

THE CARNIVAL OF THE DAMNED

A Level 0 Adventure
By David Baity

COMPATIBLE WITH

DCC
RPG





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A 0-level Dungeon Crawl Classics Adventure
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WELCOME TO THE CARNIVAL

The Carnival of the Damned was conceived on the way to **Dragon Con** in 2014. Inspired by my experience playing in **Harley Stroh's** "Seven Pits of Sezrekan" at **Gencon**, I embraced the tournament-style adventure as a great way to introduce players to the Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG. The new tournament format was perfect for those who didn't want to invest a typical 4-6 hour slot at a con on a game they knew little about. Players just needed to grab a ticket and take a seat! In most cases they'd be dead in a matter of minutes, but that was usually all it took to set the hook deep!

That weekend turned out to be a blast, and **Davey Boiling** became the first player to win what would grow to be a series of tournaments. The feedback and interest in the events inspired me to enhance and expand the adventure, and the completed story was unveiled at **Gary Con 2015**. **Sofie Netteberg** outlasted **Haley Skach** in a close finish (And rumor has it Haley had a magical cast signed by the great **Michael Curtis** that could have been used for a reroll. A reroll that just might have saved her character's face from being melted by acidic pig vomit!) Several other players would walk away with the title of tournament champion over the course of the year, and what you now hold in your hands is the culmination of those experiences mixed with long hours of tweaks and rewrites to give you something memorable. May you find the laughter and smiles of your players just as endearing as their untimely, and somewhat grisly deaths!

~ David



AUTHOR THANKS

"I think of myself as a bad writer with big ideas, but I'd rather be that than a big writer with bad ideas" ~ Michael Moorcock

If you'd asked me at any point in my life if I thought I'd be writing an acknowledgment for an adventure I'd written, I would have laughed quite heartily at the question. I've never thought of myself as any sort of writer, though I've spent most of my life creating worlds and challenges for lifelong friends to spend many of their Sunday afternoons plundering. The above quote has always struck a chord with me, and as I write this, one of my "big ideas" is about to see print. I can't tell you how humbled and thrilled I am. I hope, that with the purchase of The Carnival of the Damned that you find something within its pages that not only challenges your group, but also sparks your own creative fires. Special thanks goes out to:

Jon Marr: The Patron Saint of DCC! Thank you for the chance, and guidance along the journey, Jon.

Jen Brinkman: If it wasn't for the First lady of DCC this adventure would never have been submitted to Jon!

Stan Reed: A wonderful friend and mentor. Thank you for the wonderful art, and hard work on the Carnival.

Todd McGowan: Thank you for diving into this project and consistently blowing my mind with all of the creepy art. You're my favorite Canadian!

Jeff Templeton: Thank you for the mid-afternoon text sessions where you helped me through the trickier encounters.

Brandon Goeringer: For adding fuel to the flames of creation.

The G+/DCC Community: Thank you for the support, friendship and with helping the Carnival take root!

Kathy Heatherly: For always believing and never allowing me to doubt myself.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The **Carnival of the Damned** is a Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG adventure designed for both “next serf up” tournament style play and as a 0-level funnel. With over 30 intricately detailed encounters and dozens of random threats, there is enough content for days of tournament play, or judges can select a smaller collection of favorite dangers for a quick funnel session.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Scores of village children have vanished after returning home from a magical day at a seemingly innocent traveling fair. In the dead of night, a band of novice adventurers follow clues back to the carnival, soon finding themselves trapped in a mist-shrouded killing ground, where the attractions have been transformed into things of nightmare!

Characters who survive gradually uncover the sinister purpose of the carnival and its twisted overseer, the **Black Jester**: a formerly kind and popular entertainer who by turn of tragic events descended into madness, long ago making a pact to serve a Mad God.

Following a path of death and discovery, players must learn of and collect summoning keys to have any hope of rescuing the missing children: the keys are required to open the portal to **Carnival Land**, the fun-filled but vacuous realm where the children have been taken to spend the rest of their lives in the tender care of the Black Jester, never to return!



RUNNING THE CARNIVAL OF THE DAMNED

This adventure can be run as a Dungeon Crawl Classic tournament or as a standard funnel adventure. For extensive tips and author's notes about adapting the adventure to various needs, see **Appendix D: Tips & Notes on Page 123.**

BACKGROUND

Familiarity with the tragic background of the Black Jester will provide judges context as they subject their players to the nefarious challenges of the Carnival of the Damned. The entire history follows, but if you are a judge who just wants to get the carnage started, here's a quick summary. After reading the synopsis proceed to **The Truth Behind the Carnival on Page 8.**

Black Jester's History: Quick Synopsis

A talented jester named Emerik grows in popularity, eventually playing for huge crowds and royalty, but remaining humble and always taking time to visit children and those in need. He meets and marries a lovely maid named Sophia, and they are blessed with a daughter Freya. The lure of the road soon calls him back, and his family begins to suffer. Sophia confronts him and Emerik departs in wrath. On the road he regrets his decision, but before he can return, his wife and daughter die in a fire. The only objects that survive for him to remember them by are a violin he constructed for his wife, and his daughter's stuffed bear.

Planning to kill himself, the jester wanders into the forest and composes and performs a final tune. A unicorn overhears, and convinces Emerik to go on. They become friends, and Emerik slowly rebuilds his life.

Years later while on the road, Emerik ridicules a despotic prince during a performance. The prince has the jester tortured for three days, and Emerik slips into insanity. In the jester's darkest hours, Gelos, the Dark God of Madness appears and offers him a deal: vengeance and a release from pain in exchange for a lifetime of service. He accepts, becoming the Black Jester, and goes completely mad, killing everyone in the prince's castle in horrible ways.

The unicorn knows Emerik will now kill her on sight, yet she is still loyal to her friend. Consulting with a sorcerer, she has herself turned into a statue that will be placed in the Black Jester's path. She hopes that someday she might join with other brave and noble souls to reach out and rescue her fallen friend.

Black Jester's History: Beginnings

Many decades ago a young jester named **Emerik Bertram** worked his way up from obscurity to fame and fortune. Known far and wide for his unparalleled mix of humor, acrobatics, puppetry and magic, Emerik's reputation as an entertainer was matched only by tales of his kind heart. The jester rarely left a town or village without visiting a local orphanage or hospice to bring smiles to the unfortunate. From lowly peasants to kings and queens, it was difficult for someone who knew the young jester to not adore him.

Eventually, love found the traveling jester in the form of a fair-haired commoner named **Sophia**. Finding one excuse after another to visit her during his travels, Emerik soon began courting the maid, eventually asking for her hand. Deeply in love, the young couple traveled the jester's circuit together, Sofia assisting with various aspects of his show. She even became an accomplished entertainer in her own right, often bringing the audience to tears with soulful ballads she composed and performed with an ornate violin Emerik had crafted and gifted her on their wedding day.

Loss

Sophia became pregnant during their fifth year of marriage, her life on the road coming to an end to ensure the safe delivery of the baby. **Freya Bertram** arrived soon after with a smile that brightened every soul it fell upon. For the first year Emerik stayed close to help raise Freya in the small keep he purchased for his family, but the call of the road and roar of the crowd soon pulled the Jester back. His trips grew more frequent; the stays at home more brief. Sophia struggled to raise Freya alone, and although well provided for, the young mother and child longed for Emerik to retire from the road permanently. Loneliness and frustration came to a head during Freya's fourth year: while Emerik prepared to visit distant nobility, Sophia finally took a stand and a horrible argument ensued.

Angry and frustrated, Emerik returned to the road, leaving Sophia and Freya behind in tears. The argument wore heavily on Emerik on his journey, and while performing for the children of a King he realized the error of his ways. Finishing the performance, Emerik hurried back to his family with a heavy heart, eager to make amends to the two he loved above all else. His days on the road were finished.

But fate denied the reunion as Emerik returned to find his keep engulfed in flames. A stray ember had started the blaze while his family slept on the upper floor, smoke claiming Sophia and Freya's lives long before the flames ever reached them. Several hours of morning light passed before the local farmers and Emerik could douse the flames.

The Jester now faced the burden of putting the family he cherished to rest, the chance to correct mistakes gone forever. Taking the only items to survive the fatal blaze—Sophia's violin and Freya's stuffed bear—the devastated Jester wandered off into the forest with nothing but a travelers pack and a flask of whiskey. He wandered aimlessly for days before finding a beautiful glade he considered a fitting place to end his guilt-wracked life. Finishing the last of the whiskey, the Jester threw a rope over a thick branch and fashioned a hangman's knot. His preparations complete, Emerik collapsed for a final rest under the tree, creating one last ballad on his wife's violin as he sat weeping amongst the roots. Perhaps, he thought, Sophia and Freya would hear his playing in the lands beyond and follow it to his departing soul. As his tune rang out amongst the trees, it grew in power and raw emotion until it filled the wood, and an audience of woodland creatures seem to be summoned to fill the glade. Even a unicorn from the sacred heart of the forest appeared. Legends tell that such noble creatures can look deeply into a human heart, and when she sensed the tragedy of the Jester's life and his overwhelming guilt, it touched her almost as much as the memories of the kindness he'd shared with so many unfortunate souls throughout his life.

The unicorn approached the Jester and came to rest beside him while he played. She reached into his mind, showing him that ending his own life would be just another tragic sin piled atop all the other mistakes he had committed. Good deeds and bringing smiles to those who had forgotten how might eventually lead him back to his family, but another senseless death would not. Slowly, her wisdom reached him, and the jester drew strength from her kindness and compassion. The uni-

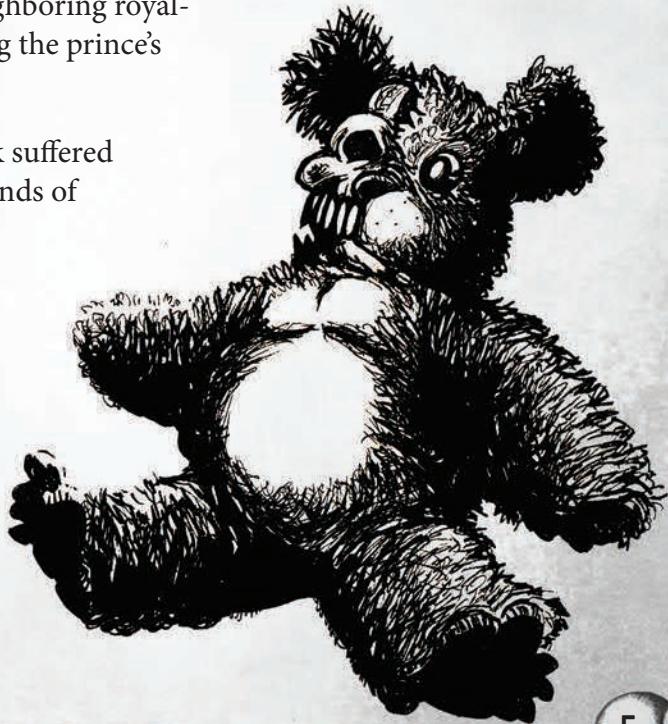
corn tended the Jester for several days and resolved to become Emerik's steed and companion, protecting him on his travels through the forest and always waiting for his return.

Several years of performing began to heal the Jester's heart, and Emerik took time to visit the frail and orphaned and share his wealth as never before. Often he escorted small groups of children to the edge of the forest so that they might lay a hand on the majestic beast that had found and healed him so many years before.

Vengeance

Sadly, despite Emerik's reformation, one final tragedy remained. A decade later the Jester visited the court of **Lord William Thancred**, a young prince who had little respect for anything, including the act of Free Pass, a traditional, though unspoken agreement giving Jesters freedom to ridicule the host at the royal court's expense. A night of feasting and merriment ended horribly after Emerik insulted the prince, sending Thancred into a rage. The prince ordered his guards to throw Emerik into the dungeon, decreeing that the fool would be tortured for three days then beheaded, demonstrating to all (including neighboring royalty) the folly of testing the prince's mettle.

For two days Emerik suffered torture under the hands of a man renowned for inflicting horrible pain while keeping his subjects alive. The prince decreed that all within the castle must bear witness to his torture. Some laughed at the jester's inhuman screams, but most only came to avoid



suffering the same fate. Emerik came to understand the hopelessness of his situation, and during the third day accepted his fate. Forgoing pleas for mercy, between gasps of pain he responded to each new torture with sharp-witted puns aimed at Prince Thancred. Thancred refused the torturer's request to remove Emerik's tongue, growing desperate to hear the jester plead for mercy as the cruelty reached a crescendo before the looming beheading.

In the dark hours of quiet before the morning of the Jester's execution, a visitor appeared in Emerik's cell. **Gelos the Dark God of Madness** manifested as a pair of rabbits, one white, the other black. The rabbits whispered soothing words to the barely conscious Jester. They spoke of forbidden things mortal minds should never hear. Maddening revelations laced with chaos quickly unraveled the Jester's pain-wracked mind, and when a fell pact was offered, Emerik deliriously agreed, his mind finally shattered. One of the dark emissaries presented the Jester with a vial containing a fluid which, when drunk, would shield his mind from pain. The second rabbit took Emerik's signature penned in blood: for vengeance the Jester pledged the rest of his years to the service of the Mad God in the pursuit of a different kind of laughter.

A dark storm rolled in as the rabbits departed, and as the sun struggled to emerge, the final hour of torture commenced. Both Prince Thancred and the Master Torturer were stunned as the Jester laughed uproariously at each foul act performed on his shattered body. Though free of pain, the side effect of the tonic ate away at what little sanity still remained. Thunder cracked, and Emerik cackled as each limb was torn from his body, and in the final moments before his beheading he gazed up into the prince's eyes and uttered one last pun: "Madness always takes a toll... remember to have exact change when it comes for you!" He smiled even as his head dropped to the bloody floor.

Remains of the jester were collected and thrown to the pigs as the storm grew fiercer throughout the day and into the night. At the stroke of midnight Gelos appeared. The Mad God sat in the mud with the filthy beasts, stitching the Jester back together haphazardly as lightning flashed and thunder shook the castle walls. Finishing his work with one final hiss, Gelos breathed unlife into the Jester before vanishing as the corpse twitched back to a twisted semblance of life.

Rising to his feet, Emerik could hear the echoes of chaos tickling his brain. Looking down at his crudely stitched body erased all remnants of humanity, leaving a hole filled with nothing but forbidden visions and a desire for revenge. The raging storm covered the screams of every man, woman, and child he found in the castle that night. It would be several days before the storm cleared and the gruesome carnage was discovered. None were spared; neither lowly cooks nor royalty. Each death seemed more twisted than the last, the prince's skinless, headless body was found in his bed chamber, a pig's head sewed horribly to his corpse. Thancred's skin, removed with surgical precision, was found sewn to the hide of a sow wandering about the castle halls. From that day forth Emerik would forever be known as the Black Jester.

Sacrifice

The mice of the castle witnessed all, and eventually their gossip was overheard by the doves of the bell tower, who flew to the unicorn waiting at the edge of the forest to relay the grim news. With a shattered heart she rushed to visit a reclusive wizard for aid. Searching her mind the wizard could offer only one solution: the Unicorn could never approach the Black Jester in his current state. She would have to submit to a powerful spell that would transform her into a small statue that could be brought into his presence, until a day someone true and just could summon her forth to end the doomed jester's misery. The unicorn agreed, and the spell was cast. A second ritual placed the statue in the Black Jester's path. The dark entity that was once Emerik discovered and claimed the statue while traveling to serve his dark master, not fully understanding why the statue struck a chord in some lost part of his mind.



THE TRUTH BEHIND THE CARNIVAL

Emerik now honors his pact with Gelos by guarding an ancient artifact called the **Fool's Tear**. The artifact contains a world within a world, and when activated summons a carnival of wonders. The Fool's Tear also acts as a direct link to the Mad God, siphoning emotional energies that fuel the hungry patron and help him grow in power and influence. By day the carnival is a place of wonder and excitement. Laughter and happiness are absorbed from every man, woman, and child. At night the terror of would-be rescuers generates a second course of fear and madness, all generated while the desperate parents and friends attempt to find their missing children.

Contrary to what may be expected, the children are never harmed directly. The abductions serve two purposes. First, they lead rescuers back to the twisted and dangerous carnival, where the villagers' fear, madness and other dark emotions act as a second feast for Gelos. Secondly, the children are led away to a pocket dimension where they can never suffer pain, where their biggest worry is which dessert to eat for breakfast or what game to play with their friends. Every blade of grass is a sugary treat, all trees bloom with candy, and the streams run with chocolate. Sadly, in this paradise the children quickly lose memories of home, family and friends left behind. It's a timeless heaven where the children will never grow old. They have nothing to fear. At least until the Fool's Tear is activated.

The price of activating the Tear is innocent souls. Each time the artifact is triggered, dozens of children living in Carnival Land are erased from existence. The remaining children assume their friends are off playing another game and soon forget them completely. Only the parents in the world outside remember, but they will never see their little ones again in this life.

The Carnival

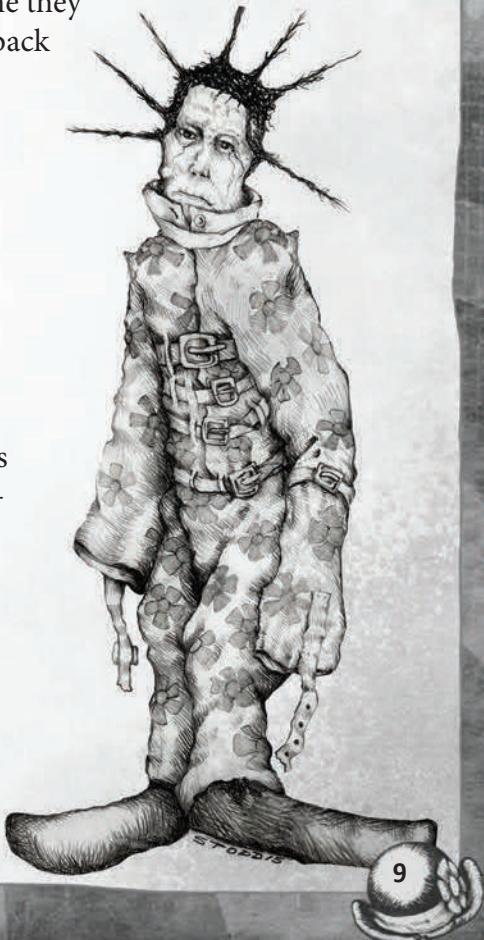
By day the carnival is filled with wonderful attractions and games. These are attended by Carnival workers that are faithful worshipers of Gelos. Their role is to serve every visitor a generous dose of smiles

while encouraging laughter and positive emotions. Every game results in a prize and every attraction thrills: most visitors experience the time of their lives.

With the fall of night the carnival shifts dimensionally. New attractions manifest while others fade away. The carnival grows in size, becoming a small sea of tents, deserted food carts, and rides. Worshipers of Gelos not fit to appear in the light of day begin to manifest. Twisted clowns and creatures cursed by the Mad God strive to generate as much madness and terror as possible before slaughtering the poor fools who dare attempt to rescue the children.

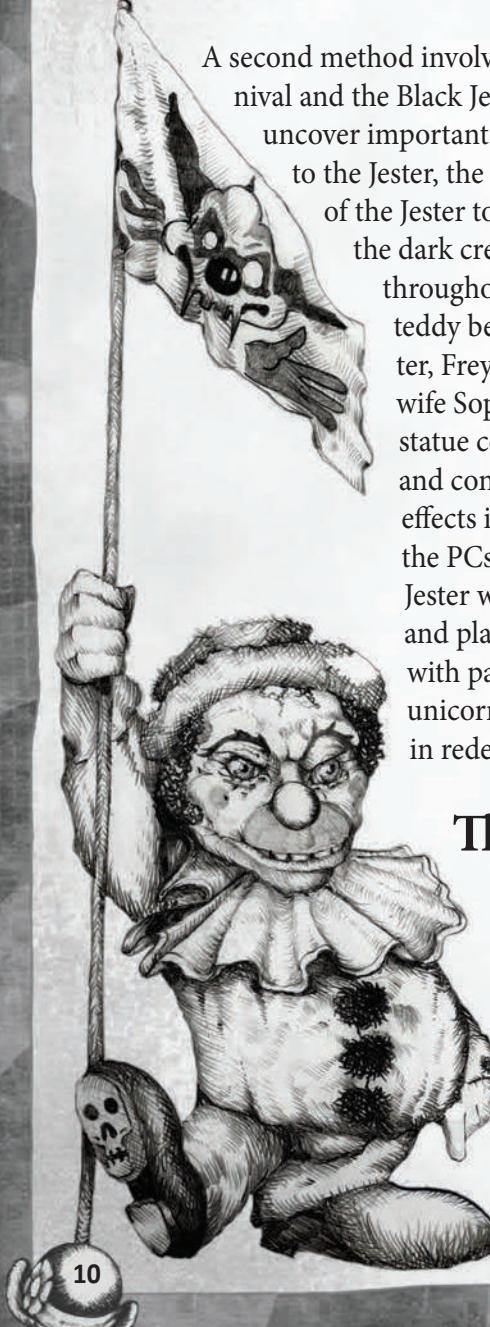
When the carnival shifts, all the wonderful toys the children have taken home are animated by a powerful ritual cast by the Black Jester. The toys whisper to the little ones of a magical place that only children can enter called **Carnival Land**. Their dreams can come true; all worries and hardships erased. Few children can resist the promise of such a place, and one by one they follow the toys quietly into the night, back into the open arms of the Black Jester.

Once they return to the carnival, the children are led to the **Mag-ic-Mirror**: a portal leading to the land of sugary delights. The mass exodus of the children causes an emotional feedback, triggering nightmares in their parents. It isn't long before the poor souls awaken to find their dark dreams have come true! Subtle clues are intentionally left in the village to lead back to the carnival, and soon townsfolk are marching to the carnival grounds en-masse to discover it has become something twisted and dark.



Defeating The Black Jester

PCs have two main strategies to defeat the Black Jester and free the children. The first is the fiendishly difficult direct approach: after successfully wading through the terrors of the carnival the party eventually find his lair and by force of numbers overcome the sadistic clown and his minions. Good luck with that.



A second method involves investigating the story behind the carnival and the Black Jester. PCs explore the carnival grounds to uncover important items from Emerik's past. Once presented to the Jester, the items will encourage the noble elements of the Jester to re-surface, triggering a redemption of the dark creature's soul. These items are scattered throughout the carnival and include the scorched teddy bear that belonged to his deceased daughter, Freya; the violin he made for his beloved wife Sophia as a wedding gift; and the unicorn statue containing the spirit of his faithful steed and companion. Each item triggers powerful effects in the presence of the Black Jester, giving the PCs an advantage. Presenting the bear to the Jester will summon the ghost of his daughter, and playing the violin will flood his dark soul with painful memories. Critically, activating the unicorn near him will likely prove the final key in redeeming the Black Jester's dark soul.

The Summoning Keys

Reaching the lair of the Black Jester and defeating the vile creature will not be enough to rescue the missing children. A thorough search of the lair reveals a door-sized magical mirror that acts as a portal. Giant-sized key holes in the ornate frame are mated to matching summoning keys that are hidden in encounters E7, E21, and E23. The last key is kept on a chain around the Black

Jester's neck. (If the players have missed these encounters, feel free to place the keys in alternate spots.) The keys resemble hollow blown glass. The bow of each is a palm-sized globe containing a beating black heart that circulates demonic blood throughout the key. All four keys are needed to open the portal, thus allowing the children to be rescued. The mirror will also offer a means to transport the PCs and missing children home from Carnival Land.

The Magic Lantern

Based off early 17th century photography projectors, PCs should find this device after completing encounter **E2**. At various points in the adventure slides will be found. The Magic Lantern and slides are a crucial element for PCs to fully understand the story arc. When a slide is placed in the lantern, light from the full moon triggers the slide, showing imagery like an old time movie. Each slide portrays a portion of Emerik's life before he became the Black Jester. See the Appendix for the contents each slide will reveal. The slides can be found during encounters **E8, E11, E16 and E18**. (If the players have missed these encounters, feel free to place the slides in alternate spots.)

Mists of Gelos

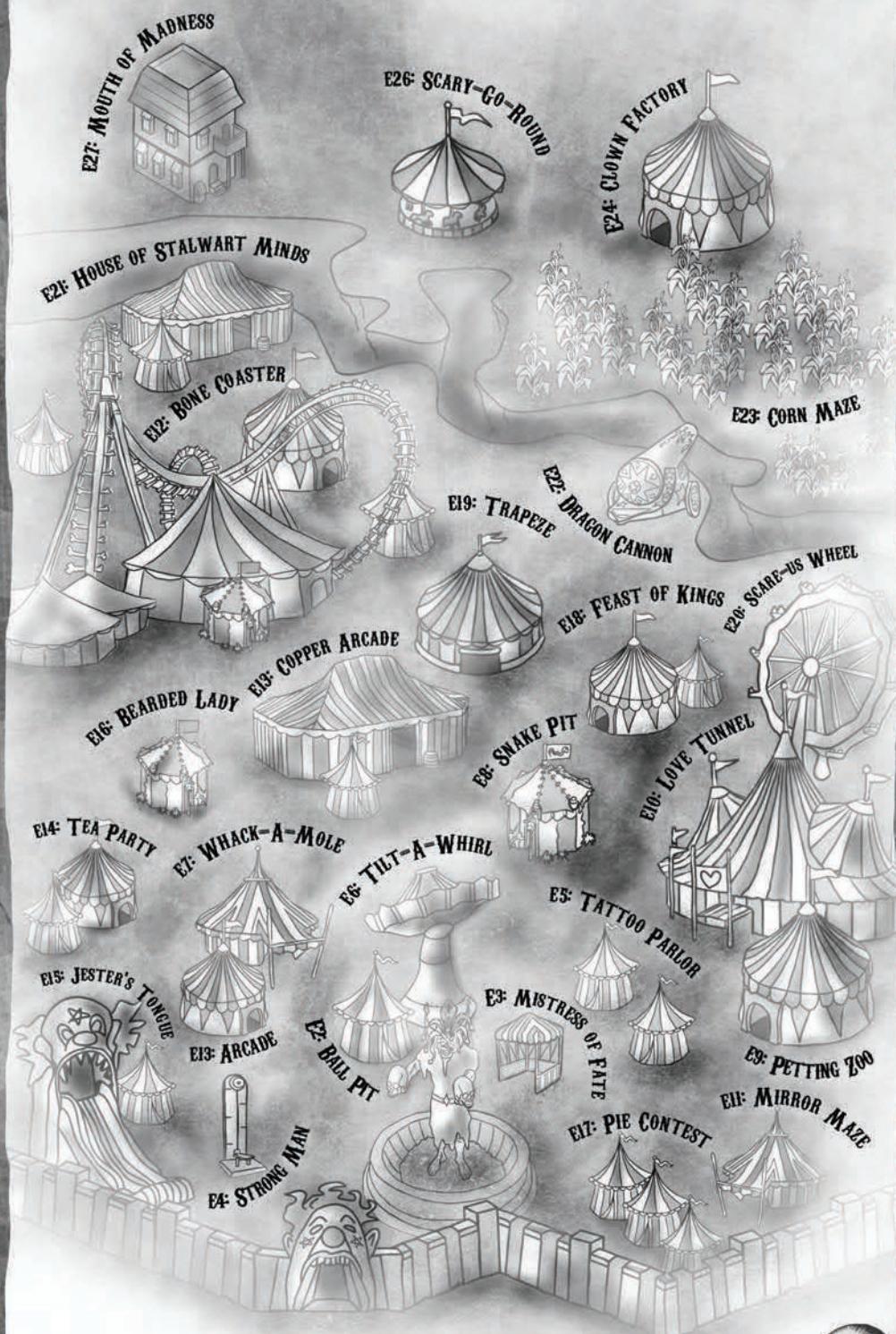
One haunting feature of the carnival at night are its creeping pink mists. Easily mistaken for fog from a distance, the mists are semi-sentient and constantly coil and crawl about the PCs. The mists help guide PCs throughout the carnival, but never cause harm. The mists limit vision to 20' unless stated in encounter descriptions. The mists also have the ability to wall off attractions, dumping fleeing cowards right back into the fray. If time is of the essence, use the mists to direct PCs to important encounters needed to complete the adventure!

The Unicorn

The spirit of Emerik's faithful steed haunts the carnival grounds. It searches for those noble and strong enough to help redeem her dear friend and set his spirit free. Feel free to use the ethereal form of the unicorn to guide PCs to get them headed back in the right direction. The beast will linger long enough for a PC to touch her before being called back to her ethereal glade. PCs touching the unicorn will become overwhelmed with mingled feelings of sadness and hope at the same time.

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STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins as the PCs are roused from their sleep by frantic cries. Friends and neighbors have awoken to discover their children have vanished! Searching the homes of those affected reveal small foot prints in the damp ground and a trail of discarded wax-paper treat-wrappers, all leading back towards the carnival the families had enjoyed so much during the day. PCs can be either parents or kind (or curious) souls wishing to aid in solving the mystery. Read or paraphrase the following as the adventure begins:

It's the dead of night, and all Hell has broken loose in your quiet village. You jump up from a peaceful slumber as cries for help ring out in all corners of the hamlet. What could have happened to spoil the end of a perfect day? Hours before you had experienced a thrilling afternoon with family and friends at a traveling carnival set up in the valley below the village green. Everyone had enjoyed a rare but well-deserved day of games and excitement: a far cry from the usual routine of back-breaking farm labor.

The day had been magical in every way! Every child won a prize and every adult walked away with memories that would warm them through many cold winter nights. But now, to your horror, you learn that every child in the village has vanished! What witchery could fashion such a mass exodus? Your only clues are tiny footprints in the soft ground and trails of discarded wax-paper treat-wrappers, all leading back towards the village green... and the traveling carnival.

With pitchfork in hand (and your lucky hen tucked under your arm) you join a band of the bravest folk in the hamlet to make your way back to the carnival in search of answers; and, if the Gods will it, to win the safe return of the missing children!





ARRIVING AT THE CARNIVAL

The PCs arrive just over the hill, looking down on the Carnival. Read or paraphrase the following:

You find yourself looking down into the moonlit valley that hosts the carnival. Thick fog clouds the entire area, shrouding the carnival in a hazy veil. The dim glow of garishly colored lights break through the mists here and there, shaping a vast oval. It's almost as if your mind is playing tricks on you: you don't remember the carnival being nearly so large by light of day! Making your way down to the entrance, you discover that what you had mistaken for fog is something else entirely: the floating mists are sickly pink, coursing about unnaturally in an almost sentient fashion, like a curious serpent! They pour over the wood and canvas walls, shrouding much of the entranceway in a pink haze. Your exposed flesh tingles as the cool mists close in to coil around you. The air smells faintly of sweets.

Two jesters carved into tall standing poles mark either side of the entrance. By day they looked innocent and comical, but under the light of the moon they have taken on a sinister aspect. Though harmless, their eyes seem to follow the PCs wherever they move. A tall rectangular object, some 15' tall, is just visible beyond the entrance, looming ominously in a shroud of pink mists. Passing through the entrance leads the party to area E1. (If PCs attempt to climb over or damage the traveling carnival's walls, the pink mists close in and the characters suddenly find themselves standing 10' away from the wall, surrounded in swirling mists!)

E1. STATUE OF THE MAD GOD

Taking a deep breath, you gather your courage and step through the entrance. The mists begin to part as if to welcome you to the night's festivities. The large silhouette in front of you slowly comes into focus, and you find yourself staring up at an enormous statue, surrounded by a circular pool. A jester with a skull for a face leers down on you, its mouth open in mid-laugh. The figure sports delicately carved ornate armor covered in arcane symbols. The jester's arms extend towards you, skulls resting on each outstretched palm. A dark and viscous liquid fountains out from

each skull's mouth to arc down into the pool. A metal plaque embedded in the base of the statue is carved with rough characters.

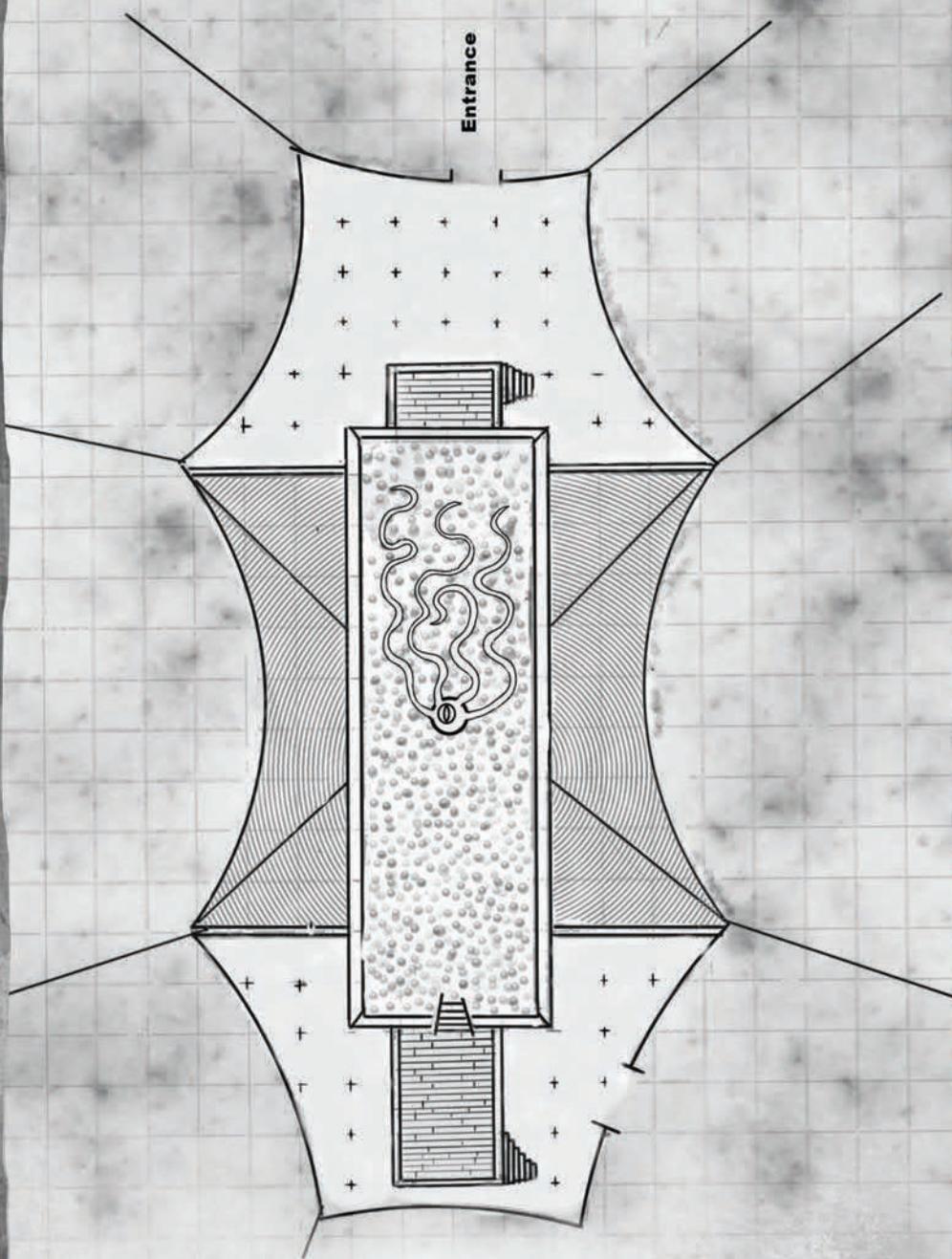
The statue serves as a warning to all who enter. Characters moving closer see severed human heads bobbing lazily in the dark liquid of the pool. They recognize some of the heads in the pool as friends from the village, while other decayed specimens have likely been bobbing for years. The plaque reads "*In this land of madness only the mad are sane*". PCs reading the plaque must make a DC 12 Will save or begin laughing uncontrollably for 1d3 rounds as they feel the tickle of insanity. Attacking the statue is a bad idea. If characters who approach the fountain with ill intent are looking up at the statue, they will notice the statue's eye sockets begin to glow. Attempts to physically harm the fountain result in arcane bolts shooting out from the statue's eyes to strike each aggressor (1d4 dmg every round they continue to attack). PCs can recover heads without any ill effect: if carried the heads will occasionally emit blood-curdling shrieks whenever no one is looking at them.

E2. THE BALL PIT

Walking through the carnival in the misty dark is a challenge: you soon realize you could easily become lost in the sea of tents and alleyways. A massive tent suddenly looms before you, a wooden sign hanging crookedly above its entrance. It depicts children at play in a large box filled with hundreds of colored orbs. Text above the artwork reads "The Wonder pit! Dig for prizes of all different sizes!" Lanterns with colored glass shed light on the entrance and interior, giving the attraction a rainbow hue.

A large rectangular wooden construction waits inside the tent. Standing eight feet tall, the sides stretch the width of the tent, running eighty feet in length. The pit is filled with soft leather balls dyed in many bright colors. PCs can only see the balls when they climb stairs up to a wooden platform located just in front of them at the closest pit wall. When the first character begins to climb the steps read or paraphrase the following:

The steps creak from the weight of your cautious steps as you climb. Reaching the platform you see thousands of fist sized balls inside the rectangular pit. They appear to be stitched leather, dyed in all the colors of the rainbow. Roughly four feet of the walls remain exposed above



E2: THE BALL PIT

the balls which fill the pit. The exposed walls are painted with more children at play. On the opposite side of the pit you see a small hanging ladder reaching up to a platform with an exit flap just beyond. A dim golden glow breaks the surface at multiple spots in the mass of balls, leading you to believe something worthwhile may rest at the bottom.

The balls fill the pit up to four feet, leaving another four feet of exposed wood on either side. The tent walls butt up against the pit keeping anyone from trying to skirt past. The side walls jiggle if stepped on, so any attempts to 'tightrope walk' the edges require a DC 10 Agility check every move. Failure results in the PC being dumped into the pit. For most, the only way through is by crawling through the balls in the pit.

PCs move at half speed when surrounded by balls, and dwarves and halflings are at -2 to attack due to sight restrictions. Those who attempt to back out of the tent find themselves blocked by the pink mists. Stepping through only transports PCs back through the entrance (No escape!)

A tentacled monster lurks under the balls and gains surprise the first round after PC's enter the pit. The creature blindly sweeps for legs when the first PC reaches the 20' mark and each round thereafter (as long as it has a free tentacle.) After the surprise round it will rise up from the cover of the balls, attempting to pull any grappled PCs towards its mouth.

Read or paraphrase the following when the beast surfaces:

You suddenly realize you're not alone as rope-like appendages reach out blindly to snag your legs. Your movement seems to have awakened a vile creature: colored balls rise up then fall way at the center of the pit as the twisted abomination is revealed! Towering over you is an enormous slug-like monstrosity, gazing at you with its lone baleful eye as if lustng after a tasty snack. Below the cyclopean eye gapes a huge maw filled with rows of jagged teeth. A thick black tongue snakes out of from the foul mouth, blindly searching for any remains of flesh that lie unclaimed.



The Tentacle Horror: Init +1; Atk tentacles/surprise on first round of attack (4/ 30' long) –1d on the dice chain due to attacking blindly (1pt). PC is grappled and pulled towards the maw. Grappled PCs gaining initiative on the following round may attempt to break the grapple (opposed Strength roll) or attack the tentacle (causing 5 HP of damage renders it useless). Grappled PCs may also attack the body of the beast before being bitten. Should the beast gain initiative, or still be alive after being attacked it will bite one grappled PC (PC with lowest Luck); bite melee (1d4+1); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 16; MV 5'; Act 5d20 (four being used for tentacle attacks); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AL: C.

The Three Boxes

Three boxes decorated with glowing gold paint rest at the bottom of the pit about halfway across. Two are located 5' from either side, the third in the center.

1. Five **jelly beans** that heal 1hp.
2. The **Magic Lantern** and a crescent moon coin. (See **Appendix C on Page 118** for a description of the Lantern and Slides.)
3. Five gold teeth worth 5gp each, along with a **wooden eye**. (Magical: if placed into a hollow socket the eye grants vision and allows the PC to spot secret doors and traps with 60% accuracy.)

E3. MISTRESS OF FATE

As ornate cabinet of wood and glass stands alone in the mists, seven feet tall and three wide. At first you surmise a woman has been imprisoned within, only to realize it is a beautiful statue. Her brightly painted features and dress remind you of the traveling folk that pass through the villages and farms from time to time. A large crystal ball glows faintly in front of her, while a fanned out set of tarot cards lies under her left hand. At knee height a brass plate is etched with a crescent moon symbol, a similarly shaped slot is cut into the plate next to the etching. The phrase “Ask the Mistress of Fate” is painted in fine detail on a board near the top of the cabinet. The lovely statue seems to study you serenely, her perfectly sculpted smile eliciting an unexpected calming effect over your nervous souls.

The Mistress of Fate is an automaton, and the characters will encounter her repeatedly while in the Carnival. It represents the ancient and fundamental tenants of order that Gelos and the other Gods of Chaos are defiantly subject to, even amidst the horror, death, and chaos of the carnival. The Mistress shares wisdom, and with the right coin PCs can ask her any question. The moon coins are rare though, sprinkled throughout the carnival encounters. To activate the device a character simply places a coin in the slot, at which point the automaton springs into motion. The Mistress moves in mechanical fashion, accompanied by a ghostly feminine voice poorly synced to her mouth movements. The first time the PCs approach her she activates without need of coin. Read the following:

What brave souls stand before me? Hearts filled with courage and fear, eyes soon filled with tears. Come to one willed by the Gods of a merry tune; providing coins of the Moon to bring forth a boon. Answers given without guile, to cut out this cancer vile.

After a coin is deposited and a question asked, her hand moves stiffly to a tarot card and picks it up. The card suddenly bursts into flames, the ashes rising to orbit the crystal ball for several seconds. The crystal ball then begins to glow brightly and soon a swirl of mist forms inside. Within the mist a vision forms to help answer the player's question.

Using the Mistress as a Player Aid

Judges are encouraged to come up with clever clues to help the party overcome the challenges ahead. Subtle hints are often enough to spark the player's imaginations, getting them thinking in the correct direction. Sample questions are listed below, but assume your players will come up with their own! Feel free to remind players of the Mistress any time you think they need a boost, planting additional **moon keys** as necessary to fund additional questions.



Sample Questions:

“Where are the children being held?” - A vision appears of the children in a strange land, where everything seems fashioned of candy. They play happily in a world of ginger bread houses, candy cane trees, and ponds that sparkle like lightly sweetened syrup! The children play games while a sun with a smiling face hovers overhead whistling a merry tune.

In the distance, on the top of a grassy hill a large distorted mirror looms. The mirror shimmers softly with a pale blue light. As you watch, a small group of children suddenly vanish. The other children pause for a moment in confusion, then continue laughing and playing.

“Who is holding them captive?” - A large mob of twisted and misshapen clowns huddle around a sinister looking figure addressing them. Tall and gaunt, the man is dressed in black and white studded leather armor. His skin is decayed and covered with tightly drawn wrinkles, giving his face a rictus grin showing needle sharp teeth. He wears curled boots and a velvet jester hat that ends with tiny skull bells. Wands capped by drama masks joined at the sides in many facial expressions hang from his belt. His eye sockets are hollow: pin pricks of blue light serving as eyes. He speaks for a moment then pauses, turning to look directly at you. He begins laughing, the lights in his eyes flashing as the mists cloud the globe once again.

“How do we save the children?” - You are flying high above the carnival, seemingly transformed into a bird! By the light of the moon you can survey the many tents and alley ways of the carnival. The vision soon fades, replaced by four arcane looking keys. They each seem to be the size of a dagger, fashioned from blown glass.

“Where are the keys located?” - Describe the attractions where the keys have been placed.

“How do we defeat the Black Jester?” - A sea of discordant images clearly display Freya’s charred bear, Sophia’s violin and a small golden statue of a unicorn.

E4. THE STRONG MAN GAME

A shallow but sturdy wooden box lies on the ground here, a square metal plate mounted on its surface. The plate has clearly taken a hammering in its lifetime, pitted and scarred by repeated blows by some blunt object. Another metal arm connects the prone box to a larger wooden structure that rises twenty five feet into the mists, crowned by a large iron bell. A square lump of lead is attached to a metal rod that runs all the way up to the bell. The wood surface behind the rod is painted with numbers and categories ranging from “Babies can hit harder” on the very bottom to “Strongest in the land!” at the very top. A large wooden mallet is propped against the upright structure. A squat oak closet with shuttered doors sits off to one side. Music echoes from within, and scenes of toys and prizes are painted along the sides.

Players will obviously be tempted to give the striking plate a good whack with the mallet in an attempt to ring the iron bell. The trick is to hit the lip of the platform instead of planting the mallet hard in the middle of the striking plate, which most try to do. Have the first PC to strike make a Luck check to see if they strike the edge. If they succeed (or specifically state they are striking on the edge) they receive a +5 bonus to the DC 12 strength check required to ring the bell. With a successful strike the prize closet springs open and the winner (and only the winner) can claim a prize. (Find out more about the prize closet and available awards in **Appendix B: The Prize Closet on Page 113.**)

Anyone failing to reach the bell with a strike, or who touches the prize closet or an award without first winning, is immediately teleported away: finding themselves hanging from the top portion of the strong man tower! The teleported PC’s head is now the new target for the lead weight. Simultaneously a hypnotic new tune begins to play: characters on the ground must succeed on DC 12 Will saves or find themselves compelled to line up to take swings of their own with the mallet! Those failing to strike the “bell” will not be teleported, however, as long as a living soul is currently trapped in place of the bell, and the striker can even attempt a new save to shake off the charm. Those who fail this new save march back to the end of the queue.

Anyone who interferes with a charmed PC by touching them finds themselves teleported, changing places with the original unfortunate screaming soul at the top of the attraction. Those so trapped can do nothing but hold themselves up to avoid choking. If struck by a lead weight they take $1d4+1$ damage, but are teleported back to the ground, alive or dead. The music fades away as well, and all charmed characters are released from the enchantment. Striking again with the mallet restarts the process.

Each player may only win one prize from the prize closet. Trying to play a second time results in electrical bolts racing up the mallet to deliver $1d2$ dmg.

E5. THE TATTOO PARLOR

You pass through a sea of deserted tents and food carts. They seem devoid of life, covered in dust and cobwebs. But a small tent at the end of one row suddenly catches your attention: music can be heard drifting from within.

When you approach and peel back the tent flaps, you see an elderly tattoo artist busily applying art to a hulking, shirtless, albino, seemingly-mutilated giant of a clown! Two smaller clowns sit on stools nearby making a discordant racket with their accordions: they seem too busy admiring the tattoo artist to focus on their performance. The artist is frowning unhappily as he applies ink to the abomination, and for a moment he glances up at you, weary eyes filled with curiosity. His attention is quickly diverted, however, as a massive fist connects to his jaw, almost flipping him out of his chair. The battered old man quickly gathers himself and returns to his work, blood trickling into his gray beard. The two smaller clowns cackle wildly at the violent display.

PCs wishing to help the artist can attack the clowns: the horrible accordion music covers their approach, giving them the element of surprise.

Hulking Clown: Init d16; Atk two handed mallet +0 melee (1d6) or fist +0 melee (1d4+1); AC 11; HD 3d8; hp 15; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; AL C.

Sidekicks (2): Init +2; Atk accordion SP Charm; AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 3,4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP (charm) players must make Will saves at DC 11 or become dazed (+1D on attack rolls against those who fail), each time a dazed victim takes damage a new save is allowed; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

Defeating the clowns gains the trust of Claudio, the tattoo artist. He gratefully offers to ink special tattoos, and can also provide helpful information.

Claudio was a well-known painter in his prime, often creating portraits of the wealthiest patrons, including royalty. During one such session, he fell in love with a princess, desiring to marry her so desperately that he signed a pact in blood with Gelos. The dark god empowered Claudio to paint a portrait of the princess so beautiful that the King would gladly grant his daughter's hand in marriage. Indeed, the finished product was the most beautiful painting he'd ever created. Unknown to Claudio, however, the portrait was also tainted by the Laughing God's corruption. Although Claudio married the princess, she became so obsessed with the beauty of the painting that she eventually cast herself from a tall tower, knowing that with each passing day she would age and fall farther and farther away from the beauty portrayed in her portrait.

Regardless, Claudio remained bound by contract to the dark god, forced to paint caricatures of the families who visited the carnival during the day. He eventually rebelled and tried to warn visitors of the carnival's evil intent. His reward was to be hauled away and cursed to forever inhabit the night-side, giving tattoos to the freaks that terrorize the grounds and suffering abuse at the hands of those who worship the Mad God.

Things Claudio Knows:

- The Black jester was once a performer named Emerik, well loved by the masses for his skill and kind heart. A dark pact with Gelos twisted him into the monster he has become.
- The children are somehow fed upon by the carnival when it manifests.

- All of the attractions found on night-side are staffed by those who have stood up to the Black Jester, or failed him.
- Most attractions can be deadly, but they also contain clues to freeing the children and useful items that can aid those who would dare try rescuing them.
- Gelos was once a Young God, known as a patron of performers and entertainers. He was driven insane during a war with the Elder Gods.
- A unicorn lives in spirit here. Once a companion to Emerik before his fall, legend has it the steed waits for the chance to save her fallen companion and to help those noble in spirit he now threatens.

Magical Tattoos

Claudius offers a tattoo to each PC using a vial of special magical ink he has kept hidden away. Roll 1d14 for each character who accepts, re-rolling duplicates. (If the Judge has access to DCC temporary tattoos, this is a great place to introduce them. Accepting Claudio's offer requires them to actually use the temporaries: Lick em and stick em folks!)

- 1) +1 to hit all followers of Gelos and clowns.
(*A clown mask with dagger through the temple*)
- 2) +1 to all Luck checks (*A black rabbit with a halo*)
- 3) Reroll one attack per day (*An ornate flaming sword*)
- 4) Reroll one save per day (*A pair of dice with skulls for numbers*)
- 5) Cast magic missile once per day with d14
(*A lightning bolt striking a tower*)
- 6) Natural AC improves by 1 (*A tortoise shell*)
- 7) Gain the ability to smell chaos-taint (*A smoking chaos symbol*)
- 8) Heal 1d6 hp once per day (*An anatomically accurate heart*)
- 9) +1 to Strength checks (*A plate gauntlet*)
- 10) +1 to Agility checks (*A viper coiled and ready to strike*)
- 11) +1 to Stamina checks (*A bucking bull*)
- 12) +1 to Will saves (*A sun breaking through dark clouds*)
- 13) +1 to Reflex saves (*A cat with a jeweled crown*)
- 14) +1 to Fortitude saves (*A battle weary dwarf*)

Particularly nasty Judges can assume that the presence of the Black Jester and Gelos has somehow tainted the ink, gradually introducing sinister side effects related to the blessing. (The skin of the bearer of the tortoise shell tattoo gradually takes on a subtle shell pattern, and the PC loses 5' of movement, etc.)

E6. TILT-A-WHIRL

(Standard Funnel Warning: The Tilt-A-Whirl is particularly fun in tournament-style play where massive casualties are easily replaced. For normal funnel play, a Judge may consider lowering the DC for falling in round 4 to avoid wiping out too many members of the party.)

A large circular wooden platform sits before you, resembling a wheel lying on its back. Its edges rest slightly off the ground and the platform is bordered by a tall wooden wall decorated with beautiful designs. A small arched-shaped opening parts the wall directly in front. Steps lead up to the opening, through which a faint green glow beckons.

This is a version of the modern day “Tilt-a-whirl”. The wooden platform is edged by a 12' high wooden wall. The ride is designed to spin and raise up at high speed. Once characters approach close enough to see the source of the glow read or paraphrase the following:

Gazing deeper into the narrow opening you can see that the encircling wall is divided into several 2' sections each having two iron handles mounted waist high and shoulder width apart. The remaining sections have no handles and are painted with beautiful designs. You also see the source of the glow: a four foot tall square-shaped pillar of crystal rising from the center of the platform. The transparent crystal is trimmed in ornate bronze with padlocks on each of the four corners.

As you gaze at the crystal, a child's face suddenly presses against the transparent surface from within, mouthing the word 'help'.

Once all the characters have entered, a door shoots up from below to close the opening, and the ride commences. The wheel begins spinning at unsafe speed during round two. Characters must immediately succeed on a DC 8 Agility check or be slammed into a section of wall by the violent start of the ride.

PCs must work themselves into a section where the handles are bolted to the wood for support as soon as the ride begins. Doing so requires a movement action and a DC 9 Agility check on round one. Failure results in being thrown into a section of wall and suffering 1pt of damage.

Round Overview:

Round 1: Each PC must pass a DC 9 Agility Check or tumble into a wall (1pt dmg).

Round 2: The wheel spins and lifts at incredible speed causing panels without handles to slide open, revealing glowing keys made from the same metal encasing the crystal. (Determine randomly to see which PCs can reach the keys.)

PCs holding onto handles must succeed on a DC 6 Agility check to remain anchored while the wheel begins rising vertically. For those without handles the check is DC 11 to either remain footed, or reach a panel with handles.

Round 3: PCs holding on to handles can attempt to grab a key by succeeding on DC 8 Strength check to reach out against the pull of gravity, followed by DC 6 Agility check to avoid slipping as normal. All other PCs must pass a DC 6 Agility check to remain anchored while grasping the handles. (DC 14 to remain standing without handles).

Round 4: Wheel reaches top speed and vertical height. PCs can continue to grab at keys (DC 8 Strength check). All PCs simply holding onto handles must pass a DC 6 Agility check to remain anchored. Failing the check results in the PC bouncing into a section of wall and being slung out into the night at high speed (2d6 dmg).

Round 5: Repeat round 3 steps.

Round 6: Repeat round 2 steps.

When the ride ends, any panels with unclaimed keys slam shut.

Opening the Glass Structure

If PCs have successfully grabbed the four keys they can unlock the padlocks on the glass structure once it stops.

Read or paraphrase the following once the keys are used:

Using the keys you risked your lives to acquire, you quickly open each lock. As the fourth key turns the crystal cracks, then explodes outward in a gust of sweet scented air. Looking down into the remnants of the crystal shards you spy a very small girl squatting down in a charred dress. She gazes up at you, managing a weary smile. “Find the man with heart of coal, reveal again his noble soul” she whispers. She reaches up to you, holding a stuffed bear with singed fur. As the mists flow in to touch her hand she suddenly transforms into a cloud of harmless glowing moths. They flutter and swirl around you for an instant, then as the moths climb into the night you hear once again “Show him who he once was”.

The stuffed bear belonged to Freya, Emerik’s daughter who died in the keep fire decades ago. The bear can be used to help redeem the Black Jester as described in the **Defeating the Black Jester Section on Page 10**.

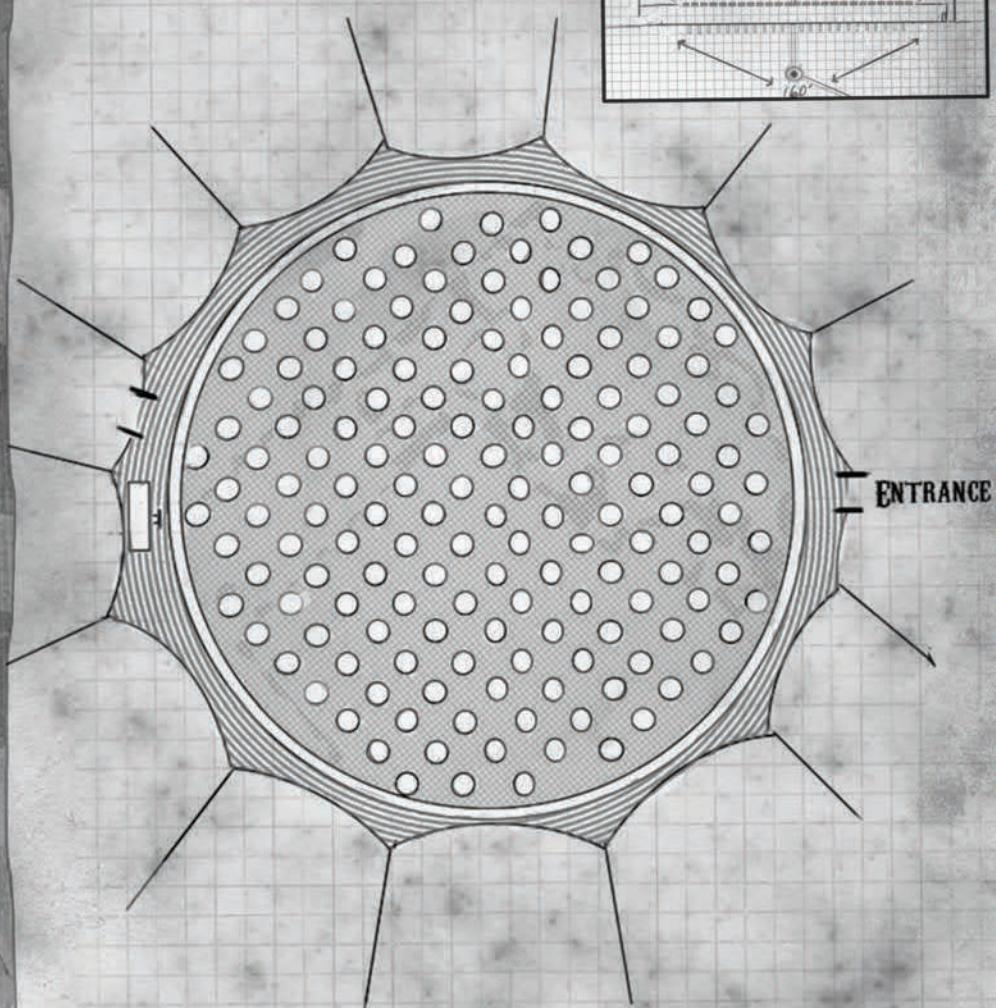
E7. WHACK-A-MOLE

This tent is absolutely massive. Once the PCs are inside read or paraphrase the following:

Pushing the tent flaps aside, you are nearly blinded by a dazzling rainbow of colors. The pink mist flowing in from outside rises towards colored lights shining through holes in the tent’s low wooden ceiling, creating a riot of swirling colors. When your vision finally adjusts to the strange light you see a large chest at the far end of the tent, a golden glow escaping through its seams. The box looks to be at least 150 feet away.

Once the characters enter, the attraction starts. The floor is trapped, and once set into motion spins on an unseen axle with such a sudden jerk that all PCs must make a DC 13 Reflex save to avoid falling and sliding into cylindrical holes that suddenly open up below. Those who fall land shoulder-deep in quick setting glue, suffering no damage. Immediately after spinning, the floor lurches upwards, pushing those

E7: WHACK-A-MOLE



held in the glue into the holes in the ceiling above, exposing their heads to angry mole men and their head-splattering mallets!

Read or paraphrase the following once all saves have been attempted:

The floor suddenly spins violently as if on some unseen axle. Some of you lose your footing, falling into cylindrical holes filled with thick quick setting glue that seem to appear out of nowhere! Before you can crawl



out of the viscous mucilage hardens, holding you fast! Those lucky few who managed to avoid the holes are now prone, and before a word can be uttered the floor lurches again, simultaneously spinning in a circular motion while springing upwards towards the ceiling. Those held fast are thrust upwards through the holes in the ceiling from which the colored lights emanate, the rest duck quickly to avoid being rammed into the ceiling!

The eyes of those lifted up struggle to adjust to the bright flashing lights, and their ears are suddenly deafened by screams and cheers of excitement. All along the edge of the platform/ceiling twisted clowns cackle while their toad-like warty tongues snake out to capture pink cotton on sticks. Gazing across the floor you see the heads and horrified faces of others in your party also trapped in the glue! Two creatures resembling a sickening cross of man and mole shuffle out of hiding! Dressed in colorful costumes, each wears thick spectacles giving them a silly visage. They awkwardly hold two-handed mallets. With delighted shrieks they charge towards you raising their mallets high, seemingly intent on popping your heads like ripe melons!

Have the PCs make initiative rolls. The moles gain one surprise attack before initiative order commences. Each mole will attack a random glued PC with its action. PCs stuck in the glue must try to break their bonds with their entire action, passing a DC 19 Strength check. The glue will weaken after each successive round, modifying the DC to break free by -3 (cumulatively). Held characters who break free fall to the lower level to join those who made their initial Reflex saves.

PCs on the lower level can make their way to the chest, or remain prone to wait out the game above (it ends when all those trapped have been killed). Each round, the floor descends momentarily while the ceiling spins randomly. Each PC wishing to make a dash towards the box must succeed on a DC12 Agility check or suffer damage as they're pancaked against the ceiling (1d3 dmg) as it lurches upwards once more. The nature of the encounter makes it impossible for any character to move more than their normal movement (no running, sprinting, etc.).

The glowing chest is actually a control box fit with a lever. Pulling the lever down will stop the floor from moving, ending the game. The

clowns and Mole Men above will pour out of the tent through a flap onto a ladder once the game is done.

Have each survivor make a Luck check while leaving the tent. Any who succeed spot a golden glow coming from one of the glue-filled holes in the floor. The glow emanates from a chest lying hidden at the bottom. It contains a black box trimmed with silver that holds a **Summoning Key** along with a small sack containing **five onyx stones worth 75gp** and a **Moon Coin**.

Mole Men (2): Init d20 on surprise round, otherwise d16; Atk two handed mallet melee -1d due to the weapon size and weakness of the moles (1d10); AC 11; HD 1d6; hp 4,5; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SV Fort 0, Ref +1, Will +1; AL C.

E8. THE SNAKE PIT

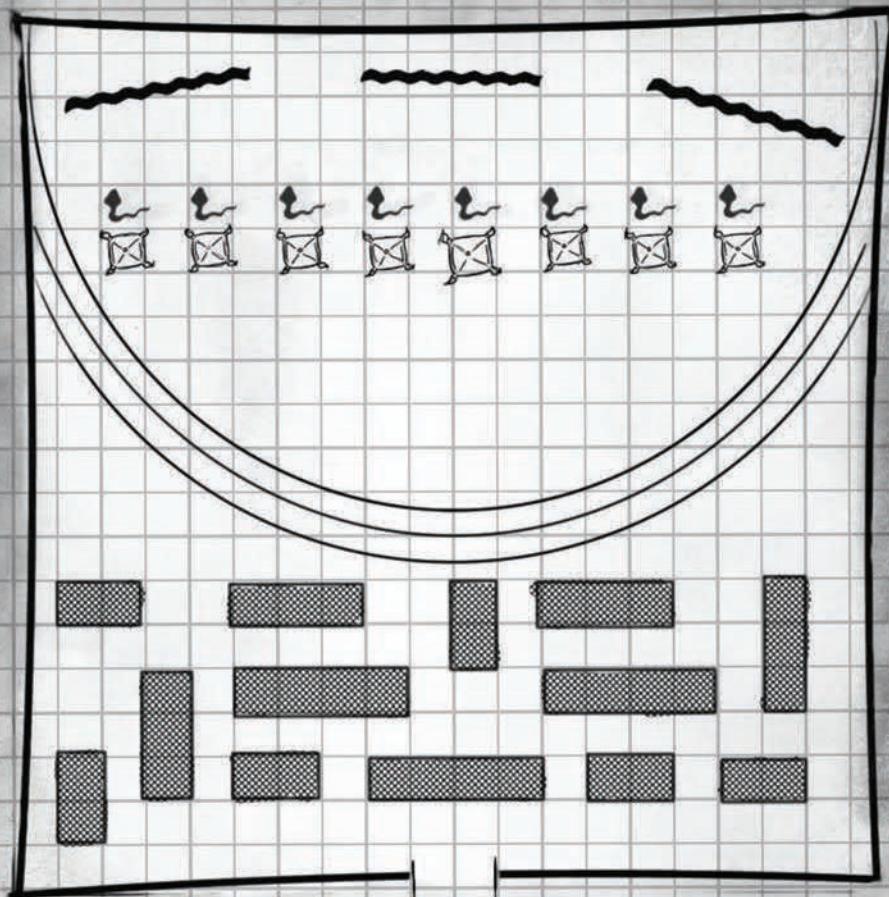
A large tent stands before you colored in aged red and white stripes. Two poles carved into the likeness of serpents stand to either side of the opening. A faint red glow beckons you to enter.

Characters entering find hundreds of stacked cages brimming with rats, the stacks forming a number of aisles that lead to a circular area in the center of the tent. Read or paraphrase the following once characters reach the center:

Making your way to the center of the tent, you hear sudden reptilian hisses that cause the thousands of caged rats in the area to shriek in fear, gnawing madly at their wire prisons. Ten onyx cobras slither into view, their hoods flaring as a sign of agitated warning. The serpents form a line, each just a few feet behind a matching velvet floor pillow. A small coin box sits to the side of each black devil, an ornate silver box directly in front of each pillow. Lidless clay urns lie behind each agitated cobra.

Three giant tapestries hang from the ceiling in the center space, depicting humanoids worshiping cobras in what appears to be an ancient time. Some worshipers play exotic instruments while others seem to be paying tribute by kissing the cobras on their heads and offering treasure. The cobras hiss again, eyes glowing red as their tongues taste the fear in the air.

E8: THE SNAKE PIT



Until the cobras are slain or trapped in their urns, the mists will prevent anyone from leaving, dumping them back into the entrance.

Inside of each box lies a punji; a musical instrument used to charm cobras. PCs can charm a serpent by making two consecutive Luck checks over two rounds, representing the PC playing a short melody. A PC with a music related occupation can succeed with a single DC 8 skill check. When a PC passes the required test the appropriate cobra returns peacefully to its urn, a lid magically appearing on the urn immediately after. Then in a puff of smoke the urn disappears, leaving a chest

in its place. Failing one of the two checks will agitate the cobra, but it is only with two failed checks that the cobra will attack the offending character.

PCs may also follow a clue from the tapestry by depositing a coin in a silver box, then kissing one of the serpents on its head. Depositing a coin will cause the cobra to bow its head slightly. To successfully kiss the cobra PCs will need to succeed on a DC 11 Will save (due to fear). Kissing the serpent will trigger the same response as charming it.

Failing to musically charm a cobra, or refusing to kiss it after offering a coin, will result in the offending PC being attacked. The other serpents will remain neutral unless they are attacked, or are also the subject of failed attempts at being charmed. When attacking, the cobras first use their spit attack, following up later with a bite. Any successful bite against a rat results in the rat being swallowed whole. (See below.) Each PC can only charm a single cobra.

Rat-Ray Cobras (10): Init +4; Atk Bite +2 melee (1d3) or Spitting +1 Ranged (polymorph spit ray, see special); AC 12; HD 1; hp 3,3,2,2,1,1,5,4,4,4; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SP polymorph spit ray (Cobras have a special attack in the form of a narrow red beam of energy they

“spit” out. Those hit must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex

save or be struck flush and polymorphed into a large rat. Polymorphed characters physically become rats while retaining all their mental abilities and stats. The effect is permanent unless a remove curse is performed.); SV Fort 0, Ref +2, Will 0; AL N.



Defeating the Cobras

A previously invisible exit will appear with the death or charming of all the snakes. Chests only appear after a snake is charmed: killing a cobra provides no additional benefit beyond removing its threat. Each chest contains a treasure or two:

1. **Slide 1** for the magic lantern; **Onyx Cobra Figurine** (+1 to all poison saves. Bearer gradually takes on a sinuous, head-bobbing stride the longer he carries it.)
2. **Moon Coin; Magical Clown Nose** (Raises a PCs AC by 3 when worn! Can't be removed until the first critical hit the PC suffers in the future slices the nose in two!)
3. **Potion of Healing** (Two doses that heal 1d6 each.)
4. **Rabbits Foot** (+1 to all Luck checks, causes user's front teeth to grow while carried.)
5. **Potion of Acid Bubbles** (Covers a 20x20 area in acidic bubbles. For 1d4 rounds, all in the area of effect must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save each round or suffer a bubble pop delivering 1d2 dmg.)
6. **Magic Boomerang** (+2 rangedatk for 1d4 dmg, will return after each miss. User gradually adopts a strange accent. Shatters on a critical hit.)
7. **Magical Figurine of a Fly** (All insects must pass a DC 15 Will save to attack owner, bearer of figurine adds occasional 'zzz' sounds to words.); 10 ancient gp.
8. **Potion of Levitation** (Treat as a roll of 14 for the spell listing in the DCC rulebook. Once used judges roll 1d20: on a 1 the levitation will cut out suddenly at the worse possible moment.)
9. **Magical Horn** (When blown at any individual clown the target must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be dazed 1d3 rounds.)
10. **Potion of Speed** (Imbiber gains one additional action for 1d4 rounds.)



E9. THE PETTING ZOO

The scent of hay and manure assault your noses as an immense tent comes into view. A sign hangs above the entrance depicting children petting animals, with the phrase “Petting zoo for you!” drawn in whimsical letters above. The ground is littered with hay, a few bales are stacked to the side of the entranceway.

The Petting Zoo within the large tent is separated into several sections:

Section 1: Transparent Cow

You hear methodical chewing as your eyes slowly adjust to the lower lighting in the area. You soon discover the sound's source: a cow with transparent skin! Each organ, bone, and contracting muscle is in plain view. The bovine's heart beats strongly, pumping blood throughout the beast's highway of vessels, and a reservoir of milk rests just below its abdomen. The milk is a rainbow swirl glowing softly. A stool and empty bottles sit off in a corner of the stall.

PCs may each take a turn milking the cow. An untrained skill check (DC 7 using a d10) modified by any Personality bonus must be passed to succeed. If a character has a farm related occupation the roll changes to a trained skill check (DC 7 using a d20). Success fills a bottle with colored milk. Brave PC's tasting the milk will experience its effect in time, usually during the next encounter. The chief exception is black milk, which takes effect immediately. Repeated milking attempts by a PC results in sour milk.

Roll 1d8 to determine the milk produced:

1. **Green:** Grants +4 temporary Strength during the next encounter.
2. **Red:** Drinking allows the character to breathe fire for 1d8 dmg in a 20'x5' cone, igniting flammable objects. A DC 12 Reflex save will halve damage.
3. **Purple:** Grants temporary +4 Agility lasting one encounter.
4. **Yellow:** Causes the PC to painfully lay 1d3 golden eggs over the course of an hour valued at 50gp each.

5. **Blue:** Allows the character to discern the answer to one question he concentrates on. The answer comes in the form of visions as the drinker “trips” in a drug-like state.
6. **White:** Restores 1d4 hit points. Two doses per bottle.
7. **Orange:** Grants +4 temporary Stamina lasting one encounter.
8. **Black:** Drinking black milk instantly causes the PC to grow a second head. The new head has an irritable personality and will second guess the PC constantly, but also has the Second Sight ability (as if a 14 was rolled on the spell table) 1x per day. The second head must truthfully answer questions about its sight when asked. The second head also has permanent night vision 60'. (The cow only produces 1 dose of black milk. Reroll additional rolls of 8.)

Section 2: Giant Goat

A narrow path winds through hay bales stacked high. The scent of animal grows stronger as you move forward. Suddenly the bleat of angry goats causes you to jump as a blur of fur and horn attacks from atop the bales.

The bales are the stomping ground of a giant two headed goat! It attacks from above with surprise, diving down head-first onto a random PC.

Two-headed goat: Init +2; Atk head butt +1 melee (1d4 slam knocking target prone); AC 12; HD2d8; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP can attack two separate targets within 5' of each other; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Al C.

Section 3: Cockatrice Harem

This area opens up to reveal a chicken coop: the individual wooden boxes are fronted with chicken wire, stacked shoulder high. Nervous clucks can be heard from the hens, sensing your presence. The coop forms an L-shape and houses hundreds of hens. A basket rests on the ground next to a step-ladder on the far side of the coop.

If PCs approach closer read the following:

Moving closer to the cages you notice an odd sight: all of the hens are missing their eyes! You also spot an odd shaped piece of leather hanging over the basket's handle that seems to be a crude mask of sorts.

A juvenile cockatrice guards the coop and will surprise the first PC looking into the cages. The leather mask lying on the handle of the basket is used by those who come to collect eggs.

Juvenile Cockatrice: Init +4; Atk spurs +2 melee (1d2) or gaze SP petrification (see below); AC 14; HD 2d6 hp 10; MV 25' or fly 10'; Act 1d20; SP minor-petrification (DC 12 Will save or random limb permanently turned to stone (Roll 1d5: 1) head (instant death), 2) left arm (unable to use appendage, with exception as a granite club (melee 1d14 due to weight, 1d6 dmg), 3) right arm (see left arm), 4) left leg (speed reduced to 15' (10' for dwarves and halflings) and -8 to all checks requiring agility), 5) right leg (see left leg); SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +2; AL C.

PCs averting their eyes make all attacks at -1d on the dice chain. This also grants the foul fowl +1d to attacks.

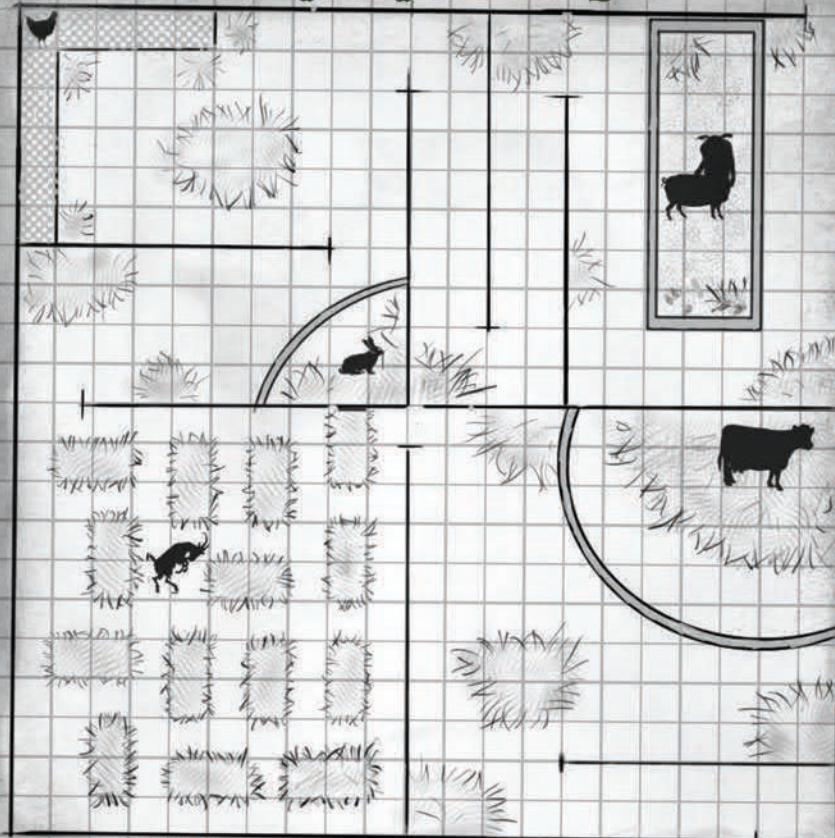
A jeweled emerald egg worth 100 gp lies in the cockatrice nest.

Section 4: Free Killer Rabbits

The pen in front of you is filled with miniature, brightly colored rabbits. They constitute all colors of the rainbow as they hop, play, and do general bunny things with their kin. A sign above the pen reads "Lucky Bunnies! Only ten copper for a hopper!" A painted arrow points down to a coin box. The rabbits look like they could easily fit in the palm of your hand, and a stack of small wooden cages with chains attached to the top lie close to the pen's gate.

The bunnies are there for the taking. Failing to pay, however, results in a fist sized flurry of furry attacks by the bunny's enraged brethren. Any character who pays the ten copper can claim a bunny without incident. The tiny creatures grant their keepers +1 to all Luck checks while the creatures live. Allowing the bunny to perish triggers a curse that

E9: THE PETTING ZOO



incurs a -1 penalty to all Luck checks until a remove curse is performed. Judges are encouraged to get creative with these curious and fragile pets, creating interesting situations where bunnies are placed in harm's way requiring rescue.

Killer Bunnies (5 for each character stealing): Init +4; Atk leaping bite +2 melee (1pt); AC 12; HD 1d2; hp 1; MV Leap 15'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0; Al N.

Section 5: Man Pig

The unmistakable smell of slop overwhelms you, reminding you of the farm back home. Familiar guttural snorts and grunts also ring out as you come upon a large pen. Several sows seem relaxed and well fed from the trough of slop left for them. A mud-caked man is lying amidst the pile making grunting noises as he rubs each pig with affection behind their ears. A snap of straw from your approach disrupts the happy scene as swine scurry away screeching with fear. As they scatter, you realize the man is not human: rising from the slop it stands taller than any of you, resembling a horrifying cross between a man and a pig! He bellows a wall-rattling snort in challenge before lunging forward!

Man Pig: Init +2; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+1) or once per day SP vomit spray acid +1 ranged, 10' cone 5' wide(1d6 first round, 1d3 the following round) have all PCs make Luck checks. The two that fail and have the lowest Luck stat will be caught in the spray ; AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 13; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2; Al C.

Should characters search the slop in the trough they find a severed finger still bearing a bright red copper ring. On the inside is scratched the command phrase 'Bake Em!'. The ring allows the wearer to cast Flaming Hands once per day at 1d16+CL + Int modifier.

E10. LOVE TUNNEL

Two winged statues in the form of angelic cherubs hold bows, grinning mischievously at all who stand near the entrance. A trail of rose petals leads into the large opening of the tent. When you peer within, the tent is lit by some hidden source of red hued lighting, casting a soft glow on the small swan shaped boats waiting inside. By some magic the boats float on a narrow channel of water that runs off into the red haze, while candles on crimson lily-pads bob lazily around the crafts on the surface of the stream.

The boats can each hold two PCs. Those who travel in pairs end in one part of the attraction, while those who go solo arrive at a different destination. Should characters decide to flee the tent, the pink mists will teleport them directly onto a boat alone. Make a chart numbering each boat and who sits in each before starting the encounter, as it

will aid in keeping track of the combat. Each PC staying behind will be attacked by 2 love zombies after the boats have moved out of range (see below).

When all characters have boarded read the following.

As the last of you climb aboard the vessels, soft violin music begins to play, and the swan boats glide forward atop the calm waters. The light seems to coalesce around you until it seems you are floating through a softly lit tunnel, lined with tapestries and statues depicting all forms of the timeless art of romance. Your attention is momentarily pulled from the tranquil scene as a hinged stand flips down in each of your vessels. A bottle of wine materializes on the stand, along with glasses appearing in each of your hands. The speed of the boats begins to increases slightly as the tunnel separates into two channels.

Riding Alone

Read or paraphrase the following for those riding alone:

As quickly as the boat had picked up speed it slows back down. Decorations continue to line the walls as the wine bottle uncorks, levitating long enough to fill your glasses as the boat drifts to a stop.

All is still for a moment, then without warning a bloodied torso lunges into your craft from the water below! What once may have been human is now stripped of skin! Blood and tendons glisten in the low lights while lidless bulging eyeballs gaze at you lovingly. Licking away the slime covering its lipless mouth, the ghastly corpse speaks to you in a deep throaty croak: "No one should ever be alone in life, and now you have me! Let's seal our love with a tender kiss fleshling!"

A single love zombie attacks each solo PC. The zombies roll normally for initiative on the first round due to the surprise boarding, but attack last each round thereafter. A love zombie's bite infects its foe with a mind altering poison that turns pain into pleasure. This causes its victim to hallucinate and feel no trauma, fantasizing that the attacking zombie is the most beautiful man/woman in the world, and the flesh-chewing bites only "Love nibbles".

Love Zombie: Init +0; Atk bite +2 melee (1d2 dmg + love nibbles venom see below); AC 11; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead (half damage from slashing, piercing weapons and immune to crits); SP Love venom (DC 12 will save or victim is paralyzed by love for 1d3 rounds while being eaten alive and finding it pleasurable) SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

Riding in Pairs

Read or paraphrase the following for those riding in pairs:

As quickly as the swan picked up speed it slows back down in seconds. More decorations line the walls as the wine uncorks itself, levitating long enough to pour each glass full. Your curiosity about the enchanted wine shifts as the boats move along a long channel lined on either side with dozens of cherub statues set amidst more gaudy art. The cherubs suddenly take flight and attack!

The cherubs are living statues capable of flight. Characters can strike them with melee attacks during their action, since the cherubs have to fly low to find a mark with their weak bows. One cherub attacks each boat, gaining surprise on the first round.

Living statue-Cherub (One per boat): Init +2 (surprise); Atk arrow +1 ranged (1pt plus charm, see below); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 2; MV fly 20'; Act 1d20; SP love spell (PC struck by an arrow must make a DC 12 Will save or immediately fly into a jealous rage attacking the person closest to them on their next available action. “If I can’t have you, no one will!” The effect lasts 1d4 rounds; SP surprise is automatic on the first round; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +4; AL N.

End of the Ride

Characters making it through either channel will eventually merge together in a curving landing section allowing them to exit the crafts. If a PC manages to save a glass or bottle of wine, they will be awarded with a healing potion that heals all current damage.

A chest rests on a pedestal near the exit. Opening it reveals a stringed-instrument case: mahogany trimmed in gold. A wax seal has been

placed on the clasp with an unrecognizable symbol imprinted upon it. Breaking the seal releases the spirit of Sophia, Emerik's deceased wife. Opening the case reveals the **Ivory Violin** Emerik gifted her on their wedding day.

Sofia manifests above the violin briefly observing all of the PCs. If any PC has a music-related background she will smile and point to the character and do a slight curtsy before transforming into a cloud of butterflies before fluttering away. If no PC has a musical background she will choose the PC with the highest Personality stat, Lawful PCs being preferred. As the butterflies fly away, the chosen PC hears a soft whisper: "Remember the song that drew his last tears."

Two corpses lie near the exit apparently having suffered the love zombie charm effects. One has been stabbed repeatedly, while the second looks to have somehow strangled himself. Searching the bodies reveals a **Moon Coin** and a **jelly bean** that will heal 1d3 points of damage.

III. MIRROR MAZE

A very large attraction takes up most of the clearing you've found. Peering in, the light of your torches and lanterns reveal just enough to startle you as you see your own faces staring back! A nervous chuckle ripples through the party as you realize you are just looking at your own distorted reflections in large mirrors. Closer investigation reveals the tent is filled with row upon twisting row of the reflective surfaces that form a maze. Gazing up, for the first time you notice a sign hanging just outside the entrance that depicts a maze with a chest of gold lying in the center. Funny you hadn't noticed it before...

This is one of three maze encounters in the adventure. These mazes can be safely navigated by *Intelligence* and a little bit of *Luck*. Have each PC add the two stats (*Intelligence* & *Luck*) together and divide by two (rounding down) to come up with their **Maze Score**. Compare this figure on the ability bonus table on page 18 of the DCC Rulebook to determine whether there is a bonus or penalty when rolling to avoid dead ends in the maze. Three successful DC 20 checks must be made by the single PC nominated to navigate to the center of the maze. Each additional character may try to assist by succeeding on a DC 10 Maze Score check using their modifier. Each success adds +1 to the chosen navigator's roll. Failing a



roll means the party runs into a dead end, where a random character with low luck is attacked by a Spectral Angst.

As the party moves through the maze, the mirrors act to channel in a darker doppelgänger of a PC with all their negative traits magnified. It appears as a sinister version of the PC, with jaundiced skin and black-orbed eyes. These Spectral Angsts attack by reaching out of the mirror closest to their twin, attempting to pull their target to the other side of the surface where they will be lost forever. Attacking a mirror triggers an automatic attack, and the broken section of the mirror heals itself the following round.

Spectral Angst (1): Init +4; Atk cold embrace (see below) +1 melee (1d4); AC (Same as PC); HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 5' Bound to stay in mirror. Limited to a 5' area of attack); Act 1d20; SA cold embrace (1d4 dmg and grappled. PC must make an opposed STR roll on his next action or be pulled into the mirror becoming forever lost. Other PCs can aid the victim if their initiative beats the spectral angst: succeeding on a DC 12 Strength check adds +1 to the victims grapple roll); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C

The Center of the Maze

When the party has achieved three successful checks they reach the center of the maze where they discover a large wooden chest painted with the likeness of a clown. Read or paraphrase the following if the chest is opened:

You snatch your hands away from the chest as compressed air blows the lid off with a loud blast! A demonic clown springs from the chest to rise above you, its entire lower body replaced by a coiled spring. Its upper torso is massive by human standards, and it bellows an ear-splitting roar as it looks for the first target upon which to vent its rage.

The bottom of the chest contains **100 gp**, a **+1 suit of magical chain armor** (ignores one crit per day), **Magic Lantern Slide #2**, and **Magic Boots of Feline Attunement** (wearer always lands on their feet taking only 1pt of dmg per 10' fallen, as well as gaining the move silently ability at +2. Those who wear the boots for more than a week gradually find they can only poop outdoors or in large mounds of sand. The

wearer also grow obsessive about personal grooming. The effects wear off two weeks after giving up the boots).

Clown in the Box (1): Init +4; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4) or slam +2 melee (1d3) (PC taking damage is knocked prone); AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 17; MV 10' reach, bound to chest; Act 2d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C

Once the center of the maze is reached PCs must make three additional navigation rolls to find the exit. Dead-ends trigger more Spectral Angst attacks. (If session time is of the essence, skip the exit rolls.)

E12. THE BONE COASTER

Winding through a narrow alley you turn a corner and encounter a dead end. Sudden creepy cackles erupt from behind you, and you spin about to discover a grotesque clown now blocks your path! He's hunched over a strange contraption that looks like a wooden box with a t-shaped handle. It sits on the ground before him, a coiled wire running from the box directly under your feet!

Before you can blink, the fiend yells "Whoopsie!" and plunges the handle down. Instantly an eruption of blinding light and colorful confetti fill the air as you feel the ground fall away beneath you. Partially stunned by the blast, you are dimly aware that you are sliding into the bowels of the earth uncontrollably! Finally you tumble out onto level ground, coming to a sudden stop in a tangle of limbs. Clearing your eyes of dirt, you find yourself in a low cavern filled with a series of linked carts on wheels, each attached to tracks made from human bones. The bone-track leads out the far end of the chamber into darkness. Sudden deep rumbling coupled with clods of earth tumbling from the ceiling above tells you there are just seconds to react before you are buried alive!

Characters will have no choice but to jump into the carts: once all the PCs have made a decision and committed, the ride will begin. Those that stay behind are buried alive. (Judges in a standard funnel session might grant PC's staying behind a final chance to leap into the last cart, perhaps requiring a strength check to hang on!) Read or paraphrase the following once the ride starts:



The carts begin to roll forward on the bone rails. Once the track exits the chamber it begins to climb rapidly, the line of carts rocketing forward at dizzying speeds! The eerie lights of the carnival dazzle you as you're launched from the suffocating depths to dizzying heights under the light of the moon. Thousands of polished bones have been used to build this twisting set of tracks and in the moonlight you realize your carts are fashioned from crudely stitched human skin with cushions that are covered with scalps: blood-crusted hair still intact!

The quick ascent begins to slow to a crawl at the peak of the first drop and you notice huge balloons drifting in your direction, dark silhouettes dangling under the balloons by strings. Suddenly the silhouettes detach from the strings and begin falling all around you. With horror you realize they are hairless monkeys with alabaster skin and scorpion tails, the creatures scattering in random directions while preparing to attack! Your stomachs suddenly find your throats as the carts crest the bone trail's peak and begin diving at inhuman speeds. Your screams of fear are almost matched in volume by the screeching simian demons who lash out at you with their demonic tails!

Each monkey attempts to sting a PC with its venom attack: a successful strike means the victim must succeed on a DC 10 Fort save or become paralyzed. Paralyzed PCs must make a Luck check the following round to avoid flying out of their cart and plummeting to their deaths below.

Attacking a monkey requires holding on with one hand while swinging with an available weapon hand. PCs attack at -1d on the dice chain under such difficult circumstances.

Drawing a cart diagram and placing the monkeys randomly will help aid in managing the combat!

Scorpion Monkeys (One per cart): Init: +4; Atk tail sting melee (1pt plus paralyzation); AC 13; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP paralyzation (DC 10 Fortitude save or paralyzed for 1d4 rounds); SV Fort 0, Ref +3; Will 0; AL C.

The ride lasts six rounds before coming to a stop under a covered platform: any remaining monkeys will hiss and scurry off once the ride is over. The corpse of a villager lies mangled on the platform after

being thrown from the ride and hitting a wall. He's wearing a clown nose, and has a partially deflated balloon tied to one wrist, a shattered lantern tied to the other. The nose grants +1d to hit against any clown type. He also wears a pouch containing three normal darts.

E13. COPPER ARCADE

Whimsical music flows from this large tent, colored glass in hanging lanterns adding to the atmosphere. The tent is filled with several games of the variety designed to take your coin against the slim hope of earning prizes should you be lucky. A few of the games appear to be pulsing with life, while others are covered in cobwebs and dust.

Any character can take a chance with these games, but losing can be costly. Attempts to damage a game or steal prizes will result in the guilty PC being instantly electrocuted! (2d6 dmg).

The Jester's Claw

A large wooden case stands in front of you. The front section consists of a thick glass plate, encasing a hollow area that is stuffed with interesting treasures. A metal claw is suspended above the trinkets on a piece of silken chord. Its jaws are spring loaded, seemingly ready to snap shut like a bear trap. Two wheel cranks lie mounted on the outside of the casing beside a narrow slot. A small brass plate is engraved with a picture of a copper piece.

This is a version of the modern-day claw-grabber machine. PCs attempting the snatch must first succeed on a DC 12 Agility check. If successful they must then make a Luck check for the prize to remain in the claws as it makes its way to the exit chute, where it can be claimed by the PC. Failing either roll results in no prize. Use the prize chart found in **Appendix B: The Prize Cabinet on Page 113** to determine prizes by rolling 1d4 and describing those items lying in the case amidst random stuffed clowns. Pulling a clown will apply a chaotic effect to the PC. (Be creative! Judges can roll on the corruption tables the first time the clown is grasped, or create their own strange effects that occur any time the possessor rolls a 1, etc.)

Crossbows-N-Clowns

A series of ten crossbows are mounted to a long wooden counter-top. Under each crossbow a brass plate engraved with a copper coin is mounted next to a coin slot. Several feet beyond, a row of stuffed maniacal clown torsos with hideous grins await. Each holds a target with a series of colorful circles that have numerical values on them. The smaller circles appear to be worth more points. A colorful banner hangs above the game reading “Crossbows-n-Clowns challenge your friends and take careful aim, score the most points and you’ll champion the game!”

Once all participating PCs have placed a coin in the slots (at least two characters must play for the game to activate) the game whirls to life. The clown torsos begin moving in random directions making targets harder to hit. Each round PCs roll a d20 modified by Agility, continuing to roll until a PC succeeds in winning two consecutive rounds of shooting (highest total rolled) or if character rolls a perfect “20” which is an automatic win. If multiple PCs roll a d20, have each roll another d20 to determine the winner. (The crossbows will automatically reload each round.)

When a winner is declared, celebratory music and lights begin! Unfortunately at the same moment, the targets drop revealing crossbows aimed at each losing PC. Each losing participant must make an immediate Luck check or be struck by a bolt (1d6 dmg). The winning PC finds his crossbow now detaches from the counter, transforming into a +1 magical light crossbow that reloads as long as bolts remain in the six shot cartridge (1d6 dmg). Once the game has been played it will deactivate permanently.

Jester Ball

Identical cabinets line this side of the tent. Small wooden ramps start at ground level and slope upwards, resting on the base of a piece of wood with several holes cut into it. Each hole is encircled by a brass tube that matches the size of the opening. A series of numbers are painted on the sloping wood, the center hole having the highest value. A small brass plate with a copper coin etched into it is mounted next to an open slot at knee level. A section of steel mesh reveals that one side of the cabinet holds several small balls, perhaps released once triggered. Resting at the top of each of the games are wooden jester hats.

This is a version of skeet ball. Dropping a copper piece into the slot releases six balls that can be rolled in hopes of hitting a high point hole. Have each PC roll the tens die of the percentage pair to determine the result (10, 20, 30, 40, 50, etc.) Have players keep their own tally. Each ball scoring causes the head of a jester to rise higher out of the box, finally revealing a potion being brewed in each mouth. The final tally of each PC determines the nature of each potion. Once the machines have been used they deactivate permanently.

- **250-300:** Potion of Invisibility (as if a 14 was rolled on the spell table.)
- **200-240:** Potion of Haste (drinking allows character to take an extra move/action for d4 rounds.)
- **160-190:** Potion of Mirror Images (Drinking produces 1d4+1 mirror images of imbiber. Images last for 2d4 rounds, or until struck. When PC is hit in combat, there is a 50% chance an image is struck instead). The potion lasts for 1d4 rounds.
- **110-150:** Potion of Healing (two doses: 1d4+1 healing each)
- **70-100:** Potion of Misfortune (a dark cloud arrives in one round after imbibing that follows the character around for life or until a Remove Curse is performed. Every time the character fumbles add +1d to the dice chain to determine results.)
- **60:** Poison (PC must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or die in a violent fit of laughter: a demonic grin permanently etched on his face.)

Three-Card Rooster

Bar stools line up along the front side of this small wooden stand, four large walnut shells resting on its surface. A massive rooster wearing a monocle and dressed in a custom velvet jacket views you with curiosity from the far side, cocking his head to the side. It grasps one of the shells and raises it slightly revealing a golden egg. Above the rooster is a sign reading “Beat the fowl at his game, spot the egg and show him who’s lame!”

It is suggested that you use actual props to play this version of the popular shell game: anything can be used in place of the shells.

Once the egg is placed try your best to mix it up. Should the PC guess the correct shell they win a golden egg valued at 75gp. If the PC guesses wrong they must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or be permanently polymorphed into a chicken. (The Rooster subsequently eying the cursed character with disturbing fascination.)

The player can continue to run the transformed PC if they wish, but the PC will now have the physical stats of a chicken. (Use the same stats for Fast Percy found below). Mental stats remain unchanged and the PC can still talk in a chicken-patois between clucks. Anyone cheating will have to make the same save to avoid being polymorphed. If you don't wish to use the props have the PC make opposed Intelligence checks vs the rooster (+2 mod).

Fast Percy the Rooster: Init +3; Atk beak +2 melee (1pt) AC 12; HD 1d3; hp 2; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +2.

Cotton Candy Machine

A large case of glass filled with a pink cottony substance rests on top of this cart. To the side of the case a stack of paper cones rest on a wooden dowel. The front of the cart features a familiar brass plate with copper piece engraving mounted next to an open slot. A large wooden clown with crossed legs sits on top of the case. Its huge head leers down on you, its mouth opening mechanically causing its wooden lips to clack together. A sign above the cart depicts a child eating a head-sized mound of the pink stuff, reading "Tasty clouds banish frowns!" in colorful lettering. A square opening on the opposite side of the cart grants access to the pink material behind the glass.

If a PC deposits a copper coin and holds a cone into the slot, the cotton material will begin swirling around it until a cotton candy mound is formed on the cone. The substance is delicious and sugary, and once eaten the PC will gain +2 bonus to all physical-based rolls through the next encounter. Once the encounter is over the sugar crash will cause a -2 penalty to all mental and physical rolls through the following encounter. There is a 20% cumulative chance with each new dispensing of candy that a dormant mimic will attack, bursting through the glass to protect its sugar palace.

Cotton Candy Mimic (1): Init +4; Atk slam/grapple melee (1d3 dmg); SP-PCs struck by a slam attack are automatically grappled and held by the natural adhesive the creature exudes. An opposed grapple check must be made on the victim's next action to break free (and avoid an additional 1d2 dmg each round). Weapons that hit the mimic will also become stuck and require the same roll to be pried away. AC 12; HD 2d8; 12 hp; MV crawl 10; Act 1d20 ; SP Blind-sight-creature cannot be blinded or affected by any attack that affects vision ; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

E14. TEA PARTY

Light pours out of this immense tent. Closer inspection reveals it is packed with aisles standing over eight feet in height, filled with rows upon rows of stuffed animals, dolls, and other toys. Distant childish laughter distracts you momentarily; the sound of a girl playing and talking to herself echoing from somewhere deep in the tent.

The many toys in this area stare continually at the party, their tiny eyes tracking the PCs as they move. When the party finally emerges from the towering aisles, they step into an open space near the center of the tent. Before them a small girl and her stuffed friends are enjoying a tea party at an ornate child-sized table. Several of the chairs are empty. Read or paraphrase the following once she is discovered:

You're thrilled to finally be clear of the racks of toys you swear have been watching your every move! In the open area before you, the source of the conversation is revealed: a small girl surrounded by stuffed animals and dolls sitting in seats around a beautiful child-sized table. The girl appears to be seven or eight, pacing around the table pouring imaginary tea into china cups. She wears a lovely black school dress that only the child of a noble could afford. Her face is pale and creased with worry as she stops to scold a stuffed bear for not finishing its dinner. The bear ignores the scolding, its head slowly turning towards you with eyes that catch the light from above to give it a threatening gleam.

The little girl turns to see what has stolen her bear's attention, as do all of the toys at the table. She pauses for an instant and then places her hands on her hips impatiently: "Well, you're late for tea and you've completely missed dinner, but I've saved some seats. Wipe your feet and come have some of my delicious pie and cookies!"



All the food and beverages at Isabelle's tea party become real if PCs decide to join her. The toys will watch the party suspiciously while she talks to them: attacking the girl will result in an army of toys coming to her aid.

Isabelle can't leave the tent. She doesn't know why, but she understands that the "funny man" has given her an important job: keeping all the toys prepared and dusted until they're ready to go to their "forever homes". She knows the toys are given to visiting children during the carnival, but doesn't understand why they almost always come back. When they do she cleans them up and assumes the children have been mean to the toys, causing them to run away. She will ask a few questions, such as "Why are you here after dark?", or "Do you have any boys and girls?". She misses her own parents immensely, and asks characters to tell them she wants to go home now, should they see them.

Isabelle can answer a few questions about the carnival and the funny man who runs it. Any other questions are met with a shrug and the offer of a cookie. If PCs are nice to her she will begin cleaning the table, telling the bear that first noticed them to help the nice party find the missing kids. (If the party has mentioned their search.)

Clues

- "The children always come back at night for more fun and games."
- "They get to go to a special place and eat candy forever! You can look for them, but they won't want to leave if you find them! (giggle)"
- "The man who runs the carnival is named Emerik, but he made me promise not to tell anyone and he doesn't like grownups. He does bad things to them because they don't take care of their kids. That's why the kids always come back."
- "The kids get to go to Carnival Land where they don't have to ever grow old and they can eat candy until they throw up, or play games all day while the sun sings to them!"
- "I don't get to go to the special place because Emerik says I have a special heart. He needs me to take care of all the wonderful toys."

- “Some of the others here call Emerik the Black Jester and say he’s mean, but he’s always nice to me and sometimes I see him crying and looking for things I think the other clowns hide from him.”

Should characters attack Isabelle, or threaten her, she will emit a banshees wail, causing a large number of toys to animate and come to her aid while she tries to escape to the darker aisles.

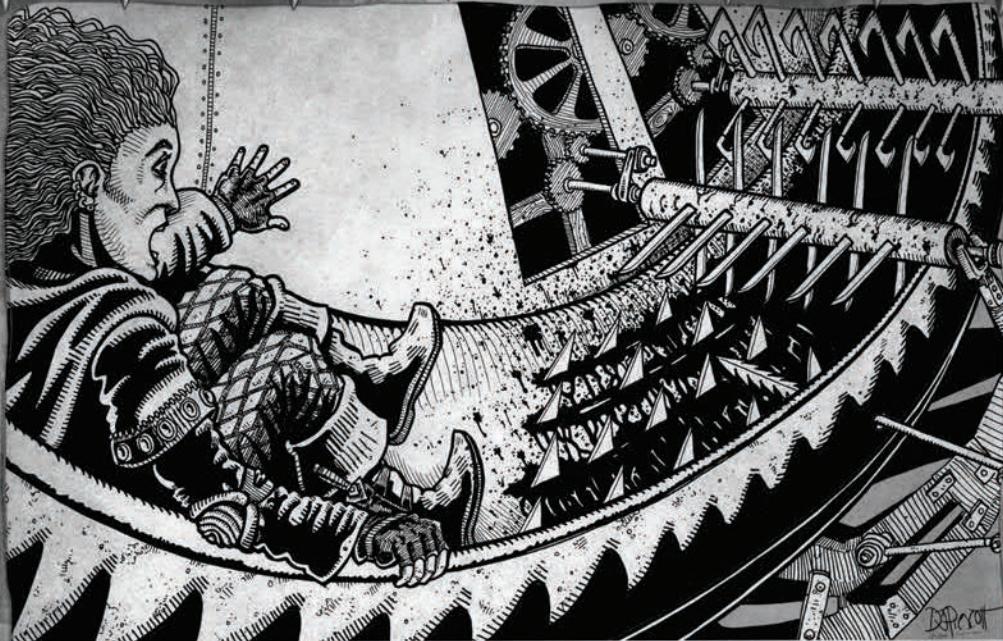
Animated toy (20 per PC) Init +1; Atk bite +1 melee (1 point); AC 10; hp 1; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; Al N.

The animated bear Isabelle asks to help the party is named **Tiddlefinks**. It stands 18" high and can communicate by points, shrugs and nods. Tiddlefinks is actually possessed by the ghost of Isabelle’s Mother who was slain long ago on a similar quest to rescue children. She watches over Isabelle and only exists to protect the lonely child. She has a very basic knowledge of the carnival and of the Black Jester, and will try to communicate with the PCs that they must search for clues in the attractions and find keys that somehow will release the children. In the face of danger the bear will topple over inanimate to the ground until the threat has passed. If Tiddlefinks suffers 4 hp in damage the ghost will return and reanimate another bear within 24 hours.

E15. JESTER’S TONGUE

The mist begins to part, revealing a previously shrouded large construction. A giant wooden jester head rises fifty feet into the mists above, its mouth frozen in mid-laugh. A wide section of highly polished pink wood slopes steeply down from the mouth to the ground, ending in a pile of velvet pillows. Halfway down the ramp glowing keys dangle from a cord that hangs in the air from both sides. A sign on the side of the structure depicts children laughing as they ride the ramp down. Some hold keys they grabbed along the way.

A small bin filled with scraps of cloth lies at the foot of the stairs leading up to the slide. The ramp has enough ridged slots to accommodate each PC. Characters have one chance to grab a key at the 20' mark by making a Luck check. Crafty PCs who try to climb the side to reach the keys will be hit by a spring loaded fist, falling 20' (2d6 dmg). Any other attempts to grab the wire, or cheat the ride will result in electrocution (1d6 dmg).



Read or paraphrase the following when a key is grabbed:

You grin at the prowess of your successful snatch of a key, however the smile is short lived. A loud boom behind you causes you to look back: the jester's head is now alive! Flames shoot up within its eyes as a gust of foul breath blasts from the mouth, causing you to gag. Vicious blades and spikes suddenly spring up from random sections of the slide, all churning like gears in some twisted machine of death!

Sections of the bladed ramp will spring out in the path of PCs at random places. Failing a Luck check means the PC slides head first into a medieval lawn mower for 1d6 dmg. Slain characters are swallowed up by the ride momentarily until the bloody remains are spat high into the air landing on the ground below. (This is to keep any character who dies with a **Summoning Key** from losing it: the sentient slide will not eat nonliving items.)

Characters making it to the bottom with a glowing key can use it to open the **Prize Closet** that materializes after all PCs have safely reached the ground. Characters with a key are allowed one pick each. Anyone trying to steal a prize will be electrocuted (1d6 dmg) and the closet will immediately vanish. Use the prize list found in the **Appendix B: The Prize Closet**.



E16. THE BEARDED LADY

Low and melancholy music in the distance draws you past a row of dreary tents and food carts. Eventually you find yourselves at the entrance of a tent showing signs of life. The fragrant scent of roses flows from the opening, accenting the soft ambiance within.

When PCs look inside the tent, read or paraphrase the following:

Female sobs can be heard above the soft music. Peering inside the tent, you see the source of the crying: a woman sits on an ornate wooden chair in front of a matching vanity. Her beauty is obvious from her reflection in the mirror, excepting one small detail: a large unkempt beard completely covers her face below her cheeks. She suddenly notices you and turns with tears streaming down her cheeks. Her voice is soft and weary as she asks "Have you come to add more pain to my miserable existence?" She raises her hands as if to surrender and you immediately see another source of her sorrow: bloody nubs replace what probably were once beautiful hands. The bandages are blood-caked and dirty, seemingly not changed in ages.

The PCs can approach this encounter in two ways: either attacking her immediately or taking a chance on helping her. If they attack, proceed to her stats and resolve combat. Should they approach peacefully, read or paraphrase the following:

"I am Constance, cursed for these many years to live alone and watch my family through these damned mirrors. My sins against the Laughing God were judged too severe to ever be pardoned, and the Black Jester had my hands removed so that I can no longer comb my beautiful beard. You cannot end my curse, but perhaps you could provide me with a brief respite from this cursed existence?" She gazes at a beautiful gem-encrusted silver comb and then back to you, a hopeful smile appearing underneath the thick knotTED beard.

Any PC can take the comb and attempt to groom her beard. As much as Constance wants her beard brushed, her decades of solitude have driven her mad. If a PC doesn't comb the beard in a pleasing manner she will become irritated, impatiently looking to another in the party to help comb the beard. Should a second PC fail she will fly into a rage and attack, her beard coming alive to lash out.

Bearded Lady: Init +4; Atk beard strands (6/ 10' long) +2 melee (1 point of damage per round for each beard strand and PC is grappled (grappled PC must spend their next action breaking free with a DC 12 strength check or suffer 1d3 Stamina damage from asphyxiation each round the hold isn't broken) or bite +2 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 3d8; hp 20; beard strands each have 4 hp, but become lifeless if the bearded lady is slain; MV 30'; Act 7d20 (for beard attacks and one bite); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; AL N.

To successfully please Constance characters must make three consecutive DC 11 Agility checks, however a barber gains +1d on the chain to groom her. If a PC succeeds, Constance will be overjoyed and offer the PCs a box that contains a **Moon Coin** and a **jeweled dagger** along with **Slide #3 for the Magic Lantern**. An exit then appears on the opposite side of the tent. If Constance is slain the characters can find the box after a few rounds of searching. The jeweled comb is worth 100gp.

E17. PIE CONTEST

The pink mists bear a sweet scent in the alley you're traveling down. Swirling, they part to reveal an opening in the alley, through which you see a open space which holds a raised platform topped by a table, chairs, a banner, and several colored lanterns. The sweet scents of fresh baked pies tickle your nose: stacks of them line the length of the table. Swirls of steam rise from the crusts, evidence that the pies are fresh from the oven. Several of the chairs are occupied by twisted clowns sporting demonic grins that taunt you silently. The banner above the table reads "Eating contest! Eat the most pies and win a prize! Come fill your tummies with fresh baked yummies!" The clowns seem to be waiting for you to join them, tapping their feet anxiously, obviously tortured by the delicious pies in front of them.

The clowns will not attack during this encounter and there are enough empty chairs for every PC. The contest will not begin until all participants are seated. To encourage the PCs to begin the contest, the clowns will each grab a pie from the stack in front of them and watch for the PCs to follow suit. Once each character has a pie in front of them a monkey dressed as an old wizard will drop down from the shadows of the tent and unfurl a scroll reading "EAT, YOU FOOLS!"

The clowns immediately embark on a disgusting display of gorging themselves on the delicious pies: smacking and grunting while shoving handfuls of pie into their toothy maws with pie-stained gloves. To win, PCs must follow suit: after each pie they must succeed on a DC 8 Fort save to continue onward to the next round. The judge should also make a roll at +0 for each of the eight clowns participating. Failing to pass the Fort save means the character cannot finish eating the pie, and the remaining 1d6 berries in the pie will animate and attack. (Clowns failing the roll will immediately have their face eaten off by the flying berries). Characters trying to leave the table before the contest is finished will have pies thrown at them by booing clowns, causing 1d6 berries to attack in the same fashion.

Devil Berries (1d6): Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (1 pt); AC 5; HD 1hp; MV flight 15'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

Ending the Contest

The contest continues until all clowns are beaten or all participating PCs are killed. Once the clowns have been killed, surviving characters find a special new pie appearing before them. Each pie has a different effect once eaten or activated. Roll 1d16 to determine the type of pie:

1. Heals all damage.
2. Flaming burp deals 1d6 dmg in a 5'x 10' cone.
3. Levitate for one encounter as if 14 was rolled on the spell chart.
4. When placed on the ground, one chosen enemy must compulsively spend 1d3 rounds eating it, dazed the entire time.
5. The eater turns blue and becomes sweetly scented, attracting enemies to the smell. All stealth skills are at -3 for everyone within 20'.
6. Light healing: 1d4 points.
7. PC becomes very gassy through one encounter, with a 50% chance of passing flatulence and becoming light headed and suffering -1d on all actions for that round. Judge is encouraged to use a whoopee cushion to liven the effect.
8. A ring is found in the pie that gives +1 to all saves.

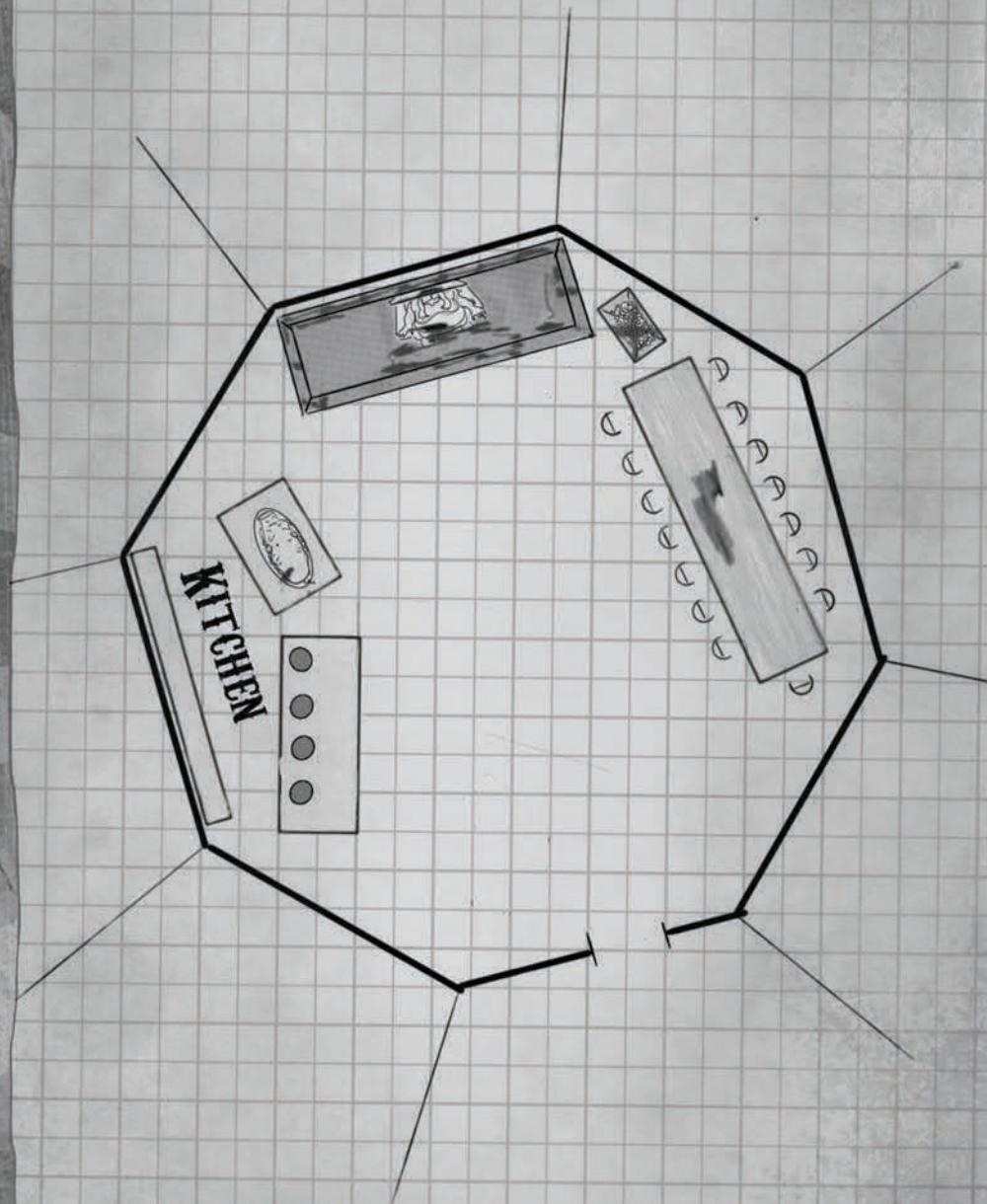
9. The pie crust can be used as a missile weapon with acidic cream (1d6 dmg the first round, followed by 1d3 dmg on the following round).
10. The pie contains a sentient berry. It can answer one yes or no question per day, but also can be eaten (destroying the berry) curing all damage.
11. The eater's hair falls out, and a small bush grows from their scalp. Delicious berries grow each day providing sustenance.
12. An exploding pie that can be thrown doing 1d6 damage.
13. Forevermore the eater possesses a lovely singing voice adding +4 to any performance.
14. Causes all of the eater's teeth to fall out, replacing them with holes that produce honey and angry honey bees once per day. Roll 1d3: 1) bees attack enemies within 10' of host, 2) bees attack both host and enemies, 3) bees attack host only.
Honey Bee swarm: Init +4; Atk sting +1 melee (1d3 pt); AC 10; HD 6hp; MV flight 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +0; AL C.) The Bees will scatter after three rounds. Host can collect 1qt of honey per day from gums.
15. Pie permanently increases HPs by 2.
16. Pie animates and attacks. (Animated pie: Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3); AC 10; HD 4hp; MV flight 15'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.)

E18. A FEAST FOR KINGS

The smell of delicious food is unmistakable while approaching this tent. Peering inside you see it is divided into two sections. On one side is a full kitchen staffed by at least a dozen men going about their duties at a frantic pace. Only males are represented and each seems emaciated, pale and gaunt. They wear only stained aprons and loincloths.

On the other side a raised platform hosts one of the largest humans you've ever seen. Her body bulges at impossible angles under her gravy-stained silken dress. The staff rush to transfer fresh savory dishes to the behemoth's mouth at a frantic pace. Disgusting noises of fat and muscle being chewed along with the crunching of bones turn your stomach.

E18: A FEAST FOR KINGS



Those feeding her quickly pull their hands back before losing a finger in the feeding frenzy. A sign beside the platform reads “Guess the weight of the beautiful lady and win a prize of kingly size.”

Some of the men notice you and whisper into the enormous woman’s ear. The rolls on her body dance with a twinge of excitement, and after a guttural burp of soured milk and digested meat she bellows “Long has it been since I’ve seen a visitor in my slice of the pie! Welcome new friends! Perhaps you would like to play a game of chance?” She pauses to lick a dribble of gravy escaping from her lips before continuing. “Win and attend a feast for kings, and also select a single treasure from my personal collection of baubles collected throughout my delicious life. Fail and you must give me a pick of your weapons.”

Mimi’s game is to guess her weight, and each player (not character) receives one guess (she weighs 1100 pounds). The scene is not, however, quite what it appears. Mimi was cursed long ago to always feel hunger, and the men were once kings, now cursed with an undying hunger for human flesh. They are magically warded from eating Mimi and cannot leave the tent, so in hopes that someday the curse will wane they constantly feed Mimi to make the years of toiling away in her service worth it should they ever get a chance to dine on her.

Mimi will keep her word, and offer the PCs one pick each from her chest if one of the players guesses correctly. The chest is large and filled with trinkets and baubles including twelve crowns (flashy but worthless). Astute players may figure out that there are twelve servants serving her. Mimi keeps her second promise of a “feast for kings” by inviting PCs to eat a meal cooked by the staff. However, the feast is for the cursed cannibal kings to enjoy, serving the PCs as the main course! Each player may make one DC 18 Int check to notice the crown/staff connection, but if they fail and stay for dinner, a DC 11 Fort save must be passed to avoid the effects of poisoned wine served during the first course. Failing results in a penalty of -2d on the dice chain for all actions for 10 rounds. The cannibal Kings will attack at this point, Mimi staying out of the fray unless attacked.

Emaciated Servants (12): Init +2; Atk bite +1 (1d3); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 3,4,1,1,5,6,4,6,4,2,4,3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

Mimi: Init +0; Atk bite melee (1d4) or Acid Spew (5' cone 20' long) +2 ranged (1d3+ 1 point per round for 1d3 rounds); AC 11; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 0'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C.

Mimi's chest contains several items of worth:

- **Slide #4 for the Magic Lantern**
- Ornate dagger made of meteorite: 1d5 dmg and worth 30 gold
- **Black Onyx Cat Brooch** (+1 to stealth rolls)
- **Scent of the Succubus Perfume** (+2 charisma based rolls when dealing with humans, elves, halflings) 6 doses.
- Emerald necklace - 100 gp
- Pearl earrings - 30 gp
- Silver owl pendant - 10 gp
- Pipe trimmed in gold - 15 gp
- Spyglass - 5 gp
- Hand mirror with silver backing - 10 gp
- Makeup kit - 5gp
- String of pearls - 50 gp
- Numerous baubles worth 1 gp each

E19. THE TRAPEZE

The PCs come upon a large tent filled with tiered benches. The benches remain empty until all characters have entered. Once the party has arrived read or paraphrase the following:

An eerie scene unfolds as you move further into the tent. Tiered wooden benches line the tent walls and ghostly humanoids seemingly oblivious to your presence begin manifesting and taking their seats while gazing high into the air. Ghosts of all ages seem transfixed by the scene above.

Two poles rise into the ceiling opposite each other a hundred feet apart. Small platforms host what appear to be humans in glittery costumes at the thirty foot mark on each pole. A male and small boy stand on the side closest to you, while a female and a small girl stand poised on the opposite pole.

The music grows louder as the figures begin a daring set of acrobatics, swinging from paired ropes attached to metal rods. The spectral crowd gasps and applauds each death-defying maneuver. Suddenly all four of the high flying aerialists make a fatal error, colliding in mid-air and plummeting to the merciless ground below with a bone-crunching smack. The ghostly spectators groan in disappointment as they begin to fade away.

Without warning, every form in the broken heap of bloody corpses on the floor begin shuddering back to life. Bones crack and pop and they look balefully at each other and then towards you. Each lifts a mangled arm in your direction and points as they begin shouting a deathly wail! Thick clouds of black flies swarm out of each mouth, while glowing spectral energy escapes each withering body. The corpses drop lifeless to the ground as the droning ocean of insects rushes upon you in an instant.”

The family members were once great acrobats, but after a tragic mishap Gelos cursed them to relive the fateful routine again and again. After several decades the spirits have gone quite mad, taking the pain of their curse out on anyone entering the tent.

The flies engulf the entire party: have PC's each make a DC 12 Will save or become possessed by one of the artist's spirits as the flies swarm down the PC's throat. Four PCs maximum can be possessed: compare lowest Luck totals amongst those who miss their saves to determine the victims if more than four miss their saves. If less than four miss their saves, fill out the ranks of the possessed with PC's with the lowest luck even if they make their saves: The show must go on!

Possessed PCs will instantly be teleported to the platforms above. Each possessed PC will have ghostly encouragement from the spirit possessing them: telling the PC ‘this time you can make it!’. The flies continue to attack PCs that pass their saves, distracting them from delaying or trying to save the possessed.

Once the possessed PCs have been teleported, they must make one Agility check per round for three rounds while they perform their

aerobatics. If characters make all three rolls the ghost inhabiting them is released from the curse and the character regains control. Those that fail will fall thirty feet, taking 3d6 dmg. PC's on the ground can attempt to shout encouragement or instructions to individual PCs (granting a +1 to that PC's Agility check, maximum bonus +3), but must succeed on a DC 10 Fort save or swallow a mass of flies taking 1 point of dmg.

The ghosts fade away once their host has fallen. Any PC that succeeded on all three Agility checks will instinctively know a trunk lies behind one of the benches against the wall, a reward for setting the ghost free.

The trunk contains family memorabilia in addition to 20 gp, a **Moon Coin**, and a **+1 lucky ring** (Allows one re-roll of any sort once per day at +1, but PC slowly develops acrophobia).

E20. THE SCARE-US WHEEL

Finding yourself in a clearing, you pause to take in the incredible sight before you: flames shoot up from the surface of a massive moat! On an island in the center of the moat, two giant wheels (like an enormous double Ferris wheel) tower above you some hundred feet in the air, held erect by massive wooden braces that reach half the height of the wheels. Dozens of small carts hang between the two wheels. A massive pole rises through the center of the attraction, support cables disappearing into the mist on three sides. A rickety wooden bridge runs out to the island through the blazing moat, seemingly immune to the flames.

Suddenly you realize you're not alone as a dozen or more clowns waddle in from the far side of the moat. They all seem morbidly obese, shuffling sluggishly. Almost immediately they form a line and begin retching violently. As you watch in horror you realize they were merely serving as vessels for something far more sinister: fist sized spiders that clamor out of each clown's gullet by the hundreds! Within moments the clown hosts' empty husks drop lifeless to the ground.

A black carpet of death begins scurrying toward you at incredible speed, skirting the moat as the mass chitters gleefully. As they draw closer you notice that each has a face resembling their former host, only with gleaming orange eyes. Their squeaky cackles add to your horror: you only have seconds to act before being overrun!

Fighting the spiders is fruitless, but fire-based weapons such as torches will buy the characters a single round of safety. Attempts to flee back toward the carnival will be blocked by the pink mist. The only escape is to cross the bridge and then knock it over into the flaming moat. If the PCs cross without destroying the bridge, 1d12 clown-spiders will follow them across and attack.

One PC can push the bridge over with a DC 12 strength check; two or more can do it without rolling. The spiders will die in droves as they try to leap the moat once the bridge is toppled, but every round a clever handful (1d4) will leap across, finding a dying brother's back the perfect spring board to cross the flames. The clown-spiders attack by forcing themselves down a PC's throat and devouring their organs, transforming their victim into a new host upon death.

Clown Spider (1d4): Init +3; Atk bite +1 (1pt + poison, see SP); AC 13; HD 1hp; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.; SP PCs bitten must succeed on a DC 11 Will save or sag to the ground allowing 1d4 spiders to enter their throat on the following round. Each round thereafter the victim takes 1 point of damage from each spider as they devour the unfortunate soul from the inside out. The only chance the victim has is to swallow some type of healing draught which will slay the unholy spiders on contact. PCs who are slain by the spiders reanimate as a zombie transport.

Escaping the Encounter

A button and crank are mounted to a control box lying on the backside of the giant wheel platform. Pushing the button causes the attraction to light up and music to play. Turning the crank will set the ride in motion, allowing characters to board. As the bridge has likely been destroyed, the only escape from the island is to leap from the top of the ride to a support cable, sliding down over a section of wall that rings the area. A DC 8 reflex save must be made to safely grab the wire, followed by a DC 6 Reflex or Strength save (whichever is better) to shimmy the length of the cable to safety. Characters who fall die instantly, either in the flames of the moat, or by the teeth of the hordes of spiders waiting below. (Feel free to decrease the DC of the checks for a regular funnel session.)

E21. THE HOUSE OF STALWART MINDS

This attraction resembles many of the dusty, aged tents you've encountered this evening, with a few differences. First, it is in much better condition. The entrance flaps are trimmed with shiny gold geometric stitching, and an ornate sign above the entrance reads "The House of Stalwart Minds". A creature that appears to be a strange cross between rabbit and man stands just inside the tent flaps, a rag and bucket of soapy water in hand, busily polishing the clasps holding the tent flaps in place.

The man-rabbit is dressed in scholarly robes and wears a colorful velvet cap trimmed in silver thread. It also wears a very thick set of spectacles giving his pupils a distorted and comical look. When he takes notice of you he pauses, observing you closely as he straightens his robes. Placing the bucket and rag to the side, he approaches you with excitement.

"Welcome new guests!" he says in a nasally tone. "Long has it been since I've had visitors to my exhibit! Please step inside to test your mental mettle against thrilling games of the mind." Pausing, he pushes his spectacles back up his nose then darts just inside the entrance, pulling the tent flaps open.

"The games will truly test your mind, but the reward for solving them all is a prize befitting the difficult challenge." Pushing the drooping spectacles back once more, he adds more quietly: "Fail, and you'll pay the price for being the village idiot." After a moment he giggles in an eerie fashion, ending with a pig-like snort.

The tent is divided into four rooms. A doorway will be revealed to the next room after PCs have either solved the challenge or triggered the negative consequence. PCs will have to succeed at all four challenges before reaching the final prize. Each player may make one guess at the challenge, representing the sum of all the characters they control. You may allow the players to work together on the challenges if you wish, but it is suggested that room #4 be attempted one player at a time.

Room 1

Stepping through the opening you find yourselves gazing at three alabaster walls faced with highly polished white marble. A strange snipping sound behind you causes you to turn to see the entrance you just passed through has vanished. A subtle chiseling noise causes you to spin around once again: words are beginning to form on each of the three marble walls. Each forms the same phrase... a riddle it would seem.

*I have a heart that never beats
I have a crown you'd love to keep
I can take a man's house to build another's
I love to play games with my stack of brothers
I am the crimson King in the courts of chance
Who am I?*

Just as you finish reading the riddle aloud a large hour glass materializes and flips, the sands quickly filling up the reservoir below.

(The hour glass gives the party five minutes of real time to answer the riddle correctly.)

The answer to the riddle is the King of Hearts from a deck of cards.

Should PCs guess correctly, an opening in the far wall materializes allowing access to the next room. Should a PC fail to guess the answer, thousands of playing cards shoot out from the walls in random directions. Characters suffer deep cuts (1d3 dmg) from the cards unless they succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save. All cards have the King of Hearts on the face. Ethereal laughter fills the room once the last card has been shot, and the opening appears. (Tough judges will make the party guess correctly before the opening appears.)

Room 2

Stepping through the opening to the second room, you find a chamber almost identical to the last, save that all four walls and the floor are covered in the brilliant marble. As the entrance vanishes as before, the same chiseling noise can be heard. This time however, random letters begin to appear underneath your feet all across the floor. At the same time a message begins to form on the far wall: "Nine words you must find

in the given set of time. Make order from the madness, or fail and suffer sadness". The same hourglass materializes above you and flips, signaling the start of the contest.

R	M	N	N	S	A	D	C
E	U	R	D	S	M	A	S
T	R	O	E	E	I	M	S
S	D	C	A	N	R	N	E
E	E	I	T	K	R	E	N
J	R	N	H	R	O	D	D
G	E	U	O	A	R	W	A
W	Y	E	K	D	K	T	M

The words the players need to find in this searching game are:

damned, darkness, death, jester, key, madness, mirror, murder, unicorn

As PCs find and trace a word that matches one on the list, the floor sparks and a border appears around the discovery. Finding all the words before time runs out will cause an exit to appear. Failure results in all the letters beginning to glow and shift, forming phrases born from pure chaos. Each PC must succeed on a DC 8 Will save or be driven to claw at their own eyes to shut out the madness. (1d3 dmg and the PC suffers -1d on the dice chain for all activities involving sight until healed due to permanent eye injury). The exit is dimly visible to those driven to near madness.

Room 3

After you traverse a short corridor, you find the next room is different than those encountered previously. It is circular and faced with rough stone. Several large holes are gouged in the walls and ceiling, seemingly at random. A scroll case hangs from the ceiling just within reach, while several sconces hold smoky torches that cast devilish shadows all about you.

The parchment scroll inside the case contains a riddle. Once PCs have read it, the familiar hourglass appears and flips. The riddle reads:

*A coiled snake
With a stinging bite
I hang at rest
Unless forced to fight*

The answer is a whip.

Failing to answer the riddle in the allotted time will trigger a giant serpent to spring from one of the random holes in the walls or ceiling, attacking with surprise the first round. The giant creature is a **Clownaconda**, possessing a serpent's body topped by a twisted snake/clown head! (The same creature can be found in the random encounters listed in **Appendix A: Random Encounters on Page 108**).

Solving the riddle causes an opening to appear in a random section of the wall. (Defeating the Clownaconda will reveal the door as well.)

Clownaconda (1):+3 Init; Atk bite +1melee (1d4) Swallow whole, up to two human sized targets (when a victim is bitten they are considered grappled. On the grappled victim's next turn they must attempt to break the grapple. If the opposed check is failed the victim is swallowed whole taking 1d4 in Stamina damage per round from suffocation in addition to acid damage (1pt); AC 12; HD 1d14; 12 (-1 per target swallowed) hp; MV 30 ft or 20 ft after feeding; Atk 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +2 or -2 after feeding, Will +0; AL C

Room 4

Stepping through the opening to this room delivers an overwhelming blast to your senses. The square room is filled with swirling purple mists, roiling about on some uncanny wind. The center of the room hosts a rectangular block of crystal four feet in height and at least one foot in thickness. Its interior glows with a sick pulsating light, bathing what appears to be a large key suspended in its center. Thousands of clownish faces wearing crowns watch you from every part of every wall. The faces begin whispering to one another as soon as you enter. Before you can act they all begin chanting in unison:

*“You’ve made it this far, thus setting the bar!
“There’s just one last test, ‘til crowning the best!
“Repeat the key phrase, that’s sure to amaze,
“Five times is the charm, to bugger the harm!”*

After repeating the chant twice, the clowns will pause for a moment. (If your players have more than one character each, have them select one and slide the PC’s sheet forward.) Then have the clowns slowly chant as one:

*Clowns grow glowing crowns!
Clowns grow glowing crowns!
Clowns grow glowing crowns!*

Then point at a player and say “five times fast!” The player must quickly repeat the phrase five times without pause or error. Failure will cause a random set of faces to spew out a gout of sweet-smelling pink acid at the selected PC (1d4 dmg in round 1, 1d3 in round 2, 1 pt in round 3). Any PC attempting to help the victim will suffer the same fate. Either circle clockwise around the table to the next player with each failure, or randomly point at a player to keep them in suspense. (Though be sure to give everyone a chance in turn.)

Success will cause every face to scream in unison, shattering the crystal and revealing a **Summoning Key** along with the **Fool’s Crown**. An opening also appears in the far wall, finishing the encounter. (Attacking the crystal will electrocute the offender for 1d6 dmg).

The Fool’s Crown

This magic crown allows the wearer to charm a target once per day as if a 14 was rolled on the Charm spell chart. Additional charm victims can eventually be added to the first, but when the attempt is made, add up the number of currently charmed victims and add one. (If four victims are currently charmed, the final number is five.) Before the new charm attempt is made, have the bearer of the crown roll 1d10. If the roll is less than or equal to the final number, the spell fails automatically, and all the currently charmed victims break free of the enchantment and attack the bearer of the crown!

E22. DRAGON CANNON

Moving cautiously through twisting corridors formed by empty tents, your senses are suddenly rocked! A titanic explosion stuns you briefly as the ground shakes wildly. Staggering forward you reach a clearing that harbors the source of the explosion: a bronze cannon forged in the likeness of a mighty dragon! The cannon rests on a high platform overlooking a huge chasm that runs as far as you can see in either direction. A clown is currently climbing a ladder to the platform while another has already slid into the muzzle. With a pull of a cord another explosion rocks the grounds as the cackling clown is propelled hundreds of feet into the air, crossing the chasm and safely landing in a net on the other side. The second clown isn't as lucky: as he pulls the cord and rides the explosive force forward, his wild gyrations seem to slow his flight, and he falls shrieking into the mist filled chasm below!

PCs must use the cannon to cross to the second section of the carnival. They must succeed on a DC 10 Reflex save to land safely in the net. Failure results in instant death. (Kind judges will allow those who miss their save to instead land in awkward terror on the far side by burning 2 points of luck. Feel free to break such a PC's leg (1/2 move for duration of adventure), arm (-1d to attacks), or mind (goes insane on next natural 1 rolled) if you feel so inspired).

Read or paraphrase the following as PCs sail across the chasm:

With your ears ringing and head throbbing you feel your organs shudder as you're propelled high into the night. The pink mists that fill the chasm rise up to tickle your twirling body. The mists part just enough to reveal dozens of titan-sized serpents with twisted clown-like heads all lunging upwards hungrily from their mist-filled prison as they sense your journey across.

E23. THE CORN MAZE

You take a moment to catch your breath, allowing your innards to properly settle after the daring flight across the chasm. You roll out of the net onto the ground to find yourself standing before a vast corn field. Beyond the rows of corn the familiar garish lights of another section of the car-

nival awaits. Large crows gaze down at you from a safe distance, filling their gullets with the bountiful crop's gold niblets.

This is one of three maze encounters in the adventure. These mazes can be safely navigated by *Intelligence* and a little bit of *Luck*. Have each PC add the two stats (*Intelligence* & *Luck*) together and divide by two (rounding down) to come up with their **Maze Score**. Compare this figure on the ability bonus table on Page 18 of the DCC Rulebook to determine whether there is a bonus or penalty when rolling to avoid dead ends in the maze. Three successful DC 20 checks must be made by the single PC nominated to navigate to reach the center of the maze. Each additional character may try to assist by succeeding on a DC 10 Maze Score check using their modifier. Each success adds +1 to the chosen navigator's roll. Failing a roll means the party runs into a dead end, where a random PC with low luck is attacked by a murder of crows seeking juicy eyeballs to compliment their meal of corn.

Attempts to plow through the maze of corn results in cuts from the sharp husks and leafy stalks (1 pt per round). Each wall section requires 1d4+2 rounds to break through to the other side.

At the heart of the maze PCs discover a large pole rising thirty feet above the ground in the center of a large clearing. A glass box rimmed with ornate iron rests on top of the pole, a purple glow shining through its panels revealing the silhouette of a key. Wooden rungs nailed into the pole allow it to be climbed easily. The box contains a **Summoning Key** and a trapped spirit: once the box is opened the spirit will rocket forward, howling as it flies around the party before disappearing into the field. This will trigger the crows to swarm around the PC holding the key for 2 rounds, doing one point of damage per round before flying away.

Read or paraphrase the following when the crows attack while in the maze:

Just as when you've made a wrong turn in the maze, the shrieks of hundreds of crows pierce the night as they swoop down from their corn stalk perches. Their crazed wings beat at your face, disorientating and temporarily blinding you as you throw up your hands to protect your eyes.



Murder of Crows (1): Init +5; Atk swarming peck 20' cube, +1 melee (1pt); SP Eye bite (See below); AC 10; HD 1d10; hp (Causing 4 hit points will disperse the flock temporarily; MV fly 30 ft; Act 1d20 ; SP eye bite, one random party member must make a Fortitude save DC 10 or lose an eye (1d4) and suffer a permanent -1d to all actions requiring sight ; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will -2; AL N.

While the characters deal with the crows, the ungrateful spirit just released from the box seeks for a way to punish the living. Soon it finds and animates a scarecrow that immediately begins stalking the PCs. The scarecrow moves easily through the corn and attacks with 70% surprise. When it is ready to strike, read or paraphrase the following:

When you find yourselves facing yet another dead end, you raise your arms to protect your eyes from the murderous birds that have attacked you at every other similar point, but the crows seem to have finally lost interest. You sigh in relief, but freeze in mid-breath at the sound of a slight snap of stalks behind you. You turn to find yourself face to face with a scarecrow, standing awkwardly in an almost comical posture. Wearing tattered farmer's garb and sporting a rotten pumpkin for a head, the decaying gourd seems to leer at you as it slowly swings a scythe back and forth. The same purple light that lit the glass box on the pole pours through holes in the creature's hollow head. With a mocking tip of its floppy hat, the creature raises its scythe and swings!

Scarecrow (1): Init +2; Atk scythe +1 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 20'; Act 1d20; vulnerable to fire attacks (-4 to all related saves and +1d on the damage die) SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AL C.

Once the PCs reach the exit of the maze, they find posts driven into the ground flanking the entrance. Eviscerated villagers are nailed to each while crows feast on their juicy innards.

E24. THE CLOWN FACTORY

Traveling through a dismal collection of forgotten attractions, the eerie sounds of distant carnival music are drowned out by a multitude of pitiable human screams. Taking a quick look about, it seems that the shrieks are coming from a narrow opening just ahead of you amongst several dilapidated vendor carts.

A captured band of villagers, much like the PCs, are responsible for the screams. They have been overwhelmed by evil forces and taken prisoner. The tent they have been herded into is filled with equipment usually found in a furnace room. The demonic furnace at the heart of the tent feeds on human remains, in turn transforming humans into twisted clowns, willing or not!

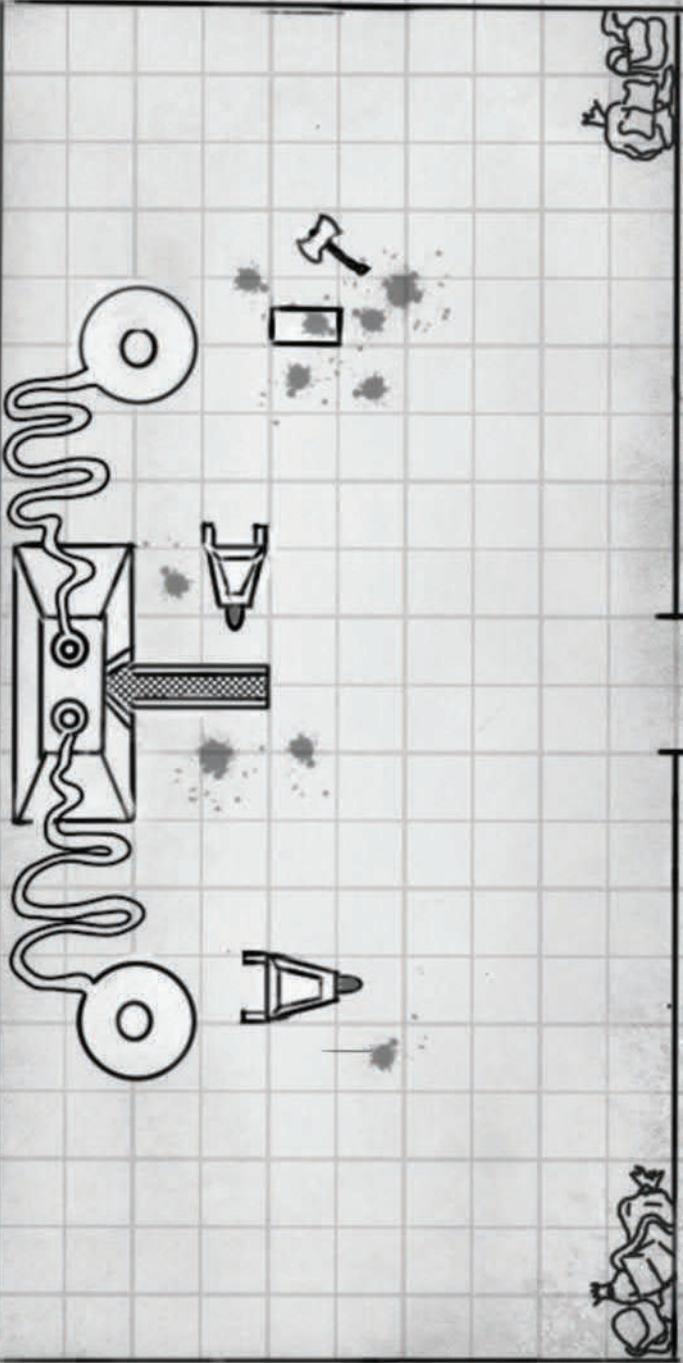
When the PCs move closer to the tent, read or paraphrase the following:

It's difficult to comprehend the murderous carnage taking place inside this tent. The sickly scent of burning flesh immediately draws your attention to a demonic furnace in the heart of a mass of twisting pipes. Its hellish-looking mouth almost seems to be chewing mechanically, while two grated openings slightly above the side of the mouth give the appearance of fiercely glowing eyes. Two large glass pipes curve and loop from the top of the furnace stretching away to either side of the contraption. The tubes are each attached to separate glass domes fashioned of thick glass, one of which houses a screaming man, a farmer perhaps.

Your attention is pulled away from the tubes and glass domes to the source of the rest of the screams. Several torsos are strewn about the floor, limbs missing, heads severed. A twisted clown holds a young man down on a chopping block, while a massive brute of a clown hefts a large two handed axe high into the air. The shrill screaming is cut short as crimson streams shower from the fresh wound. Another clown standing next to the furnace mouth gleefully cackles as he tosses dismembered body parts into the fiery maw as a strange purple mist begins piping through the twisted tubing towards the screaming man trapped in the dome.

This furnace is one of many used to create the twisted clowns of Gelos. Created in the realm of the Mad God, the demonic furnace

E24: THE CLOWN FACTORY





contains the spirit of a demon native to the plane Gelos inhabits. Fresh flesh activates the device, which produces a painfully toxic mist that transforms normal villagers into random clown servants of Gelos.

In all the noise and chaos, PCs easily gain the element of surprise. They can use the free round to attack or simply run away. Once combat begins, the smaller clowns in the tent will attempt to drag PCs to the furnace and toss them in, while the humongous bruiser lays about with his axe.

Bruiser: Init 1d16 (two handed weapon); Atk two handed axe +0 melee (1d8+1); AC 12; HD 1d12; 10 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -2; AL C.

Furnace feeders (4): +2 Init; Atk grapple +2melee (1pt); SP (On a successful attack the clown begins to grapple and drag its victim. An opposed Strength roll is required to break the hold on the PC's next action. If the hold isn't broken after the second round, the PC is thrown into the mouth of the furnace and cooked instantly); AC 11; HD 1d4; 3,4 hp; MV 30 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -2; AL C.

The screaming man in the dome is the victim of a failed transformation. PCs wishing to rescue the poor soul will find a section of the dome slides away. If released the mutated man will choke out his last breaths, begging the party to save his "sweet Timmy", then repeatedly pointing at a pile of clothing and gear and gasping "keys... keys". The man's flesh begins to melt away soon after as he dies.

Players wishing to test the furnace out can continue to feed the infernal device while up to two PCs can enter the glass domes. Two rounds after feeding the furnace parts, a purple mist will envelope each PC turning them into ghastly clowns (See **Appendix A on Page 110** for clown stats). Forever more, such clown PCs will have to continually resist the urge to murder the party in sick and twisted ways.

Searching amongst the pile of clothing reveals a backpack. The pack contains 50' of rope, 2 torches with flint and tinder, a healing potion (1d4 hp) and an ornate **Music Box** with a silver key attached to it by a black ribbon. The music box is covered in an elegant script written backwards. The script is so intricate that the writing can only be



read while holding it in front of a mirror. The reflection makes reading the words easy: a joke central to the events of area E25. Read that encounter to learn how to handle the party's interaction with the magical music box.

Attempts to force or damage the box will result in a sulfurous explosion dealing 1d10 dmg to all in a 10' radius (DC 12 Reflex save for $\frac{1}{2}$ damage). This will also trigger Encounter E25: **The Music Box**.

E25. THE MUSIC BOX

This encounter can come into play at any point after the PCs find a mirror and wish to activate the **Music Box** discovered in E24: **The Clown Factory**. Once the box is held in front of a suitable mirror the owner will be able to see that a joke has been beautifully painted on the surface. Once the joke has been read aloud (or the box is damaged) the box pops open. Both the joke and its answer are written on a lovely card found inside.

When the box pops open, read or paraphrase the following:

As the box pops open, a silver mist rushes out and begins to swirl about the clearing. Quickly the mist coalesces into shapes. The first to form is that of a smiling ghostlike man dressed in tights and a massive ruffled tutu. Soon he begins juggling ethereal cantaloupes, his mouth moving as if speaking to a crowd. All about him other mist shapes form into colorfully decorated poodles who dance about the man merrily on their back legs.

It's best to hand out a written version of the joke and answer so the player whose character retrieved the card can read it aloud to the party while the act is in progress.

The joke reads:

A mad wizard combined a rooster, a poodle and a ghost in a magical ceremony! What was the end result?

The answer is:

A cock-a-poodle-boo!

How the party reacts to the joke is important, as their response will determine the nature of the encounter. The box contains the spirit of an insane specter, once a jovial man who trained poodles to perform while he juggled and told terrible jokes. The joke painted on the box is the last he prepared before his death. Both the friendly juggler and his dogs were butchered during their last performance by an ugly mob of villagers that didn't care for either his attire or cleverly-decorated small-breed dogs. Not being able to deliver his last joke and hear the crowd's response has haunted the poor juggler ever since, and his spirit has lingered in a sort of comedic limbo.

If the majority of the party (it's up the Judge to gauge the players response) laughs at the joke, the juggler will finally find peace and be released from his self-imposed curse. Each party member will be completely restored of all lost hit points as the ghost departs to some better place. In addition he will leave behind the **Magic Collar** as a gift (see below).

Should the majority of the party not laugh, the ghost becomes enraged. The well-groomed pink poodles will begin to decay into hideous beasts and attack. The juggler throws his cantaloupes, now morphed into the ghostly severed heads of past dullards who didn't laugh at his jokes! If all the ghosts are defeated the mass of spectral energy will return to the box, which reseals once all of spirits are inside. The device is now reset for the next group that might find the joke funny enough to set the spirits free.

Giggleyips, the Mugging, Juggling Master of Poodles: +3 Init; Atk ghostly head missile +1 ranged (Cold 1d4); AC 15; HD 1d10; 7 hp; MV 30 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C. Un-dead (Immune to critical hits, $\frac{1}{2}$ damage from all weapons not magical in nature)

Ghastly poodles(6): +2 Init; Atk bite +1 melee (Cold 1d3); AC 12; HD 1d4; hp 3,3,2,4,1,4; MV 20 ft; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

The Magic Collar

Once placed on the ground and triggered by a hearty whistle, the Magic Collar summons a spectral poodle (stats above) to attack a chosen opponent. The dog can follow basic commands such as fetch,

guard, dance, etc. The poodle will remain until dismissed or slain. If slain, the dog cannot be summoned again for at least 48 hours.

E26. THE SCARY-GO-ROUND

The soft light of the moon casts an almost ethereal glow on the attraction you now face. Steps lead to a raised circular platform that hosts dozens of beautifully carved animals and magical beasts. Brass poles rise from the floor, passing through each beast and its saddle to reach the canopy ceiling above. Colored lanterns hang from the canopy casting vibrant colors across the structure. The pink mist quivers at the edge of these beautiful grounds, seemingly unable to draw nearer. Turning your attention back towards the attraction you catch a brief glimpse of the spectral unicorn you've seen in flashes throughout the night. It seems to be waiting on you amongst the other beasts, but in a blink it fades from sight.

The Scary-Go-Round is a magical device used to transport riders to a pocket dimension, the place where the children have been taken and where the Black Jester resides. The ride will also lead PCs to the final object needed to help defeat the jester. Characters will need to ride the merry go round as a group to be transported to the pocket dimension. Read or paraphrase the following once the PCs have all mounted a wooden steed:

Once everyone has mounted a wooden beast, the attraction comes to life. The beasts begin to rise up and down independently while the entire platform rotates in place, a haunting tune arising from some hidden place to accompany your ride. The attraction's speed picks up quickly, as does the tempo of the music. Suddenly the world outside the ride begins to peel away, revealing a vast galaxy of stars and planets. A sudden jerk upwards turns your stomachs as the ride is sucked into a swirling vortex of electrical energy. The astral tunnel pulses with lightning as you spiral upwards through its twisting pathway, visions of the past flashing before your eyes along with scenes unknown, perhaps visions of events yet to come!. As quickly as it began the ride lurches to a sudden stop in a vibrant flash of blinding light.

Clearing your eyes you gaze over an alien landscape. The sky is lit by constantly roiling and colliding pink clouds. Tents and deserted attractions have been replaced by a sparse forest of withered, leafless, soot-black trees that seem to ooze a crimson sap. You shudder as thousands

of eyes open on their trunks, glaring as if to banish whatever courage you might have remaining. Faint moaning can be heard on the strong, sweetly scented breeze, and in this strange place you're not sure its source isn't the haunted oaks. A twisting path slopes upwards through the forest, and several hundred yards away you detect the outline of what appears to be a dilapidated house.

A Strange New World

Definitely play up the alien aspects of this pocket dimension: judges are encouraged to describe strange features, and even add to the scenery to creep the party out. Traveling two hundred yards away from the path through the forest in either direction will take the PCs to the edge of oblivion, a bottomless pink void waiting to swallow any who dare to jump. The twisting path leads players to the final set of encounters in The Carnival of the Damned.

E27. THE MOUTH OF MADNESS

A twisted mockery of a house looms before you. Colored lanterns hang from every available perch, giving the front of the structure a rainbow hue. Laughter and whimsical music (mixed with an occasional agonized scream) escape from within. A large clown head has been constructed around the archway leading in: its eyes flicker with an eerie blue flame while jagged teeth line the archway. Above the entrance, a banner flutters limply from a copper pole. You can just make out the words "Mouth of Madness". Red stairs in the shape of a twisting tongue lead up from the ground into the horrible mouth.

Characters entering the structure soon discover that all the laws of nature and gravity have no hold here. Rooms are scattered about long twisting halls that shift without warning, while ever-changing lights and echoing sounds all serve to disorient and confuse those who dare enter. It's impossible to map this mad house: have the players encounter the rooms in order as they explore the house.

Room A: Blowing Clown

Moving into the house you find yourselves in a featureless circular hallway painted black. Stepping deeper inside you realize the hallway

is actually spinning at a snail's pace. The hallway eventually ends in a mist-filled opening lit by a red neon light, which bleeds through into the passageway. As you have come to expect, when your attention is diverted the doorway behind you vanishes, but this time it is replaced by the clown head that greeted you on the outside. It seems to have turned inward, leering at you with sinister intent. Suddenly the giant head inhales deeply, and a sour gust of wind blows out with such force that you begin to tumble towards the opening filled with red light.

The breath will send PCs into the opening where they drop thirty feet harmlessly into a ball pit below. A small ladder in one of the pit's walls leads up to a tiny opening granting access to a hallway. Once all PCs have entered the hallway, keep track of rounds. Every two rounds PCs spend in the hall, sharp blades will spring from the floor hitting a random PC if they fail a DC 10 Reflex save (1d3 dmg).

Room B: Bobo

The scent coming from the chamber beyond is truly stomach-churning: an unholy combination of every bodily function imaginable. Deep throaty grunts and chortles echo from below, and approaching the entrance you notice the round chamber drops thirty feet straight down. A wooden staircase spirals down from where you stand, curving around the walls all the way to the bottom. What awaits below is a sight best forgotten.

An abomination sits surrounded by piles of refuse and severed body parts. Shirtless and clothed in dirty overalls, the creature sports two heads, each painted in clown-like fashion, covered in warts and oozing pustules. It's playing some horrific game with two human heads, apparently just removed from the still twitching bodies lying off to the side. The abomination's two heads seem to be arguing about the rules of a new game it has invented.

A golden glow amidst the vile nest surrounding the creature distracts you momentarily: the source is a statue of a unicorn, the only beautiful thing in this chamber of horrors. Its golden hue wars with the pulsing blue glow that otherwise permeates the entire chamber.

The two heads seem to finally give up on the game as one of them takes a bite out of one of the heads with which it was playing. The sickening crunch is accompanied by a spray of blood that splatters the filthy floor.

BoBo has the mental clarity of a small child and is being kept here until the chaotic energies have finished developing the brute into a tool Gelos can use. BoBo is easily fooled, and PCs can try several approaches to deal with the monster: combat isn't the only avenue. Judges are encouraged to run with any plan the PCs come up with.

BoBo: Init +1; Atk fist +1 melee (1d6) or bite +1 melee (1d8); AC 10; HD 2d8; hp 17; MV 10'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

In addition to the **Unicorn Statue**, there are a number of useful items scattered amidst the pile of limbs and refuse. These include a **+2 Mace** that can shed light on command and cast Holy Sanctuary as if a 14 was rolled on the spell chart 1x per day; a backpack containing a **Potion of Healing** (3 doses, 1d6 hp) along with a prayer book dedicated to the Three Fates.

The Unicorn Statue

When a PC touches the unicorn statue, all neutral and lawful PCs will be teleported to a glade in the ethereal limbo where the unicorn waits. The haunting tune Emerik played when he planned to end his life plays quietly in the background. The Unicorn approaches and communicates through visual imagery, filling any gaps in the PCs' knowledge of Emerik's history. It also instructs the PCs about the use of items they have collected that can help in defeating the Black Jester. Once the vision has ended, the PCs are transported back safely to the rest of the waiting party.

Room C: Pinwheels of Death

You are dazed the moment you open this door. The walls, ceiling and floor are painted in black and white pinwheel patterns, and your eyes are soon playing tricks as the spirals seem to float from the walls. Squinting, you shake off the effect and try to refocus. The faint outline of a door frame is located on the opposite wall of the room.

This 30x 30 room is a pocket dimension that holds two creatures native to its strange circumstances. They have been driven insane by their years of imprisonment, however, and attack at the first opportunity. The

creatures' skins match the same pinwheel design as the walls, and seem to shift and meld into the background, making them nearly invisible to the human eye. The door leads to a chute-sized corridor.

Dimensional Exiles (2) : Init +3 (75% surprise first round); Atk claw +1 melee (1d4 dmg) AC 13; SP Vertigo Defense (Any hit will still miss 40% of the time due to the constant shifting of the walls and the exile's skin); HD 2d8; hp 10,11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

Room D: Tight Maze

You climb into a narrow chute and have just enough room to crawl supine as you make your way down the smooth corridor. The walls are painted black and your party's heavy breathing echoes eerily in the narrow passage. Soon you are forced to twist and climb vertically, then back horizontally. You begin to realize that you are in a constricted maze, and must fight off the claustrophobia creeping into your brain

This is one of three maze encounters in the adventure. These mazes can be safely navigated by *Intelligence* and a little bit of *Luck*. Have each PC add the two stats (*Intelligence* & *Luck*) together and divide by two (rounding down) to come up with their **Maze Score**. Compare this figure on the ability bonus table on Page 18 of the DCC Rulebook to determine whether there is a bonus or penalty when rolling to avoid dead ends in the maze. Three successful DC 20 checks must be made by the single PC nominated to navigate to reach the center of the maze. Each additional PC may try to assist by succeeding on a DC 10 Maze Score check using their modifier. Each success adds +1 to the chosen navigator's roll. Failing a roll means the party runs into a dead end. Stumbling into a dead end invokes the dark entity that resides in the walls. It manifests as a red glowing eye in front of a random PC, an enormous acidic tongue then lashes out from another wall to wrap the target in a corrosive hug. If the PC isn't killed by the strike, the tongue and eye vanish until the next dead end. A killing strike pulls the poor soul into the wall to be devoured: soon after, the PCs' bones (sucked clean), clothing, and equipment drop from the ceiling (keeping characters that hold summoning keys from losing them).

Maze Monster: Init +5 surprise 60% on first round; Atk acidic tongue +2 melee (1d4, 1d2 following round); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 15; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; AL C.

Room E: Ball Trap

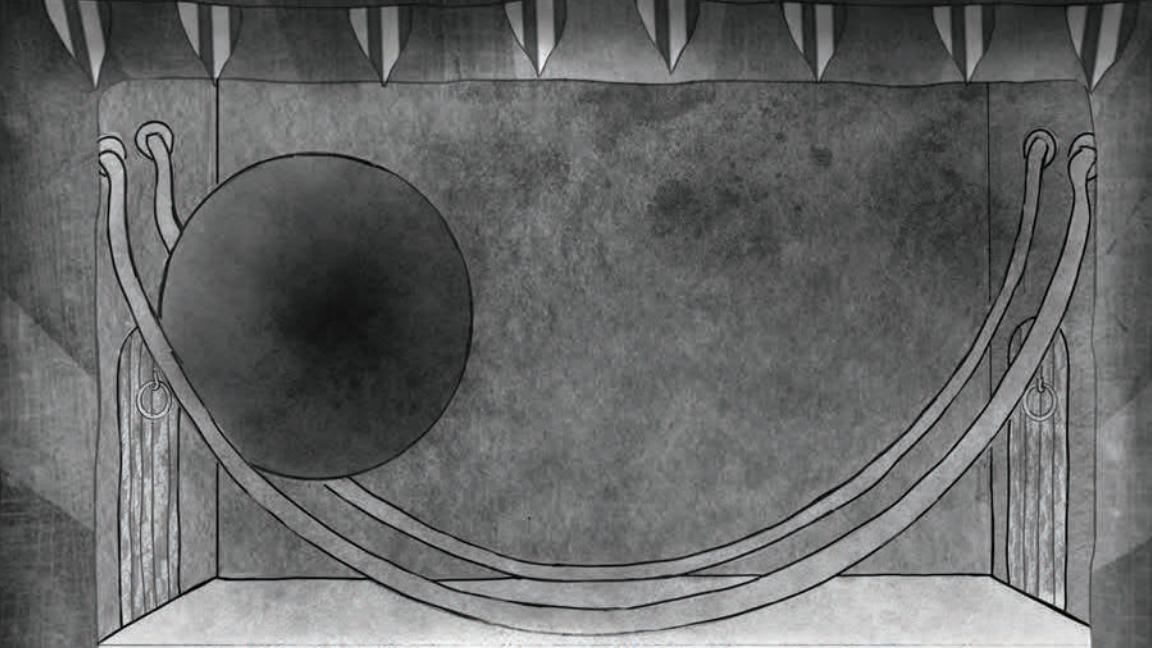
Opening the door reveals an odd construction filling a long narrow room. Two iron rods run high above your heads, shoulder width apart. The rods run straight out before slowly dipping towards the floor in a curved shape, rising back again on the other side. A giant red ball rolls back and forth the length of the room at great speed along the rods. A body lies crushed between the rods in the center of the room, seemingly flattened by the rolling red ball. A door waits invitingly on the far side of the room.

PCs have two options to cross the room. If they search, they have a 2 in 6 chance of detecting a secret door in the Eastern wall. It opens onto a tight passage that runs just behind the wall, skirting the trap and exiting back into the room at the far end. The second method entails trying to run the length of the hallway while avoiding the huge ball. Characters succeeding on a DC 16 Int check figure the best method is to chase the ball and dive under it before it makes its return pass. (Players who come up with this on their own don't need to roll.) Using the "follow and dive" method requires a DC 8 Reflex save to safely pass the danger, otherwise the DC is 14. Failing the roll results in 1d10 crushing damage. Survivors must re-attempt the roll or suffer an additional 1d8 damage.

The crushed body has little of value except a short sword and leather armor. The door opens onto a vertical shaft with rungs leading 100' up to the Lair of the Black Jester.

E28. LAIR OF THE BLACK JESTER

Moving through the door you step into a massive natural cavern. Roughly circular in shape, it rises 30 feet to a natural ceiling gashed with a large man-made skylight revealing pink clouds above. Near the far wall sits a throne made from Purple Heart oak, decorated with arcane symbols. Above it, giant drama masks are mounted, while two large tapestries hang to either side depicting scenes of madness and torture. Music assaults your ears, playing over the top of what seems the singing of a huge discordant choir. You soon discover to your horror that there is no choir: scattered amongst useless props and stage-gear the cavern floor is riddled with large faceless mouths! Each seems to be singing in a different key, the words mere babble in an unknown tongue. They seem to be trying to sing along with a figure standing high on the top of an elevated platform in the center



of the cavern: a thin man dressed in the garb of a jester. He sings while haphazardly stitching together something large and man-shaped lying on a table next to him.

The elevated platform is attached to a stone column that reaches from floor to ceiling. The rolling pink clouds above crackle as a sudden bolt of electricity streaks down onto the platform to strike something blocked from view next to the jester, creating blinding pulses of light and sparks that drift slowly down to the floor. The jester stops singing abruptly as he senses your presence, peering down at you through dark goggles. As he flips them up you get a full glimpse of his sinister face: pale desiccated skin is pulled tight around a rictus grin, while sunken eyes brim with madness as they take each of you in.

Turning, he slaps the huge figure lying on the table next to him, and an oak-like arm slips down to dangle free, its fingers beginning to twitch as the jester speaks:

"It's about time you village idiots made it to the party! I'd serve you wine and crackers, but the greedy floor has eaten it all!" He throws his head back in a mad cackle, the mouths on the floor immediately joining him in a cacophony of laughter. He reaches for a switch and the platform slowly begins to descend. "I'll be down in just a moment. I have a new friend up here who's just dying to eat...err...meet you!" With another cackle he unholsters a wand and points it down at you. Your world explodes in a spiraling beam of purple light!



At last the characters can put the Black Jester down and rescue the missing children! PCs will likely adopt one of two strategies to accomplish this:

Option One

PCs attempt to defeat the Black Jester in combat while trying to avoid the mouths in the floor and the clown golem's enormous mallet!

During combat the Jester tries to stay out of the fray, using his wand from a distance while the golem waits in the middle of the floor amidst the safety of the mouths for the PCs to approach (the mouths vanish when the golem or Jester pass over). PCs moving to attack must succeed on a DC 10 Reflex save each round, or fall prone as a mouth opens up wide enough to swallow a foot.

Emerik Bertram (The Black Jester/Un-dead): Init +4; Atk bite +2 melee (1d6) and poison (DC 11 Fort save or bitten character laughs uncontrollably for 1d3 rounds, losing all actions) or the Wand of Madness (see below); AC 16; HD 5d8; hp 30; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2; AL C.

The **Wand of Madness** shoots out random effects with each use. Roll 1d12 for the effect: **1)** Tickle ray, 1d4 dmg. **2)** Target levitates 20' for 1d3 rounds. **3)** Magic fist springs forth (1d4 dmg). **4)** Target polymorphs into a chicken for 1d2 rounds. **5)** Target throws up a cloud of butterflies: they are unable to act on their action and all within 20' suffer a -2 penalty to attacks and reflex saves for one round. **6)** Ants appear in PC's trousers doing 1 point of dmg and target must disrobe to get them off or suffer an additional point each round. **7)** A miniature rainbow engulfs the target blinding him for 1d3 rounds. **8)** Grease covers 5' area around target for 1d4 rounds (DC 10 Reflex save to avoid falling prone). **9)** Target belches a cone of sour breath causing one random comrade to be dazed for 1d2 rounds. **10)** Target is hit by a giant snowball for 1d4 dmg. **11)** Target's entire skin peels away and begins slapping its host for 1pt of dmg a round for 1d4 rounds. While skinless the PC suffers -1d on the dice chain to all actions. When the effect ends the skin magically snaps back onto the PC's body. **12)** Target's hair grows so long it becomes a tripping hazard (DC 10 Reflex to avoid falling with each action until it is cut).

Clown Golem: Init +1 d16 (Two handed weapon); Atk mallet +2 melee (1d10); AC 12; HD 3d8; hp 24 (Pygmy offspring SP) MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C.

If the party easily defeats the golem, consider increasing the challenge by adding some new foes: at the moment of death the golem's abdomen begins to shudder and twist, until tiny hands poke through ripping free. Several pygmy clowns will break off ribs and emerge from the golem to attack!

Pygmy Offspring (6) : Init +2; Atk rib "spear" +0 melee (1d2); AC 12; HD 1d3; hp 2; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort 0, Ref +2, Will 0; AL C.

Option Two

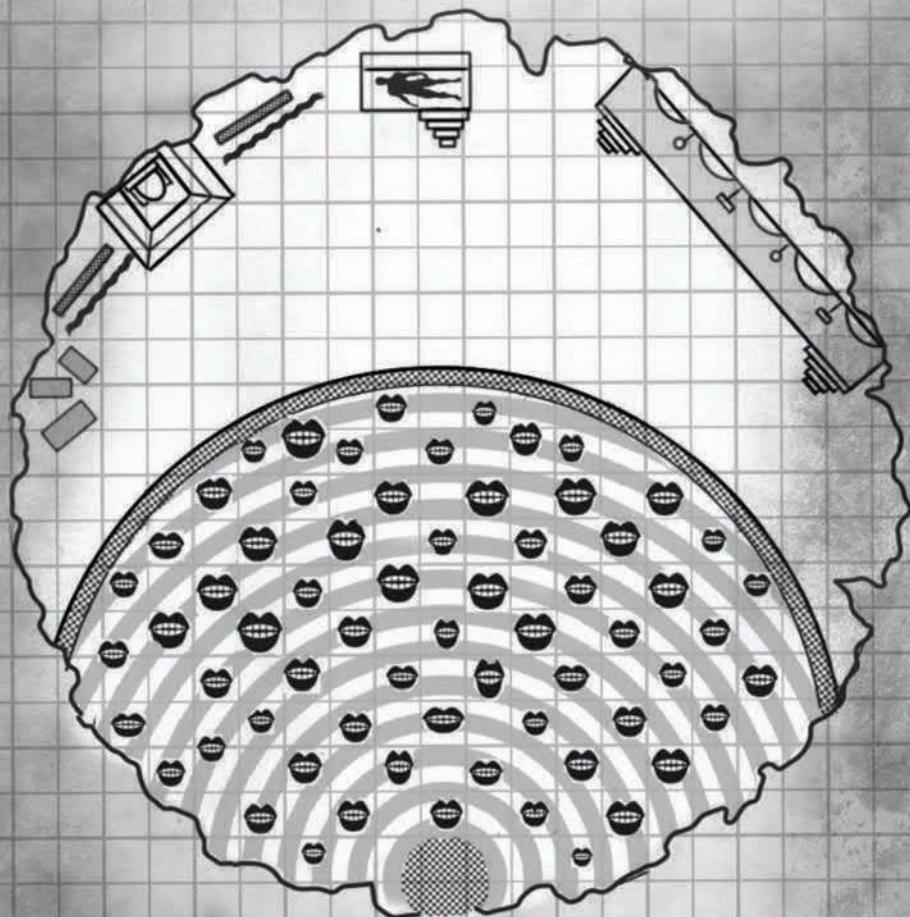
PCs attempt to use the items collected during their search of the carnival grounds to redeem the Black Jester's lost soul. PCs will first need to replicate the ballad Emerik created the day he planned to take his life after losing his family. Three successful skill checks must be made to remember and play the song. PCs with music related backgrounds must pass a DC 10 skill check using a d20. PCs with no musical background will find it almost impossible to play the ballad (must succeed using an unskilled d10 for the check). One point of Luck must permanently be spent each round in addition to the skill check. The successes do not have to be consecutive.

While all this is going on, the party will have to deal with both the Black Jester and its golem. At the start of the encounter the golem crackles to life, rising from the table to attack with its enormous mallet, while the Jester hangs back firing off spells from its wand. Both continue to attack until the Jester is dazed (see below). Judges can refer to **Option One** above for more information about their combat tactics.

On the third successful check, the Black Jester must immediately pass a DC 16 Will save or become dazed as memories begin flooding his mind. If he resists he must make another save roll each round as long the PC continues playing.

If a PC presents Freya's bear, the ghost of the little girl will manifest and begin calling out to her Father. This will pull the Black Jester even

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deeper down the rabbit hole of lost memories. The emotions triggered by the adoration of his daughter will add +3 to the DC of the Will save he must pass to avoid being dazed by the violin.

If the PCs set the unicorn statue down, it begins to vibrate, its surface chipping away to reveal a golden light within. The spirit of the unicorn manifests fully 1d3 rounds later. Once the unicorn is present, the Black Jester becomes completely overwhelmed and staggered with memories, feelings of love, and the pain associated with the realization

of what he has become. The end effect is that Emerik regains control of himself just long enough to beg his loyal friend to end his wretched existence. (The mindless golem will continue attacking until killed regardless of the Jester's state.)

Setting the Jester Free

Once all three items have been presented, read or paraphrase the following:

Memories seems to flood the Black Jester's soul as he stands mesmerized by the haunting violin and sad ballad. His attention is quickly diverted by the barely audible voice of a little girl calling out "Papa". Recognition crosses the cretin's face as a ghostly form begins to take shape above the stuffed bear. Within moments a beautiful girl in a charred dress stands facing the jester with arms outstretched. She calls out again for her father in a stronger voice, causing the Black Jester's knees to buckle, dropping him to the floor. Black tears flow freely down his long-dead flesh as a loud neighing comes from what was once the unicorn statue, now replaced by the majestic steed it contained. With the spell broken, the unicorn stares intently at her old friend, seeming to communicate empathically, flooding his mind with memories of better days and a forgotten friendship. The Black Jester's head drops in resignation. He unbuckles his dread armor, allowing it to fall to the floor.

An ancient wound gapes open in the jester's chest, revealing a rotted black heart. Looking up again, his eyes move from daughter to unicorn as he speaks "I am so tired, my friend. So many years lost in this dark prison of the mind... so much undeserved pain for the innocent. I beg your forgiveness for losing the path of kindness you taught me to walk. I just want to go home, dear friend, to be free of the pain, please finish this..."

The unicorn rears back before charging forward, piercing the jester's black heart with its horn. The dark jester gasps, his cold hands reaching out to stroke the unicorn's mane as his life begins to fade. The steed whinnies in genuine sorrow, gently nuzzling the lifeless corpse of the jester. The young girl drifts to her father's side and bends to kiss him on his cheek. The tender kiss somehow stirs a spectral version of a handsome young

man that rises out of the corpse. He comes to his feet while looking at the girl and begins to smile. Lifting her he twirls her about in his arms and they both begin to laugh. At last, he places her on the unicorn's back, and then mounts as well. Gazing at all of you with a mix of joy, gratitude, and deepest regret, he pats the unicorn's shoulder and the trio rides forth, vanishing in a burst of golden light as they reach the cavern wall.

Conclusion

Once the PCs have defeated or released the Black Jester, a careful search of the cavern reveals a large mirror behind one of the tapestries. The mirror is surrounded by ornate brass, which houses key holes designed to fit the **Summoning Keys**. The corpse of the Black Jester wears the last key around its neck. Turning all the keys in their slots will activate the portal to "Carnival Land". Stepping through the mirror transports the PCs to the pocket dimension. All of the missing children are safely at play there, eating off of the completely edible world they've been taken to. After much ear-twisting, the children can be convinced to return home. Those who have used the Summoning Keys instinctively know that the mirror can be tuned to transport those who pass through it to any place they hold in memory, allowing the children and party to be transported directly home if desired.

(Players will no doubt be intrigued by the Jester's now-abandoned armor: covered in laughing demonic faces, a pink mist seems to flow constantly from the open mouths granting a bonus to AC and hinting at other powers. Certainly a tempting prize for any party, but is it worth the risk? Only the Judge - and the Mad God Gelos - knows for sure!)



APPENDIX A: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters serve a vital role in the Carnival of the Damned, especially in a tournament session. If you are planning on running multiple sessions over the course of a weekend, the chance of a player going through repeat encounters is rather high. To make this less likely, insert a random encounter after each established encounter. Doing so will provide plenty of action while keeping the unique encounters special.

During a convention session where time is limited use random encounters sparingly. The author suggests triggering no more than one per hour. Most of the established encounters will keep the players busy and dying, so the need for additional bloodshed is unnecessary. If, however, a group is particularly lucky and breezes through the encounters, feel free to throw a random nasty in the mix to turn up the lethality... but always be mindful of the clock!

If you are running Carnival of the Damned for your home group and time is not an issue, rolling for a random threat after each established encounter will keep the action going. Such random bouts of violence are particularly useful if the players are overly cautious or take too much time planning their actions while moving through the carnival grounds.

If rolling randomly for encounters, roll 1d6 if you prefer lots of combat, 1d8 otherwise. If the result is a “1” roll 1d12 on the list below:

1. **Zombie Circus Animals:** Nothing goes to waste in the dark confines of the carnival, and when creatures die they soon return as members of the walking dead. The creatures are emaciated and infested with maggots, but are still adorned with remnants of their circus costumes. They shamble about seeking escape from the grounds and will attack characters on sight. Roll 1d6 to determine the type of animal.
 - 1) **Zombie elephant** (1 per six characters): Init always goes last; Atk tusk gore +1 melee (1d6+1); SP Un-dead: immune to crit-



ical hits; AC 12; HD 1d14; 10 hp; MV 15 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N.

2) **Zombie bear** (1 per four characters): Init always goes last; Atk claw +1melee (1d4); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 12; HD 1d10; 6 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N.

3) **Zombie lion** (1 per four characters): Init always goes last; Atk bite +1melee (1d6); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 12; HD 1d10; 8 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -2; AL N.

4) **Zombie monkeys** (1 per two characters): Init always goes last; Atk bite +1melee (1d2); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 11; HD 1d4; 3 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -2; AL N.

5) **Zombie poodles** (1 per character): Init always goes last; Atk bite +1melee (1pt); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 11; HD 1d6; 3 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N.

6) **Zombie snake** (giant) (1): Init always goes last; Atk constrict/grapple +1melee (1d4+1) Victim must make an opposed grapple to escape the serpent. SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d12; 10 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL N.

2. **Cigar Box Zombie:** A shambling female holding a serving tray staggers out of the parting mists. She will not attack, instead offering various “treats” to PCs at the low, low rate of 2 copper a piece. A coin box rests on the tray beside various human parts! The zombie will energetically try to communicate to the PCs that they are supposed to eat the parts they purchase. Characters who pay and try to eat the item must pass a DC 11 Fort save or begin vomiting for 1d4 rounds. Those who pass the save gain the following benefits:

- **Ear:** Characters gains superior hearing for the next d2 encounters. Immune to surprise.
- **Eye:** Characters can see in complete darkness for the next d2 encounters.

- **Nose:** Characters gains the ability to smell danger for the next d2 encounters. PC cannot be surprised.

- **Finger:** Characters gains +1d on the die chain for all Agility based checks for the next d2 encounters.

- **Heart:** Characters regains full hit points, or if they are at max they permanently gain 2 hp.

- **Liver:** Characters becomes immune to poison for the next 24 hours.

- **Lung:** Characters can hold their breath three times the normal duration for the next 24 hours.

Concession Zombie (1): Init always goes last; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 3 hp; MV 15 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N.

3. **Zombie Villagers:** Characters will recognize former inhabitants of their own village or from a local farm. The zombies are dressed in makeshift clown gear and all sport clown noses. They shamble forward from the mists, heralded by the squeak of their oversized shoes! Zombie villagers (1 per two party members): Init always goes last; Atk bite melee (1d3); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 3 hp; MV 15 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N.
4. **Sword Swallowers:** These ghoulish looking humans charge from the dark, juggling daggers while holding one short sword in their throats. The jugglers will throw the daggers until engaged and then pull the sword from their throats to attack.
Sword swallower (1 per four party members): +3 Init ; Atk dagger +2 ranged (1d4) or short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 1d6; 3 hp; MV 30 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.
5. **Animated Doll and Face Balloons:** A doll appears holding several balloons. Upon closer inspection the balloons are fashioned from human faces! The doll attacks by skipping towards the PCs giggling and unleashing the floating terrors. The faces on the balloons are tormented would-be rescuers transformed into floating horrors. They mewl like kittens while trying to bite

characters. If all the balloons are popped the doll will hiss and try to run away.

Cannibal balloons (1 per party member): +1 Init; Atk bite melee (1d2); AC 10; HD 2hp; MV fly 20; Act 1d20; SV Fort -2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

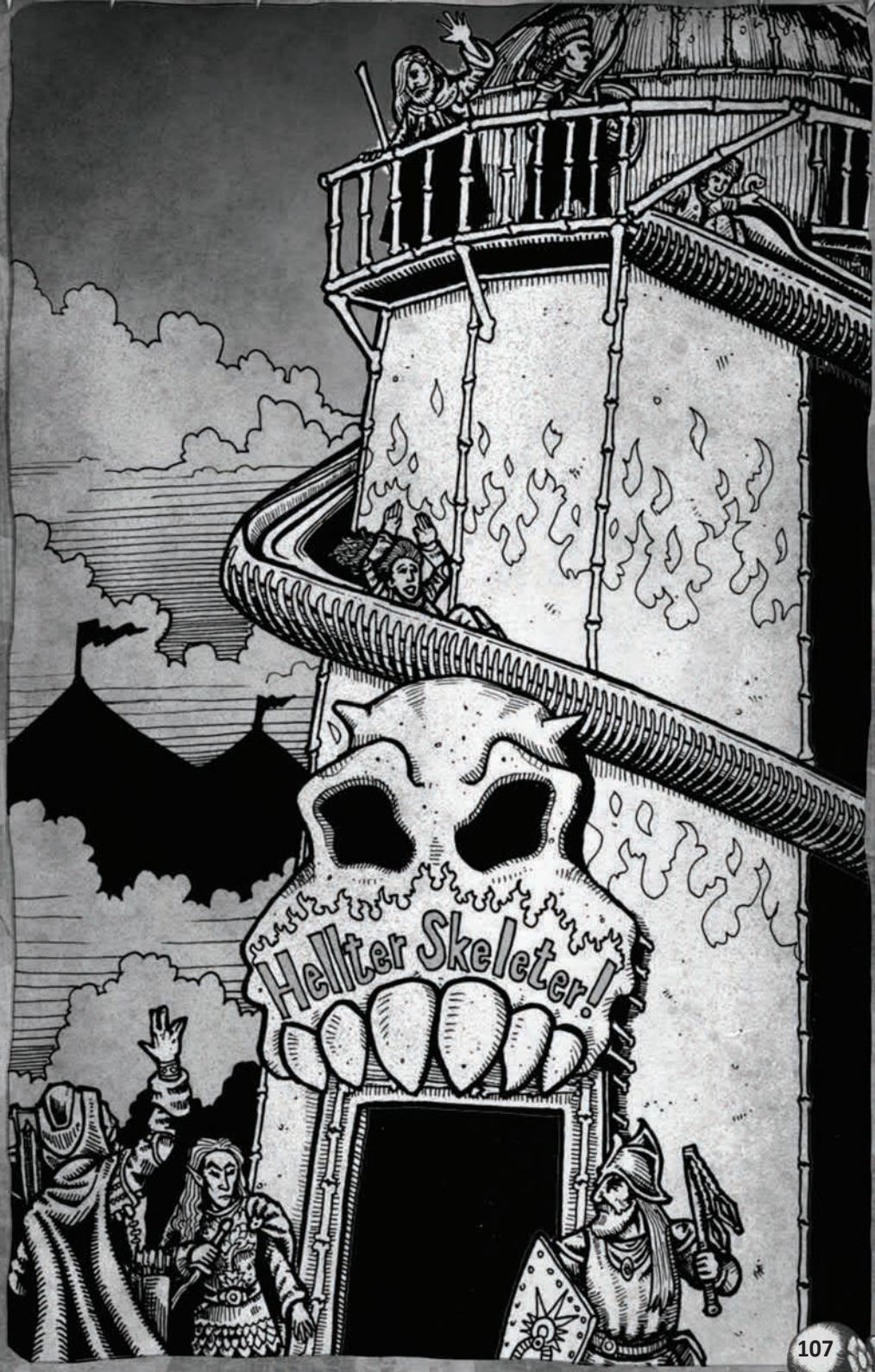
Animated doll (1): +2 Init; Atk scratch +1melee (1pt); SP construct - immune to critical hits; AC 12; HD 1d4; 2hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

6. **Severed Head Go-Carts:** A pack of moaning severed heads sprouting arachnid legs scurry into view, some recognized as friends or family from the village. Their blackened tongues loll from their mouths, and tiny, fist-sized clowns ride at the base of each neck, chittering in glee. The heads attempt to scurry up the PCs to reach their necks, grappling with acidic tongues until the neck-flesh burns through and a new “Go-cart” for the clowns is prepped as the severed head hits the ground.

Spider head go-cart (1 per two party members): +2 Init; Atk tongue grapple +1melee (1d2 dmg per round) and victim is grappled. Characters must spend their next action trying to break free with an opposed grapple roll or automatically suffer additional acid damage; AC 12; HD 1d3; 3 hp; MV 30 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

7. **Skeletal Organ Grinder and Monkey:** The skeleton plays music while the monkey dances and performs small tricks for the PCs. After performing, the monkey tips his hat for coins. Should PCs offer a tip, the skeletal primate will give them a crescent moon coin that can be used during the *Mistress of Fate* encounter. If attacked, the skeleton will begin playing a different tune and the characters must save against joining the monkey in a dance of death: the nature of the magical step will literally suck the life out of them. The monkey will bite all who interfere with the dancing PCs.

Skeleton organ grinder (1): +1 Init; Atk musical charm (PCs must pass DC 11 Will saves or begin dancing uncontrollably, taking 1d4 Stamina damage per round; SP Un-dead: slashing and piercing weapons do half damage; AC 11; HD 1d8; 6 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; AL N.



Skeletal monkey (1): +3 Init; Atk bite +1 melee (1d2); SP Undead: slashing and piercing weapons do half damage ; AC 14; HD 1d4; 3 hp; MV 30 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will -2; AL N.

8. **Clownaconda:** An enormous constrictor snake with the demonic head of a clown slithers from the shadows. The clownaconda attacks by biting and swallowing its prey whole. Once a man-sized or smaller victim has been swallowed the serpent will grow torpid and attempt to slither away to digest its snack.

Clownaconda (1): +3 Init; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4) Swallow whole (When a victim is bitten they are grappled. On the grappled victim's next turn they must attempt to break the grapple. If the opposed check is failed the victim is swallowed whole taking 1d4 in normal and Stamina damage per round from suffocation); AC 10; HD 1d14; 11 hp; MV 30 or 20 after feeding; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +2 or -2 after feeding, Will +0; AL C.

9. **Sugary Pete the Candy Golem:** A magical construct of pure candy strides into view with a mob of hideous clowns nipping at its heels. The clowns manage to tackle the creature momentarily and immediately begin biting and licking its sugary hide. The creature manages to shrug them off, however, and after rising to its feet it charges towards the party while the clowns retreat back into the mists. The creature looks to be made of pinwheel lollipops, licorice sticks and dozens of other treats, but several bite marks mar its body. Suitably enraged by the clowns, the creature attacks immediately assuming the party is also interested in a quick snack.

Candy Golem (1): +0 Init; Atk slam +1 melee (1d4) or gum drop cannon +1 ranged (1d2 in a 10x20 cone); AC 10; HD 1d12; 9 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will +2; AL N.

If PCs destroy the golem they'll acquire enough sweets for eight characters to stay on a sugar high through two encounters (+2 to all Agility and Strength based rolls for two encounters). Afterwards, such rolls will be at -2 for the same duration as the mother of all sugar crashes descends on those who indulged.

10. **Circus Zombies:** A menagerie of performers who have now joined the ranks of the dead come shrieking out of the night. They all retain some aspect of the lives they lived before their

untimely deaths, giving each an odd quirk or two.

1) **Belly Dancers:** Once beautiful women who have long since rotted away stagger into view covered in veils, and jingly bits. The zombies still think they're the beauties they once were.

Belly dancing zombies (1 per two party members): Init always goes last; Atk bite +1melee (1d3) or Charm (Dance and gyrating causes victim to make a DC 10 Will save or become dazed allowing an automatic bite on the next action of a zombie); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

2) **Snake Handlers:** These zombies once handled exotic snakes and are now infused with their charge's poisoned essence. The zombies shamble forward, shirtless, gold sashes wrapped about their sunken ribs, and decomposing billowy pants flaring. When the zombies get within melee range a serpent will strike from the hollow of their stomachs.

Snake handler (1 per 3 party members): Init always goes last; Atk snake strike +1 melee (1d2 + poison DC 10 Fortitude save or paralyzed for 1d3 rounds) or bite +0 melee SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N. Snakes slither away when the hosts are slain.

3) **Magician Zombies:** These zombies still proudly strut with top hats in hand. When they reach striking range they pull zombie rabbits from their hats and release them to attack!

Magician Zombies (1): Init always goes last; Atk bite +1melee (1d3) rabbit toss +0 ranged (2 rabbits per PC shamble to attack having 1hp each and doing 1pt of damage) Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 3 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

4) **Fire Breathers:** These zombies still imagine they can control the chemicals they used to spew gouts of fire when still alive. Their slowed reflexes mean such attempts will only serve to set themselves on fire, but their un-dead state means they can try to grab the PCs to join in the fiery fun!

Fire breather zombies (1 per two party members): Init always goes last; Atk zombie bomb +1melee (1d6 flammable to both targets, 1/2 dmg to zombie due to the fire resistant gel still coating them); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

5) **Strong men:** Larger and stronger than the typical zombie, these creatures have retained some of their brawn and often carry the dumbbells they used in life.

Strong Man zombies (1 per two party members): Init always goes last; Atk dumbbell +1melee (1d4); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d8; 6 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

6) **Contortionists:** These zombies died while holding strange positions: it's not unusual to see them walking crab style, or on their hands. In death, they retain some of their Agility, making them faster than other zombies and decent grapplers. They attempt to suffocate their prey before eating them.

Contortionist zombies (1 per two party members): +3 Init ; Atk grapple suffocation +1melee (1d3 stamina per round until successful opposed Str check is made)); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL C.

11. **Clowns:** There are several types of clowns in the dark carnival. Roll on the table multiple times to build a balanced variety for the party to face, or select a group of a specific type. If the zombies have differing Initiative bonuses, apply the slowest modifier to the whole group to keep combat running smoothly.

1) **Flamers** (1 per two party members): Wearing burnt clown costumes these freaks "carry a torch" for all things flammable, hefting tanks filled with liquid they imbibe and spit while holding a torch for ignition; +1 Init; Atk fiery breath +1 ranged 5' cone (1d6 flammable); SP Un-dead: immune to critical hits; AC 10; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will 0; AL C.

2) **Gassers** (1 per three PCs): These clowns wear twisted versions of gas masks and carry tanks containing a noxious brew of chemicals. They wear bandoleers of glass globes filled with various concoctions; +2 Init; Atk puke bomb +1 ranged (1d4 noxious gas causes victim to retch for 1d3 rounds in addition to the damage); AC 12; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will 0; AL C.

3) **Bruisers** (1 per four PCs): These beasts are extremely muscular and revel in the sound of bones crunching in their hands; Init always goes last; Atk brass knuckles +2 melee (1d5+1); AC 10; HD 1d10; 7 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -2; AL C.

4) **Jugglers** (1 per two PCs): These nimble clowns are good with their hands; Init always goes last; Atk juggled objects +1 ranged (1d3); SP catch missile weapons and return fire (If the juggler can match or beat the roll to hit them the missile weapon is caught and thrown back at the attacker with a new attack roll. Only thrown items can be caught this way); AC 12; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort 0, Ref +2, Will 0 AL C.

5) **Muties** (1 per three PCs): These clowns are true monstrosities that have mutated while being exposed to the purple mists of a demon furnace; +2 Init ; Atk tentacles +1 melee (1d3); SP laughing death. PC struck must pass a DC 12 Will save or begin laughing and allowing the tentacle access to the throat for choking while the victim giggles; Horns +2 melee (1d4) ; Acid spray +1 ranged (1d4 and 1d2 on the following round) AC 11; HD 1d8; 6 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will -2; AL C.

6) **Contortionists** (1 per 3 PCs) : These gangly clowns love to wrestle, and try to maneuver in close to choke PCs with their double-jointed limbs; +2 Init ; Atk Grapple +2 melee (1d3 Stamina per round until a successful opposed Strength check is passed); AC 11; HD 1d8; 6 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will -2; AL C.

7) **Floaters** (1 per 2 PCs): These clowns defy the laws of gravity by using large balloons to jump high into the air, descending with spiked clown shoes; +3 Init ; Atk boot stomp +1melee; AC 14; HD 1d6; 4 hp; MV 20 (Floating leap with balloons every other round. Can only be attacked by missile fire while in the air) ; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will -2; AL C.

8) **Stilts** (1 per 3 PCs): Stilt clowns tower about the party, walking on two tall wooden poles. The stilts are covered in wicked barbs and spikes used to impale unlucky PCs; +1 Init ; Atk stilts +1melee (1d5); AC 11; HD 1d8; 6 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will -2; AL C.

12. **Balloons:** There are several types of balloons floating around the carnival grounds. All balloons are attracted to heat and can sense a warm body from 100' away. Balloons have different effects determined by rolling a d8. There will always be 1 balloon per 2 PCs. All balloons are AC: 8 with 1HD; 1hp. PCs striking balloons in melee suffer the effects listed.

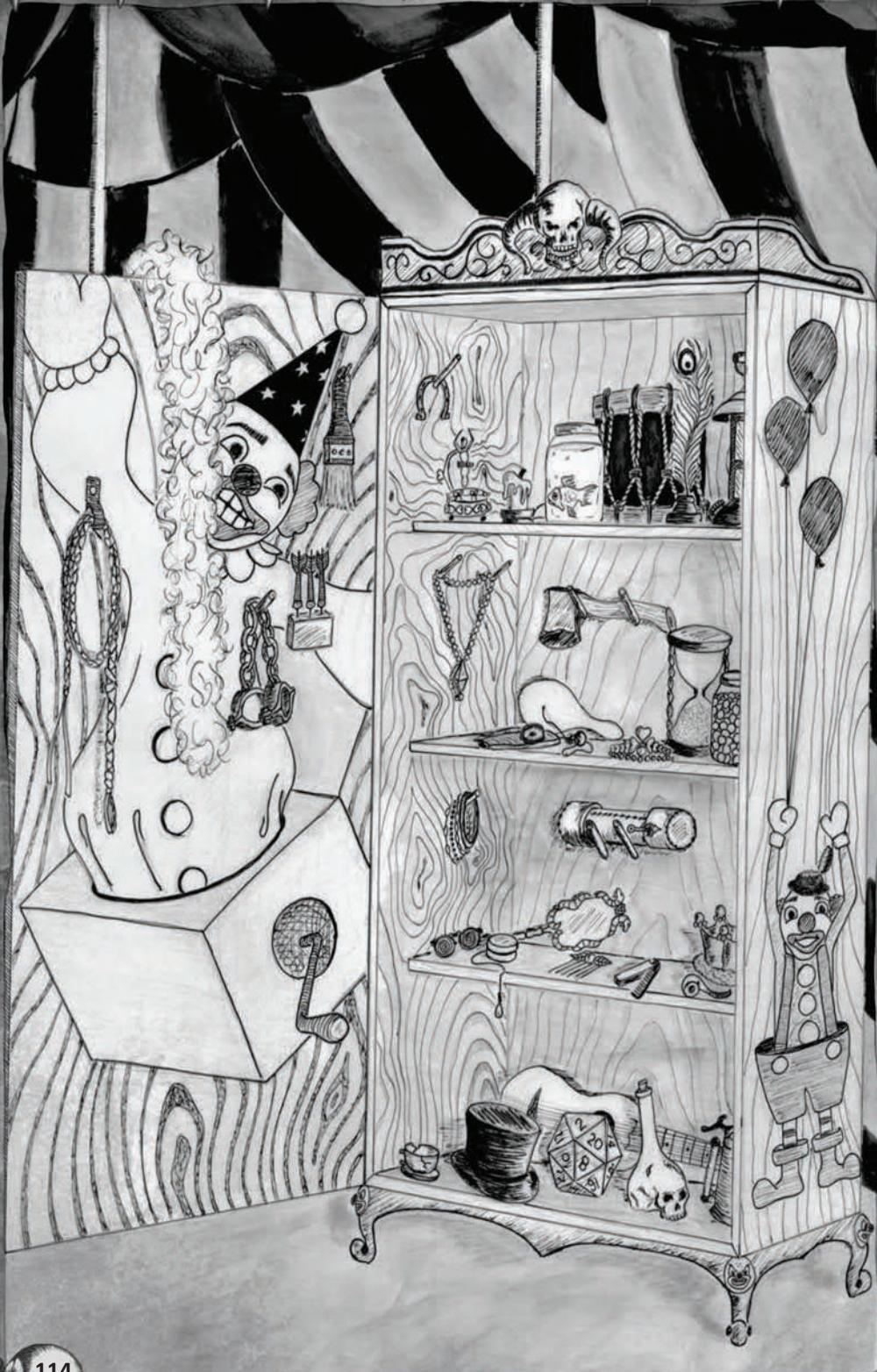
- 1) **Exploding:** These balloons shine with an inner glow as they float. If they are struck or bump into a PC, inner sparks ignite and trigger an explosion: 1d4 dmg and flammable objects within 5' catch on fire.
- 2) **Laughing gas:** Usually painted with laughing clowns on the surface these balloons explode in a cloud of magical dust when they bump against a PC. The character must succeed on a DC 11 Will save or begin laughing violently. Each round of laughing causes 1d3 stamina damage. The effect ends when the PC succeeds on a save.
- 3) **Swarm:** These balloons are filled with angry stinging insects that attack once a PC has been struck. **Angry swarm:** +2 Init ; Atk sting +1 melee (1pt); AC 10; HD 1d6; 3 hp; MV 20 ft; Act 1d20; SP $\frac{1}{2}$ damage from non-area affect attacks; SV Fort +2, Ref 0, Will -2; AL C.
- 4) **Glow Paint:** The PC is covered in a phosphorescent paint that grants any attacker +1d to the dice chain for attack rolls and hinders any stealth actions until the paint is washed away.
- 5) **Cannibals:** These balloons appear to be made from the skin of human heads, and have gnashing teeth which will attempt to bite the PCs (1d2 dmg).
- 6) **Stink Balloons:** These balloons explode and cover the PC with a skunk-like stench. The affected PC must succeed on a DC 12 Stamina save or begin vomiting (-1d on the dice chain to all actions for one encounter). The stench also attracts additional random encounters: the Judge should roll again on the encounters table to see what horror has caught wind of the PC.

APPENDIX B: THE PRIZE CLOSET

PCs can receive rewards from the prize closet after completing many encounters. Feel free to add the closet at any point you feel it's deserved, such as after a hard fought random encounter, or an established encounter where PCs showed incredible valor. Judges can choose to roll randomly, allow the player to roll a d30, or just select prizes they feel are appropriate. If a random result has already been used just roll again or select the next highest prize.

Judges are encouraged to use this list as a spring board for their own prizes. Try to come up with your own original trinkets to give away through-out the adventure.

1. **Firecrackers:** 1d4 sticks that can be lit and thrown, exploding for 1d5+1 dmg to a range of 30 feet.
2. **Smoking Pipe:** Fills the area with smoke for 1d8 rounds granting cover to all within a 20' cube. If the player rolls an 8 the smoke expands to fill an area the size of an arena, but the pipe is exhausted.
3. **Yoyo:** +2 ranged weapon that returns. (1d4 dmg, 10' range). Shatters on a natural 20 after delivering its critical damage.
4. **Comb:** Adds +2 to Personality for one encounter.
5. **Lollipop:** This sweet treat grants +1d on the dice chain for all physical rolls for one encounter as the user experiences a magical sugar high.
6. **Jar of Gum-balls:** 1d10 colored balls that heal 1pt each.
7. **A Top Hat:** Once per day something useful can be pulled from its depths to help with an encounter.
8. **Feathered Boa:** Can be thrown up to 15' away as a +1 ranged attack; on a hit it constricts doing 1d3 Stamina damage per round. A successful DC 10 Strength check is required for targets to break free.



9. **Various Amulets Hanging by Chains:** Roll 1d4:

- 1) May re-roll any one die once per day
- 2) May add +2 to one Save once per day
- 3) Detect lie once per day
- 4) Absorbs the elements (Soak up 10 points of damage from Heat, Cold, Water, Wind based attacks.)

The charms are shoddily constructed, with each use roll 1d20: on a 1 the amulet falls to pieces and loses its power.

10. **Magic Ring:** +2 AC when attacked by Chaotic opponents. If the chaotic foe delivers a critical hit, the ring absorbs the damage but shatters in the process!

11. **Paddle Ball:** +1 melee weapon used as a rapid fire weapon that returns. (1d6 attacks for 1 pt each on up to two targets within 5 feet). Clever foes can easily cut the fragile band.

12. **Kazoo:** Tickles the ear of one opponent causing them to go prone and claw at their own ears as long as the instrument is played unless they succeed at a DC 11 Will Save.

13. **Mechanical Monkey with Cymbals:** When placed on the ground the monkey will activate and clash its cymbals, ensorcelling one target to stand and clap in amazement for 1d6 rounds unless they succeed at a DC 12 Will save. Clapping targets are unable to do anything else unless attacked, which breaks the spell. (If the player rolls a 6 on the clapping length, the monkey is damaged. Only a master craftsman can return the object to working order.)

14. **Sitar:** PCs can entrance an opponent with an exotic song (opposed Personality check vs. Will save: if the PC wins, the target will sit down on the ground and listen for 1d4 rounds as if dazed. The spell is broken if the foe is attacked.)

15. **Animal Figurines:** Pick a random animal: anyone carrying the statue receive a +1 to the save or ability check the animal would be best at. (Cat= Reflex, bear=Fortitude, owl=Intelligence, etc.)

16. **Writing Quill with Ink Vial:** Once per day, when PCs place the quill on a piece of parchment and ask a question, the quill

levitates, dips itself into the ink well, then scratches out a basic answer. The answer is correct 75% of the time.

17. **Goldfish in a Glass Jar:** The wise goldfish within is the trapped spirit of a powerful desert spirit! Characters may ask it a yes or no question once per day, but the bowl and occupant must be constantly protected due to its fragile nature. It's also extremely difficult to carry. The goldfish is never wrong.
18. **Squirting Flower:** When this bulb attached to a hollow tube is squeezed, a jet of acid squirts out 10' in a +2 ranged attack. The liquid has four forms and only one can be used per day.
 - 1) Acid (1d6 first round, 1d3 second round).
 - 2) Grease, covers 5' area in front of PC causing anyone who attacks to fall prone unless a DC 13 Reflex save is passed.
 - 3) Glue, covers 5' area in front of PC that causes anyone in the area to be stuck to the ground unless a DC 15 Fortitude save is passed. The glue weakens each round, allowing additional saves at a cumulative -3 to the DC each round.
 - 4) Healing nectar that heals 1d4 points.
19. **Tiara:** Adds +1d on the dice chain to all Personality based rolls. Male wearers will likely be harassed in public places.
20. **Skull Flask with Stopper:** Filling the flask with any liquid changes the liquid to a healing potion. (Can be used to create 1d3 doses that heal 1d4 dmg, 1x per day). Judges should keep track of uses: after 1d12 creations the flask malfunctions, producing a single batch of poison that delivers 1d4 damage instead of healing. At that point roll another 1d12 to reset the counter.
21. **Bullwhip:** +1 melee weapon (1 point of dmg and trip: foe must resist an opposed Strength check or fall prone).
22. **Darts:** three +1 darts that return after thrown, until they find their mark.
23. **Music Box:** Once per day the tune of the box can be used to daze an opponent for 1d6 rounds: DC 12 Will save to resist.
24. **Clown Nose I:** When worn PC becomes invisible to clowns as if a 14 was rolled on the Invisibility spell chart.



25. **Clown Nose II:** When worn, PC gains +1d on the dice chain to attacks against clowns.
26. **Divining Rod:** Can be used to locate items within a few hundred yards. User must focus on the item to get a general idea of direction to travel before the rod begins to pull and vibrate in the direction of the object.
27. **Sneezing Powder:** When blown into the face of an opponent the target must succeed on a DC 12 Fort save or helplessly sneeze for 1d5 rounds.
28. **Dust of Disappearance:** When sprinkled on an object or creature, the dust imparts invisibility as if a 16 was rolled on the Invisibility spell chart.
29. **Itching Powder:** When blown onto an opponent the target must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save or all die rolls will be made at -2d on the chain due to the compulsive desire to scratch for 1d4 rounds.
30. **Origami Butterfly:** The bearer may toss the butterfly into the air 1x per day to gain a bird's eye view of an area for 5 minutes.

APPENDIX C: MAGIC LANTERN SLIDES

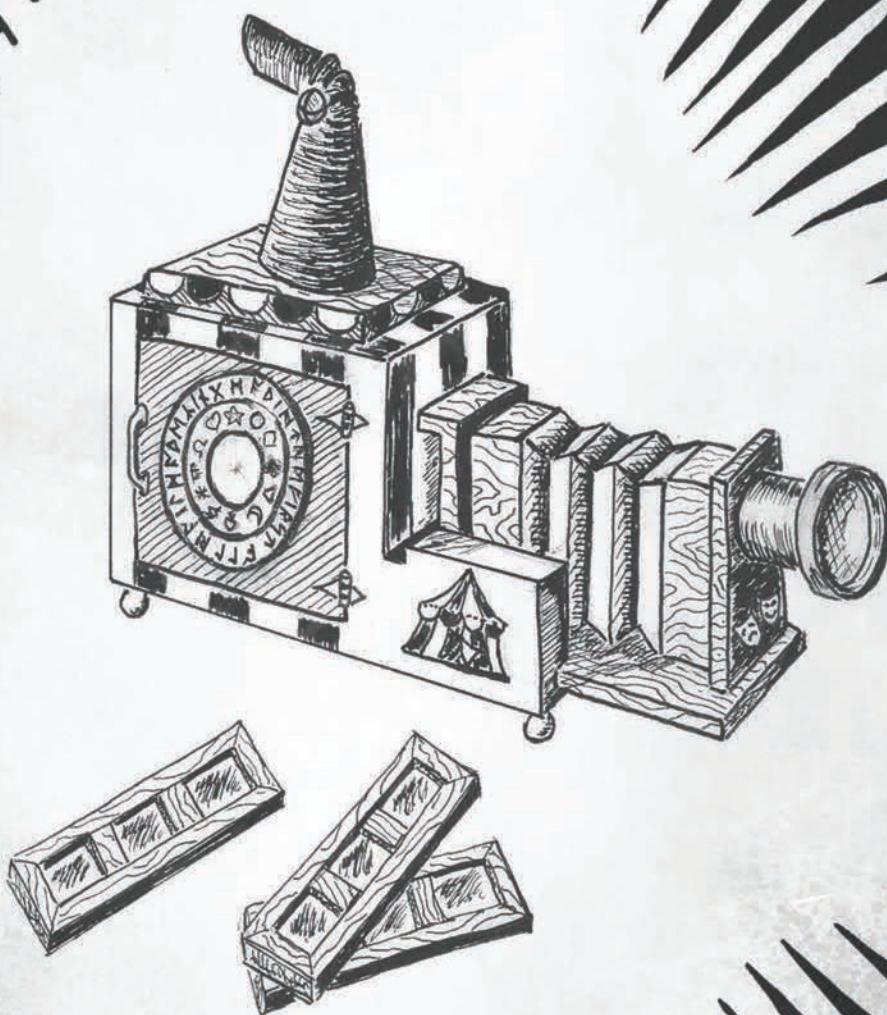
The Carnival of the Damned is woven around a tragic story. At the end of many standard funnel sessions, players told me “I really felt sorry for the Black Jester at the end”. Too often, we run adventures where the final foe is simply a cardboard cutout propped up for the party to defeat. If you wish to breathe life into the “cretin” that the players are struggling to vanquish, we recommend you inject as much of this backstory into the adventure as you can.

How much of the tale you choose to inject into your session is up to you, but the Magic Lantern and its accompanying slides are designed to help you relay some of the backstory to your players. The slides are scattered throughout the adventure, each revealing a snippet of the backstory behind the carnival, while providing clues to defeat its many threats.

The author suggests reading the background story before delving into the encounters, and then again before you sit down to play. The slides can be used in two different ways depending on the time you have to devote to the session, and which format you use (tournament or standard funnel).

If time is available to read and digest the story, and you feel confident in your story-telling ability, read the entire background story and share the story at appropriate points in the adventure from your own point of view, instead of reading word for word from the adventure. Just as the bards of old, make the story your own!

If adventure prep time is limited, however, you can take advantage of the bullet points below to relay the story of the fallen jester who has become the Prince of the Carnival of the Damned.



MAGIC LANTERN SLIDE 1

- A handsome jester is a brilliant juggler, puppeteer and joke teller.
- He grows in skill and fame as he plays first villages, then towns, then cities.
- Though famous, he still freely performs at orphanages and for the sick.
- The jester meets a beautiful maiden while on the road in a small village, and they soon fall in love.
- The jester requests her hand on bended knee, a lovely wedding follows where he gifts her a beautiful ivory violin he crafted himself.
- They travel the kingdom together, the jester's wife first assisting, then joining the act singing and playing her violin before appreciative and often weeping crowds.
- Their love only grows with time, the final scene shows the jester again on bended knee, ear pressed to his wife's quite-pregnant belly.

MAGIC LANTERN SLIDE 2

- The jester purchases a lovely keep surrounded by a large farming community as a home to raise the coming newborn, and the couple stop performing.
- The jester paces nervously, while in their bedchamber neighboring wives help bring a beautiful baby girl into the world.
- The couple raise the child lovingly for a few years, but eventually the jester misses the roar of the crowd and begins touring again.
- The jester's fame grows, and he becomes addicted to the adoration of those he entertains, while his wife and child begin to suffer from loneliness.
- While the jester packs to leave for the road once again, his wife tearfully takes a stand. The two argue briefly before he storms off into the night. Both wife and child are left in tears.

- The jester travels to his venue troubled and conflicted. Reaching the castle he performs for royalty and during an act for the King's children he envisions his own child, and realizes the error in his ways. The jester sets off for home to right wrongs, planning to retire from the road.
- He finds the keep in flames the night of his return. Both wife and child are lost in the blaze, leaving the jester overcome with pain and guilt. After the funeral, he takes a stuffed bear belonging to his daughter along with his wife's violin and wanders off into the forest.

MAGIC LANTERN SLIDE 3

- The jester wanders for days deeper into the forest. Gulping the last drops from his whiskey skin, he exhaustedly decides to end his life in a beautiful glade he has stumbled upon.
- Fashioning a noose around a limb he places the stuffed bear at his feet and decides to play one last ballad with his wife's violin.
- The song is filled with such sadness and emotion that the energies travel through the glade and summon all its denizens to the source of the music. The glade's guardian also appears, a unicorn.
- The unicorn approaches the jester. She senses his pain, and looks deeper to find a noble heart worth saving. She comes to rest beside the jester and somehow reaches into his soul. She shows him that the true path back to his family and forgiveness is to continue bringing the gift of joy to those who have forgotten it exists.
- The unicorn becomes the jester's faithful steed, always accompanying him to the edge of whatever forest leads to his next performance, protecting and serving as a true friend.
- The jester begins entertaining again, but not just for royalty. He now seems more intent on lifting the sick and the poor, often bringing groups of orphans to the forest edge to meet the magical creature that saved his life.
- As years pass, the jester learns to smile again and begins to heal. The entertainer and his companion become legends amongst the commoner and highly sought after by royalty.

MAGIC LANTERN SLIDE 4

- Tragedy returns when the jester performs for a young prince with a fiery temper and horrible disposition. A joke is taken the wrong way and the jester is viciously beaten and thrown into the dungeons.
- The prince brings in a master of torture, making the jester suffer for several days while forcing all in his castle to bear witness so that the mistake is never made again.
- Some attendees are horrified, while some laugh at the poor jester's pain. The heinous acts continue for days, but the jester never begs for mercy. Understanding his fate is sealed he doesn't wish to give the prince the pleasure of hearing him beg. Instead, the jester continues to gasp out jokes ridiculing the prince.
- The night before the jester is to be beheaded he is visited by avatars of a mad god. Two rabbits, one black, one white, whisper tainted secrets laced with chaos, driving the man insane. He is given an elixir to shield his mind from the pain, and signs a pact in blood to serve the dark power. In return he is promised power to seek vengeance on his captor.
- The final day of torture is the cruelest of all as the prince desperately seeks to make the jester beg. Instead he only hears cackles laced with madness, even as the master torturer removes extremities, and at last beheads the poor soul. His remains are thrown to the pigs.
- A storm rolls in and amidst the storm the mad god appears. He sits in the pen with the pigs and begins to sew the jester back together. As lightning cracks the bell tower, the god breathes un-life into the corpse and vanishes as the body shudders back to life.
- The jester enters the castle and exacts revenge on every living soul therein. Each murder is more gruesome and violent than the last. The prince is found days later, skin removed and beheaded. His head is replaced by a pig's, and a wandering sow is found with the man's skin and family heraldry sewn to its hide. The jester wanders off into the night, ready to begin his servitude to the mad god.

APPENDIX D: TIPS & NOTES

As previously mentioned, the carnival came to life when I decided to run a DCC style tournament in September 2014 at Dragon Con. I literally threw together a slew of carnival themed encounters and borrowed the official DCC stamps for a weekend of fun (Thanks **Harley Stroh!**) The response to the weekend was so great that I decided to further develop the adventure and story. The end result is what you're now holding! I believe the carnival has evolved into a very versatile adventure that can be used in several ways depending on your needs. Carnival of the Damned is nonlinear by nature and although encounters are numbered and described in a particular order, feel free to swap them around and move important elements such as the summoning keys to encounters you really want to run. The key word here is *flexibility!*

STYLES OF PLAY

The *Carnival of the Damned* lends itself well to many styles of play:

Tournament style

If you decide to run *Carnival of the Damned* as a tournament have each player (8 participants being ideal) take a random character sheet. Players attempt to survive as many encounters as possible. When a character dies, the owning player must give up his chair to the next waiting player who wants to join the fun. If no one is waiting, then just hand the player a new character sheet! The cycle continues as players die and eventually rejoin the table. Custom stamps are often used to mark both each survived encounter and the moment of the untimely death, but if you don't have a stamp, simply use a marker. The winner of the tournament is the player with a character still alive with the most survived encounters. (Alternately, the winner could be the character that survived the most encounters, alive or dead!) A survived encounter means being present when the initiative die is cast.

The author suggests using random encounters heavily during a tournament lasting several sessions. This will mean less repeat encounters for those who play repeatedly in multiple sessions. Aim for one random encounter with one established encounter in this case, and in the unfortunate event of a tie have the players settle by a die roll, or a few vicious rounds of paper, rock, and scissors. Additional awards can be given at the Judge's discretion, such as for most violent death, or best use of a farm animal, etc.

0-level funnel (Con session)

Carnival of the Damned is loaded with encounters. When you add in the random monster table you have an adventure with a lot of replay value. However, the best time window to run the adventure as a funnel is 5 hours, but it can be done in 4 by an experienced Judge who is capable of jumping encounters on the fly while keeping an eye on the clock. The author suggests you choose six favorite encounters: seed three of them with the summoning keys needed to free the children at the adventure's end, then add Freya's bear, Sophia's Violin and the unicorn statue to the remaining three. If you have extra time throw a random encounter at the party. Alternately, if you need to speed the action up simply use the Mists of Gelos to teleport the party closer to an important encounter. Begin with the standard 16-20 0-level serfs.

0-level funnel (no time constraint)

This is the best way to enjoy the story elements of *Carnival of the Damned*. It allows the entire carnival to be explored with some great random encounters thrown in. The story will slowly develop and players will find plenty of action mixed in with the narrative. Begin with the standard 16-20 0-level serfs. Roll for a random encounter after every structured encounter using the method described in the random encounter table.

APPENDIX E: BIRTH OF THE PANTHEON

In ancient times the **Elder Gods** ruled in the primordial soup of existence. They warred for ages in a place devoid of light, devouring each other in an eternal void of darkness. Eons passed in the blink of an eye as time, space and reality continually drowned in a twisted maelstrom that only the Elder Gods could fathom. In one such battle between the mightiest of the primordial Gods a sliver of light was cast off like sparks into the darkness unbeknownst to those too busy devouring the slain. The light rocketed through the vast depths of the void, and in its journey sparks of life began to seed, spreading the power of creation both far and wide.

These sparks would become fiery proto-stars and the proto-stars soon suns. This time would be known as **The Time of New Gods**. The illegitimate children of Elder Gods multiplied and grew in power while their progenitors continued warring, oblivious to the rising storm. Before their haughty parents could quash their existence, the children embarked on a war of their own. Whoresons and daughters united, vowing to end the reign of the bubbling, tentacled madness that had held sovereignty for so long. A new age was at hand.

Caught unaware of the accidental progeny, the old Gods' endless ages of warring and cosmic cannibalism left them with an inability to act in concert against the New Gods. The Elder Gods were defeated swiftly, sinking like stones into the vast torpor that lies beneath the universe in a dimensional prison. Trapped and left to roil and seethe in defeat, they were left to scheme and plot for the day they can return to reclaim their place on the thrones of creation, devouring all of the traitorous offspring in the process.

With the Lords of Darkness imprisoned, the new Gods took root by creating and implanting their essence and beliefs into the hearts and minds of the seedlings that would one day become man and their distant cousins, the demi folk. The worlds created quickly exploded with life, filled with all things required to nurture the new species' survival and growth.

Not all the Elder Gods progeny were avatars of light and law, and some soon grew drunk on their newfound freedom and power of creation, creating ripples and eventually new conflict as a result of the shift in the pantheistic code. The time of peace was short lived, and soon the New Gods would declare war on their siblings. Rather than risk their own divine existence in battle it was decided to settle differences by mortal pawns in their stead. Wars would create casualties and casualties would bring converts through the necessity of divine healing and aid. The bastard-sons and daughters had learned quickly that belief would bring ultimate power, and nations conquered would be nations converted, tipping the scales of balance in the heavens above.

Eventually, a cabal of the New Gods grew weary of the divine squabbles between chaos and saw need for balance. Neutrality was born to maintain this needed middle ground, ensuring one side never loses sight of the possible return of the Elder Gods. The coming of neutrality would bring about the end to much of the direct fighting, and instead each God would find more subtle manipulations to further their agendas and grow in power.

In the midst of centuries of growth and warring, an unseen taint which had been planted long ago began to take hold in many members of the pantheon. For in the last days of the war between the New and Elder Gods, the Elder Gods had realized they faced certain defeat at the hands of their offspring, and would soon be exiled to dimensional torpor. So in the final battle they allowed defeat to come easily, reserving their remaining strength to implant a small seedling of chaos into several of their children. The tainted seed took generation upon generation to grow and spread, but eventually it manifested and corrupted the god-fires of their captors.

Gelos was one such god. Once an expounder of love and good fortune, he was worshiped primarily by entertainers and storytellers: anyone in the business of bringing about smiles to the weary and downtrodden. As the ages passed, the tainted god's sanity began to wane, and by the end of his downward spiral his lawful ideology would take a dark twist. He gradually became known as the patron of murders, sadists and those who no longer have a grip on reality.

APPENDIX F: GELOS AS PATRON

(The Black Jester, Old Grin Maw, Death's Mooncalf)

Gelos is the god of laughter and madness; his followers are the insane and those who find humor in dark deeds. Gelos feeds on the emotional energy from laughter of all types, from the laughter of a child playing with a new pet to the twisted cackle of a murderer who finds sadistic glee in practicing his murderous art. The Laughing God often reaches out to those forgotten in dank dungeons and sanitariums, finding their chaos-filled souls a delicious feast for the taking through twisted bargains.

HISTORY OF GELOS

In the early centuries after the whoresons and daughters banished their creators to a dimensional prison, whole worlds were formed and given life. New worlds were populated with creatures over which the new Gods would reign. During this age the young gods began to develop their own ideals and belief structures. Little did the fledgling gods know that during the war to banish the Elder Gods, small seeds of chaos were interwoven into the core of their traitorous children. It would take centuries for these seeds to develop and begin to corrupt, but eventually the cancer of chaos grew and tainted its hosts. Gelos was the first of the new gods to succumb to the subtle kiss of chaos.

Gelos was once known as the father of all those who served to bring mirth and laughter to the world. Humans and their cousins the dwarves, elves and halflings all were to be numbered among his followers. Children were considered flowers in the garden of Gelos, as laughter is a powerful thing, especially when coming from the souls of an innocent. The kind god was known to take an active role in protect-

ing these “flowers”, often intervening and punishing those who would bring harm to a child. Entertainers, bards, jesters, and those who took warmth in the laughter of their fellow man often offered prayer and tithed a silver piece while passing by a roadside shrine dedicated to the mirthful god on the way to their next stage.

When the taint of chaos began to twist the noble god’s essence, Gelos began a slow spiral into madness. His humor became more twisted and dark, the laughter of madmen and the wicked became a much sweeter wine to savor. Those who found humor in their dark acts began to gain favor with Gelos, while those of a good nature began to see the madness of Gelos creeping into their requests for blessings. The laughing god began to answer their calls in strange and chaotic ways, often leaving them in worse situations than before they prayed to Gelos for aid. Soon word of the dark change left Gelos with only the twisted and mad in his service. The dark energy from such adoration only further fueled his downward spiral into infectious madness.

Gelos’ needs moved in darker directions. His godfire was not only nourished by laughter, but by fear and madness as well. As his chaotic followers cackled while committing dark deeds, the fear of their victims created a new and intoxicating form of sustenance for the Laughing God.

Gelos has now all but forgotten his original tenets, his new ideology fully embracing the chaos gifted to him long ago by his banished progenitors.

Those who now follow Gelos are often failed entertainers, the twisted and the insane. Gelos welcomes all who seek the ultimate cosmic joke; laughter that only comes from plunging into the deepest depths of the Dark God’s teachings, welcoming the whispered and mad revelations that life is in the end futile.

Invoke Patron Check Result:

12-13: Gelos is off tending more important matters in the grand scheme of chaos, however he does see the potential for something twisted with you. The area around the caster becomes unnaturally dark while pink rolling clouds form in the sky. Everything takes on a shade of pink except for the caster's face which becomes a pale alabaster white. All enemies within 20' are drawn to the tightly stretched grin that forms on the caster's face. The grin is unsettling and all who oppose the caster are chilled by the sardonic mockery of the smile sensing imminent doom. Enemies in the area of affect must make a DC 12 Will save, or suffer a -4 to all attacks vs. the caster and comrades for 1d6 rounds.

14-17: A sudden rip in space and time appears allowing a swarm of skeletal monkeys to escape out of the rift hysterically chattering and intent on poo-throwing violence. They swarm enemies of the caster for 1d6 rounds. Skeletal monkey swarm (Un-dead): Init +2; Atk bite +4 melee against all in 15'x15' area (dmg 1d4 and must save vs cackle see special); AC 10; HP 35; MV 15'; Act 1; SP Cackle (with a successful bite, victim must make a DC 12 Will save or break down into hysterical laughter for 1d3 rounds effectively becoming dazed) ; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

18-19: A crack of pink-hued lightning strikes the ground and smells of sulfur-laced candy apple fill the air. A giant construct in the form of a chimpanzee dressed in striped overalls and holding two deadly cymbals in its hands rises from where the earth was struck. In addition, a twisted version of a giant clown appears behind the chimp long enough to wind it up by a crank handle in its back. The clown then disappears in a wisp of pink mist leaving the construct to attack the enemies of the caster.

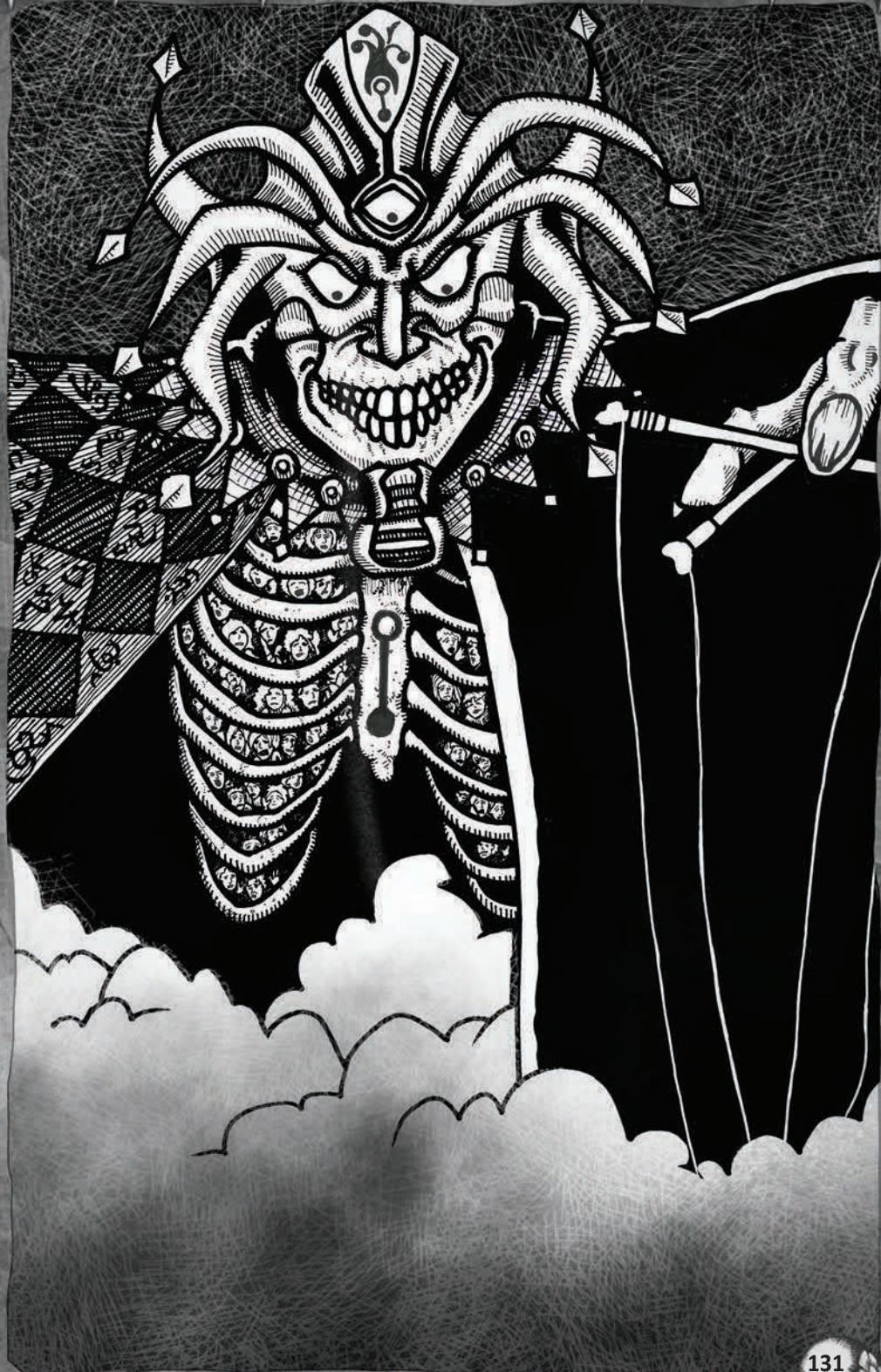
Wind-up chimp: Init -1; Atk cymbal smash +2 melee (2d6 dmg plus deafening); HD 3d10; hit points 20; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP deafening (Victim must make a DC 13 Fort save, or be deafened for 1d10 rounds. This will hinder communications, and spell casters will suffer a -1d to their checks unable to hear themselves speak); immune to mind altering spells; SV Fort +4, Reflex +0, Will +1.

20-23: Rainbow colored mists rise from the ground and engulf a 30'x30' area. All enemies of the caster begin to suffer from delusions and laughing maniacally. Each round an attacking enemy is in the area of effect he/she must make a Will save vs. the spell check result. Failure means the attacker brings harm upon himself instead and takes damage from their weapon of attack. The damage will not be as severe, thus reduce damage die of the weapon by -1d (A long sword normally does 1d8, but in this case it would be 1d6) and do not add any additional bonuses. The effect will last for 2d7 rounds.

24-27: Caster takes on the visage of his enemies' worst fears. Anyone attacking or being attacked by the caster will have to pass a Will save vs. casters spell check result. Those failing must roll randomly on the table below, suffering the results for 1d10 rounds.

Roll 1d6:

- 1: Enemy immediately withdraws in fear from the PC and will move away at his full MV for 1d6 rounds.
- 2: Enemy grows violently ill, throwing up his last campfire meal. In game terms this means they will forfeit their action to do nothing but heave rainbow colored vomit. Affected enemy suffers a -4 to AC against all attacks. This affect lasts for 2d4 rounds.
- 3: Enemy begins to hallucinate seeing all of his allies as twisted and demented clowns trying to kill him. The affected enemy will attack his own allies at random each round and if he has no allies he will attack himself suffering damage equal to the attack with no additional bonuses to damage
- 4: Enemy will see the caster as the living embodiment of the Laughing God and feel compelled to do his bidding. Caster may command the controlled target to do anything, however a suicidal command will allow an additional Will save vs. casters spell check to shrug off the effect. This affect lasts for 2d4 rounds
- 5: The target suddenly breaks out with thousands of tiny mouths all over his body. The mouths all whisper secrets and truths of the Laughing God simultaneously. These secrets aren't meant to



be heard by mortal ears and it drives the target insane. Only the caster and affected target can see the mouths. The target is unable to do anything to defend himself and will become a babbling idiot succumbing to the revelations of chaos. A Will save vs. the spell check can be made once a week to try and recover and after two such saves are made, the affected enemy will withdraw from the mouth of madness with one randomly determined phobia (Judge is encouraged to find something related to the encounter) left as an emotional scar.

6: The enemy must make DC 17 Will save or die from cardiac arrest while experiencing a horrific and forbidden vision of the Laughing God manifesting and ripping him limb from limb, cackling wildly the entire time. This attack is illusion based and anyone immune to illusion effects will not be affected.

28-29: Caster transforms into a giant demonic clown. Head, hands and feet grow to grotesque dimensions. The caster gains a +6 bonus to attacks and damage rolls. The caster also receives a +4 bonus to AC, and a temporary bonus of +10 hit points. A two handed mallet also materializes made from the purest essence of chaos and can be used by the caster as a weapon. Anyone other than the caster who touches the mallet will have his soul sucked into the weapon unless a DC 12 Will save is made. The mallet is two handed, thus 1d16 is rolled for initiative and damage is 1d14. The effects last the entire duration of the encounter that invoke patron is cast. Caster will be unable to cast spells during the effect.

30-31: An avatar of the Laughing God will appear in the form of a death jester. The avatar will serve the caster for 1d6 turns, until killed or dismissed by the caster. The death jester is garbed from head to toe in black and white leather armor and silver bells hanging from various buckles. His boots stand knee high and the toes are curled in whimsical fashions. The death jester never speaks, for his rictus grin makes it impossible. He glares at all, his frozen grin contorted and stretched.

Death Jester: Init +4; Atk bone mace +5 melee (1d8 +cackle, see SP) ; AC 15; HD 5d8+5 ;hit points 34; MV30'; Act 1d20; SP PC hit by the bone mace must make a DC 12 Will save or begin to laugh violently taking +1d4 damage per round for 1d8 rounds, and suffer -1d to all actions;

SV Fort: +1, Reflex: +3, Will +3

32+: Gelos manifests in one of his many nightmarish costumes (Usually clownish, or something taken from a child's mind, only turned nightmarish) and causes time to stop. All enemies are paralyzed and unable to move. The Laughing God then tells one of his ancient maddening jokes to all enemies within 100'. The joke is told in different languages simultaneously, sparing no one the treat of the pun. Once the joke is delivered Gelos vanishes cackling as he leaves in an explosion of glitter confetti. Immediately after, enemies will all begin laughing violently on their next round of action suffering 1d8 damage per round until a successful DC 17 Will save is made at the beginning of each round. The caster and all allies receive +1d to hit any enemy affected by the joke.

PATRON TAINT: GELOS, THE LAUGHING GOD

When patron taint is indicated for a follower of Gelos roll 1d6 on the table below. When a caster has acquired all six taints there is no need to roll anymore.

1: The casters skin loses normal color and he develops a clownish alabaster skin. Caster also develops a strange body odor smelling like candy apple and other carnival fare. The affects makes it hard for the caster and those within 15' of him to use stealth related skills. A -4 penalty applies to anyone in range of the caster trying to use such skills. If this result is rolled again strange markings will appear making the PC appear more clownish and the odor range of effect extends an additional 15'. If the result is rolled a third time, caster's eyes develop a strange pink glow. He gains infravision at 60' (Or if the caster already has infravision, add 20' to the total range) permanently and suffers -2 to all rolls involving sight in areas of a typical sunny day.

2: The caster develops a bone-chilling cackle and laughs at unfortunate things that happen to friends and enemies alike. The caster also feels compelled to learn and tell jokes, often at the worst time (During combat or important diplomatic talks). The caster's hair also changes color turning a bright pink, or other suitable color. Rolling this result a second time will result in the caster having to pass a DC 13 Will save to avoid trying to tell a joke at the beginning of every combat or crucial encounter. Failure results in the loss of his first round action/move and enemies gaining +2 to attack rolls against him (He gets caught up

in his own joke laughing uncontrollably). However, if the player can actually tell a joke and the judge/party finds it humorous, instead make saves for all of the caster's enemies that can hear the joke. Those that fail a DC 12 Will save will laugh uncontrollably, even in the heat of combat suffering a -3 to all action rolls the first round after the joke is told. Friends of the caster gain +3 to hit those who are laughing.

3: The caster's appearance grows emaciated while his mouth becomes wider and longer forming a grotesque grin. Caster always wears the unnerving smile, even when in pain and it takes a DC 12 Will save to stop smiling through an encounter. The change unnerves all who encounter the caster resulting in a -3 to Personality checks when social skills come into play. Rolling this result again will result in the caster's limbs growing longer, imposing a -5 to MV illustrated by a comical gate. Rolling a third time will cause the caster's grin to become completely frozen rigid and his teeth to grow very large. Talking with the caster is unnerving and results in a -4 reaction adjustment as the caster loses the ability to communicate well. Spell casting is modified permanently by +1.

4: Caster sees demonic clowns out of the corner of his eyes at all times. This can result in distractions during crucial moments. A DC 12 Will save will force the visions away; failure amounting to a -2 to the caster's next roll. Rolling this taint a second time will result in the clowns actually talking to the caster and make insane suggestions, whispering false statements to propagate confusion. The newly gifted caster will have to make a DC 10 Will save to avoid seeing the clown logic as sound during moments of decision. This normally amounts in a wasted action and the Judge is encouraged to come up with outlandish suggestions ("If you tickle the dragon under his chin he'll give you his largest gem!").

5: The caster suffers a mental breakdown after being visited by the Laughing God directly. He takes the caster to the depths of his own soul showing him the ultimate futility of existence and the wonders of allowing the mind to escape to the taint of chaos. Madness and pandemonium are injected into the caster as a sure-cure for all that infects his fragile psyche. The caster must make a DC 12 Will save at the start of each day for six consecutive days. Failure results in a loss of -1 from his Personality stat as he slips further down the rabbit hole. For every consecutive Will save made the caster will regain a point

of Personality (Up to his original stat rating) until the end of the six days have passed. Rolling this taint again results in a second visitation and a -2 loss to Personality per failed check over the course of six days. Only one point will come back for the consecutive saves that are made during this time. A permanent mental disorder will forever remain with the caster. Rolling for a third time will take the personality loss to -3 per failed save over the span of six days, and be left with two mental disorders (Judge and player should come up with appropriate and playable quirks)

6: Caster acquires a small clown doll. The doll will begin whispering to the caster during restful moments, telling him things that build his ego and confidence resulting in an addiction to have the doll around. The doll can be destroyed, but will be found the following morning restored and watching over the caster as he sleeps. The caster will begin to love the doll putting it above all others, and even the caster himself. As a plus the caster can draw a +1 bonus to a spell check from the doll on any round, but on the following round all PCs suffer a -1 to their rolls due to "bad luck". If allies try and separate the doll from the caster, the caster will suffer 1 point of personality loss per day that cannot be healed. Reuniting the doll and caster will restore all lost Personality instantly. Rolling this result twice will give the doll a voice and personality (Generally annoying!). The caster can also draw +2 to spell at will, but allies will suffer a -2 to all rolls after every use of the ability on their next action requiring a roll. Rolling this taint for a third time will allow the doll to animate, able to walk and talk, effectively becoming the wizard's new familiar and granting all the benefits of a standard chaos familiar. (The doll bullies the wizard's old familiar to mysteriously depart on "vacation").

The caster will begin to dote over the doll as if it is an actual child. The animated doll is mischievous by nature and will constantly try to pull pranks on the caster's party. Judges are encouraged to come up with small mishaps, such as items being misplaced, boot straps tied together, etc. The ability to alter spell checks goes to +3 and allies will suffer -3 to all rolls the round after it is used. Clown Doll (Construct): Init +1; Atk claw +2 melee (1d2); AC 12; HD 1d8+5; hit points 6; MV20'; Act 1d20; regenerate-doll will rematerialize 24 hours after it is destroyed; SV Reflex: +2, Will +2, Fort -1

SPELLBURN: GELOS THE LAUGHING GOD

The Laughing God appreciates any sacrifice for the cause of a good laugh and twisted deed. He also responds well to those who embrace madness and allow acts of random chaos to help in an encounter. Casters who can utter a quick joke, dirty limerick, or who are casting a spell where staying in the fight would be considered insane roll 1d4 and consult the table below, or use them to build off of and create your own table suitable to your home campaign.

Roll 1d4:

1: The caster thinks of something dark, twisted and funny. The vision pulls a violent chuckle from the caster. The laughter is so hard, the caster's ribs crack and vessels in his brain slightly rupture causing blood to escape from the nose and ears.

2: The caster falls to his knees laughing insanely just before vomiting swarms of black moths with skull markings on their wings. The physical trauma of vomiting the swarm results in the spellburn expenditure and the cloud of mouths cause a -1d penalty to all physical rolls to all within a 20x20 square. This effect lasts for one round.

3: A tear in reality forms and two clowns step out behind the caster. They're holding stitched leather chickens filled with steel balls. As the caster casts the spell, the clowns begin to beat him violently. The pain sparks off the dark humor of the act, and the caster laughs while literally hearing his own bones crack and tasting blood from the wounds.

4: A pink mist materializes and immediately forces itself into the caster's ears, and nose. The mist is the essence of Gelos and infects the caster with visions of madness. The caster literally has his mind drowned in the depths of lunacy. The caster is granted a single DC 15 Will save; on a successful save the caster shakes it off while laughing uncontrollably. Failing the save twists reality and the caster cannot distinguish the difference between friend and foe as they all look like demonic clowns. The caster that fails the roll also gains a +5 to all spell checks for 1d8 rounds.

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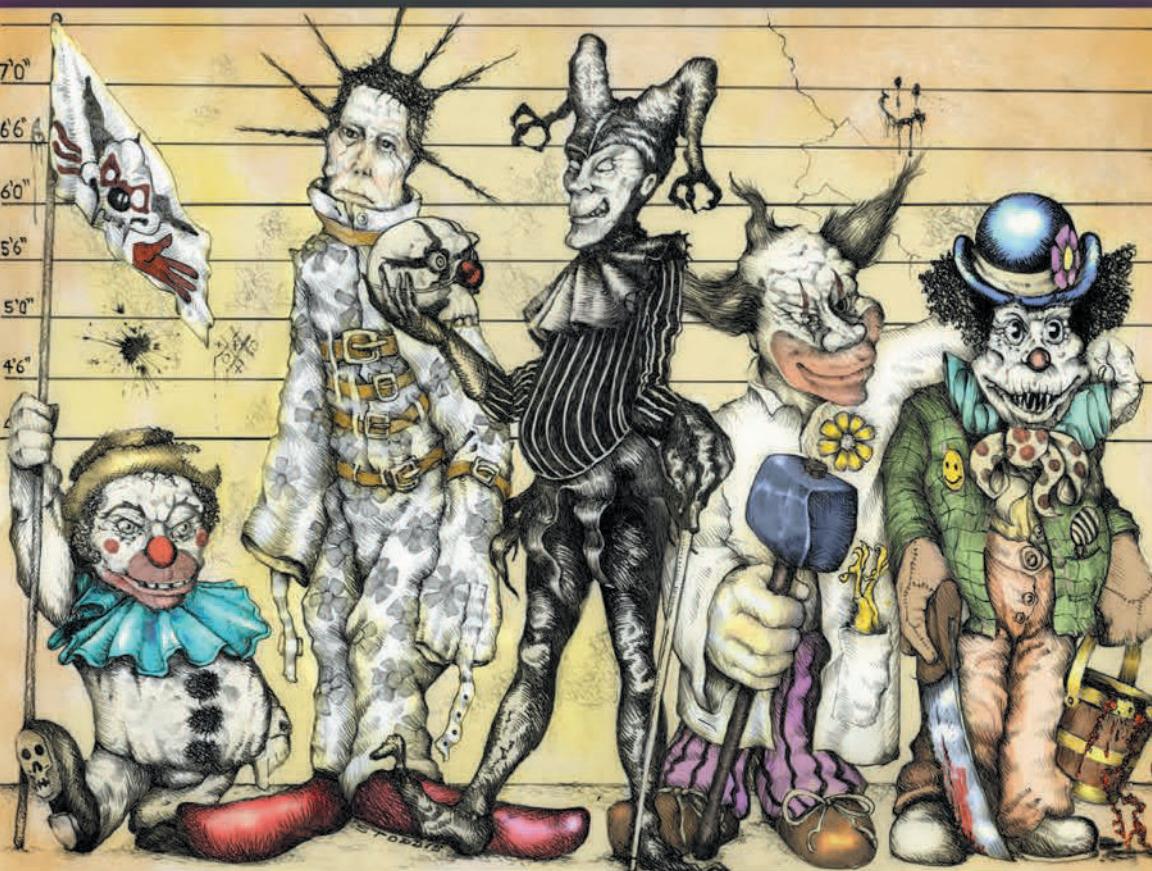
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