

A DRINKING PROBLEM



A 5E WARLOCK ADVENTURE FOR 4 PCs
OF 4TH LEVEL BY JONATHAN MILEY

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Background

The Broken Handle, a tavern in Lower Zobeck, is having continual issues with rum gremlin infestations, which is causing no end of problems for the tavernkeeper. The creatures are breaking into ale barrels, stealing food, and, worst of all, causing customers to become too intoxicated to buy more drinks or food. The Broken Handle's owner, Vilmos Agota, paid the local watch and even mercenaries to get rid of the rum gremlins, but the pests keep returning. Vilmos heard rumors that clurichauns have a pure hatred for rum gremlins, and, as luck would have it, a clurichaun has recently started terrorizing a farmstead just outside of Zobeck. Vilmos believes this clurichaun is just the type of guardian his tavern needs. If the rum gremlin problem persists, Vilmos fears he will have no choice but to close down the tavern that has belonged to his family for generations.

Unbeknownst to Vilmos, a **rum gremlin lord** (see page 12), Flix Sweetwine, has set his eyes upon the Broken Handle as his new residence. The creature plans on turning the tavern into his new base of operations in Zobeck where he and his ilk can conquer other taverns. Seeing the

success of Flix and his rum gremlins in slowly taking over the Broken Handle, servants of the Demon Lord Chitr'k'k move to contact Flix about joining forces to overthrow the balance of Zobeck.

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins as the PCs arrive at the Broken Handle in Lower Zobeck, following one of the adventure hooks or just looking for a quick meal or drink while in Zobeck.

Vilmos approaches the PCs about his plight, asking for their help. Shortly after discussions end, rum gremlins break into the tavern's ale stores again. After helping Vilmos rid the tavern of the pests, the PCs head to a nearby farm to convince a clurichaun that's been terrorizing the farmers to instead move into the Broken Handle. Clurichauns are known for their aggression toward rum gremlins and Vilmos hopes a resident clurichaun solves his problem.

The farm is half a day's travel south of the gates of Zobeck. When the PCs arrive, the farmer is facing a similar plight as Vilmos and would be happy to be rid of the troublesome fey. The farm's owner explains the clurichaun only shows up at night and often breaks things around the farm or disturbs

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the sleeping animals. As night falls, the PCs encounter the clurichaun, Oban Bryne, who flees to his home in a nearby ruin. After facing the spirits that inhabit the ruins, the PCs must participate in a drinking contest to convince Oban to return to Zobeck with them.

After returning to the Broken Handle, the PCs discover things have gotten much worse, as Flix has finally made his move.

Adventure Hooks

The PCs can stumble upon Vilmos' plight through happenstance while searching for a place to eat or drink in Zobeck, or they can seek out the Broken Handle after getting one of the following tips.

- Flyers dot building corners in Lower Zobeck, stating the Broken Handle tavern is seeking "mercenaries who can hold their liquor."
- The PCs overhear rumors of people getting sickeningly drunk while at the Broken Handle and warning others from going to the tavern.
- The Mouse King heard of the recent rum gremlin infestations at the Broken Handle and sent his spies to investigate. They told him of Flix's growth in power and of evidence the servants of the Demon Lord Chitr'k'k might approach the rum gremlins for an alliance. The Mouse King can't let the demon lord's power grow in Zobeck and sends one of his agents to contact the PCs about ending the rum gremlin threat.

Beginning the Adventure – Bad Brewing at the Tavern

The adventure starts with the PCs arriving at the Broken Handle tavern. The stretch of road holding the tavern is close to the banks of the River Argent, but the foot traffic is light for the area. The atmosphere around the tavern has a dour feel with none of the patrons looking very happy about where they chose to grab ale.

When the PCs enter the tavern, they are greeted by a young human woman wearing a worn work apron. She introduces herself as Teca and gestures to the many open tables while suggesting the PCs sit wherever they wish. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check notices Teca seems fatigued and that she winces at the light coming in through the open door behind the PCs. She is suffering a semi-permanent hangover from the regular visits by the rum gremlins and the effects of their aura. She believes she isn't feeling well because of a lack of sleep from the near-constant

interruptions of the rum gremlins and says as much if asked. If the PCs ask about the flyers or about the rum gremlins, she directs them to speak with her father, Vilmos Agota.

The PCs can either ask about seeing the owner or grab a table to have a drink first, but, shortly after they arrive, Teca tells her father a group of capable-looking individuals have come into the tavern. Vilmos then leaves the kitchen to talk to the PCs about his issue. He is an older human in a clean but old work apron stained from years of preparing food and brewing ale. Vilmos has similar signs of fatigue as Teca from the regular exposure to the rum gremlins' auras and from sleepless nights worrying if his tavern will be able to stay open with all its current troubles.

What's the Job?

After telling the PCs of the near-constant appearances of rum gremlins, Vilmos tells them of his plan to be rid of the pests. He has heard clurichauns hate rum gremlins and there are recent rumors of a clurichaun causing trouble for a farm south of Zobeck. The farm is owned by the Varga family and is known for its fine horses. Vilmos admits he has only heard stories and rumors, but, if the clurichaun exists, he believes it could solve his problem. Vilmos offers the PCs 400 gp (the last of his emergency fund) to go find this clurichaun and convince it to move into the Broken Handle as its guardian against the rum gremlins. If the PCs are successful, he even promises them free food and drink anytime they are in Zobeck.

What is a Clurichaun?

Vilmos Agota has never met one before, but his father told him stories of the creatures when he was a child. The stories say they are mean-spirited, alcohol-loving creatures that have an infamous hatred for rum gremlins.

A PC can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (History or Nature) check to recall one or more of the following about clurichauns:

- Clurichauns are fey that were once leprechauns, but they gave up a life of toil for one of solitary debauchery.
- They spend their nights drinking, singing off-key, and causing pranks on animals and people nearby.
- The best way to get a clurichaun to do something is to beat it at a drinking contest—the little fey can't stand losing to mortals.

Rum Gremlins Getting into the Ale

Towards the end of the conversation with Vilmos Agota, there's a loud crash from the taproom then a scream from Teca, "Father! They're back!" Vilmos ushers the PCs to follow as he runs to the taproom (Area 3).

Three **rum gremlins** (see page 13) have broken the keg taps off three barrels, spilling ale throughout the room. The little fey creatures giggle as they scoop up ale in their hands and drink it down. They use the freshly soaked floor to slip and slide around the room, allowing each rum gremlin in the area to take the Dash action as a bonus action.

Vilmos asks the PCs to aid him in dispatching or driving off the rum gremlins. Having spent some time in his youth as a guard on the merchant vessels that ply the River Argent, Vilmos uses the statistics of a **bandit captain** with one level of exhaustion. His daughter, who focuses on preventing the other patrons from entering the taproom, uses the statistics of a **commoner** with two levels of exhaustion.

After the rum gremlins issue is handled in the taproom, Vilmos lets out a sigh and laments, "This will keep happening unless we can get that clurichaun to come here."

The Broken Handle Tavern

All areas inside of the tavern are brightly lit either by table lanterns at night or sunlight from the many windows during the day.

1. THE BROKEN HANDLE TAVERN ENTRANCE

A single-story building of brown wood with a double door entrance sits near the banks of the River Argent. Four street-facing windows give a view of a large establishment within of many tables and bar stools. Above the door, a wooden sign depicting a mug without a handle and the words "The Broken Handle" swings gently in the breeze.

The front of the tavern faces the street of lower Zobeck, and its back faces the River Argent. A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the patrons who exit seem particularly drunk.

2. BAR LOUNGE

Multiple tables with benches sit in the western half of the tavern's main area. Three kobold patrons sit at the tables, enjoying light meals and small mugs of ale. Dart boards hang on the eastern wall of this section. Across from the entrance, two humans enjoy drinks at a small, square table. The smell of wood smoke and spilled ale hangs in the air.

The ale in the Broken Handle has been altered by the regular presence of the rum gremlins and their auras, making it particularly intoxicating. Vilmos is unaware of the change in his wares and believes his recent patrons have simply been drinking more than they can handle.

Patrons. The two humans at the table are midway through their second mugs and already show signs of being heavily intoxicated. PCs who have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 10 or higher notice both humans are so drunk they sit unsteady in their chairs and their speech is greatly slurred. PCs attempting to speak with the other patrons are met with grunts or drunken giggles and barely coherent conversation.

3. TAPROOM

Two of this room's walls are lined with stacks of wooden barrels, and each stack bears labels indicating it holds a variety of local ales. A waist-high cabinet in the middle of the room holds spare linens, and taps and wooden plugs lie on top of it. The tables in the southeastern corner hold stacks of wooden mugs and brewing ingredients and supplies. Two doors lead out of this room.

Vilmos stores his tavern's ale in this room, and, when not busy, he experiments with new recipes for his own ales. The unlocked eastern door leads to the back of the tavern with its two outhouses and to an impressive view of the River Argent and the terrain south of Zobeck.

Locked Door. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices tiny claw marks around the western door's lock, evidence of the rum gremlins' attempts to get into the room. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools picks the lock.

3B. BARREL STORAGE

This smaller room is filled with stacks of wooden barrels, each with a written label of the ale it contains.

This room holds Vilmos' most precious and expensive ales as well as a few barrels of his experimental ales. So far, the rum gremlins have been unable to break into this room to steal or consume these ales.

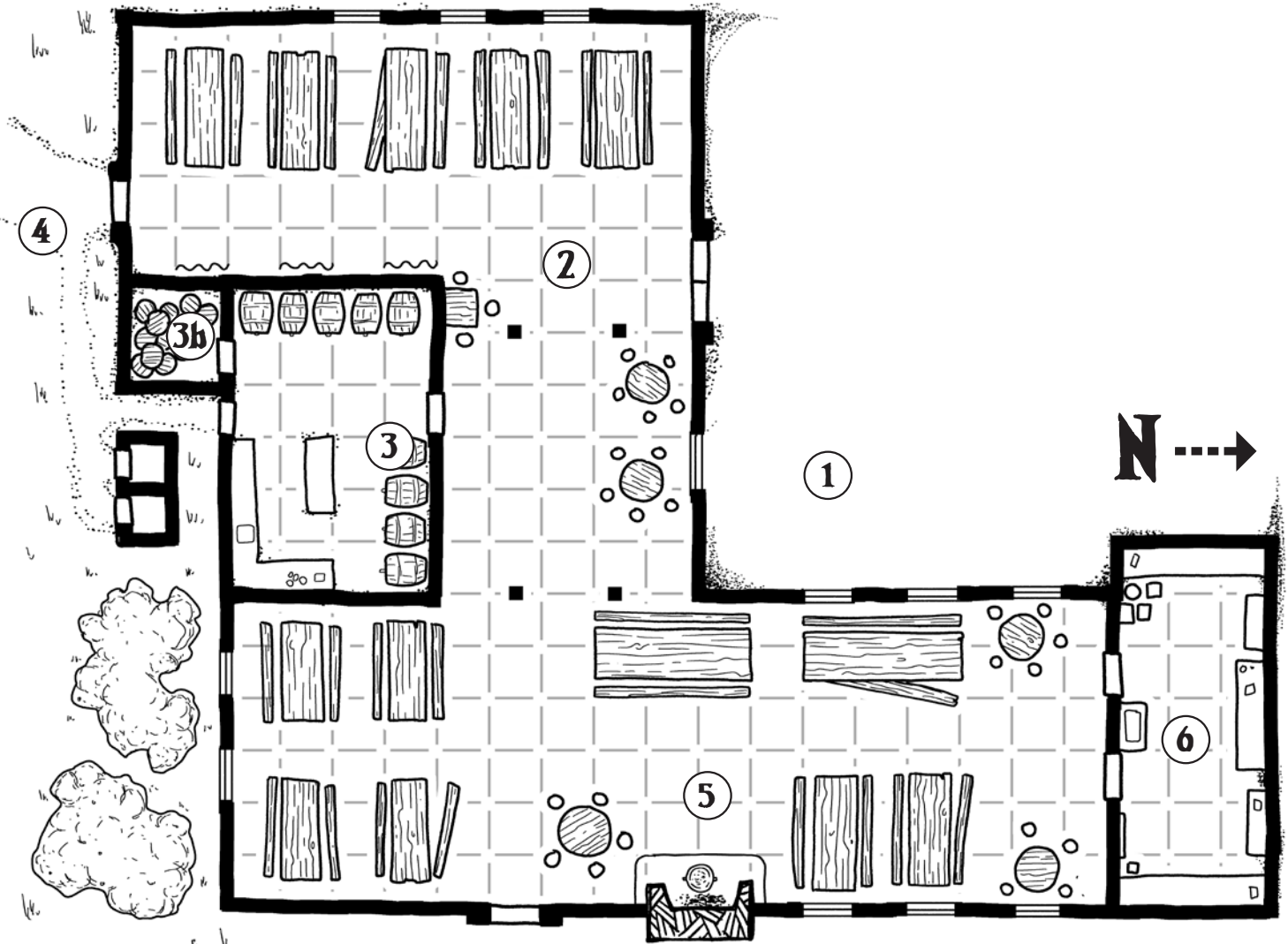
4. BACKYARD AND OUTHOUSES

Two wooden outhouses sit behind the tavern with a beautiful view of the River Argent and the grass and trees south of Zobeck.

5. DINING AREA

Large tables with benches dominate this space. Three tables made of old barrels with stools sit around the room. The many windows offer views of the neighboring building, the two trees out back, or the street leading to the establishment's main entrance. A fireplace in the eastern wall holds a crackling fire and pot of simmering stew. Three humans, each at a different table, sit slumped over the tables, asleep and filling the room with the sounds of their snoring.

The stew in the fireplace is a communal stew for patrons of the tavern and changes daily, depending on the ingredients Vilmos has on hand. The room's current patrons have been here for a few hours and have fallen asleep from the effects of the tavern's altered ale. They are regulars of the Broken Handle and Teca and Vilmos don't have the heart to kick them out, especially since the tavern has had such few patrons of late. The patrons awaken when the rum gremlins attack the taproom and leave through the eastern door at Teca's guidance.



MAP: [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MAP FOR YOUR VIRTUAL TABLE TOP.](#)

6. KITCHEN

A small oven, a table covered in cooking utensils and ingredients, and a table holding a butcher's block and knife dominate the northern wall. A small table between the doors holds a washing basin and a drying towel. Small boxes and sacks full of potatoes, spices, and various kinds of dried meat sit in the southwestern corner.

The Varga Farmstead

The Varga family farm is 12 miles south of Zobeck. The farmstead sits just off the road south toward the Magdar Kingdom. A large wooden arch with a sign reading “Varga Horse Ranch” announces its presence to travelers. The farmstead has a single, large blue barn and a small, blue farmhouse. Fenced-off areas separate the livestock, which includes more than a dozen horses.

When the PCs arrive, Gizi Varga is sitting in a rocking chair in front of the farmhouse, taking a rest. She is a thin, older human woman wearing rugged work clothes with a floppy hat to keep the sun from her eyes. She is the matriarch of the Varga family and the only one currently present at the farm as her son and grandchildren took their latest stock of horseflesh to Zobeck's markets a day ago. When the PCs approach the farmhouse, Gizi greets them and offers water to anyone that's thirsty. Gizi is hospitable but wary of strangers coming onto her farm.

If asked about the clurichaun, Gizi rolls her eyes in annoyance and gives the PCs the following information:

- His name is Oban Bryne—or at least that's what he yells out as his name in the middle of the night during his drunken singing.
- The clurichaun only shows up a night, drinking, and makes a huge ruckus.
- Gizi and her son have tried to chase him off, but they haven't been successful and can't afford to pay anyone to get rid of the troublesome fey.

If the PCs express interest in meeting or getting rid of the clurichaun, Gizi lets them stay in the barn for the night. She offers them a basket of fresh food (treat as twelve rations), if they are able to get rid of the clurichaun.

Oban Bryne, the Clurichaun

Oban just happened to pick the Varga farm as his new stomping grounds by random. The tavern where he lived burned down long ago, and he has wandered the Crossroads region ever since, stealing what liquor he can find. Oban's loneliness and misery make him a surly drunk, but his love of playing drunken games always shines through his grumpy demeanor.

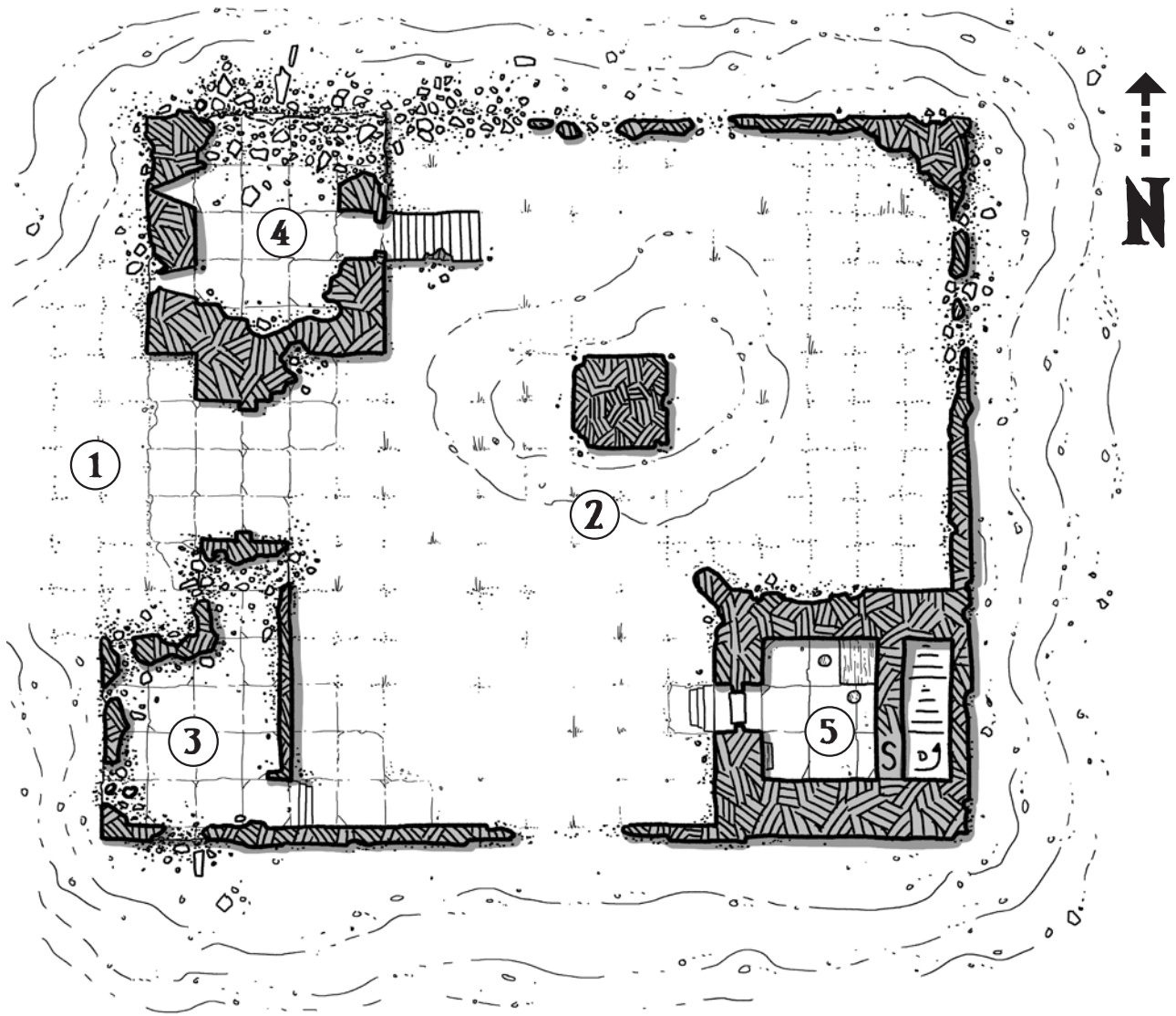
The **clurichaun** (see page 13) visits the Varga farm at night when the moon is at its highest in the sky. Any PC awake during Oban's approach can hear the tiny fey singing with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. Otherwise the PCs wake up during Oban's antics.

OBAN'S DRUNKEN ANTICS

While at the Varga farmstead, Oban wanders into the various livestock pens and causes trouble. Choose from the options below or roll a d6 to randomly determine Oban's activity on the evening of the PCs' arrival.

- Throwing dirt at a sleeping, dappled mare in the pasture while yelling, “You can't judge me, you spotted beast!”
- Leaning against a fence and having a drunken conversation with a nearby horse about how the world is being overrun by tall people.
- Climbing on top of a goat and attempting to ride it. Roll a die. On an even result, the goat grazes, ignoring Oban, which causes him to shout and kick at it. On an odd result, the goat kicks and jumps, and Oban rides it like a bucking steed, cheering and yelling the entire time.
- Serenading the sleeping chickens while wobbling along the top of the nearby fence.
- Dragging around a sack of old horseshoes that he hurls at the scarecrow that spooks him.
- Yelling down the farm's well for anyone that might be at the bottom: “Hey any spirits down there? I've got spirits of my own up here. Only carry the good stuff myself.”

A PC can convince Oban to stop any of his drunken antics with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If any PC offers the clurichaun alcohol, they have advantage on the check. On a success, the clurichaun grumbles about the PCs ruining his fun and leaves, stumbling his way toward a copse of trees near the edge of the farmstead. On a failure, Oban mocks the PCs and continues his antics. If the PCs approach Oban, especially if their weapons are drawn, he immediately dashes off into the copse of trees.



Chasing the Clurichaun

If the PCs follow Oban into the copse of trees, he quickly disappears from view, but his trail is easy to follow. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check follows his trail of broken twigs and splashes of alcohol. On a failure, PCs in the copse can find Oban's destination after 10 minutes when he starts his drunken singing. Oban makes his home in what remains of a centuries-old watchpost. A few human skeletons lie within the ruins, the remains of a bandit group that died in a battle with unknown forces several years ago. The restless spirits of the bandits inhabit the old ruin, but they ignore Oban, preferring mortal victims to the fey. Oban doesn't care about the origins of the skeletons and isn't aware of the existence of the spirits.

The Ruins

1. THE ENTRANCE

The aged walls of this once-great stone structure are now just ruins. Two rotted wooden doors lie on the ground, partially covered in dirt. A pillar dominates the courtyard and crumbled buildings sit around it.

Oban's tracks lead to this old ruin. A few empty bottles of wine and rum lie near the entrance, having rolled into the grass after being discarded.

MAP: [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MAP FOR YOUR VIRTUAL TABLE TOP.](#)

2. FORGOTTEN COURTYARD

An ancient stone pillar stands in the center of the courtyard, the bas relief iconography on its faces worn illegible from centuries of exposure to the elements. A human skeleton lies propped against the pillar, a rusted, bucket helm on its head and a tattered, rusted chain shirt on its torso. A rusted battle axe lies nearby, partially covered in dirt and grass. A stone table stands in the northeastern corner.

The skeleton is of the leader of the bandits who died in this ruined watchpost years ago. The skeleton holds no obvious wounds, leaving the bandit's cause of death indeterminate. The stone table sits propped up on three sets of rocks. Five aged, wooden chairs circle the table.

The Clurichaun. The stone table is Oban's preferred drinking and sleeping spot when he isn't raiding merchants on the road or terrorizing the animals at the Varga Farmstead. When the PCs arrive, he has already forgotten about them and is tucking into his latest bottle of wine at the table.

Creatures. When the PCs move within 15 feet of the pillar, the **specters** in Areas 3, 4, and 5 come out to attack the PCs.

DEVELOPMENTS

When the specters appear, Oban cries out in surprise, clutches his bottle to his chest, and hides under the table. If a PC rolls a 1 on an attack roll against a specter, Oban mocks the PC's poor aim. If a PC scores a critical hit on a specter, Oban hoots and cheers. After combat, Oban approaches the PCs, praising their combat prowess. He then asks why they are here. See *Convincing Oban* for details on how the PCs can convince Oban to go with them to the Broken Handle.

3. LOOKOUT CHAMBER

Chipped stone stairs lead up to a chamber full of dirt and stone rubble. Its original purpose has been lost to time. Gaps in the walls show the courtyard and surrounding trees. A skeleton wearing the tattered remnants of a suit of leather armor lies amid some rubble, a broken bow across its lap.

The skeleton was one of the bandits keeping watch when the watchpost was attacked long ago. Broken arrows stick out of the sides of the skeleton's armor, revealing the cause of death. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check while searching the skeleton finds a pouch containing a small ruby worth 15 gp.

Creature. A **specter**, the spirit of the bandit archer, resides in this area and attacks any mortal creature that enters the room.

4. CRUMPLED WATCHTOWER

Stone stairs lead to a raised platform with tall, stone walls. The chamber's northern wall collapsed long ago. A skeleton adorned in rusted chain armor lies on some of the rubble to the north. A rusted longsword sits within arm's grasp of the skeleton.

The skeleton belongs to another member of the bandits that died in this watchpost years ago. It shows evidence of being stabbed to death from different angles. A sheathed dagger hangs from the skeleton's belt by a thread frayed with time. Protected by its sheathe, the dagger shows few signs of damage from being out in the weather.

Creature. A **specter**, the spirit of the sword-wielding bandit, resides in this area and attacks any mortal creature that enters the tower.

5. OLD BANDIT SLEEPING QUARTERS

Chipped stone stairs lead up to a stone room that shows signs of more recent use than other parts of the ruins. Several old and dirty sleeping cots lie to one side while dusty cooking pots and utensils lie to the other. A door in one wall has been left open, revealing stairs.

This room was once used as shelter by bandits in the area, but it has remained empty since the assault that killed the other bandits in the ruins. The door in the eastern wall was once used to reach an underground smuggling tunnel to the Cartways beneath Zobeck, but the stairs go down only 15 feet before rubble from a long-ago cave-in blocks the rest of the passage.

Creature. A **specter**, the spirit of the bandit leader, resides in this area and attacks any mortal creature that enters the room.

Convincing Oban

After the fight with the specters, Oban is open to conversation with the PCs and appears more lucid than his drunken antics at the Varga farm might have suggested. If the PCs mention the Broken Handle tavern in Zobeck wants him as a resident, Oban shrugs with disinterest, but a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check notices the fey looks hopeful. If the PCs mention the rum gremlins, Oban grows angry and says he will go to the Broken Handle with the PCs to pummel those "rotten rum thieves." However, Oban wants the PCs to prove they speak the truth and that they are worthy allies by participating in a drinking contest.

The clurichaun wants the PCs to participate but doesn't expect them to win—participating in the contest is all the proof he needs. He tells them if one of them beats him, he will throw in “something extra.”

If the PCs decide they don't want to participate in the drinking contest and try to take Oban by force, he defends himself to the best of his ability. He surrenders if he is reduced to half its hit points or fewer. If the PCs force him to join him in this way, Oban doesn't participate in any of the combat encounters in the Broken Handle tavern when the PCs return to Zobeck, and he doesn't give them his bell (see *Fighting the Rum Gremlins* on page 10).

Let the Drinking Commence!

If the PCs agree to the drinking contest, Oban leads them to the stone table in Area 2. The tiny fey then takes off his hat, reaches into it, and pulls out a bottle of rum and one drinking glass for himself and each of the PCs who are participating. Oban motions for each participating PC to take a seat at the table. He then places a glass in front of each of them, filling the glass with rum as he places it.

The bottle is filled with a high-quality rum the clurichaun pilfered from a merchant a few months ago. Using a mixture of herbs and his natural magic, Oban enchanted the rum to be potent enough to affect clurichauns, allowing him to become intoxicated by it in spite of his immunity to the poisoned condition. The enchantment doesn't otherwise affect the PCs or any other drinker. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as detect magic, reveals a dim aura of abjuration around the bottle. A successful DC 14 Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies determines the nature of the rum's enchantment. The enchanted rum tastes better than any rum the PCs have ever tasted, but Oban refuses to share the secrets of his recipe.

DRINKING RULES

When conducting the drinking contest, use initiative rolls to determine the drinking order. On a participant's turn, the participant must drink their entire glass of rum and succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. Oban Bryne has advantage on this saving throw. On subsequent rounds, if a poisoned participant fails the saving throw, the participant has hit their limit and slides out of their chair onto the ground, unconscious and no longer part of the contest. An unconscious participant awakens if it takes damage or if someone uses an action to shake or slap it awake.

At the end of each round of drinking, Oban refills the remaining glasses with more rum. The rounds continue until only one participant remains at the table or until only one

PC remains at the table with Oban. A participant who leaves the table after the drinking has started forfeits the contest.

DRINKING AFTERMATH

If Oban Bryne passes out early in the drinking match, he wakes up if shaken or splashed with water or alcohol, at which point he giggles and pronounces the PCs “good drinking folk.” If Oban makes it to the end with one other PC still drinking, he laughs and compliments the mortal's drinking willpower. If at least one PC performed as well as or better than Oban, he gladly hands over the extra prize, his hat (treat as a *handy haversack* with no side pouches), after removing his nonmagical, backup hat and a flask of rum from it. If all the PCs become drunk before Oban, he doesn't give up his hat, but he shakes the PCs awake and agrees to go with them to the Broken Handle.

When the PCs decide to leave the Varga Farmstead for Zobeck, Gizi sends them off with the food basket she promised, thanking them again for their help with the troublesome fey. She gives Oban a quick glare before the PCs leave, though the clurichaun fails to notice it while drinking from his flask.

Last Call – the Return to Zobeck

When the PCs and Oban Bryne arrive back at the Broken Handle tavern, things have taken a turn for the worse. Flix Sweetwine made his move to take over the tavern as his own keep while the PCs were gone. The patrons who were in the tavern when the rum gremlins appeared were overwhelmed by the gremlins' auras and are all very sick. Flix now rules from the Broken Handle with a small army of drunken rum gremlins.

Flix's move impressed the followers of Chitr'r'k who have been watching him. They sent ratfolk agents to speak with the new tavern lord about an allegiance against the Mouse King. If left unchecked, Flix will spread his drunken agents across Zobeck in the name of the demon lord.

The Broken Handle Tavern Redux

A lot of things have changed at the tavern since the PCs last saw it.

Lighting. The rum gremlins smeared ale and bile upon all the windows and many of the tavern's surfaces. The smearing on the windows limits the light in the tavern, leaving Areas 2 and 5 dimly lit.

Same But Different. The rum gremlins invading the Broken Handle changed the contents and appearance of its rooms. Use the map on page 5 with the following new descriptions and information.

FIGHTING THE RUM GREMLINS

During combat, Oban Bryne fights the rum gremlins alongside the PCs unless the PCs forced him to join them. He prefers to assist the PCs by casting spells from range, but he grabs nearby bottles or broken chair legs to crack rum gremlin skulls if necessary. Before they enter the tavern, Oban tosses a small metal bell to the PCs and says, "The little buggers can't stand bells. Ring it if you want to get their attention, but be careful—they'll be angry at whoever does the ringing."

A PC can ring the bell as a bonus action, which causes each rum gremlin within 15 feet of the PC to attack the PC on its turn. While the bell is ringing, rum gremlins within 15 feet of the creature ringing the bell have disadvantage to hit a creature that isn't the creature ringing the bell. The bell's ringing doesn't affect Flix Sweetwine. If a PC doesn't ring the bell, that PC can pass the bell to another PC within 15 feet (no action required).

The Tavern's Challenge. If the addition of Oban and the bell decreases the difficulty of the fights in the Broken Handle, you can include additional rum gremlins in the tavern who are either coming back from alcohol raids or seeking to join Flix's army. Similarly, additional ratfolk of Chittr'k'k might find their way into the tavern at the behest of their cult. Be careful when adding more enemies, however, as the poisoned condition from the rum gremlins' auras can wreak havoc on even the most prepared group of PCs and make even a small addition to the combat that much more difficult to face.

1. THE BROKEN HANDLE TAVERN ENTRANCE

A single-story building of brown wood with a double door entrance sits near the banks of the River Argent. Four street-facing windows are smeared with grime, making it impossible to see inside. Above the door, a wooden sign has scratched out letters and now reads "The Broke Hand." Two human men sit slumped against the building with stained shirts. A dog lies on its side near one of the humans, whimpering.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check verifies both humans and the dog are unconscious and suffering the after-effects of major intoxication. With some rest and rehydration, they will recover. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check while standing near the door hears the familiar sounds of rum gremlin giggling coming from inside.

Rolling Barrel. A creature opening the door sees a rum gremlin running on top of a rolling barrel, heading directly for the front door. Each creature within 10 feet of the double

front doors must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d10 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. As the barrel bursts against the entrance, the rum gremlin falls off, landing prone. It then laughs and attempts to run back inside to join the other gremlins.

2. BAR LOUNGE

The smell of dried bile and spilled ale fills the tavern. The tables and benches in the western half of the tavern are upside down. One rum gremlin stands on an overturned table, throwing darts at one of the dart boards just above the slumped form of a woman. Two shirtless humans lie on the floor beneath a small, square table across from the entrance. Two rum gremlins sit at the table, wearing the humans' shirts and playing cards.

Similar to those outside, the humans in this room are unconscious from an extreme intoxication caused by a mixture of the alcohol they were drinking and the power of the rum gremlins' auras.

Creatures. The three **rum gremlins** (see page 13) attack the PCs when the PCs enter the tavern. The rum gremlin by the dart boards has five darts, which it throws at the PCs. It is proficient with the darts.

3. TAPROOM

Two of this room's walls are lined with stacks of broken wooden barrels with illegible labels. The floor is sticky from old spilt ale. A rum gremlin dances on the top of the cabinet in the center of the room, playing a flute. The room's wooden ale mugs lie scattered across the ale-soaked floor. An orange-furred ratfolk dances on the tables in the southeastern corner, twirling and juggling its darts in time with the music. The two doors in the southern wall are open.

After Flix took over the tavern, he cracked open the adjoining keg storage room and moved all the kegs to Area 5. The gremlins then tossed Vilmos and his daughter into the room.

Creatures. The **rum gremlin** plays a jaunty tune for the amusement of the **ratfolk mercenary** (*Creature Codex*, p. 315), who is the bodyguard of the cult of Chittr'k'k emissary in Area 6. Knowing the effects of the rum gremlins' presence,

the ratfolk drank a potion before arriving that protects it from the poisoned condition for 24 hours. If the PCs enter, both attack. The halting of the music awakens the **giant rat** in Area 3b, and it joins the fight on the second round of combat.

3B. BARREL STORAGE

The broken remnants of several barrels litter the floor of this mostly barren room. Two humans lie on the floor.

Most of the wooden barrels were removed from this room. The broken remains of one barrel is now a rat's nest, containing a slumbering **giant rat**.

Victims. Vilmos and his daughter lie here, forgotten by the gremlins who are drunk, literally and figuratively, on their victory. Vilmos is starting to come out of the effects of the gremlins' auras. If the PCs help him up, he offers to fight beside them, but he has two levels of exhaustion.

4. BACKYARD AND outhouses

Two wooden outhouses sit behind the tavern with a beautiful view of the River Argent and the grass and trees south of Zobeck.

A **rum gremlin** dozes on the floor of one of the outhouses, oblivious to the events inside the tavern.

5. DINING AREA

The area is a mess of flipped over tables, and many barrels stand around the room. Some of the barrels are broken, but most are intact. A mixture of ale and bile coats the windows, blocking out almost all light from outside. The doors in the north wall lie on the floor and voices echo from beyond the open doorways.

Flix ordered his rum gremlins to move all of the tavern's barrels into this area for easier access and gave them free reign of the remainder of the tavern.

Creatures. When the PCs enter the area, three **rum gremlins** on guard near the barrels rush out from behind the barrels and overturned tables to attack, giggling the entire time. One rum gremlin wields a wooden rolling pin (treat as a greatclub). On the second round of combat, a **ratfolk**

warlock (*Creature Codex*, p. 316) dressed in tattered green robes with a rat skull amulet around its neck steps out of the kitchen to join the fray. The ratfolk is an emissary from the cult of Chittr'k'k and fights to the death to protect an alliance it believes will strengthen Chittr'k'k's power in Zobeck. Knowing the effects of the rum gremlins' presence, the ratfolk drank a potion before arriving that protects it from the poisoned condition for 24 hours.

6. KITCHEN

The kitchen area has been turned into a mockery of a throne room. A hollowed-out barrel sits in the middle of the room, fashioned into a makeshift throne complete with pillow cushions. Several barrels line the walls of the room. A large rum gremlin, wielding a wooden keg tap spigot as a scepter, sits in the throne, drinking from a bottle of wine.

The figure on the throne is Flix Sweetwine. He was holding court with the emissary of the cult of Chittr'k'k about a possible alliance against the Mouse King of Zobeck when the PCs rudely interrupted them. When the PCs enter the kitchen, the rum gremlin lord smashes his bottle on the throne and brandishes its sharpened remains at them.

Conclusion

After Flix and his minions are defeated, the lingering effects from the gremlins' auras lifts, allowing the patrons to wake from their drunken comas. Thanks to the PCs, the patrons suffer no negative effects from the intoxication, minus a few hangovers. If Oban Bryne survives the battle with the rum gremlin lord, he feels invigorated and decides he really does like the Broken Handle—or at least he says he will once it's been cleaned up. He agrees to stay as the tavern's resident clurichaun, provided Vilmos promises to give him a barrel of ale each week. Vilmos happily agrees. Vilmos hands the PCs their promised reward of 400 gp and offers them free drinks for life at his tavern once the place is back in business.

The cult of Chittr'k'k isn't pleased when news spreads of the rum gremlins being defeated at the Broken Handle, and the rats of Zobeck loyal to the demon lord keep watch on the PCs. If the PCs return to the tavern later for free drinks, Oban Bryne makes an appearance to greet the PCs and challenge them to a round of drinking.

RUM GREMLIN LORD

Small fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 78 (12d6 + 36)

Speed 20 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +5

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Aura of Drunkenness. A rum gremlin lord radiates an aura of drunkenness to a radius of 20 feet. Each creature that starts its turn in the aura must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw against poison or be poisoned for 1 hour. Creatures that have drunk any alcohol during the previous hour have disadvantage on the saving throw. While affected by this poison, a creature falls prone if it tries to move more than half its speed during a turn. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the rum gremlin lord's Aura of Drunkenness for 24 hours.

Hearty. The rum gremlin lord adds its Constitution modifier to its AC (included in the Armor Class).

Magic Resistance. The gremlin has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

One for the Road. When the rum gremlin lord hits a poisoned enemy with any weapon, the target takes an extra 1d6 poison damage.

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

At will: *prestidigitation*

3/day: *command*

ACTIONS

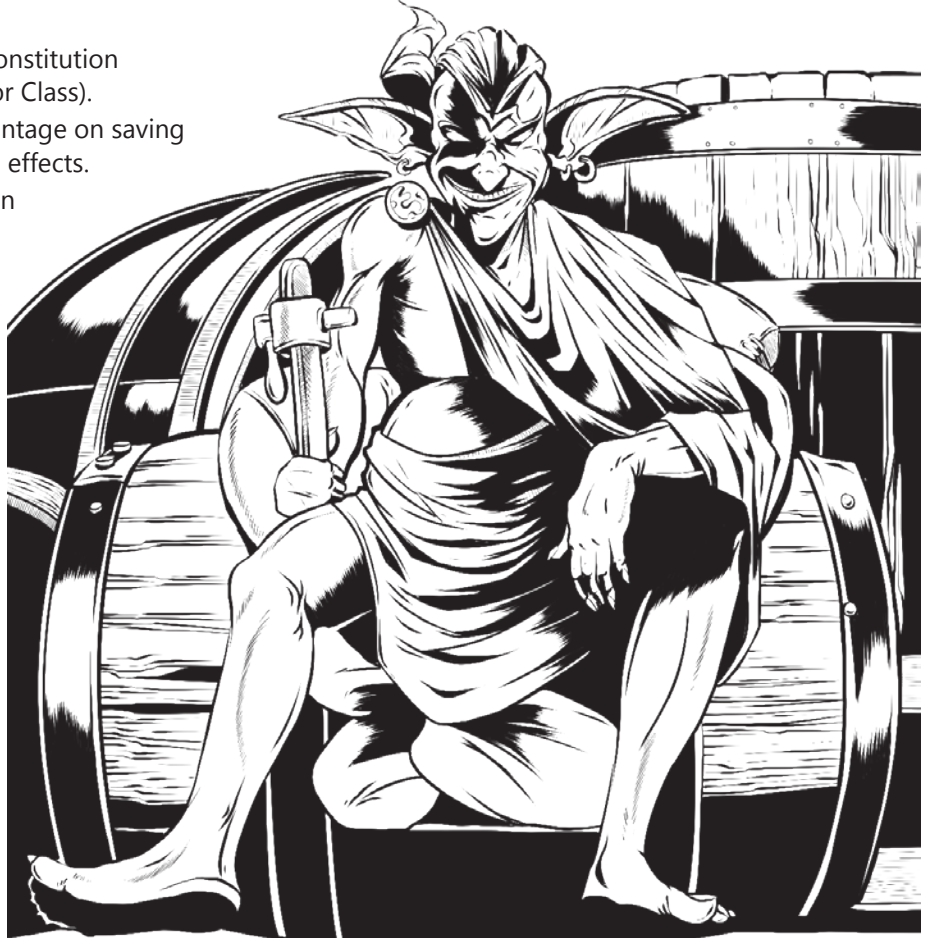
Multiattack. The rum gremlin lord makes two attacks: one with its ale tap scepter and one with its broken bottle shiv.

Ale Tap Scepter. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Broken Bottle Shiv. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Rotgut Belch (Recharge 6). The rum gremlin lord vomits green bile in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 18 (4d8) poison damage and is covered in green bile for 1 minute. On a success, a target takes half the damage and isn't covered in bile. A creature, including the target, can take an action to wipe off the bile. Rum gremlins have advantage on attack rolls against creatures covered in a rum gremlin lord's green bile.

Bring Me Another Round! (1/Day). The rum gremlin lord lets out a thunderous belch, calling 1d4 rum gremlins. The called rum gremlins arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the lord and obeying its spoken commands. The rum gremlins remain for 1 hour, until the lord dies, or until the lord dismisses them as a bonus action.



Rum Gremlin

Found in the *Tome of Beasts* on page 239, rum gremlins are malicious fey who exude an aura that causes those nearby to become drunk. They delight in terrorizing docks, ships, and sailors. In this adventure, the rum gremlins and their lord were stowaways on a merchant vessel that arrived in Zobeck not long ago. They set their sights on the Broken Handle shortly after they arrived and have been a menace to its patrons since.

RUM GREMLIN

Tiny fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 22 (5d4 + 10)

Speed 20 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)

Skills Stealth +5

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aura of Drunkenness. A rum gremlin radiates an aura of drunkenness to a radius of 20 feet. Each creature that starts its turn in the aura must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw against poison or be poisoned for 1 hour. Creatures that have drunk any alcohol during the previous hour have disadvantage on the saving throw. While affected by this poison, a creature falls prone if it tries to move more than half its speed during a turn. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the rum gremlin lord's Aura of Drunkenness for 24 hours.

Magic Resistance. The gremlin has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The gremlin's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *prestidigitation*

3/day: *command*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rum gremlin makes one claw attack and one bite attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Clurichaun

Found in the *Tome of Beasts* on page 67, clurichauns are mischievous fey who enjoy drinking and brawling. In this adventure, the clurichaun, Oban Byrne, was once a protector and resident of a roadside tavern that was destroyed in a raid by bandits. Alone and feeling guilty for being unable to protect his home, Oban Byrne wandered in a drunken stupor for—he claims—a century. Eventually, he took up residence in an old ruin near a farmstead south of Zobeck, raiding the road's merchants of their alcohol and causing no end of trouble for the farmer.

CLURICHAUN

Tiny fey, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 22 (4d4 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +5

Skills Perception +1, Stealth +3

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Clurichaun's Luck. Clurichauns add both their Dexterity and Charisma modifiers to their Armor Class.

Magic Resistance. The clurichaun has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The clurichaun's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The clurichaun can cast the following spells, requiring only alcohol as a component.

At will: *friends, mending, minor illusion, purify food and drink, vicious mockery*

1/day each: *blur, calm emotions, heroism, sleep, suggestion*

ACTIONS

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Improvised Weapon. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, depending on weapon.

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