

Grave Error

An Adventure for *Knave* or *Maze Rats* by
Questing Beast

Background: Over the past generation, the river that feeds the nearby towns has been rising. What was once low-lying pastures became wetlands and eventually a lake. Farmers grazed their sheep higher up the valley sides, and life moved on.

The cause for the change in the valley was nothing more than a beaver dam several miles downstream.

Last night that dam was torn down by farmers who were losing too much land to the flooding waters. In doing so, they set loose, at first a trickle, then a stream and eventually a torrent of built up floodwaters.

By this morning, the local lake had receded and amongst the mud and reeds, Old Tom, a local fisherman, discovered a door to an old shrine. Old Tom remembered the shrine from his youth, the priest was a strange one, full of gloom and menace. Tom tried to take a look inside but was met with such a sense of lurking evil that he retreated and came to town to tell his tale. What is the horror that lurks in the uncovered shrine?

The Shrine

The entrance to the shrine is still mostly flooded. All the above-ground parts are long since washed away but what was the crypt has held together even if it is somewhat subsided.

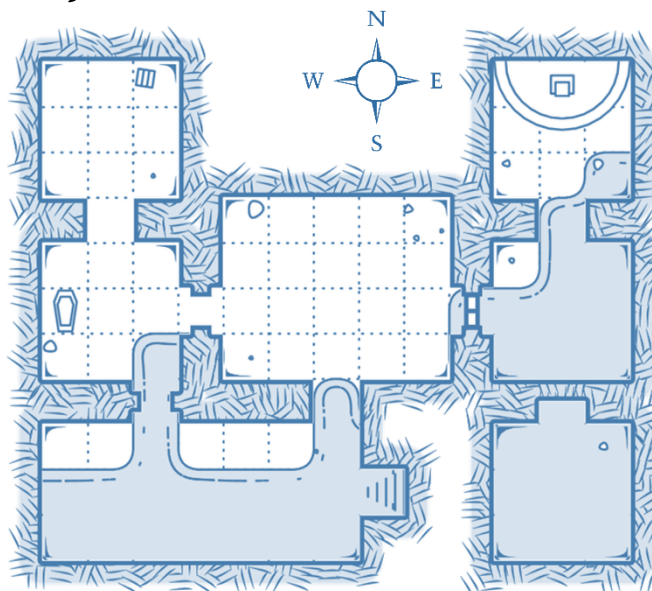
The characters will be wading through thick river mud and weed in the waterlogged sections.

Brother Gideon

The original priest here was Brother Gideon. When the waters threatened his shrine, he refused to leave, firstly trying to hold back the rising waters by building a dyke around the shrine, but eventually, that gave way, the waters flooded in and the shrine was ruined. As Brother Gideon sat on the wreckage of his former home, he felt a presence behind him, then he died. He never knew what killed him.

Brother Gideon was killed by a pack of Ghouls, and in a cruel twist of fate, after his death became a Ghoul himself.

The Adventure



Above ground, the site is thick with river mud and the rotting vegetation that was, until yesterday, the bottom of the lake. Even a few dead fish that were cut

off from the receding waters lay around, adding to the heavy smell of rot and decay.

The old shrine was a stone-built circular building, almost beehive in structure. The building collapsed as the water rose; the ground shifted and subsided heavily to one side, littering the ground with stone blocks

Entering the underparts of the shrine involves a treacherous descent down slime and algae covered stone steps. The first chamber has a vaulted ceiling that is thick with green mosses and algae. The floor is a foot deep in water, two feet deep in places where the flagstones have shifted.

The West Wing

The area to the North and West is significantly higher, and somewhat drier than the South and East.

The west chamber is the original burial chamber of a local priestess, believed to be a saint for her good works.

The north western chamber once held art and artefacts relating to Saint Bea. The conditions have not been kind to them.

GM Note: *If you want any treasure or loot to be non-monetary, this is the place to put the items¹.*

Central Chamber

This area is dark, damp and the smell is unholy. This is because it is the main nest of the Ghouls. There will be twice as many Ghouls as there are characters. These hideous corpse eaters will come out of the darkest corners.

GM Note: *If the characters cannot see into the darkest areas, have the Ghouls emerge from different corners of the*

¹ <https://bit.ly/What-Pockets>

chamber a few rounds apart, forcing the characters to turn and turn about to face new threats.

The East Wing

The East Wing is made of three chambers. There is a secret chamber to the south. One of the stones in the wall used to operate it but now with the weight of water behind it, accumulated mud and debris has seized the door shut.

If this chamber can be opened it used to hold barrels of wine and the more luxury items donated to the shrine. All of this is long spoiled.

The east chamber is half submerged. There is a 50/50 chance of there being a pair of Ghouls under the water's surface. Either roll it on your dice of choice or, if they could possibly have heard fighting in the main chamber, then they are hidden in the water, if they could not have been warned, they are huddled together in the dry corner.

These two will endeavor to drag the characters under the water and kill them.

The North chamber is the former inner shrine. It is now the resting place of Brother Gideon. His undead corpse lies spread across the dais.

When the characters enter, play the scene for full dramatic effect. He will rise slowly, trying to look imperious, a last vestige of his humanity insulted by an invasion of his shrine. He will be clearly outraged at the violation before succumbing to his undead hunger and falling upon the characters.

Conclusion

If the remains of Brother Gideon are brought to the village, some of the elders may be able to recognize something of Brother Gideon in the corpses features, the shredded and rotting remains for the priests habit would be another clue. Once that connection is made then the location of the shrine will be remembered. It

will be down to villager's speculation as to what happened to it.

Bestiary

The main threats in this adventure are the Ghouls. Ghouls are common in most OSR bestiaries. It is assumed in this adventure that Brother Gideon was slain by a Ghoul and rose again several days later as a Ghoul, to join the pack.

If you want to extend the adventure, it is suggested that Old Tom's directions to the shrine be extremely vague. The waters are receding noticeable, so telling the characters to follow a stream or the waters edge is not reliable and could put them miles out of place if they tarry too long.

Random Encounters

The following creatures are common in OSR monster books and can be used for encounters in the swampish areas.

1. Bugbear
2. Giant Leech
3. Giant Lizard
4. Kobolds
5. Lizardfolk
6. Ogre
7. Shambling Mound
8. Will-o-the-Wisp

Credits

This adventure was written to support Knave and Maze Rats but can be played with any OSR style game. All the foes are common fare.

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