

# HEROES OF HIGH FANTASY

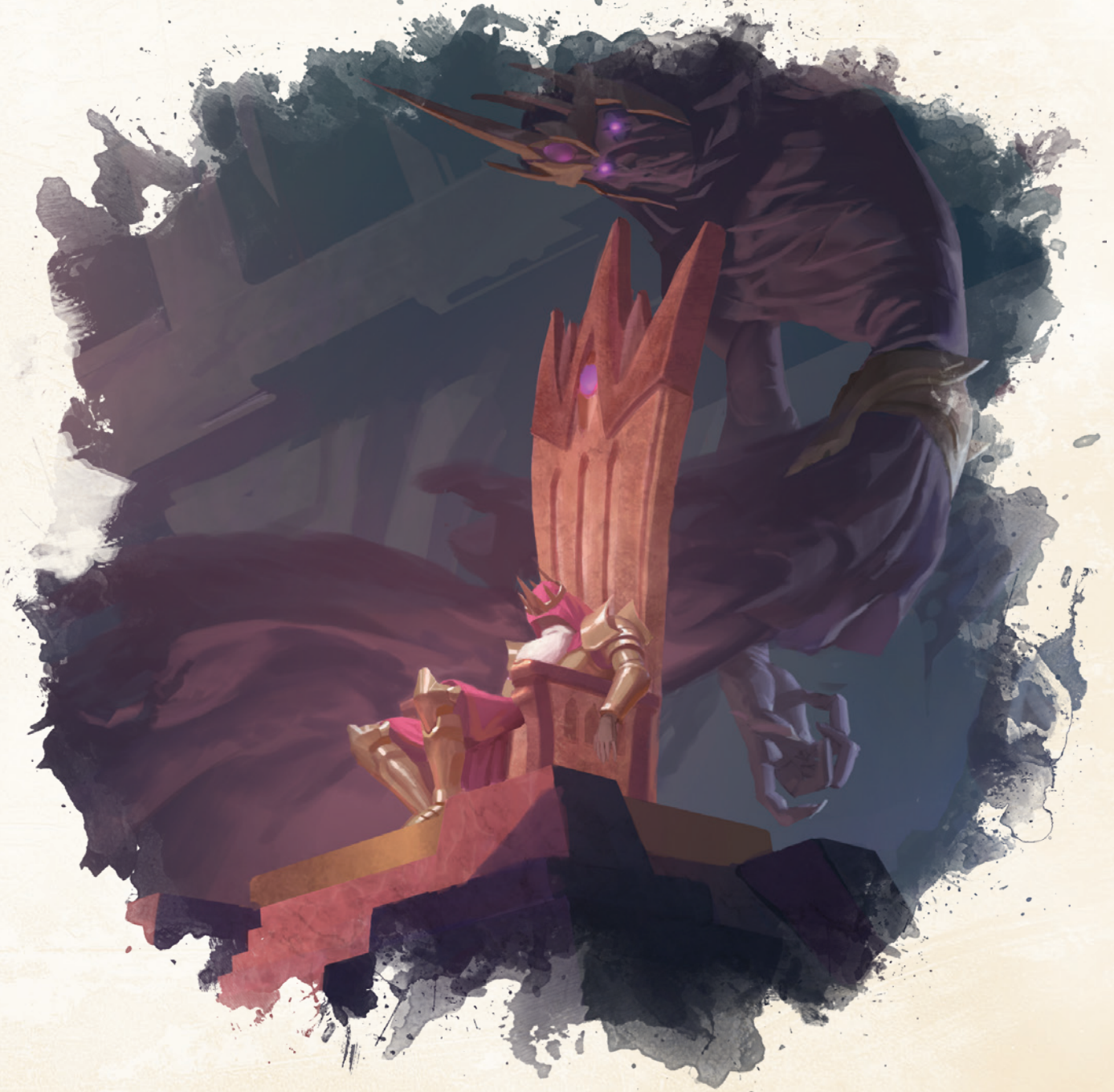


WITCH OF THE WILDERLANDS  
LOU FRYER — RALPH STICKLEY



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## CREDITS

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## INSTRUCTIONS

This adventure module is designed to be played at any level and in any campaign setting. The appendix includes statblocks for all of the monsters and NPCs within this adventure at 'Beginner', 'Intermediate', and 'Advanced' difficulty ratings. Beginner difficulty rating is considered level 1-5, intermediate is 6-10, and advanced is any level 11 or higher. You are free to add more monsters than stated in each section of the encounter to make things more challenging, if needed.

We've also included this beginner / intermediate / advanced difficulty rating mechanic within the adventure itself. Various skill checks will require higher or lower numbers, depending on which difficulty rating you're running. It's presented as follows: Make a **DC 10** (beginner)/**15** (intermediate)/**20** (advanced) **Dexterity check** to unlock the door. This way you can keep the adventure flowing nicely without flipping back and forth to determine the appropriate challenge.

## RESOURCES

Beginner pre-generated characters for this adventure can be found at [www.nordgamesllc.com](http://www.nordgamesllc.com). They include: a locally-famous *human fighter* and their *gnome bard* traveling companion; a *dwarf cleric* who arrived in the town some time ago to trade for gems, and is now looking to leave with them; and their *halfling rogue* ward, a former criminal who owes the dwarf a life debt. There is also a *human druid*, recently arrived in town and enquiring after a stranger who may have passed through recently.

Additionally, a digital version of the map in this module can be found at [www.nordgamesllc.com](http://www.nordgamesllc.com). We recommend that you have a full poster-size version if you intend to use the map with miniatures.

## OVERVIEW

*Witch of the Wilderlands* is a short adventure which should fill 2-3 average gaming sessions of 3-4 hours.

It begins in a small town, recently cut off from the wider world by the increasing danger of its surrounding forest. Rumors abound that a woman who visited town briefly a month ago is an evil witch, who put a curse on the forest. All that is known of her is that she left to investigate ruins, deep in the forest, in search of a powerful artifact.

The party can attempt to seek her out or, at least, put an end to the dangerous enchantments which lie over the area. As they search the forest, they are beset by strange visions and confusing voices, as well as by twisted beings of rotten wood; rot blights.

In the ruins of an ancient crypt, they find the so-called 'witch', now turned to stone. The crypt contains a powerful wraith who, in life, was one of four rulers (by the names of Bezhen, Pridbor, Yaromil, and Rodion). Rodion betrayed his fellows in an attempt to seize eternal power for himself and take the form of a being known as 'The Everking', but was interrupted part way through his ritual, and arose as a wraith. He is kept imprisoned by an ingenious ward - anyone killed by the wraith within the crypt is turned to stone, and whatever spell they were casting is made into a powerful, permanent version. Originally, this was a contingency so that if the jailers were killed, their binding spells would be made permanent, and there would be no bodies or blood for the wraith to use in any rituals to free itself.

The witch, the first being to set foot in the tomb in centuries, was mortally wounded by the wraith, and nearly escaped before succumbing to her injuries. Her final spells - summoning a woodland guardian and sending a plea for aid through the creatures of the forest - were 'set in stone' just as she breached the boundary of the warded tomb, disrupting the ward enough for the wraith's influence to mingle with the spells. Given enough time, the wraith can wear down the weakened barrier and gain access to the artifact it needs to gain terrible power.

It is up to the party to brave the tomb, face the wraith within, and destroy the artifact before its power can be unleashed.

## INTEGRATING THE ADVENTURE INTO A CAMPAIGN

*Witch of the Wilderlands* can be played as a one-shot adventure, or as part of a larger campaign. The pre-generated characters all have their own reasons for being in the town at the start of the adventure, though any other adventuring party could also find themselves there. It is designed to easily fit into any game world, and could simply begin when the party, traveling overland, stop-over in the town, having traveled through the mountain pass (the nature of the town itself is intentionally kept vague to allow you to integrate it into your setting with minimal work). Some other quest hooks are listed below. They can be used separately, or in any combination.

**Hook #1** - The party comes across a dwarven merchant, by the name of **Borgan Khrzadak**, massaging his calves and recuperating on the side of the road. He has just traveled through the uneven and steep mountain pass, having left his business partner and goods cart in the nearby town. He explains that they head up a courier service that serves this town and its twin, where the partners are from, on the other side of the forest. The forest



road is wide and usually relatively safe, so they get good business. However, something has recently happened in the forest that has made it dangerous. One of his carts, along with several belonging to his competitors, have gone missing, and he is loathe to send his last cart in to meet the same fate. He was taking the very long way round to hire people to manually carry the goods on foot through the mountain pass but instead offers the party **100 / 300 / 900 gold pieces** (half now, half upon their return) to find out what is going on in the forest and take care of it, so his courier business can recover.

**Hook #2** - An archeologist, named **Quranis Kuilanya**, happens upon the party on the road, or in a nearby settlement, and solicits them to procure an artifact that she is in search of. She tells the party that within the nearby forest are the ruins of a deserted city whose king once ruled these lands. He was said to possess a rod, imbued with ancient magic. She offers the party **100 / 300 / 900 gold pieces** (half now, half upon their return) to search the ruins for any sign of this rod. If they return with the rod, she promises one half of the proceeds from the sale of the artifact will go to the party. Quranis will not enter the forest, and explains that she is no hero or adventurer; she is an antiquarian, and a damn good one.

**Hook #3** - The party are approached on entry into town by **Bela Zegler**, who explains that her sisters are missing after traveling through the nearby woods, which are under the influence of a dark spell. Refer to information and role-playing notes in the 'Zegler's General Store' section of **Part 1**. She implores the party to investigate their disappearance.

NOTE: Using Hook #3 allows you to skip over a lot of interactions in the town, if you are looking for a shorter overall play session.

## PART 1: WITCH HUNT

Read the following when you are ready to begin:

*As you walk down from the mountain pass, you notice that the town is eerily quiet, unnaturally so, as if the inhabitants are actively sheltering behind closed doors. There are plenty of signs of a usually-large population, but the awnings on dozens of empty stalls in the large, sprawling marketplace wave in the breeze and serve as your only greeting. From your vantage point, you see streets and alleyways stretch back quite a distance, and the widest and best-kept road leads away from the market-place, and from you, all the way to the forest beyond. There are fewer and fewer lights in the windows of businesses and homes, the closer they are to the forest's edge. Several large inns dot the immediate area, along with smaller guesthouses, but even most of these are silent. All movement between buildings is hurried, usually only single figures who whip their heads around at the slightest sound. Some even break into a run when they catch your eye. The only signs of life are coming from 'The Stepping Stones Inn', a large building with 'Zegler's General Store' painted across the front in bright letters, and a little shop with such a packed display of curios in the window that it is impossible to look in further.*

If this is the first time the characters have met each other, this is a good opportunity to have them introduced and/or described to the other players.

The townsfolk are convinced that a witch is the source of all their current problems, and so distrust magic users. If any of the party outwardly display as magic users (wearing robes, carrying staffs etc.) or mention magic, they are likely to be met with distrust, if not outright hostility.





## ZEGLER'S GENERAL STORE

**If the party decides to visit Zegler's General Store, read the following:**

*You enter Zegler's General Store and see shelves that are somewhat depleted and only one shopper, who promptly exits as soon as you enter (If the party contains a member who is clearly a magic user read: The patron lets out a squeak, and their eyes do not leave [party member] until they are safely out the door. It is clear they are wary of you.). You are greeted (or, rather, not greeted) by an elderly, morose gentleman staring blankly from behind the counter.*

Any attempts to interact with the gentleman get little response. After a couple of attempts, a teenage girl appears from a doorway to the back room. She introduces herself as **Bela Zegler** and apologises on behalf of her father, explaining that he hasn't been the same since her sisters went into the forest and didn't come home.

The party may have questions for Bela, similar to the following:

**What happened to your sisters?** *"Mila - Milana, she's the oldest - left just over three weeks ago. She was takin' a shipment of supplies from the store to sell in the town on the other side of the forest, like she does every month. Two weeks ago, we go' a letter from the store asking where the stock was, so we knew she never arrived. It only takes a day to get there, and another to get back, so then we worried. We thought maybe she'd decided to hook up with some friends - a lot of the girls she went to school with live in the town - but she wouldn't've gone to visit without dropping the goods off first, so something must 'ave happened in the forest. Danika, my next oldest sister, packed a bag and said she was goin' looking for her. Da' begged her not to, and hired a couple of guards to go instead, but she snuck off with 'em. We haven't heard from her in over a week now, neither. It's broke Da'. He's not said a word since the day after Dani left."*

**Are you sure they are in the forest/in danger?** *"Mila and Dani aren't the types to run off. Mila's run the shop and Dani's looked after us since we lost our ma, but they're shop girls, not adventurers. They must be in trouble, or they'd have written or come home."*

**Is the forest dangerous?** *"Not usually, not any more'n you'd expect. Couple of beasties, a troll or two, but they mostly stay away from the main path to avoid the hunters. Mila's done that trip every month for near' 6 years and she's never had more'n a scare or a turned ankle."*

**Has anyone else in the town gone missing?** *"I know Mr. Khrzadak lost a cart in there recently, but I assumed that was on account of his drinking. We had to hire him last winter to take the stock when Mila got the flu, but one of the barrels of ale went missing. He swore it fell off the cart but Da' never hired him again. I only know he lost it 'cause old Mrs Penderyn was gossiping about it in here yesterday."*

**Has anyone investigated/Is anyone doing anything about it/What has changed?** *"Everyone's too scared to go and investigate now - half the guards have gone in already but they 'aven't come back. Mrs Penderyn seemed to think it was this lady's fault who was in town a while back. Said she was a witch."*

**Who was the woman?** *"I dunno, she never came in here. Didn't seem like a witch to me, I never saw her fly or nothing. Think she was just looking for something. Think she was staying at The Stepping Stones."*

**Bela** has no idea what is going on in the forest. If Hook #2 was used, Bela has never heard of the ruins in the forest, or of a magical rod. She has never entered the forest proper, only played in the trees bordering town as a child. If pressed about the ruins, rod, or history in general, she directs the party to **Ivan Volny** in **The Curio Cabinet**.

**If the party offer to help, read:**

*"You mean it? There's no' a lo' here to give you - Da' used most of what was in the register to pay the guards Dani snuck off with, but if you find Mila and Dani you can have whatever you want from the damned cart. Just bring back my sisters, if you can. If the worst has 'appened... well, bring back something for Da', so he can have some peace. I 'ave enough stock to sell to keep him fed for a while. I'd ask around and see if anyone else knows any more'n me. Thank yous so much."*

## THE STEPPING STONES INN

**If the party decides to visit The Stepping Stones Inn, read the following:**

*The Stepping Stones Inn stands in a place of prominence in the square; though clearly one of the oldest buildings around, it has been well-maintained, with updates and renovations in-keeping with the old architecture. Water trickles over stacked stones in the center of a fountain by the entrance, and you are greeted by the smell of ale and roast meat as you cross the threshold. The mood in the large bar area is subdued; there are people here, but they are sequestered in their own corners and alcoves, talking only to each other and in hushed tones. When you enter, some patrons look up and swiftly back down again, and some even subtly turn their backs and make themselves appear smaller, as if not wanting to be seen. (If the party contains a member who is clearly a magic user read: Several of them notice [party member] and, while they immediately avert their eyes, cannot resist continuing to glance up at intervals, their whispered conversations becoming more urgent. They appear scared of magic users.) An adolescent boy, who has been pretending to wipe the same spot on the counter ever since you entered, disappears round the side of it as you approach. Seconds later, a tiefling woman in a stained apron appears from where he left. She sees you, rolls her eyes back in the direction of the boy and leans over the bar to talk to you.*

*"Don't mind the boy. He's just bin all wobbly about visitors, lately. Damn right inconvenient when you work in an inn. But there's a lot of that going round at the moment." She raises her voice at this last sentence, staring pointedly at the patrons; any who have looked up hurriedly look down again and raise the level of their conversation. "Anyway, some of us still remember the rules of hospitality. Name's Zoya. You need a room?"*



**Zoya Kirichenko** is the manager of 'The Stepping Stones Inn'. A month ago, Zoya rented a room to **Jaycelin Marieve** for a couple of days before she left and entered the forest. The day after she left, and ever since, the forest has been inhospitable to travelers, and people that go in have not come back. Zoya is a tiefling, and has therefore known her fair share of discrimination and ignorance, so is determined to give the woman the benefit of the doubt. She liked her well enough, while she visited, though Jaycelin kept her own company most of the time, and spent her days reading, walking, and exploring before she moved on. When Zoya asked the reason she was in town, Jaycelin said she was looking for a ruin, and Zoya knows she visited **The Curio Cabinet** at least once.

**If the party ask questions about the woman publically, read the following:**

*"You mean the witch?!" At the mention of the visitor, a middle-aged halfling man sidles up to the bar. He climbs up onto a stool and lights his pipe. "Adventurers, are you? Ever killed a witch?"*

**Uffo Burrowes** is a local market-stall holder and an incorrigible gossip. He, along with several other prominent members of the town, has been fanning the flames of fear and hatred against a woman who recently visited, in order to boost sales of the various nicknacks with proclaimed magical effects that he sells at his stall. He thinks that making a big show of a band of adventurers going into the forest to kill the witch will lead to a surge in sales when the adventurers inevitably don't return.

The party may have questions for Uffo, (or other patrons, who have a similar outlook on the situation due, in no small part, to his influence) similar to the following:

**Who was this witch?** *"Oho, I knew she was bad news as soon as she stepped foot in town. Some sort of scholar, or so she'd have us believe. Poking her nose around where it's not wanted. Well, off she went into the woods, and good riddance we thought, but we should have known better - it was then that our real troubles began. Her 'parting gift', you mark my words, or I'm a dwarf."*

**What's been happening?** *"She's turned the forest against us, is what. Obvious, ain't it? She's cut us off from the rest of the world - if we can't get through to the other side, we'll wither and die. Folk who go into the woods don't come out again, and now they're all too scared to try. Looks different - darker, angrier. Sounds different too. That's what witches do - they take a dislike to some folk, and blight the whole town to spite 'em. Folk round here are lucky I've got a good stock of genuine protective amulets. Cutting me own throat to sell them at a discount an' all, but I'm a philanthropist like that."*

**Why do you think she's to blame for your misfortune?**

*"Obvious, if you've half the wits the gods gave a goat - she toddled off into those woods and, the day after, our troubles began. Nowt else was different, so she must be the cause - that there's just good logic."*

**So why do you want her dead?** *"Sensible thing to do, ain't it - kill the witch, end the spell. Time was we'd have a burning, but sword should do just as well, I should think."*

## THE CURIO CABINET

**If the party decides to visit The Curio Cabinet, read the following:**

*Under a flaking sign, reading 'The Curio Cabinet', is a cramped shop-cum-museum, its dusty shelves overflowing with rusted and unrecognisable bits of metalwork and chunks of old stone, interspersed with taxidermy of varying quality and shards of pottery, as well as sketches of the inferred objects, complete and in their prime.*

*"Welcome, seekers of knowledge," a deep voice intones, from the maze of shelving.*

**Ivan Volny** is the owner of 'The Curio Cabinet'. He was drawn to the area by the ruins which dot the area, and considers himself the foremost scholar on the history of the region (he is, more or less, the only person to take an interest in studying it, but this detail is lost on him). Jaycelin Marieve came to visit the shop, while she was in town, to try and narrow down the location of the rod, but learnt little.

The party may have questions for Ivan, similar to the following:

**What can you tell us about the history of the area?** *"You have come to the right place, I can assure you. The forest hides a wealth of history, and I have catalogued all I can here. Simply put, the town you now stand in, along with its twin a way through the forest, are built on the bones of one far-greater settlement; a settlement which does not appear in any of the literature I have read (and, I flatter myself, I have read a good deal). It reached its apex almost a millenia ago, and was consigned to history, seemingly overnight."*

**What happened?** *"Ah, now that is the question. As yet, unknown, I fear, though I am sure it is not unknowable. What little I can find on the subject (fragments of friezes, statuary and so on), suggests a power struggle of some kind. The city was seemingly ruled by some council of oligarchs, though the more-recent pieces depict a lone figure of authority, perhaps suggesting a coup."*

**What did the witch want?** *"She was chasing rumors of some magical rod, with the misguided idea that such bunkum would fall under my area of study. Make no mistake, mine is the study of historical fact, not the scurrying-after of tall tales, and I told her the same. I gather she left town after our conversation, and put a curse on the forest on her way out. Rather an overreaction, if you ask me."*



## PART 2: INTO THE WOODS

The woods appear mundane from the outside, but this impression is quickly broken once a traveler ventures in beyond sight of town. **Jaycelin Marieve's** final spells have been set in stone by the tomb's magic, pervading the entire area and creating dangers to body and mind. For every hour spent traveling the forest, each party member must make a **DC 10/12/14 Wisdom saving throw**. If every party member fails, they wander aimlessly for 1d4 days, suffer one level of exhaustion, and consume an appropriate amount of their rations. Otherwise, roll on the **Encounter Table** below. Some of the results contain different effects for any characters who failed their Wisdom saving throw that hour.

Alternate rolls on the table with the **Story Encounters** below: **The Sisters**, **The Cart**, **The Swamp** and, finally, **The Tomb**.

### ENCOUNTER TABLE

d6	Event
1	Ruins
2	Rot Blights
3	Crowing Chorus
4	Statues
5	Corpse Raisers
6	Lost in the Woods

#### 1. RUINS

The entire area of the forest (and the towns on either side of it) was once one huge city, and its ruins dot the area.

**If this encounter is chosen/result is rolled, read the following:**

*The organic forms of the forest are broken by crumbling, moss-covered stonework, protruding from the foliage like the bones of a dead beast. What walls remain trace the area of some grand hall, its flagstone floor just visible towards the very center of the clearing.*

Instead of ruins, any characters who failed their Wisdom saving throw for this hour instead see a table, set for four, laden with delicious, tempting food, and must succeed on an additional **DC 10/12/14 Wisdom saving throw**, or be compelled to rush towards the table and begin gorging themselves. A creature that eats the food is poisoned for 1d2 hours. While poisoned in this way, the creature believes themselves to be made of stone, and is unable to move. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw each hour, ending the effect on a success.

An unaffected creature can attempt to stop another creature from running towards the food with a **DC 12/14/16 Dexterity check**, grappling the creature on a success.

#### 2. ROT BLIGHTS

Among Jaycelin Marieve's final spells was an attempt to summon aid in the form of a wood golem. Having been set in stone, and twisted by the wraith, the spell spread through the forest, animating piles of rotting material into rot blights, which are attempting to propagate themselves (and so better 'protect' Jaycelin) by hunting down and killing any creatures they can find, to increase the amount of rotting material they can raise.

**If this encounter is chosen/result is rolled, read the following:**

*The sounds of the forest deaden, as a pile of rotting detritus, roughly the shape of a human, shambles past. It turns a head of knotted wood, hanging with lichen, towards you, and gives a grating howl. Suddenly, more appear, melting out of the undergrowth to surround you.*

The party is attacked by **4 rot blights**, and **2 rot mites**.

#### 3. CROWING CHORUS

Among Jaycelin Marieve's final spells was an attempt to send for aid with *animal messenger*. Having been set in stone, and twisted by the wraith, the spell spread through the animals of the forest, causing them to behave strangely.

**If this encounter is chosen/result is rolled, read the following:**

*You enter a small clearing around a tumbledown stone wall. Atop the ruin, half a dozen crows huddle together. They turn as you approach, open their beaks and, as one, give a harsh cry. In unison, an unseen fox howls in the undergrowth and, in the distance, a stag bellows. This strange rhythm continues for a few seconds, before the crows disperse, and the forest sounds return to normality.*

Instead of animal noises, any characters who failed their Wisdom saving throw for this hour instead hear a toneless voice saying, "Find me. Free me." Any attempt to magically communicate with the animals has the same result; until the enchantment over the forest is lifted, it is all they can say.

#### 4. STATUES

This clearing was once a plaza commemorating the four rulers of the city. While crumbling and overgrown, their statues remain.

**If this encounter is chosen/result is rolled, read the following:**

*Four statues look out across what once might have been a market square, each of them holding out a hand towards an orb which stands between them on a pedestal. Stone faces stare through centuries' growth of moss. One stoic, scarred, and stern, one crinkled in an easy smile, one with upraised, pious eyes, and one worn so smooth by time as to be unreadable.*

Instead of the fourth statue, any characters who failed their Wisdom saving throw for this hour instead see a terrifying apparition, and are frightened until the statue leaves their line of sight. While frightened in this way, they are incapable of any speech beyond the phrase:

*"A quill to write the future, a book to know the past, a rod to judge the wicked, a sword to guard the just."*

The plinths below the statues are weathered, worn, and overgrown, but just legible are the names, 'Pridbor, the Fierce', 'Yaromil, the Fair', 'Bozhena, the Righteous', and 'Rodion, the Wise', respectively.



## 5. CORPSE RAISERS

Among Jaycelin Marieve's final spells was an attempt to summon aid in the form of a wood golem. Having been set in stone, and twisted by the wraith, the spell spread through the forest, animating piles of rotting material into rot blights, which reproduce by releasing magical spores into decomposing material. Most rot blights are an amalgam of rotting wood and moss-covered animal bones.

**If this encounter is chosen/result is rolled, read the following:**

*The carcass of a deer lies where it fell by the roots of a large tree, little more than scraps of fur and moss-covered bones crowned with a tangle of ivy. A cluster of roughly-humanoid shapes surround it, composed of fungus-wracked wood, and pitted bone. One extends a hand in a cloud of yellow spores. As they float down to the carcass, winding vines sprout up, and it begins to stir, the soil and wood around it rising into a similar approximation of human form.*

The party is attacked by **6 rot mites**, seeking to slay more creatures to swell their ranks.

## 6. LOST IN THE WOODS

The party is not alone in wandering the woods. A group of guards, originally hired to find Milana Zegler, quickly became lost after entering, and have been falling foul of illusions and gradually growing in paranoia ever since.

**If this encounter is chosen/result is rolled, read the following:**

*A ragged band of travelers round a tree ahead of you and freeze, wide-eyed, as they take you in. Their outfits may have begun life as guard uniforms, but are now threadbare and stained with sweat and mud.*

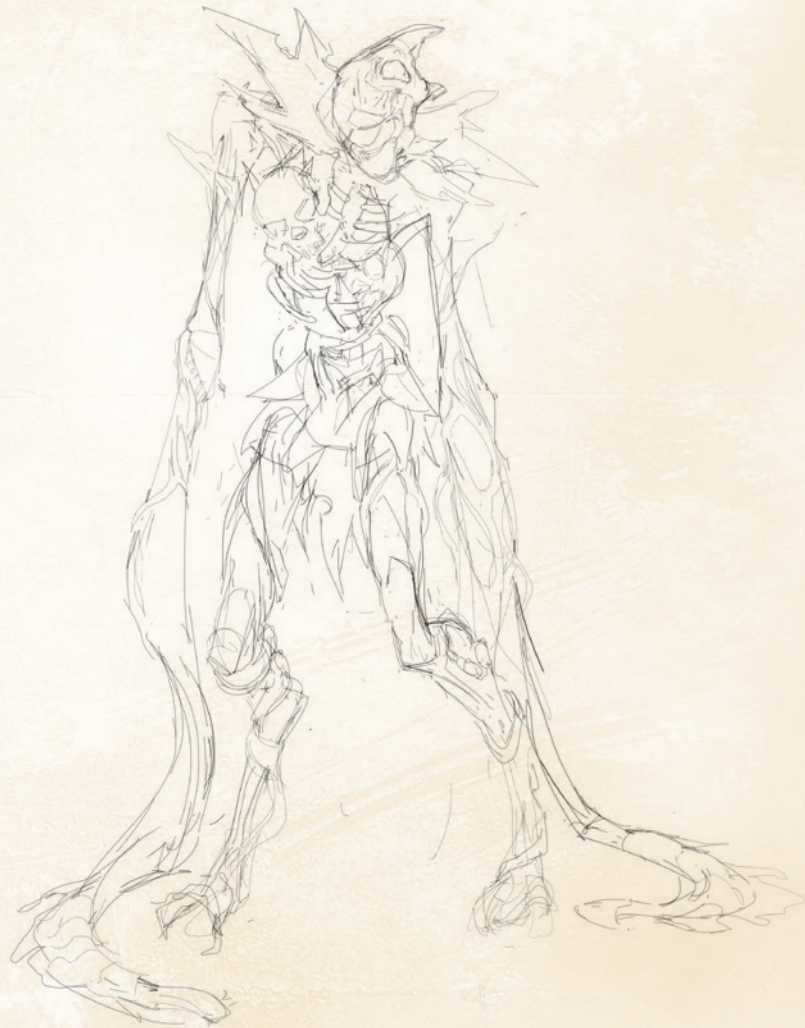
*"Wh-who are you?" one asks.*

*"Don't be dense," another interrupts. "They ain't real. It's another trick."*

*"Yeah, hear that? We're not scared of you!" a third announces, sword shaking in her hand.*

The group is made up of 5 **soldiers** who are, understandably, wary of the party. While a few of them are ready to fight, they can be talked down with proof that the party means them no harm, and a successful **DC 16/18/20 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. Alternatively, a **DC 12/14/16 Charisma (Deception) check** convinces the soldiers that the party is, as they suspected, a harmless illusion which can be safely ignored. If the party contains a character who is recognisably a female spellcaster, these checks are made with disadvantage, as the soldiers assume that the party member is the witch.

Characters who failed their Wisdom saving throw for this hour perceive that one of the soldiers matches the physical description of the witch, and 'know' that she is responsible for any hardships they have encountered so far in the forest.





## STORY ENCOUNTERS

### THE SISTERS

Milana and Danika Zegler have been lost in the woods for several weeks, after Milana got lost on her way to deliver supplies and Danika set out to rescue her. The two recently found each other, though Milana is gravely injured.

**When the party encounters the sisters, read the following:**

*A desperate cry for help rings out, and you see a harried-looking teenage girl crouching over the prone form of a young woman. Her face is streaked with tears as she tries to put pressure on the terrible wounds of her fallen companion who is pale, shaking, and breathing raggedly.*

*As she catches sight of you, her eyes grow wide. "Please, if you're real, please help me! My sister - I think she's dying!"*

Danika Zegler has recently found her sister, Milana, badly wounded. She is bleeding out from multiple wounds, and fading fast. It is clear that she will die if the wounds are not cleaned, treated, and bound. As soon as the situation becomes clear, there is a rustle in the trees and **6 rot blights** start to close in from all directions.

Unless Milana is treated each round, for 5 rounds, she dies of blood loss. Each round, a character must make a **DC 10/12/14 Wisdom (Medicine) check** to stabilize Milana. Any amount of **magical healing, healing potion**, or use of a **healer's kit** also counts as a successful check. If the party defeats the rot blights in less than 5 rounds, the remaining checks must be made out of combat.

Once the rot blights are defeated, the outcome of this encounter depends on the party's success in treating Milana.

**If the party successfully stabilised Milana for 5 rounds:** Milana is saved. Danika is very grateful, and details some of the hardships she has overcome on her journey through the woods (you could potentially use details of random encounters the party has not yet encountered to flesh these out). Her advice grants the party advantage on **Wisdom saving throws** against the forest's magic for the next **1d4 hours**.

Milana gestures groggily towards her pack, and looks meaningfully at her sister. Danika tells the party that her sister wants them to have something, as a thank you, and gives them **2 vials of antitoxin**.

**If the party failed to stabilise Milana, but made at least 3 successful attempts:** Milana dies, but Danika is grateful to the party for trying to save her life and gives them **2 vials of antitoxin**.

**If the party did not attempt to stabilise Milana, or failed at least 3 attempts:** Milana dies, and Danika is overcome with grief. She is angered at the party's lack of help or incompetence. She tells them to go away and let her deal with her sister's body.

Whatever the outcome, Danika is certain that they cannot leave the forest until whatever curse lies upon it has been broken, so would rather find somewhere safe to wait it out. She implores the party to put a stop to the curse, to make sure nothing like this happens to anyone else.

### THE CART

**When the party approaches the cart, read the following:**

*Deep ruts in the earth lead off the road, through broken bushes and down a steep hill, to a cart, now still and silent, leaning against the large tree which, presumably, put a sudden halt to its violent descent. Sat leaning against the cart are the corpses of the driver and his two companions, their heads slumped, but otherwise rigid and unnervingly upright. There is no sign of the horses.*

This is **Borgan Khrazdak's** cart, whose crew became lost in the forest. They lost hope and glumly accepted their fate, having used all of their supplies (and, reluctantly, eaten their horses), and were killed by rot blights. They have been dead long enough that the latent magic of the forest has begun to convert their corpses into **rot blights** themselves. If disturbed, they animate and attack, alerting nearby rot blights to join the fray.

### ROT BLIGHT AMBUSH

*Magic trap, (setback, harm)*

**Trigger (Interact With Bait).** A creature that touches or searches the corpses alerts them into animation.

**Effect (Reanimate Creatures).** The corpses animate into **3 rot blights** that attack all living creatures in the area. Their animation also alerts **3 rot blights** (formed around the skeletons of the horses) which were nearby, which arrive 1d4 rounds later.

**Countermeasures.** A **DC 12/16/20 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that the merchants have unusually prominent veins just under the surface of their skin (this is, in fact, the network of magical vines which will animate their corpses).

### TREASURE

The cart contains the goods the crew were hauling to the town on the other side of the forest. Most is of little value; sacks and crates which once contained food (all of which have been opened and emptied), iron ore, and a handful of brightly-colored geodes (worth **100/300/900 gp** in total).

Beneath the driver's seat is a hidden compartment, which can be uncovered with a successful **DC 10/12/14 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. Inside, there is a pouch of **50/150/450 gp**, as well as a journal. The latest entries grow more and more confused as the supposedly short and simple journey along the forest road began to take longer and longer (see **Appendix D**).



## THE SWAMP

This large, swampy clearing, roughly 200 feet wide, with a 50-foot wide pool in the center, occupies the bottom of a basin, meaning many lost travelers over the years have naturally meandered down to it.

**When the party enters the clearing, read the following:**

*The ground, which has been sloping down away from you, begins to level out as you emerge into a damp, gloomy clearing. A dark pool, coated in vibrant green scum, dominates the area, and the scant dry land around it is strewn with rotting vegetation and broken sticks. Scattered around the periphery are splinters of old wood, which might once have been carts, their owners long gone. Apart from the occasional, lazy bubble from the swamp, the area is dead silent.*

The area is home to a particularly old and lazy **swamp troll** who waits, submerged and dormant, in the central pool for any unfortunate travelers to happen by. To decrease its exertion even more, it has set up a network of tripwires and snares around the area to alert it to any potential meal. These traps are all connected to the troll itself through hooks pierced through its flesh (and quickly healed over, thanks to its regeneration), allowing it to instantly know of any triggered trap, and to reel in ensnared victims.

A close investigation of the ground quickly reveals that the broken sticks scattered about are the remains of rot blights. A character with proficiency in the **Nature** skill might note that the lack of bird song and animal activity suggests the presence of a threat.

## TROLL SNARE

*Mechanical Trap (setback, hinder)*

A series of snares litter the area, all connected to the troll lurking in the central pool.

**Trigger (Tripwire).** A creature that disturbs the tripwire triggers the trap.

**Effect (Snare).** The triggering creature must succeed on a **DC 14/18/22 Dexterity saving throw**, or be restrained until it is freed. Whether it succeeds or fails, the troll is aware of the creature's location.

The troll immediately uses its readied action to reel a restrained creature toward it, at a rate of 45 feet per turn.

**Countermeasures.** The snares are covered with leaf litter, making them difficult to spot. A **DC 14/18/22 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the existence of a snare. Beating the check by **5 or more** reveals additional snares, and the fact that all of them lead into the deep pool at the center of the clearing.

The rope snaring the creature has an **AC of 10** and **2 hp**. While being reeled in, attacks against the rope are made with disadvantage.

Once it has reeled in a creature close enough to grab it, the troll's preferred tactic is to attempt to grapple and drown its victim. If attacked by a larger party, it hides under the water to disguise its movements, and attempts to drag characters out to deeper water, where it has the advantage.

## TREASURE

The broken carts contain a few bits and pieces the troll didn't deem to be useful (or edible). Among the wreckage is a gnawed leather satchel containing two rust-flecked metal hip flasks of *potions of healing*, a locked strongbox containing **50/100/200 gold pieces**, as well as the hopelessly smashed and scattered remnants of a tinderbox.





## THE TOMB

At the heart of the forest is the tomb, which is the center of the magical disturbance plaguing the area. Before the party can enter and put an end to it, however, they must face **Jaycelin Marieve's** forest guardian.

**When the party enters the clearing, read the following:**

*Though clear of trees, the area you find yourself in seems scarcely brighter than the gloom of the forest. Ahead of you are the most complete ruins you have seen yet; a low, squat structure of dark stone, untouched by the surrounding undergrowth, its doorway yawning open to the blackness within. Just emerging from the entrance, beneath a rune-carved lintel, is a statue; a woman crawling forwards up the stairs. Her right hand is outstretched towards the forest, her face distorted into a silent scream of fear and fury.*

The 'statue' is the petrified body of Jaycelin Marieve who, though mortally wounded by Rodion's wraith, nearly managed to escape the tomb before succumbing. Her final spells were to summon a guardian in the form of a **wood golem**, and to send for help using *animal messenger*. These spells, now having been set in stone by the tomb's magic, has spread throughout the forest, animating all manner of decaying material into smaller versions of the wood golem - rot blights - as well as causing wildlife to act strangely. In addition, at the moment she turned to stone, she had just breached the outer perimeter of the tomb, allowing the wraith, Rodion's, essence to begin to seep out of the tomb, mingling with the spells and further twisting them into darker forms.

The carving on the lintel is somewhat crude, suggesting it was made after the structure was built, and by a much less practised hand. The words read:

*My will is lore, and this I set in stone*

*No triumph to the enemy, should he cut our story short*

*No blood to spill, no flesh to carve, no lost soul to distort*

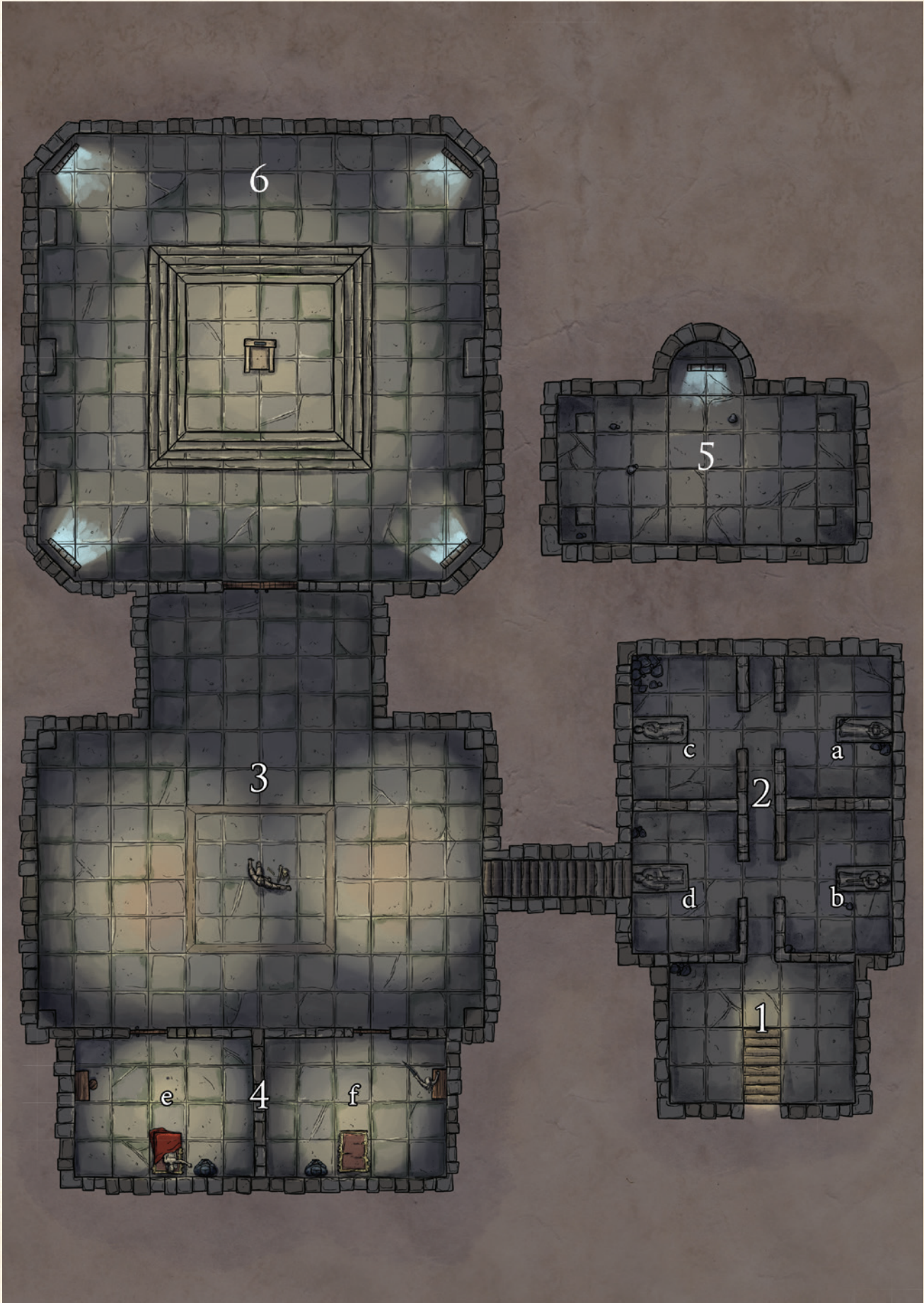
Above the words, a bracket holds the remnants of a symbol of power, belonging to one of the four rulers, **Bozhena** - the metal covers of a thick tome, its pages long since rotted away. This is one of the symbols of power, used by the treacherous Rodion in his failed ritual before being repurposed to power the wards containing him. Rodion needs all four symbols in order to complete his ritual, but bringing all four symbols together is also the only way to strike the final blow against him.

This is the outermost of the wards containing Rodion, and has been fractured by Jaycelin's near escape - the tips of her fingers just breached the doorway as she turned to stone. This allowed the wraith's influence to begin seeping out of the tomb, mingling with Jaycelin's spells - given enough time, he will be able to wear down the fractured ward and gain access to the book - the one symbol he does not yet have access to.

The **wood golem** is watching and waiting in the forest nearby, and charges in to attack anything which approaches Jaycelin, interpreting them as a potential threat.









## PART 3: SET IN STONE

Once the party enters the crypt, they are subject to the effects of the wards. If a character is reduced to 0 hit points by Rodion while in the crypt, they are not knocked unconscious, but instead become petrified. In addition, if the character was casting a spell with a non-instantaneous duration at the time of their petrification, that spell is 'set in stone' along with them, and its effects persist for as long as the character is petrified. It is up to the GM to decide what form this permanence may take.

If Rodion is killed, or the ward is broken, the petrification effect ends for all creatures, as do any permanent spells.

### 1. ENTRANCE

**When the party enters the crypt, read the following:**

*The noises of the forest fade as you descend the stairs into the dead quiet of the chamber. Though your eyes had become accustomed to the dim twilight of the forest, the darkness within seems deeper somehow, as if some malicious power were sapping away what little light dares enter its domain.*

*At the bottom of the stairs is a short corridor; four moldy wooden doors line the space, two on each side.*

### 2. TOMBS

The tombs on the right, and the second tomb on the left, contain the sarcophagi of Bozhena (a), Pridbor (b), and Yaromil (c). The first tomb on the left (d) contains an empty sarcophagus, allegedly built to contain Rodion's corpse.

**When the party enters the tombs, read the following:**

*Each room contains a sarcophagus of gray marble, a stone likeness of the interred resting atop the lid.*

- A serene figure holds a tome to their stone chest, beneath an epitaph reading, 'Bozhena, the Righteous'.*
- A grim warrior, hands resting on a sword hilt lies beneath the carven name, 'Pridbor, the Fierce'.*
- A slight smile creases the statue's face, a stone quill held between their fingers, beneath the name 'Yaromil, the Fair'.*
- This statue has a block of unshaped stone in place of a head. It holds a rod, and bears the epitaph, 'Rodion, the Wise'.*

Rodion's sarcophagus conceals a secret passage, which can be detected with a **DC 12/14/16 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. A **DC 14/16/18 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals disturbance in the dust around the sarcophagus, which suggests it moves.

The objects held in the hands of the carven figures (the book, sword, quill, and rod) conceal switches. If all four switches are activated, Rodion's sarcophagus moves aside, revealing the passageway. A **DC 12/14/16 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals the location of the first switch, and the DC is reduced by 4 for each subsequent switch.

Alternatively, the sarcophagus can be pushed aside with a **DC 16/20/24 Strength (Athletics) check**.

The passageway contains a trap, set by the bodyguards, intended to keep those who found the passageway from intruding further.

## KEEP OUT

*Magical trap (setback, block)*

A magic rune is inscribed on the floor, halfway along the passageway.

**Trigger (Fail to Speak Password).** A creature that passes the halfway point of the corridor without speaking the password, "set in stone", triggers the trap.

**Effect (Elemental Blast).** When triggered, the rune lets out a wave of force, which blasts creatures back along the corridor. All creatures within 5 feet of the rune must make a **DC 14/16/18 Constitution saving throw**, or be thrown backwards a number of feet equal to the amount the creature failed the check by. If a creature is thrown into the back wall, they take **1/2/4 bludgeoning damage** for each foot they were thrown, and are knocked prone.

**Countermeasures.** A successful **DC 12/14/16 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the rune, and a creature that succeeds on a **DC 14/16/18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** knows how the rune works.

A creature next to the rune can disable it with a successful **DC 12/14/16 Intelligence (Arcana) check**, but getting that close sets off the trap. Casting *dispel magic* on the rune makes it fade away, disarming the trap.

Within the passageway is a roughly-carved message reading:

*My will is steel, and this I set in stone*

*That our final acts may linger, should he strike the final blow*

*And ten-fold strong shall come again, a sword against our foe*

Above the words, a bracket holds the remnants of **Pridbor's** symbol of power - the rusted remnants of a longsword. While useless as a weapon, this is one of the symbols of power required to be able to strike the final blow against Rodion.



### 3. WARDING CHAMBER

This room was used for the preparatory sacrifices in Rodion's ritual, but was subsequently used to channel the warding magic keeping Rodion's wraith in check. While channeling the ward, the bodyguards were betrayed by one of their own, loyal to Rodion, who attacked and broke their concentration just long enough for the wraith to enter this chamber and kill the others. This set the warding spells in stone, preventing the wraith from traveling any further out of the tomb.

**When the party enters the warding chamber, read the following:**

*A statue stands in the middle of this chamber; a heavily-armored figure, one arm raised to the side in a loose fist, the other held out towards a large doorway in a defensive open hand. A human skeleton lies scattered at the statue's feet.*

A **DC 10/12/14 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that the 'statue' holds a few neck vertebrae in its raised hand - the only bones missing from the skeleton at its feet.

Above the doorway to the **Throne Room** is a roughly-carved message reading:

*My will is ink, and this I set in stone*

*But even stone may crumble, and even kings must die*

*That page is yet unwritten, but together we must try*

Above the words, a bracket holds the remnants of **Yaromil's** symbol of power - a brittle quill, once extravagantly plumed, but now mostly bare and colorless. This is one of the symbols of power required to be able to strike the final blow against Rodion.

The corridor between the **Warding Chamber** and the **Throne Room** is trapped with a **pitfall trap** designed to dump any would-be intruders into the **Sacrificial Pit**.

### PITFALL TRAP

*Mechanical Trap (deadly, harm)*

A concealed trapdoor gives way under sufficient weight, depositing victims into a pit of zombies.

**Trigger (Pressure Plate).** A creature that steps on the trapdoor activates the pressure plate, causing the trap door to swing open.

**Effect (Drop Into Monster Lair).** When the trap activates, the room's floor falls away, swinging down on hinges connected to the walls. All creatures in the corridor must make a **DC 12/14/16 Dexterity saving throw**. On a successful save, a creature is able to jump to safety or cling to the floor as it goes vertical. On a failed save, the creature falls into the Sacrificial Pit.

Once weight is removed from the doors, hidden counterweights return them to a horizontal position.

**Countermeasures.** A successful **DC 14/16/18 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the pressure plate and a successful **DC 14/16/18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** disables the trap.

### 4. BODYGUARD TOMBS

These chambers were used as private quarters for the loyal bodyguards while they were not on duty channeling the ward.

**If the party investigates the tombs, read the following:**

*The pair of rooms are identically sparse, each containing a ragged, moldering straw pallet bed, a small writing desk, and a neatly stacked suit of rusty armor. Each also contains a statue.*

- e. A heavily built figure rises from the bed, reaching for the wall beside its head. Its fingers just brush the hilt of a corroded sword which leans there.*
- f. A tall figure turns towards the doorway from its seat at the desk, sword in hand.*

### TREASURE

A journal sits on the desk, a record of the weeks leading up to the events in the tomb (see **Appendix D**). The parchment has deteriorated with age, so only scraps remain, but they chronicle a city ruled over by a council of four, each protected by a sworn bodyguard, before one seized power through subterfuge.

This individual, Rodion, killed the other three in an apparent 'accident', and built a grand tomb for their burial. Rodion had a secret suite of chambers excavated alongside, in order to enact a ritual (utilising the symbols of power borne by the four rulers) granting him eternal life and power, but was interrupted before the ritual could be completed and, instead, became a wraith.

The bodyguards, sworn to do no harm to any of the rulers, quickly sealed him in the ritual chamber with warding magic and, soon afterwards, used the lingering magic of Rodion's ritual to form their own ingenious contingency, should the wraith attempt to escape. Anyone killed by the wraith within the tomb would be turned to stone, and their last spells made permanent. This ensured that, should the wraith kill the jailers, not only would their spells of binding and warding endure, but there would also be no flesh or blood for Rodion to use to complete or restart his ritual.

### 5. SACRIFICIAL PIT

Rodion built this chamber to fuel his failed ritual. It still contains the zombified corpses of the sacrificial victims, and serves as another layer of protection against intruders.

**If a party member falls into the Sacrificial Pit, read the following:**

*You hit the floor with a muffled thud - a surprisingly soft landing. The rest of the room is not so welcoming. The smell hits you first; a stale, musty smell of things sealed away and left to rot for so long that little remains to stink. A pale, gray light emanates from a mirror-like portal in one wall, dimly illuminating the shrivelled corpses standing huddled nearby. At your entrance, one turns its hollow face to you, and gives a hoarse moan.*

**10 zombies** shuffle listlessly in the pit. These were the workers responsible for Rodion's expansion of the tomb, and became his first victims to ensure their silence.

The portal was used to syphon the life energy from the zombies in Rodion's ritual, and connects to the portals in the **Throne Room**, when active.



## 6. THRONE ROOM

This chamber contains Rodion's corpse, still enthroned from his failed ritual to become **The Everking**.

**When the party enters the throne room, read the following:**

*Dominating this room is a looming throne atop a tiered dais. Seated atop it is the slumped form of a skeleton, the rotted remnants of robes of office draped over its bones. At the four corners of the chamber are four pale-gray, mirror-like portals, pointed towards the throne. Atop each is a metal bracket, all empty save one, which holds a rod. Behind the throne, carved in a clear, practiced hand are the words:*

*My will is fixed, and this I set in stone*

*A quill to write the future, a book to know the past,*

*A rod to judge the wicked, a sword to guard the just.*

As you read, the shadows shift, curling up behind the throne to form the shape of a roughly humanoid shape of trailing, black smoke.

This room is the haunt of the **wraith**, Rodion.

**Portals.** The portals were originally used to funnel the life energy of the zombified victims in the **Sacrificial Pit** into the **Throne Room**, but can also be used to summon the zombies themselves. As a lair action, on initiative count 20, Rodion can summon one **zombie** from the Sacrificial Pit, which appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of one of the 4 portals. Zombies attempt to grapple the closest living creature, preferring those that are in possession of one or more symbols of power, and drag them back through the nearest portal, where they can be overwhelmed by the zombies in the pit. Characters can also use the portals to travel to and from the Sacrificial Pit. If a character enters the portal in the Sacrificial Pit, they emerge from one of the four portals in the throne room, chosen at random.

**Rod.** Above the northeast portal, a bracket holds Rodion's symbol of power - a tarnished metal rod.

## RITUAL ROD

*Hybrid trap (deadly, harm)*

The other symbols were removed, in order to power the wards, but the rod remains in its original trapped fitting, designed to discourage anyone who would disturb the ritual.

**Trigger (Touch Object).** Touching the rod, even with a spell, activates the trap.

**Effect (Life Drain).** When triggered, the trap leaches life from the triggering creature and transfers it to Rodion. The triggering creature must make a **DC 14/16/18 Charisma saving throw**, taking **2d8/4d8/8d8 necrotic damage** on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Rodion regains an amount of hit points equal to the damage dealt, as the triggering creature's life-force is siphoned away by the remnants of the ritual.

Whether a creature succeeds or fails, they must make a **DC 12/14/16 Constitution check** to keep hold of the rod, after touching it and triggering the trap's effect. On a failed save, they are unable to keep hold of the rod for long enough to remove it from its bracket.

**Effect (Poison Gas).** If the trap is triggered a second time, as well as the initial life drain effect, a 20-foot-radius sphere of poisonous, green fog erupts from the portal, below the rod. The fog spreads around corners. It lasts for 10 minutes, or until strong wind disperses the fog, ending the spell. Its area is heavily obscured.

When a creature enters the cloud's area for the first time on a turn, or starts its turn there, that creature must make a **DC 14/16/18 Constitution saving throw**. The creature takes **1d8/2d8/4d8 poison damage** from the trap on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The fog moves 10 feet away from its starting point at the start of each round, rolling along the surface of the ground. The vapors, being heavier than air, sink to the lowest level of the land, even pouring down openings.

**Countermeasures.** A successful **DC 10/12/14 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals runic symbols carved into the bracket holding the rod. A successful **DC 14/16/18 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals the nature of the trap, and allows a creature to attempt a **DC 14/16/18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** to disable the rune.

The rune can also be found with *detect magic*, and *dispel magic* will disable the rune.

A successful **DC 14/16/18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** allows a character to ease the rod out of the bracket safely, although a failed check triggers the trap.

**Killing the Wraith.** Rodion can only be killed by a creature in possession of the rod, book, quill, and sword. If he is reduced to 0 hit points by any means other than the direct action of a creature in possession of the four items, he is instead reduced to one hit point. If he is able to gain possession of all four items, he is able to complete his original ritual, and gain true immortality in corporeal form.





#### After the wraith is defeated, read the following:

*The shadowy essence holding the wraith together falters, and it casts about in confusion as it begins to drift apart, undone by the latent magic of its own ritual. With a final, wavering shriek, it is gone. There is a sound of crumbling stone, and the armored figure staggers in from the hallway, straightens as best it can, clasps a hand to its chest in a salute, and collapses to the ground, dead. The darkness seems lesser now, the oppressive presence of the wraith gone for good.*

## CONCLUSION

The three bodyguards die upon being unpetrified - their lives were bound to the four rulers and, with the passing of Rodion, they too pass on.

Upon exiting the tomb the party finds **Jaycelin Marieve**, unpetrified and unconscious, but alive. The pall over the forest is lifted and the area is far less ominous; with the wraith gone, and Jaycelin's spells no longer running rampant, there is nothing holding the rot blights together any more, and the enchantments and illusions have dissipated. The party has no trouble finding the main road and, from there, their way back to town, should they so wish.

The townsfolk are grateful that the party have put an end to the curse on the woods, and that trade can resume with their neighbours (though **Uffo Burrowes** is secretly a little disappointed that he can no longer run his racquet on protective charms). **Ivan Volney** is particularly interested if the party divulge the full tale of what they found in the tomb, and is keen to transcribe their experience as a centrepiece for **The Curio Cabinet**.

Many townsfolk still believe Jaycelin to be to blame for their troubles, regardless of any explanation to the contrary, ("She might not have meant it, but 'its still her doing, nonetheless."), though they stop short of running her out of town. **Zoya Kirichenko** offers to take her in and nurse her back to health.

Once she regains consciousness, Jaycelin feels great remorse for the trouble her actions have wrought. She explains that she was simply curious, having heard of ruins in the area, and artifacts within; being a practitioner of magical arts, she was particularly interested in vague rumors of a magical rod, in case it held some arcane power. She trusted her not-inconsiderable skills to keep her safe, but delved too deep too carelessly, and will not be making the same mistake again. Should she hear rumors of any more magical artifacts, she will be sure to enlist the help of some fellow adventurers to retrieve them...

**Danika** (and **Milana**, if she survived) **Zegler** make her/their way home once the forest returns to normal, to the great relief of **Bela** and their **father**, who wordlessly thrusts **25/50/100 gold pieces** into the party's hands, with tears of gratitude in his eyes.

If the party followed any of the adventure hooks, they can collect on what is owed to them:

**Hook #1 - Borgan Khrazdak** is disturbed by the fate of his crew, and grumbles about funeral expenses, but pays the party their due, regardless. If and when his business picks back up again, Borgan is amenable to giving the party very favorable prices for transportation of goods or people.

**Hook #2 - Quranis Kuilanya** is somewhat disappointed that the rod is not innately magical, but is thrilled to have an object of such archaeological significance, if the story is related to her. The party having now proved themselves reliable, she may have other, similar work for them in the future.



## APPENDIX A: BEGINNER MONSTERS

### ROT BLIGHT

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)	8 (-1)	4 (-3)

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 9

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**False Appearance** While the rot blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

#### ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 9 Constitution saving throw, or be poisoned until the end of the rot blight's next turn.

### ROT MITE

*Small undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 11 (2d6 + 4)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Explosive End.** If the rot mite dies, it explodes in a cloud of rotting matter and spores. Living creatures within 10 feet of the rot mite must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, or take 4 (1d8) poison damage, and be poisoned until the end of the creature's next turn.

**False Appearance** While the rot mite remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

#### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

### SOLDIER

*Medium humanoid (and race), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 13 (padded armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 5 (1d8 + 1)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

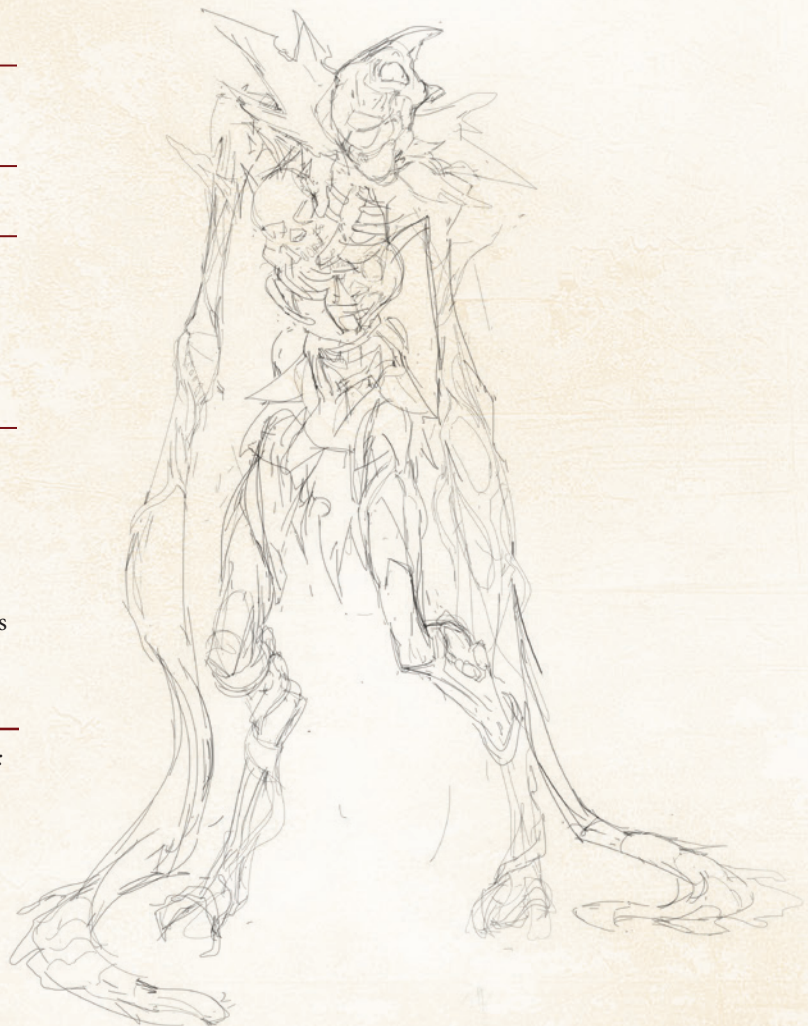
**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

#### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.





## SWAMP TROLL

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 73 (7d10 + 35)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +2, Stealth +4

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

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The swamp troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Overwhelming Stench.** Creatures that start their turn, or move within 5 feet of, the swamp troll must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, or become poisoned. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the start of each of their turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the creature stays at least 10 feet away from the swamp troll for an entire round, they automatically succeed on saving throws to end the effect. After a successful saving throw, a creature is immune to the swamp troll's overwhelming stench for 24 hours.

**Regeneration.** The swamp troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the swamp troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the swamp troll's next turn. The swamp troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Swamp Camouflage.** The swamp troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide while in swamps or murky water.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The swamp troll makes three attacks: one with its bite, and two with its claws. It can replace one of these attacks with a lasso attack.

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

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Lasso.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 50 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained. As a bonus action on its turn, the swamp troll can reel in one Medium or smaller creature grappled in this way, pulling the creature 25 feet straight towards it.

## WOOD GOLEM

*Large undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 80 (7d10 + 42)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	6 (-2)	22 (+6)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Wis +0

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the wood golem is lying still, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wood golem makes two attacks, only one of which can be a slam.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

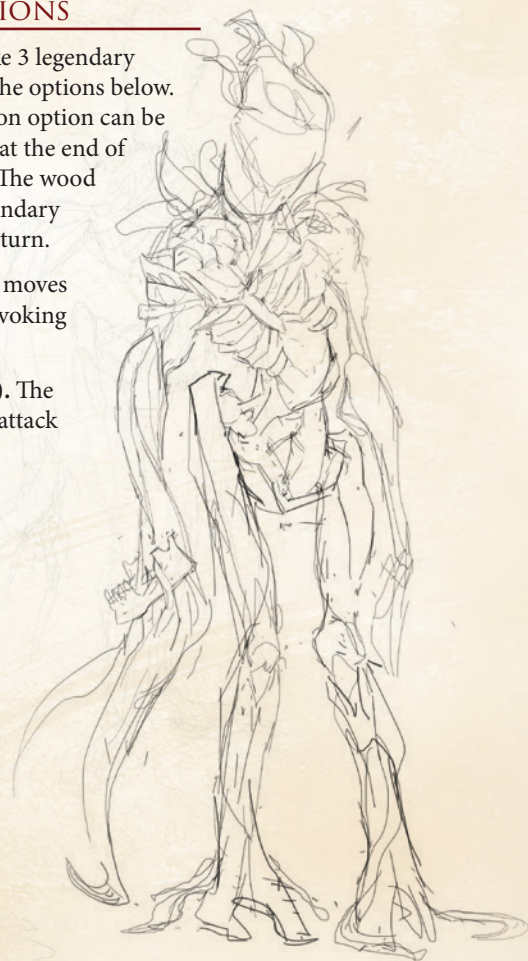
**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw, or be knocked prone.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The wood golem can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The wood golem regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Lurch.** The wood golem moves up to 5 feet, without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Claws (Costs 2 Actions).** The wood golem makes one attack with its claws.





## WRAITH

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 65 (10d8 + 20)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

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

### ACTIONS

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (5d8) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**Necrotic Lash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) necrotic damage.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The wraith can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The wraith regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Shift.** The wraith flies up to half its fly speed, without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Hateful Lash.** The wraith makes a Necrotic Lash attack.

## ZOMBIE

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 13 (2d8 + 4)

**Speed** 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	6 (-2)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Con +4, Wis +0

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life, but can't speak

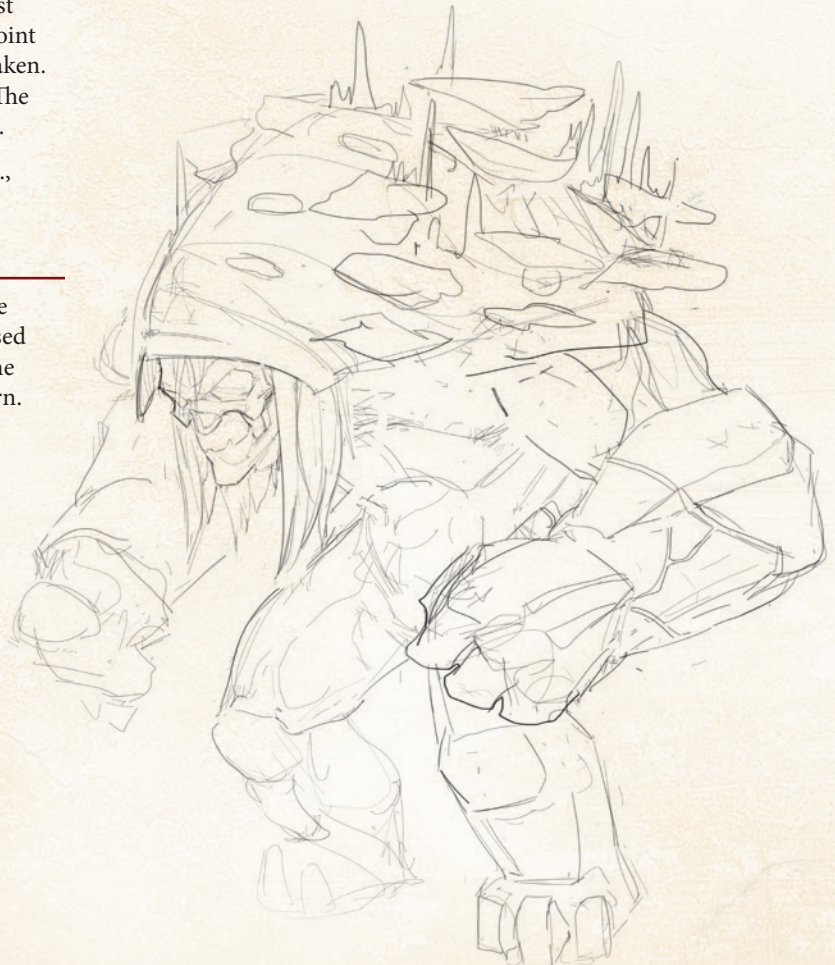
**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Cadaverous Appearance.** While the zombie is lying still, it is indistinguishable from a mundane decomposing corpse. It can still be detected by a *detect evil and good* spell, or similar magic.

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

### ACTIONS

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





## APPENDIX B: INTERMEDIATE MONSTERS

### ROT BLIGHT

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**False Appearance** While the rot blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The rot blight makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, or be poisoned until the end of the rot blight's next turn.

### ROT MITE

*Small undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 19 (3d6 + 9)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Explosive End.** If the rot mite dies, it explodes in a cloud of rotting matter and spores. Living creatures within 10 feet of the rot mite must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or take 9 (2d8) poison damage, and be poisoned until the end of the creature's next turn.

**False Appearance** While the rot mite remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The rot mite makes two attacks with its bite.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

### SOLDIER

*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 15 (padded armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

**Skills** Athletics +4

**Senses** passive Perception 12

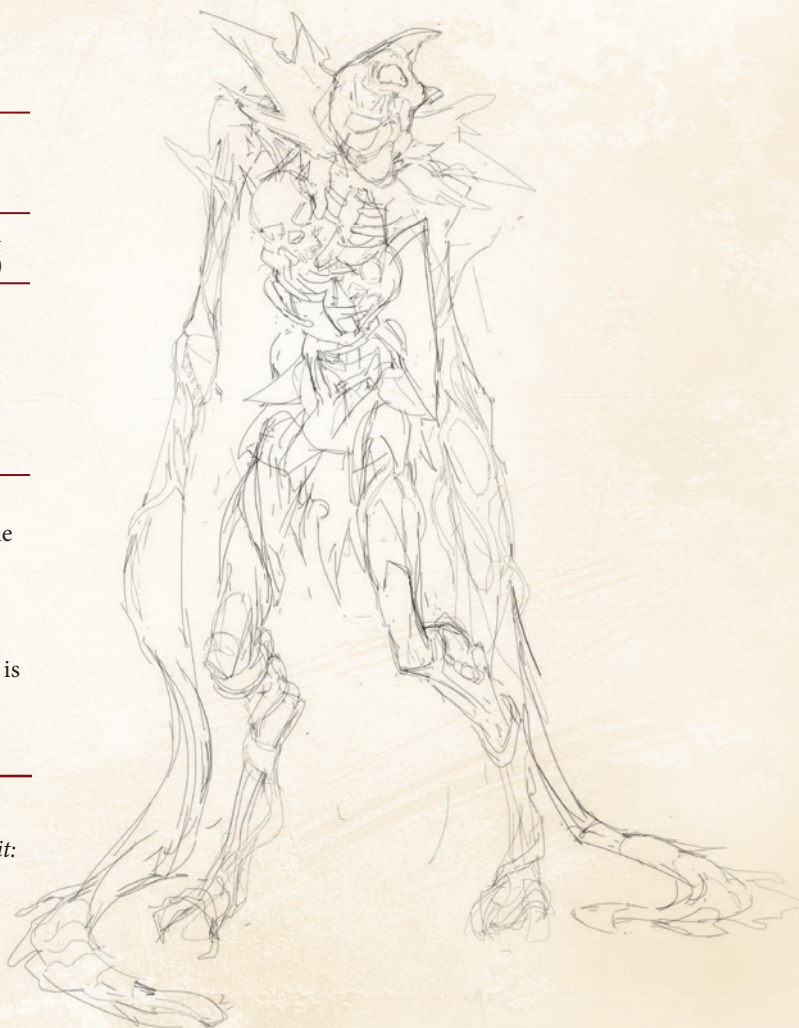
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Shield Wall.** While the soldier is within 5 feet of at least two other creatures with this trait, and they are all wielding shields, the soldier gains a +2 bonus to their AC and to Dexterity saving throws.

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.





## SWAMP TROLL

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 105 (10d10 + 50)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	21 (+5)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	7 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

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

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The swamp troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Overwhelming Stench.** Creatures that start their turn, or move within 5 feet of, the swamp troll must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, or become poisoned. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the start of each of their turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the creature stays at least 10 feet away from the swamp troll for an entire round, they automatically succeed on saving throws to end the effect. After a successful saving throw, a creature is immune to the swamp troll's overwhelming stench for 24 hours.

**Regeneration.** The swamp troll regains 15 hit points at the start of its turn. If the swamp troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the swamp troll's next turn. The swamp troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Swamp Camouflage.** The swamp troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide while in swamps or murky water.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The forest troll makes three attacks: one with its bite, and two with its claws. It can replace one of these attacks with a lasso attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

**Lasso.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 50 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained. As a bonus action on its turn, the swamp troll can reel in one Medium or smaller creature grappled in this way, pulling the creature 25 feet straight towards it.

## WOOD GOLEM

*Large undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 175 (14d10 + 98)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	6 (-2)	24 (+7)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Con +10, Wis +2

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the wood golem is lying still, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wood golem makes three attacks: one with its slam, and two with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

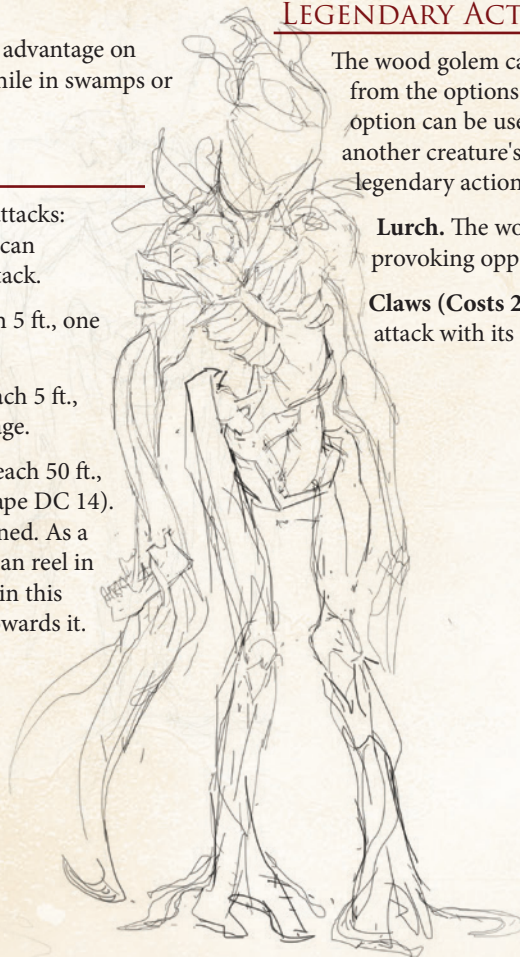
**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw, or be knocked prone.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The wood golem can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The wood golem regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Lurch.** The wood golem moves up to 5 feet, without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Claws (Costs 2 Actions).** The wood golem makes one attack with its claws.





## WRAITH

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 195 (26d8 + 78)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

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

## ACTIONS

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 36 (8d8) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**Necrotic Lash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 20 (4d8) necrotic damage.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The wraith can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The wraith regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Shift.** The wraith flies up to half its fly speed, without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Hateful Lash.** The wraith makes a Necrotic Lash attack.

## ZOMBIE

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 68 (8d8 + 32)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	9 (-1)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Con +6, Wis +1

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life, but can't speak

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Cadaverous Appearance.** While the zombie is lying still, it is indistinguishable from a mundane decomposing corpse. It can still be detected by a *detect evil and good* spell, or similar magic.

**Grasping Horde.** If a creature is grappled by more than one creature with this ability, it has disadvantage on ability checks to escape the grapple.

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

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The zombie makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 11). Until this grapple ends, the zombie can't use its slam attack against another target.





## APPENDIX C: ADVANCED MONSTERS

### ROT BLIGHT

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 75 (10d8 + 30)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

**Saving Throws** Con +5, Int +0, Wis +3

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 11

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**False Appearance** While the rot blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The rot blight makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or be poisoned until the end of the rot blight's next turn.

### ROT MITE

*Small undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 39 (6d6 + 18)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+2)	18 (+3)	2 (-4)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Explosive End.** If the rot mite dies, it explodes in a cloud of rotting matter and spores. Living creatures within 10 feet of the rot mite must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or take 13 (3d8) poison damage, and be poisoned until the end of the creature's next turn.

**False Appearance** While the rot mite remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The rot mite makes two attacks with its bite.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

### SOLDIER

*Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment*

**Armor Class** 16 (chainmail)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +5

**Senses** passive Perception 10

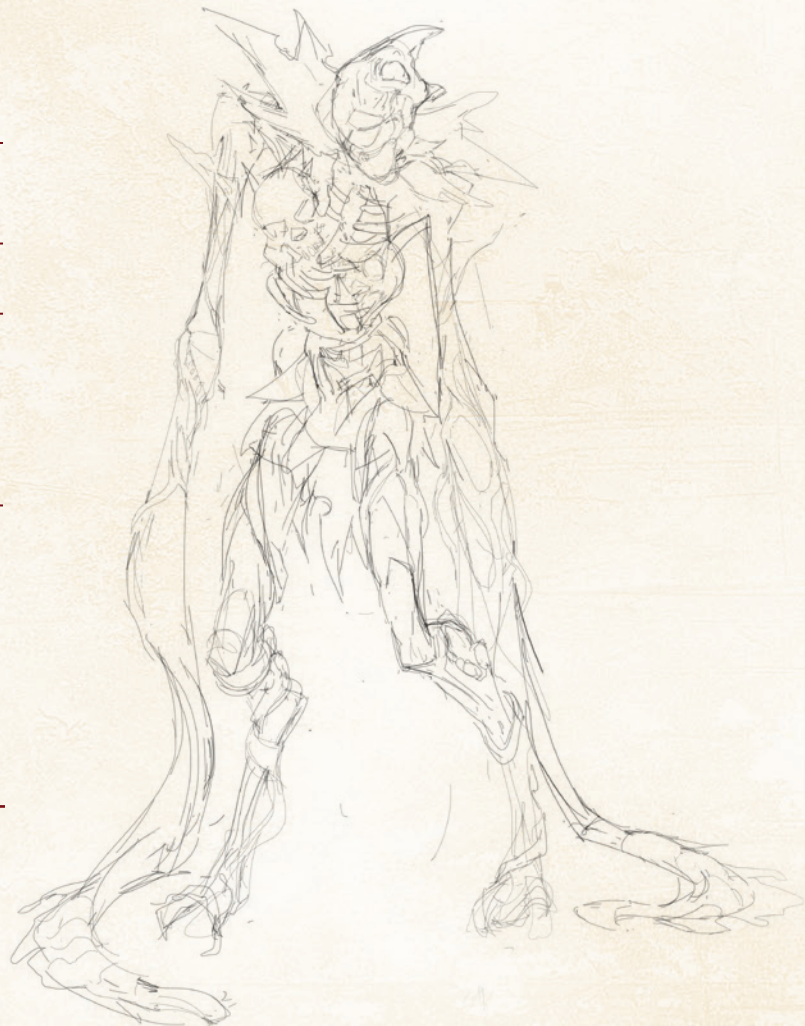
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Line Defense.** If the soldier is within 5 feet of at least two other creatures with this trait, they can use their reaction to make a single melee weapon attack against a target, when that target enters the soldier's reach.

#### ACTIONS

**Halberd.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage.





## SWAMP TROLL

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 149 (13d10 + 78)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	13 (+1)	22 (+6)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	7 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +5

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

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The swamp troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Overwhelming Stench.** Creatures that start their turn, or move within 5 feet of, the swamp troll must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, or become poisoned. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the start of each of their turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the creature stays at least 10 feet away from the swamp troll for an entire round, they automatically succeed on saving throws to end the effect. After a successful saving throw, a creature is immune to the swamp troll's overwhelming stench for 24 hours.

**Regeneration.** The swamp troll regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn. If the swamp troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the swamp troll's next turn. The swamp troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Swamp Camouflage.** The swamp troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide while in swamps or murky water.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The forest troll makes three attacks: one with its bite, and two with its claws. It can replace one of these attacks with a lasso attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

**Lasso.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 50 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained. As a bonus action on its turn, the swamp troll can reel in one Medium or smaller creature grappled in this way, pulling the creature 25 feet straight towards it.

## WOOD GOLEM

*Large undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 250 (20d10 + 140)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	6 (-2)	25 (+7)	2 (-4)	9 (-1)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Con +12, Wis +4

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak

**Challenge** 14 (11,500 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the wood golem is lying still, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of rotting vegetation.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wood golem makes three attacks; one with its slam, and two with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) slashing damage.

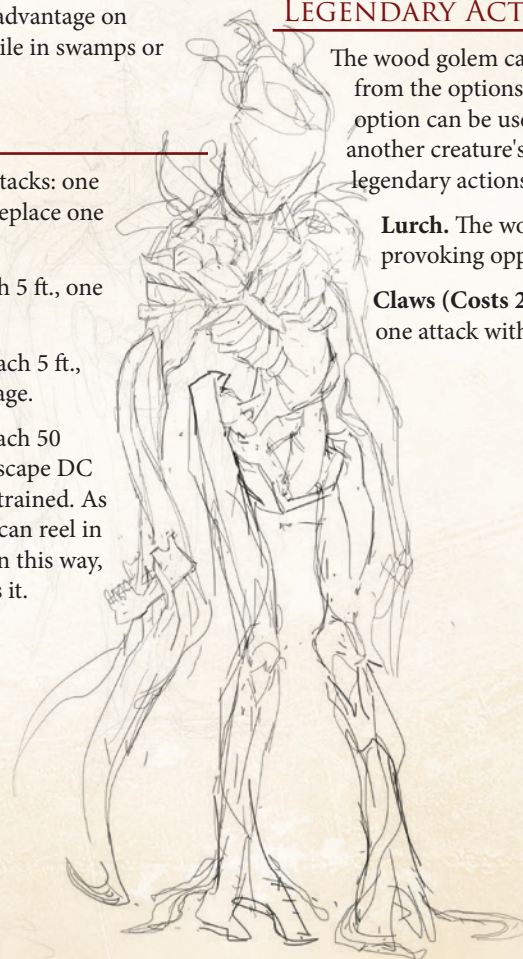
**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw, or be knocked prone.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The wood golem can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The wood golem regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Lurch.** The wood golem moves up to 5 feet, without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Claws (Costs 2 Actions).** The wood golem makes one attack with its claws.





## WRAITH

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 246 (29d8 + 116)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	20 (+5)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)

**Damage Vulnerabilities** radiant

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 18 (20,000 XP)

**Incorporeal Movement.** The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** When the wraith fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

## ACTIONS

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 54 (12d8) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**Necrotic Lash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (5d8) necrotic damage.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The wraith can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time, and only at the end of another creature's turn. The wraith regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Shift.** The wraith flies up to half its fly speed, without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Hateful Lash.** The wraith makes a Necrotic Lash attack.

## ZOMBIE

*Medium undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 133 (14d8 + 70)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	6 (-2)	20 (+5)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

**Saving Throws** Con +8, Wis +3

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life, but can't speak

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Cadaverous Appearance.** While the zombie is lying still, it is indistinguishable from a mundane decomposing corpse. It can still be detected by a *detect evil and good* spell, or similar magic.

**Grasping Horde.** If a creature is grappled by more than one creature with this ability, it has disadvantage on ability checks to escape the grapple.

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

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The zombie makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the zombie can't use its slam attack against another target.





## APPENDIX D: DOCUMENTS

### MERCHANT'S JOURNAL

*Could have sworn this should have been a two-day journey, at most. Hard to tell how long it's been. Day or night, much the same with all these damned trees.*

*Traveled this path half a hundred times, must be. Could swear I've never seen this place before.*

*Saw some more of those shadows moving in the trees. Called out to them to show themselves, but they paid no heed. They stank. There was talk of a troll stalking about. These looked smaller though. Best be careful.*

*Tried to cut through to our usual route. Got turned around and can't find the road now. Slow going. Rations getting low...*

*Saw a deer. Just stared at me, like it was trying to tell me something. Went to get the crossbow, but it was gone by the time I nocked.*

*Find me. Free me.*

*I don't remember writing that.*

*Hate this place.*

*Found the road. Think it's the road. Something on our tail. Got to pick up the pace.*



## BODYGUARDS' JOURNAL

*...being the thirtieth year of their reign. Long live the four, and we four that guard them. Gods' will that our city may continue to prosper.*

*...collapsed with them within... the feast hall... and many dignitaries. Rodion alone being outside, was spa...*

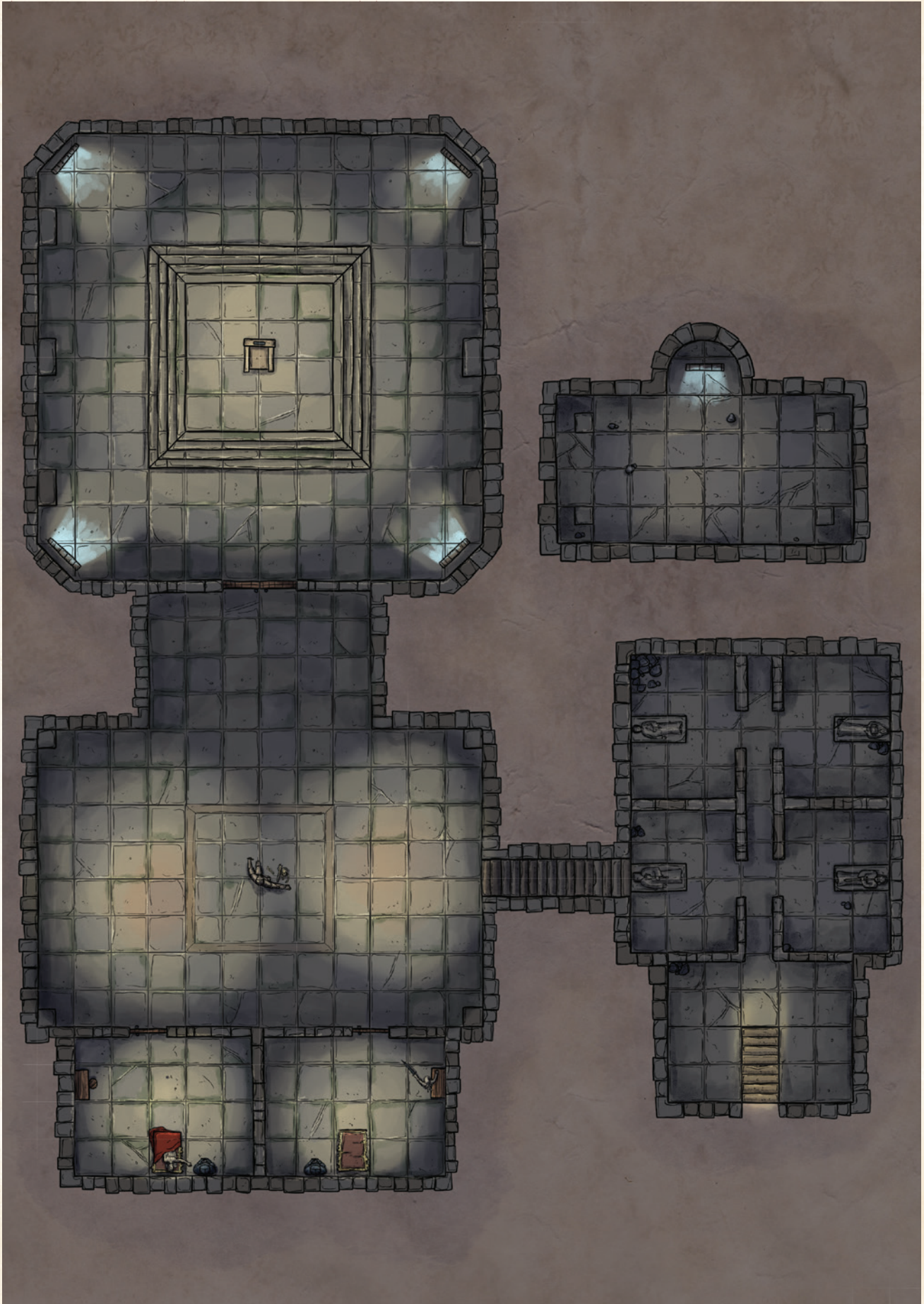
*...a grand tomb for them, with space for himself, when the time comes... reunited with the three honored dead. While he lives, he alone is our...*

*...was no accident, but Rodion's first betrayal. In secret... chambers for his own dark purposes... kers who built it were the first sacrifices, but how many more, I ca... by combining their symbolic power, and the lifeforce of... power set in stone, unyielding and unbreakable. The Everking.*

*...we three who remain loyal... no sign of our fourth... thrown in his lot with the betrayer... as soon as we could, but the ritual was already begun... sworn to do him no harm, but disrupting the ritual was enough... contingency, and his spirit arose, dark, twisted, and terrible... thinking quickly, began a prayer of warding to keep him contained, but must rest before long, and then... shall take up the chant in turn, but should one of us falter...*

*...provides the solution. The magic of Rodion's ritual lingers, remolded and rechanneled... inscriptions, and their symbols... the entire complex. Any he kills within shall be as stone, their bodies of no use should he... and their spells also, set in stone and made permanent... escape all but certain in time, but as long as one of us remains to chant, with our last breath, the wards shall keep him here evermore.*







## LEGAL

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Can you discover its source, or are you doomed to wander the woods forever?

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