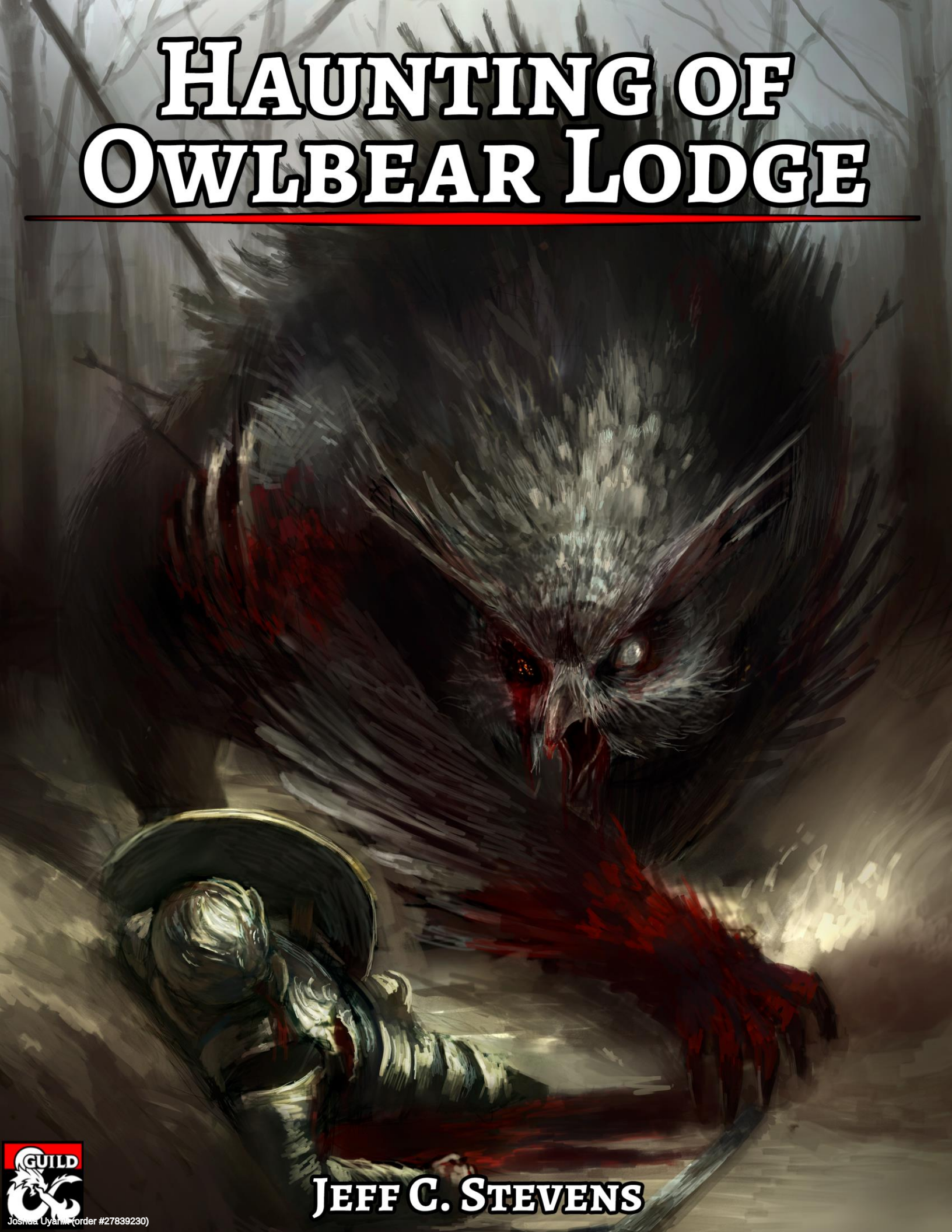
# Haunting of Owlbear Lodge



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# *Haunting of Owlbear Lodge*

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# Introduction

Welcome to *Haunting of Owlbear Lodge*, an adventure in the Neverwinter region for three to five characters of 3rd level. Scaling suggestions have been added to allow this adventure to be played with characters of 1st through 6th level.

This adventure is designed for **three to five 1st–6th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**.

## Using this Supplement

Locations in this adventure may be changed as needed to fit your campaign.

Text in these yellow boxes is to be read to players.

Text in these boxes is for the DM only and should not be read to players.

Unless otherwise noted, all NPCs have the stats of a **commoner**.

## Placing the Adventure

Though written for use in the Neverwinter region of the Forgotten Realms, this adventure is easily be placed within any forested area or campaign setting. Lord Neverember's name and the location of Neverwinter can be changed as you see fit.

## Average Party Level

The **Average Party Level (APL)** is used to calculate the appropriate challenge level for your party. To calculate the APL, add the total levels of all characters and divide the sum by the number of characters (rounding up for .5 or greater).

## Skill Checks and Saving Throws

Specific DCs are written for each of the encounters. You may wish to change these DCs based on the APL of the adventuring party. We suggest the following range:

| APL | Check / Save DC |
|---|---|
| 1st thru 2nd | 10 |
| 3rd thru 4th | 12 |
| 5th thru 6th | 15 |

In addition, if you feel a skill check or saving throw DC is too low or too high, feel free to adjust the DC as you wish.

## Maps

Unless otherwise noted, for all maps:
1 square = 5 feet.

## You Are Empowered

As mentioned above, you do not have to run these encounters as written. You (as the DM) are empowered to make changes as you wish – adjusting the encounters as the game is played.



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# Adventure Primer

## Adventure Background

**Herka Herkle** and **Tabor Mellot**, two avid hunters in the **Neverwinter region**, opened a hunting lodge many years before the fall of Neverwinter. Their business was profitable for several years, until the city's demise. Business became scarce, and the two sought out ways to improve upon their income. They decided to hold a special hunt, for a giant albino weasel which they knew was rare and would bring many hunters to their lodge.

When the two opened **Owlbear Lodge**, they made a pact with a druid living in Neverwinter Wood. The druid allowed the sport hunting as a means of conservation and population thinning. They requested one animal never be hunted – a **giant white ferret.**

Herka and Tabor, needing gold to maintain the lodge, decided to hold a special hunt for the giant white ferret. The druid hadn't been seen a couple of years, so the possibility of them finding out was minimal. They created flyers and letters, sending them to prior customers and city criers. The response was fantastic! They quickly filled the limited number of hunting slots.

The night before the hunt, while the hunters relaxed and prepared for the next day, the druid returned. They snuck into the cellar and placed a magical poultice on the hanging meat. This poultice created **Dead Men Spores**, which permeated the lodge, filled the inhabitants with spores, and changed them forever.

### Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure:

***Beak –*** The stuffed owlbear mascot of Owlbear Lodge is now an animated undead creature. The zombie owlbear has broken free of the lodge and stalks the surrounding campus and Neverwinter Wood.

***Dagult Neverember –*** The Lord Protector of Neverwinter is a strikingly handsome man with orange-brown hair and dark eyes. He's quick tempered and overconfident, yet his natural charm and charisma make him well liked by the citizens of Neverwinter.

***Raul –*** The thin man with a handlebar mustache is one of the workers sent from Neverwinter to reclaim Owlbear Lodge. He's found in **Area 13: Butcher Shop**, on top of a cutting table and fending off undead creatures.



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# Part 1. The Assignment

*Estimated duration: 30 minutes*

The adventurers are approached by Lord Neverember of Neverwinter and asked to locate several missing workers who were sent to Owlbear Lodge to reclaim it from overgrowth. The lodge, located a short distance away in the Neverwinter Wood, hasn't been used in years, and the original owners, Herka Herkle and Tabor Mellot, cannot be reached. Lord Neverember hopes to reopen the lodge to encourage tourism.

The workers were dispatched three days ago and were to return after locating the lodge. The city is concerned that the workers are either in danger or are wasting time at the lodge. It was known to have many top wines and ales in its cellar. Perhaps the workers found this stash and are enjoying themselves.

Read or summarize:

> "Go gather up these workers. Their names are Raul, Phoebe, and Lemon. They're each wearing a uniform – green trousers and white shirts.
>
> "Here's a map to the lodge. As I mentioned, it's been abandoned for many years, so the trail may be overgrown. Use your wits and you'll get there.
>
> "We need the lodge in top shape soon. We're certain it will help increase tourism to the city."

### Worker Uniforms

Lord Neverember tells the party that each of the workers wears green pants and has their name stitched into the white shirt of their uniform. Their names are **Phoebe, Lemon, and Raul**.

### Supplies

Before they leave, the adventurers have time to collect any basic supplies, gear, and equipment they need from the local merchants. Additional *potions of healing* are limited, a current total of only three in the city.

### Mule & Carriage

At your discretion, the city allows the adventurers the use of a mule and carriage. The mule, an old black-haired animal with spots of grey, is called JimJim. The carriage (AC 12, 30 HP) is an ordinary, open-air, wooden wagon with seating for three medium-sized creatures at the front and up to nine medium-sized creatures in the cargo area.

### Reward

As a reward, Lord Neverember offers each adventurer 50 gp (adjusted as you see fit for your party), a free night's stay in the lodge after it is reopened, and a 25 gp food and beverage credit to use in Neverwinter and at Owlbear Lodge once it is reopened.



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# Part 2. Underway

*Estimated duration: 30 to 60 minutes*

The adventurers travel to Owlbear Lodge, following an overgrown, yet still visible, wagon trail. During their travel, they encounter one or both of the following encounters.

### The Bear and the Ghoul

A dead brown bear is being eaten by a ghoulish creature.

The **ghoul** was an employee of Owlbear Lodge. It escaped after the workers entered the lodge and left the main door open.

The ghoul's tattered clothing is covered in splotches of yellow-green mold. The back of their shirt reads, "Owlbear Lodge." It attacks the adventurers if it is bothered. Otherwise, it continues to feast on bear flesh.

### Prickers the Porcupine

A **porcupine** named **Prickers** waddles out of the forest, up to a ranger or druid in the party.

Prickers is a laidback porcupine, preferring to lounge in the warm sun than move about foraging for food. They have a penchant for groundnuts (peanuts), blueberries, and figs. They've only had figs once, when one fell off a traveling cart and into Prickers' paws while they laid in the sun on the side of the road. It was tasty!

Prickers witnessed the workers enter the woods, taking the old route to the hunting lodge.

If a character speaks with animals, Prickers tells them that the old lodge is spooky. No animals go near it. They have this feeling that something isn't right with the lodge.

If asked, Prickers becomes a traveling companion if promised delicious fruits, nuts, and leaves.



## Porcupine

*Tiny beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 10
**Hit Points** 3 (1d4 + 1)
**Speed** 20 ft., climb 10 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (-3) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 2 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 5 (-3) |

**Senses** darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 11
**Languages** --
**Challenge** 1/2 (50 XP)

***Musk Defense.*** If threatened, the porcupine fans its backside, revealing a large patch of quills. These quills are coated with a smelly oil. Any creature within 10 feet of the porcupine must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute as it retches.

***Quill Body.*** At the start of its turn, the porcupine deals 5 (1d10) piercing damage to any creature grappling it. This number also reflects the number of quills imbedded in the creature's skin.

***Wounding Quills.*** While imbedded with quills, the creature has disadvantage on attack rolls, saving throws, and concentration checks. In addition, removing a quill deals 1 point of piercing damage.

#### Actions

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

#### Reactions

***Quill Defense.*** The porcupine releases 5 (1d10) quills to any creature making a melee attack against it. These quills automatically hit, requiring no attack roll, and are embedded in the attacker's skin (see above).



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# Part 3. Owlbear Lodge

*Estimated duration: 90 to 120 minutes*

The adventurers enter Owlbear Lodge, encounter strange undead creatures, and solve the riddle of what is going on with the Dead Men Spores. While in the lodge, the adventures are exposed to the spores, which may turn them undead too.

## The Lodge

Owlbear Lodge was once a grand oasis for hunters. The human owners, **Herka Herkle** and **Tabor Mellot**, spent lavishly on its production, going so far as taking out a loan with a shady individual to cover most of the costs. This proved a smart move as the lodge paid for itself in merely two years. However, their good fortune didn't last, and the two were forced to take drastic measures to secure repeat business: offering a bounty on the **giant white ferret** that inhabited the forest. This was a direct violation of the agreement they had made with **Juniper**, a wise old gnome druid who protected the forest. The rare ferret was off limits and not to be hunted. When Juniper learned of the betrayal, she snuck into the lodge and infested the meat in the cellar with **Dead Men Spores** – a fungus which feeds on live or dead flesh.

## Dead Men Spores

The druid, unhappy with the owners, planted a Dead Men Fungus in the cooling cellar. The fungus silently spread its spores around the lodge, infecting the inhabitants and guests. The spores cause living creatures to stop eating and drinking, causing their bodies to wither and shrivel. The spores effect both living and dead creatures differently. Some become undead, hungering for blood and flesh. Others still live but lose their mind and become lost to time and some creatures merely die.

Many of the creatures and mounted trophies in Owlbear Lodge are now considered undead creatures.

While exploring the lodge, characters are required to make Constitution saving throws to see if they are affected by the residual Dead Men Spores. In addition, the save must be made for every subsequent 5 minutes they stay within 50 feet of the campus, if they are outside of the lodge.

On a successful save, they are immune to the spores' effects for 5 minutes, or until they enter another area requiring a saving throw. On a failure, they accumulate a small amount of the spores in their lungs. Once a creature fails three saving throws, they begin feeling the following, cumulative effects:

**1)** No effect – spores begin to build up in the creature's lungs.
**2)** No effect – spores continue to build up in the creature's lungs.
**3)** They begin to feel slightly dizzy. The creature is considered to have level 1 exhaustion: disadvantage on ability checks.
**4)** They begin to feel lethargic. The creature is considered to have level 2 exhaustion: speed is halved.
**5)** They notice their motor functions slowing down. The creature is considered to have level 3 exhaustion: disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws.
**6)** The creature becomes a zombie.

### Character to Zombie Conversion

**Statistic modifications**:
+1 STR, +2 CON, -6 INT, -4 WIS, -4 CHA
**Gains:** Undead Fortitude (see zombie stat block), Immunity to poison, darkvision 60 ft., can't speak but understands the languages it knew in life.

## Curing Dead Men Spores

The only cure for Dead Men Spores is to remove oneself from the infected area and seek treatment. For each casting or usage: a *healing word* spell removes one failed save, a *potion of healing,* a *cure wounds* spell, or similar magic removes two failed saves, and the *lessor restoration* spell or similar magic removes all



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failed saves. Only a *greater restoration*, *wish* spell, or similar magic reverts the creature to its prior self if it has turned into a zombie.

A **Handout # 1 Dead Men Spore Failed Save Tracker** is found in **Appendix A**. You may track the failed saves for the characters, or have the players track their own failed saves.

### Beak – the Undead Owlbear

Beak, the lodge's stuffed owlbear mascot, once stood inside the lodge. The stuffed body is now gone, animated by the Dead Men Spores.

#### Using Beak

You use Beak several ways. She's been left out of the main part of the adventure to allow you to introduce her as you like. For instance, you could mention gravelly *hoot, hoot, growls* coming from the forest while the party travels; see glimpses of her during flashes of lightning; or have her attack at any moment in any area outside of the lodge, either during the investigation, or as the party leaves, thinking they've completed the mission.

#### Beak: Mule & Carriage

If the party is using the mule and carriage provided to them by the city, when they return to it, Beak has destroyed the carriage and mule.

## Beak – Undead Owlbear

*Large undead, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)
**Hit Points** 66 (7d10 + 28)
**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 19 (+4) | 3 (-4) | 6 (-2) | 3 (-4) |

**Skills** Perception +3
**Condition Immunities** poisoned
**Damage Immunities** poison
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
**Languages** --
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

***Undead Fortitude.*** If damage reduces Beak to 0 hit points, she 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 Beak drops to 1 hit point instead.

### Actions

***Multiattack.*** Beak makes two attacks: one with her beak and one with her claws.

***Beak.*** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

***Claws.*** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

### Scaling Suggestions

**APL 1-2:** Decrease Beak's *to hit bonus* to +5 and her HP to 45.
**APL 4:** Increase Beak's HP to 98.
**APL 5-6:** Increase Beak's AC to 14, HP to 115, and give her *magic resistance:* advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.



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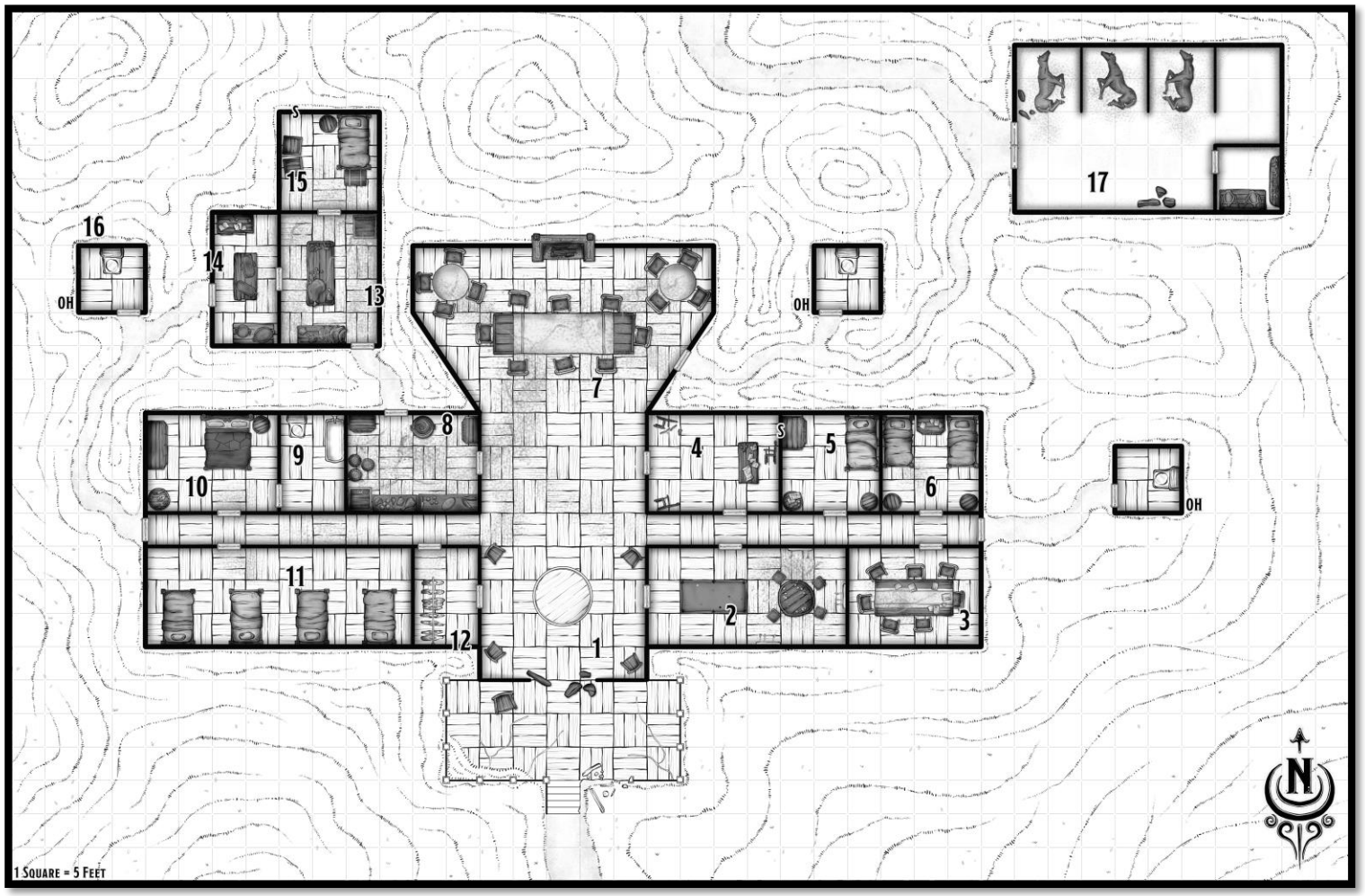
## OWLBEAR LODGE



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## Rooms of the Lodge

Each of the lodge's rooms have a bit of story to tell. The source of the spores, located in the cellar, can be found before all areas of the lodge are explored.

As the adventurers approach the lodge, read or summarize:

> The dense forest opens to a thin clearing, in which stands a large wooden building. A dilapidated wood porch, its stairs overgrown with vines and ivy, leads to a set of double doors, broken and hanging from the hinges.

The interior of the lodge cannot be seen from the lodge grounds. It is dark, with the windows covered in moss or by overgrown vines.

### 1: Main Foyer

*No roll required*

The main doors are broken open and it appears that something large exited the lodge. Read or summarize:

> The main door leads to a grand foyer. A large, circular podium stands in the middle of the foyer, surrounded by four wicker chairs. Across the foyer, a large black and white banner hangs from the ceiling. It reads, "The Great White Ferret Hunt!" in Common, Elvish, and Gnomish.

#### Podium

The podium is 5 feet tall and 10 feet in diameter and is covered in a thin layer of yellow Dead Men Spores. Inspecting the podium reveals four large animal footprints, suggesting something once stood on the podium. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Nature) check reveals the prints are owlbear prints. These prints belonged to Beak, the lodge's stuffed owlbear mascot. Beak is now animated by the Dead Men Spores and lurks in the woods surrounding the campus.

You Beak attacks the adventurers whenever you like while they are outside of the lodge. This happens when they travel to the outhouses, stables, or the butcher house. Or, Beak is their final battle as they exit the house or while they return to Neverwinter.

### 2: Game Room

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 15*

The doors to the office are closed but unlocked. A creature standing within 10 feet of the game room and succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices clacking noises coming from behind the door.

When the room is entered, read or summarize:

> The door opens to a room containing a grand but dusty billiard table. A dart board hangs on the north, east, and south walls, and a round card table circled by four chairs rests near the east wall.
>
> Two withered figures sit at the card table; one dressed in a blue hunting jacket with stacks of platinum pieces, the other wearing a red hunting jacket with only five platinum pieces. A pile of platinum pieces and a face down card sit in the middle of the table. They turn their heads and look at you. As they do, the billiard balls make a click-clack sound.

#### Card Sharks

The withered figures (**zombies**) are former guests of the lodge. They were playing five-card draw poker before the spores overtook them, and they continue to do so.



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These two zombies haven't succumbed to the bloodthirst of the spores. They are somewhat immune to the effects and their minds are stuck in time. It is red's turn, but she can't decide what to do. Blue discarded a Jack (Clubs), hoping for a full house, but instead drew the 6 (Hearts) and has been waiting patiently over the years.

### Platinum in the Middle

A total of 25 platinum pieces are in the middle of the table, representing the ante and bets of the zombies.

### Coins

The zombies do not attack unless their coins are taken away. If a creature attempts to take away the coins, the zombie owner slaps their hand away. To steal coins requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. Though, if all coins are stolen, the zombie notices it no longer has a stack of coins and attacks.

### Cheating

If a character attempts to peak at the top cards of the deck, or at Blue's discarded card (8 of Clubs), the zombies slap their hand before the adventurer succeeds on peeking.

### The Cards & Game

Reviewing the table allows the characters to deduce that it is Red's turn, as Blue has already discarded a card (8 of Clubs) and has five cards in his hand. The below cards are presented in **Player Handout #2**.

**Red's Cards:** Ace (Clubs), Ace (Hearts), 2 (Clubs), 3 (Diamonds), 8 (Spades).

**Blue's Cards:** King (Clubs), King (Hearts), Queen (Spades), Queen (Diamonds), and 6 (Hearts).

Red hasn't been able to decide if she should draw to the straight, discarding one of her Aces and hoping for a 5, or if she should try for another Ace for three-of-a-kind. The next five cards in the deck are Ace (D), 9 (C), 7 (D), J (S), and 5 (D). If Red discards any other card than one of her Aces, she draws an Ace, which would give her three-of-a-kind, beating Blue, who takes no cards.

If the characters help Red win, the zombies collapse. The only thing keeping them alive was the outcome of that hand.

However, if Red loses, Blue cheers from himself, throwing his hands in the air, waving them about, and making the best woot-woot sounds that he can with his withered and shriveled vocal cords. They then shuffle the deck and start a new hand. Play this out as you like.

### Billiard Table

A withered **rat**, no more than a skin covering bones, skitters around the billiard table, knocking the balls around. The rat is technically alive but has **Undead Fortitude** and **Undead Nature**: it doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check allows a creature to pick up the rat, befriending it. An unsuccessful check results in the rat biting the creature and then skittering off.





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### Dart Boards

The dart boards hold nine darts, three of which are expertly crafted with a tip, barrel, and shaft made of electrum, and griffon feather flights, each valued at 1 gp.

## 3: Conference Room

*No Roll Required*

A large, rectangular table surrounded by chairs fills this room. Scattered on the table are parchment flyers **(Player Handout #3)** which read, *"The Great White Ferret Hunt! Come to Owlbear Lodge for your chance to hunt this giant, exotic creature!"* Another reads, *"Lifetime Hunting Opportunity! Hunt the Great White Ferret!"*

Printed on each is: *50 gold gives you the chance to hunt this extraordinary animal. Hurry! Only ten spots are available.*

***Where's the gold?*** The gold is stashed in the cellar, in a large barrel labeled *poison*.

## 4: Main Office

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 15*

The doors to the office are closed but unlocked. A creature standing within 10-feet of the office and succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a shuffling sound from behind either of the doors.

Herka (**zombie**) was the more hands-on owner, with Tabor spending most of his time in Neverwinter and other cities, promoting the lodge. Herka is now transformed into an undead creature, unable to exit his office. He stumbles about, bumping into furniture and shuffling around. He holds a leather scroll case in his right hand which contains the agreement they signed with the druid **(Player Handout #4).**

When the room is entered, read or summarize:

> The door opens to an office-style room. A large tapestry of an Owlbear hangs on the east wall next to a large desk, its wooden chair toppled next to it. Two other chairs lay chaotically on the floor in each corner of the west wall.
>
> Standing in the southeast corner of the room and holding a leather scroll case in its left hand is a humanoid with its back to you. It continually moans and walks forward, bouncing off the wall.

If Herka is touched or attacked, he turns and attacks the nearest creature. Otherwise, he continues walking into the wall. A successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check allows a creature to unknowingly remove the scroll case from Herka's hand. A failed check results in Herka attacking.

### Owlbear Tapestry

A secret door, hidden behind a tapestry of an owlbear, allows access to Herka's sleeping quarters. The door is unlocked and easily noticed if a creature looks behind the tapestry.

### The Desk

Searching the desk easily reveals a stack of signed hunting contracts, a dagger, a dried pot of ink and ruined quill, and a letter signed by Tabor **(Player Handout #5).** The letter reads:

*Herka,*

*Good luck with the upcoming great white ferret hunt! Let's hope that pesky druid doesn't catch wind of it.*

*I'm headed to Chult soon, to recruit some new customers. I think I might go on a Tyrannosaurus Rex hunt while I'm there!*

*Tabor*



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A creature succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the dimensions of one of the drawers to be off and locates a hidden compartment. Inside this compartment is a small, locked chest which jingles with loose coin as it is moved. The chest has an AC 12 and 20 HP, and is opened with the key found in Herka's pants pocket, or with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tool. The chest is valued at 5 gp and holds 1 pp, 25 gp, 25 sp, and a small diamond worth 25 gp.

### 5: Herka's Bedroom

A small, elegant bed rests along the east wall. A large dresser stands in the northwest corner, and two small nightstands rest in each of the other corners.

The sheets and blankets are made from exotic material. Though they are covered in green and yellow dust-like spores, they are able to be laundered. Combined, the set has a value of 10 gp and makes an excellent bedroll.

#### Dresser

The dresser contains:

- A fancy purple suit, complete with a white poet's shirt.
- A pair of high-end black dress boots.
- Three sets of standard cotton pants and shirts.
- A yellow, high-end, button-down dress shirt with "Owlbear Lodge Staff" stitched into the left breast pocket.

The dresser acts as a secret door to Herka's office. A creature succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices scuff marks on the floor, near the base of the dresser. The dresser moves easily, revealing the hidden access behind the owlbear tapestry hanging in the office.

#### Nightstands

Searching the nightstands reveals the following:

- A large, wooded soup spoon with an H engraved on the handle.
- A glass jar containing a white cream, labeled 'snake repellant'. If opened, any creature within 5 feet of the jar must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is poisoned for 1 minute as they gag and wretch from the horrible smell. After this time, they are immune to the smell of the snake repellant. The same save is required after the cream is applied, with each new creature coming within 5 feet of the wearer requiring the save.

  On a successful save, the creature is unaffected and is immune to the stench; instead, smelling an intoxicating scent of orange and strawberries that they wouldn't mind wearing.
- A single six-sided die made from bone.
- A total of 8 cp.

**Snake repellant**

This container has six applications remaining. Once applied, snakes within 5 feet of the wearer cannot target the wearer. One use has a duration of 24 hours.



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### 6: Staff Bedroom

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 15*

Two beds, one occupied by a dead staff member wearing a yellow Owlbear Lodge Staff shirt, along with two nights stands and a tall, shared dresser fill this room. Read or summarize:

> The door opens to a small room containing two beds, a dresser, and two nightstands. The bed on the right is neatly made, though covered with yellow-green dust. The blankets on the left bed cover something, which twitches and moves sporadically.

#### Under the Blankets

The emaciated and leathery body of Lucy Hammerfist, a skilled dwarf taxidermist employed by the lodge to skin and clean the pelts and hides of guest's trophies, is found under the blankets. The spores killed Lucy whose body now acts as a host for a new creature (**vine blight,** removing *entangling plants* action). Removing her blankets reveals her dwarf body covered in yellow-green tendrils of various size. Two tentacles are 10-feet long and attack the nearest creature as they reach for new nourishment.

Searching Lucy's remains reveals that she is wearing an Owlbear Lodge staff shirt with the name "Lucy" embroidered on it.

#### Dresser & Nightstands

Two sets of female commoner clothing are found in the dresser. The nightstands are empty, save for a three-inch long piece of white chalk.





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### 7: Dining Hall

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 18*

A giant eagle, gold in color but missing feathers and with clumps of white fluff spilling from its body, stands on a large dining table, tearing red flesh from a humanoid.

The dining hall is empty. The staff and guests were overtaken by the Dead Men Spores while they slept. However, an **undead giant eagle**, once a stuffed centerpiece on the table, now pecks at a decaying human body lying on the table. The eagle attacks if it is interfered with. When the eagle is hit with a successful attack, lumps of cotton are seen falling from its body.

#### The Body

The body is that of Phoebe, one of the workers sent from Neverwinter. Though she's been torn up by the giant eagle, inspection of her body reveals she was dressed in green trousers and a white shirt. The stitching on her shirt once read Phoebe, but now only 'ebe' is visible.



### 8: Kitchen

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 15*

The swinging-hinged door to the room is unlocked. When the kitchen is entered, read or summarize:

The door opens to a kitchen covered in yellow-green dust. Along the south wall rest two large preparation tables. Next to a door on the north wall rests a potbelly stove. Two cabinets stand in corners while a wooden floor hatch covers the southwest corner.

The cabinets contain dried spices, pickled vegetables, and preserved fruits. These items are good to consume and collecting them creates four normal ration kits.

The door on the north wall opens to the outside and leads to the butcher shop.

A meat cleaver and a set of cooking utensils are wrapped in an oiled cloth which rests on the large table. The meat cleaver is able to be used as a shortsword.

There's nothing of interest about the potbelly stove.

The floor hatch leads to the cellar, where perishable items are stored.



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### 9: Suite Private Bath

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 18*

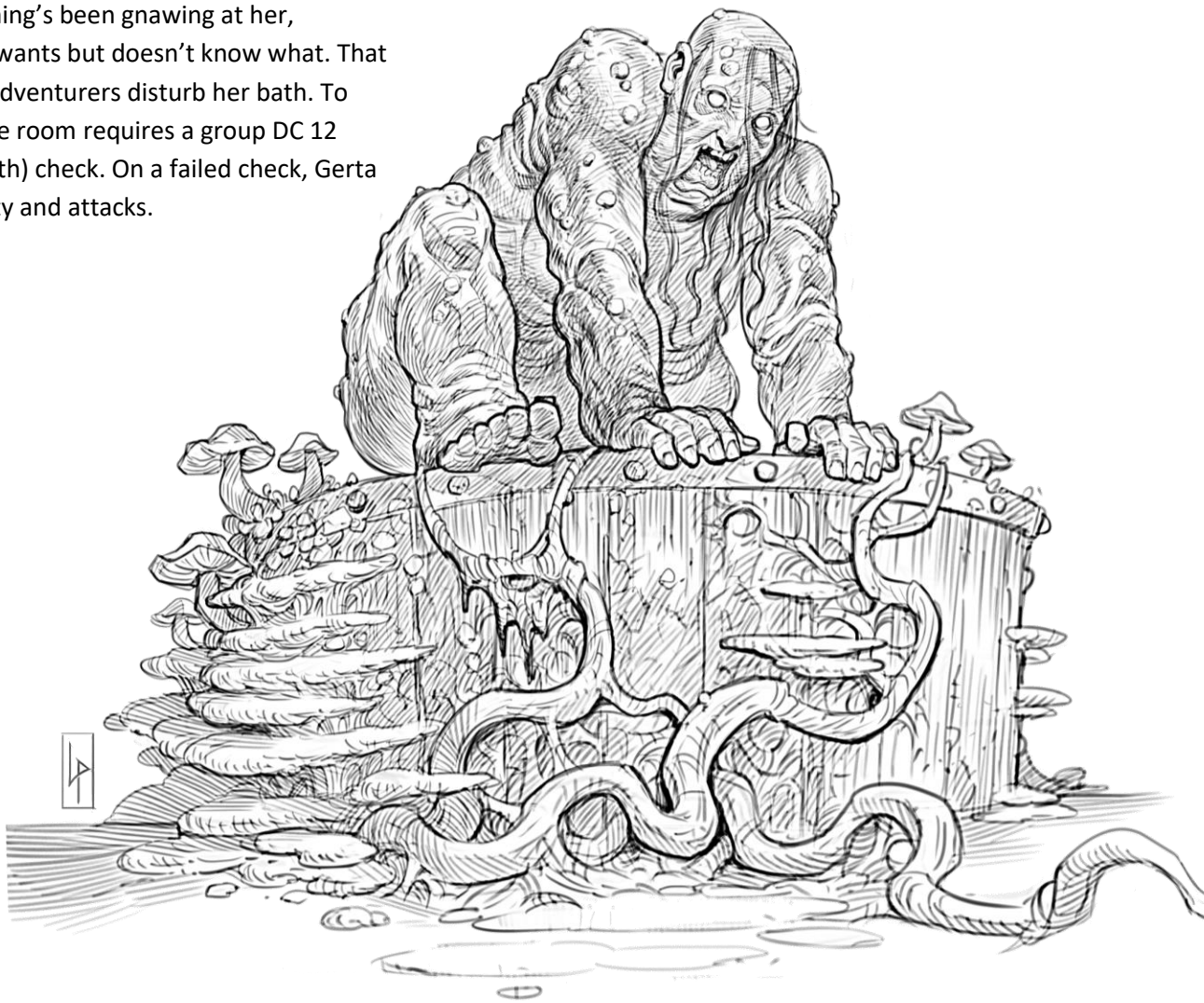
As an added luxury for the those who can afford it, the private suite has its own privy and iron tub. When this room is entered, read or summarize:

> As the door opens, a fetid stench belches from the room, which appears to be a washroom.
>
> A bloated, green figure with long dark hair washes itself in an iron tub while humming an unknown and out-of-key tune.

The bloated, undead body of Gerta Tuss is in the iron tub. She's been happily soaking ever since the spores took over her body. She's lost in time, believing that she is still taking her relaxing bath. But yet, something's been gnawing at her, something she wants but doesn't know what. That changes if the adventurers disturb her bath. To quietly leave the room requires a group DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failed check, Gerta notices the party and attacks.

If Gerta is spoken, attacked, or interrupted, read or summarize:

> The washing stops and the creature's eyes widen. She leaps from the tub, naked and dripping with putrid, black water. She throws her head back and forth, whips her long black hair about, and gnashes her yellowed teeth. Clumps of her bloated body slip from her bones and fall to the floor.





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## Gerta Tuss

*Large undead, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 8
**Hit Points** 85 (9d10 + 36)
**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 3 (-4) | 6 (-2) | 5 (-3) |

**Saving Throws** Wis +0
**Condition Immunities** poisoned
**Damage Immunities** poison
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
**Languages** Understand Common and Elven but cannot speak
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

***Stench.*** Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of Gerta must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to Gerta's Stench for 24 hours.

***Turning Defiance.*** Gerta has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

***Undead Fortitude.*** If damage reduces Geta to 0 hit points, she 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, Gerta drops to 1 hit point instead.

### Actions

***Multiattack.*** Gerta makes two attacks: one with her fist slam and one with her hair whip.

***Fist Slam.*** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

***Hair Whip.*** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

### Scaling Suggestions

**APL 1-2:** Decrease Gerta's *to hit bonus* to +4 and her HP to 60, remove her hair whip attack.
**APL 4:** Increase Gerta's HP to 115.
**APL 5-6:** Increase Gerta's AC to 10, HP to 126, and give her *magic resistance:* advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### Gerta Modification

If you have a strong party of adventurers, you may wish to give Gerta the following modification:

***Greasy Skin:*** Gerta's flesh is bloated and deadly. When she jumps from the tub, two tiny patches of her skin slough off and onto the floor within 10 feet of her, randomly placed by you.

Each skin patch greases the square it lands in. If the square is occupied, each creature in the square must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. A creature that enters the area or ends it turn there must also succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

A successful attack dealing bludgeoning, slashing, or force damage causes another patch of skin to fly from Gerta's body, landing in a random square within 10 feet of Gerta, chosen by you.



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## 10: Private Suite

*No Roll Required*

This room was used for traveling families or honeymooners. Read or summarize:

> The room contains a large, comfortable-looking feather bed with a withered occupant covered in purple satin sheets on the west side of the bed, and a dried red rose on the pillow on the east side.
>
> A small nightstand rests in the corner and a large dresser stands next to the bed.

### The Occupants

Before coming to Owlbear Lodge, Nolen Highton and Gerta Tuss, both half-elves, were recently engaged. Gerta surprised her new fiancé with a hunting expedition, a new crossbow, and set of bolts which are currently stashed away in the dresser. Sadly, Nolan never got the chance to try out his gift.

Nolan died while waiting for Gerta to return from the hot bath she was taking in **Area 9: Private Washroom.**

### The Nightstand

Lying on the nightstand is a letter, which Gerta gave to Nolan with the crossbow and bolts. The letter **(Player Handout #6)** is easily noticed and reads:

*My dearest Nolan,*

*I am so excited about the wedding. To think that you will be my husband takes my breath away.*

*You've been so kind and good to me, giving up your time to help me with various things that always seem to come up and ruin your plans. That's why I wanted to make our engagement special for you, by taking you on this hunting trip. Also, I commissioned this crossbow and set of bolts for you. To forever remind you of this special trip.*

*Happy hunting, my love!*

*Gerta*

### The Dresser

The dresser contains a set of noble-looking hunting clothes, a few dresses, and a new light crossbow and a quarrel containing three exquisite *+1 bolts*.

## 11: Bunkhouse

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 12*

More often than not, the hunting guests preferred to bunk together. They'd stay up late telling stories or crude jokes. Almost always trying to one-up the other with tails of trophy hunts or the one-that-got-away. It was a place of childish happiness for the now old adults.

The guests in the room succumbed to the spores during their slumber, after a prank had been pulled on one of the men.

***Bed 1)*** Barnaby Flintoes: gnome hunter and trickster, deceased. Searching under his bed reveals a short bow, a quiver of 12 arrows, a 10-



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foot length of rope, a dagger, a pot of dried black ink, and a paint brush covered in black ink.

***Bed 2)*** It appears it has been slept in but is currently empty. The bed belonged to Jimbo James, a dwarf hunter who got up in the middle of the night and made his way to one of the outhouses **(see Outhouses).** Searching under his bed reveals 6 javelins.

***Bed 3)*** Sarmus O'nell: half-elf hunter, undead (**zombie**). Searching under Sarmus' bed reveals 6 spears. Sarmus is trapped in his blankets, a product of a prank by Barnaby while Sarmus slept, the blankets tied down with rope along the edges of his bed. He constantly rolls back and forth while making gasping sounds. If released, he attacks the nearest creature, flopping to the floor and crawling toward them, biting at their ankles.

***Bed 4)*** Tarvis Tent: human hunter, undead (**zombie**). Searching under Tarvis' bed reveals three throwing axes. Tarvis is found sitting on his bed, holding a handaxe. He was also pranked by Barnaby during his slumber, when the gnome painted a black moustache and thick black eyebrows on him. He's in a dormant stage while he waits for a living creature to come within 5 feet of him. Then his bloodlust kicks in and he attacks.

***Tarvis Tent:*** **(zombie)** ***Multiattack.*** Tarvis makes two attacks with his handaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

### 12: Coat Closet

This small closet contains ruined hunting jackets, rain gear, and cold weather gear. Searching the pockets of the hunting jackets reveals a piece of parchment **(Player Handout #7)** which reads:

*The Great White Ferret Hunt!*

*Your chance to take down an exotic animal*

*Taxidermist on Site!*

*Owlbear Lodge*



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## The Butcher House

The Butcher House consists of three rooms: the butcher area, a taxidermist room, and a small bedroom for Horg, the half-orc butcher.

### 13: Butcher Area

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 12*

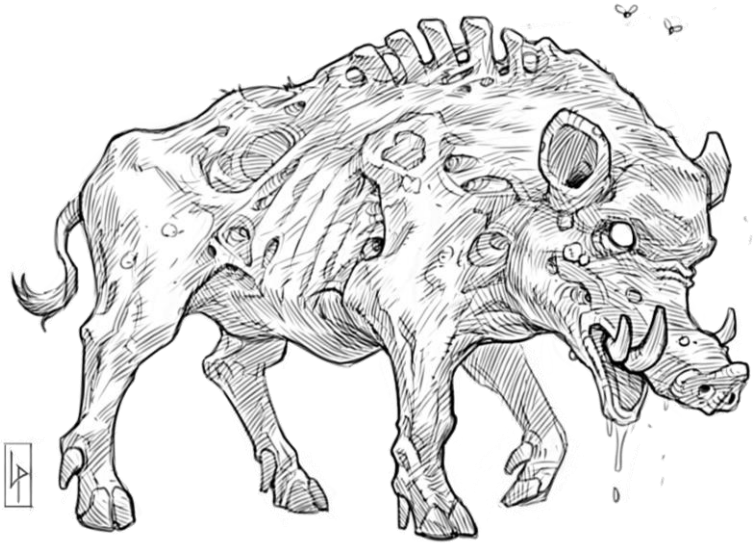
A butcher-block table rests in the center of the room. A floor hatch leads down to the cold cellar, an unlocked door leads to Horg's bedroom, and an unlocked door on the back wall leads to the taxidermist's shop.

As the butcher house is entered, read or summarize:

> The room is complete chaos. A whimpering man, curled into the fetal position, lays on a large table in the center of the room. Three featherless, withered birds hop near the table, flapping their wings as they attempt to fly. A large, emaciated boar stands on its hind legs, leaning against the table.

#### Raul

The man is **Raul**, one of the workers sent from Neverwinter to reclaim Owlbear Lodge. He's scared to death as these undead creatures try to attack him.



#### Creatures

The birds are pheasants, which were killed the day the spores were placed in Owlbear Lodge. They are now animated corpses (use **raven** but remove mimicry). The **boar** was killed the same day. These creatures attack the adventurers when they enter the room. All creatures are considered undead and have **Undead Fortitude**: if damage reduces the undead creature 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 undead creature drops to 1 hit point instead.

#### Floor Hatch

The floor hatch opens easily, though it squeaks loudly. A set of stairs leads to a small room with a dirt tunnel leading to the cold storage area.

### 14: Taxidermist Area

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 12*

The room contains two large tables and several mounted trophies on the wall. When the room is entered, read or summarize:

> Two large tables each hold several small baskets. The heads of elk, deer, bear, and other creatures hang on the wall, expertly preserved by a skilled hand.
>
> A door lines the back wall and a small desk rests in the northwest corner.

#### The Baskets

The baskets contain the following items:

- Various sized and colored glass marbles made to resemble eyeballs.
- Spools of grey, black, brown, and white thread.
- Various sized sewing needles.
- Three cutting knives (daggers).



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- Dry and empty pots of various colored paint.
- Lumps of cotton and straw.

As the room is investigated, the mounted heads bleat, grunt, and growl at the adventurers.

Searching the desk reveals a small sack containing 10 gp, a taxidermist degree awarded to Lucy Hammerfist, and a set of leatherworker's tools.

### 15: Horg's Bedroom

*No Roll Required*

Horg kept to himself most of the time. He wasn't keen on mingling with the guests. His job was to butcher and he enjoyed it. He didn't need anything else.

Horg the half-orc is dead. His body lays peacefully in his straw bed. Searching Horg's room reveals a longsword, a small leather pouch containing 5 cp, 5 sp, 3 gp, and an Owlbear Lodge staff shirt with the name "Horg" embroidered on it.

### 16: Horg's Hidden Stash

*No Roll Required*

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a hidden door behind Horg's bed. The door is well hidden but opens easily, leading outside. Horg didn't trust the other staff members of the lodge and hid his coin behind one of the outhouses. The path is well-worn and the hiding place has been dug up and refilled several times, requiring only a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check around the outhouse to find. The stash is under 3 feet of dirt and yields 20 gp, a small ruby ring worth 25 gp, and a *potion of heroism.*

## Stables

### 17: Stables

*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 10*

An emaciated dead horse lays in each of the north stalls. The east stall holds an undead horse. The creature is withered but docile. It no longer needs to eat, sleep, drink, or breath and its hair and hooves no longer grow. A creature succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check approaches and saddles the horse. Once saddled, a creature must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to successfully mount the horse. On a success, the creature now owns an emaciated, withered, and undead horse that is typically followed by a swarm of buzzing black insects.

#### Tack Room

Several saddles and sets of tack are found in the stables, but only one set is usable. The others decayed by time and weather.

## Outhouses

### OH: Outhouses

*No Roll Required*

The outhouses each contain one of the below, chosen as you see fit:

**1)** The **zombie** of Jimbo James, dwarf hunter who got up in the middle of the night from the bunkhouse. Jimbo sits inside, reading a tattered newspaper. If the door is opened, he doesn't attack. Instead, he gets up, pulls the door closed, and continues to read his blank newspaper. If attacked, Jimbo rolls up his newspaper and clubs his attackers, dealing 1 point of bludgeoning damage on a successful hit. He only wants to return to the outhouse.

**2)** An empty outhouse.

**3)** One of the workers – Lemon – has barricaded herself in the outhouse. She's



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frightened after seeing the giant eagle attack her co-worker and doesn't want to leave the outhouse until she's certain it is dead. She began feeling the effects of the Dead Men Spores, which are seen in her drawn and taught skin, sunken eyes, and her lack of hunger. Removing Lemon from the campus is the only way to end the transformation.

## Cold Cellar

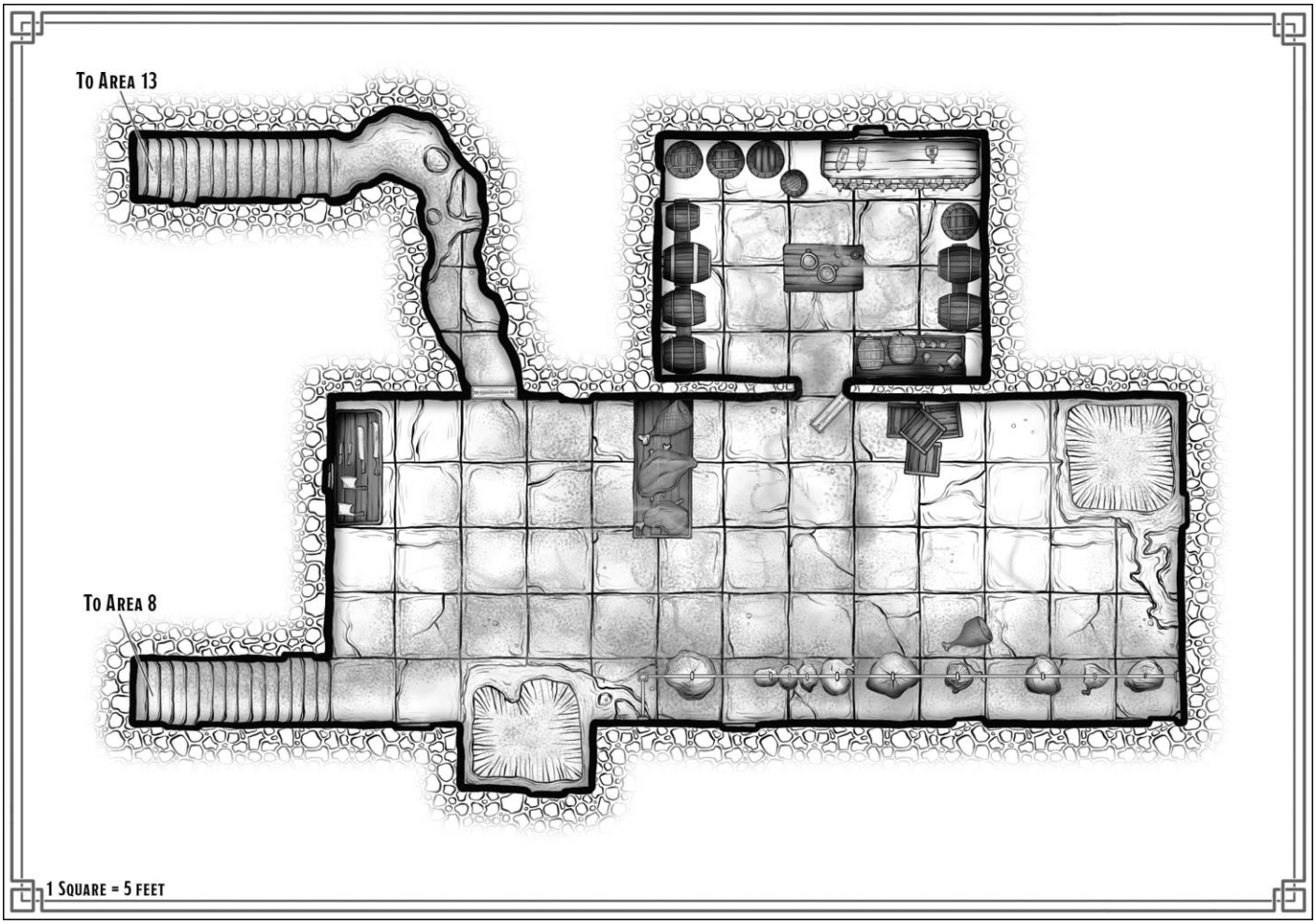
*Roll for Dead Men Spores: DC 20. Failure results in two failed saves on the Tracking Sheet.*

When the adventurers enter this room, read or summarize the following:

The cellar is considerably colder than the main lodge, and a thick greenish dust hangs in the air.

Several cleaned carcasses of elk and deer hang from a long rack on the south wall and lay on a short table. An open door is seen on the north wall and two large pits are dug into the southwest and northeast corner of the room.

The door on the north wall opens to a wine and spirits cellar. Searching the cellar yields six bottles of fine wine, six casks of ale, and a large barrel labeled poison. The ale is stale, but the wine has aged well. The barrel labeled poison is used to hide the lodge's gold. The barrel is empty and holds 500 gp.



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A creature succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, or one proficient in brewer's supplies, finds three bottles of highly regarded wine, each valued at 10 gp.

### Cold Pits

The pits are 10 feet deep and contain patches of **brown mold**, which keep the cellar at a frigid temperature.

***Brown Mold:*** When a creature moves to within 5 feet of the mold for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Brown mold is immune to fire, and any source of fire brought within 5 feet of a patch causes it to instantly expand outward in the direction of the fire, covering a 10-foot-square area (with the source of the fire at the center of that area). A patch of brown mold exposed to an effect that deals cold damage is instantly destroyed.

### Source of Spores

The hanging meat is covered in yellow-green spores, which appear to be eating away at the small bits of tissue still visible. The spores also float from the carcasses, spreading about the cellar and floating through cracks in the floorboards. This is the source of the Dead Man's Spores, planted here by the druid to stop the ferret hunt.

A creature succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check or DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check believes that burning the carcasses destroys the source of the Dead Man's Spores. A creature succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) or similar check realizes that doing so in the cellar is quite deadly, as the brown mold in the pits will grow to reach the heat source.

Additionally, a creature succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices several holly sprigs, bird feathers, berries, and animal dung covered in yellow-green spores, laying below the carcasses. This is what the druid used to infest the meat with the spores. A druid succeeding on a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana, History, or Nature) check realizes that this mass carried the initial spores.



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# Part 4. Conclusion

***Estimated Duration:*** 30 minutes

## Aftermath

***The mission is successful if*** the adventurers destroy the source of the Dead Man Spores. Suggested treasure rewards are listed below but you may adjust these to better suit your adventuring party:

- 75 gp each for destroying the spores.
- 25 gp each for each worker (body) returned.

***If the adventurers did not destroy the source of the spores,*** they are called on again to complete the task. In this case, Lord Neverember sent six humanoids to the lodge to organize it and prepare it for guests. These humanoids are now transformed by the Dead Men Spores. The modifications are easily reusable in the adventure, placing the workers as you see fit.

***If all aspects of the adventure were completed***, Lord Neverember opens the lodge and invites the adventurers to spend a restful and relaxing weekend at the lodge at no charge to them.

### Reclaiming Owlbear Lodge

When the party returns to Neverwinter, Lord Neverember has prepared a new set of workers (a priest, 5 guards, and 5 commoners) to send to the lodge to begin repairing and cleaning it.

If the source of the Dead Men Spores was not destroyed, the party soon hears tales that the workers have been transformed into zombie-like creatures. Depending on their actions, they are not welcomed in Neverwinter any longer. If they volunteer to return to the lodge to investigate, Lord Neverember allows it, but offers no payment since they obviously did not perform a thorough search of the lodge the first time they were sent.






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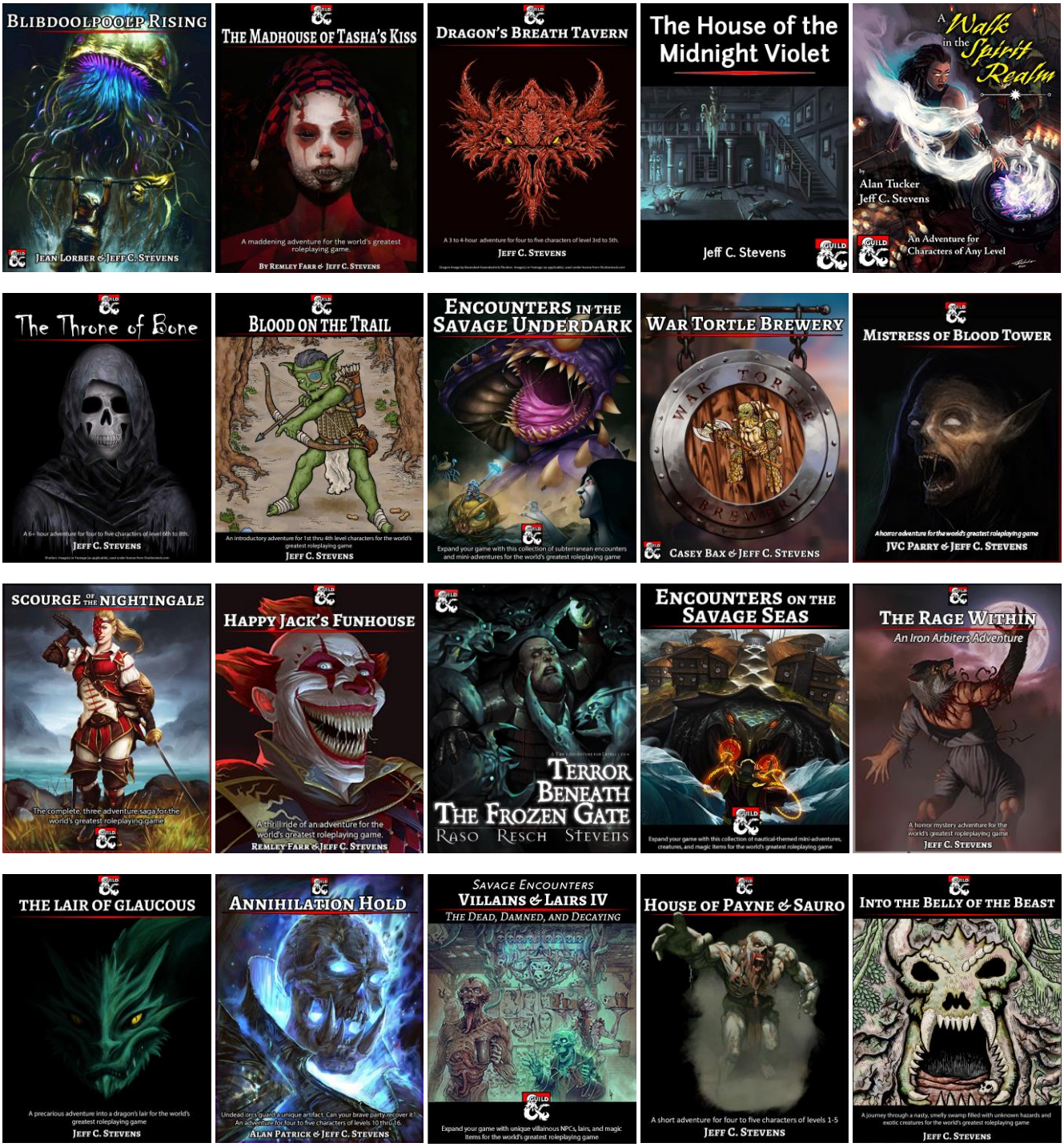
## I hope you enjoyed the adventure! I had a lot of fun writing it. Checkout my other products.



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# Appendix A.

# Player Handout #1

### Dead Men Spore Failed Save Tracker (DM Version)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Character Name | No Effect | No Effect | Exhaustion 1 | Exhaustion 2 | Exhaustion 3 | **You are now a ZOMBIE!** |
| | | | | | | |
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### Character to Zombie Conversion

**Statistic modifications**:
+1 STR, +2 CON, -6 INT, -4 WIS, -4 CHA
**Gains:** Undead Fortitude (see zombie stat block), Immunity to poison, can't be poisoned, darkvision 60 ft., can't speak but understands the languages it new in life.

### Curing Dead Men Spores

The only cure for Dead Men Spores is to remove oneself from the infected area and seek treatment. For each casting or usage: a *healing word* spell removes one failed save, a *potion of healing,* a *cure wounds* spell*,* or similar magic removes two failed saves, and the *lessor restoration* spell or similar magic removes all failed saves. Only a *greater restoration*, *wish* spell, or similar magic reverts the creature to its prior self if it has turned into a zombie.



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### Dead Men Spore Failed Save Tracker (Player Version)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Character Name | No Effect | No Effect | Exhaustion 1 | Exhaustion 2 | Exhaustion 3 | **Ask the DM!** |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
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## Player Handout #2 Card Zombies

**Red's Cards:** Ace (Clubs), Ace (Hearts), 2 (Clubs), 3 (Diamonds), 8 (Spades)

**Blue's Cards:** King (Clubs), King (Hearts), Queen (Spades), Queen (Diamonds), and 6 (Hearts)

## Player Handout #3

**Flier #1:**

*The Great White Ferret Hunt! Come to Owlbear Lodge for your chance to hunt this giant, exotic creature!*

*50 gold gives you the chance to hunt this extraordinary animal. Hurry! Only ten spots are available.*

**Flier #2:**

*Lifetime Hunting Opportunity! Hunt the Great White Ferret!*

*50 gold gives you the chance to hunt this extraordinary animal. Hurry! Only ten spots are available.*

## Player Handout #4

*Let it be known that the owners of Owlbear Lodge and their customers may freely hunt game in the Neverwinter Wood as an act of conservation and population control. All game may be hunted except for the giant white ferret. This beast is rare and magical and is off limits. Hunting this creature voids this contract and may result in negative actions against Owlbear Lodge, its owners, and its customers.*

*All agreed and signed,*

*Herka Herkle*
*Tabor Mellot*

*Juniper*



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## Player Handout #5

*Herka,*

*Good luck with the upcoming great white ferret hunt! Let's hope that pesky druid doesn't catch wind of it.*

*I'm headed to Chult soon, to recruit some new customers. I think I might go on a Tyrannosaurus Rex hunt while I'm there!*

*Tabor*

## Player Handout #6

*My dearest Nolan,*

*I am so excited about the wedding. To think that you will be my husband takes my breath away.*

*You've been so kind and good to me, giving up your time to help me with various things that always seem to come up and ruin your plans. That's why I wanted to make our engagement special for you, by taking you on this hunting trip. Also, I commissioned this crossbow and set of bolts for you. To forever remind you of this special trip.*

*Happy hunting, my love!*

## Player Handout #7

*The Great White Ferret Hunt!*

*Your chance to take down an exotic animal*

*Taxidermist on Site!*

*Owlbear Lodge*



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