varies)

Due to their acidic nature, bogs lack the biodiversity present in other wetlands. Many of the reptile species present in warmer and more-hospitable environments cannot survive in this harsher and cooler climate. Nonetheless, a handful of hardy snakes thrive in this damp terrain. In general, the PCs run into a den of **1d6+2 venomous snakes**, though in the case of the tiger snake, the number is reduced to **1d6 venomous snakes**. (The Sidebar appearing after **Table 3–12** provides the precise effects of each variety of snake venom.)

VENOMOUS SNAKES (1d6+2)

CR 1

XP 400

hp 13 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* "Snake, Venomous")

The adventure's set encounters take place at specific locations identified on the map of the Wytch Bog. The residences scattered throughout the southern portion of the region are addressed collectively rather than individually with the exceptions of those homes that contain one or more of Hamish's specific targets. These locales appear as areas **B**, **D** and **S**. Other set encounters not associated within a particular homestead are described in the following section as well and correspond to an area on the Wytch Bog map.

B. Banquo Residence

After the untimely disappearance and presumed death of her husband Montague, **Serena St. Worté née Banquo** (CN female human expert 3; Cha 12; Bluff +7) and her young daughter **Sybelle St. Worté** (N young female human commoner 1; Dex 12; Stealth +2) returned home to live with her brother **Huc Banquo** (LN male human ranger 3; Wis 14; Survival +8). The terrible event transformed the formerly doting mother into a carefree hedonist who spends her nights seeking pleasure and company in the homes of others. Her recent behavior lends credence to the false rumors about her infidelity during her marriage. The stern Huc greatly resents his sister, as the childrearing responsibilities for his 6-year-old niece now fall squarely upon his shoulders. On those rare occasions when she is home, the surly disciplinarian always clashes with the nonchalant Sarah in regards to Sybelle's upbringing.

The same attitudes also extend to other family matters. Huc proudly boasts that the Banquo family predates all others in the area, making him, at least in his mind, the pre-eminent authority in the region. By comparison, Serena has little interest in her living relatives, let alone dwelling upon her long-deceased kin. While most residents shun strangers, Huc Banquo loves to tout his ancestors' accomplishments, most notably their prominent role in aiding Hamish MacDuncan to commit his infamous atrocity, and going so far as to claim that his fourth-great-grandfather actually participated in the slayings. Despite the glee in his voice when discussing his forebears' deeds, the misguided bragging centers on his family's close ties with Hamish MacDuncan rather than deriving any pleasure from his crimes. If the characters indulge his fanciful musings, he divulges that Hamish uses several enclosed structures spread throughout the Butcher's Bog as waystations to avoid exposure to sunlight during his travels through the region. The crude stone buildings consist of an open entryway that leads into a dark, windowless room, protecting the occupant from sunlight. A black cloth curtain can be drawn across the portal to completely block all light from entering the shelter. His recollection of their exact whereabouts leads the characters to within a half mile of each redoubt.

D. Dugier Residence

The fraternal twins **Aemoux Dugier** (N male human commoner 4) and **Synesse Dugier** (CG female human commoner 3) share their residence with the family's wizened matriarch, their geriatric grandmother **Lycelle Motté** (LE old female human adept 3). The siblings harvest peat from the land and fish for eels in the pond several hundred yards from their residence. Despite her infirmity and mild dementia, the woman wields absolute authority over her grandchildren. The unfriendly and gruff senior never leaves her spacious bedchamber on the dilapidated second floor, leaving Aemoux and Synesse to act as her intermediaries. Conversations with the socially awkward Aemoux can be tedious and frustrating. He displays no knowledge of the outside world beyond his family's little corner of the Wytch Bog. On the other hand, his sister revels in procuring and spreading local gossip, though Hamish's archaic affairs and the recent emergence of Hamish's skeeters fail to capture her imagination. Instead, she dwells on rumors pertaining to alleged trysts between married and unmarried residents, including a supposed affair between Artur St. Worté and his late brother's widow, Sarah St. Worté.

While her younger grandchildren are oblivious to the recent attacks

QUESTS OF DOOM 4

and their family's connection to Hamish's atrocity centuries earlier, the bond between her ancestors and the land's nosferatu are never far from Lycelle's mind. PCs who request an audience with the family's matriarch must succeed on a DC 20 Diplomacy check with Aemoux or a DC 16 Diplomacy check with Synesse. In this case, the younger Dugier escorts the group into Lycelle's personal quarters, where they meet with the elderly woman. However, gaining access is only half the battle. Like most of her kin, Lycelle detests outsiders, thus it takes a successful DC 26 Diplomacy check to win her favor. If the PCs gain some measure of her trust, Lycelle relays that her fourth-great-grandfather, Patrick Motté, was an influential voice supporting Hamish's deportation plan. She strongly believes that the despicable Patrick encouraged Hamish to outright kill the refugees, which she insists accursed her family for generations to come. She laments that Synesse and Aemoux are the last of her line, claiming the nosferatu's destruction offers the only hope for her progenies' continued success. She tells the characters her grandfather told her Hamish's grave lies beneath a peat-filled pond in a remote corner of the Butcher's Bog and the subterranean mausoleum is accessible only through the hollowed-out stump of a petrified tree. If the PCs succeeded on their Diplomacy check by 5 or more, the matriarch also explains that three clusters of moss-covered trees surround the pond. Despite these details, she cannot tell the adventurers the pond's exact location.

F. Forested Copse

Small trees along with a mix of woody shrubs grow throughout the Wyth Bog. The copses typically cluster close to the open ponds, where they provide a continuous source of moss for the ponds that collect and sequester rainwater. Each individual square within this particular area contains typical trees, light undergrowth, heavy undergrowth, or shallow bog. There are no deep bog squares at these locations.

G. Hamish's Grave (CR varies)

Hamish's final resting place lies in the northwest corner of the Wyth Bog, shielded on three sides by trees and undergrowth. Though it would seem the nosferatu deliberately chose the isolated locale in the northeastern corner of a stagnant pond, his grave's placement is a wild stroke of luck. His vengeful killers hurled his coffin into the newly formed pond, where it sank to the bottom and settled beneath layers of accumulated peat. The subterranean grave is accessible only through the hollowed out trunk of a petrified tree. Hamish enters and exits the 4-inch-diameter wooden tunnel in his centipede or spider swarm form. There are always 2 **skeeters** flitting about the stagnant water above his grave. When the PCs happen upon the scene, the GM may read or paraphrase the following description.

Two flying abominations with translucent insect wings, a segmented body, and six legs buzz over a muddy pool of fetid water. The monsters possess a barbed, spear-like proboscis. In addition to their insect features, they also have atrophied arms with gnarled humanoid hands, and a grotesquely twisted humanoid face with compound eyes, suggesting they are some strange amalgamation of insect and human. As if these monstrosities were not unsettling enough, skeletal human arms and skulls covered with leathery, preserved skin protrude from the muck beneath their flight path. The gnarled remnants of a hollow stump stand at the water's edge.

The skeeters immediately attack any creature approaching Hamish's grave and fight to the death in its defense. When the PCs defeat the nosferatu's protectors, the characters must then devise a way to enter the underground crypt in order to vanquish Hamish. The pond is a mere 3 feet deep, but the brown water filling the reservoir proves impenetrable to normal vision. If the PCs extract any of the leathery cadavers from their final resting place, they are extremely old, though

well preserved by the bog, and consist of 15 bodies in total: 4 men, 6 women and 5 children.

Finding Hamish's grave isn't enough. Gaining access to the subterranean hollow is another matter. The vampire enters and exits through a narrow, 4-inch-diameter wooden tree stump that descends 5 feet below the surface, opening into a subterranean chamber. He can accomplish this feat only while in centipede or spider swarm form. Likewise, the adventurers may use a *gaseous form* spell or similar magic to fit into the tight spot and then shimmy down the hollow. Despite the character's diminished size, he or she may still succeed on a successful DC 15 Climb check to avoid plummeting 10 feet to area G1.

SKEETERS (2)
XP 1,200
hp 42

CR 4

Gr. Hamish's Grave (CR varies)

The stench of damp earth, fetid water, and rotting organic matter is almost overwhelming upon entering into this cramped, 6-foot-high, dripping subterranean chamber. A warped wooden coffin rests on the floor near the center of the room. The casket's lid lies propped up against its side. Although partially filled with mud and peat, the glint of gold can still be seen beneath the dirt and debris.

Hamish's tactics depend upon the circumstances of his likely final encounter with the PCs. If he arrives here within 1 hour after being reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, his fast healing special ability does not function until he rests in his coffin for 1 hour. The nosferatu is completely helpless in this state and the PCs can incapacitate him by driving a wooden stake into his heart. Otherwise, a rejuvenated yet cornered **Hamish** resorts to almost any means to survive and see his plan to fruition.

His first line of defense, regardless of his predicament, is his **mudlord** ally. It fights to the death to defend Hamish. The creature disguises itself as an ordinary pile of mud using its freeze special ability, allowing the mudlord to take 20 on a Stealth check made in plain sight. Therefore, it takes a successful DC 38 Perception check to notice something amiss about the muddy patch of earth adjacent to the coffin. When the PCs approach within 10 feet of Hamish's coffin, the amorphous monster reassumes solid form and attacks.

MUDLORD
XP 2,400

CR 6

hp 67 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4* "Mudlord")

HAMISH MACDUNCAN

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 96 (see the **Freeform Encounters** section)

Tactics: The outsider hurls mudballs at his targets or bashes the trespassers with his slam attacks. The pair may work in concert to flank common opponents or to focus their assaults upon a blinded or otherwise incapacitated foe. Likewise, Hamish leaves the mudlord to deal with PCs armed with garlic, mirrors, and other items that keep the nosferatu at bay. The mudlord refuses to cede its territory to the interlopers, thus prompting it to battle to the death. On the other hand, Hamish never demonstrates the same loyalty. If clearly losing the fight, Hamish attempts to flee, if possible, by assuming swarm form and escaping back outside through the hollow tree trunk. When he reaches the surface, he tries to fly away from the fray as a bat swarm if daylight doesn't prevent him from doing so, though he will surely return to haunt the PCs in the future.

Treasure: Hamish's coffin contains 3,985 gp, 2,089 sp, eight 250 gp sapphires and two 1,000 gp diamonds. In addition, he also has a *wand of scorching ray* (CL 7th: 18 charges), a *staff of the scout*^{UE}, and an *extend metamagic rod*.

^{UE} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment*

FORGIVE AND REGRET

H. Hail Hydra (CR 8)

This hydra splits its time between wading in its foul-smelling pond devouring the abundant fish and eels and hunting larger game animals in the trees and vegetation adjacent to its pool. The monster is too big and stupid to attempt to conceal its presence. On land, it lumbers through the undergrowth toppling and crushing every obstacle in its path, while in the pond its movement creates constant splashing and ripples, making its location readily apparent. However, it has a knack for spotting its prey. It takes a successful DC 25 Stealth check to avoid detection.

The hydra immediately attacks anything that looks even remotely edible. It lashes out with its multiple heads, concentrating its ferocious bites on one or two opponents. The monster fights until destroyed, confident it will simply regenerate when its foes depart. This is especially true if the characters exclusively pummel the creature's body but ignore its multiple heads. However, if the PCs use fire or acid, the creature's survival instinct kicks in, and it does everything possible to flee when reduced to 3 heads or less.

NINE-HEADED HYDRA XP 4,800

CR 8

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary "Hydra"

N Gargantuan magical beast

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;
Perception +14

AC 21, touch 7, flat-footed 20 (+1 Dex, +14 natural, -4 size)
hp 112 (9d10+54 plus 9); fast healing 9
Fort +12; **Ref** +9; **Will** +5

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.
Melee 9 bites +13 (2d6+7)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Special Attacks pounce

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 22, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9
Base Atk +9; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 31 (can't be tripped)
Feats Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Perception +14, Swim +15; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception
SQ hydra traits, regenerate head

Fast Healing (Ex) A hydra's fast healing ability is equal to its current number of heads (minimum fast healing 5). This fast healing applies only to damage inflicted on the hydra's body.

Hydra Traits(Ex) A hydra can be killed by severing all of its heads or slaying its body. Any attack that is not an attempt to sever a head affects the body, including area attacks or attacks that cause piercing or bludgeoning damage. To sever a head, an opponent must make a sunder attempt with a slashing weapon targeting a head. A head is considered a separate weapon with hardness 0 and hit points equal to the hydra's HH. To sever a head, an opponent must inflict enough damage to reduce the head's hit points to 0 or less. Severing a head deals damage to the hydra's body equal to the hydra's current HD. A hydra can't attack with a severed head, but takes no other penalties.

Regenerate Head (Ex) When a hydra's head is destroyed, two heads regrow in 1d4 rounds. A hydra cannot have more than twice its original number of heads at any one time. To prevent new heads from growing, at least 5 points of acid or fire damage must be dealt to the stump (a touch attack to hit) before they appear. Acid or fire damage from area attacks can affect stumps and the body simultaneously. A hydra doesn't die from losing its heads until all are cut off and the stumps are seared by acid or fire.

Treasure: A past victim of the hydra's lost a leather pouch in its pool. It

can be located with a DC 23 Perception check. It contains 8 garnets (100 gp each) and a *stone of alliance*^{UE}.

^{UE} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment*

K. Skeeter Breeding Pool (CR 8)

On this spot centuries ago the callous soldier systematically butchered 22 mothers and their children. After he finished the deed, he tossed their bodies into these waters. Their suffering was so great, 3 **unrequiteds** coalesced at the spot. Though these undead pose no threat to Hamish, they attack living creatures on sight.

The monsters' affinity for suffering and their corrupting influence fouled the waters. However, Hamish was the missing ingredient that finally gave rise to the skeeters. The combination of these two components duplicates the effects of an *unhallow* spell that affects the pond's southeastern edge. The magical aura emitted by this potent, evil magic serves as an important clue that something untoward affects this area. A *hallow* spell cast in the same area negates this effect and prevents any more skeeters from springing to life as long as Hamish and an unrequited do not return to the accursed site. If both come back here, the *unhallow* effect is restored and the skeeters re-emerge from the pond at a rate of 1d2 per week.

UNREQUITEDS (3) XP 1,600 hp 59

CR 5

Tactics: Like Eladrian, the tormented incorporeal spirits can use their lifeseign supernatural ability to locate any living creature within 60 feet. When they detect any humanoid presence, the creatures immediately rush toward the source. They constantly radiate an aura of regret; therefore, any creatures within 30 feet of an unrequited must succeed on a DC 17 Will save to avoid being slowed. The unrequiteds then resort to incorporeal touch attacks, dealing Wisdom damage with their touch of sadness ability as well as taking turns blasting their foes with their *crushing despair* spell-like ability. The vengeful apparitions have no concerns regarding their personal safety, thus they continue to assault their enemies until one side completely falls.

Treasure: The tainted pool also contains a forgotten treasure cache that lies in a murky section of shallow water near the pond's southeastern edge. Locating the sealed stone jug partially buried in the thick mud requires a successful DC 24 Perception check. The jar contains 1,508 gp, an arcane scroll (CL 10: *dominate person*, *major creation*, *shout*) and an *insistent doorknocker*^{UE}.

^{UE} *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment*

N. Nixie Parade (CR 9)

Three weeks ago, Hamish's skeeters slew the reclusive **Ewan Lacour** as he picked berries just outside his door. Over the years, the old man succeeded wildly at only one endeavor — getting others to despise him. The crotchety septuagenarian rubbed everyone the wrong way. He constantly squabbled with his neighbors, making unfounded, paranoid accusations that they stole his stores of food while he slept and even once claimed they magically compelled the indigenous birds to sing too loudly outside his door. As a whole, the community shunned the hermit. Therefore, when the skeeters killed him, no one took notice, which opened the door to 8 **bog nixies** from the nearby pond. With Ewan dead, the malevolent fey moved into the residence, disguising themselves as a jovial couple and their 6 children. All too familiar with their human nemesis, the creatures claim they are Ewan Lacour's long-lost son Sian, Sian's wife, and 6 orphans they have found and raised over the years. When the PCs meet Sian and his family, they find them whistling and singing as they go about their chores, as if they had no cares in the world.

Instead of perpetrating an elaborate ruse, the phony family's patriarch acts jubilant at the approach of visitors and calls his "family" out to gather round and greet them. When the troupe musters around him, he extols them to entertain the newcomers with a cheery tune. Acting as the octet's chorus leader, Sian leads the 8 bog nixies to unleash their captivating song.

The nixies attempt to lead captivated PCs to the nearest bog pool to lure them into the deep bog by swimming out ahead of him. Unless the adventurer fears water, the pond does not appear to be a dangerous locale

QUESTS OF DOOM 4

that would entitle the entranced creature to a second saving throw against the effect. The nixies then attempt to leave the bogged-down character and pepper him from afar with their light crossbows.

Meanwhile, characters who successfully saved against the captivating song must next withstand a barrage of *charm person* spells to lead them into the treacherous terrain of the bogs as well. If these magical effects fail, they flee to the nearest pond to hide in the murky depths until the PCs have gone away. They can remain underwater indefinitely. Slain bog nixies revert to their true form.

BOG NIXIES (8)

XP 800

hp 13 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* 3 “Nixie, Bog Nixie”)

CR 3

Treasure: The bog nixies carry eight 100-gp pearls, a conch horn worth 25 gp, a *pearl of power* (2nd level) and a *golembane scarab*.

P. Pond

The reservoirs of stagnant water spread throughout the Wytch Bog are the wetland’s defining feature. Thick layers of stratified peat along the pond’s underwater surfaces function like a modern pool liner. The ponds collect precipitation and sequester the rainfall from entering groundwater systems while also preventing water runoff and groundwater from seeping into the pond. The decaying organic material gives the water a brownish tinge that impairs underwater vision. Furthermore, the acidity inhibits plant growth other than simple plant organisms, such as algae, which often floats atop the water’s surface. The squares within a pond contain light undergrowth, shallow bog, and deep bog. There are no typical trees and heavy undergrowth in these locales, though they may be encountered along the ponds’ edges.

Hamish dumped many of his victims in these ponds. If the characters search any of these watery graves, they find 2d4 leathery corpses with a

successful DC 20 Perception check. There is a 50% chance a mummified body still has 5d6 gp worth of random items on its person, with no more than 20% made up in actual coins. If the PCs examine any of these cadavers, a successful DC 25 Heal check confirms they died a violent death. These injuries include stab wounds, ligature marks around the neck, and slashing wounds to the throat.

R. Residences

The men, women, and children who troll the ponds for fish and cut peat from the earth dwell in sturdy wooden and stone homes scattered throughout the southern portion of the Wytch Bog. A handful of these abodes date back several centuries, but most are less than 100 years old. Wild berry patches and small animals such as raccoons, grouse, cranes, and myriad amphibians and reptiles are commonly found in close proximity to most of the homes. Larger game animals such as deer and moose shy away from humanoid contact. Those who hunt these game animals must do so in the wilds of the Wytch Bog generally at least several hundred yards away from the closest manmade structures.

Most homes consist of one floor with a partial stone foundation spread over a wide area. Homes have only one entryway and no windows. Homes are lit by smoky peat-burning lanterns to keep the worst of the insects at bay. There are 23 residences spread throughout the region, making it impossible to detail every one of them. Instead, the GM may populate any given abode with one of the families briefly described in the accompanying side box or create interesting individuals of his own design.

S. St. Worte Residence

Life in the Wytch Bog is harsh, and tragedy takes a toll on every family in this rugged environment. Yet even by the wetland’s brutal standards,

Residents

Dunleve Family

Orphaned 5 years ago, 15-year-old **Maisie Dunleve** (NG female human commoner 2; Dex 12; Stealth +3) and her 13-year-old brother **Wallace Dunleve** (NE male human rogue 1; Dex 13; Sleight of Hand +5) live with their uncle **Gervin Dunleve** (CN male human commoner 3). The lifelong bachelor is ill-suited to rear his unruly niece and nephew, whom he mostly ignores and allows to run amok while he hunts grouse and other game birds. Maisie demonstrates some measure of restraint, stopping short of committing any overtly criminal acts, unlike her temperamental and devious younger sibling who indulges nearly every mean-spirited whim that pops into his mind. Even Maisie fears her brother is spiraling out of control, prompting the young woman to beg her uncle to exert some discipline. To date her efforts have been ignored.

Adoc Family

The 53-year-old **Bertran Adoc** (LG old male human ranger 3; Wis 16; Knowledge [nature] +9) is the rigid yet loving head of this family. His older son **Torqil Adoc** (CG male human expert 3; Int 15; Craft [pottery] +11) shares his father’s ideals on the topics of righteousness and respecting the land, but resists his father’s efforts to transform him from an unmotivated lad into a hard worker. Instead of toiling in the fields, the whimsical young man prefers to turn ordinary clay into beautiful amphorae. Torqil’s younger brother **Alec Adoc** (LN male human cleric of Vanithu 2; Wis 14; Knowledge [religion] +7) and his mother **Collodena Adoc** (LN female half-elf warrior 3) share the patriarch’s devotion to Vanithu and stern authoritarian outlook. Bertran keeps the peace between his impulsive older child and his strict younger child and the man’s equally firm wife.

Ramsay Family

Ian Ramsay (N male half-elf sorcerer 2; Cha 14; Spellcraft +10) shares this residence with his younger siblings **Craigton Ramsay** (LN male half-elf expert 3) and **Sorcha Ramsay** (N female half-elf expert 4; Int 13; Craft [baskets] +8). The trio — all unmarried and approaching middle age — leads a pastoral lifestyle hunting game animals and gathering wild berries and other edible plants. Their deceased parents, a male elf and female human, experienced racism firsthand when they married and started their family five decades ago despite the fact they were both born and reared in the Wytch Bog. Now the trio derives some guilty pleasure from recent developments inflicting what they see as just deserts upon their bigoted neighbors.

Verien Family

In a strange coincidence, sisters **Elise** (NG female human expert 2; Profession [herbalist] +6) and **Fiona** (CG female human expert 3) married brothers **Errol Verien** (N male human ranger 3; Wis 15; Survival +8) and **Finlay Verien** (LN male human warrior 3; Str 15; Profession [soldier] +6). The couples, all in their twenties, share the home that belonged to the women’s parents before their untimely demise 6 years earlier during an outbreak of plague. Elise is 6 months pregnant with Errol’s child, while Fiona and Finlay wed only a few weeks earlier. The quartet harvests rare herbs from the surrounding vegetation, using the plants to concoct a variety of questionable poultices and brews. However, there is no doubting the efficacy of the pungent garlic bulbs growing in a small garden outside their door. Elise’s pregnancy spurred the idea of strategically positioning the plants to grant an added line of defense against the land’s unwelcome nosferatu, especially in light of recent developments.

Luci St. Worte's Diary Entry

"Disgusting wretches. Heaving, moaning, crying, sobbing. Hamish MacDuncan spoke with us yesterday about them and offered a noble solution. He would lead them somewhere out of our sight. Good riddance I say. They seem less than human in every way. My husband and I offered to help him in his noble quest. I told him about a pond and patch of land northwest of our home that might be conducive for his purposes. He smiled and thanked me for the assistance. They cannot be gone soon enough. I am carrying my own child and cannot worry about those that refuse to help themselves. I trust that Hamish will help us and bring this matter to its just end."

the St. Worte family seems especially unlucky. The 39-year-old **Artur St. Worte** (N male human commoner 4) is the last surviving child of his parents' 11 offspring. He watched as disease, accidents, and suicide decimated his siblings and parents over the years. His only remaining brother Montague disappeared and was presumed dead 7 months ago after straying into the deeper bog in pursuit of a deer. An exhaustive search turned up only a severed forearm and hand bearing the elder sibling's distinctive physical feature, a deformed tip on his right index finger. Even his beloved wife Mary could not escape calamity, as she died 8 years earlier after contracting a mysterious illness that ravaged her body for nearly a year before finally taking her life.

The endless succession of heartbreak has left Artur a broken man. He wallows in his misery, spending his days tilling his fields for food and selling blocks of peat to **Burgess Woolcroft**, a traveling merchant whom he considers his only friend. After laboring on his land during the day, the elder St. Worte drinks himself into a stupor every evening. If not for his son **Willem St. Worte** (LN young male human wizard 1), Artur would almost certainly sink into a perpetual alcoholic haze. Artur's love for his only child is the only impetus keeping him going every day, albeit in his diminished state.

Artur dwells more on the loss of his immediate family than on the actions of his ancestors. The man has no interest in speaking with outsiders about his distant lineage except to casually remark that some unforeseen blight hangs over his house. On the other hand, the well-read Willem takes great interest in his parentage. He tirelessly scours through his extensive collection of dog-eared journals and crumbling diaries in his spare time. The youngster happily shares his discoveries with complete strangers despite his father's protestations. One diary in particular greatly interests him. Written by **Luci St. Worte** roughly 200 years ago, the battered book consists of mad ramblings and indecipherable scrawls except for one page Willem happily shares with anyone who takes interest in his studies. It is impossible to note the date of the entry, but its subject matter and language indicates Luci wrote it contemporaneously with the massacre.

Willem concludes that the passage references Hamish's atrocities in addition to implicating Luci and her husband in his despicable plan. Questions about the mysterious parcel of land Luci references in her diary passage go unanswered as neither Willem nor his father ever venture beyond their property lines, especially these days. Furthermore, they never interact with Hamish, so they can provide no direct knowledge about him.

T. Redoubt (CR varies)

Unable to travel about during daylight, long ago Hamish constructed three solid stone structures that offer him temporary refuge from the sun's rays. When the PCs happen upon one of these buildings, the GM may read or paraphrase the following description.

This squat 10-by-10 bunker has windowless walls made from loose stone joined together by dried mud and crude mortar. Wooden beams, reeds and dried mud rest atop the stone walls to create a solid roof. A short opening on the south face is the only visible entrance to the makeshift shelter. A thick, black curtain is drawn across the entrance.

If the PCs succeed on a DC 25 Perception check, they notice 5 small holes in the floor, covered by a metallic grid.

If Hamish is unaware the PCs entered his domain, there is a 10% chance of encountering him inside a redoubt while the sun is in the sky. However, the skeeters that always accompany him keep a vigilant watch on the surrounding area. When intruders approach the redoubt, they swoop down from the heavens and attack the trespassers. Adventurers who slay the skeeters and enter the redoubt have the startled vampire at a significant disadvantage. Unable to flee outside, Hamish initially stands and fights, taking up a defensive position in one of the near corners to prevent any accidental exposure to sunlight. When the battle turns against him, the vampire transforms into a swarm of centipedes and makes for one of the drains. He then descends into a pipe and flees into countless vermin warrens spread beneath the redoubt. In similar fashion, whenever the PCs start to block up the pipes, he immediately foregoes combat and escapes into these tiny warrens where his swarm form can spread out and sit tight to wait out any intruders. He remains in swarm form underneath the surface until the sun sets. When darkness falls, he returns to the surface through a drain or one of countless tiny vermin burrows scattered 2d20 feet outside the redoubt.

SKEETERS (1d2+1)

XP 1,200

hp 42

CR 4

HAMISH MACDUNCAN

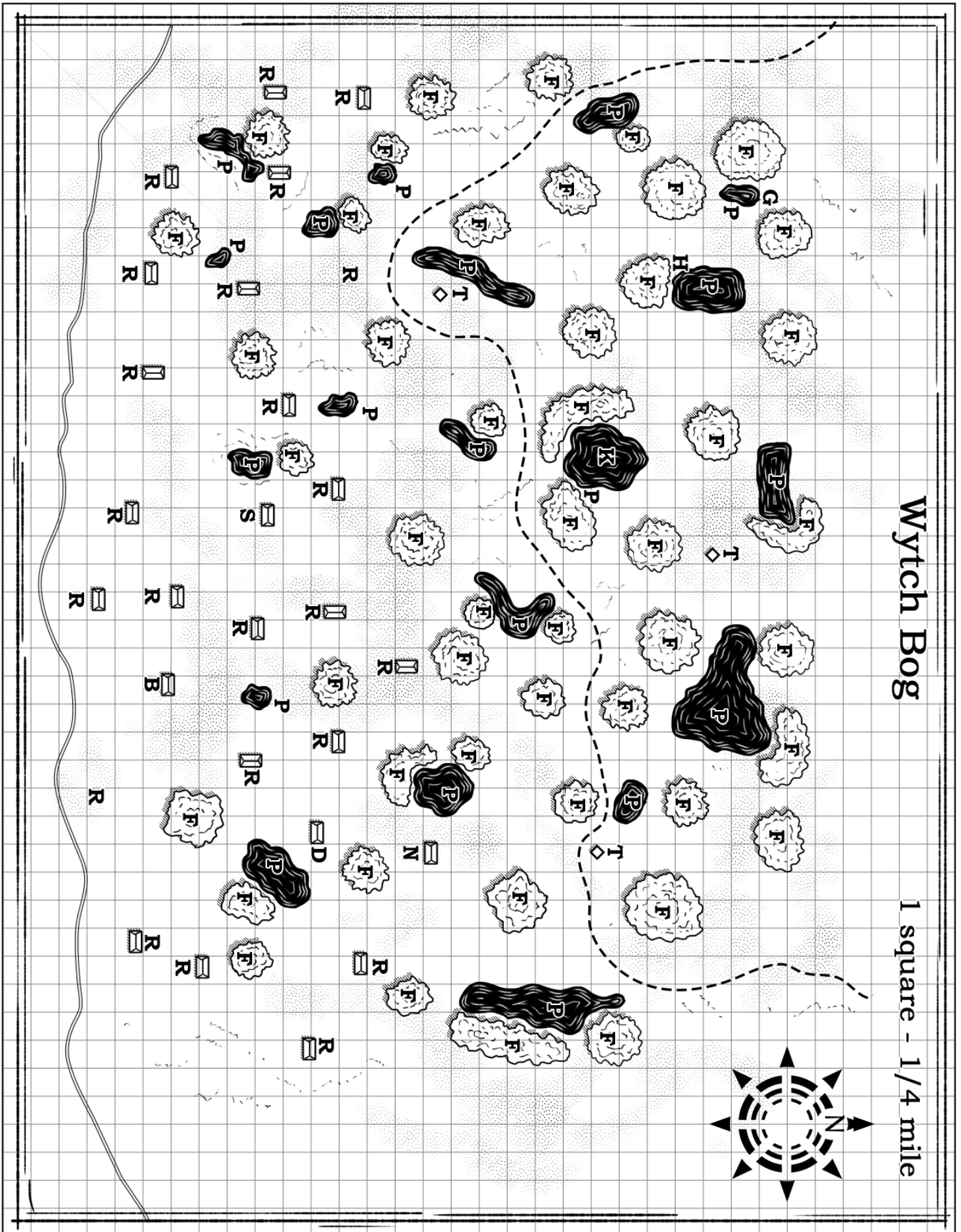
XP 6,400

hp 96 (see the **Freeform Encounters** section)

CR 9

Ending the Adventure

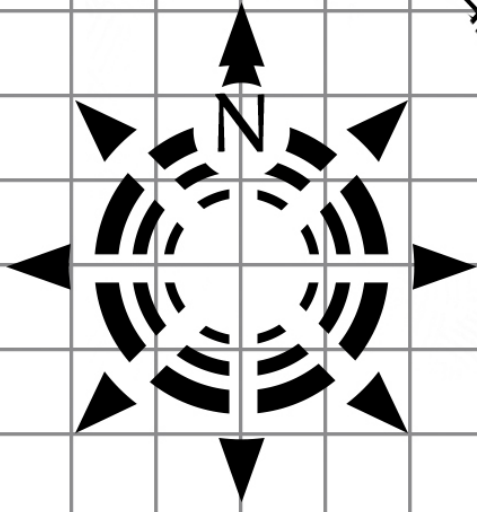
Destroying Hamish ends the imminent threat to the people inhabiting the Wytch Bog, but they remain in tremendous peril. If the PCs did not defeat Eladrian or the will-o'-wisps, these monsters rush forward to fill the power vacuum Hamish left behind. Now free to move about and attack the residents without restrictions, the monsters seemingly release decades of pent-up frustration in violent fashion. Within mere hours of Hamish's destruction, the now purposeless elf spirit makes her way across the land, mercilessly slaying anyone she encounters. On the other hand, the pair of will-o'-wisps takes a less aggressive approach. Though they do not immediately attack the residents, the duo becomes more opportunistic with Hamish's restrictions now lifted. They have no love lost for Hamish, so they take no actions against the individuals who destroyed him. However, everyone in the Wytch Bog is now a potential victim as the creatures step up their frightful attacks in the days and weeks ahead. Given this set of circumstances, it is almost certain the PCs must deal with these threats, particularly Eladrian, before departing the Wytch Bog for good.



Hamish's Grave

1 square - 5 feet

G1



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