

Tainted Lands

The Lollygag Inn

THE LOLLYGAG INN

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This module is designed for 4th-level
adventurers and up!

Clerics and Fighters are strongly encouraged.

OGL

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DESIGNER'S STATEMENT

This adventure and all of the material presented in the Tainted Lands box set is designed to purposely scare your players while they role-play the game. I will warn you in advance that there will be lots of complaining from your players, as they perceive the situation is too difficult. I can just imagine hearing something like, "How can you send 100 giant rats at us when we are only first level?" Naturally, the horror of the scene caused the players to believe they were facing that many, when actually they were only facing five normal rats. If they can't take the challenge of the horror, they shouldn't be playing this version of the game.

It's a horror themed campaign and everything will seem tougher than normal. Most times, it will be tough, but not as dangerous as it seems. The primary objective in this product is to present some unusual situations that gamers don't face all the time. There are times when a campaign can become boring as you find the monsters, kill the monsters, and take its treasure. There is a lot more going on here than just monster hunting. As the Castle Keeper, your job isn't to kill your player characters in the Tainted Lands. Your job is to make them run! Your job is to make them feel they don't have a chance, when actually they could defeat the encounter they are facing.

You never lie to your players. They have psychic and supernatural attributes they can use to calm themselves down and see what isn't real. The negative material plane impacts the Tainted Lands hard. What they see, hear, taste, and feel is often distorted far beyond what is real. As the Castle Keeper, you have all of that mapped out in advance.

FOR THE CASTLE KEEPER

The Castle Keeper can do a lot to set the horror scene before the players even begin the adventure. Playing by candlelight in the dark can help set the mood. Setting up some Halloween-style music in the background can be fun. Snacks of gummy worms and sour patch candy, sets up a squashy scene. Be sure to talk about how tough the adventure is going to be. Allow them to roll up new characters so that they don't feel so bad when these characters die. Work on playing some sound effects like the noise of a thunderstorm or the groaning and moaning of the undead. Talk about foreshadowing and have a large raven fall out of the sky dead in front of the traveling characters. Talk about the dreams the characters are having with dead friends and relatives all warning that something terrible is going to happen. Have an old woman offer to tell their fortunes in a local inn and while doing so she screams and falls into a coma.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In getting ready to play this adventure, Castle Keepers should review the pummeling rules in the combat section, as many of the encounters here will have the creatures pummeling to subdue the characters and throw them in the Tainted Lands Portal.

HORROR ELEMENT: The horror element of any creature is designed to inspire dread and even revulsion in your players. Whether it is used at the beginning of the battle or as a surprise in the middle of the battle, it's supposed to fill them with a bit of

fear. Dwell on it in your description. If your players don't seem to care about it, expound on it giving the element a sense of smell, taste, feel, and the visual element making the experience as nasty as you can make it. In working on this horror element, try hard to do something different every time. The object is never to kill your player characters, but to instill fear and horror in their minds as they deal with truly terrible events.



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LOLLYGAG INN INTRODUCTION

FIRST LOOK AT THE LOLLYGAG INN

Rumors were plentiful about the inn and everyone from far and wide talked about what they thought was happening. For hundreds of miles around, the inn was known for its fun and entertainment. It was also known as one of the most expensive places to stay. The castle was converted to an inn a hundred years ago. It was far out of town and the unknown owners didn't care that it was the most expensive inn to be found anywhere. This version of the inn rests on top of a hill at the fork of two large rivers. Kings and queens were entertained there. The best bards thought it a big deal to have entertained others there.

The major piece of current inn news was that the king had to send royal elite troops to try to handle something happening at the inn. Two weeks went by and there was no word from those troops. Representatives of the king were now trying to hire adventurers to check the inn and bring back information.

FIRST SIGHT OF THE LOLLYGAG INN

From twenty miles away, a swirl of storm clouds turns round and round high above the inn. There is a huge tail of fog and clouds twisting round and around down into the middle of the inn on the stone hill. From the middle of the morning to the end of the day, the cloud cover blocks off the rising sun and the land is covered in a darkness much like what happens in a thunderstorm. Currently, this is the only spot of land with dark cloud cover as everywhere else one can see clear blue skies.

Coming within fifteen miles of the hill, a stillness comes over the land. Birds don't fly into the shade of the clouds. One cannot see animals in the area and riding mounts of all types begin to get very nervous. The group notes a small army camp just outside the range of the clouds. Approaching, the group meets one king's trooper who was assigned to look after the horses. He says he's been there for many days, with no word of his mates. It seems animals won't get within a mile of the inn. The troops made camp, he was ordered to wait for their return, and they never came back. He orders the characters to bring back information for the king.

GETTING CLOSE TO THE INN

The player characters are walking at this point as even their mounts refuse to get close to the inn. Within a mile of the Lollygag Inn, it's clear this was some type of fortification before it was an inn. The walls are high and made of stone. There are crenulations at the top of the structure and one of the corners is a high three-story tower. The hill the structure rests on is a difficult climb except in one place where a carefully carved out road rises to the only entrance to the inn. There are few arrow slits in the heavy-looking walls. No one walks the guard posts high on the top of the inn. The clouds continue to spiral down into the center of the inn. Thunder and lightning move through the clouds, but do not strike out of the funnel, yet.

INVOLVING THE CHARACTERS

Sometimes the characters need to be encouraged to enter the adventure. Here are some of the easiest ways to get them to visit the Tainted Lands Inn.

1) THE THUNDER CLOUD

The player characters are traveling from one point to the next. They spot the odd cloud formation and could easily take it for a tornado. There is a huge and highly unnatural storm cloud with a tail swirling down into the center of the inn. The spinning cloud, with its thunder and lightning, can be seen from twenty miles away. As the characters get within ten miles, they can see the inn high on its hill.

2) THE KING'S EMPLOY

The player characters are resting at their favorite inn after a long adventure. Suddenly a large number of king's troops come into the inn and inform the party that the king wants to see them now. The king has heard rumors about his favorite inn, and is concerned. He sent his elite guardsmen there and they didn't return with a message. He is now down to paying adventurers to check things out and has already sent several groups, but hasn't heard back from them yet either. The character party is offered 1,000 gp before they go on the adventure and 5,000 gp if they come back with news and physical proof about what has happened at the inn.

3) THE WIZARD'S NOTE

The wizard Elanstar sent a magical message to the group. He wants to meet them at the inn to talk them into an assignment. He sends each of the characters a 1,000 gp white diamond as an advance they can keep, even if they don't agree to his job.

4) HAUNTING DREAMS

For a month, the player characters have been having terrible dreams about skeletons and zombies and a haunting gateway to a world populated by undead. These dreams are so troubling that the players are growing weaker from lack of sleep. All of their studies into the matter point to this inn as the only answer to their horrible dreams. They are extremely tired all the time and feel themselves grow weaker from lack of sleep. They must find where this inn is located or they could die.

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS AND THE INN

There is no central intelligence guiding the actions of the creatures at the inn. The portal from the Tainted Lands has been sent there and undead creatures have been pushed into the area to help strengthen the portal. These creatures have a desire to shove characters from the "living side" of the portal into the portal and through to the Tainted Lands. They are not out to kill the player characters, but won't stop attacking if the characters make the deadly effort to attack.

In the middle of several battles, have the players realize that the monsters are striking to subdue and often try to overpower the entire group and capture them for some vile purpose.

This adventure is meant as a springboard to send the player characters into the Tainted Lands. If the players don't take the bait, the inn becomes more and more deadly, but greater and greater rewards come to the player characters if they take a hand and try to solve the problem. There is the largest number of undead at the inn right now. As the characters adventure and come back to the inn, there will always be at least one type of undead at the 12 numbered locations through the inn. These single versions will be unusually strong.

Lights of all types only work half as well while the player characters explore the inn. Any liquids the characters bring in to drink, will instantly become tainted and nasty tasting. This would be a good time to have some apple vinegar ready to let the players drink so that they can know the taste of their drinkables. There are constant noises running through the inn and often when the characters go to investigate the sound they find nothing but an empty area.

INN ENCOUNTERS

1: TAVERN –

TAVERN DESCRIPTION – It's a large, L-shaped room. Because of the roaring fire in the large fireplace, one can instantly see the many massive skeletons in the chamber. The large fireplace is in the middle of the east wall. Flanking that fireplace is a pair of warrior statues with huge mirrors in their hands. The brass mirrors pick up the light of the fires and spread an even light all through the chamber. There is a large, L-shaped bar down in the southern end of the tavern. There are benches and tables all over the large area. In the northwest corner of the tavern is a group of skeletons standing in a large clump.

There is the smell of ale and cinders in this room. The air is unusually dry and one can taste a strange dust that instantly hits the tongue. There is more than enough light to see in all the corners.

EXITS –

North wall – far-eastern portion, is a 10-foot-wide open door.

East wall – 25 feet down the northern portion is an open portal.

South wall – far-eastern portion, is a 10-foot-wide open portal.

South wall – 35 feet from the eastern corner is a 5-foot-wide open portal.

West wall – 10 feet from the northern corner is a 5-foot-wide open portal.

West wall – 10 feet from the southern corner is a 5-foot-wide open portal.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – One can see 21 skeletons in the corner. Several of the undead are clinging to the walls or hanging from the ceiling. These skeletons are well-armored and all but one is in black armor. Each appears well over 6 feet tall. The one in the center is dressed in massive, red-lacquered armor. It turns its head to look at your group. Its mouth opens and a green glowing gas escapes. Suddenly, all the skeletons open their mouths and emit this gas. The group of undead moves toward the characters' door. These creatures scramble on the ceiling, along the walls, and move from the floor.

TAINTED LANDS SKELETONS x21 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 2 (d12), HP 20 × 21, AC 15, MV 40 ft. Their primary attribute is physical. An even more intelligent leader skeleton, always dressed in red plate mail, leads these highly intelligent skeletons. These armored skeletons will attack clerics first and then spell casters if they have a choice. They have the ability to climb walls and ceilings and get behind the enemy. They attack with their stone-hard talons (1d6) and spew a glowing green gas in the area that causes a -2 to strike for air breathers. These skeletons are all 8 feet tall and all but one wears a black, sticky plate mail that has 2 chances in 6 of trapping any weapon striking them in a tarry mass on their armor. They move as quickly as any human does. They don't

want to leave the tavern portion of the inn; however, if the characters throw ranged attacks at them, they will chase the characters through several rooms before retreating. Like all skeletons, edged weapons do half damage. NOTE: All of these skeletons are striking to pummel and subdue. They want to capture the player characters and throw them through the Tainted Lands Portal.)

TREASURE: Fist-sized gold sphere on each skeleton worth 70 gp.

HORROR ELEMENT: Many boney hands are ripping and tearing at the flesh of the characters as these skeletons attack. Even if they miss their damaging strikes, they are still grasping at the bodies of the prey. The green gas they breathe out smells like the worst rotten eggs and chokes those who breathe it in and makes the eyes water in pain. In a round or two, the entire area is filled with this green, glowing gas. Player characters will not be able to voice spells while breathing the gas. At least five of the skeletons will move on the ceiling to try and come behind the character group.

RED PLATE MAIL SKELETON (*chaotic evil*), HD 3 (d12), HP 36, AC 16, MV 40 ft. Its primary attribute is mental. This skeleton will call a halt to the battle if the skeletons are losing. It will ask to parley with the group; all the while, the other skeletons are filling the area with the debilitating gas. The leader wants the player characters to either leave or take up arms for its master. All they have to do is go through the portal to find the leader of the skeletons. The red skeleton uses a chaotic-aligned long sword doing 2d8 +3 double damage versus humans.

TREASURE: +3 Tainted Lands silvered battle axe, a gold star sapphire (10,000 gp). There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this sapphire. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.

HORROR ELEMENT: Work hard on making the deep voice of the skeleton leader something chilling and terrible to hear. Have it talk quickly and in short sentences. It knows the names of all the player characters.

2) KITCHEN –

KITCHEN DESCRIPTION – The smell of spilt blood fills the area, making it hard to breathe. The lights reveal a mass of what appears to be large zombies at the center of the area. They all turn to face the player characters. The chamber appears fairly large, and is lit by several lamps hanging from the ceiling. The area has a square shape to it except in the upper northwest corner where the corner comes into the chamber. One can see metal ovens, a large wooden chopping block, and many copper pans hanging from the ceiling.

In the northeast corner of the kitchen the walls, floor, and ceiling are covered in blood. On the floor, it is inches thick and very slowly spreading into the rest of the kitchen.

EXITS -

North wall – far western portion, is a 5-foot-wide open door.

East wall – 5 feet up from the southern portion is an open portal.

South wall – there are five shut doors, all 5-feet-wide, filling the area.

West wall – 10 feet from the northern corner is a 5-foot-wide open portal

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West wall – in the middle is a 5-foot-wide open portal.

West wall – 10-feet down from the northern corner is a 5-foot-wide open portal.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – The zombies appear to have on a strange, spiky armor. There are a large number of them. They are tall, making it difficult to count how many is in the mass. There are no visible weapons on the creatures. When the characters look into the chamber, the zombies start moaning and groaning and all look at the player characters and show their rotting grins.

TAINTED LANDS ZOMBIES x20 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 2 (d12), HP 24 x 20, AC 17, MV 30 ft., *primary attribute: physical*. These are all intelligent zombies driven to eat the flesh of the living. They move far quicker than normal zombies do, as they are energized by the Tainted Lands. It is their intent to bash a living being, fling them to the ground, and then swarm their bodies to eat them. Its bash attack does 1d10 and when 10 points are inflicted on one prey, the victim is bashed to the ground. These zombies want to surround their victims, preventing the prey from escaping.)

TREASURE: Displacer cloak, boots of levitation, 10 small white pearls.

HORROR ELEMENT: At the first inspection, it appears these zombies are wearing a spiky armor. During the course of the battle, the player characters discover these undead creatures are growing a type of shell around their arms, legs, and chest that is part of their undead flesh. Attacking the zombies causes the shell to crack and yellow spores of some type fill the air. As the spores settle on the flesh of the player characters it compacts and starts to grow. It's going to be very painful to scrub off. Even a night's growth will turn solid and be extremely difficult to remove. Also, these zombies have no problem retreating and attacking at a more advantageous time.

Work the spore clouds as if they were living things that rise up into the air and then come down like arrows onto the flesh of the living player characters. It should make their skin crawl and tingle in an unpleasant way. If the castle keeper has the time, mix up a cup of toothpaste and red food dye. Have each player hold out the top of their hands and use a butter knife to spread a little of the mixture on top of their hands. Then don't let them take it off until the battle is done and they can find some water, which isn't in the kitchen.

3) GREAT HALL –

GREAT HALL DESCRIPTION – The hall is very large. In the southeastern corner of the chamber is the statue of a warrior with a huge bowl and brass mirror in his arms. The bowl has a large fire in it and the mirror lights up the entire area with a golden glow. This was clearly a large dining area. There are many tables and benches in the area. A large fire is burning in the fireplace. The characters can see plates and bowls with food on the tables. There are pitchers there as well. The light from the fireplace shows up a few rats on the table. On a raised dais at the north end of the chamber is a long table clearly for lords and ladies. There are chairs there instead of benches.

EXITS -

West wall – 25 feet from the southern corner is a 5-foot-wide open portal

West wall – 5 feet from the southern corner is a 5 foot wide open portal.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – There are two ghostly forms in the center of the area. This is the area where bards and other performers usually do their thing. The jingling of chains can be heard from that area. Coming closer, the player characters recognize these ghosts as people they knew in the past. A moaning of pain can be heard and the two forms are reaching out their arms in supplication. If the Castle Keeper can get some chains and jingle them at this point, it will aid a great deal to the horror effect.

TAINTED LANDS WRAITHS x2 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 7 (d12), HP 84 x2, AC 19, MV 40 ft., 70 ft. (fly). Their *primary attribute is mental*. The wraiths attack with a touch (1d6) and an energy drain. The wraiths heal 5 points per energy level drained. Spawn will be created if the character is completely drained.)

TREASURE: 150 gold coins, a bag of 30 Tainted Lands Shurikens, stone of skeleton repulsion.

HORROR ELEMENT: These wraiths appear to look like lost friends or important females the characters have known. They whisper the names of the player characters and offer important information about their quest. These wraiths advise the characters to go into the portal and offer to take them there. Just as the characters might enter the portal, the wraiths will strike to try and drain their levels. It will take magical weapons to cut the chains that bind the wraiths. They are fastened to the floor in this chamber by ghostly chains of silver. While chained, the wraiths can do no damage to the player characters.

4) LIBRARY –

LIBRARY DESCRIPTION – The chamber is filled with books and scrolls. There are several lamps lighting the area. The characters can see some type of ragged humanoids in the northwest corner of the room. There are several tables and benches in the area. The chamber has 15-foot-tall shelves with ladders on wheels to get to the high shelves. There are tables and benches in the area. The stench of rotting flesh fills the chamber and there is a strange blue mist in the air.

If the characters take the time, this library has many books talking about the local animals and plants of the area. There are also several detailed books talking about the ruins and caves in the fifty-mile area around the inn. The history of the rivers and the cities on those rivers are covered in a lot of detail. In a glass case, in the southern corner are a set of cursed books that are not obviously cursed. There are two books each, which would lower the readers attribute scores: strength, dexterity, intelligence, wisdom, constitution, and charisma. There are several books that when read, turn the reader into an ant. Two books would force the player character to have a -1 to strike. Two books would force the player character to have a -1 on damage with every strike.

EXITS –

East wall – 15 feet from the south end is a 5-foot-wide opening.

South wall – 45 feet from the west side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – The ghosts have much more than a zombie look to them. They are well-dressed in gypsy-style, colorful clothes. As they move, their bodies shimmer with foggy steam. They open their mouths to reveal fangs. As the ghosts move toward the player characters a wave of horrible stench smashes into their faces and senses.

TAINTED LANDS GHOSTS x10 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 8 (d8), HP 6 × 10, AC 18, MV 40 ft, *primary attribute: physical*. These highly intelligent ghosts are charged with leading the player characters into the portal area. If the characters don't go into the portal, these creatures attack. 2 claws 1d6/1d6, their touch forces a strength save or be paralyzed. Their stench forces a constitution save against vomiting. Ghoul fever will take over the dead bodies of player characters.)

TREASURE: 60 gold coins, a purple star sapphire (10,000 gp) embedded in a shillelagh and covered in blood. There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this sapphire. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands Portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.

HORROR ELEMENT: The stench should be played up to the maximum. The smell should be felt early on; maybe even as many as two or three chambers and halls away. In fact, it should be difficult to even go forward. The smelly, greasy stench should be so strong as to make the player characters want to turn away. Present to your players that there is a red haze of stench in the air that gets brighter and more glowing as you get closer to the ghosts.

5) COURTESAN LOFT –

COURTESAN LOFT DESCRIPTION – The chamber is P-shaped and quite large. There are many silken drapes blocking sight in the area. A strong smell of perfume is detected.

(CASTLE KEEPER NOTE: Actually spraying some women's perfume into the air at this time will help bring your players more into the spirit of the adventure.)

There is the squeal of females in among the silken drapes. There are light sources in the area and the shadows of obvious feminine figures can be seen lightly moving about.

EXITS -

West wall – There are three, evenly-spaced portals on that wall. Each is 5feet wide.

South wall – There is a single, 5-foot-wide opening on the farthest east space.

East wall – On the southern most section is a 5-foot-wide opening.

East wall – Ten feet from the north corner is a 5-foot-wide opening.

North wall – There are three, evenly-spaced portals on that wall. The two to the west are 5 feet wide. The third one in the east corner is 10feet wide.

LOOK OF THE MONSTER – At first, it seems as if a man is being well-treated by ladies of the evening. The women don't bother looking at the player characters; they only have eyes and smiles for the man on the divan. These women are dressed in silks and satins and all of them are full-figured young ladies. Part of the horror of this scene is the fact that the ladies will throw their unarmed bodies against the characters to save their vampire lord.

TAINTED LANDS VAMPIRE LORD (*chaotic evil*), (HD 10 (d12), HP 120, AC 21, MV 50 ft., 60 ft. (*flying*), 30 ft. (*climbing*). His *primary attribute* is *mental*. It does a *slam attack* for 1d6 and drains two levels. It has a *blood drain* after a successful slam doing an automatic 1d4 in damage. When this vampire gets low on hit points, it turns into a gaseous form.)

TREASURE: 3,000 gp in a two-foot-tall sphere, a purple star sapphire (10,000 gp) in a small box of holding (There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this sapphire. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands Portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.), 3 Tainted Lands Mattocks, +4 bane double-bladed axe vs. vampires, +4 bane short sword vs. vampires, +4 bane heavy mace vs. vampires.



HORROR ELEMENT: This monster and his women are at the center of the silken screens. Vampire Thomas is more than willing to talk calmly and rationally to the player characters. It will let the player characters go if they pay a small toll in magic items and gold. It's surrounded by charmed females in many types of dress from armored warriors to women in nightgowns. They fawn and lay about the area all wanting the vampire's attention. There are ten of these women and all of them will fight to the death so that the vampire isn't hurt. Their rage and extreme fighting is meant to be terrifying to the player characters. While the women are all 0 level fighters, they would go insane at the thought of their lord being attacked. It will be necessary to kill or subdue the women before reaching the vampire. The monster has no problem trying to charm the player characters.

6) STUDY –

STUDY DESCRIPTION – The chamber is blindingly bright at its center. There are tools and sticks of raw wood along the walls. Characters can smell the sap of recently cut wood. Big benches and a small stove fill in the center of the area, but it's extremely difficult to see them from the bright glare of the area.

EXITS –

East wall – in the northern section is the beginning of a 10-foot-wide corridor with a set of double doors, one open and one closed.

South wall – 35 feet from the west wall is a 5-foot-wide opening.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – These monsters appear like lights. Normally, their light pulses like a heart beat, but there are enough of them in this area that when one light is off, there are three other wisps lighting the area. Part of the horror of this area is the movement of the wisps with deadly intent. They begin shining in the middle of the room, but quickly begin moving above and behind the player character party.

TAINTED LANDS WILL-O'-WISPS x20 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 9 (d10), HP 5 × 20, AC 29, MV 50 ft. (flying). Their primary attribute is mental. The wisp attacks with a touch (2d8). It generates its own fog in its lair area. It is immune to magic except for magic missile, protection from evil, and maze. The zombies and skeletons of other areas have damaged these wisps. They want to lead the party toward those creatures and feast from the dead player character bodies as they are killed by other undead. They will tell the player characters anything they want to hear to draw them away.)

TREASURE: 1 star ruby (10,000 gp), (There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this ruby. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands Portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.) 9 silvered shuriken, 6 cudgels, and assorted bleached human bones.

HORROR ELEMENT: The chamber of the wisps appears well lit with lights everywhere. It is only when the characters have come into the chamber that they realize they are surrounded by wisps very intent on leading the group astray. The horror element is in the fact that the room isn't lit by lights but by dangerous creatures.

7) GAMING ROOMS –

GAMING ROOM DESCRIPTIONS – There are four chambers where games are played. The three smaller chambers are for dice games and dagger

throwing games and have straw on the floor and a single set of benches and a table in each of them. The larger game room has a big fireplace with a constantly blazing magical fire. In this large room is a set of 3 spectres at the center of the chamber in a huge pile of human bones.

In the southwest corner is a statue of a soldier holding a large bowl and a brass mirror. The fire in the bowl sheds light onto the mirror that in turn lights up the chamber.

EXITS –

North wall – 20 feet from the east wall is a 10-foot-wide opening.

South wall – 10 feet from the east wall is a 5-foot-wide opening.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – These appear to be helpless-looking ghostly figures. They are on the ground surrounded by a pile of bones and weakly move when the player characters enter the area. In ghostly whispers, these monsters beg for food and help. All the while, they want to touch and hurt the character party. In the piles of bones are several skulls of dwarves, orcs, and humans. All of the bones have been split in half with their marrow sucked out.

TAINTED LANDS SPECTRES x3 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 9 (d12), HP 3 × 3, AC 15, MV 40 ft. Their primary attribute is mental. The spectre touches for 1d8 and then drains two levels healing the spectre five hit points.)

TREASURE: 300 gp in a 1-cubic-foot box of gold, a white diamond (5,000 gp), (There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this diamond. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands Portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.) a +1shield/+2 against undead, 1 dozen +2 darts +2/+4 against undead, a +1short sword +1/+against undead, and 2 wooden idol clubs.

HORROR ELEMENT: These three have sucked the marrow out of many bones laying about the area. They are extremely weak and beg in spooky, breathy voices for the player characters to help them. These spectres can't move because of their weakness and have their ghostly arms held out to the players as they beg for help. They want to touch the players and drain them of levels by seeming pitiful when they really aren't. Each will continue to beg and offer anything they can to interest the players all the while hoping the characters come close enough to touch and give hit points back to the monsters.

8) LOUNGE –

LOUNGE DESCRIPTION – Looking into this area there is only pitch darkness. Throwing a torch into the area has the torchlight engulfed in darkness. There must be a magical darkness in the area, as no light source seems to work.

It will be difficult if not impossible for the player characters to do well versus the shadows. If they are lucky enough to defeat them, the area still stays perpetually dark.

If the characters enter, they will discover by feel that there are several padded leather couches in the area. They will also find six wood chests with heavy padlocks. The chests hold the effects of six different spell casters. In each is a set of spell books with a large supply of wizard-style equipment. There will be two random potions in each chest along with a scroll with five random spells, one

from each lower level 1-5. There will be 500 gp in leather pouches. Each chest also contains quality wizard robes, a supply of candles, and 15 gp in silver dust, used to make pentagrams.

EXITS –

East Wall – In the upper “P” shaped section of the chamber, there is a 5-foot-wide opening 10 feet down from the northeast corner.

East Wall – There are three, 5-foot-wide openings evenly spaced on that section of the wall.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – These creatures are invisible in the darkness. All that can be seen in that area is darkness. The shadows enjoy toying with the characters and will fly past each of them. When this happens, a feeling of intense cold comes over the characters. The castle keeper should have prepared a bag of ice for the players to place their hands in. The castle keeper tells the player their entire bodies feel like the hand that is in the bag of ice.

TAINTED LANDS SHADOWS x4 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 5 (d12), HP 60 × 4, AC 15, MV 30 ft., 60 ft. (flying). Their primary attribute is mental. Its touch does 1d4 with a loss of 1 strength point. Shadow spawn are created when all of a character's strength is drained away. These shadows whisper in the ears of the characters that they must go north to the portal if they want to survive. Each of the shadows gives the chance for the players to leave the chamber and head north. If the characters don't leave the shadows have no problem draining away all of their strength points.)

TREASURE: 200 gold pieces, 3 Tainted Lands Shillelaghs, and a potion of restoration.

HORROR ELEMENT: Darkness is the horror element here. The characters light sources slowly grow weaker and weaker until there is no light at all when they use magical light sources. Other, more natural light sources just go out. Often the four shadows combine their attacks as all four of them fly down from the black ceiling and swarm a single character, attack, and then fly up again. No lights including fireballs and lightning bolts can be seen even a few feet away from the characters. Have them become lost in the darkness. The idea again is never to kill them, but to make them feel helpless in the darkness until they logically figure out how to get away from the shadows. Feel free to add whispering into the mix with the shadows giving the characters bad advice on how to escape the area.

9) GUEST ROOMS –

GUEST ROOM DESCRIPTIONS – There are a great deal of foggy wisps floating in and out of these chambers. Every one of the small rooms is exactly the same in this area. The room has a cot, a waist-high cabinet and on top of that cabinet is a large washbowl and a large, filled, water pitcher. Very large rat droppings fill the corridors of this area. A normal rat dropping is an eighth of an inch long, and these are two feet long.

EXITS –

The chambers face different directions. Each has one door that locks.

LOOK OF THE MONSTERS – The rats still slink along the edges of the walls and stand about two feet tall. They are sleek and their glowing eyes can be seen from over 50 feet away. The Castle Keeper should

dwell on the demonic stare of each rat. They have no trouble fixing their eyes on an individual character. The castle keeper should consider using two lit red Christmas tree lights under a blanket or hood. Before the game starts, he could place this set up ten or twenty feet away from the gaming table with all the other lights covered up by something. When the group meets these rats, he could turn on the two Christmas tree lights so that the players can constantly see in the distance the two lights viewed as the rat's eyes. These lights could be kept on for the rest of the evening and the castle keeper could keep refereeing to the eyes in the distance.

TAINTED LANDS GIANT DEMON RATS x4 (*chaotic evil*), (HD 1 (d12), HP 8 × 4, AC 15, MV 30 ft., 20 ft. (climb). Their primary attribute is physical. These giant rats begin high on the walls of the chamber and seek to frighten the characters into doing stupid things. They bite for 1d4 and are the size of large dogs (3 foot long with a long tail).

TREASURE: 40 gold coins, 1 Tainted Lands Mattock, and 3 silvered throwing daggers.

HORROR ELEMENT: The eyes of these monstrous creatures glow bright red and sometimes that is all that is seen as they move in the darkness around the player characters. With a successful bite, all of the other rats swarm the newly bitten character. The heavy weight of the rats bashes the character to the ground so that the rats have an even better chance at biting at the face and eyes. Wounded and dead rats attract the instant attention of the other rats. They cover the body and have it eaten in three rounds. These creatures are perfect for eating mounts and other pets the character may have brought with them. All around the area are huge piles of rat droppings.

The rats are very capable of coming out into the dark corridors, screaming at the player characters from a distance and slinking off to hide in another chamber.

Bashed player characters that are down on the floor will start to be pulled by two or three rats toward the portal. The rats also want to throw the bodies through the portal if they can. The rat bites should be treated as pummeling damage and the characters could be knocked unconscious by these bites.

10) STORY HALL –

STORY HALL DESCRIPTION – This is a very large chamber and there are large pillows all over the area. In the center is a large couch with a man sleeping on it. In two corners of the chamber are large statues of warriors. Each is holding a bowl and a brass mirror. The fires in the bowls reflect off of the mirrors and light the area. There is a large fireplace with a burning fire in the middle of the west wall. There are several scrolls on the floor. Picking one up, the characters read children's story about a boy who cried wolf too much.

EXITS –

North Wall – 10 feet from the west side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

West Wall – 15 feet from the south end is a 5-foot-wide opening.

THE LOOK OF THE MONSTER – The man is thin and bleary eyed. He's resting on a couch when the player characters see him in the large area. There is a jumble of equipment at the foot of

the couch. He has a ring that begins glowing when the player characters come into the area. In one hand is a long silver dagger, and in the other is some type of wand.

TAINTED LANDS WIZARD (*chaotic evil*), (HD 10 (d4), HP 33, AC 12, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are intelligence 19, dexterity 18, constitution 18. The wizard has already put up several protective spells. He seeks to sell the player characters magical weapons they will need to face the horrors of the area. They will pay the price of the weapons or not and then later, as they use the weapons the items break in the middle of the battle. Spells: 0-7, 1st-6, 2nd-5, 3rd-3, 4th-3, 5th-2. He wears a +5 ring of protection and has a wand of hold person with 11 charges. He has the following spells up and running: protection from good, shield, protection from arrows, see invisibility, and fire shield.)

He's selling a number of magical items from the Tainted Lands Player Handbook. Remember that at the first battle, the weapons will break and become useless.

TREASURE: 3,000 gp in the form of a sphere of solid gold, gold star sapphire (10,000 gp), (There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this sapphire. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands Portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.) ensemble vampire armor, ring of missing, rod of the vampire, and 10 black garlic candles.

HORROR ELEMENT: He presents himself as an opportunist who knows there is great danger in the area and wants to make a profit by selling some useful items. He charges top dollar from the items. The horror element comes when the wizard turns to gather the objects he has for sale. The back half of his body has been severed away and the characters will note maggots crawling out of his skull and the visible muscles on his back where the flesh has been peeled away. At this point, the castle keeper could bring out a bowl of gummy worms and inform the players that there are a large number of worms on each piece of the equipment.

11) MASTER BEDROOM –

MASTER BEDROOM DESCRIPTION – At first look, this is clearly a bedroom. There is a huge canopy bed against the east wall. The heavy curtains around the bed are closed. A large fire burns in the fireplace on the middle of the south wall. There are chests and benches in the area. A thick carpet of lion skins covers the floor.

“Is there anyone out there? Oh please, come and save me,” the female voice says from behind the covers of the bed.

EXITS –

West wall – 10 feet from the northern side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

North wall – 20 feet from the west side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

North wall – 20 feet from the east side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

South wall – 10 feet from the west side is a closed 5-foot-wide door.

South wall – 10 feet from the east side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

LOOK OF THE MONSTER – When the characters look inside the bed curtains, they see an attractive young, human woman, wearing silken

bedclothes. She's bound with thin silver chains that attach to the east wall. The blankets and pillows are mussed on the bed. There is a silvery glow about her body, clearly from the chains.

TAINTED LANDS NIGHT HAG (*chaotic evil*), (HD 10 (d8), HP 80, AC 22, MV 30 ft. Her primary attribute is mental. Spell-like abilities: improved magic missile (2d8 3/day), ray of enfeeblement 3/day, etherealness, know alignment, polymorph self, greater sleep, dream haunting 1/day, gate 1/day. Her bite does 2d6. She is immune to fire, cold, charm, sleep, and fear.)



TREASURE: 200 gp, 6 red-green carnelians (100 gp each), a huge blue diamond (5,000 gp), (There is a strand of foggy mist connect to this diamond. While it can be blown away, it always reattaches itself. The strand will lead back to the Tainted Lands Portal. In a long, dark hall, the strand can barely be seen floating back to the portal.) undead cloak, drums of skeleton summoning. There are several chests in this chamber and these are filled with quality clothes for the man and woman owners of the inn; long since killed and eaten. In hidden compartments in the lids of these three chests are wrapped pouches each containing 1,000 gp. The chests and the locks are very well made and difficult to break open.

HORROR ELEMENT: She appears as a lovely woman who is chained to a wall by a slim silver set of chains. She begs to be free and offers great treasure for her release. As long as she is chained, no matter what the character do, she appears lovely. All spells of detection and magic items of seeing will show her to be just as she seems, a lovely woman. When freed she goes submissively with the group, but now they would be able to detect her evil nature. She wants to invade their dreams as they camp for the night. She would warn of the portal and its dangers if they go into that area.

12) MASTER BATH –

MASTER BATH DESCRIPTION – The characters see some type of large bathtub. There are candles lit in several places around the tub and the smell of flower-scented water is strong in the area. Steam rises from the tub. There is a ten-foot walkway of tile around the north and east ends of the tub. The others sides are tight against the wall. Above the middle of the water is a sword that floats in the air. The weapon is large and there seems to be some type of demonic head at the end of

the pommel of the weapon. As soon as the characters step into the chamber the head on the sword looks at them and screams in a high-pitched voice, “Clear out!” There are red symbols all along the blade of the weapon and they start to glow bright red.

EXITS –

East Wall – 10 feet from the north wall is a 5-foot-wide opening.

LOOK OF THE MONSTER – A floating sword is highly unusual. A sword that moves to keep its blade toward the player characters is even stranger. When the sword uses telepathy to warn the characters away, they should know they are facing something strange and deadly. This would be a good time to use some type of flower-scented air freshener spray to get the players more in the mood to imagine what they are facing.

TAINTED LANDS SWORD OF MADNESS – *lawful alignment, Will 22, has the powers of speech, telepathy, sight, hearing, the weapon can cast darkness 3/day, hold person 3/day, detect illusions 3/day, locate object 3/day, detect undead at will, lesser globe of invulnerability 1/day, wall of wind 3/day, wall of thorns 3/day. This dancing, two-handed sword is floating in the chamber. It has a purpose to champion law and tries to get sword wielders to enter the Tainted Lands Portal without going itself. The weapon has the head of some sort of demon on the pommel of the sword. The blade is etched in blood-red runes adding plusses to the strike and damage of the weapon (3d10 +5) and is an adamantine weapon. It will happily come into the hand of a fighter type and promptly take over that character in a battle of wills. Control is maintained by making a successful charisma saving throw, adding in all attribute bonuses plus the player character's level. Failing that, the sword generates the illusion of a powerful fighter holding it and the fighter comes to attack the party. The sword won't go out of the bath area unless it has convinced characters to follow it to the portal.*



TREASURE: There is a small leather sack of gemstones on a loop of the pommel of the sword. It falls into the water of the tub when the sword floats out to fight. 1 Sun-Yellow Sphere Ioun Stone – Undead strike at -1 in a 10 ft. radius of the stone, 1 Pink Sapphire (1,000), 1 Scarlet Ruby (500), 2 green garnets (50 gp each).

HORROR ELEMENT: This weapon instantly attacks a player character that doesn't have a lawful alignment that has entered the bath area. Player characters should realize they could try to take it over by attempting to grasp it. The runes are glowing bright red and the weapon waits above the east opening, wanting to strike down in surprise if the characters come back into the chamber. The sword talks to the group, shouting about wanting to kill chaotic creatures.

HORROR EFFECTS

The following lettered areas are designed to increase the horror of the inn. These areas are replenished from day to day and don't change, no matter what the characters do during the adventure. The energy of the Tainted Lands Portal is powering these effects.

A) TAINTED LANDS PORTAL

This is the most important encounter in the adventure. Spend some time describing the unusualness of the portal. There is a huge earthquake crack in the floor, creating a chasm going outside the north walls, and into the fireplace to the south. One could fall and hurt oneself if they aren't careful in the depths of the chasm. The portal is actually in the deep tub. It's on three circular steps and the portal rests on a dais above the steps, but the top just peaks up over the lip of the deep pool.

While there are floating mists all over the inn, there are five strands of mist that float from the gem pockets in the portal sides to areas in the inn. Undead have come out of the portal from the Tainted Lands and grabbed the gems to spread the effect of the portal and make the portal take no damage from physical or magical attacks. It would be easy to follow these tendrils as they float through the corridors of the inn and connect to the gems in the treasure piles of the monsters.

- 1) **Gold Star Sapphire** – in the tavern section with the skeletons
- 2) **Purple Star Sapphire** – in the library with the ghosts
- 3) **Star Ruby** – in the study with the will-o'-wisp
- 4) **White Diamond** – in the gaming rooms with the spectres
- 5) **Blue Diamond** – in the master bedroom with the night hag

The portal stands 30 feet tall on a raised circular set of three terraced steps, leading to the portal on the top terrace. The portal itself seems to be carved out of black stone and represents bunches of coiled tentacles. This look changes from portal to portal and no one knows why, but all of them have a tentacled theme. The only spot of color on the portal are five gems, two on the left side, two on the right side, and one at the top of the portal. Each of these gems is a fist-sized, glowing gem: gold star sapphire, purple star sapphire, star ruby, white diamond, and a blue diamond. On this portal, these gems have been taken away.

The center of the portal is large, oval, twentyfeet tall and sixteen feet wide. There is a swirl of dark gray fog constantly moving in the oval and often pushing out into the area around the portal. Anything touching the surface of the portal, teleports it to the center of the Tainted Lands. This transportation especially includes characters holding on to something and touching into the portal. If a character held a rope and threw part of it in, they would be instantly transported. If they held a short rod and pushed it into the portal, they would be transported. If, however, they threw a dart in, they would not be transported. All silver items on any character or beast fall to the floor in front of the portal and cannot go through the oval. Even if the silver item were in a portable hole, it would come out of the hole and fall to the floor while everything else was transported. It's very common to see silver of all types on the edges of the room as angry undead coming out of the portal, from the other side, kick it away from the portal's opening as the silver stings and damages them.

The Tainted Lands powers have become attracted to this area, and want to use the portal to bring the mists of the Tainted Lands closer to cover the portal and take over the nearby lands. The more people that go through the portal and the further away the five gems get from the portal, increases the power of the pull of the Tainted Lands. When a portal lands in the area, it cracks the earth, forming a large chasm.

HOW TO GET RID OF THIS PORTAL

Only a Portal Keeper can destroy a portal, and then only when five of the right types of gems are in their indentations, along the sides of the portal. This portal can be made less dangerous in two ways. The thick stone ceiling of the inn can be brought down on the portal blocking it in stone so that creatures can't go in or out. The portal is a doorway to another land, so a *wizard lock* spell will work to close it, however, it would be only a matter of time until a strong enough undead creature broke the spell from the Tainted Lands side and walked on through.

There are hundreds of silver coins all over the area. On the bottom of the three steps to this portal is a massive long sword with a silver pommel and a huge blue diamond (5,000 gp) at the end of the pommel; (+2, Will 14, telepathy, double damage to undead.)

HORROR ELEMENT: As you describe the portal and the chamber have the player's roll an intelligence check. The higher they roll the more they feel the portal is deadly and extremely dangerous. There are many dead bodies on the sides of the chasm around the portal. Some appear to be dead a few days ago and some look mummified. The gear they wear looks fresh, and useful to the party. Searching the bodies reveals a lot of well-made camping gear. All of these bodies have died from savage head bashing. Castle Keepers should light some candles if they haven't already and use some cinnamon and place the herb in the burning candle. Doing that every time the players see a portal will always bring this adventure to their minds when they smell cinnamon at other times. A chill will hit their spines at those times.

While the player characters are wandering around the portal area, two ghostly shapes come out of the portal. They look around and pass through the walls to the south. This happens several times every hour, and these ghostly shapes ignore the party.

TURNING BACK THE HANDS OF TIME

In a tournament situation or in a scenario where you don't want your player characters to go through the portal just yet, the way to stop this is easy. Just before the player character is about to stick something in the portal a lich walks out. The characters will attack and the lich will only use spells to defend itself. "Don't you recognize me?" the creature asks. It is revealed that one of the player characters in this group, who crossed over to the Tainted Lands, eventually turns into a lich. This creature spent time and magic to eventually come through the portal. The lich warns the party not to fool with the portal and to go away. The lich then turns to dust from the extreme effort of going back in time.

EXITS –

East wall – 10 feet from the northern corner is a 5-foot-wide opening.

West wall – 10 feet from the northern corner is a 5-foot-wide opening.

South wall – in the middle is a 5-foot-wide opening.

B) THINGS IN THE FOG

In the open courtyard of the inn, the funnel of clouds and fog spins round and round at the center of the area. Player characters entering the cloudy fog for any reason run the risk of being struck by lightning once every turn for 20 points of damage, constitution save for half damage. If they enter the funnel, they are struck once by lightning (save for half), then spun out of the funnel onto the earth of the courtyard.

The characters can see two statues of warriors in the courtyard and these are holding large brass mirrors that reflect the light. There are garden patches in the area and these hold unusually large flowers (N).

From the lightning strikes and wind, it is massively noisy in the courtyard. Characters won't be able to hear themselves talk. The wind also blows so hard the characters can barely walk in the area.

On the north wall, there is a large crack in the bare earth, allowing one to go into the opening, moving into a fireplace area with a fire burning brightly in the fireplace in the chamber to the north of the courtyard wall.

Weather control spells will not work on the clouds, as the tainted power of the portal powers this funnel cloud, keeping it going no matter what happens.

EXITS –

South wall – in the middle of the south wall is a 10-foot-wide corridor out of the inn.

South wall – 15 feet from the east wall is a 5-foot-wide opening.

South wall – 15 feet from the west wall is a 5-foot-wide opening.

West wall – 25 feet from the north corner is a 5-foot-wide opening.

East wall – 25 feet from the north corner is a 5-foot-wide opening.

HORROR ELEMENT: The air pressure pushing down on the courtyard is very strong. Just moving a few steps into the area is difficult. One can't help but look up into the massive storm cloud and feel like the hand of a god is crushing down on the area. There is a deep pit in the center of the area and earth is constantly being pulled up into the cloud.

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C) BLOOD AND MORE BLOOD

All of these areas are marked with a flow of red, flesh blood. There is blood rolling down the walls of the area. The party coming into this area is walking in an inch of blood on the floor and it's very slippery so that the characters have a good chance of falling down (dexterity check every twenty feet. The smell of the blood is overpowering and makes it difficult to talk, it's so strong in the area. An occasional blood-covered rat with an extended belly can be seen breathing hard in a corner of the blood area.

D) CHAINED MOVING SKELETONS

Coming close to these areas the player characters hear the rattling of chains as the skeletons try to break free. The walls of this area have animated skeletons trying to pull out of the manacles fastened to the walls every five feet. Naturally, when the player characters come into the area, the skeletons all succeed and pull out the chains and attack. There are several sections of these skeletons and as the player characters pass by and look in, more and more of the skeletons release themselves and attack. They follow the character party until either the skeletons, or the party are all killed.

CHAINED SKELETONS (*neutral*), (HD 1 (d12), HP 12, AC 13, MV 30 ft., primary attribute: *physical*. The skeleton possesses no armor but is armed with a sharp long sword.)

HORROR ELEMENT: An area can be cleared of skeletons, but there will be more of them 24-hours later in the same fixed manacles.

E) ROTTING KING'S GUARDS

These are piles of ten king's guards. They are all dead, dressed in chainmail, and have the outer vestments of the guard with a large black castle form etched into their clothing. Each of these guards is armed with a long spear and a long sword. They have large shields. They have been dead for at least three days and insects are eating away at their bodies. Each of the guards has a purse with 20 silver and 1 gold coin. Examining the bodies, there is no way to tell how the group died. The biggest member of the group is at the bottom of the pile. His equipment is clearly better and he is dressed in plate mail. His spear and long sword are +1.

HORROR ELEMENT: From the point where they find the dead guardsmen to every encounter at the inn, the player characters will see one or two ghostly guardsmen trying to motion the player characters away from whatever danger they are walking into. When the group gets to the portal area, all twenty of the ghostly guardsmen stand around the portal steps unmoving and just staring off into the sides of the chamber. The player characters can move through these apparitions showing no ill effect.

When the player characters come near the openings for encounters 1-12, the king's guard ghosts stand in the portals trying to warn the characters away from that area.

Castle Keepers should dwell on the concept of nasty beetles and worms eating the flesh off of the bodies. The players are supposed to be grossed out from the description of the dead flesh moving as bugs move beneath the skin.

F) LINES OF GIANT CENTIPEDES

The chamber has a set of stairs going up in the northeastern corner. There is a statue of a warrior in the southwestern corner. The statue is of a warrior is holding a large brass mirror and a bowl with a blazing fire inside the bowl. The light from the fire reflects off of the mirror and shines across the entire area. On the floor, in a semicircle around the steps leading up, is a long line of moving, giant centipedes. They enter the area from a hole in the east wall and they move around the stairs and exit the chamber through a hole in the north wall. Each centipede is four feet long with five-inch-wide pincers at the front and a stinger in the back. Each is jet black and there is a strange acid smell coming from each of them. You watch for a moment and see hundreds of these bugs moving through the chamber.

The characters can walk over these creatures with no harm, but if they interrupt their march, they are going to be swarmed.

Swarming isn't the only surprise for the characters. If they interfere with the bugs, the statue in the corner animates and comes to attack. If the characters do anything but run, the statue follows them until the statue is destroyed. It, like the other monsters, is striking to pummel the characters and throw their unconscious bodies into the portal.

GIANT CENTIPEDES (*neutral*), (HD 2d8, HP 16, AC 15, MV 40 ft. Their primary attribute is physical. 1d6 will attack each player character. They bite for 1d4 and sting for 1d4 points of poison damage use a constitution save to only take half the poison damage., EXP value is 15 +2 per hit point.) The more the characters fight the centipedes, the more come out of the east wall and attack. There could be hundreds of them swarming the bodies of the characters. The centipedes don't follow the group up the stairs or through the only exit in the chamber.)

ANIMATED SOLDIER STATUE (*neutral evil*), (HD 5d10, HP 50, AC 19, MV 30 ft. Its primary attribute is physical. It strikes to subdue with a stone sword (1d8 +2). It is immune to all cold, fire, and control spells.)

EXIT –

Northeast corner – a set of 10-foot-wide stairs going up.

West wall – 15 feet down from the north side is a 5-foot-wide opening in the wall.

G) SLEEPING FLOATING GIANT RATS

At the center of the chamber are rows and rows of floating rats. Their tails are straight up in the air and their heads don't move. There are 100 rats at the center of the room floating 5 feet in the air. If one is careful, they could go around the rats on either side and escape the chamber.

Touching a rat or doing anything to disturb the rats causes ten to fall to the floor and the rats attack the character party. The rats are just sleeping and a mystical force has them floating in the air.

GIANT RATS x100 (*neutral*), HD 1 (d4), HP 4 x100, AC 13, MV 30 ft., 20 ft. (*climb*). Their primary attribute is physical. Their bites do 1d4 each.

HORROR ELEMENT: A hundred rats floating in the middle of the chamber is supposed to be a horrific image. The fact that they are only sleeping and could wake up at any second should add some suspense to the image. That they are floating in the air, as if 100 ghosts were holding their tails should also create some sense of danger. A

fireball or bouncing lightning bolt should kill them all; however, they are already sleeping so a sleep spell will have no effect on them while they are hanging. Doing anything physical to the rats causes 10 of them to drop to the floor and attack. A pitched battle with them would cause all of them to drop and try to swarm the player characters.

If the player characters purposely rouse the rats, have whatever is holding the rats in the air begin throwing rats at the faces of the characters. Be sure to detail the horrible smell of the area, as there are rat droppings all over in high piles.

EXITS –

East wall – 5 feet down from the northern corner is a 5-foot-wide opening.

South wall – 25 feet over from the north side is a 5-foot-wide opening.

H) HAUNT PARTY SHADES

When the player characters come into this area, they see two lovely ladies eating a lavish dinner with three knights in chain mail. The girls are flirting with the three men. All five of them will look up and take notice of the character party. The girls giggle and ask why the player characters are there. The girls carry on a festive dialogue with the players. They tell them this is the knight's feast and they have been paid to show these noble knights a good time. The five will then go back to eating and laughing together. Every new H section will have a different set of ladies and knights laughing and eating.

HORROR ELEMENT: Touching the laughing group or the well-laid table causes all of the five to stand up. The prettiest of the ladies says, "I really wish you hadn't done that." Suddenly the smell of rotting corpses is overwhelming and the five turn into rotting zombies. Slowly they move out from around the tables and they begin stumbling toward the characters. More and more flesh falls off their bones; as they move toward the group. They continue to follow the characters until their legs fall off and then they vanish. If the characters fight these haunts, the spectral group vanishes.

I) REOCCURRING DEATH SCENE

The clang of weapons sounds in the distance. A female voice shouts for help. When the group comes on the scene, two men are fighting over a lady with a ripped shirt who stands against the wall shouting for help, over and over again. The two young men are using deadly fencing blades in one hand and long dirks in the other. The three of them totally ignore the player characters watching the scene. The battle goes on for many minutes or until the player characters decide to take a hand.

HORROR ELEMENT: When the players come in to take a hand, the two fencers make deadly lunges at each other. One of the fencers blocks the long blade into the heart of the lovely young woman and she dies. Seeing his ladylove dead, the other fencer shouts that he can't live without her. He thrusts his dirk into his throat and dies. The last fencer surveys the scene in horror and all three of them vanish into mist. A minute later the party can hear screams of help and then they detect the sound of blades. Suddenly the three are redoing the death scene. The characters can try to stop things, but it always ends in death and the vanishing mists.

J) MESSED UP/NOT MESSED UP

Before the player characters come into this chamber, they see a well-lit area in a massive mess. Once it could have been a comfortable study. There are leather padded chairs and well made tables visible in the area, but they and many other things are thrown in the middle of the area. Piles of gold coins, strands of expensive jewelry, and several glowing swords are also in that pile. The place is a true mess.

Exits –

North wall – 10 feet from the east corner is a 5-foot-wide opening in the wall.

East wall – in the southern corner is a 10-foot-wide opening.

HORROR ELEMENT: The second the first player character walks into this chamber, there is a massive blurring of everyone's vision. The chamber completely transforms from a mess into an ordered study with all the tables and chairs in their places and candles lighting up the area. When all of the characters step out of the chamber, the area blurs again and changes into its former mess.

If the group tests this magical effect, they can throw whatever they want into the messy version of the chamber, and those thrown things fall on top of the jumble of things in the middle of the chamber. Those thrown things would not appear in the unmessed study.

TREASURE: If the characters are clever, they can lasso some of the treasure out of the messy chamber. There are three +2 silvered long swords (double damage versus undead), five pearl necklaces each worth 1,000 gp, and a small chest with three potions of healing in the chest.

K) WALL-TO-WALL INSECTS

The chamber walls and floor are alive with crawling insects of many types. There are the poisonous insects like black widow spiders, scorpions, and the like. There are all sizes of beetles, many of them with huge pincers. There are centipedes and millipedes of many different lengths. None of the thousands and thousands of bugs step one claw out of any of the rooms, but they move all over the walls, floors, and ceilings of the chambers where they are located.

HORROR ELEMENT: If a character walks into one of these areas, bugs are going to start to rain on top of them. Poisonous spiders and scorpions will bite them. Centipedes will be crawling into their clothes and nipping at their flesh. They won't take a great deal of damage, but they are going to have to be smashing bugs into their flesh. For a good long while after they leave these chambers they will find bugs in their pouches and backpacks.

L) FLOATING BODY PARTS

The lights of the character party reveal hundreds of floating human body parts. Eyeballs, severed heads, cut hands and feet, chests without arms or legs are all floating in this area. There are hundreds of these parts and the smell of fresh blood fills the area adding to the horror.

HORROR ELEMENT: If the floating body parts weren't enough of a problem, as the characters enter the area, 1d6 of these parts start floating toward each of the player characters. These parts want to attach themselves to the bodies of the characters.

If the parts were eyeballs, the floating parts start ramming into the eyes of the character. If the part is a foot, that floats toward the feet of the character and starts ramming into the foot of the character. These horrors are only stopped by burying them in the ground. They will continue to fly toward the characters no matter how chopped or burnt each part is. They are seeking some closure and only the player characters can put them to rest.

M) RAW CURSED TREASURE

There is a large chest in the center of this chamber. It's made of steel and there are very strong-looking chains binding the chest with a padlock, holding the chains together. There are several pools of fresh blood in the area. On one wall, a large spear has pierced a heavy shield right to the wall. Right in front of the only entrance is a spread of three daggers sticking upright into the floor. In the northeast corner of the room, a mass of bugs is busily eating a human skeleton. The metal equipment on the body would indicate it was a fighter.

CURSED TREASURE: An amulet of inescapable location, bag of devouring, bracers of defenselessness, gauntlets of fumbling, and stone of weight are all in the heavy, locked, and chain-bound steel chest bolted to the floor. It's a CL 12 to get the lock open. The chest takes 250 points of structural damage before it would even crack slightly. The chains are strong steel and each link takes 75 points of damage. Once the characters start fooling with the chest there is a black smoke that begins pouring out of the seams in the chest. This causes all the characters to start choking and soon it fills the chamber.

When the chains are broken, a spear trap sends three spears at each of the characters (1d6 for each spear). When the lock is picked, daggers fly out of the walls and 1d4 strike the characters for 1d4 points of damage. There is contact poison on each of the wondrous items in the chest forcing a constitution save where the 26 points of poison damage is cut in half with a successful save if the characters are picking up the items with their bare hands.

Exit –

East wall – 10 feet up from the southern side.

N) GARDEN FLOWERS OF DEATH

This is a 10-foot-by-10-foot box of flowers growing in the open courtyard. Once the box held a lovely bunch of flowers and each bud was fragrant and attractive. When the portal came to the inn, a dark magic from the Tainted Lands settled all over the different chambers of the inn and filled things with tainted magic. Now the flowers are massive and thick looking with wide stems filled with thorns and flower heads that constantly snap at any moving object.

If the player characters come within 10 feet of any of the plant boxes, the plants try and attack. Even in the wind that blows up into the funnel, the plants are able to shoot poison seeds at the characters.

DEADLY PLANTS (*neutral evil*), (HD 2d8, HP 16 x9, AC 17, MV 0 ft. Their primary attribute is physical. Each plant can shoot one poison seed every other round. If the seed strikes for 1d8, it forces a poison constitution save allowing for half damage. If the victim fails, it does 10 points of damage. If the victim dies from the seed, they quickly turn soft and a few hours later have drained into the earth to be fertilizer for the plants. The bites of the plants do no damage, but can delay prey so more of the seeds are shot at them.)

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HORROR ELEMENT: The characters only have to deal with one plant if they stay away and make ranged attacks. If they close in to strike with swords or other melee weapons, they take multiple attacks from the nine large plants in the box of flowers.

O) RAINING BLOOD

The area seems normal until the player characters walk inside. With the first few steps, single drops of blood make a nosey splatter against their shoulders and heads. The longer they stay in the O areas, the more blood rains down upon them. At first, it's a few drops. These drops increase in intensity and after several minutes of more and more blood, there is a downpour and the characters can't see a foot in front of them. There will be no blood hitting the walls or floor. All of it is hitting and staying on the bodies of the player characters. Once they leave the area, the blood vanishes from their clothes, as does the smell.

P) DRUNKS FOR GHOSTS

The party hears a drinking song. If they come closer, they see three men around a large cask of wine. Every once in a while, one of the men opens the tap and out flows a large portion of wine into their tankards. The wine can be smelt and several bits splash against the floor. These men are gloriously happy, are singing, and start to toast the player characters. The men offer each of the characters their own tankard filled with the wonderful scent of wine. Nothing stops at least one of the three from drinking and singing and they often empty their tankards.

HORROR ELEMENT: When one of the men is touched, their true nature comes out. These are ghosts who are continually drunk. They vanish with a touch, and are back in the same spot, an hour later not remembering anything that happened to them before. Their wine tankards fall and spill to the floor. They aren't there to give advice or answer questions. They just do their own drunken thing and try to get others to get drunk as well. The wine is very strong and one tankard full will make a character very drunk.

ROAMING THE FLOORS OF THE INN AND HORROR ELEMENTS

This inn is designed to inspire horror in your players. There will be times when they are just talking too long in being careful. During those times, throw a wandering creature at them.

Listen to what your players say as they play the game. When they talk about things they might see or things they really don't want to encounter, feel free to make those things happen right away.

Remember when you are throwing things at them to try and use all of their senses to inspire horror. Sights and sounds aren't nearly enough. All five senses should be used: vision, hearing, smell, touch, and taste.

VISION EXPERIENCES: The inn generates all sorts of mystical visions. There are constant tendrils of twisting fog moving through the corridors. Quite often, a face with red, demonic eyes will fly through the corridor, and through the player characters, to give them quite a scare. Floating ghostly skulls can cause great fun, especially when these ghostly skulls begin following the party. Naturally, the skull s can't be touched and weapons go right through them. Clerics should be able to turn them easily.

SOUND EXPERIENCES: Work up a good moan and let that rip every now and then as the player characters move from encounter to encounter. Get some chains from somewhere and actually rattle them once in awhile. Combine the sound of rattling chains with the player characters finding broken and bloody manacles against the walls of the inn.

TOUCH EXPERIENCES: Touch takes a little work, but can bring about the most feelings of horror and disgust. Most of the time, the player characters should be reaching into bags to feel things you hand them. The Castle Keeper should be saying things like, "Yes this is the way the wall feels," when the player is touching a chunk of fresh meat. "Yes, this strange pool smells and feels like this," as the player reaches into a bowl of cows blood. Sandpaper is good for the feel of zombie flesh. Beef jerky with ketchup can simulate some creature flesh.

SMELL EXPERIENCE: Cow's blood smells interesting. Burning some incense can be fun. Vinegar in a bowl at the table creates an interesting scent. Sprinkling pepper into a fan blowing across the table can be fun. Add spices to burning candles to fill the room with strong scents. Ammonia in a shallow bowl in front of a fan can be effective.

TASTE EXPERIENCE: First assure your player characters that everything you are going to have them drink is nothing disgusting. Have them drink a bit of cider vinegar and tell them all of their water bottles have been tainted. Have them drink some cherry juice and then explain that the player characters thought they were drinking water, but it turns out to be blood. Tell the party they are walking into an orange fog and that the breathed in fog tastes funny. Then sprinkle a bit of cinnamon on their tongues.

WANDERING ENCOUNTERS IN THE INN

1) ANOTHER CHARACTER PARTY

This is a family group on the same business as the player characters. They have only recently entered the area. This group will appear friendly, but will attack instantly if the player characters show a hard image. If one of the Darkson's die, the rest of the family goes berserk and gains a +2 to strike and do damage.

DRUD DARKSON (*neutral evil*), (4th level fighter; HP 28, AC 17, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are strength 17, constitution 16, and dexterity 16. He uses chain mail, shield, broadsword (2d4 +2), and dagger (1d4 +2).)

OOON DARKSON (*neutral evil*), (1st/4th level cleric/rogue; HP 12, AC 15, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are strength 17, dexterity 17, and wisdom 16. He uses leather armor, a heavy mace (1d10) and a dagger (1d4).)

Ooon has become famous in the community as a cleric using his rogue skills to open locked passages to find pockets of evil.

LARISA DARKSON (*neutral evil*), (6th level rogue; HP 20, AC 12, MV 30 ft. Her primary attributes are constitution 18, dexterity 16, and intelligence 14. She uses leather armor, a long sword (1d8), and a dagger (1d4).)

APPLE DARKSON (*neutral evil*), (4th level cleric; HP 24, AC 19, MV 20 ft. His primary attributes are strength 16, wisdom 16, and charisma 16. He uses plate mail, a shield, and a war hammer (1d8). He uses the following clerical spells: 0-4, 1st-3, 2nd-2.)

DANIEL DARKSON (*neutral evil*), (5th level cleric: HP 20, AC 11, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are wisdom 17, intelligence 17, and charisma 14. He uses an ironwood staff (1d6) and padded armor. He uses the following clerical spells: 0-4, 1st-3, 2nd-2, 3rd-1.)

Daniel is a coward and quick to run from a difficult battle.

2) MARCHING ZOMBIES

These zombies have acquired a taste for fighters and will attack them first.

ZOMBIE-UNDEAD (*neutral evil*), HD 2d8, HP 14 x9, AC 19, MV 20 ft. Their primary attribute is physical. The zombies attack with a slam (1d8.) The zombies act last in the round. These can be heard long before they are seen. They are well outfitted in king's guard chain mail with a full body shield. They march through the inn in perfect step and the thunder of their new boots echoes down the corridors and grows louder and louder or softer and softer depending on if they are coming toward or away from the character group.

3) CLERICAL BAND

This group is filled with horror at what they have seen so far. They offer to bless the player character group, but they won't go the same way as the party group.

KONTAL SEPT (*chaotic evil*), (11th level cleric: HP 49, AC 15, MV 25 ft. His primary attributes are strength 17, wisdom 16, and charisma 15. He uses a morningstar (2d4 +2) and wears a steel breastplate. He uses the following clerical spells: 0-6, 1st-5, 2nd-4, 3rd-4, 4th-3, 5th-2, 6th-1.)

Kontal maintains a style of patience, but is quick to kill enemies in battle.

TURLOON ANDOOL (*chaotic good*), (10th level cleric: HP 48, AC 11, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are wisdom 16, intelligence 16, and charisma 15. He uses an obsidian staff (1d6 +2) and wears padded armor. He uses the following clerical spells: 0-5, 1st-4, 2nd-4, 3rd-3, 4th-3, 5th-2.)

Turloon is a calm man, able to deal with large crowds and angry creatures. He's a good leader and his men are likely to stay around him instead of fleeing a battle.

PATENA TALL (*neutral evil*), (8th level cleric: HP 37, AC 15, MV 30 ft. Her primary attributes are intelligence 17, wisdom 17, and charisma 15. She uses a morningstar (2d4) and wears a steel breastplate. She uses the following clerical spells: 0-5, 1st-4, 2nd-3, 3rd-3, 4th-2.)

Patena likes to hang back and toss clerical spells at enemies instead of entering into a melee.

4) ROGUES PAIR

This pair would like to come with the character party and slowly steal all of their important items.

SOBICK SEPT (*chaotic neutral*), (8th level rogue: HP 36, AC 13, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are dexterity 17, intelligence 16, and constitution 16. He uses padded armor, a short sword (1d6), and he carries four throwing axes (1d6). Early in his career, he acquired a special set of enchanted lock picks and he's never come across a lock he couldn't open since that day.)

Sobick makes a great deal of gold selling special locked chests of

merchants. He then steals their keys so they have to pay him to unlock those chests.

ANUUN SEPT (*lawful evil*), (8th level rogue: HP 32, AC 13, MV 30 ft. His primary attributes are dexterity 18, intelligence 16, and charisma 15. He uses a +3 ring of protection and his weapon of choice is a hand crossbow (1d4) and a set of five throwing daggers (1d4).)

5) TWO MEDUSA

MEDUSA x2 (*lawful evil*), (HD 6 (d8), HP 48 x2, AC 15, MV 30 ft. Their primary attribute is mental. Medusa attacks include: throwing dagger (1d4), Shortbow (1d6), Snakes attack up to three feet away. Unless treated, the poison of the medusa kills in 1d4 turns. The poison forces a constitution save or the victim dies. The petrifying gaze forces a strength save or the victim is petrified. These two medusa keep 15 feet away from each other at all times. They have a gold star sapphire (10,000 gp) in a pouch.)

6) GELATINOUS CUBE IN CORRIDOR

Gelatinous Cube (*neutral*), HD 4 (d10), HP 40, AC 3, MV 20 ft. Its primary attribute is physical. The cube slams for 1d4. Its acid does 1d4. It engulfs, forcing a dexterity save or the prey is inside and taking acid damage. Its touch forces a strength save or the prey is paralyzed.

7) MERCENARY BAND

BAND x5 (*lawful good*), (5th level fighters: HP 30, 30, 29, 28, 27, AC 13, MV 30 ft. Their primary attributes are strength 17, constitution 14, and charisma 11. They wear ring mail and use mauls (1d10) in battle. These men are interested in being bought off. They demand gold or they will have to arrest the character party. They look tough, and none of the characters are going to want to be hit by mauls.)

8) SKELETONS

SKELETONS x10 (*neutral*), (HD 1 (d12), HP 12, AC 13, MV 30 ft. Their primary attribute is physical. The skeletons are armed with sharp long swords (1d8 +2).)

9) ANNIS AND WOLVES

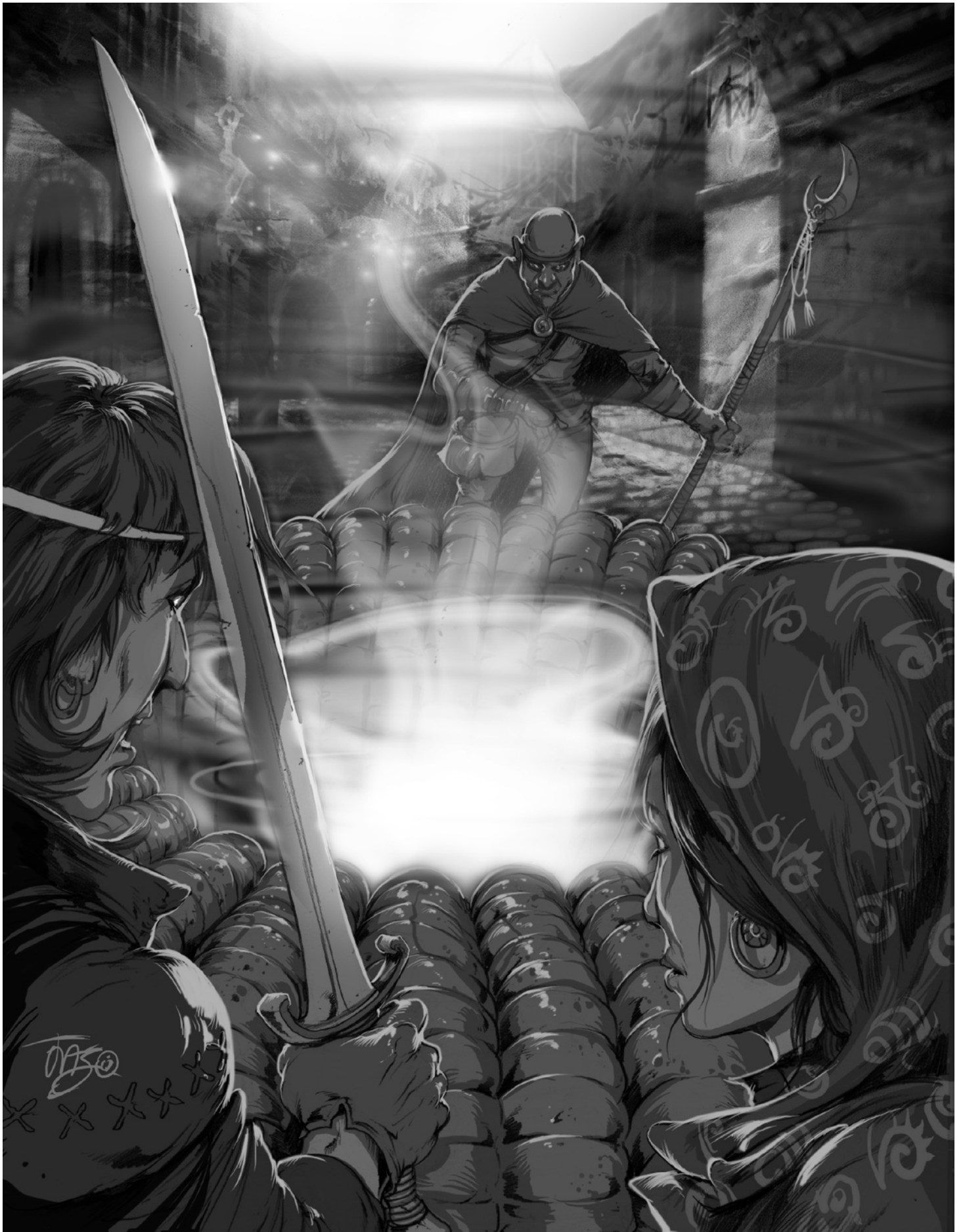
ANNIS (*chaotic evil*), (HD 7d8, HP 56, AC 20, MV 40 ft. Her primary attribute is mental. She attacks with 2 claws 2d4/2d4 and a bite 1d6. Striking with claws and a bite allows the Annis to grab the prey. Once grabbed, the Annis rends striking successfully with all attacks and then the prey is allowed a strength save to escape. She also uses fog cloud 2/day and change self 2/day. The Annis is looking for the night hag, wanting to kill her. If the character party gives her directions, she doesn't attack them.)

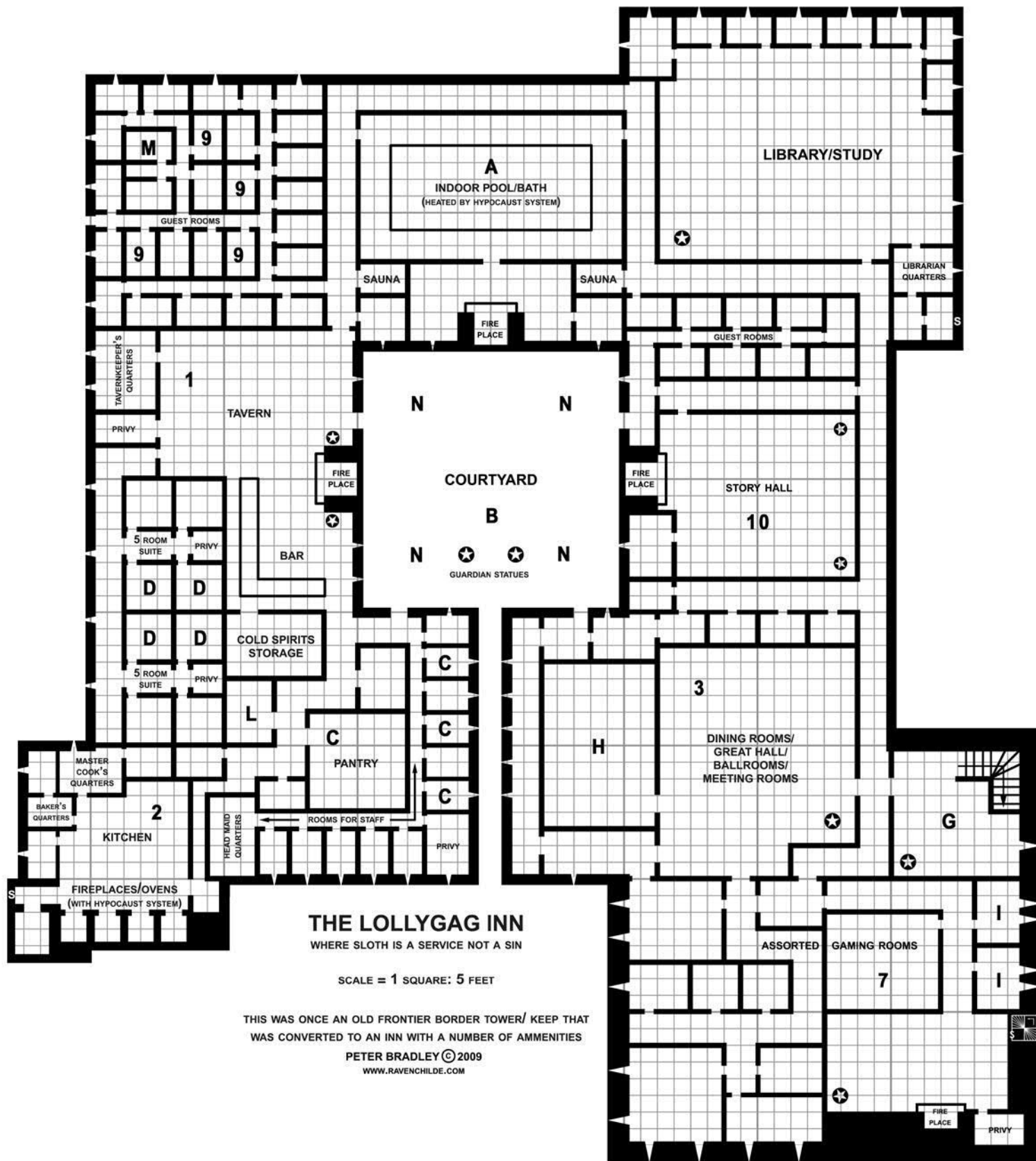
WOLVES x6 (*neutral*), (HD 2d8, HP 10 x6, AC 13, MV 50 ft. Their primary attribute is physical physical. They attack with a bite (1d8). The six wolves are under the tight control of the Annis and don't attack unless the Annis is attacked.)

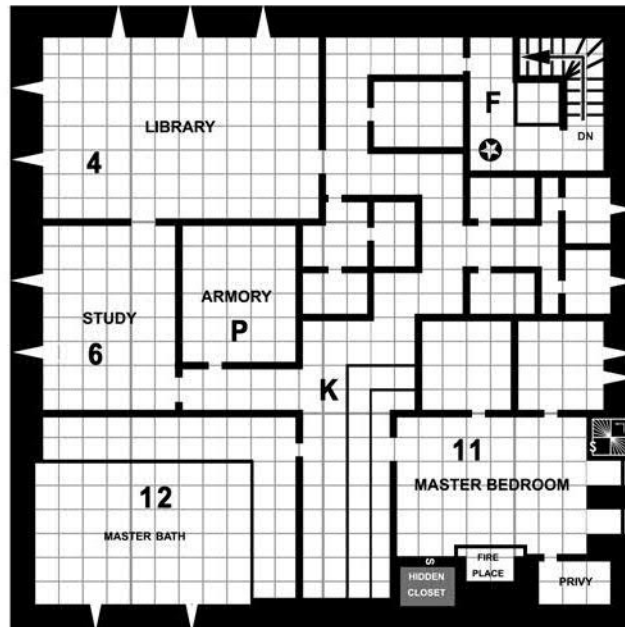
10) GREEN HAG

GREEN HAG (*chaotic evil*), (HD 9d8, HP 72, AC 22, MV 30 ft. Her primary attribute is mental. She attacks with 2 claws 1d4 +4/1d4 +4, weakness as a ray of enfeeblement, spell-like abilities: audible glamour, dancing lights, invisibility, pass without trace, change self, speak with monsters, and water breathing.)

16 CASTLES & CRUSADES







3RD FLOOR OF CORNER TOWER
INN OWNER'S SUITE



2ND FLOOR OF CORNER TOWER

MONSTER NAME	HD	AC	ATTACK	SPECIAL	EXPERIENCE
TAINTED SKELETONS	2d12	15	1d6	Tar Armor, Green gas	15 +2
TAINTED RED SKELETON	2d12	16	2d8 +3	Green gas	30 +3
SKELETONS	1d12	13	1d6	½ damage from edged weapons	10+1
TAINTED ZOMBIES	2d12	17	1d10	Mold armor	15 +2
TAINTED WRAITHS	7d12	19	1d6	Energy drain	280 +5
TAINTED GHASTS	8d8	18	1d6/1d6	paralysis touch, Stench	375 +8
TAINTED VAMPIRE	10d12	21	1d6	2 level drain, 1d4 blood drain, Charm	1885 +8
TAINTED WISPS	10d10	28	2d8	Immune to magic, natural Invisibility	1440 +9
TAINTED SPECTRES	9d12	15	1d8	2 level drain	660 +7
TAINTED SHADOWS	5d12	14	1d4	1 strength point drained	80 +3
TAINTED GIANT RAT	1d12	15	1d4		5 +1
GIANT RATS	1d4	13	1d2		1 +1
TAINTED WIZARD	10d4	12	Wand	Spells	900 +10
TAINTED NIGHT HAG	10d8	22	2d6	Spell-like immunities	1360 +8
GIANT CENTIPEDES	2d8	15	1d4	1d4 poison	15 +2
TAINTED GIANT PLANT	2d8	17		1d8 poison	15 +2
DRUD DARKSON	4d10	17	2d4 +2/1d4 +2		40 +4
OOON DARKSON	1d6/4d8	15	1d10/1d4		40 +4
LARISA DARKSON	6d8	12	1d8/1d4		120 +6
APPLE DARKSON	4d8	19	1d8	Spells	60 +4
DANIEL DARKSON	5d8	11	1d6	Spells	120 +5
KONTAL SEPT	10d8 +3	15	2d4 +2	Spells	1125 +11
TURLOON ANDOOL	10d8	11	1d6 +2	Spells	900 +10
PATENA TALL	8d8	15	2d4	Spells	375 +8
SOBICK SEPTEMBER	8d6	13	1d6		250 +8
ANUUN SEPTEMBER	8d6	13	1d4		250 +8
MEDUSA	6d8	15	1d4	Petrifying, Poison Bite	450 +6
GELATINOUS CUBE	4d10	3	1d4 acid	Engulfing, Paralysis	130 +4
MERCENARY BAND	5d10	13	1d10		80 +5
ANNIS	7d8	20	2d4/2d4	1d6, grab	855 +7
WOLF	2d8	13	1d8		10 +2
GREEN HAG	9d8	22	1d4 +4/1d4+4	Weakness	1600 +9
ANIMATED SOLDIER STATUE	5d10	19	1d8 +2	Immunity	120 +5

