

DUNGEON AGE

A hand, appearing to be made of stone or a similar material, reaches up from a dark, shadowed area. The hand is positioned centrally, with fingers spread. The background is a deep red, almost black, with a bright, glowing orb (possibly a moon or sun) behind the hand, creating a strong silhouette effect. The overall atmosphere is dark and ominous.

SAVING SAXHAM

The village of Saxham has been struck by a terrible curse! Or perhaps it's being terrorized by demons, ghosts, and the undead? Or... was there a terrible storm? Maybe?

This adventure is intended for characters levels 1 to 3. It includes a small village, several wilderness areas, and a simple network of tunnels to explore. Each area contains various encounters and unique magical items.

DUNGEON AGE

“SAVING SAXHAM”

a 5e adventure for levels 1-3

Written and illustrated by Joseph Robert Lewis © 2018

INTRODUCTION

The village of Saxham has been struck by a terrible curse! Or perhaps it's being terrorized by demons, ghosts, and the undead? Or... was there a terrible storm? Maybe?

No one seems to know exactly what happened here. But the villagers are terrified, bizarre monsters roam the forest, and strange lights strike the woods every night at midnight...



DESIGN NOTES

This adventure is intended for characters levels 1 to 3. It includes a small village, several wilderness areas, and a simple network of tunnels to explore. Each area contains various encounters and unique magical items.

There are many opportunities for combat, but it is possible for players to explore every area and complete every interaction without any combat at all, depending on their choices.

▮ The DM's read-aloud text looks like this.

Items that are explained in their own section have [**brackets**] around them.



OBVIOUS NOTE IS OBVIOUS

The names and settings used in this adventure are drawn from the world of Dungeon Age. Obviously, you can and should change whatever you want to fit in your campaign setting.

The creatures in this adventure range in challenge rating from easy (1/8) to challenging (4). Obviously, you can and should adjust the stats and numbers of creatures to meet the skills of your players.

But you already knew that, right?

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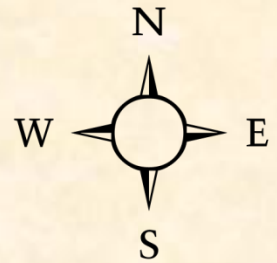
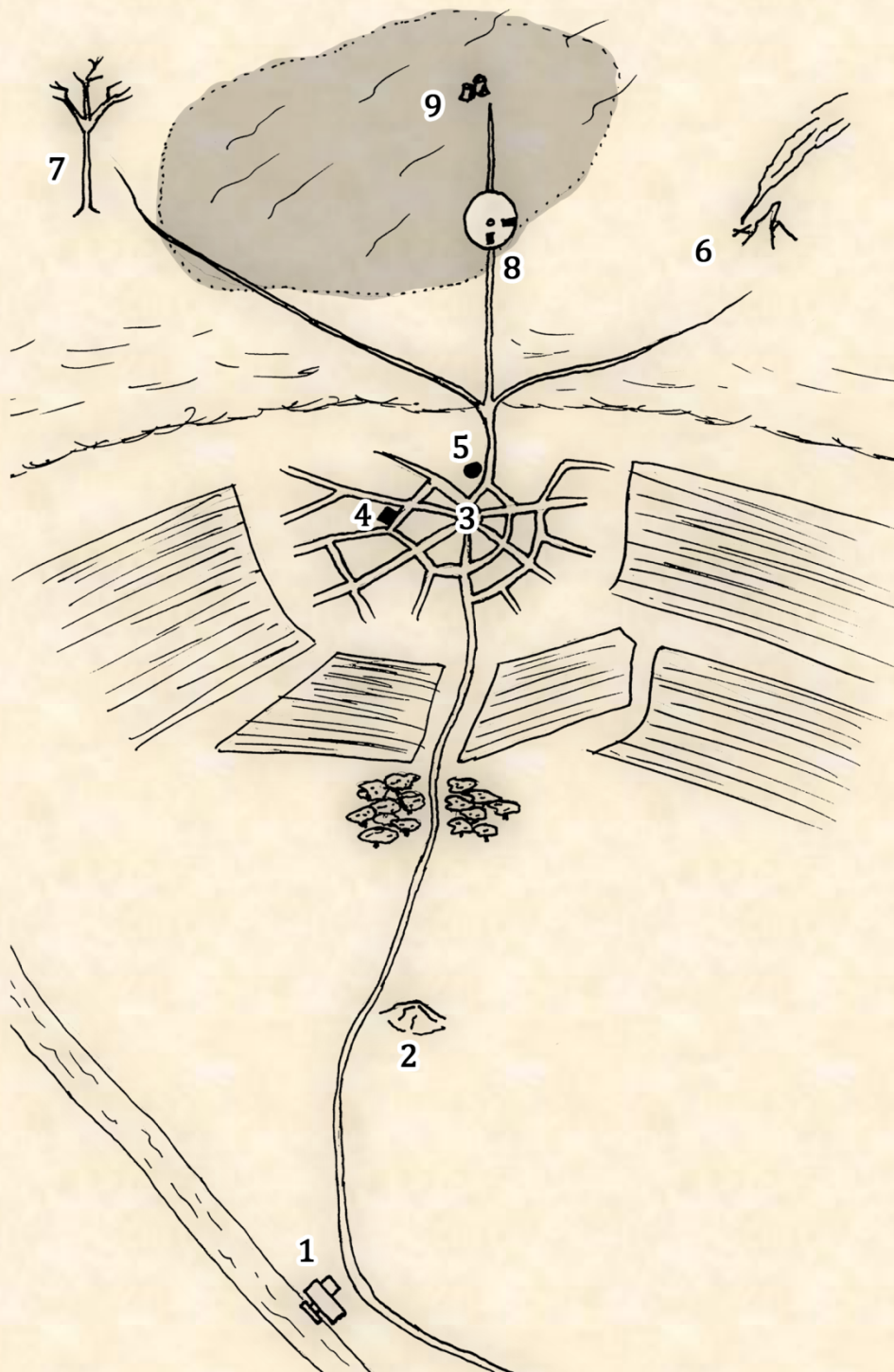
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MAP OF SAXHAM AND ITS SURROUNDINGS



1. GRIST MILL
2. WEASEL MOUND
3. SAXHAM SQUARE
4. SAX ESTATE
5. CHAPEL
6. GOBLIN CAMPFIRE
7. SPRITE TREE
8. CEMETERY
9. ELF TENTS

BACKGROUND

The wealthy Sax family established the small farming village of Saxham to produce grain to be ground at the family's grist mill. The village stands at the border of an elven forest, and near an abandoned elven holy grove that the village uses as its **cemetery**.

Thirty years ago, a barrel of fruit was delivered to the **Sax Estate** containing plague rats. The plague killed all 317 people in the village in just a few weeks. Most victims were hastily buried in the cemetery. Most...

Five months ago, the **ghost** of the village cleric **Sister Anna** rose from her tomb with a desire to save the people of Saxham. She cannot leave the cemetery, so she has captured several creatures and uses them to dig tunnels outward from the cemetery into the surrounding forest. The ghost uses the **tunnels** to reach the roots of the living trees.

Every night at midnight, the ghost steals the life-energy from the trees and uses that energy to resurrect one villager. The **blighted trees** turn black and ooze a reeking black oil. The villager climbs out of their grave as a **Clayskin** (earth zombie with glowing green eyes).

After three days of shambling and moaning, they shed a layer of grave soil and become a **Woodwalker** (bark zombie with green berry eyes). After three more days of staggering through the woods, they shed a layer of bark and become a normal human villager. They then each make their way back to the village, naked and confused, with no memory of their death or bizarre resurrection.

TODAY

There are now **138 villagers** in Saxham. They have no idea that they were dead, or that 30 years have passed.

They don't know where the rest of the villagers are, and are gripped by grief and fear. They are baffled by the decayed and overgrown state of the village and fields. They are terrified of the creatures wandering the blighted forest.

Their only solace is that every day or so, one of their lost loved ones stumbles out of the forest and returns to them.



THE CATCH

The "catch" to this adventure is that if the party does nothing at all, then the ghost cleric will continue to resurrect the villagers until Saxham is mostly restored. Then the ghost will be at peace and there will be no more "undead", and the forest will recover from the blight naturally. Probably. Hopefully...

But then, there would still be the three factions of goblins, sprites, and elves in the forest to deal with.

However, if the party stops the ghost or its tunneling creatures, then the resurrections will stop and the village will struggle to survive with its current number of residents.

What to do? What to do...

STORY HOOKS

Here are a few ideas to get your players engaged.

- On the road, the party finds an old grist mill by a river, where two old men tell tales of the village of Saxham. [**The Grist Mill**]
- In the wilderness, the party finds a boy fleeing from a Woodwalker. He describes Saxham as a village cursed and threatened by monsters. [**Isaac Dale**]
- In the wilderness, the party sees a flash of green light every night at midnight, and choose to investigate. This allows the DM to have the party enter the area from any direction the DM wants.
- A traveling merchant mentions to the party that he's seen smoke coming from Saxham, which is strange since it's been abandoned for 30 years...

ISAAC DALE

A painfully thin boy of thirteen staggers forward, shaggy hair pasted to his sweaty face. He collapses in front of you, gasping for breath, begging for water, and babbling about a strange creature in the woods.

- "I was gathering sticks for the fire when one of the Woodwalkers lunged at me, and I ran. It kept following, so I kept running..."
- "I'm from Saxham, just back that way. I live with my ma and pa (Dathan), but ma's missing. Lots of folks are missing."
- "Everyone says the village is cursed. Our house was all falling down. There're weeds all over the fields, and the goats are gone!"
- "There're monsters in the woods. Dead things with green eyes. No one goes into the woods anymore, it's too dangerous."

THE GRIST MILL

The cracked and mossy stone walls of the grist mill lean precariously over the river. Its water wheel has rusted solid and half its paddles have rotted away, as the stream continues to pull relentlessly at the decaying structure.



A tattered cloth hangs across the doorway and fragments of glass cling to the window frames.

- By day, two old men sit by the stream with fishing rods. By night, firelight flickers inside.
- The leathery-skinned, squinty-eyed old men are **Horace** (with prodigious muttonchops) and **Jasper** (with drooping mustache).
- They have lived here as fishermen for the last two years.
 - **Horace** remembers coming to the mill as a little boy with his father (a baker) to buy flour, but that was decades ago. He has no idea why the mill stopped running.
 - **Jasper** remembers making trips to Saxham with his father (a tinker) to sell forks and spoons. He recalls the wealthy Sax family having a large home full of art in gold frames, musical instruments, and fancy jewelry. It's probably all still up there.
 - **Both men** have seen flashes of green light late at night coming from Saxham for the last few months. But nothing has ever come to the mill, and the old men have never gone to investigate.

ROAD TO SAXHAM

Two dusty wheel ruts run north from the Sax Grist Mill through grassy hills toward a line of massive dark trees. The seedy grasses and blue wildflowers shiver and rustle endlessly as vermin explore the fields. The occasional rat scurries across the road.

- **Dead couple.** Sun-bleached bones lie tangled in the weeds in the road. Human. One man, one woman. Many years old. The bones have been gnawed by small teeth.
- **Bone heap.** Just 30 feet off the road is a bare dirt mound 5 feet high and 10 feet across. Two giant weasels sit on the mound, watching the party. The sides of the mound are littered with tiny bones. The weasels will defend their nest if provoked.

Giant Weasel

25 xp

Medium beast ▪ AC 13 ▪ 9 HP ▪ 40 ft

+5 bite attack ▪ 1d4+3 piercing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+3	+0	-3	+1	-3

OVERGROWN FIELDS

Wide open fields sweep across the hills into the distance to the east and west of the village. The crop rows are merely green grooves, covered now in thick grass and weeds.

Far away, dozens of men and women kneel in the fields, tearing out weeds by hand. Only one small patch of one field is freshly tilled and planted. The skeletal frames of small shacks and barns dot the hills.

ENTERING SAXHAM

Weeds stand tall in the middle of the dirt roads. Black rats dart boldly in the open, and fat striped cats trot slowly after them.

Rotting beams and thatching lay heaped against cracked stone walls, but cleared paths weave around the debris from house to house. Half the homes are ruined and half are repaired.

Ruined houses: The thatched roofs have collapsed, the doors have fallen off, and the windows are empty. Flies and gnats buzz over stagnant puddles. Pigeons squawk from nests in the chimneys. Spider webs sag, full of brown leaves and dead flies.

- **Note:** There is a 1-in-20 chance of finding a human skeleton inside a ruined house.

Repaired houses: There are freshly thatched roofs, newly stained doors, and tightly sealed shutters. Knocking at the closed doors produces no response.

Inside: The doors are unlocked. The floors are swept clean and dry mattresses sit on wooden frames smelling of fresh oil staining and sawdust. Pots, spoons, and knives are neatly hung by the hearth. No one is at home.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- A lone two-story house with two brick chimneys stands on the west side. [**Sax Estate, p8**]
- A broad wooden dome stands on the north side of town. [**Chapel of Saint Helena, p9**]

SAXHAM SQUARE

Voices and sounds of wood chopping and sawing echo through the streets from the village square. Seven men are working at a pile of fresh lumber to repair yet another identical house. The men are all thin and bearded. Six of them wear patched linen shirts and trousers, but the seventh wears a frayed blue suit.

- Amos the carpenter
- Barnabas the thatcher
- Dathan Dale the farmer (father of Isaac)
- Felix the farmer
- Jesse the cooper
- And...

EVERETT THE HUNTER

A gruff burly fellow. The last man to venture into the woods, three days ago. He found no signs of any game animals. While near the cemetery:

- He heard **chanting to the north.**
- He saw a **strange white tree to the west.**
- He smelled a **foul smoke to the east.**

PHILIP SAX

A foppish brat of 27, he is the last scion of the wealthy millers who founded Saxham. He wears a faded blue suit, waxes his mustache, and sits apart from the others, lazily sanding the edges of a small board, sighing and rolling his eyes.

- He is angry that the village isn't focused on repairing his estate, the large house on the west side of town. [**Sax Estate, p8**]
- He complains loudly about his father Martin wasting money on rare trinkets and lavish funerals instead of things like better security.

RUMORS/DIALOGUE OPTIONS

What happened to the village?

- “We don’t know, we don’t know! Maybe an evil spirit in the cemetery cursed us? Maybe a storm destroyed our homes and crops?”
- “I woke up alone in the woods, and can’t remember how I got out there.”
- “Only half of our people have returned so far. But more people come home every week. Hopefully everyone will be back soon.”
- “We’ve been trying to rebuild the village and restore the fields for months now.”

Have you looked for the missing people?

- “We’ve gone into the woods to look for them a few times, but the woods are full of monsters. Zombies! Walking trees!”
- “We are too busy trying to fix the village to look for them. We need to grow crops if we’re going to survive the winter.”

Tell us about the cemetery.

- “It used to be a holy elven grove.”
- “The forest around the cemetery is dead and black, and smells of corpses.”
- “Every night at midnight, there are flashes of green light near the cemetery.”
- “The cemetery is swarming with undead creatures.”

Is there anyone special in town?

- “We had a healer, Sister Anna, but she hasn’t returned yet. No one’s been to her chapel lately. It’s the domed building on the north side of the village.”
[**Chapel of Saint Helena, p9**]

SAX ESTATE

This two-story mansion looms over the nearby cottages. The collapsed roof and upper floor have buried the interior. Splintered debris fills the front doorway and windows. A flagstone path leads through an overgrown rose garden to the back yard. No debris blocks the **back door**, which stands square in its frame.

- **Back door.** Unlocked. Rats scurry out. The kitchen lies buried in fallen debris (including a huge gold harp, value 350gp, weight 200lbs) on the left side, but not on the right. In the right corner is a closed **trap door**.
- **Trap door.** Unlocked. A creaky wooden stair leads to a dank cellar. There are five **barrels**, two **trunks**, and a sleeping **goblin**.

Tosk the Goblin

50 xp

Small humanoid ▪ AC 15 ▪ 7 HP ▪ 30 ft

+4 sword attack ▪ 1d6+2 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-1	+2	+0	+0	-1	-1

This scrawny **goblin** wears yellow war paint and tattered leather armor, and stinks of urine. A **saw-toothed scimitar** lies beside him.

- Tosk wants (1) to survive and (2) to steal his brother Besk's **diamond ring**.
- He is looking for his grave-robbing brothers **Besk and Nikt**. They have been missing for a week. Tosk rewards good news about his family, but attacks if given bad news.
- He has 9gp.

TOSK'S RAT-GUTTER

This serrated scimitar deals +3 slashing damage to all Tiny creatures. The handle is sticky with blood.

CELLAR STUFF

- **Barrels (5).** Contain a black mush that reeks of rat droppings, but with a hint of cherries.
- **Trunk #1.** Unlocked. Contains: Two moth-eaten wool blankets, very itchy. Fine leather boots, value 10gp. Silver ring, Sax four-point star signet, value 50gp.
- **Trunk #2.** Locked. DC 10 to open. Poison dart trap. Dex ST 15 to avoid, 1d6 poison damage. Contains a shiny **black box**.
- **Black box.** Locked. DC 15 to open. This polished ebony box has a red velvet interior, and contains twenty-three broken wand shards and one intact **black ring**.

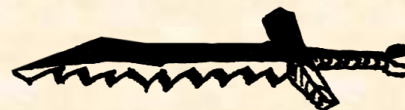
MARTIN'S RING OF PRIVACY

A gleaming black ring set with a tiny ruby.

When worn and activated, this ring emits a dim red light up to 10 feet and has the effect of the Silence spell within that radius. The ring remains active for one hour or until deactivated. The ring can only be activated once per sunrise.

The ring smells faintly of patchouli. Always.

Value: 450gp.



CHAPEL OF SAINT HELENA

This circular building's high domed roof is mossy but intact. Inside, four cracked and yellowed windows dimly light the chamber. A dozen stone benches form two curving rows around a bubbling **fountain** in the center of the space. Opposite the entrance is a short red **altar**. Behind the altar is an **iron-bound door**.

FOUNTAIN OF SAINT HELENA

Carved from white marble to resemble a single life-sized rose, clear cold water spouts up from the fountain, and spills down into a rusty grate in the floor.

- **Note:** Drinking the fountain water restores 1d6 HP and the drinker is unable to tell a lie for one hour. A creature can only gain this benefit/effect once per sunrise.

ALTAR OF SAINT HELENA

This low dusty altar of red stone veined in golden flecks glitters in the half-light.

On the back is an open shelf containing:

- Three fragile scrolls that all disintegrate when touched.
- One moldy Book of Saint Helena bound in blue leather, written in Old Common. Hidden between the pages is a **folded letter**.

FOLDED LETTER

Sister Lydia writes to Sister Anna that a plague in the Kingdom of Kalahar may be spreading toward Saxham. Victims are covered in painful weeping sores, and then go blind before dying. The disease spreads easily and kills quickly. Some clerics believe the plague is spread by rats. The letter is dated exactly 30 years ago.

IRON-BOUND DOOR

This unlocked door leads to a small bedchamber lit by a single narrow window. To the left are the mildewed remains of a **cot**. To the right is a small wooden **trunk** bound in rusty iron bands.

- **Cot.** Underneath is a small brown leather bundle covered in dust and spider webs. Inside the bundle are several faded letters.

FADED LETTERS

These six letters are too faded and tear-stained to read, but they are all addressed to "My dearest Anna" and are all signed "Love, Abel". The letters are all dated 32 to 35 years ago.



- **Trunk.** Unlocked. Inside are decaying clerical vestments of white and red silk bearing the rose emblem of Saint Helena, and a golden **reliquary necklace**.

RELIQUARY OF SAINT HELENA

Attunement. This glass vial contains a single human finger bone. When worn, the wearer is resistant to poison damage and immune to the Poisoned condition.

As an action, the wearer can cure one creature of the Poisoned condition by feeding them three drops of the wearer's blood. This feature can be used once per long rest.

Value: 250gp.



INTO THE WOODS

A dense forest looms over the village to the north. Ancient yews tower over alders and rowans, deep greens slashed by pale brown and silver trunks. Three faint footpaths lead to the north-west, the north-east, and due north.

ENCOUNTERS

For every hour spent in the woods, there is a 1-in-4 chance of an encounter with a wandering creature. Roll a d6 to select a creature below:

- 1) **A confused villager**, naked and filthy. They have no memory of how they got out into the forest, and beg for help getting home.
- 2) **A Clayskin**. These clay-skinned zombies have glowing green eyes. They cannot speak, wear no clothes, and carry no weapons. They attack anyone they see within 30 feet.
- 3) **A Woodwalker**. These bark-skinned zombies have green berries for eyes. They moan but cannot speak, wear no clothing, but carry rocks and sticks as weapons. They attack anyone they see within 60 feet.
- 4) **A swarm of ants devouring a dead animal**. The body is dry and partly skeletonized. Thousands of black ants swarm over the remains. The ants attack anyone who touches the corpse.
- 5) **A starving bear**. The beast's ribs press out clearly against its hide, and it limps on one crooked leg. Still it roars and charges the party on sight. When it dies, a poisonous fume erupts from its belly. 1d6 poison, 5ft.
- 6) **A rabid wolf**. The mad beast's red eyes never blink, and the foam around its maw is pink with blood. It attacks on sight.

Clayskin 50 xp

Medium undead ▪ AC 12 ▪ 15 HP ▪ 20 ft
+3 bash attack ▪ 1d6 bludgeoning

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	-2	+3	-4	-2	-3

Woodwalker 75 xp

Medium undead ▪ AC 10 ▪ 20 HP ▪ 20 ft
+3 bash attack ▪ 1d6+2 bludgeoning

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+1	+3	-2	-1	-1

Swarm of Ants 100 xp

Medium swarm ▪ AC 12 ▪ 30 HP ▪ 20 ft
+3 bite attack ▪ 3d4 piercing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-4	+1	+0	-5	-2	-5

Starving Bear 25 xp

Medium beast ▪ AC 10 ▪ 10 HP ▪ 20 ft
+3 claw attack ▪ 2d4 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+0	+2	-4	+1	-2

Rabid Wolf 50 xp

Medium beast ▪ AC 12 ▪ 20 HP ▪ 40 ft
+4 claw attack ▪ 2d4+2 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+2	+1	-4	+1	-2

OBSERVATIONS

- If watched for one day, a Clayskin sheds a layer of clay to become a Woodwalker.
- If watched for one day, a Woodwalker sheds a layer of bark to become a naked and confused villager.

THE EASTERLY PATH

The old hunting trail winds up into the hills among verdant alders and rowans. Ferns cover the ground, hiding the forest floor. Locusts chirp incessantly. A falcon cries out. After an hour of walking, the trail fades away.

The scent of smoke wafts from the north, smelling of burnt meat. Another hour's walk north brings you to a circle of gray boulders. A campfire burns inside the ring.

A **goblin** sits by the fire, roasting two rats on a spit.



Grazler the Goblin

100 xp

Small humanoid ▪ AC 16 ▪ 18 HP ▪ 30 ft

+5 sword attack ▪ 1d6+3 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+3	+2	+1	+1	+1

This cruel-eyed goblin elder wears yellow war paint and has a bronze helmet covering some of his wild white hair. His scarred arms bulge with corded muscle. A rusty scimitar stands thrust into the ground beside him.

- Grazler wants (1) respect and (2) food.
- He fears losing his three sons, who provide both respect and food.
- If attacked, he fights to the death.
- If offered food or trinkets, he reveals he is waiting for his three sons to return. Besk and Nikt went to the cemetery, but never returned. Then Tosk went to find the others, but also has not returned.
- If the party gives him bad news about his sons, he attacks. If the party gives him good news about his sons, he flips them a gold coin in thanks.
- He has 22gp.

GRAZLER'S HELM

This dented, rusty bronze helmet can only be worn by Small creatures. The wearer has advantage against being Stunned.

Value: 50gp.



THE WESTERLY PATH

The old woodcutter's path strikes a nearly straight line up the hillside through massive pine trees and granite boulders. After an hour, you reach the edge of the Blight-wood.

A ragged line of ash divides the healthy forest from the dead zone. The soil is black and dry. Fir trees stand bare of needles or bark, the trunks all black and cracked like scorched skeletons.

There is no sound of life. Black oily residue drips from the knots in the dead trees, reeking of rotten vegetation and copper.

- If anyone comes within 5 feet of the oil, tiny black tendrils reach out from the slime several inches and paw at the air, trying to touch the creature.
- If anyone touches the oil, tiny black tendrils quickly slither over its body to suffocate and digest it. [**Dolorous Ichor, p16**]

After another hour on the trail, the party can see a lone white tree standing perfectly straight about 300 feet to the west.



At 60 feet from the tree, the party sees thirteen sprites emerge from the far side of the white tree, led by an armed warrior.

Twiglet the Sprite

50 xp

Tiny fey ▪ AC 15 ▪ 4 HP ▪ 40 ft
+6 bow attack ▪ 1d4 piercing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-4	+4	+0	+2	+1	+0

A fierce young sprite with a bright green Mohawk flies toward you, carrying a tiny bow with poisoned arrows. She bares her teeth in a terrible grimace of rage.

- She wants to save the forest from the blight.
- She fears that the forest and sprites will die.
- She reports that the blight began about half a year ago. Shortly thereafter, she discovered two elves camped out to the north of the cemetery. They believe that the elves are causing the blight because they want their holy grove back from the humans.
- If attacked, the sprites all vanish into the trees. They fly directly to the elves' camp to attack, and all die in the attempt.
- If the party is friendly, then Twiglet will offer to lead them to the elves' camp to get rid of the elves by any means necessary.
- If the party leaves without making any arrangement with Twiglet, then the sprites proceed to the elves' camp to attack, and all die in the attempt.



THE NORTHERLY PATH

Rough flagstones covered in moss draw a ragged little road along the gully floor between the eastern and western hills. Towering yews shade the grassy ground. Squirrels chatter from above.

An hour's walk brings the party to the cemetery.

[Cemetery Grove, p14]

The area inside the cemetery's low stone wall is green. Tall grasses and flowers threaten to engulf the grave markers. But outside the stone wall to the west and north, the soil is black and dry without any undergrowth. Trees stand bare of leaves or bark, their trunks all black and cracked like scorched skeletons.

The flagstone path circles around the cemetery and continues on due north. Another two hours of walking brings the party to the campsite of two elves. [Elf Camp]

ELF CAMP

Two circular tents made of silk stand in a small cluster of dead rowan trees. The silk is dyed to blend in with the greens and browns of the forest, but here they are easily spotted against the blacks and grays of the Blight-wood.

DM NOTE: If the party did not make a deal with **Twiglet**, then there are thirteen freshly killed sprites arranged on a stone between the tents.

Two **kelenkens** stand guard outside the tents. These nine-foot-tall war birds have small wings, but powerful legs and massive beaks. Their saddles rest on nearby rocks. They shriek and kick up dust when they see you approach.

An **elf** emerges from each tent when they hear the birds, or the party calls out to them. They wear forest-green robes and carry quarterstaves.

Kelenken

50 xp

Large beast ▪ AC 11 ▪ 18 HP ▪ 50 ft

+4 claw attack ▪ 1d8+2 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+1	+1	-4	+0	-3

Elf Druid

450 xp

Medium humanoid ▪ AC 14 ▪ 27 HP ▪ 30 ft

+4 staff attack ▪ 1d8+2 bludgeoning

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+1	+1	+1	+2	+0

Spellcasting. Spell save DC 12, +4 to hit.

Spells: produce flame, shillelagh, entangle, thunderwave, barkskin, animal messenger

HYACINTH & HAWTHORN

An ageless woman with proud eyes and frowning mouth glares at you, but stays close to her kelenken. The woman's twin often raises an eyebrow and smirks, as though amused.

- They want to heal the blighted forest.
- They know the blight began when the villagers returned, so they are considering burning down Saxham to end the blight.
- They are forbidden from physically entering the holy grove because they are druids and not holy elven priests.
- They have 157gp.

ELVISH CANTEENS (x2)

These silver flasks, decorated in leafy etchings and damascene patterns, produce an endless trickle of clean, cool drinking water. Value: 250gp each.

CEMETERY GROVE

Once an elven holy grove, this 300-foot wide circle in the forest is surrounded by a knee-high wall of white stone and a ring of slender elm trees. In the center of the circle stands a perfectly cylindrical white stone pillar 20 feet tall with a stone likeness of an owl atop it.

SOUTH AND EAST

On the southern and eastern sides of the circle, there are hundreds of graves marked by small crooked gray stones, with dates going back over 100 years. Ivy and weeds reach up to smother the stones.

In the southern area there is a simple gray stone mausoleum. [**Humble Tomb**, p15]

In the eastern area there is an elaborate marble crypt. [**Sax Family Crypt**, p15]

NORTH AND WEST

In the northwestern area, there are hundreds of graves marked only by simple wooden posts. Many posts are broken, pecked by birds, chewed by insects, or consumed by lichen. Only a few are intact enough to read the names. All are dated 30 years ago.

There are nearly 300 graves in this area. Dozens of them are disturbed, the dirt freshly churned and rent with deep clawing humanoid prints.



DAY TIME

Wind blows. Locusts chirp. Birds and chipmunks move through the trees. Nothing strange here.

NIGHT TIME

Every night at midnight, a flash of green light at the edge of the Blight-wood accompanies the sudden visible deaths of three trees, their leaves and bark instantly incinerated.

Moments later, a faint white ghost appears from the **Humble Tomb** with a ball of bright green light in its hand. The ghost appears to be a human woman with a rose emblem on its chest.

It goes to a grave in the northwest area and deposits the green light in the ground. One minute later, a Clayskin erupts from the grave to shamble out into the forest. The ghost then returns to the tomb.

Ghost of Sister Anna

1,100 xp

Medium undead ▪ AC 11 ▪ 45 HP ▪ 40 ft

+5 touch attack ▪ 3d6 necrotic

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+3

A pale, wispy image of a woman in clerical robes glides through the air, her eyes vacant, her voiceless lips gaping. Frost covers the ground as she passes.

- If the ghost sees the party, it attempts to grapple the smallest member (DC 13 Str ST) and phase them through the wall of the tomb to put them in the **Wailing Tunnels**.
- If the party attacks the ghost, it fights. If reduced to half HP, it phases through the tomb wall. The party can pursue the ghost into the tomb, and down into the tunnels to continue the fight.

SAX FAMILY CRYPT

This white marble structure has iron bars protecting tiny glass windows, an iron gate protecting an iron door, and a roof covered in wrought iron spikes and turrets to resemble a tiny castle. Above the door is the name: "Sax".

- **Iron gate.** Locked. DC 10 to pick or DC 15 to force open.
- **Iron door.** Locked. DC 12 to pick or DC 17 to force open.
- **Pressure plate trap.** Located immediately inside the iron door. One charge. DC 10 to detect. DC 15 to disarm. 3d6 poison damage.

Built into the walls are 50 small alcoves. Eleven alcoves contain blue porcelain urns, all containing human ashes. The other alcoves are empty. In the center of the crypt is a cedar table with a lace runner, all covered in dust.

- Under the table is a hidden compartment (DC 15 to find) containing a pink **corset** and a brass **bell**.

CONSTANCE'S CORSET OF CONTORTION

This pink corset allows the wearer to squeeze through Tiny gaps at full speed, but the wearer is unable to hold their breath at all. The item is cursed and cannot be removed without the Remove Curse spell. Value: 300gp.

BERTRAND'S BROKEN BRASS BELL

This mangled brass bell's discordant clanging drives away any Beast within 10 feet for 1 minute, and attracts any Ooze within 100 feet for 1 minute. Value: 120gp.

HUMBLE TOMB

The only feature on this gray stone mausoleum is the iron-bound door. Above the door are the words: "Here lie the sisters of Saint Helena".

- **Iron door.** Unlocked. Rusted and overgrown. DC 15 to force open.

Inside the tomb there are three shallow shelves cut into the walls on each side. Two shelves on the left side contain shrouded remains: Sister Ruth and Sister Anna. The others are empty.

- **DM NOTE:** If the party blesses, burns, or removes the remains of Sister Anna from the cemetery, then the ghost will stop rising. No more villagers will return. The blight will fade. Eventually.

At the back of the tomb, in the center of the floor, the stone tiles are pried up to reveal a 5-foot-wide dirt hole descending into the darkness. The darkness smells of rotten vegetables and copper. Faint sounds echo up from below. It almost sounds like countless people wailing in pain...



WAILING TUNNELS

The dirt hole drops 15 feet straight down to the tunnel floor, which is entirely covered in a black oily fluid. [**Dolorous Ichor**] There is no light. Roots dangle like webs. Screams echo endlessly from every direction. From the hole, there are tunnels extending to the **west**, to the **north**, and to the **east**.

- **DM NOTE:** If the party frees or kills all the creatures digging in the tunnels, but leaves the ghost intact, the resurrections will stop until the ghost can find more creatures to dig in the tunnels. And it will.

DOLOROUS ICHOR

Every footstep that falls on the Ichor causes this living mass of black slime to moan and shriek with a hundred tiny voices, which can be heard 300 feet away. It is impossible to walk through the tunnels without stepping on the Ichor.

- If a creature stands still on the Ichor for one minute, dozens of slender black tendrils will rise up to weakly paw at the creature's feet. There is a 1-in-12 chance that the Ichor will trip the creature and it will fall prone.
- If a creature falls prone in the Ichor, the black tendrils will immediately smother its eyes, ears, and throat, rendering it Blind, Deaf, and Suffocating. DC 12 Str ST to escape.



- **The Ichor can only be dissolved by acid.** It does not burn or freeze, or react to physical attacks. Acid will clear a small area for a few moments, before the rest of the Ichor oozes back over the cleared space.

NORTH TUNNEL

The north tunnel snakes along for 300 feet and then splits to the left and to the right.

- **Left fork.** 60 feet to a **giant badger**.
- **Right fork.** 120 feet to a **gnoll**.

Giant Badger

50 xp

Medium beast ▪ AC 10 ▪ 13 HP ▪ 30 ft
+3 claw attack ▪ 2d4+1 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+0	+2	-4	+1	-3

A giant badger labors in the darkness to extend the tunnel. It does not notice you approaching.

It ignores the party unless attacked. It can be commanded in Sylvan or Druidic to peacefully leave the tunnel through the tomb.

Hesheg the Gnoll

25 xp

Medium humanoid ▪ AC 8 ▪ 5 HP ▪ 10 ft
+1 pickaxe attack ▪ 1d4+1 piercing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+0	-2	-2	+0	-2

Emaciated, eyes sunken, limbs shaking, a gnoll labors to extend the tunnel using a rusty pickaxe. Hearing you approach, he cowers against the dirt walls.

- If attacked, he howls but does not fight back.
- If asked, he claims to have come to the cemetery to dig up and eat a body, but he was captured by a ghost and forced to work in the tunnels. He has been here for weeks.
- If freed, he will flee into the forest to the north and be killed by the elves.

WEST TUNNEL

The west tunnel runs 200 feet and then splits to the left and right.

- **Left fork.** 30 feet to a **dead goblin**.
- **Right fork.** 120 feet to a **live goblin**.

BESK THE (DEAD) GOBLIN

The tunnel ends in a particularly pungent pool of the Dolorous Ichor. Rising above the surface are the decaying remains of a goblin, as well as a rusty shovel, a bent knife, and one small leather boot.

The black tendrils of the Ichor continuously caress the dead flesh, gently licking it away. Two thin arms of the Ichor reach up through the goblin's empty eye sockets.

- Somewhere under the Ichor is a diamond ring. DC 18 to find it. Value: 100gp.

Nikt the (live) Goblin 50 xp

Small humanoid ▪ AC 15 ▪ 7 HP ▪ 30 ft

+4 shovel attack ▪ 1d6+2 slashing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-1	+2	+0	+0	-1	-1

Sweating and swearing, a wiry young goblin works to extend the tunnel, digging with a shovel too large for him to handle properly.

- If asked, he claims he followed his brother Besk to the cemetery to rob some graves, and they were both captured by a ghost and forced to dig in the tunnels. Sometimes he sees the ghost in the tunnels, sucking the life from the exposed tree roots.
- If freed, he flees east into the forest to join his father Grazler.

EAST TUNNEL

The east tunnel curves a bit to the north and ends 90 feet from the hole. The walls here shift and glitter as thousands of black ants swarm over the bones of a giant mole.

Next to the ants is a partly open coffin that has fallen out of the wall. The walnut lid is askew. Inside is a **glint of gold**.

- The swarm attacks if the coffin is touched.

SILAS'S GOLDEN CRAVAT

Attunement. This extravagant neckwear allows the wearer's speech to be understood by any creature that can hear it and that can understand at least one language. It does not allow the wearer to understand other languages. Value: 200gp.

Swarm of Ants 100 xp

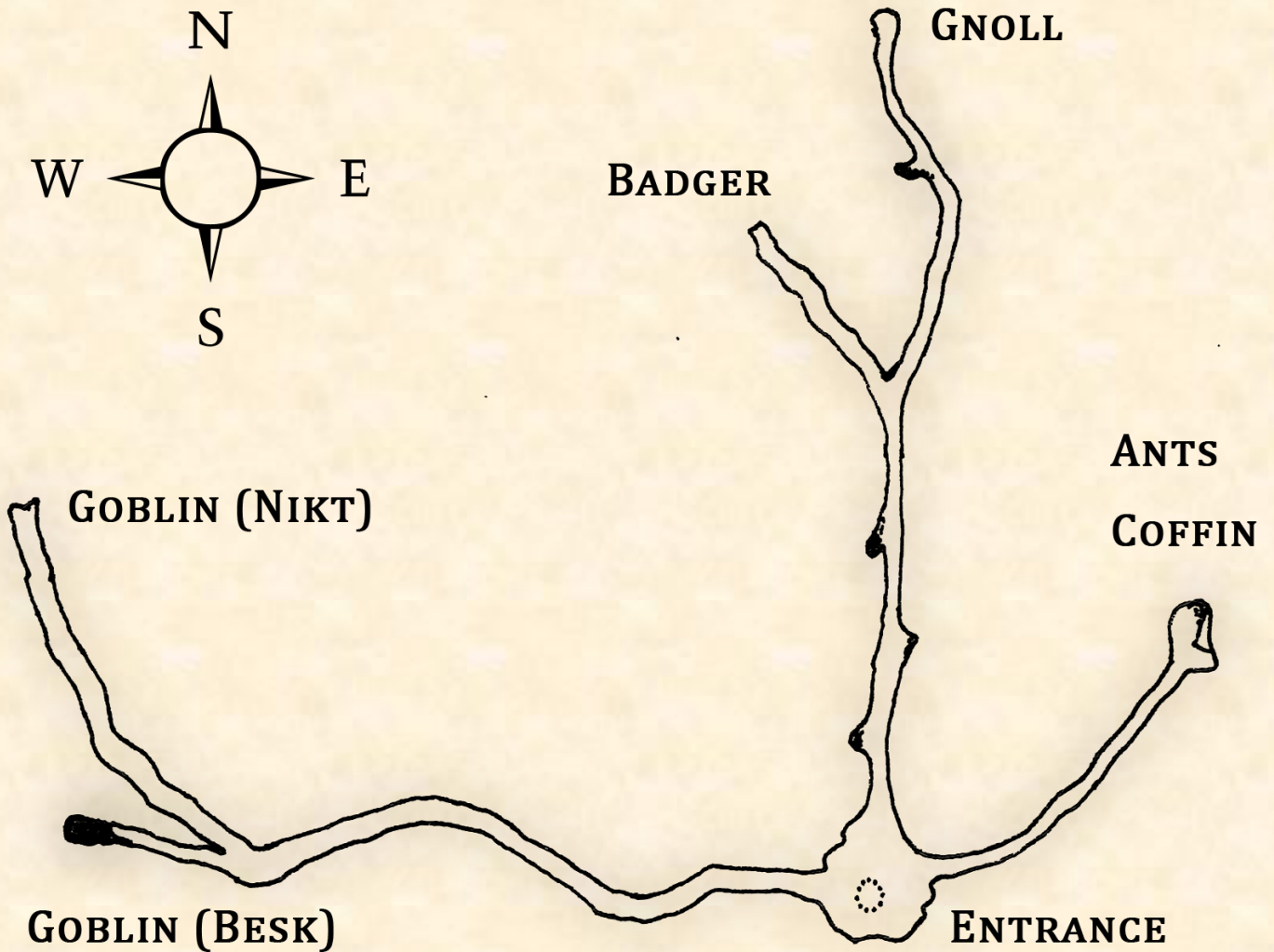
Medium swarm ▪ AC 12 ▪ 30 HP ▪ 20 ft

+3 bite attack ▪ 3d4 piercing

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-4	+1	+0	-5	-2	-5



MAP OF THE WAILING TUNNELS



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