

TERROR

OF THE BLEAK WOODS



Hunt or be hunted by a deadly new monster in this adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game.

By Darrin Scott



TERROR OF THE BLEAK WOODS

CREDITS

ARTISTS

Omercan cirit (cover art)

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Written and formatted by Darrin Scott.

Edited by Ken Carcas

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TERROR OF THE BLEAK WOODS

INTRODUCTION

Terror of the Bleak Woods is a Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition adventure which has an estimated run time of around 3–6 hours of play. It is designed to be challenging for a party of four 5th-level characters but can be adjusted for characters of higher levels.

Although this adventure can be adapted to take place in any small town, it is written as part of the Ravenloft campaign setting. If you intend on running it within that setting but are unfamiliar with Barovia, see the Appendix for a brief overview. Unless otherwise specified, assume any non-player characters (NPCs) mentioned are human, as other races are exceedingly rare in Barovia.

The adventure begins as the characters are attacked by ghouls chasing someone on the brink of death. The characters then investigate the source of the attack to find a scene of slaughtered werewolves and another witness, who speaks of a monstrous, winged creature: a Sanghast. Following the clues, the characters track the monster to its lair to uncover the truth behind its presence.

BACKGROUND

Even before his transformation into a vampire, Strahd von Zarovich was fascinated by the dark arts, later spending lifetimes experimenting with them. One such experiment yielded a creature known as a sanghast— a powerful, winged undead empowered by Strahd’s very own blood. For more information on this creature, see the sanghast’s entry in the Appendix.

When a rebellious pack of werewolves acquired a *Symbol of Noach*, Strahd decided to unleash his creation to deal with the problem for him after fitting its claws with silver blades. The sanghast slaughtered the pack in the small hours of one evening, bringing the leader back to its lair.

Thirsting for more blood before returning to Castle Ravenloft, it settled in for the day.

Meanwhile, a group of lesser ghouls followed in the wake of the sanghast to pick clean that bodies of the slain werewolves. Spotting a live human, they decided to give chase, leading them to the Village of Barovia, where the adventure begins.

THE VILLAGE OF BAROVIA

Looming beneath the domineering shadow of Castle Ravenloft, the Village of Barovia cowers as the most depressed and oppressed settlement in the realm. Its people live in complete poverty and constant fear of Strahd and the darkness that surrounds them. Barovians only venture outside when they must, especially during the night, when wandering the woods can be a death sentence.

To make matters worse, Kolyan Indirovich, the town’s burgomaster, recently died from a heart attack when Strahd visited the village, looking for his adopted daughter, Ireena. Whatsmore, Father Donovich, the local priest, has never been able to recover from the loss of his son, who was slain a year ago in an attempt to overthrow Strahd.



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AN UNPLEASANT AWAKENING

The adventure starts in the Blood of the Vine tavern, which, characteristic of the rest of the town, is small, shoddy, and scarcely occupied.

If the characters are visiting the Village of Barovia for the first time, read both of the following text boxes. Otherwise, skip the first and continue to the second:

Of all the places you would have wanted to stop for rest, the tiny, miserable Village of Barovia may have been one of the last. The previous night you were met only with disheartened, empty eyes, even though the wine was flowing at the Blood of the Vine Inn, which you now occupy.

As you rise from your slumber this morning, even the crackling fire in the hungry hearth cannot seem to abate the cold that has dug its way into your weary bones. Assembling in the common room, you and your compatriots suddenly turn as the door to the establishment slams open, showing to you that the nighttime does not wish to let go its final grasp on the land. Within the door frame, a shadowy, haggard figure hunches. What do you do?

The one at the door is Izabella Medved (CN female **commoner**) heard that the dying screams of something that appeared to be both wolf and man. She knew of a werewolf pack that prowled the southern outskirts of the village, which thus far had caused no trouble. Knowing that the leader of this pack carried a valuable trinket, she decided to investigate. Unfortunately, ghouls were also there and saw a live meal as preferable to exsanguinated werewolves. Izabella was wounded in her escape attempt but saw the sanghast flying overhead.

Izabella collapses in the doorway. With her dying words, she says, "The werewolf camp... A dread beast has found the village. We must flee or die" after which, she expires. However, as soon

as the players' guards are down, she violently rises again as a **ghoul** with the following ability:

- As an action, she can vomit a gout of black ichor in a 20-foot line by 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

The characters can hear the howls of other creatures coming from outside the building— 2 other **ghouls** with the same ability to vomit black ichor, as well as 3 ordinary **ghasts**. The muddy roads are lit with dim light. The scene is laid out as shown in Map A.

Once the ghouls have been dispatched, the characters notice a scrawny man in his 30's cowering behind cover. He is wearing a chain shirt, holding a spear, and has a lantern belted to his hip. The man is Sanya Grbich, the only **guard** on duty. A fearful individual, even by Barovian standards, Sanya has a nasally voice; being a guard was the only work he could find.

Sanyaa begs for the characters' help dealing with the "dread beast." If they refuse at first, he brings up that the slain werewolves are rumored to possess a valuable magical trinket, and they could have it as a reward, as well as the gratitude of the entire town.

THE INVESTIGATION

Sanya knows the location of the werewolf camp, as do the 3 other **guards** within the village.

Otherwise, the characters can track the ghouls with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check. Their footprints lead to the camp.

Sanya also mentions Navena Danchev, another local, who claims to have spotted a large, winged beast, but mentions that she "says a lot of things."

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The players can choose which lead to investigate first. At any point during the investigation after which the party has learned the sanghast headed south, Sanya appears uneasy. If the characters succeed on a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check, he reveals that he knows of large caves in that area, but didn't want to mention it because the last time he was in the area, he stole his comrade's wine flask, drank the whole thing near a large cave they were tracking a ghoul by, and left the empty container there. He was afraid the empty container could be used as evidence for his wrongdoing, leading to a potential flogging.

WEREWOLF CAMP

When the characters arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

You arrive at the scene of a massacre. Even before you can see it, you can smell the rotting remains of bodies. You then spot what is left of the victims— an arm here, a head there. One body is torn in half at the waist. Everywhere you look, mangled pieces of wolf-human hybrids are splayed about a dead campfire and the few remaining tents.

The following clues can be unearthed by the characters. Alternatively, the individual with the highest bonus to Intelligence (Investigation) rolls can make such a check, with one other character assisting. Their score corresponds with how much they learn:

- (Automatically notice) The bodies have been exsanguinated.
- (Score 5 or higher) There is no obvious magical trinket.
- (Score 7 or higher) It would take something stronger than a ghoul to tear in half a werewolf...
- (Score 11 or higher) There are several large, clawed footprints, but they seem

disconnected from a series of others as if whatever made them never walked into the camp (it flew).

- (Score 13 or higher) The bedding in the tents appears to be thrown aside, suggesting a hasty rising.
- (Score 15 or higher) Some of the nearby trees appear to have been bowed by something heavy.
- (Score 18 or higher) There seems to be an absence of a pack leader (that should appear to be bigger and stronger than the others) among the dead.



A character that uses their knowledge of the arcane to analyze the situation, with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check realizes that werewolves are immune to mundane attacks, so given the physical trauma the werewolves suffered, the creature must have access to silver or magical attacks.

Characters can also attempt a Wisdom (Survival) check to reveal information. A score of 13 or higher yields that the ghouls came from further south, within the woods. These tracks can be followed, eventually leading to the sanghast's

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lair (see “Black Ghoul Cave”). A score of 15 or higher reveals that the large footprints about the scene belong to a creature that uses wings to fly.

Finally, a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check tells a character that the exsanguinated werewolves had their blood drained by a creature with numerous long, sharp teeth along all of its jaw, but that the blood was drawn through two particularly large fangs.

In total, there are three dead werewolves. Among the camp, the following items can be found:

- 4 spears, two longbows with thirty arrows between two quivers.
- Three daggers.
- Four unwashed fur bedrolls.
- Three waterskins.
- Various cooking supplies.

NAVENA’S HOUSE

As the characters approach Navena’s house, which is on the southwest border of the town, read or paraphrase the following:

You come to a house, further apart from its neighbors, that doesn’t appear to have seen a fresh coat of paint in decades. Some of the wall panels have fallen out and been replaced with newer ones. All the window shutters are closed, save one in the front that is slightly cracked. Without a sign of life, the house just stands there, in grim readiness.

Navena (N female **commoner**) is a woman in her seventies who sanity has been eroded with the passage of time in Barovia; as is the case with many who live to be her age. The loss of her partner to the creatures of the night only made matters worse for her. Now, she lives with the belief that she must be vigilant if she is to prevent the death of all in the village. She has an unkempt appearance and wild eyes.

Navena won’t answer the door unless she is given reason to believe that the characters aren’t shapeshifting monsters and are there to help her. If they try to force their way in, Navena immediately shoots at the first one to enter with her light crossbow (+2 bonus to hit). Otherwise, when she opens the door, she has her crossbow pointed at the characters.

When the characters enter her house, read or paraphrase the following:

The smell of death fills your nostrils as you enter the house. When your eyes adjust, you see the interior looks almost as bad as it smells. Rotten food and sundries are piled in the corners and rats scurry about the floor. Nonetheless, Navena appears to have reinforced the house’s walls and windows from the inside.

Although she doesn’t trust anyone, Navena reports activity she finds suspicious to whichever guards that will listen. Two nights before the characters arrived, she caught a glimpse of a great, winged creature, like a bat crossed with some sort of demon, heading south from the direction of Castle Ravenloft. She believes this creature to be the devil Strahd having taken on his true form, coming to torment the village before destroying it.

CONCLUSION

After visiting both sites, the characters should have enough leads to go on and head toward the sanghast’s lair. Observant characters might conclude that, because the creature came out during the night and drank blood, that it is vampiric in nature.

If the characters are unable to piece together the clues, after spending an hour of dead time, Sanya offhandedly mentions that the only ghouls he has heard of that spew out the black substance like the ones that attacked the village were seen around Black Ghoul Cave.

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TRACKING THE SANGHAST

Neither Sanya nor any guard in the village is willing to accompany the characters to Black Ghoul Cave, but they can provide them with general directions– “... head south and look for an old ruin with but a few walls standing. Proceed on and look for the rocky hillock ...”

When the characters enter the Svalich woods, read or paraphrase the following:

Upon piercing the woods’ edge, hulking, greyish trees overwhelm all around. The misty wood that stretches ahead of you into unknown sights is hidden by the night’s darkness and the ever-present mists. A deathly silence permeates the area, broken only by the sound of your breathing and movement.

Navigating the woods is difficult and dangerous. Call for a Wisdom (Survival) check from the character with the highest modifier to the skill. One other character proficient in the Survival skill may assist with the roll.

Also, mention to the players that their characters can aid with other skills as well. The following are examples they could consider:

- If a character is proficient with Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Stealth), they can act as forward scouts.
- If they are proficient in Intelligence (Nature), they can examine the terrain for signs of nearby caves or unnatural life.
- Those proficient in Wisdom (Perception) may be able to spot notable landmarks.

Any character that succeeds a DC 15 score on their check may assist in the main Wisdom (Survival) roll.

Consult the table below to determine how long it takes for the characters, traveling on foot at a normal pace without unexpected interruptions, to reach Black Ghoul Cave. Narrate the journey in

accordance with what skills were used and what result was rolled, allowing for moments of roleplay and description of the environment:

Score	Expedition Time
6 or lower	10 hours. After the first 8 hours, the characters must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw if they wish to push on. On a failure, they suffer one point of exhaustion.
7-10	8 hours
11-14	6 hours
15 or higher	3 hours

Halfway through the characters’ journey, they encounter hostile creatures at the Old Ruins (see Map B).

If this occurs during the day, they encounter an enormous bear with shaggy, blood-stained fur and piercing red eyes. Use the **polar bear** statistics with the following modifications:

- It has a hit point maximum of 110 (13d10 + 39).
- When it has 30 hit points or fewer, the bear has advantage on attack rolls. In addition, it deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage to any target it hits with a melee attack.

At the end of the first round of combat, roll initiative for a second such bear that approaches the characters from their rear flank.

If they are halfway through their journey at night, a **vampire spawn** prowls the ruins, searching for the sanghast, attempting to return it to Castle Ravenloft. When combat breaks out, two **wights** burst from the floor of the ruins and fight alongside the vampire spawn.

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BLACK GHOUL CAVE

Years before Strahd arrived in the valley, this cave was used by the savage folk that inhabited the Balinok Mountains as a shelter when needed, but was eventually abandoned to other more aggressive creatures. As the land became a Domain of Dread, ghouls have taken to using it as their own home. When the sanghast arrived, it quickly established dominance over these lesser of its type and now uses the cave as its lair.

The interior of the cave is completely unlit, counting as darkness, save for any sunlight that manages to spread into the entrance (to a maximum of 15 feet).

1. EXTERIOR

Set into the side of a hill, from the exterior, the cave mouth resembles a great earthen maw with wicked stone teeth, eager to swallow anything that comes within.

2. ENTRANCE

As the characters enter the cave, read or paraphrase the following:

As you descend into the gullet of the hillside, you are enveloped by a hungry darkness. The cave is so silent that you can hear your heart beat like the drum of a savage hunt. Suddenly, the quiet is broken by the sounds of frantic chewing, echoing faintly down the cold stone walls.

3. EXECUTION CHAMBER

This room was used by the wild folk of the Balinoks to perform executions, sometimes for breaking their laws, other times for their own pleasure. Read or paraphrase the following:

The floor of this chamber is raised slightly, and carved from a protruding stone is a knee-high block, covered in old, dark stains.

If any character comes within 5 feet of the block, read or paraphrase the following:

For just an instant, your vision goes black and you open your eyes to find yourself bound and on your knees. You are bloody and bruised from the sadistic treatment of your captors. The sound of excited chanting in a guttural tongue fills the chamber as wild-eyed spectators look on with anticipation. A bedraggled man in bestial vestments and a mask made from a human skull approaches you, eyes betraying its cruel intentions, bronze axe in hand. He raises the axe above your head and brings it down and you suffer an instant of searing pain. You open your eyes, seeing your fellow party members standing before you.

A character that experiences the vision is required to make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the character takes 1d6 psychic damage.



4. BAT NEST

6 **carion bats** are gathered here. Passing through the chamber without alerting the bats requires a successful DC 11 Dexterity (Stealth) check; on a failure, or if the characters bring any light sourced into the chamber, the bats are alerted, in which case, read or paraphrase the following:

Several sets of malevolent eyes, glowing red in the darkness, peer down at you from the ceiling of this chamber.

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5. SANGHAST DEN

In the chamber beyond, you hear the sound of snapping bones and flesh being rent asunder. A view of the area reveals a massive, natural room with a ceiling nearly fifty feet above. Behind a cluster of stalagmites, you catch glimpses of a terrifying creature. Even hunched over, it is nearly ten feet tall. Its body the shape like that of a massive ghoul crossed with a demonic bat, with leathery wings protruding from beneath its arms and fangs like great daggers. It greedily tears on what little remains of a human body.

The creature is the **sanghast**. If the encounter occurs during the same day ghouls attack the village, the sanghast has not yet fed enough to fully heal. It has 85 hit points out of its maximum of 119. There are also two **ghouls** that lurk in the corners of the chamber that come to the sanghast's aid.

The chamber has a 50-foot high ceiling. There are rock outcroppings along the walls (20 feet off the ground) that the sanghast can use to land on at the end of its turns. Searching the area also reveals the exsanguinated body of Havel Naumov, the pack leader of the werewolves near the village. One arm and part of his face have been transformed into its bestial hybrid state; the sanghast attacked as he lay sleeping, and he was not even able to fully reach his hybrid form before death. On his body can be found the bloody remnants of a journal and a *Symbol of Noach* (see Appendix). The decipherable portion of the journal reads as follows:

Castle Ravenloft must be poorly guarded if a twisted wretch like the one I found can slip out of there with an item like this. Lucky for me, it might be exactly what I need. That vampire's lapdog, Kiril, will no longer be an even match for me, and once I establish dominance, the rest of his pack will fall in line. Then? Well, let's just say that I have reason to believe Strahd's castle isn't so well defended after all.

Treasure. The ghouls have also collected other treasures as the years have gone by. Among the worthless garbage is 121 ep, 2 *potions of greater healing*, a dagger with a blade of rough obsidian and a carved bone hilt worth 400 gp, and six assorted gold piercings each worth 50 gp.

CONCLUSION

When the party returns to the village, Sanya enthusiastically thanks the characters for their service. They have earned the respect of many of the others in town, but Navena remains unconvinced that the threat was ever dealt with. Nobody in the village has any coinage to spare as a reward.

Meanwhile, Strahd's ire toward the characters increases even more if they took the *Symbol of Noach*—there is little that Strahd hates more than a thief.

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APPENDIX

THE DOMAINS OF DREAD

Although this adventure can easily be adapted to take place in any small town, it is written on the assumption that it takes place in the Village of Barovia, one of the domains in the *Ravenloft* setting.

THE NATURE OF BAROVIA

Barovia is a bleak land surrounded by a perpetual mist that acts as a barrier between it and other realms, existing as part of a demiplane in the Shadowfell. Even during the day, the fog prevents direct sunlight from shining down. For mechanical purposes, this still counts as bright light but doesn't inhibit vampires or other sunlight-susceptible creatures from roaming around during the daylight hours.

It is a dreadful land without vibrance or healthy plant life, beset by predatory beasts and monsters that the populace cowers in fear from. The land itself is a cold valley surrounded by mountains, pocked with gnarled evergreens.

It contains a number of settlements, but less than three thousand people live here. The lives of Barovians are ones of fear. They are wary of strangers and spare no words with such folk, opting to stare in silence. However, they have tight-knit communities and look out for their friends, should you gain the trust of a Barovian.

These Barovians are ruled over by Strahd von Zarovich, whom the locals believe to be Strahd IX. However, the truth is much darker; Strahd became a vampire when he made a dark pact by killing his brother, Sergei, in order to attain the affections of Tatyana, who was to be married to Sergei. When his transformation was complete, his true desires fled him as Tatyana flung herself off of the walls of Castle Ravenloft to her death. Tatyana is

reincarnated after every death but always perishes in a twist of fate before Strahd can be reunited with her— this is Strahd's punishment from the Dark Powers that have controlled the land since the day of Tatyana's first death.

MAGIC IN BAROVIA

Barovia is isolated from all other planes. No traditional magic can be used to escape it. Only the Vistani may come and go from the Demiplane of Dread without intervention from the Dark Powers— mysterious entities of godlike power that hold absolute dominion over the demiplane.

For all other magic users, any spell that attempts to send a creature into another plane fails. These restrictions also apply to magic items. However, magic that summons or contacts creatures from another plane still functions normally, as do spells which create an extradimensional space, like *rope trick*.

Divine spellcasters are also still able to receive their spells, as are warlocks. However, if a warlock or divine spellcaster attempts to contact an otherworldly being, Strahd can make himself the recipient of the spell instead so that he is the one who is contacted.

There are also more superficial modifications to spells cast in Barovia, as explained in Season Four adventures of the Adventurer's League:

Alarm. Instead of hearing a mental ping when the alarm is triggered, the caster hears a scream.

Bigby's Hand. The conjured hand is skeletal.

Find Familiar. The familiar is undead instead of being a celestial, a fey, or a fiend, and is immune to features that turn undead.

Find Steed. The summoned steed is undead instead of being a celestial, a fey, or a fiend, and is immune to features that turn undead.

Find the Path. A child's spirit appears and guides the caster to the desired location. The spirit can't be harmed and doesn't communicate.

Fog Cloud. Misty, harmless claws form in the fog.

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Gust of Wind. A ghastly moan accompanies the summoned wind.

Mage Hand. The summoned hand is skeletal.

Maze. The surfaces of the demiplane's maze are made of mortared skulls and bones.

Phantom Steed. The steed resembles a skeletal horse.

Raise Dead. If the creature has been dead for longer than 24 hours and is brought back to life, it gains one random form of indefinite madness, as explained in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Rary's Telepathic Bond. Characters linked together by the spell can't shake the feeling that something vile is telepathically eavesdropping on them.

Revivify. A creature restored to life by a revivify spell screams upon regaining consciousness, as though waking from some horrible nightmare.

Spirit Guardians. The spirits appear as ghostly, skeletal warriors.

Wall of Stone. A wall created by the spell has ghastly faces sculpted into it, as though tortured spirits were somehow trapped within the stone.

RUNNING HORROR

"Horror involves more than simple fright. It entails revulsion and anguish. Often it arises when adventurers see something completely contrary to the common understanding of what can and should occur in the world, or upon the realization of a dreadful truth." – Dungeons Master's Guide, Chapter 9.

Terror of the Bleak would draw from the gothic horror of the Ravenloft setting. A few effective ways you can inspire a sense of dread in your players are:

Be evocative in your descriptions.

Engage the senses to illustrate how deathly silent the room is, or how decrepit the house stands.

Emphasize the unknown. Not knowing the nature of a threat makes it even more terrifying.

Perversion of goodness. Taking symbols of goodness, such as angels and puppies, and turning them into something dark and twisted subverts the expectations of players in such a way that they begin to comprehend the twisted nature of the world their characters occupy.

Utilize helplessness. When the characters feel outmatched and as though they have no means of escaping their predicament is when fear is more likely to set in.

Control the pacing. Having appropriate pacing is essential for horror games. Exploration and roleplay should be slow and descriptive, whereas combat should be a frantic fight for the characters' lives.

MONSTERS

CARRION BAT

Awakened from the dead by necromancy or the foul energy that pervades the domains of dread, these bats grow to an unnatural size and gain an uncanny intelligence and malevolent intent. Carrion bats are drawn to undead or evil spellcasters of great power, serving as their minions. Even more disturbing, they thrive by draining the life of the living.

CARRION BAT

Small undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 14 (4d6)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances necrotic

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Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned

Senses Blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Echolocation. The bat can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Keen Hearing. The bat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1 + 3) piercing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 11). While grappled in this way, the bat can use its action to instantly inflict 3 (2d6) necrotic damage on the target. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the bat regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

GHAST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghost 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 the ghost's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghost and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

POLAR BEAR

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)

Speed 40 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 2 (450 XP)}

Keen Smell. The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Multiattack. The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

SANGHAST

When a ghost is able to drink the blood of a higher vampire, it undergoes a metamorphosis to something more frightening, growing wings and drastically increasing in size. Once fully formed, the sanghast is bound to the service of the vampire as long as the vampire remains corporeal.

Sanghast are sometimes bred by vampires raising an army of undead, but it is

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exceedingly rare outside of those circumstances because most vampires are typically unwilling to part with so much of their blood to create such creatures.

ABOMINATION OF UNDEATH

Only a living creature can become a true vampire, so sanghasts cannot be counted among their ranks and don't experience many of the same strengths or weakness of their makers. Nonetheless, their unnatural resilience is similar and they cannot tolerate sunlight, consequently preying by night.

DRIVEN BY HUNGER

Although sanghasts are intelligent, they are the product of ghoulish and vampiric nature, thus experience the hunger and thirst of both. This desire to feed can be so strong that a sanghast thinks of little else. It devotes its mental energy by the most efficient means, finding and devouring prey to appease an appetite that can never truly be sated.

SANGHAST

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 119 (14d10 + 42)
Speed 30 ft., fly 70 ft..

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances necrotic, bludgeoning, piercing, slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

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

Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

Flyby. The sanghast doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the sanghast has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Turning Defiance. The sanghast and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Actions

Multiattack. The sanghast makes two attacks, only one of which can be with its bite

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the sanghast, incapacitated, restrained, or paralyzed. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the sanghast regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

VAMPIRE SPAWN

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws DEX +6, WIS +3

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Regeneration. The vampire regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

TERROR OF THE BLEAK WOODS

Spider Climb. The vampire can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Vampire Weaknesses. The vampire has the following flaws:
Forbiddance. The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

Harmed by Running Water. The vampire takes 20 acid damage when it ends its turn in running water.

Stake to the Heart. The vampire is destroyed if a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into its heart while it is incapacitated in its resting place.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Multiattack. The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

WIGHT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

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 the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point 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 hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

MAGIC ITEMS

SYMBOL OF NOACH

Wondrous Item, rare (requires attunement)

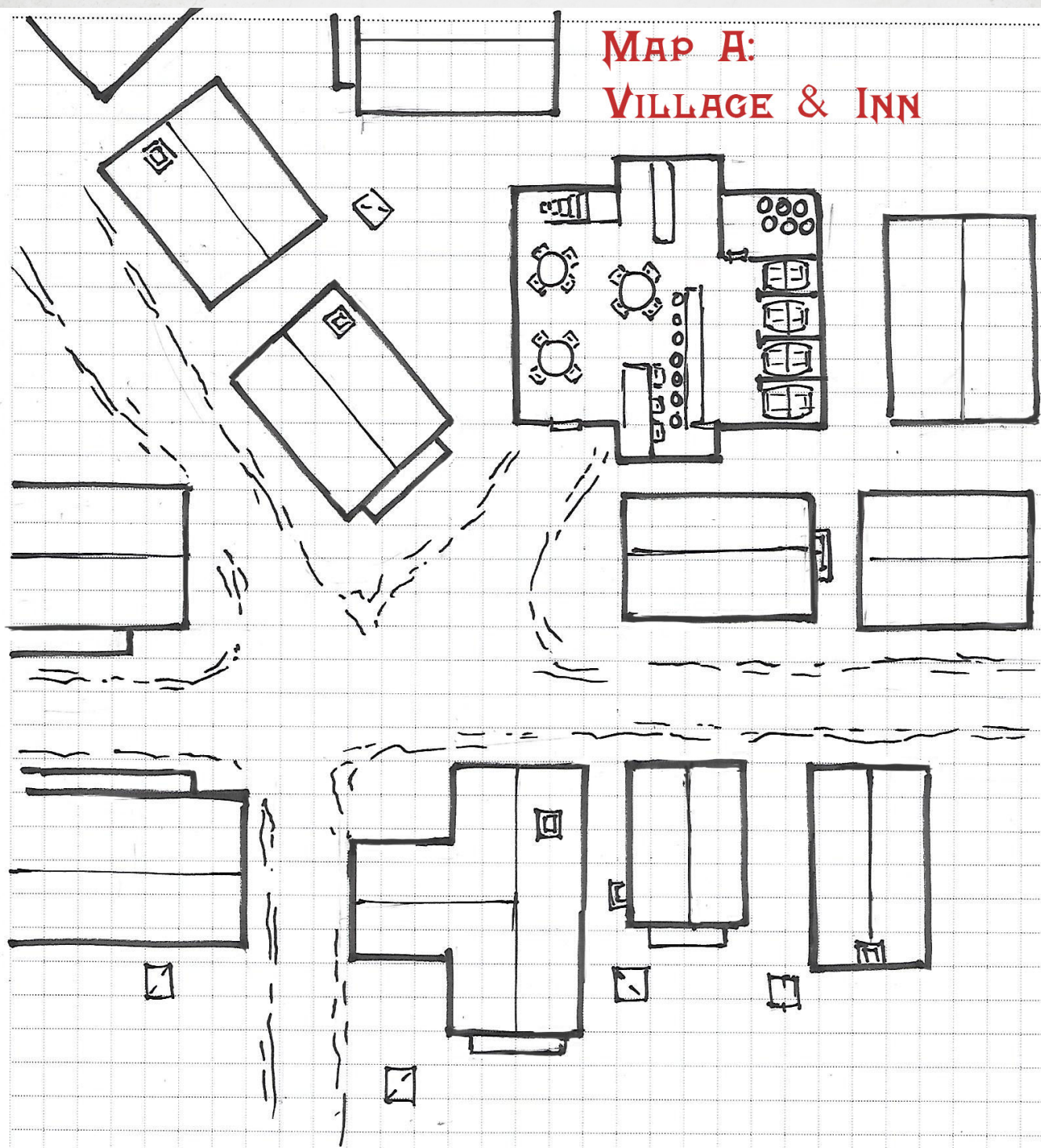
A Symbol of Noach, when a creature is not attuned to it, takes the form of an 8-inch diameter iron disk with arcane glyphs etched around its circumference. When a creature becomes attuned, the physical object disappears, leaving a glowing circle of those same glyphs upon the creature's chest.

At the start of the creature's first turn of every combat, it gains 7 temporary hit points.

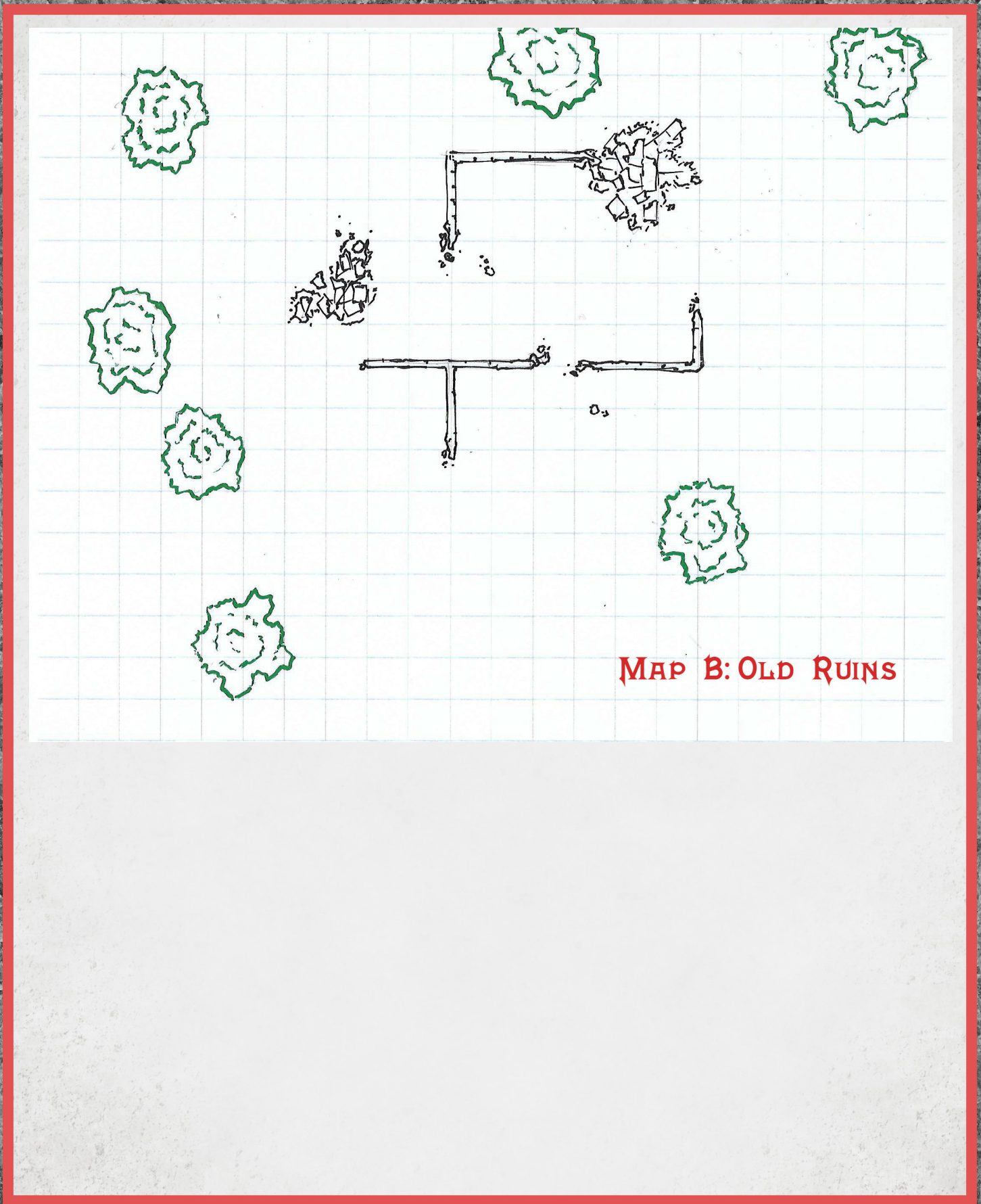
Curse. This item is cursed, and becoming attuned to it extends the curse to you. As long as you remain cursed, your voice has an unsettling, ethereal resonance, conferring disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

TERROR OF THE BLEAK WOODS

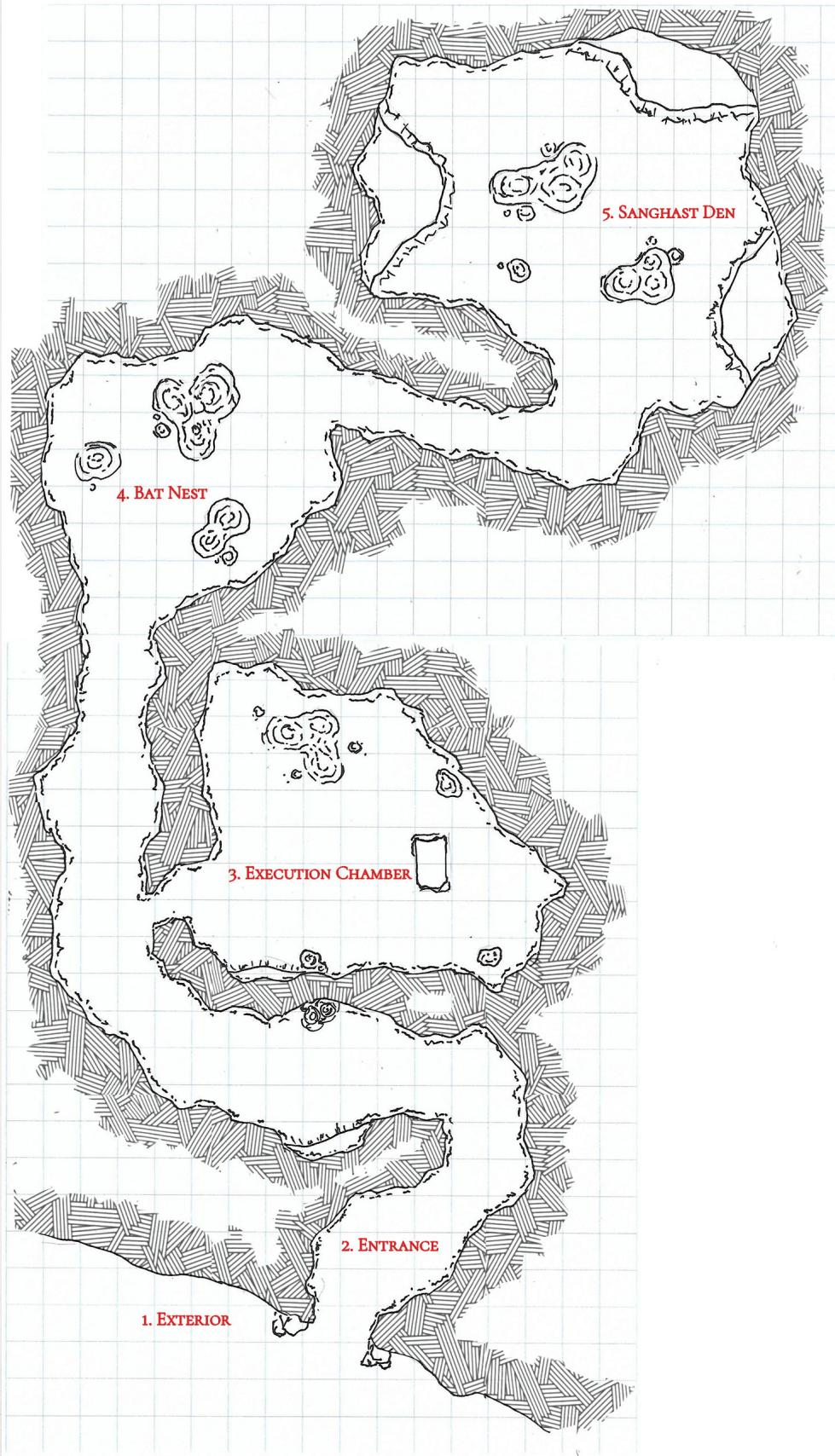
**MAP A:
VILLAGE & INN**



TERROR OF THE BLEAK WOODS



TERROR OF THE BLEAK WOODS



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