A 5e & PATHFINDER-COMPATIBLE ADVENTURE FOR 4-7 PLAYERS OF LEVELS 1-20

DARK-ONE

VOL. 8

THE BOOK OF DARK SECRETS

MISGUIDED



5th Edition Fantasy

PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

DARK BY DESIGN

Credits ~ D&D 5e

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Introduction

ADVENTURE INTRODUCTION

You feel the magic box that Matigan Brennan gave you vibrate and hum. You open the box and see an amulet resting upon a slip of parchment. The face of the amulet is made of silver, encircled by a loop of ivory. There is an ornate sigil engraved onto the silver face. You retrieve the parchment and read it.

One of the gifts my father gave me years ago. It's an amulet of protection, and believe me when I say that it works. Just a small thank you for putting your trust in me.
I am working on something new for you to investigate, but it takes more research on my part. In the meantime, may this pendant provide you with protection, and may your blades continue to be keen. Until next time,

M

NOTES - This amulet should be decided by the DM/GM, and should be one that offers group protection as opposed to having a power that only benefits the wearer. Some amulet suggestions are as follows:

PROTECTION from EVIL
PROTECTION from CHAOS
PROTECTION from OUTSIDERS

The following short adventure can be inserted into almost any wilderness campaign and involves the party being sent into a trap being set by a band of monstrous bandits. This short adventure takes place in a hollow. This hollow is not a cave, but a slightly submerged area of land that is lower in elevation than the lands surrounding it.

The plan of the bandits lying in wait is simple. To kill all of the PCs, loot them of all weapons and valuables, then ride off in their covered wagon to another location, and to continue with their dirty work for as long as possible.

These bandits are known as **THE CRIMSON CUDGELS.** They got their name by starting small and ambushing rich merchants traveling through the wilderness late at night. The Cudgels would smash their victims in the head with their clubs, take their loot, and leave the area quickly.

The leader of The Crimson Cudgels is a shapechanger named **BARIOGANU.** Barioganu will assume the form of a lone adventurer whose party was slain by bandits on the outskirts of town. This short adventure may occur at almost any time that the DM/GM deems fit.

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1. A WAGON AND A HOLLOW -
You see smoke rise before you and smell a haunch of meat being cooked. This smoke rises from an area sloping down into a hollow. Outside of this hollow is a red and black covered wagon and two horses. Painted in the common tongue on the side of the wagon are the words:

DR. PHANTASM!
ILLUSIONIST EXTRAORDINAIRE,
AND HIS TRAVELING BARDS

As you get closer to the opening of the hollow, you see stairs that have been cut into the dirt. The stairs descend for 25 feet, and you see a bald warrior with his back to you roasting meat over a spit. Without turning around, the man lifts his head and speaks. As he speaks, he halfheartedly raises a loaded crossbow in his right hand.

"Aye, I'm alone, but I've had one helluva bad day. I hope you're friendly. Come join me. If you were bandits, you would have already shot me in the back by now."

Shroom Hollow

1 Square = 5 Feet





Sole Survivor

The man lowers his crossbow and rips aways a hunk of meat from the spit. As you near the stranger, the man continues,

"I'm Spencer, by the way. My party and I were traveling across these lands to provide entertainment. Instead, my brothers ended up with a score of godsdamned goblin arrows in their backs. The only reason I'm still alive is that I got the hells out of there, dragging this heap along with me. Nearly rode Gertie and Maxine to death getting away, but we're alive. Care for some rabbit, pilgrims?"

NOTES - The wagon is locked from the inside. **Lurking inside is a lycanthrope** that will wait for the signal to leave the wagon and venture down the natural steps to surprise attack the party. The signal is Spencer's feigned scream of terror. Spencer's function is to put the party at ease and to generate seemingly typical rumors traditionally used in any fantasy campaign. Spencer tells the truth in case the story he shares with the party can be detected employing true seeing or divination. Spencer has no intention of having the party survive to find out if his tale is true or not. Spencer will relay the following story in hopes of gaining the trust of the party.

The rugged-looking bald warrior offers you meat and a swallow of whiskey from a ceramic jug and says,

"I don't know if you folks are from around here, but I heard the next town south of here has a guild of thieves fighting against a guild of assassins. If you ask me, what's wrong with humans nowadays is *greed*. Can you imagine running half an entire city and not being satisfied? *Greed, I tell ya!*"

Spencer takes a long tug at the whiskey jug he has been partaking of. He then continues to add a bit too much information,

"Well, *damn*. I'll be right back. *Urp!* I have to go drain the ole tuatara lizard, if ya know what I mean, and maybe something else! Ha!"

Spencer gets up and wavers for a second then points to his destination and heads further into the hollow.

You have the opportunity to get a closer look at your surroundings. Immediately to your right is a ridge that rises 10 feet and is surrounded by half a dozen giant mushrooms. To your left is another copse of mushrooms that extends 30 feet into the hollow.
Almost 40 feet ahead of you is a bridge that spans over a slow-moving creek.
Interrupting your assessment of the hollow, *a scream shatters the silence of the night.*

Dark humanoid figures come into view 25 feet ahead of you, and more dark shapes loom to the right of you. The telltale sound of bowstrings being drawn can be heard, as something is padding its way down the rough-hewn steps behind you. *It seems that you are suddenly caught in a three-way crossfire.*

NOTES - The three-pronged attack is detailed below. The DM/GM may choose from a wide variety of Lycanthropes including Werewolves, Wererats, Wereboars, and Weretigers. The DM/GM may also choose a humanoid type that is a challenge to the party, but not an outright TPK. These could range from Goblins, Orcs, Gnolls, Hobgoblins, Bugbears, and Ogres. **The *number* of these creatures should also be determined by the DM/GM.**

The humanoids from area 4 may wait to attack after the first wave of attacks has ended.

Lycanthrope Sneak Attack



2. SOUTH ATTACK -
Humanoid figures are in front of you, readying their bows.

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3. SOUTHWEST ATTACK -
Humanoids hiding behind giant mushrooms take aim with their longbows.

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4. LYING IN WAIT -
After bypassing the creek, you make your way further into the hollow. Movement appears between half a dozen clusters of enormous mushrooms. Armored humanoids rush forth to attack!

NOTES - The DM/GM can spice up this short adventure considerably by including a variety of humanoids, the weapons they use, their tactics, etc. If the PCs search this area thoroughly and make a successful DC 20 Perception roll, they will uncover the body that was replicated by the shapeshifter leader. ***The body is that of the real Spencer.*** He has been slain by bandit arrows to the back. He looks exactly like the fake Spencer.

5. DEADLY MUSHROOMS -
A copse of enormous mushrooms takes up much of a 10-foot by 20-foot shelf that is upon a 10-foot high ledge. The mushrooms are a sickly mauve color.

NOTES - BEAR TRAP - The DM/GM should ask for a marching order for this adventure, as well as which character is the first PC to walk into this area. The trap has been covered liberally with moss in the hopes of cleverly disguising this trap. Attack +10 and damage is (1d6+2). If a PC fails his or her save and activates the trap, read the following to the players,

A sharp snap of metal on metal is heard immediately followed by an involuntary yell from your point person. A bear trap has been activated and jagged iron jaws have bit deeply into his (or her) **lower leg.**

The enormous mushrooms adorning the raised ledge above you begin to stir, and a huge, plant-like form rears back and attacks your party from above.



Stats - Plants & Shifter

YELLOW MUSK CREEPER	AC 12 - HP 25 - Spd 5
STR 18, DEX 14, CON 17, INT 0, WIS, 10, CHA 8 Senses DV 60 Perc 12, Challenge 1 (200 XP) ACTIONS Tendril +6 to hit (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. Pollen DC 13 Con save or incapacitated 1d4 minutes.	

ASSASSIN VINE	AC 13 - HP 85 - Spd 5
STR 18, DEX 10, CON 16, INT 1, WIS, 10, CHA 1 Senses BS 30 Perc 10, Challenge 3 (700 XP) ACTIONS Constrict +6 to hit (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. DC 13 Str save or be restrained.	

SHAMBLING MOUND	AC 15 - HP 136 - Spd 20
STR 18, DEX 8, CON 16, INT 5, WIS, 10, CHA 5 Senses BS 60 ft, Perc 10, Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) ACTIONS Slam +7 to hit (2d8 + 4) bludgeon damage. Engulf DC 14 Con save needed or (2d8 + 4) bludgeon.	

GIANT FLYTRAP	AC 16 - HP 102 - Spd 15
STR 19, DEX 11, CON 17, INT 1, WIS, 10, CHA 5 Senses BS 60 ft, Perc 10, Challenge 10 (5,900 XP) ACTIONS 4 bites +8 to hit (2d10 + 4) piercing damage. (escape DC 16 save or (3d6) acid damage.	

ASSASSIN VINE	CR 3 - AC 15 - HP 30
STR 20, DEX 10, CON 16, INT —, WIS, 13, CHA 9 Init +0, Senses BS 30, Perception +1, XP 800 Speed 5, Base Atk +3, CMB +9, CMD 19 Melee slam +7 (1d8+7 plus grab)	

MOSS MONSTER	CR 6 - AC 21 - HP 67
STR 18, DEX 15, CON 16, INT 13, WIS, 14, CHA 17 Init +6, Senses AAV, Perception +16, XP 2,400 Speed 30, Base Atk +6, CMB +10, CMD 22 Melee 2 slams +10 (1d6+4) poison cloud	

GIANT FLYTRAP	CR 10 - AC 22 - HP 149
STR 25, DEX 18, CON 25, INT 1, WIS, 12, CHA 6 Init +8, Senses LL Vision, Perception +10, XP 9,600 Speed 10, Base Atk +9, CMB +18, CMD 32 Melee 4 bites +15 (1d8+7 plus grab) engulf	

ADVANCED GIANT FLYTRAP	CR 11 - AC 26 - HP 175
STR 29, DEX 22, CON 29, INT 1, WIS, 16, CHA 10 Init +10, Senses LLV, Perception +12, XP 12,800 Speed 10, Base Atk +9, CMB +20, CMD 36 Melee 4 bites +17 (1d8+9 plus grab) engulf	

DOPPELGANGER	AC 14 - HP 52 - Spd 30
STR 11, DEX 18, CON 14, INT 11, WIS, 12, CHA 14 Senses DV 60 Perc 11, Challenge 3 (700 XP) ACTIONS Slam +6 to hit (1d6 + 4) bludgeon damage. Read thoughts within 60 feet.	

OGRE MAGE	AC 10 - HP 51 - Spd 40
STR 19, DEX 10, CON 16, INT 16, WIS, 14, CHA 10 Senses DV 60 Perc 12, Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) ACTIONS Staff +7 to hit (2d8 + 4) bludgeon damage. Mage Armor, Fireball, Lightning Bolt, Scorching Ray.	

ONI	AC 16 - HP 110 - Spd 30
STR 19, DEX 11, CON 16, INT 14, WIS, 12, CHA 15 Senses DV 60 ft, Perc 14, Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) ACTIONS Claw +7 to hit (1d8 + 4) slashing damage. Glaive +7 to hit (2d10 + 4) slashing damage. Spells.	

ONI	AC 16 - HP 110 - Spd 30
STR 19, DEX 11, CON 16, INT 14, WIS, 12, CHA 15 Senses DV 60 ft, Perc 14, Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) ACTIONS Claw +7 to hit (1d8 + 4) slashing damage. Glaive +7 to hit (2d10 + 4) slashing damage. Spells.	

DOPPELGANGER	CR 3 - AC 16 - HP 26
STR 18, DEX 13, CON 12, INT 13, WIS, 14, CHA 13 Init +1, Senses DV 60, Perception +9, XP 800 Speed 30, Base Atk +4, CMB +8, CMD 20 Melee 2 claws +8 (1d8+4)	

JA NOI ONI	CR 5 - AC 18 - HP 57
STR 19, DEX 15, CON 18, INT 12, WIS, 13, CHA 14 Init +2, Senses DV 60, Perception +10, XP 1,600 Speed 30, Base Atk +6, CMB +10, CMD 22 Melee mwk tetsubo +11 (1d10+6/x4) bow +8 (1d8/x3)	

OGRE MAGE	CR 8 - AC 21 - HP 92
STR 24, DEX 17, CON 23, INT 14, WIS, 14, CHA 17 Init +7, Senses DV 60, Perception +13, XP 4,800 Speed 40, fly 60, Base Atk +8, CMB +16, CMD 29 Melee greatsword +14 (3d6+10) bow +10 (2d6+7)	

ATAMAHUTA ONI	CR 11 - AC 25 - HP 147
STR 25, DEX 12, CON 20, INT 13, WIS, 16, CHA 17 Init +5, Senses DV 60, Perception +24, XP 12,800 Speed 30, Base Atk +14, CMB +22, CMD 33 Melee +2 orc double axe +22 (2d6+12/19-20)	

Spencer's Last Stand

6. SPENCER'S LAST STAND -
Spencer lies before you in a heap. He is lying prone on his back and two dead humans lie next to him. A groan comes from Spencer,

"Ugh, dear *gods*... ...that was the worst piss I've ever had in my entire life! Thank the gods you lot are still alive. Help me up, will you?"

NOTES - The shapeshifter calling himself "Spencer" (Barioganu) will take this opportunity to attack the party to the death. If the PCs have made it this far in the hollow, Barioganu knows he has no one else to help him. He will try to once again put the party at ease and sneak attack the largest warrior first, then any spellcasters next. The two dead humans are indeed dead and are all part of The Crimson Cudgel's typical plan of attack.

There are several horses that belonged to many of the bandits. These horses are being tended to in the nearby woods. The DM/GM may also choose to stage another bandit attack outside of Shroom Hollow.

The DM/GM may also choose to add magic items or weapons as he or she sees fit, but the vast majority of the remaining treasures are within the recently unlocked wagon.

These treasures are as follows:

PC LEVELS - 1-5 - 126 pp, 234 gp, 357 sp, 445 cp, **WAND OF MINERAL DETECTION** (15 charges) 5 sapphires worth 60 gp each. Masterwork Sling with **19 silver sling bullets +1.**

PC LEVELS - 6-10 - 214 pp, 336 gp, 460 sp, 540 cp, **WAND OF MINERAL DETECTION** (19 charges) **WAND OF MAGIC MISSILES** (18 charges) 7 sapphires worth 80 gp each. **Sling +1 with 24 silver sling bullets +1.** An onyx ring with a ruby worth 120 gp.

PC LEVELS - 11-15 - 348 pp, 420 gp, 522 sp, 660 cp, **WAND OF MINERAL DETECTION** (24 charges) **WAND OF MAGIC MISSILES** (24 charges) 10 sapphires worth 100 gp each. **Sling +1 with 33 silver sling bullets +1.** An onyx ring with a ruby worth 250 gp. **Handaxe +1**.

PC LEVELS - 16-20 - 444 pp, 560 gp, 616 sp, 777 cp, **WAND OF MINERAL DETECTION** (36 charges) **WAND OF MAGIC MISSILES** (40 charges) 15 sapphires worth 200 gp each. **Sling +2 with 44 silver sling bullets +1.** An onyx ring with a ruby worth 500 gp. **Handaxe +2,** and a **ROD OF ABSORPTION.**

MAGIC MUSHROOMS - The DM/GM may choose to have these giant mushrooms be some form of **magic mushrooms.** These magic mushrooms can have virtually any properties that he or she chooses. If the PCs bring hunks of these shrooms to the nearest town and consult with an alchemist, for a fee, said alchemist could relay the powers of these lovely shrooms, which might include having the following properties: sleep, poison, slow, visions, intoxication, healing of certain injuries or ailments, etc. The shrooms with magical properties should be limited, however.

AFTERWORD - This concludes the adventure **MISGUIDED.** DARK BY DEZIGN hopes that you and your players have enjoyed this dark, short adventure. Plenty more of our publications can be found by visiting DTRPG under **DARK BY DEZIGN.**

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