

GOOD COUNTRY DYIN'

A HILLSFAR HORROR STORY



3-5
PLAYERS



2-4
HOURS



5-10
TIER 2



Written by: Marc Anderson

Cover Art: Kate Manning

*Dedicated to John Music,
my grandfather.*

*Inspired by a dream,
encouraged by a tweet from
Ivan Van Norman.*

Only the start.

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CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



GOOD COUNTRY DYIN' - A 5TH- TO 10TH-LEVEL ADVENTURE

"Trust no one." - Forsaken NPC, World of Warcraft

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO GOOD COUNTRY DYIN'. **THIS DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 5th Edition adventure is designed for 5th-through 10th-level characters and is optimized for five 8th-level characters.**

This adventure takes place near the outskirts of the Cormanthor Forest, somewhere between the village known as the Stop and the Moonsea-side city of Hillsfar, on the continent of Faerûn.

ADJUSTING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure provides suggested adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding to the nearest whole number). This is the group's Average Party Level (APL). To approximate the party strength for the adventure, consult the following table.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH Party Composition

		Strength
3 - 4 Characters	APL less than	Very Weak
3 - 4 Characters	APL equivalent	Weak
3 - 4 Characters	APL greater than	Average
5 Characters	APL less than	Weak
5 Characters	APL equivalent	Average
5 Characters	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 Characters	APL less than	Average
6-7 Characters	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 Characters	APL greater than	Very Strong

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Good Country Dyin' is a standalone adventure. But if you've run the hardcover adventure *Out of the Abyss*, your players may enjoy the nods and references to that adventure. This adventure would also pair well with the *Lost Tales of Myth Draenor*, available for purchase on [DMsGuild.com](https://www.dmsguild.com/)!

The length of this module is estimated to last 3-4 hours, depending on how combat-hungry your players are. Not every encounter is meant to be won, though some players may find a way, even if it means burning everything to the ground with carefully-placed fireballs.

Not too long ago, Joyce and Linda, a tiefling and a human, fell in love. Before meeting Joyce, Linda Pemperton was a leatherworker by trade, plying her handcrafted wares in Hillsfar to prospective and current adventurers.

Over the years, Linda made enough coin to purchase a farm on the outskirts of the Cormanthor Forest. Located two miles away from a village called the Stop, the Two Moon Ranch once provided fresh food and leather for passing caravans or made-to-order gear for adventurers.

During this time, Linda met a certain adventurer named Joyce Softstep who wanted a custom suit of armor made, one that would never get dirty on her many trips across the Moonsea. This beautiful tiefling ranger would become much more than a customer over the next few months. One year after she moved to Two Moon Ranch, Joyce accepted Linda's marriage proposal and became her wife.

The newly-wed couple adopted two orphans, Susanne and Bryce, took in impoverished workers from Hillsfar, and set themselves up for a long, happy life together. You would think the story would end there.

Unfortunately, it doesn't.

Unbeknownst to the happy couple, their home was being watched, both from the Cormanthor Forest and the ground underneath it. Mendax and Proditorax, two doppelgangers fresh from a crime spree in Mulmaster, wanted to take over the farm. Far enough away from any points of civilization, Two Moon Ranch would make the perfect death-trap for unsuspecting adventurers and also satisfy their mysterious Zhentarim handlers' desire for "used" items to sell on the black market.

Over a period of weeks, the couple's children's growing fears of going outside, compounded by Joyce swearing that someone was watching her while she tended to the cornfield, drove the Pempertons away from their beloved home. It was even easier for the doppelgangers to convince Streeb, the half-orc farmhand employed by the Pempertons, to start working for them. He never cared for the couple anyway.

For a while, business for the two doppelgangers was good, and, if it weren't for the disappearances, it would've been even better. But nothing seemed to satisfy the Zhentarim-aligned drow overseeing their operation, not even the one whose eye twitched in the wrong direction. The ooze was to blame. That was it. Something was coming out of the Cormanthor Forest, scaring off their "help" and dragging the ones who remained behind the Two Moon Ranch barn. Something that left red trails of ooze in its tracks.

There are places where the barriers between the surface world and the Underdark are the weakest. In these places, creatures of great evil — demons, aberrations, and more — wait for just the right moment to break through and spread their corrupting influence on elf and man alike. The back of the Two Moon Ranch, or, more specifically, the woods near the barn, is one of these places.

The intrusion began, insignificantly enough, with a small crack in the earth that mysteriously bled red. Over the course of days, it grew, kept alive by woodland animals who wandered too far and, in part, by Mendax and Proditorax's refusal to maintain the farm. Eventually, the growing blob of ooze, a crimson red oblex, undulated its way into the barn and took up residence, snacking on unwitting farmhands and adventurers along the way. Satisfied with its dank and humid lair, the ooze turned its attention to the rest of the farm and the warm, delicious humanoids spread over it like a holiday feast. With more oozes, puddings, and jellies coming out of the crack in the ground and spreading across the farm, its goals became clear: Consume, lest it be consumed.

In recent months, deliveries from the Two Moon Ranch have ceased coming to the Stop. The farmhands and animals that once called the farm home are no more, having either

disappeared into the forest or, worse, been killed. The Pemperton family, driven out by the horrors that plagued their daily lives, now live within the high city walls of Hillsfar. The only person who still walks the road from the farm to the Stop is a half-orc dressed in dirty overalls and a nearly-ruined straw hat. He calls himself "Streeb," and he always puts up a flyer in the local tavern that reads, "Two Moon Ranch, Strong People Wanted. Honest Pay for Honest Work." Sometimes he gets people who are interested in helping out. Those poor souls never come back to the Stop.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

This adventure has three parts:

- **Part 1.** The characters meet Streeb, the half-orc farmhand and face of an operation meant to snare adventurers and their precious gear.
- **Part 2.** Either through the night or the next day, the characters must face the dangers that lie hidden on the farm. The party meets shapeshifters impersonating the Pempertons, as well as other unusual characters that call the Two Moon Ranch home. They might also discover a connection between the Zhenatim and some of the shapeshifters.
- **Part 3.** By uncovering clues and battling horrific monsters, the party comes to see the truth behind the unsavory characters skulking about the farm. Based on what they have uncovered so far, their final conflict is with either the doppelgangers Mendax and Proditerax or the oblex lurking in the Two Moon Ranch barn.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

All the adventure hooks assume that the characters are approaching Two Moon Ranch by wagon, horses, or some other vehicle, and, like any good horror film, there should be time to introduce everyone before the mayhem begins. Take five minutes to get introductions from your players and ask them one thing that their character is afraid of. Why are they traveling with the other players? What was their last adventure together?

1. *If Nobody's Using It....* Siku, a wealthy tiefling nobleman, recently of Mulmaster, has tasked the party with investigating the long-thought abandoned Two Moon Ranch. He's looking to expand his holdings in the Hillsfar region, and what better real estate is there to take than a farm close to the Stop, that caravan way station? There are rumors that some strange humanoid figures are haunting the farm, but they're unfounded at best. Best to head to the farm and start investigating.
2. *I'm Not Going Crazy - I Saw Something!* A mutual friend or acquaintance of one of the party members asked that you meet with one Linda Pemperton, a leatherworker who's living with her wife in the city of Hillsfar. Linda is looking for anyone who can help her, or her family, and provide any evidence of the "shadows" and "tall men" her children saw at their former home, the Two Moon Ranch. She



doesn't have enough gold to provide payment, but she can fashion new armor for the party for a discounted fee.

3. *Any Port in a Storm*. No wizard could have predicted the intense rainstorm coming in from the Moonsea. Hillsfar and her surrounding countries are soaked with rain, making long-distance travel next to impossible. It's a blessing, then, that the party was able to see that farm just off the muddy road. Maybe they can use it as shelter until the storm passes?

SPELLCASTING SERVICES

Characters who need spellcasting services must make their way to Hillsfar, the major city in this part of the Moonsea region. Priests of Chantea, Lliira, and Tempus provide these sorts of services to their faithful and take gold coins from non-worshippers as a donation.

At the DM's discretion, there might be several Silvanus-worshipping druids at the Stop who can perform spellcasting services. In exchange for their services, they might ask the requesting character to investigate the abandoned Two Moon Ranch.

SHADOWFELL-TOUCHED MARBLES

Over the course of the adventure, characters might find black marbles hidden in various areas of Two Moon Ranch. These marbles are being used as part of a clairvoyance spell, meant to keep an eye on anyone moving about the area. Their creator is a lawful evil rock gnome **mage** named Teeno Nevilpot, allied with the Zhentarim, who's currently holed up in **area 2b** of the ranch.

Any character that touches the marble for the first time must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. If they fail, they see an elongated humanoid form with flashing yellow eyes and dark blue skin — a doppelganger — before being affected by Shadowfell despair (found in Chapter 2, "Optional Rule: Shadowfell Despair" of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). For your convenience, the effects are printed below:

Roll a d6 to determine the effects, using the Shadowfell Despair table. You can substitute different despair effects of your own creation.

SHADOWFELL DESPAIR

d6	Effect
1-3	Apathy. The character has disadvantage on death saving throws and on Dexterity checks for initiative, and gains the following flaw: "I don't believe I can make a difference to anyone or anything."
4-5	Dread. The character has disadvantage on all saving throws and gains the following flaw: "I am convinced that this place is going to kill me."
6	Madness. The character has disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws that use Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, and gains the following flaw: "I can't tell what's real anymore."

If a character is already suffering a despair effect and fails the saving throw, the new despair effect replaces the old one. After finishing a long rest, a character can attempt to overcome the despair with a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. (The DC is higher because it's harder to shake off despair once it has taken hold.) On a successful save, the despair effect ends for that character.

A *calm emotions* spell removes despair, as does any spell or other magical effect that removes a curse.





INTRODUCTION

RAIN. IT'S BEEN NOTHING BUT RAIN SINCE you left Hillsfar, enough to leave your clothes soaked and your spirits low. If this keeps up, you think, the farmers living beyond the city walls will be left with nothing to harvest come autumn.

To make things worse, the road you're traveling on should be paved cobblestone. Instead, it's a mess of mud, broken stones, and deep grooves made by wagon wheels passing through, a perfect way to break an ankle or leg if you're not paying attention. Whoever said this part of the Moonsea was "beautiful" and "great for visiting" should be shot through with arrows. Repeatedly.

PART I: GREEN ACRES IS THE PLACE TO BE

After a long trek from the Stop, one of the last caravan stations between Hillsfar and Yûlash, the party arrives at Two Moon Ranch, soaked from the rain that's been pounding this region of the Moonsea. Here, they meet Streeb, the half-orc.

MEET STREEB

Depending on the time of day, things are very quiet on the Pemperton estate. The doppelgangers are shoring up their defenses in the farmhouse, having finished resetting adventurer-sized traps set around the farm. Regardless of the hour, the adult oblex and its spawn are digesting their last meal in the barn. In the cornfield, Teeno Nevilpot has recast *clairvoyance* on the marbles he uses for surveillance around the farm.

After arriving at the farm from the main road, read or paraphrase the following:

The sun's dipped past the horizon a while ago, and the night is at her strongest. Just up to your right, about twenty paces or so, a set of buildings and cleared land provide a break from the Cormanthor tree line. A white-painted shed sits by the roadway, although it looks like it hasn't been used for years. The sound of wood hitting wood leads you to spot a small sign hung on the shed, slowly swinging in the wind thanks to some copper wire. When you get closer, the sign reads in black lettering and in Common, "LEATHER FOR SALE."

The shed is about 4 feet wide and 6 feet tall — enough to house a single humanoid and little else. Any characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score above 10 hear the faint sounds of snoring coming from inside the shed.

Streeb, the half-orcish farmhand (**wereboar**), is currently taking a nap on his trusty wooden rocking chair, surrounded by two stacks of "good" leather armor. When the adventurers arrive, Streeb is working for Mendax the doppelganger.

Read or paraphrase the following if the party gets a closer look at the shed:

A heavy-set, aging half-orc with mottled grey skin, stained farmhand's clothing, and dark leather boots, is currently taking a nap in a wooden rocking chair that's as old as he is. It creaks under his weight while he rocks. A light breeze pushes what's left of his white hair about. A stack of dark brown leather sits to the half-orc's right and occasionally drips a thick, yellowish liquid onto the shed's wooden floor.

Investigating the shed or trying to steal its contents wakes up Streeb. If attacked, he rouses and shifts into his hybrid form. Getting within 5 feet of the stack of leather, or attempting to examine the pile, will cause a muddled stew of an **intelligent black pudding** and **three ochre jellies** to slide out from the stack and attack the first thing it can sense: Streeb.

If the party decides to aid Streeb and defeat the oozes, the half-orc turns back into his regular form, acting genuinely surprised, but grateful, muttering something about extra pay under his breath. He denies knowing that the leather went bad: "This? Just a bad batch. Wasn't tanned right. I'm sure the Missus will want to know about this, though. Let me get you set up in the guesthouse and I'll keep watch right here till morning." Any questions about his wereboar form are answered with a variation on "Something bit me in the forest. I'd stay away from there if I were you. Bad things live out there."

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this **hard** encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove two **ochre jellies**.

Weak: Remove one **ochre jelly**.

Strong and Very Strong: Add two **intelligent black puddings**.

Treasure. Streeb keeps a rotting wooden maul, 1d20 crossbow bolts, one acid-damaged leather glove, and a small pouch of 55 gold coins on his person, (presumably to pay the farmhands after their week of work, which never seems to happen), along with a set of four small silver keys initialed with the letters "L&J." One of the silver keys unlocks the guesthouse.

If no one approaches the shed, Streeb continues to nap until he's disturbed by screams or other loud noises or until the morning of Day 2. On Day 2, Streeb leaves the farm to do what he was supposed to be doing and post work flyers at the Stop, returning home in the evening to nap in the cool of the white shed.

If Streeb is woken up peacefully, read or paraphrase the following:

The half-orc lets out a hacking cough. His eyes flutter open. You could swear the chair squeaks in protest as he gets up to look at you properly with striking amber eyes. "Wha? Huh? ...You're here because of the flyers, aren't you? You're looking for work?" The half-orc cracks a smile.

"Don't say a word, I know you are. Streeb knows these things. So, you want to talk about payment? I can do 40 gold pieces for a week's worth of work. I'd need to talk to the Boss about raisin' that. Put you up in the guest house. Good place to stay through all this heat. Mhm!"

Roleplaying Streeb: By now, Streeb's dealt with quite a few groups of people looking for work. As a result, he is very to the point and leaves little room for the adventurers to get a word in edgewise.

A successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check gets Streeb to pay proper attention to the adventurers and possibly raise the wage to 75 gp. If Streeb is asked about the leather, it's "not for sale," as it's meant to go to the Stop, although a successful Charisma check might get the farmhand to sell it outright for 100 gold pieces.

WHAT DOES STREEB KNOW?

- "This is the Two Moon Ranch. It's run by the Missus— Mrs. Linda Pemperton and her wife, Joyce. Doesn't look like much, but it is what it is."
- "Linda is a leatherworker by trade. The leather next to me? That's supposed to go out to the Stop for sale. It'll get there. Eventually. Soon. The yellow stuff? I don't know what that is."
- The Pempertons are looking for seasonal workers, which is why Streeb's been putting up flyers at the Stop. Didn't the party see them?
- "It's easy work, really. Working out in the cornfield, helping with the barn, that sort of thing. Some cattle are coming in later this week, so someone who knows their way around animals would be a good addition to the farm."
- "The Missus left to take care of some business in Hillsfar. They'll be back by the afternoon or dusk tomorrow."
- "I can put you up in the guesthouse, like I said. Best place to weather the storm until the Missus get back."





THE GUESTHOUSE: STREEB SURVIVES

If Streeb survives his encounter with the party, he gets off his precious rocking chair and escorts them to the Pemperton farm's "guest house," a ramshackle structure that sits off and to the right of the main farmhouse.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The rain is picking up again, and visibility is getting low, even for those with special gifts. Seemingly satisfied with himself, Streeb leads you off into the direction of the "guest house," if it could be called that. Standing less than a story tall, everything about this structure seems to be falling apart, from the straw roof and chimney to the grey stone siding to the two broken glass windows that look out on the common area of the farm.

"Don't mind the outside. It's due for improvement," the half-orc says with a guttural chuckle. "Maybe I can get you to work on it while you're here?" With a faint "tch-chik," the wooden door to this ramshackle building swings open. The inside of the house is pitch black.

"There," Streeb says smugly. "That should get you set up right. Food's in the big chest there, and water's out in the back. Look for the big iron pump. Have a good night, and see you in the morning!" Slamming the door behind him, Streeb shuffles off to someplace else, and you're covered in a light dusting of loose stone.

PART 2: FARM LIVING IS THE LIFE FOR ME



WHETHER THE PARTY DECIDES TO WAIT the storm out until morning, kill Streeb outright and take shelter in the guesthouse, or go exploring on their own, the farm is not as idyllic as it might appear. The doppelgangers—Mendax (impersonating

Linda) and Proditorax (impersonating Joyce)—have laid traps in sections of the farm, hoping to kill off any adventurers who want to play farmhand. In addition, monsters from the Cormanthor Forest have taken up residence here, thanks to Mendax's lack of care for the property.

AREA 1: THE GUESTHOUSE

The guesthouse, located off the common area of the farm, was used by past farmhands and workers for resting, eating, and sleeping.

The building is normally kept locked. Streeb has a key to open the front door, but a successful DC 10 Dexterity check with thieves' tools or a DC 13 Strength check can open the door. Forcing the door open will alert Streeb.

Read or paraphrase the following when the party enters the guesthouse, using a light source or darkvision:

This ramshackle “guest house” has a rather decent living area—four cots, a fireplace, and even a wooden chest and dresser. From the straw roof and dilapidated chimney to the grey stone siding to even those broken windows looking out towards the common area of the farm, you were sure this place would fall apart the moment you stepped inside. Maybe tonight doesn’t have to be spent out in the cold. Maybe there is a merciful god. That’s before you see the walls covered with the phrase “THEY ARE WATCHING” written over and over in increasingly unsteady hands.

A VERY UNRESTFUL NIGHT

Characters who choose to rest in the guesthouse or have a long rest here do so surrounded by the horrors on the Two Moon Ranch.

For each character who chooses to keep watch, read or paraphrase the following:

You are haunted by shadows and unnerving noises emanating from the dark corners of the house. Someone—or something—is watching you. They must be. There’s no possible explanation for the chills you feel up your spine or the feeling of pressure being applied to your shoulder.

Characters on watch must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, even when their watch ends, they are unable to sleep and do not gain the benefit of a long rest.

INSIDE THE GUESTHOUSE

The inside of the guesthouse is an improvement from the outside. Four adult-sized cots are arranged along the walls, with a large metal fireplace along the eastern wall. Next to the fireplace, there’s a large wooden chest that has no lock and a dresser that’s missing two drawers. A pile of stones are blocking what appears to be a door leading out back. The stones can be moved with a successful DC 17 Strength check, by casting *mage hand*, or with similar abilities.

The walls, while almost completely covered in writing, hold a secret: a small, intricately drawn winged serpent descending from the sky, about to consume a black orb. The character with the highest passive Perception score can see, and fish out, a small black marble from where the “orb” is. A *detect magic* spell shows that the marble gives off an aura of divination magic. See “**Shadowfell-Touched Marbles**” for more information.

Inside the chest is a week’s worth of edible rations, a waterskin, an iron knife that breaks after one use (an attack roll, skill check, etc.), a wrapped wheel of cheese, and a loaf of days-old bread. The cheese and bread’s edibility is dubious; characters who eat these foods must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 2d4 hours. The dresser is stuffed full of parchments, all written by the same hand. Addressed to a “Linda” from a “Joyce,” it is a plea for Linda to take “Susanne and Bryce” away from the farm: “The night terrors are becoming too much for them to handle. We are not safe anymore. We need to leave.”

OUTSIDE THE GUESTHOUSE

A back door, obscured by a pile of stones, leads to an empty wooden trough and iron pump. Another wooden shed stands nearby, with a crescent moon carved into its front. The pump pours fresh water, provided its handle is moved up and down.

Adventurers who help themselves to the outhouse are greeted with the smell of decay and humanoid fecal matter.

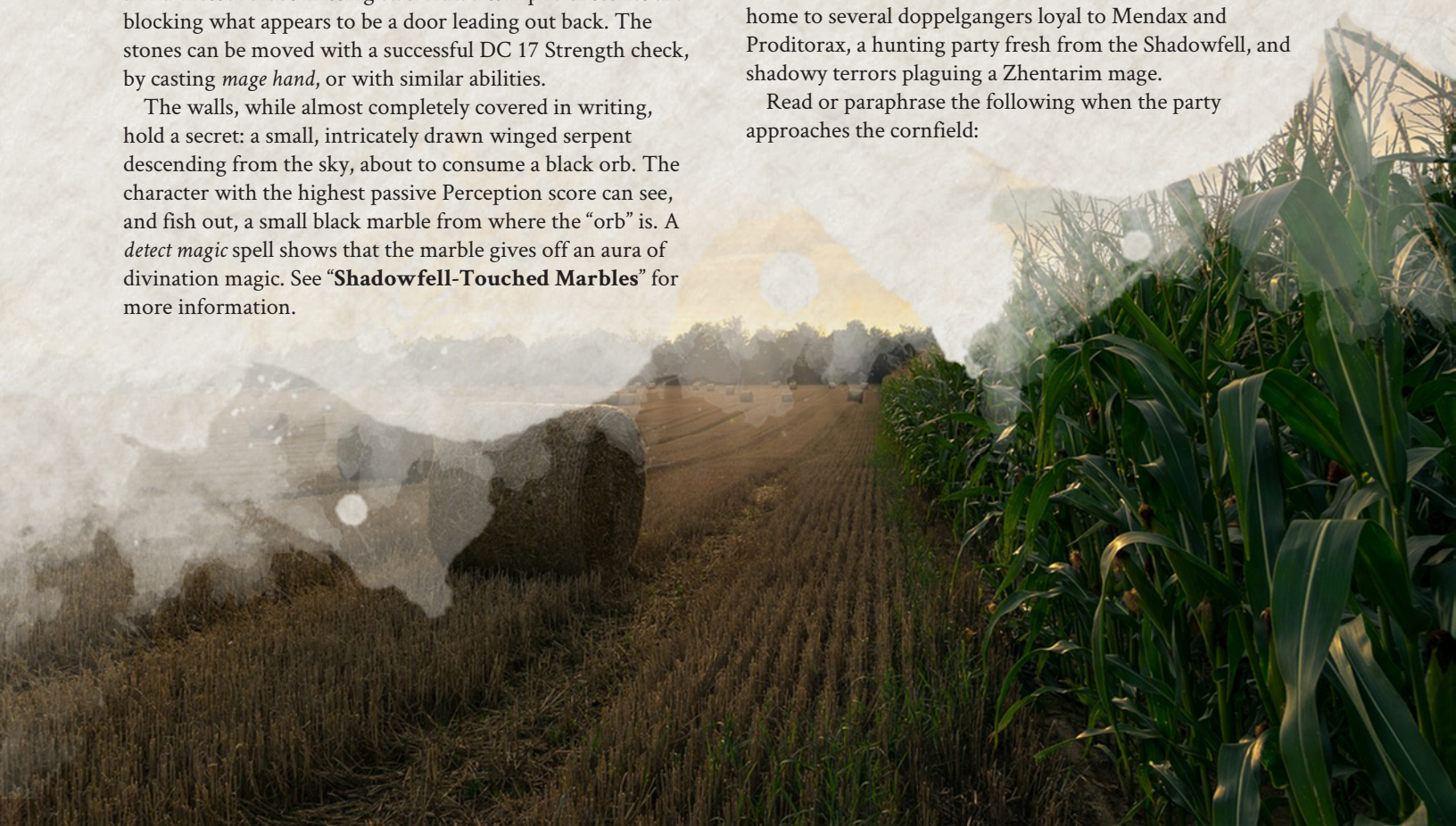
The back portion of the Guesthouse also provides a scenic view of the surrounding land, including the cornfields and Cormanthor Forest.

AREA 2: THE CORNFIELD

While the Pempertons lived at Two Moon Ranch, the cornfield was used by the Zhentarim doppelgangers to study and stalk the family. After the family left, the oblex claimed this slice of the ranch. As a result, the ground is a breeding ground for oozes, jellies, and oblex spawn of all kinds. The sign described below doesn’t lie: there is a treasure to be found, but it’s behind a trap set up by the doppelgangers.

Attentive adventurers might also find a hideout that’s home to several doppelgangers loyal to Mendax and Proditorax, a hunting party fresh from the Shadowfell, and shadowy terrors plaguing a Zhentarim mage.

Read or paraphrase the following when the party approaches the cornfield:



In this field, for as far as the eye can see, stalks of half-grown corn or maize are lined up in perfect rows, like soldiers waiting for a reprieve that will never come. The wet ground between the rows of corn show signs of many tracks, humanoid and otherwise, most going into the field. A small wooden shield, wedged into the mud, bears the phrase "TREZHUR AHEAD," carved in broken Common. An arrow to the right of the shield points into the field.

WHICH WAY TO THE TREASURE?

Despite the arrow pointing into the cornfield, there are no other signs or aids to help adventurers who want to find the hidden treasure. To make things worse, the rainstorms plaguing this part of the Moonsea turn the field into a soggy, sticky mud pile, making pathfinding increasingly difficult the farther one goes. To successfully navigate their way through the cornfield, adventurers must succeed on three consecutive Wisdom (Survival) checks, one DC 5, then DC 10, then DC 15. A failure results in a mini encounter with the **oblex spawn**, **black puddings**, and **ochre jellies** living here.

The party may backtrack at any time without penalty, arriving back at the edge of the cornfield. If they decide to do this, they need to succeed on the Wisdom (Survival) checks again in order to make progress. Any successful checks already made count towards their progress.

DOPPELGANGER DECEPTION

Read or paraphrase the following when the party approaches the abandoned warren:

Though your feet and choice of footwear may be wet and caked with mud, though you've passed by more rotten corn than you'd ever like to in your lifetime, your journey into the cornfield is not in vain. You've come across a large open hole that appears to have been dug some time ago. Discarded farming equipment surrounds the opening. The sounds of angry, barking animals comes from within.

While most of the doppelganger hideout is collapsed, either from the rainy weather or farming equipment passing over the tunnels and living areas, there appears to be at least one straight tunnel leading underground.

A detect magic spell reveals an aura of illusion magic in this area. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check also shows that there are fewer footprints around the tunnel opening. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check confirms that the opening of the tunnel is, in fact, the cover of a mud pit.

The first character to step foot on the edge of the tunnel activates a simple pit trap. The cover of this trap—several wooden planks tied together with rope—drops to the bottom, causing the character to fall 20 feet into a slippery mud pit.

Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notice an iron door that's been covered with mud, possibly in an attempt to make it hidden.

Treasure. At the bottom of the pit are the bones of various adventurers who, weakened by their encounters in the cornfield, fell victim to their own greed. Hidden amongst the bones is a brown satchel covered in mud and an odd reddish slime. This bag contains rare coins worth 100 gold pieces, along with two **potions of greater healing** and a **potion of hill giant strength**.

AREA 2B: (MOSTLY ABANDONED) ZHENTARIM CORNFIELD HIDEOUT

This tunneled-out hideout was made by Mendax and Proditorax and several other doppelgangers loyal to the Zhentarim. At one time, the doppelgangers used this den to spy on the Pemperton family, studying their behaviors so that they could successfully drive out the family, take over the farm, and turn it into an adventurer death trap.

While they were able to accomplish one of those goals, keeping a hold on the farm has proven to be a difficult venture, now that the oblex living in the barn claims the cornfield as its own. With Mendax and Proditorax cut off from their allies and holed up in the farmhouse, the rest of the Zhentarim were left to fend for themselves. It was a tragedy, then, that the mage meant to keep an eye on things, Teeno Nevilpot, inadvertently opened a tear into the Shadowfell, attracting the attention of a Shadar-Kai hunting group.



AREA 2B-1: ENTRANCE

Claustrophobia-inducing and only big enough for a single humanoid to squeeze through, the muddy tunnel in this area branches off into two directions: northwest towards area 2b-2, and northeast towards area 2b-3.

AREA 2B-2: STORAGE/LIVING AREA

Four tall cedar logs appear to hold up the makeshift, rectangular room here, which is in danger of collapsing.

Stacks of rusted, ruined, or otherwise disrepaired armor, shields, and weapons are stacked up on top of each other. Occasionally, mud drips down from the 15-foot-high ceiling, making the floor slick, which counts as **difficult terrain**.

The corpses of seven Zhentarim thugs, a half-green dragon assassin, and a wizened veteran are strewn amongst the equipment. Waiting for unsuspecting adventurers are a shadar-kai hunting party: two **shadow dancers**. Drawn to the magic rift in 2b-3, they are currently looting the room and looking for fresh victims.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative:

Very Weak and Weak: Replace the **shadow dancers** with two **mezzoloths**.

Strong and Very Strong: Add one **shadow mastiff**.



AREA 2B-3: OBSERVATION ROOM

Four tall cedar logs hold up the makeshift, circular room here, which appears to be in slightly better condition than area 2b-2. A shadowy, pitch-black tear in the fabric of reality lies near the middle of the room.

Piles of parchment and books encircle a large, intricate steel bowl, which is placed upon a similarly-made steel pedestal. It's filled to the brim with equally-sized black marbles, although there seems to be room for more.

Teeno Nevilpot, a rock gnome **mage**, lies on the floor next to the pedestal, alive, but clutching his bald head in apparent agony. He occasionally talks in Common saying, "I have to find my lost marbles. I can't see. I didn't do anything wrong, I swear!" If someone tries to help him, he turns to look at them with hollow, voidless eye sockets and points to where his eyes once were. "Whoever you are - please - find my marbles!"

Putting two of the black marbles into Teeno's eyes causes the very shadows in the room to animate and surge into the gnome's body before sending him into the Shadowfell. Every character inside the room must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, they gain the *blinded* condition and the following character flaw: "There is no hope - that's for other people. I am forever haunted by the things I've done wrong in my life." Their eyes become black, shadowy sockets. A *greater restoration* spell or similar magic removes the flaw and condition.

Teeno Nevilpot. A failed Red Wizard before the Zhentarim took him in, Teeno was tasked with using his talents of precognition and *clairvoyance* to watch the Pemperton family for Mendax and Proditorax, in addition to providing exacting notes about them. The doppelgangers never told Teeno why they were interested in the couple, but they expressed the most interest in how Linda and Joyce behaved and spoke. The piles of parchment and journals around Teeno were the result of hours upon hours of surveillance. As a cruel joke by the Shadar-Kai passing through, his eyes were gouged out and replaced with the marbles he used for surveillance.



AREA 3: ZHENTARIM HANDLER CAMP

Out near the cornfield, next to a decaying wooden fence, are three white canvas tents and the remains of a campfire. One of the wooden planks has leather leads wrapped around it, along with a discarded saddle.

The tents contain mundane camping supplies and the contents of an explorer's pack minus the rations, although an adventurer who makes a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds a rolled up parchment hidden under one of the bed cots. It has three symbols on it: a black, winged snake descending towards a small black orb; two pale crescent moons intertwined with each other, each with a wide, jovial grin on its face; and the number two written in Undercommon.

AREA 4: THE GRANARY

This granary has not been used for its intended purpose—the storage of grains, dry feed, and other food for the livestock on Two Moon Ranch—for quite some time. Instead, it's been a dumping ground for both the oblex and the doppelgangers. Corpses, oozes, and other disgusting remains of adventurers and farmhands alike rot underneath the mounds of feed.

Read or paraphrase the following when the party approaches the granary:

This appears to be an old granary or storehouse, intended for keeping grains and dry feed in one place and away from any rain that might ruin the stock. Easily the tallest structure on the farm, the granary is about 30 feet high. Closer examination reveals that the structure is comprised of a series of bricks stacked together in a spiral fashion. A stucco roof, shaped like a cone, sits comfortably on top.

A huge pile of corn and other grains have been left to rot. Running along the edge of the interior appears to be a set of wooden stairs leading to the top of the granary, as well as chalk writing that says "HIDE UP HERE." The stairs don't look like they can hold more than one person. Another winged serpent, similar to the one in the guesthouse, has been painted on the side of the granary's wall. As in the guesthouse, there is a black marble where the orb in the drawing should be. The character with the highest passive Perception score can see, and fish out, a small black marble out from where the "orb" is. A *detect magic* spell shows that the marble gives off an aura of divination magic. See "**Shadowfell-Touched Marbles**" for more information.

If adventurers do decide to climb up the stairs, they need two successful Dexterity checks, DC 12 and DC 15, to pass. Failure on either check causes the adventurer to fall from the stairs and land in the large mound of grain, disturbing its contents—eight ghouls and eight zombies marked with Zhentarim tattoos—and starting an encounter. Passing both checks allows adventurers to get to the top of the granary. (Treat the mound of grain as difficult terrain.)

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this hard encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove two **ghouls** and two **zombies**.

Weak: Remove one **ghoul**.

Strong: Add a **ghast** and an **ogre zombie**.

Very Strong: Add two **ghasts** and an **ogre zombie**.

AREA 4B: CHILDISH THINGS, PUT AWAY

A closed 5-foot wooden panel, big enough for a humanoid to pass through, lies at the top of the granary stairs. Once opened, the panel's corroded copper hinges break, making it impossible for the panel to be reset, save for a mending spell or the appropriate tools, such as smith's or carpenter's tools.

Just past the panel is an open (but dusty) space filled with childish drawings, parchment, writing tools, and hand-woven dolls of all types. "THEY CAN'T SEE HERE" is written in colored chalk.

On one of the pieces of parchment are four stick figures—two tall and two short. Three of the figures have long hair drawn on them, while the fourth has short hair. One of the long-haired figures has a pair of pointed wings and a tail. In addition, each of the figures possesses a hand-drawn label, reading, left to right, "Momma, Mother, Me (Susanne!), Bryce."

AREA 5: THE FARMHOUSE

This formerly idyllic, one-story farmhouse, located off the center of the farm and to the northeast of the guesthouse, is the current hideout for Mendax and Proditorax, the doppelgangers running Two Moon Ranch. Since the "change" in ownership, the building's fallen into disrepair, although it's in better shape than anything else on the farm.

Where are They? Starting midday on Day 2, Mendax and Proditorax keep a close eye out one of the front windows for anyone moving around the farm who isn't Streeb. They're expecting their Zhentarim handlers to arrive with instructions regarding their next assignment, so any disruptions while this meeting takes place are not be tolerated. Mendax is also attempting to make leather armor in the basement and does not want to be interrupted.

Read or paraphrase the following when the party approaches the farmhouse:

This one-story, 20-foot-tall house is a marked improvement over the rest of the farm: carefully placed grey stone bricks with strong timber supports, wood supports for windows that surround the structure, and painted wooden planks that make up the building's roof. It's even got a wooden sign that hangs over the sturdy-looking front door, like a tavern in the Stop. The sign reads "Two Moon Ranch" and shows two pale crescent moons intertwined with each other, each with a wide, jovial grin on its face.

Regardless of the day, the windows, front door, and back door are barred shut and locked. It's not impossible to use

either way into the house; a successful DC 20 Strength check can brute-force a way in, or a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools undoes the locks. Getting in through either way activates an *alarm* spell meant to keep intruders out and alert Mendax, Proditorax, and their Zhentarim handlers, (if inside the farmhouse), to the party's location.

AREA 5A: LIVING AREA

This room is the first after entering the farmhouse through the front door. It contains several mismatched lounge chairs, a rectangular table that holds three pewter mugs, and a smaller side table upon which several pewter plates and utensils are stacked. A painting of a sleeping doe, about to be consumed by a winged serpent clutching a black orb, hangs on the north wall. (The serpent appears to be a later addition by the artist.)

The character with the highest passive Perception score can see, and fish out, a small black marble out from where the "orb" is. A *detect magic* spell shows that the marble gives off an aura of divination magic. See "**Shadowfell-Touched Marbles**" for more information.

There are two doors in this room: one on the north wall that leads to the children's bedroom, and one on the west wall that leads to the master bedroom.

AREA 5B: CHILDREN'S BEDROOM

Two small empty bed frames sit along the eastern wall here, kept above the wooden floor by a garish blue, red, and yellow carpet. Along the northern wall is a wooden door with a small sized dresser pushed up tightly against it. There is also an opening on the west wall that leads to the washroom.

Drawn on all the walls at about gnome height are drawings of many fantastical plants, animals, and humanoids, most of which could only exist in a child's mind. Most prominent are tall, elongated, bluish-black figures with bright yellow eyes.

AREA 5C: WASH ROOM

Two long wooden rods are attached to the west wall. Brushes, soap, and grimy towels surround a large wooden bucket that's filled to the brim with dark, cloudy water. An opening in the east wall leads into the children's bedroom.

AREA 5D: MASTER BEDROOM

A queen-sized bed, a dark wooden side table, and hand-crafted dresser with rustic accents are pushed up against the north wall in this room. Underneath the furniture is a yellowish tan carpet with brown accents that likely went out of fashion in the past hundred years.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check uncovers a trap door in the middle of the bedroom's floor, hidden by layers of dust that surround it. This door leads to the basement.



AREA 5E: BASEMENT

Unfinished, and never to be finished, this part of the house has no furnishings and no trappings of civilian life. All that's down here is a wooden ladder that leads up to the master bedroom, and down into a pit of bones.

Surrounding the ladder are polished white bones, mostly humanoid, some beast, but all of which shine under any active light source. Under the bones is dirt and broken-up gray stone. The dirt feels extremely soft to the touch and seems to threaten to pull any unsuspecting soul into its cold, earthen embrace.

Unless there is a reason for them to be elsewhere on the farm, Mendax and Proditorax, currently disguised as Linda and Joyce Pemperton, respectively, are having an impassioned argument between themselves. Their Zhentarim handlers are hidden in the dark places of the basement.

Entering the basement means being seen by either the doppelgangers or the Zhentarim and begins Part 3.

AREA 6: THE BARN

Some years back, when the city of Hillsfar was plagued with demons, some wounded adventurers—a half-elf ranger, a dragonborn fighter, and a triton sorcerer—took shelter at the Two Moon Ranch. (This would end up being a bad decision.) The trio took advantage of the open barn doors and the safety that the structure seemed to provide. What they failed to account for were the traps an adult oblex constructed inside the barn, a crude imitation of what Mendax has constructed elsewhere on the farm. The triton Sebastian sprung one trap when he got too close to where the oblex settled itself. The other traps were dismantled.

Any adventurers, farmhands, or doppelgangers who are killed near the barn will have their bodies dragged into the innards of the structure, most likely to be digested by the fully grown oblex living here.

Read or paraphrase the following when the party approaches the barn:

This barn is in the process of being rebuilt, or it was at some point in its life. Long wooden boards lean against the western wall of the barn, while the remnants of construction—hammers, iron buckets, and a hobby horse—litter the entrance of the barn. Aside from some criss-crossing tracks outside the barn, the area looks deserted. The large door to the barn, which sports an antique silver lock and chains stretching across its length, is shut.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Investigation) check (with disadvantage due to the heavy rain) yields some interesting results:

- There are no traditional barnyard animal tracks here.
- The tracks appear to be mostly humanoid, although something was dragged into or from the barn.
- Green, red, black, and yellow ooze, dried from age, has pooled in areas around the barn.

INSIDE THE BARN

Read or paraphrase the following when the party enters the barn:

The wide interior of the barn smells strange, no doubt due to the weird sheets of reddish-black slime that drip from cracks in the ceiling and spread across the floor. The slime seeps from the roof's wooden planks at a snail's crawl, forming a mess of dangling walls of gook. As you watch, a bit of the stuff separates from a sheet and drops to the ground with a wet plop. The smell of something burning permeates the air here. A withered, scaled humanoid with gills hangs in the center of the room, impaled on a scythe that dangles from the ceiling. Strips of his skin are missing.

The interior of the barn is in worse condition than the outside. Two stalls where livestock might have been housed stand empty, except for discarded barding and slanted bronze nameplates on the livery doors. Closer examination reveals the names "PRECIOUS" and "MIDNIGHT." A ladder, placed to help farmhands and the Pempertons reach the upper parts of the barn, is in disrepair and covered with red slime. Straw and sawdust litter the floor in jellified masses, and, oddly, black marbles float amongst the goo.



The triton Sebastian, as described, sprung a trap in the middle of the barn, sending a scythe swinging down from the ceiling and ending his life. If *Speak with Dead* is cast, Sebastian has no knowledge about where his companions might have gone. He does know the following:

- There was an unusual suit of leather armor hanging from a workbench towards the back of the barn. It looked pristine, even though the rest of the barn was in disrepair.
- While Sebastian's life was fading, he saw a thin human woman, dressed in farmer's clothes, staring at him from the workbench. She was bleeding from her ankles—there was a long line of blood, which seemed to move when she moved.
- Just before Sebastian perished, there was movement at the barn door. The same woman was there, but her face wasn't human. It was dark blue, and there were glowing yellow eyes. Everything went dark after that.

Towards the back of the barn lies a solitary workbench, tools, and a rack, which still holds stretched out strips of leather. Here, also, is a thin human woman in farmer's clothes, using a silver tool to scrape away bits of scale from her latest creation. A thin red line about her feet stretches elsewhere, making it look as if she is bleeding from her ankles. This appears to be Linda Pemperton but is really an **adult oblex**, and Sebastian's former "allies," (simulacrum tethered to the **oblex** in the field behind the barn), wait in the shadows, ready to strike should Linda be disturbed. Savvy adventurers might note a tarp-covered hole under the workbench with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. What lies beyond will be covered in another module.

If Linda Pemperton is attacked, confronted, or otherwise disturbed, proceed to part 3.





PART 3: THE TRUTH, AND ONLY THE TRUTH

Whether the adventurers take the time to explore the Two Moon Ranch and uncover clues regarding the truth behind the Pempertons, or blaze their own path through the farm, the need to confront the monster masterminds living here arises very quickly. If time allows, run both encounters when the players enter the farmhouse and barn; otherwise, choose the encounter that best fits what the party's found or done so far.

CONFRONTATION WITH LINDA AND JOYCE PEMPERTON (MENDAX AND PRODITORAX)

Unless "Linda" and "Joyce" are encountered elsewhere on the farm, they're in the basement of the farmhouse. Their Zhentarim handlers—a **drow gunslinger** named Ildan Lueltar, a **drow elite warrior** named Bruss Tinzoth, and four **Zhentarim thugs** - are in the basement as well, if not encountered elsewhere. Ildan has an intellect devourer inside his head, kept hidden beneath a perfectly combed and cared for powdered wig.

When characters enter the basement for the first time, Mendax is disguised as Linda the human, and Proditorax is disguised as Joyce the tiefling, but there's one detail missing: "Joyce" has no tail, but possesses wings instead. At the moment, both doppelgangers are pretending to have a lover's quarrel. The handlers are hidden and can only be detected with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

The doppelgangers use their Read Thoughts action to tailor the argument to what the party is thinking, adding things like, "You never help around the house!" or "You're the one who doesn't have the nerve to clear out the barn!" "Joyce" keeps her back towards the darker part of the basement.

Linda is the first to address the group:

A thin, dark-skinned humanoid, their hair pulled up in a bun, turns and offers a relieved smile. "Look, Joyce, we have company. Isn't that...nice...." The humanoid opposite of them, a slender winged red tiefling, also smiles, but this one drips with malicious intent. "Let's get dinner on the table, sweetheart." A crossbow bolt whizzes past your heads, and when you turn to see where the noise came from, it becomes painfully clear that you're not alone.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this **hard** encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove the **drow elite warrior**, **drow gunslinger**, and **intellect devourer**. Replace them with **two veterans**.

Weak: Remove the **drow elite warrior**. Replace it with one **veteran**.

Strong: Add one **drow elite warrior**.

Very Strong: Add one **drow elite warrior** and one **intellect devourer**.

NOTES FOR THIS ENCOUNTER

When the encounter begins, Mendax takes advantage of the distraction from the crossbow bolts. It uses the Disengage action and immediately heads for the Zhentarim campsite. If

it is not stopped, it will steal a horse, light a torch, and burn the farm before heading for the woods.

If Proditorax is reduced to 20 hp or lower, it dips into the darkness and uses an action to change itself into “Hambone” Simone, a scrawny halfling farmhand who was originally killed by the doppelgangers. “Hambone” then waits until the drow are defeated to beg for his life and ask to be let go. If successful, the halfling runs from the farm, angered at the betrayal by its partner, and head for a quieter part of the Moonsea.

Treasure. If Proditorax and their Zhentarim allies are defeated, the party finds 15 gp on each of the Zhentarim, a *vial of poison*, and the weapons Ildan and his cohorts were carrying. Ildan is also carrying a scroll, which has the following drawn on it: a black, winged snake descending towards a small black orb; two pale crescent moons intertwined with each other, each with a wide, jovial grin on its face; and the number two written in Undercommon.

CONFRONTATION WITH LINDA PEMPERTON (OBLEX)

What appears to be Linda Pemperton is a simulacrum created by the **adult oblex** living outside of the Two Moon Ranch’s barn, who can be found in her original’s leatherworking shop inside the barn. At the time of the players’ arrival, she is prepping a piece of Sebastian the triton’s skin for tanning. A thin red cord of ooze, passing underneath a length of wood, connects her to the oblex. Waiting in the wings are the twisted and re-animated remains of adventurers who once stood up to the oblex: a **greater zombie**, four **gray oozes**, and two **skeletons**.

“Linda” asks any adventurers if they’d like to help her finish prepping Sebastian’s skin. Regardless of their answer, the simulacrum moves forward and attacks. The other oozes act on “Linda’s” orders.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this **hard** encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove the **greater zombie**.

Weak: Remove the **greater zombie** and replace it with 2 **ochre jellies**.

Strong and Very Strong: Add a **greater zombie**.

NOTES FOR THIS ENCOUNTER

If the oblex thinks that the encounter is unwinnable, it destroys its simulacrum and attempts to flee through the crack it’s made behind the Two Moon Ranch’s barn. The oblexes’ minions fight to the death in an attempt to keep adventurers away from their master.

Treasure. If the oblex and its minions are defeated, the party find a pristine suit of *glamoured studded leather armor* where the simulacrum stood. It smells faintly of the sea.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of which villains the party defeats, the stalemate between the doppelgangers and the oblex is broken, and the balance of power on this farm is forever shifted.

If the doppelgangers are defeated, the oblex eventually expands its influence over Two Moon Ranch, creating more oblex spawn and other oozes and making the area unsafe for anyone to enter. Some of the townspeople from the Stop set fire to the farm in a last-ditch attempt to stop the oblex from consuming the village.

If the oblex is defeated, the doppelgangers regroup with their Zhentarim handlers and, if the ranch isn’t destroyed, attempt to tighten their hold on the land. Whether they are successful depends on the efforts of a new batch of adventurers who pass by the ranch.



If both factions are defeated, the farm becomes quiet for the first time in years. It takes time, but a rich tiefling named Siku eventually buys the property, demolishes its buildings, and commissions a large manor to be raised there. Whatever memories the Pempertons made are gone, forever.

RESOLVING THE ADVENTURE HOOKS

1. *If Nobody's Using It...* After receiving reports of the monsters, oozes, and Zhentarim presence at Two Moon Ranch from the adventurers, Siku will pay the party the amount they were due and quietly send them on their way, promising additional jobs should they decide to stick around Hillsfar. If asked what he plans to do with the property, the tiefling simply smiles and assures the group that the farm will be put into "good hands," since it's clear that the time is not right for repurposing the property.

In truth, Siku arranges for a team of mages to "accidentally" cause a forest fire nearby, causing the total destruction of the property and reducing its property value by thousands of gold pieces. When the deed is done, Siku buys the property and begins the process of building his summer home. How successful he is in doing this is left up to the DM.

2. *I'm Not Going Crazy - I Saw Something!* If the adventurers have successfully dealt with the monsters, oozes, and Zhentarim presence at Two Moon Ranch, Linda and Joyce are relieved to hear that the farm is safe — at least for the time being. In addition to offering to repair the party's armor and equipment, Linda also offers the use of the ranch as a home base. She reasons that it's a fair deal for both her family and the party, as she can restart her leatherworking business and the adventurers have a safe place to return to from their adventures, (as long as they help with chores around the farm).

It's possible that the Zhentarim will return to try and take over the farm, or the oblex will ooze its way back to the barn. Whether they come back is left to the DM.

3. *Any Port in a Storm.* Assuming that the adventurers are able to deal with the monsters, oozes, and Zhentarim presence at Two Moon Ranch, the land becomes theirs to do with as they please, or abandon in favor of adventure elsewhere. As long as they keep friendly relations with the Stop, the party can open up the farm for possible business ventures.

The longer the party stays on the farm, there's a greater chance that someone, like the Zhentarim, Linda and Joyce, or even Siku the tiefling's goons, comes to challenge their claim to the land. This is left to the DM to expand upon.

REWARDS

XP rewards are listed below:

Monsters and NPCs	Experience Points
Adult Oblex	1800 xp
Black Pudding	1100 xp
Doppelganger	700 xp
Drow Elite Warrior	1800 xp
Drow Gunslinger	1100 xp
Ghast	450 xp
Ghoul	200 xp
Greater Zombie	1800 xp
Grey Ooze	100 xp
Intellect Devourer	450 xp
Intelligent Black Pudding	1100 xp
Mezzoloth	1800 xp
Oblex Spawn	50 xp
Ochre Jelly	450 xp
Ogre Zombie	450 xp
Shadow Dancer	2900 xp
Shadow Mastiff	450 xp
Shadow Mastiff Alpha	450 xp
Veteran	700 xp
Wereboar	1100 xp
Zhentarim Thug	100 xp
Zombie	50 xp

Treasures are listed below:

Potion of Greater Healing. A character who drinks the magical red fluid in this vial regains 4d4 + 4 hit points. Drinking or administering a potion takes an action.

Potion of Hill Giant Strength. When you drink this potion, your Strength score changes to 21 for 1 hour. The potion has no effect on you if your Strength is equal to or greater than that score.

This potion's transparent liquid has floating in it a sliver of fingernail from a hill giant.

Vial of Poison. You can use the poison in this vial to coat one slashing or piercing weapon or up to three pieces of ammunition. Applying the poison takes an action. A creature hit by the poisoned weapon or ammunition must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take 1d4 poison damage. Once applied, the poison retains potency for 1 minute before drying.

Glamoured Studded Leather Armor. While wearing this armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC. You can also use a bonus action to speak the armor's command word and cause the armor to assume the appearance of a normal set of clothing or some other kind of armor. You decide what it looks like, including color, style, and accessories, but the armor retains its normal bulk and weight. The illusory appearance lasts until you use this property again or remove the armor.

Made from tough but flexible leather, studded leather is reinforced with close-set rivets or spikes.

APPENDIX A: MONSTERS AND NPCs

ADULT OBLEX

Medium ooze, lawful evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +7, Cha +5

Skills Insight +3

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this distance), passive Perception 14

Languages Common plus two more languages

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Amorphous. The oblex can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Aversion to Fire. If the oblex takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Innate Spellcasting. The oblex's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

3/day each: *charm person* (as 5th-level spell), *color spray*, *detect thoughts*, *hold person* (as 3rd-level spell)

Sulfurous Impersonation. As a bonus action, the oblex can extrude a piece of itself that assumes the appearance of one Medium or smaller creature whose memories it has stolen. This simulacrum appears, feels, and sounds exactly like the

creature it impersonates, though it smells faintly of sulfur. The oblex can impersonate 1d4 + 1 different creatures, each one tethered to its body by a strand of slime that can extend up to 120 feet away. For all practical purposes, the simulacrum is the oblex, meaning that the oblex occupies its space and the simulacrum's space simultaneously. The slimy tether is immune to damage, but it is severed if there is no opening at least 1 inch wide between the oblex's main body and the simulacrum. The simulacrum disappears if the tether is severed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The oblex makes one pseudopod attack and uses Eat Memories.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (2d4) psychic damage.

Eat Memories. The oblex targets one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 18 (4d8) psychic damage and become memory drained until it finishes a short or long rest or until it benefits from the greater restoration or heal spell. Constructs, oozes, plants, and undead succeed on the save automatically.

While memory drained, the target must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from any ability check or attack roll it makes. Each time the target is memory drained beyond the first, the die size increases by one: the d4 becomes a d6, the d6 becomes a d8, and so on until the die becomes a d20, at which point the target becomes unconscious for 1 hour. The effect then ends.

When an oblex causes a target to become memory drained, the oblex learns all the languages the target knows and gains all its proficiencies, except for any saving throw proficiencies.

BLACK PUDDING

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 7

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 20 ft., Climb 20 ft.

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

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amorphous. The pudding can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrosive Form. A creature that touches the pudding or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the pudding corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty

to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the pudding is destroyed after dealing damage.

The pudding can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

Spider Climb. The pudding can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) acid damage. In addition, nonmagical armor worn by the target is partly dissolved and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

REACTIONS

Split. When a pudding that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new puddings if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new pudding has hit points equal to half the original pudding's, rounded down. New puddings are one size smaller than the original pudding.

DOPPELGANGER

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +3

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. The doppelganger can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Ambusher. The doppelganger has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Surprise Attack. If the doppelganger surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The doppelganger makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Read Thoughts. The doppelganger magically reads the surface thoughts of one creature within 60 feet of it. The effect can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of wood or dirt, 2 feet of stone, 2 inches of metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. While the target is in range, the doppelganger can continue reading its thoughts, as long as the doppelganger's concentration isn't broken (as if concentrating on a spell). While reading the target's mind, the doppelganger has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks against the target.

DROW ELITE WARRIOR

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +10

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

REACTIONS

Parry. The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

DROW GUNSLINGER

Medium humanoid (elf), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +4, Wis +3

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +8

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Gunslinger. Being within 5 feet of a hostile creature or attacking at long range doesn't impose disadvantage on the drow's ranged attack rolls with a pistol. In addition, the drow ignores half cover and three-quarters cover when making ranged attacks with a pistol.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (2d6 + 2) slashing damage plus (1d4) fire damage.

Poisonous Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) poison damage.

GHAST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	18 (-1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghastr must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghastr's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghastr and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GHOUL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GRAY OOZE

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8+9)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. The gray ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrosive Form. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the ooze corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to –5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the ooze is destroyed after dealing damage.

The ooze can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical metal in 1 round.

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or wet rock.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage, and if the target is wearing nonmagical metal armor, its armor is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

GREATER ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	18 (-1)

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Turn Resistance. The zombie has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The zombie makes two melee attacks.

Empowered Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

INTELLECT DEVOURER

Tiny aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 21 (6d4+6)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities blinded

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12

Languages understands Deep Speech but can't speak, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Detect Sentience. The intellect devourer can sense the presence and location of any creature within 300 feet of it that has an Intelligence of 3 or higher, regardless of interposing barriers, unless the creature is protected by a *mind blank* spell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The intellect devourer makes one attack with its claws and uses Devour Intellect.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Devour Intellect. The intellect devourer targets one creature it can see within 10 feet of it that has a brain. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence saving throw against this magic or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage. Also on a failure, roll 3d6: If the total equals or exceeds the target's Intelligence score, that score is reduced to 0. The target is stunned until it regains at least one point of Intelligence.

Body Thief. The intellect devourer initiates an Intelligence contest with an incapacitated humanoid within 5 feet of it that isn't protected by *protection from evil and good*. If it wins the contest, the intellect devourer magically consumes the target's brain, teleports into the target's skull, and takes control of the target's body. While inside a creature, the intellect devourer has total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside its host. The intellect devourer retains its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as its understanding of Deep Speech, its telepathy, and its traits. It otherwise adopts the target's statistics. It knows everything the creature knew, including spells and languages.

If the host body dies, the intellect devourer must leave it. A *protection from evil and good* spell cast on the body drives the intellect devourer out. The intellect devourer is also forced out if the target regains its devoured brain by means of a *wish*. By spending 5 feet of its movement, the intellect devourer can voluntarily leave the body, teleporting to the nearest unoccupied space within 5 feet of it. The body then dies, unless its brain is restored within 1 round.

INTELLIGENT BLACK PUDDING

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 7

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 20 ft, climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages Understands Elvish and Undercommon, but can't speak.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amorphous. The pudding can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrosive Form. A creature that touches the pudding or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the pudding corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed.

Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits

the pudding is destroyed after dealing damage.

The pudding can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

Spider Climb. The pudding can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Innate Spellcasting. The pudding's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It can cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *dancing lights*, *mage hand*
3/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *shield*
1/day: *Melf's acid arrow*

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) acid damage. In addition, nonmagical armor worn by the target is partly dissolved and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

REACTIONS

Split. When a pudding that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new puddings if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new pudding has hit points equal to half the original pudding's, rounded down. New puddings are one size smaller than the original pudding.

MEZZOLOTH

Medium fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 18

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The mezzoloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). The mezzoloth can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

2/day each: *darkness*, *dispel magic*

1/day: *cloudkill*

Magic Resistance. The mezzoloth has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The mezzoloth's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mezzoloth makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its trident.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

Trident. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage when held with two claws and used to make a melee attack.

Teleport. The mezzoloth magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

OBLEX SPAWN

Tiny ooze, lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 18 (4d4 + 8)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +4, Cha +2

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this distance), passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Amorphous. The oblex can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Aversion to Fire. If the oblex takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 2 (1d4) psychic damage.

OCHRE JELLY

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 45 (6d10+12)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances acid

Damage Immunities lightning, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amorphous. The jelly can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The jelly can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

REACTIONS

Split. When a jelly that is Medium or larger is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new jellies if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new jelly has hit points equal to half the original jelly's, rounded down. New jellies are one size smaller than the original jelly.

OGRE ZOMBIE

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 85 (9d10 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands Common and Giant but can't speak them

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

SHADOW DANCER

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 71 (13d8+13)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +4

Skills Stealth +6

Damage Resistances necrotic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The shadow dancer has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put it to sleep.

Shadow Jump. As a bonus action, the shadow dancer can teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Both the space it teleports from and the space it teleports to must be in dim light or darkness. The shadow dancer can use this ability between the weapon attacks of another action it takes.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shadow dancer makes three spiked chain attacks.

Spiked Chain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffer one additional effect of the shadow dancer's choice:

- The target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Medium or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the shadow dancer can't grapple another target.
- The target is knocked prone.
- The target takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

SHADOW MASTIFF

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks while in dim light or darkness

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Ethereal Awareness. The shadow mastiff can see ethereal creatures and objects.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The shadow mastiff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Shadow Blend. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow mastiff can use a bonus action to become invisible, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. The invisibility lasts until the shadow mastiff uses a bonus action to end it or until the shadow mastiff attacks, is in bright light, or is incapacitated.

Sunlight Weakness. While in bright light created by sunlight, the shadow mastiff has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

ZHENTARIM THUG

Medium humanoid, neutral

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

STREEB

Medium humanoid (half-orc, shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 10 In Humanoid Form, 11 In Boar Or Hybrid Form

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., 40 ft. in boar form

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Intimidation +1, Perception +2

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Orc (can't speak in boar form)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Relentless Endurance. When Streeb is reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, he can drop to 1 hit point instead. He can't use this feature again until he finishes a long rest.

Savage Attacks. When Streeb scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, he can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

Shapechanger. The wereboar can use its action to polymorph into a boar-humanoid hybrid or into a boar, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Charge (Boar or Hybrid Form Only). If the wereboar moves at least 15 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with its tusks on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the wereboar takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The wereboar makes two attacks, only one of which can be with its tusks.

Maul (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Tusks (Boar or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereboar lycanthropy.

ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

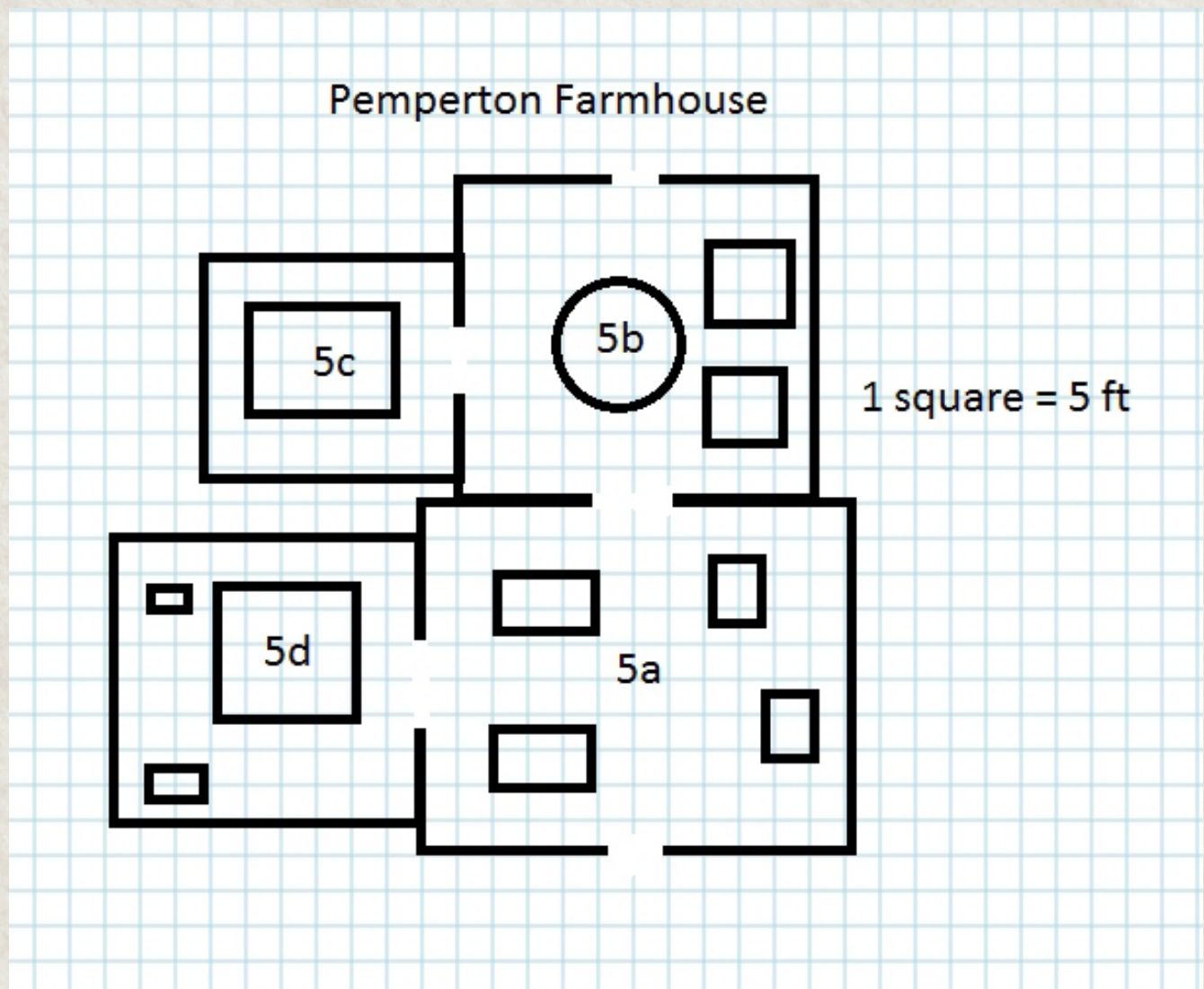
Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

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

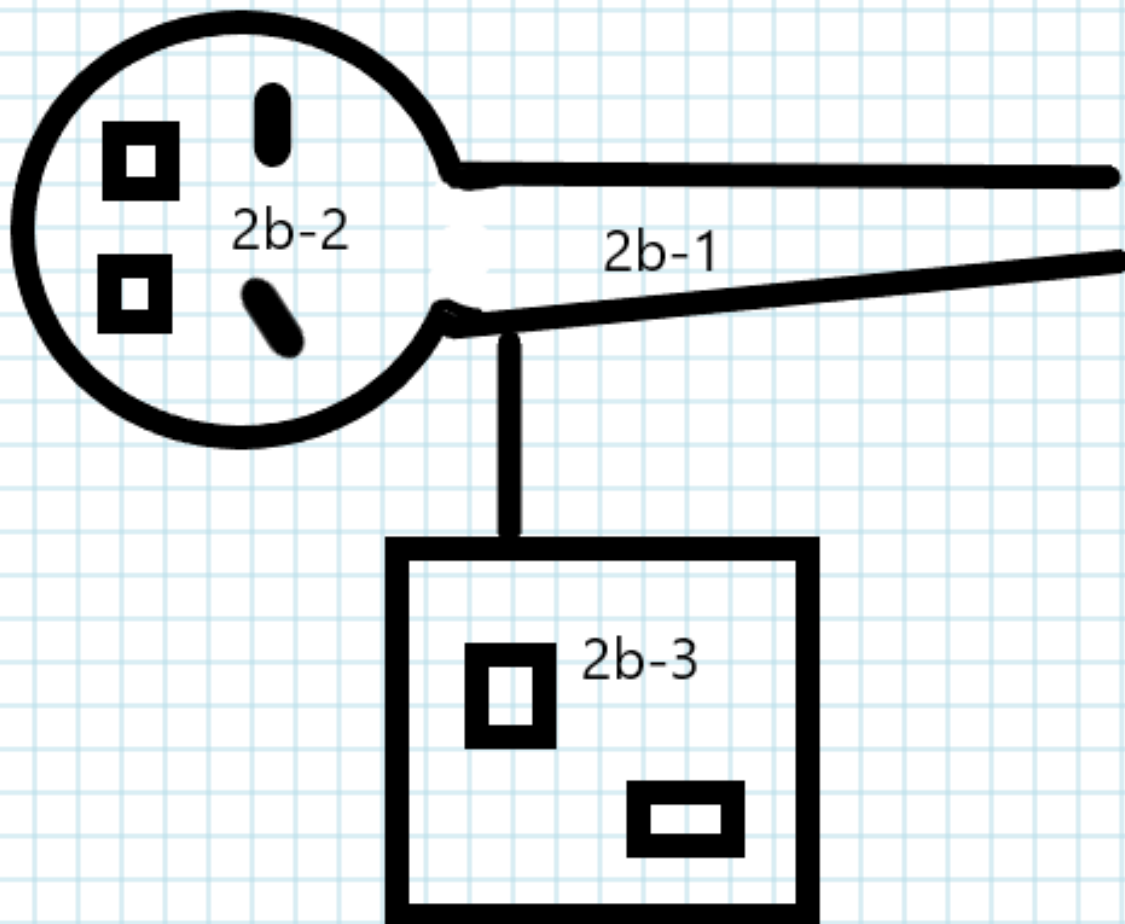
APPENDIX B MAPS

THE FARMHOUSE



Zhentarim Hideout

1 tile = 10 feet



CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Product Lead: Marc Anderson
Primary Editor: Adam Hancock

Contributor: @Dave_the_Human

Cover Artists:

- Kate Manning (<https://www.deviantart.com/ktmanning>)
- Huntress099

Layout and Template: Nathanaël Roux (<https://www.barkalotdesigns.com>)

Interior Art:

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For more information on doppelgangers, consider the following:

- "The psychology of the doppelganger," Dragon Magazine #80
- "The Monsters Know What They're Doing: Doppelgangers" (<http://themonstersknow.com/doppelganger-tactics/>)

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