

RECLAMATION OF HALLOWHALL

FOR 5 PCS OF
9TH LEVEL



A 5E WARLOCK ADVENTURE
BY JEFF LEE

RECLAMATION OF HALLOWHALL

Adventure Background

Hallowhall was the property of Bryma Grenat, a devout servant of both Lada and the Crown. The land was gifted to her after she was knighted by King Stefanos—young and still a bachelor—for valor in battle against raiding Rothenian tribesmen. She built Hallowhall soon after. Bryma never married, becoming more reclusive and eccentric with each passing year. One day she simply stopped leaving the castle, and her local duties were no longer carried out. When the taxes failed to arrive, the King sent messengers, then officials from court, and finally a band of knights to investigate. None ever returned. The Mharoti attack on Illyria turned attention elsewhere, and the death of Stefanos ensured Hallowhall did not catch Queen Dorytta's attention until recently.

Unbeknownst to the outside world, Bryma Grenat was the victim of revenge. While gathering a household staff, she recruited a wizard adviser, Damir. Unknown to Lady Grenat, she had killed Damir's brother, Ilnar, in the conflict that won her title and lands. Once settled in the castle, he began laying a curse upon the castle. This curse caused a growing paranoia and fear of the outside world, leading those under its effects to never wish to step beyond its walls. The plan was successful, in fact too much so. The wizard did not realize he too had fallen under its effects, certain that

not considering the castle home would protect him from the curse. When Bryma died, he simply took over Hallowhall as his own. He was content to conduct magical experiments and torment the household staff until the band of knights sent by the King managed to breach the castle. Damir died defending his self-made prison, though even death did not free him from the curse.

Hallowhall sits alone, shunned by locals. The curse remains in place. Those who linger too long within its walls become trapped, seeing the old castle as home, and become hostile to those who intrude upon its confines. These accursed denizens protect it against any outsiders, as do the traps and magical hazards its paranoid occupants developed to defend themselves against interlopers.

Adventure Hooks

Queen Dorytta worries about the might of the Mharoti Empire and the forces that sit just beyond the borders of Magdar. Recently she has been bolstering the country's defenses and attempting to strengthen its borders. To this end, the Queen has charged the PCs to travel to the Vurkove Hills, where an abandoned castle has sat upon the southern border, unoccupied, for decades. The PCs are tasked to

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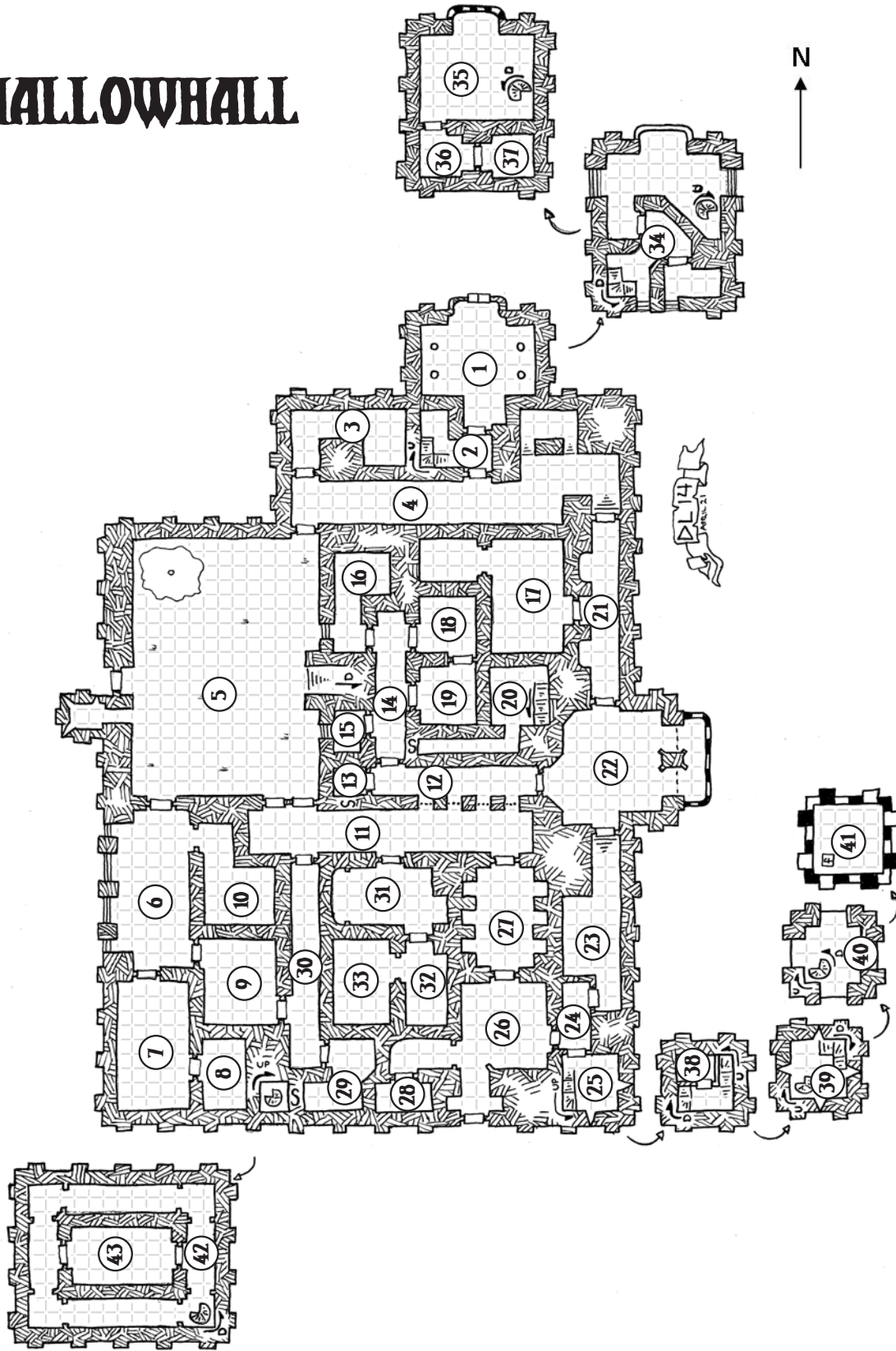
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HALLOWHALL



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enter Hallowhall, clear it of any dangers, and report back complete. The Queen offers the PCs the sum of 2,000 gp upon their return.

The PCs could have other reasons for venturing into Hallowhall. Below are some suggestions.

- If the PCs are loyal citizens and servants of Magdar, their reward for the reclamation of Hallowhall is to become its new masters. They are provided with a reward and annual stipend to refurbish and repopulate the castle, in exchange for their service as local lords. Once in command of Hallowhall, they are charged with protecting the surrounding lands and defending against any incursions by the Dragon Empire. This might also suit PCs compelled by more mercenary attitudes, providing additional income and a base of operations in exchange for their services.
- One of the PCs is a distant relative of the original owner of the castle, contacted by a clerk of the Royal Court. They are offered the deed to the land and building—provided they can clear the locale of any dangers that may be lurking within it.
- The characters are approached by the inhabitants of the village of Grenatsburg. Village children went to Hallowhall on a dare by their peers, and they have not returned. The villagers have collectively amassed 250 gp as a reward for rescuing the children. If the meager reward does not entice the PCs, the various shopkeepers and artisans up the ante with additional enticements (free room and board at the local inn when the PCs are in town; the blacksmith offers to shoe horses and make repairs for free, etc.).

The Curse of Hallowhall

The castle's curse is still in effect, ensnaring all living creatures that enter its walls. It is slow and insidious. Those that enter Hallowhall find themselves hard put to leave. Each creature with an Intelligence score of 2 or higher that spends 1 hour within Hallowhall must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature finds some excuse to delay exit from Hallowhall. For example, an afflicted PC may recommend securing a room to rest in rather than leaving to camp, to save the group time.

Each day the creature stays in Hallowhall, the DC increases by 1, to a maximum of 17. As time progresses, excuses for staying become more outlandish and paranoid. The afflicted may believe misfortune will befall them if they leave, or that hidden enemies await in ambush outside the walls. A creature under extreme circumstances—lack of food or water, a disease that can only be cured by leaving, or a loved one in dire need beyond the walls, for example—has

advantage on the saving throw. A *remove curse* lifts the curse from a creature, but if it reenters Hallowhall, or remains within the castle for another 24 hours, it must make another save or come under the effects of the curse once more.

The curse can be lifted permanently from the castle by finding the three fetishes that produce the effect, then destroying or removing them from the castle. The DC of the curse is reduced by 1 for each fetish destroyed or removed. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check while interacting with one fetish recognizes it is part of a magical anchor for some type of spell. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check while interacting with two fetishes reveals the two are magically connected and form part of an anchor to a powerful spell permeating the castle. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check while interacting with all three fetishes realizes the three are the anchors for the curse that hangs over Hallowhall and that their destruction or removal from the castle will break the curse.

Gaining Entrance to Hallowhall

All doors into Hallowhall are locked. First floor exterior windows are set high in the wall and blocked with iron bars, as are the courtyard windows (Area 4). The balconies on the second floor and third floors of the north tower (Areas 34 and 35) are open, but they stand 25 feet and 40 feet above ground level, respectively. A successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check is required to climb the walls of Hallowhall. Windows above the first floor are locked but have no bars. DCs for the various entrances are as follows.

- Main entrance (Area 1): Locked double doors, which requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to unlock.
- West gate, courtyard (Area 5): Iron door with complex puzzle lock, which requires a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to unlock.
- East balcony (Area 22): Two locked iron gates, which require a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to unlock.
- South entrance (Area 26): Iron-banded wooden door, which require successful DC 25 Dexterity checks using thieves' tools to unlock.
- North tower (Area 34): Locked windows, which require successful DC 15 Dexterity checks using thieves' tools to unlock.
- Southeast tower (Area 41): Locked trapdoor, which requires a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to unlock.

1. ENTRANCE HALL

A dusty carpet runs from the exterior double doors to the single interior door, which bears the crest of Hollowhall: a pair of crossed blades, a golden eye above them, and a rose below. Four pillars carved with angelic figures support the vaulted ceiling overhead.

Trapped Door. The door to Area 2 is trapped with a *glyph of warding*. If the door is opened without first speaking the password “dawn reveals all” or dispelling the glyph, it triggers the glyph’s explosive runes. Each creature within 20 feet of the door must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Prevention. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check notices tiny runes carved along the edges of the door’s crest. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, reveals an aura of abjuration magic on the door. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 13) cast on the door destroys the trap.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the golden eye on the interior door’s crest as one of the holy symbols of Lada, the goddess of the dawn, love, and mercy. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a small, wooden figurine of a winged devil inserted into a cleft in the southwestern pillar, a few feet above the floor. This is one of the three fetishes that binds the curse in place. It radiates both magic and evil.

2. ANTECHAMBER

This small hall is empty, save for a set of stairs rising to the north.

The stairs here lead up into the north tower (Area 34).

3. GUARD ROOM

A dusty table sits against the north wall of this room. Pieces of broken chairs and the skeletal remains of several humanoid forms litter the floor.

The room was once a guard post. Now it contains the restless remains of several former guards of Hollowhall. Eight **skeletons** rise up to attack intruders.

4. NORTH HALL

This dark hallway is lined with old, dirty paintings, mostly landscapes, though a few figures gaze down from portraits hung here and there.

It has been years since any cleaning or maintenance was performed here, and the value of most of the paintings would

be spent on the experts necessary to restore them. However, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check notices one piece done by a local artist in the Magdar Kingdom which could fetch 100 gp even after the expense of restoration.

5. INFESTED COURTYARD

The yard is choked with weeds. In one corner, a small pond sits still and silent, with a statue on a small plinth standing at its center. The statue is so befouled with guano that it can no longer be recognized as anything beyond humanoid. Every available perch along the walls and in the yard is crowded with sickly-looking ravens. The place stinks of their waste and the smell of decay, highlighted by another acrid, underlying odor.

The stairs leading to the lower levels of Hollowhall from here have been walled over with a thick barrier of stone and mortar. (If you wish to expand this adventure with whatever mysteries lie below, do so; but the lower levels are not featured in this adventure.)

Creatures. The courtyard is a motley collection of creatures ensnared by the Curse of Hollowhall. The ravens have plenty of water but are crazed with hunger. They have been feeding on whatever insects they can catch, and those of their own kind that succumb to starvation. Creatures entering the courtyard cause the ravens to fly to the attack, forming twelve **swarms of ravens**. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check recognizes the ravens are starving and that something is compelling them to not fly out of the open courtyard for food.

The yard is also home to twelve **alliumites** (*Creature Codex*, p. 13), safe from the ravens’ depredations because of their strong odor and taste. The alliumites likewise attack any creatures that intrude on their domain, not from hunger but to protect their garden. A creature who shows respect to the alliumites or their garden and succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check is ignored by the alliumites—as long as the creature continues respecting the plantfolk and the plants in the courtyard.

Finally, a **wind demon** (*Creature Codex*, p. 93) and its **wind’s harp devil** companion (*Creature Codex*, p. 105) were recently lured into the courtyard, attracted by the miasma of raven guano, decay, and the alliumites’ odor. They have decided to stay their journey a while and enjoy the foul aromas. The alliumites ignore them, and the ravens fear them. When not flitting around the courtyard, they can be found in the small guard tower on the west side of the courtyard. They join in the attack on any intruders simply for the thrill.

Statue. The statue at the center of the pond is an image of Lada. If a creature spends 10 minutes cleaning the filth from the statue, it receives Lada’s grace. A creature with Lada’s grace has advantage on its next saving throw. Lada bestows her grace only once.

Windows. Two small, barred windows sit in the eastern wall of the courtyard, giving grime-coated views into Areas 15 and 16.

Treasure. The fiends have a sack in a corner of the guard tower, which contains 225 sp and 80 gp.

6. SOLARIUM

High, arched windows covered in decorative ironwork let in light from outside. Several high-backed chairs and a divan are scattered around the room. Pieces of a broken table are piled next to remains of a campfire in the middle of the floor. The divan is blood-stained, and a trail of blood and drag marks leads from it to the door on the south wall.

The room is unoccupied, though bloodstains on the divan and the campfire indicate someone occupied this room in the last few days.

Treasure. Under the divan are an empty hooded lantern and a backpack, which contains two days of rations and a silver flute worth 25 gp.

7. LIBRARY

Heavy, wooden shelves line the walls of this room, some still filled with books. A long table occupies the center of the room, its top cluttered with knives, a saw, and several blood-soaked cloth bundles.

Creatures. Four mercenary soldiers (use the statistics for a **bandit captain**) are in the room. Trapped by the curse and out of food, they killed a lone adventurer who was resting in the solarium and plan on drying the meat for food. They attack anyone entering the room. The sounds of combat draws their leader from Area 8, who joins in the attack.

Treasure. The mercenaries have a total of 10 gp, 25 sp, and 70 cp on their persons. The books in the library are mostly ruined due to insect infestation, but a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check made while searching the room finds four rare volumes that are mostly intact and worth 30 gp each to a scholarly collector.

8. STUDY

Small bookshelves sit along the north and south walls, and a map of the Magdar Kingdom hangs on the east wall. Beneath the map, a writing desk is cluttered with more books and stacks of paper.

Creature. A **mage** currently occupies this room, leader of the mercenaries in Area 7. She originally came to loot the castle but has lingered due to the curse.

Treasure. The mage carries a pouch containing 30 gp. The desk drawers hold an obsidian inkwell worth 25 gp, a white onyx paperweight worth 35 gp, and a gold-inlaid, silver letter opener worth 5 gp.

9. TEA ROOM

Fine furniture is scattered about the room, and once-fine rugs are littered with shards of ceramic. A dented copper teapot sits on a small table in the northwest corner, a golden tassel hanging out from under its lid.

Curious Teapot. An odd puffball mushroom hides in the sludge in the bottom of the teapot. If the lid of the pot is removed, the puffball releases a cloud of spores that fills a 5-foot cube originating from the teapot. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. The tassel is attached to a brass key that unlocks the secret door in Area 14.

10. SMOKING ROOM

The door to this room has been knocked off its hinges and leans up against the wall just inside the doorway. Old smoke permeates the air and furnishings of this room. Several chairs and a sofa sit on a rug in the center of the room around a low table bearing a silver humidor. A lacquered cabinet stands against the south wall.

The cabinet is mostly empty. A few carved, wooden pipes sit on its racks while a broken hookah sits on its bottom shelf.

Trapped Humidor. The silver humidor is worth 75 gp, but it is trapped. Opening the lid causes a shower of sparks to rain down on the contents, setting them alight and rapidly filling a 5-foot cube originating from the humidor with **burnt othur fumes**. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to hold its breath or inhale the fumes.

Prevention. The sparkers were added to the lid and not included in its initial construction, setting the lid slightly off-center. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the lid isn't flush with the rest of the humidor. A successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools extracts the sparkers from the lid without opening the humidor. Unsuccessfully attempting to remove the sparkers triggers the trap. Alternatively, if the humidor is turned upside down before it is opened, the contents settle over the sparkers and prevent the trap from triggering.

11. THE RED HALL

This long hall is covered in a thick, crimson carpet. Wall hangings of the same color drape the walls. Decorative iron grills on the northern wall cover openings into a nearby hallway.

The iron-covered doorways allow those in this hall to look into the Middle Passage (Area 12) and vice versa. A successful DC 20 Strength check bends the iron bars enough to allow a Small creature to squeeze through them into Area 12.

Trapped Hallway. Four trip wires laid over the plush carpet each release one crossbow bolt into the hallway from crossbows mounted on the other side of the iron grills leading to Area 12. Each bolt makes a ranged attack with a +8 bonus against a random target in a 15-foot line extending south from the iron-covered doorway nearest the tripwire (vision is irrelevant to this attack roll). (If there are no targets in the area, the bolts don't hit anything.) A target that is hit takes 5 (1d10) piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Once triggered, the crossbows don't fire bolts again until reloaded by a creature in Area 12.

Prevention. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check sees the four trip wires stretching across the hallway near each iron-covered doorway. A successful DC 15 Dexterity checking using thieves' tools breaks a trip wire harmlessly. A character without thieves' tools can attempt this check with disadvantage using an edged weapon or edged tool. On a failed check, the trap triggers. Alternatively, a creature in Area 12 can remove the bolts from the loaded crossbows, making the trap harmless.

Secret Door. A secret door to Area 13 hides behind one of the wall hangings. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check finds the seams of the door poking out from behind the wall hanging. Moving the wall hanging reduces this DC by 5.

12. MIDDLE PASSAGE

This unremarkable passage has decorative iron grills in the south wall. A loaded crossbow on a tripod sits in front of each grill, pointed at the space beyond the ironwork.

This passage connects the servants' quarters and kitchens with the dining hall. The crossbows in this hallway can be made harmless by removing the crossbow bolts loaded in them.

13. LINEN CLOSET

This small room smells strongly of cedar. Shelves along the walls hold folded sheets, towels, cloths, and other textiles.

This room was used to store the castle's bedding after it was laundered. The current occupants of the castle typically ignore it, making it a good place for the PCs to rest if they so desire. The secret door in this room leads to Area 11, and it is easy to see on this side.

14. SERVANTS' HALL

This short hallway has several doors along its length, and the wooden panels between each door bear bas-reliefs of the Hollowhall crest.

The doors here connect to Areas 12, 15, 16, 18, and 19.

Secret Door. A secret door leads to Area 20. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the rose in the Hollowhall crest on this section of wall is removable. The rose hides the keyhole, which reveals the presence of the door. The secret door is locked, requiring a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to unlock it. Alternatively, the door can be opened with the key from Area 9.

15. STEWARD'S QUARTERS

This staid but well-appointed room contains a bed and wardrobe against the north and south walls, respectively. A small writing desk and chair sits beneath a barred window looking out upon the castle courtyard.

Treasure. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check while searching the wardrobe notices a false bottom, which hides the steward's collected wealth of 165 cp, 70 sp, 35 gp, and a silver and garnet brooch worth 75 gp.

16. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

This long room is plainly appointed, with a several cots arranged along the walls, each with a footlocker under it. A single, barred window looks out onto the castle courtyard.

Treasure. This room is long abandoned and thick with dust. The footlockers contain clothing, personal items, and a total of 50 cp and 15 sp.

17. GUARD BARRACKS AND CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

This room smells of carrion and the floor is littered with gnawed bones. Bunks along the walls hold torn mattresses and soiled bedding, mounded up like animal nests. An archway on the west wall leads to a smaller room, which holds a bed in slightly better shape.

Creatures. Affected by the curse like the rest of the castle, the guards and their captain eventually resorted to cannibalism to survive after the food stores ran out. The worst of the lot

lingered on after death. Eight of the guards rose as **ghouls**, still wearing their studded leather armor (increasing their AC to 14). Their captain is a **ghast** who wears a breastplate (increasing his AC to 17) that still bears the Hollowhall crest. The ghouls occasionally obey Damir out of dimly-remembered habit, but mostly they cater to their own hunger than anything else.

18. KITCHEN

A fireplace, flanked by a pair of ovens, occupies the north wall of this room. A large, iron rack hangs from the ceiling, festooned with an assortment of pots, pans, and utensils. A wooden table rests beneath the rack. The top of the table bears years of scars from knives and cleavers, though the scars are now coated in a thick layer of dust.

The pantry shelves here are bare, the food long since eaten, stolen, or left to rot.

Weakened Rack. The supports for the iron rack are weakened from years of use and the recent neglect. If a creature disturbs the various cookware hanging from it, there is a 25 percent chance it collapses. This chance increases to 100 percent if a creature pulls on the rack, attempts to climb it, or otherwise puts a significant amount of additional stress upon the supports. If the rack crashes down, it breaks the table and each creature within 10 feet of the table must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't knocked prone. At your discretion, the noise generated by the collapsing rack alerts the ghouls in Area 17 and the elementals in Area 19 to the PCs' presence. If the ghouls are alerted, they arrive in 2d4 rounds. If the elementals are alerted, they hide and ready actions to attack the first PC that comes within range.

19. LAUNDRY

A huge copper cauldron, green with age, sits in the center of the room, full of steaming water. A fire burns under a grate in the floor beneath it. A cluster of barrels sits in the southwest corner and drying racks line the walls. The biting odor of lye permeates the area.

One barrel is half-full of lye. The rest contain water. The laundry cauldron and its fire are not as simple as they seem.

Creatures. Damir bound a pair of elementals here to make the laundry more efficient. The **fire elemental** provided hot water and quick drying of bedding and clothes. The **water elemental** provided self-agitating laundry. Now both simply torment one another while yearning to be free. They forget their rivalry if anyone enters the room, quickly joining forces against interlopers.

20. SECRET STORAGE ROOM

A narrow hall leads to a room filled with makeshift shelves and wooden bins. A set of stairs that once led down is sealed off by a wall of masonry.

This room was used as storage as well as a hidden way into the castle's basement before the paranoid Lady of Hollowhall had it bricked up. A small fetish made of bird bones and feathers and painted in blood hides under one of the wooden bins. This is one of the three fetishes that binds the curse in place. It radiates both magic and evil.

Treasure. Some of the shelves and bins still contain useful items. There are six 50-foot coils of silk rope, a bag of ball bearings, a climber's kit, two sledge hammers, a bullseye lantern, and two casks of oil (each holds the equivalent of 10 flasks of oil). A small box on one of the shelves holds three *potions of healing* packed in wood shavings.

21. THE BLUE HALL

This long hall is covered in a thick, cerulean carpet. Wall hangings of the same color drape the walls. Two alcoves flank a door on the west wall. One holds a stuffed bear, the other a stuffed lion.

Roaring Taxidermy. If anyone touches or stands within 5 feet of one of the taxidermy animals for more than 1 round, it comes to life and roars continuously. The roar and movement is a harmless illusion, and it can be quieted if struck. The illusion resets 1 hour after being struck. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 13) cast on the taxidermy animal destroys the illusion. The noise alerts the occupants of Areas 17 and 22 to the presence of someone in the hall.

22. DINING HALL

A huge, dusty table dominates the center of the room. Chairs are scattered about the place. The musical sound of water comes from a marble fountain in the northeastern corner of the room. Two iron gates block egress to a raised balcony on the east side of the castle.

Creature. This room is the domain of Eumelia, a **crinaea** (see page 13) that lairs in the fountain. She was tied to the underground spring that feeds the fountain, but she found her new home much more enjoyable until Damir's curse took effect. She was at first confused by the behavior of the occupants, as she was curiously unaffected by the castle's curse. Eumelia is an excellent eavesdropper, and she eventually pieced together that Damir had used his magic to somehow affect the castle's occupants. Eumelia is not hostile and is eager for conversation. She openly addresses any PCs who enter the room. Should the PCs treat her politely, she gladly shares what information she has. She

cannot travel far from her fountain, nor does she care to, but Eumelia can provide general directions to anywhere in the castle, including Damir's former quarters (Areas 31-33). A successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Eumelia to part with the coins in the basin. Alternatively, Eumelia could be convinced to trade the coins for a shiny, metal object worth at least 10 gp.

If attacked, Eumelia retreats into the water of the basin, becoming invisible before flowing down into the spring that feeds the fountain to hide. Should the PCs have the audacity to take water from her fountain after assaulting her, she poisons it with her curse after they have left.

Treasure. The fountain's basin is covered in coins, a total of 82 cp, 71 sp, and 13 ep. Eumelia considers these her property and doesn't allow them to be taken without her consent.

23. SOUTH HALL

Green light flickers behind a row of statuary standing in a long alcove along the western wall, casting strange, warped shadows of humanoid forms along the floor and on the eastern wall of the hallway.

The light comes from *continual flame* spells in the alcove. The statues are finely crafted, but all have been damaged. Some are missing hands, others whole arms or their heads.

24. HALL OF SKULLS

This short hallway has three doors. Several skulls, humanoid and animal, are nailed to the wall with iron spikes.

The door to Area 26 is braced from the other side. A successful DC 20 Strength check forces it open.

25. SOUTHERN GUARD POST

A pair of arrow slits look out onto the castle grounds. Yellowed bones are scattered over the floor. A set of stairs hugs the wall in the southwestern corner, rising to the next level.

The bones, unidentifiable as anything other than humanoid, show no sign of cause of death, and have been here for years. The stairs ascend to the second floor of the castle's southern tower (Area 38).

Trapped Stairs. When a creature steps on a hidden pressure plate on the twelfth step up the stairs, a scything blade swings down to strike creatures on the stairs before swinging back into its slot in the ceiling. The trap activates when more than 20 pounds of weight is placed on the pressure plate, releasing the blade. Each creature on the stairs on and below the twelfth step must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) slashing damage on a failed

save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The trap then resets itself.

Prevention. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the presence of the pressure plate from variations in the wood on the stairs. Wedging an iron spike or other object under the pressure plate prevents the trap from activating.

26. PRACTICE ROOM

Dirty straw mats cover the floor of this room. Wooden practice dummies line the south wall. An iron pot, suspended from a makeshift tripod made of weapon racks, sits over a small fire.

This room was once used by Hallowhall guards for practice drills. The door to the west leading to Area 28 is made of iron and securely locked. A successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools unlocks the door. Damir in Area 43 holds the key.

Creatures. Four **wereboars** currently occupy this room. One of them has not yet succumbed to the curse, and he foraged for food recently to help feed his comrades. As a result, a hearty rabbit stew cooks over the fire.

Treasure. A sack of loot lies near the fire, containing 2 gold candlesticks worth 25 gp each, an electrum serving tray worth 30 gp, and an amber necklace worth 50 gp.

27. HALL OF ARMAMENTS

Shields and banners line the walls of this room, and a pair of crossed swords hangs over each door. A half dozen alcoves hold suits of plate armor.

The room is decorated with trophies collected by Bryma Grenat during wartime.

Creatures. The six alcoves each hold a suit of **animated armor**, which attack anyone that attempts to pass through the room without first speaking the phrase "honor the ancestors."

28. ARMORY

This room is packed with weapon and armor racks. Most are empty, but some still hold equipment.

Treasure. The arms and armor in this room have been well oiled and are still serviceable. There are seven longswords, six light crossbows, 200 crossbow bolts, two longbows, 60 arrows, and four pikes on the weapon racks. The armor racks hold four chain shirts, a suit of studded leather, and three shields. A *berserker battleaxe* sits locked in a case under one of the racks. A successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools unlocks the case.

29. ROOM OF THE GUARDIAN

The furniture in this room has been smashed to kindling. Broken bones and crushed skulls are scattered among the debris.

Creature. A **shield guardian** occupies this room, standing around the bend out of sight of the door and blocking access to the secret door. It is bound to an amulet Damir carries and has been tasked with protecting the hidden door to Damir's current chambers. It attacks any intruders and fights to the death, but it doesn't pursue anyone that flees the room by either exit.

Secret Door. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check finds the secret door behind a tapestry depicting a radiant Lady Grenat in battle. The small room behind the door holds reveal a spiral staircase that leads up to Area 42.

30. THE YELLOW HALL

This long hall is covered in a thick, bright yellow carpet. Wall hangings of the same color drape the walls. An eerie moan echoes through the hall and the wall hangings sway lightly, moved by some unseen force.

The hallway holds no hidden menace. Cracks in the structure above channel the wind, causing the moaning noise and the movement of the tapestries.

31. MAGISTER'S SUITE: SITTING ROOM

This room is well-appointed with a polished wooden table, three padded leather chairs, and a long couch. A fireplace in the east wall is stacked with wood ready to be lit. The walls are covered in tapestries of the night sky, with shining jewels and silver threads comprising the various constellations.

This is the first of a suite of rooms that once belonged to Damir, former magister and traitor to Hollowhall. Damir rarely visits these rooms any longer, preferring to ensconce himself atop the southwest tower.

Trapped Door. The door to Area 32 is trapped with a *glyph of warding*. If the door is opened without first speaking the password "hail the night" or dispelling the glyph, it triggers a *stinking cloud* spell (save DC 17) centered on the creature that triggered the glyph. The spell's cloud lasts for 1 minute.

Prevention. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices runes scratched on the underside of the doorknob. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, reveals an aura of abjuration magic on the door. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 13) cast on the door destroys the trap.

Treasure. The tapestries are finely made, though the jewels that represent the stars are only small tourmalines. Each of the three tapestries in this room are worth 40 gp.

32. MAGISTER'S SUITE: BEDROOM

A canopied bed sits against the south wall, flanked by twin end tables. Thick tapestries, dusty and moth-eaten, adorn the walls. A low wardrobe sits against the north wall, and a silver bowl, ewer, and hand mirror rest on top of it.

Damir once slept here, but in undeath he is inured to such comforts. The wardrobe contains clothing of fine cloth and make, but much of it is moth-eaten.

Creatures. Three **vampire spawn** currently enjoy the magister's former room. They are exploring Hollowhall for their vampire master, who is seeking a new lair.

Treasure. The silver bowl, ewer, and hand mirror are each worth 25 gp.

33. MAGISTER'S SUITE: WORKROOM

Tables in this room hold alembics, flasks, and various other laboratory components, including pots and jars filled with various liquids and powders. Spilled jars of liquids have stained and eaten away some of the table surface, and they have soaked and dissolved portions of books lying on and under the tables.

In this workroom, Damir created the curse which doomed Hollowhall. The room now sits abandoned and gathering dust. Damir's journal sits among the ruined books on the table. Its pages are damaged and stained, but enough remains for those familiar with Infernal to glean Damir's tale of revenge and the form it took, as described in the Adventure Background at the beginning of this adventure. The book also speaks of the fetishes and where they are located.

Near the end of the journal, shortly before Damir lost interest in writing down his thoughts, he wrote, "The castle is mine now, every coin and every stone. Its doors will only open at the mention of my name." This clue could serve the PCs well if they realize its connection to the arcane locked doors in Area 42.

Treasure. A rack sitting on one of the tables holds vials filled with magical liquids: a *potion of clairvoyance*, a *potion of giant strength*, a *potion of poison*, and a *potion of speed*. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a hidden catch under one of the tables that opens a secret drawer containing Damir's spare spellbook. The spellbook contains all the spells Damir has prepared (see Area 43) plus *conjure elemental*, *magic mouth*, *major image*, and *stinking cloud*.

34. LADY'S SUITE: WAITING ROOM AND AUDIENCE CHAMBER

At the top of the stairs, a short hall ends in two doors, each bearing the crest of Hollowhall.

This floor and the one above contain the chambers of the former Lady of Hollowhall, Bryma Grenat.

Southern Room. The small, southern room contains a pair of couches and a low table. A pottery bowl on the table holds the dried, blackened residue of long-rotted fruit. A ceramic carafe is half-full of old wine turned to vinegar. Petitioners seeking audience with Lady Grenat waited here until summoned to the audience chamber next door.

Northern Room. The northern room is an airy chamber with a balcony overlooking the lands north of the castle. A cushioned, high-backed chair surmounted with the Hollowhall crest stands in front of the balcony, facing into the room. Brocade rugs, worn by time and weather, cover the floor. Here the Lady of Hollowhall heard pleas from petitioners, mediated justice for her people, and meet with peers and other visitors. A spiral staircase leads up to Area 35.

35. LADY'S SUITE: SITTING ROOM

This large room holds several plush divans and small tables. A railed balcony overlooks the northern exposure of the castle. The spiral staircase to the lower level and a single door are the only other exits.

Lady Grenat would lounge here when time permitted, sometimes entertaining less formal guests in this room.

Treasure. Bryma Grenat's signet ring—thick gold, bearing the Hollowhall crest done in raised relief, with the rose carved of carnelian and the eye of Lada in silver—is stuck between the cushions of one of the divans, lost when its owner became careless as a result of the curse. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check sees the ring glinting from between the cushions. It is worth 100 gp, a price Queen Dorytta happily pays as a bonus to the PCs if they return it to her.

36. LADY'S SUITE: BEDROOM

This room is without windows and dark, lit only by what light comes in through the doorway. The room is dominated by a large, canopied bed. Its gauzy curtains partially-obscure a form lying under the covers, propped up by pillows.

The bed is occupied by the remains of Bryma Grenat, left where she passed. A small, mirrored vanity sits to one side, and a chest rests at the foot of the bed.

Creatures. The bed is surrounded by six **shadows**. These are the remains of former servants of the castle. They blame Bryma for their demise and fate, and they congregate here to let their cold hate bathe her remains. Should the living

intrude upon their angry contemplation, they readily turn their wrath to the intruders. The shadows pursue enemies anywhere except outside the castle walls.

Treasure. The vanity still contains a few items of jewelry and other possessions: a silver hairbrush worth 5 gp, a pair of gold earrings worth 25 gp, an onyx jar containing a scented oil worth 50 gp, and a crystal bottle that once held perfume worth 10 gp.

37. LADY'S SUITE: BATHROOM

A thick fur rug covers the sky blue tile of this room's floor. A large stone bathtub stands on clawed feet against the opposite wall. A shelf nearby holds towels, soaps, and bath oils. Pipes run from the ceiling over the tub, with a pair of bronze valves attached to them.

The pipes run from a cistern on the roof of the tower, and the water is magically heated to the desired temperature by adjusting the valves. The water drains through a pipe that leads through the floor and out into the grass outside Area 1.

Hazard and Treasure. The tub appears to be half-filled with cloudy water, and a silver diadem set with an opal worth 400 gp sits at the bottom. The water in the tub has been mixed with lye from the laundry downstairs. A creature that comes into contact with the lye solution takes 5 (1d10) acid damage on first contact and each round it remains in contact with the solution. A creature burned by the lye has disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity-based ability checks and attack rolls that require the use of the burned limb until the creature rinses the wound with fresh water. The burn also disappears if the creature receives magical healing.

38. CHAPEL

A single door in the north wall is marked with the carving of a large eye. At the other end of the landing, another flight of stairs leads up to the next level.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check recognizes the symbol on the door as one of the holy symbols of Lada. Beyond the door is a small room with a prayer mat and a shrine to Lada. The evil creatures in the castle avoid this room, making it a safe place for the PCs to rest.

Treasure. A compartment in the shrine's base holds a flask of drinkable water, enough dried meat for a single meal, and a silver holy symbol of Lada worth 25 gp.

39. GUARD ROOM

This room holds a single cot, a simple wooden table, and a pair of stools. A spiral staircase leads up to the next level.

This room was used by off-duty guards during times of danger. One squad would occupy the room above as lookouts. At the end of the shift, they would come down to this room to rest while the next squad went up.

A tiny doll is hidden under the spiral staircase. Its bones are made of twisted iron nails, and its body is made of real human skin and hair. This is one of the three fetishes that binds the curse in place. It radiates both magic and evil.

Creatures. The room is currently occupied by a pair of elite soldiers from the Mharoti Empire (**half-red dragon veteran**). These elite soldiers were on a scouting mission and investigated the castle. Thanks to the curse, they have lingered under the pretense of judging whether Hallowhall would serve as a good outpost for their advanced scouts. As they have no wish for their presence to be discovered by the locals, they have no qualms about killing anyone who discovers them.

40. WATCHPOST

Large, arched windows open out onto the cardinal points of the compass, allowing an excellent view of the surrounding lands on all sides. A barrel sits in the northeast corner. The staircase continues up to a trap door in the ceiling.

This post was manned during times of trouble. The guards in this room would support the archers stationed above by keeping watch here and passing arrows and news to the archers. The barrel holds 200 arrows, but time has warped them to uselessness.

41. TOWER ROOF

The crenellated top of the tower provides a view of the castle, including down into the courtyard (Area 5), and of the surrounding lands. The trap door is sturdy and secure. A stack of stone sits in one corner near a rusty cauldron on a tripod. The cauldron contains mostly rainwater, topped with a thin sheen of oil—all that remains of the oil kept here to be heated and dropped on intruders. The stack of stones was kept for the same purpose as the oil.

Those in the courtyard (Area 5) have a chance of noticing creatures atop the tower. Each round a creature stands atop the tower, it has a 25% chance of attracting the attention of the **wind demon** and its **wind's harp devil companion** or 1d12 **swarms of ravens**.

42. OUTER HALL

The secret staircase exits into a hallway that extends west and north from the top of the stairs. A thin carpet lines the middle of the hall in both directions.

Doors on the east and west sides of the hall are thick oak and iron-banded. Both doors have been sealed with *arcane lock*. A successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools unlocks the door. Speaking Damir's name within 5 feet of a door suppresses the spell, reducing the DC to unlock the door to 15. The PCs can discover this trick by reading Damir's journal in Area 33.

43. LAIR OF THE FORSAKEN

The center of this room is a cluster of chests, boxes, and sacks stacked into a pile. The rest of the room is completely bare.

The current master of Hallowhall, and the architect of its downfall, resides here. **Damir** has retreated to the castle treasury, sitting atop his hoard, and is content to spend the rest of his long, undying years here. The influence of his curse is strong, and he has no will left to fight it. Intruders are looked upon with scorn, and he attempts to destroy anyone foolish enough to intrude upon his sanctuary.

Treasure. The remaining wealth of Hallowhall is here, collected in various containers piled in the center of the chamber: 500 cp, 3,620 sp, 1,115 gp, 45 pp, 10 amethysts worth 100 gp each, *dust of disappearance*, *goggles of night*, *restorative ointment*, and a *rope of climbing*.

DAMIR, FORSAKEN WIGHT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +8, History +8, Insight +3, Perception +3

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Infernal, Khazzaki

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Cursed Rejuvenation. If the curse still permeates Hallowhall and Damir is killed, he returns to unlife in 1d3 days, regaining all his hp and becoming active again. If his body is completely destroyed, such as being burned to ash or destroyed by a *disintegrate* spell, he returns as a ghost, retaining his Cursed Rejuvenation and Spellcasting traits. Only the destruction of the curse, by destroying or removing the fetishes in Hallowhall, prevents this trait from functioning.

Undead Nature. Damir doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Spellcasting. Damir is a 10th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Damir has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand, minor illusion, ray of frost, shocking grasp, true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *acid arrow, ray of enfeeblement, see invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, fireball, fly*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye, greater invisibility, phantasmal killer*

5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill, dominate person*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Damir can use his Life Drain twice.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or its hp maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hp maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a shadow. Damir has no control over shadows created in this manner, but the shadows don't attack him. When a shadow rises, it is automatically under the influence of the curse and can't leave the castle.

Crinaea

Crinaea are nymph-like water fey that inhabit small bodies of water such as wells and fountains.

Waterbound. Similar to dryads, crinaea are bound to a body of water which becomes its home and its focal point. Unlike dryads, crinaea can choose to be bound to a water source and can change which water source they call home. A crinaea

must submerge itself in its bound water source every day or suffer. As long as the water source stays pure and the crinaea never travels more than a mile from it, the crinaea can live indefinitely. If its home water source is ever dried up or destroyed, the crinaea quickly fades until it finds a new home or dies.

Friendly But Poisonous. One of the most gregarious fey, the crinaea enjoys long conversations with intelligent creatures. The crinaea is often well-versed in the goings-on around its home and happily shares such information with friendly creatures. It offers its pure water to those in need and those who are polite, but woe be unto those who anger the fey after having tasted its water as the crinaea can poison any water taken from its home.



CRINAEA

Medium fey, neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances fire

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Crinaea's Curse. The crinaea can sense water within 300 feet of it that was drawn from its bonded source within the last 24 hours. As a bonus action, the crinaea can poison up to 1 gallon of water within 300 feet of it that was drawn from its bonded source. This can even affect water that has been used to make another nonmagical substance, such as soup or tea, or water that was consumed within the last 30 minutes. The poison can affect a target through contact or ingestion. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 18 (4d8) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 hour. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't poisoned.

Watery Form. While fully immersed in water, the crinaea is invisible and it can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Waterbound Form. The crinaea is bound to its water source. If the

crinaea is separated from its water source for more than 24 hours, the crinaea gains 1 level of exhaustion. It gains an additional level of exhaustion for each day until it bonds with another water source or it dies. The crinaea can bond with a new water source and remove its levels of exhaustion by finishing a long rest while submerged in the new water source.

Innate Spellcasting. The crinaea's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *poison spray*

3/day each: *create water, purify food and drink* (water only)

1/day each: *disguise self, fog cloud, protection from poison*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.



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