

A Thorn in the Side

By
Malrex



A sacred druid's grove has become haunted, cursed and contorted by evil. Will the party be able to solve the mystery...or will the evil continue to spread....An adventure for levels 3-6.

A Thorn in the Side

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Author's Note

Ever since I've seen the cover art, I was inspired for this adventure. Happy to finally write it down on paper and get it out of my head.

Thanks to my patrons at <https://www.patreon.com/malrexmodules> for supporting me!

Special thanks to my wife, putting up with me while I finished this during vacation.



A Thorn in the Side

Introduction: After her Calamitous Tree was destroyed by the druid Naekos, the Thorn Dryad Merizyl sought revenge. Coaxing and encouragement allowed the stump of her fallen tree to become a Rootmaw, which helped sustain Merizyl. The roots of the Rootmaw oozed foul ichor across the grove transforming Naekos' grove into a place of twisted evil. All the while, Merizyl continued sowing new calamitous trees, slowly changing the groves' remaining defenders into a mockery of their once noble forms.

Summary: After the druid had slain her calamitous tree, Merizyl created a **Thorn Necklace** for Naekos, eventually ensuring that it fell into the druid's hands. Mistaken for a gift from a friend, Naekos immediately donned the necklace, causing him to descend into a deep madness and paranoia. With the grove's protector out of the way, Merizyl trapped the druid's friends (**Area #3** and **#11**), slaying them (in the case of the Banshee, **Appendix B, Area #4**) or cursing them (in the case of The Wendigo, wanders or **Area #13**). Having taken control of the grove, Merizyl has been free to seed the area with additional calamitous trees, ensuring the whole natural grove shifts into darkness and corruption. The adventurers enter the grove depending on the Adventure Hook chosen.

Adventure Hooks

1. A nearby village is at wit's end due to a difficult crop-growing season. Due to past altercations, they reluctantly seek adventurers to find the reclusive druid in his nearby grove to beg for his assistance, yet no one knows the exact location. In fact, they haven't heard from the druid in over 10 years, which has suited them fine.... until now.

2. A charismatic merchant offers the party a reward (500 gp each) to recover the **Ice Sapphire of the Ancients**. The gem's last location was believed to be in a burial mound inside the druidic grove. The merchant is actually a thief in the local Thieves' Guild, and will not honor his side of the bargain.

3. A centaur, Jakora, seeks help from the party. Ancient centaur traditions require children, when they come of age, to visit the burial mound to pay their respects to their ancestors. After 10 years, it's finally time to make the visit. However, Jakora has discovered that the grove has gone through a strange transformation over the years and has deemed it unsafe. She offers 300 gp for the party to come back with information on what has happened to the centaur burial mounds and the surrounding grove.

4. A wizened old herbalist has found the location of a group of Leptographium. She wants some of their bark-skin for its rare properties for spice making. She offers 300 gp and a **Potion of Healing** for the efforts. She even offers the potion up front.

5. A nearby village has been terrorized by a wyvern. They are organizing a monster hunt with a 500 gp reward.

Travel Through the Druid Grove: As the players make their way through the corrupted grove, they must contend with a number of environmental hazards. If not on an already-extant trail, all movement is slowed by ½. If off-trail, brambles and thorns seem to lash at exposed limbs and faces, dealing each party member **1d3 damage per turn** while traveling off-trail. Narrow animal trails allow normal movement if discovered by a tracking ranger or druid. Other party members may discover the animal trail but quickly lose the trail through the underbrush. Further, the forest is withered and dark, with a thick, overarching canopy that blocks most of the sunlight from reaching the misty and damp forest floor. Besides the crunching of leaves and twigs during movement, the forest is deathly quiet.

GM's Notes: Please refer to **Appendix F: New Monsters**, for descriptions of new monsters. Anytime at night, in **Areas #7-10** and **#12-15**, there is a 40% chance of experiencing the Rootmaw's (**Area #14**) *Dancing Lights* ability, as it tries to lure the unwary to its lair (and mouth).

Special Note: Larengos, the Wendigo knows the territory and uses it to its advantage, attempting to ambush, separate and generally harass the party whenever they are occupied or camping. Larengos stays to fight in 1 vs. 1 or 1 vs. 2 odds but attempts to flee if he reaches half hp. Its territory ranges from **Areas # 1-4, #7-10, and #13**.

Larengos the Wendigo: AC 4, Move 12, HD 6, hp 42, THACO 15, Attack 2 or 3 (2 claws 1d8+1 and gore 2d4+2), Size M to L, Morale 12, XP 650+. Special: 90% resist to *Sleep, Charm* and *Hold* spells.

Wandering Encounters:

Roll every 2 hours. A result of 1 or 2 on a d10 means a wandering encounter:



Artist: Dean Spencer

Roll	Encounter
1	(5) Twisted Pixies: AC 5, Move 6 (fly 12, MC 2), HD ½, hp 4 ea., THACO 20, Attack (by weapon), MR 25%, Size T, Morale 11, XP 650 ea. Special: Invisibility, spells, sleep arrows. They harass the party with their magic and try to put the party to sleep.
2	(4) Giant Wasps: AC 4, Move 6, (fly 21, MC 2), HD 4, hp 23 ea, THACO 17, Attack 1 (bite 2d4 or sting 1d4+special), Size M, Morale 8-10, XP 420 ea. Special: Save vs poison or take additional 5d6 damage and be paralyzed for 2d6 hours. These wasps are looking for food.
3	The Wendigo: AC 4, Move 12, HD 6, hp 42, THACO 15, Attack 2 or 3 (2 claws 1d8+1 and gore 2d4+2), Size M to L, Morale 12, XP 650+. Special: 90% resist to Sleep, Charm and Hold spells. The Wendigo watches the party from the trees and mist and is spotted, but it quickly disappears.
4	Cries of help are heard from the south. If they rush off, the party may get separated due to the mist. The Wendigo attacks lone characters.
5	(6) Leaf Rustlers: AC 8, Move 12 (6 floating), HD 3, hp 17 ea, THACO 17, Attack 2 (Stem spike 1d6), Size M, Morale 11-12, XP 175 ea. Special: +1 weapons to hit, ½ damage pierce, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water. They float down to surprise the party.
6	(1) Wyvern: AC 3, Move 6 (fly 24, MC 5), HD 7+7, hp 46, THACO 13, Attack 1 or 2 (bite 2d8, sting 1d6, 2 talons 1d6), Size G, Morale 14, XP 4,000. Special: Poison. Save or die. The wyvern is on the hunt for food. 50% chance it doesn't see the party due to the thick canopy.
7	Cries of a wailing baby are heard through the mist. Eventually it fades.
8	The Wendigo: AC 4, Move 12, HD 6, hp 42, THACO 15, Attack 2 or 3 (2 claws 1d8+1 and gore 2d4+2), Size M to L, Morale 12, XP 650+. Special: 90% resist to Sleep, Charm and Hold spells. The Wendigo follows the party and attacks the last party member when they are engaged with something else.
9	(3) Leptographium: AC 3, Move 6, HD 5, hp 30 ea, THACO 15, Attack 1 (1d6+2), Size S, Morale 14, XP 975 ea. Special: Sap, spore form, double damage from fire. They are moving towards one of their entrances. They attack immediately.
10	Roots slither for a full round, oozing a black ichor, creating a rustling noise.
11	A disfigured (2 heads, 2 tails, 5 legs, 2 mouths, 3 eyes, etc.) animal (deer, elk, chipmunk, etc) watches the party (harmless). Flees if attacked.
12	A spectacular butterfly, vibrant with color, is the only movement in the forest. It spreads its wings wide before falling into the mist....dead.

The Grove:

1. Stick Around: The forest opens partially along the animal trail into a small, grassy clearing. The sound of a crying woman breaks the silence followed by eerie, saddened wails of an infant. A strange, decapitated buck's head hangs upside down from a vine, 7 feet off the ground. The head spins slowly, revealing three eyes and fangs. Stiffened legs protrude out of the mist marking the carcass.

- Four vines from trees slowly move into position to snare the unwary. These vines act exactly like the *Snare* spell.
- The crying sounds come from **Area #3**. The crying baby comes from the Wendigo mimicry ability, as Larengos attempts to trick the party into this area to take advantage of the vines. The vines do not attack Larengos.
- Once a character is snared, the Wendigo crashes out of the brush and attacks the last person in the party. It attacks for one round before rushing off into the woods. If followed by the rest of the party, it attempts to double back and decapitate any snared foes.

Monster: Wendigo

2. Cursed Trail: The narrow animal trail branches off in several directions. Sounds of a sobbing woman emerge, but are hard to pinpoint through the dark, misty forest.

- This intersection is cursed and roots seek to trip anyone walking through. Every round spent in this area, 1d3 characters must save vs. spells or trip, as the *Trip* spell. Roots have AC 7, hp 10 ea and are 18 of them. Tripped characters lose a round of action.
- 7 constrictor snakes slither within the mist to attack. Slain snakes revert back to sticks (see *Sticks to Snakes* spell).
- **Important Note:** Roots and snakes are confined to a 20' radius centered on the center of the intersection.

Monster: (18) Evil Roots: AC 8, hp 10 ea. Act as a *Trip* spell until destroyed and affects 1d3 characters per round.

(7) Constrictor Snakes: AC 6, Move 9, HD 3+2, hp 16 ea, THACO 17, Attack 2 (bite 1, constrict 1d3), Size S, Morale N/A, XP 120 ea.

3. Weeping Woman: A cracked, lichen-covered statue of a cowed woman in a dress stands in the center of a trail intersection. Her hand is upraised with a broken dagger blade protruding from it. Tears stream from its eyes and sounds of sobbing can be heard coming from the statue, though the face remains motionless. Mud and shallow water puddles surround the statue.

Artist: Dean Spencer



- The statue is 5'8" tall, with impeccable craftsmanship. Roots are entwined about the feet, seemingly holding up the statue as it has no other base.
- Whoever touches the statue first is enveloped in a golden glow and receives the effect of a *Bless* spell for 6 turns. The statue changes expression to a look of determination and the crying stops. The 'toucher' hears "Avenge me!" telepathically. The statue does not say anything else.
- A successful strength check can pull the blade from the hand which envelopes all those in a 20' radius in a golden glow and provides the effects of a *Bless* spell for one full day. The statue turns to flesh and the woman smiles and says "Thank you", before rapidly deteriorating to bones and finally collapsing into a pile of dry dust.
- A broken dagger hilt lies in the muck at the foot of the statue. The hilt is engraved with a long-faced medusa (handle) with her snake hair forming the hilt. Despite the strange occurrences with the statue, the dagger has no magical abilities (anymore).
- The statue is of Yasha, see **Appendix B, Area #7**.

4. Leptographium Entrance: A giant, rotten fallen tree lies across the trail and clearing. Dappled sunlight reveals an enormous stump with jagged wood reaching for the sky. A dark opening, 4' long and 3' wide, is set within the gnarled wood with roots forming crude stairs leading down. Five strange leaf piles, 2' diameter, lay scattered about the entrance.

- There is a 50% chance that a squad of 8 Twisted Pixies enters the clearing from **Area #8**. They are delighted to maliciously trick, harm, and even kill party members.
- The piles of leaves are slain Leaf Rustlers.
- The stump leads into the Leptographium lair. See **Appendix A: The Root Lair**.

Monster: (8) Twisted Pixies: AC 5, Move 6 (fly 12, MC 2), HD ½, hp 5 ea., THACO 20, Attack (by weapon), MR 25%, Size T, Morale 11, XP 650 ea. Special: Invisibility, spells, sleep arrows.

5. Leaf Rustler Lair: The claustrophobic canopy finally lifts, revealing several different layers at varying heights within the canopy itself. A few huge trees dominate the forest, with branches as thick as a wagon expanding in different directions, forming a sort of aerial highway. A moss covered, rope-and-wood ladder creaks and dangles near a huge tree to the south.

- Approaching the rope bridge causes 7 Leaf Rustlers to float down from above to attempt a surprise attack.
- Despite its appearance, the rope bridge is sturdy and ascends 50 feet to the Leaf Rustler Lair, see **Appendix B: The Leaf Rustler Lair**.

Monster: (7) Leaf Rustlers: AC 8, Move 12 (6 Floating), HD 3, hp 24, 22, 18x4, 16, THACO 17, Attack 2 (Stem spike 1d6), Size M, Morale 11-12, XP 175 ea. Special: +1 weapons to hit, ½ damage pierce, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water.

6. Root vs. Leaves: A strange, chaotic battle occurs in this gloomy meadow as bark-like creatures face off against bizarre creatures composed of leaves. There are losses on both sides. The bark creatures seem to be defending a narrow crevice set in a moss covered stump.

- The combatants fight for 1d4 rounds before noticing the party.
- Once noticed both groups of combatants attempt to flee with the Leptographium entering the crevice and the Leaf Rustlers climbing a humongous tree nearby. Leptographium withdrawing from attacks arrive in **Room #2 of the Root Lair**.
- The crevice leads to the Leptographium Lair, see **Appendix A: The Root Lair**.

Monster: (5) Leptographium: AC 3, Move 6, HD 5, hp 37, 28, 23, 15, 7, THACO 15, Attack 1 (fist 1d6+2 or weapon +2), Size S, Morale 14, XP 975 ea. Special: Sap, spore form, weakness to fire.

(12) Leaf Rustlers: AC 8, Move 12 (6 floating), HD 3, hp 22, 18x7, 11, 10, 7, 2, THACO 17, Attack 2 (Stem spike 1d6), Size M, Morale 11-12, XP 175 ea. Special: +1 weapons to hit, ½ damage pierce, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water.



Artist: Public Domain

7. The Field: The canopy and mist disappear revealing open sky above a wide open, grass dominated field. Colorless and drab flowers are scattered about the field, mixed with shrubs, and withered single trees. A sizable rock outcropping protrudes towards the sky near the middle of the meadow. Surrounding the rock outcropping is a noticeable, 20' diameter circle of grayish grass and droopy, dead flowers.

- Traveling through the field releases flower pollen. Save vs. Poison each turn while in the field or have an allergic reaction that puts the victim into a sneezing and coughing fit for 1d6+2 rounds.

7A. Centaur Burial Grounds: The rock outcrop is covered in petroglyphs, and huge slabs of granite thrust up towards the sky with clumps of grass clinging to patches of earth. A few spears are thrust into the ground, topped with impaled goblin skulls and colorful feathers that vibrantly pop out from the surrounding ashen and drab landscape. Several stacked rocks are placed randomly along the rock outcrop. Two huge granite slabs crisscross each other forming a dark cave entrance, covering a set of rough-hewn stairs descending down.

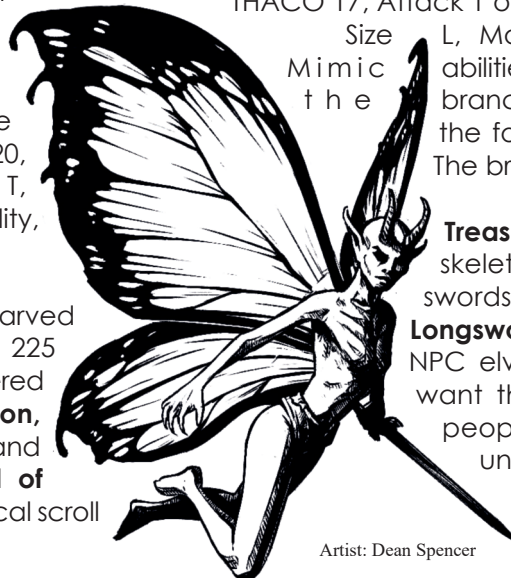
- The petroglyphs consist of centaurs, satyrs, nymphs, elves, and pixies all fighting different threats—dragons, orcs, goblins, and other evil humanoids. The spears are mundane.
- See **Appendix C: Centaur Burial Grounds.**

8. Twisted Lair: On the edge of the field, a series of enormous dead firs desperately cling to their dry needles. Two dead giant wasps lie in a crumpled heap along the field's edge with the forest's mist licking at the corpses.

- The dead firs are hollow and contain a small Twisted Pixie encampment. One pixie can cast *Irresistable Dance* although all the pixies use their powers to full effect in defense of their fort.
- Captured characters are dragged to the front of **Area #7A**, stripped of their gear.

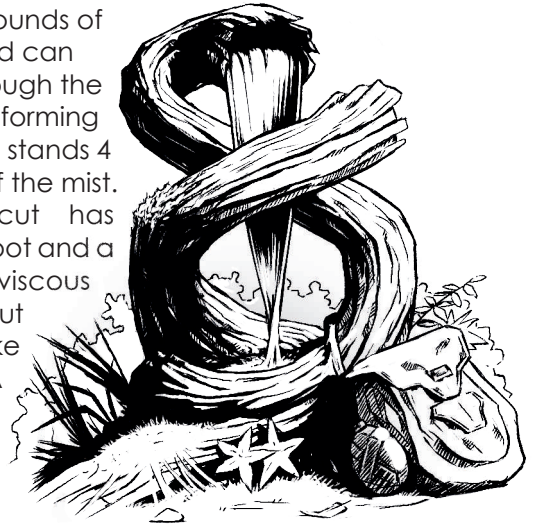
Monster: (12) Twisted Pixies: AC 5, Move 6 (fly 12, MC 2), HD ½, hp 5 ea., THACO 20, Attack (by weapon), MR 25%, Size T, Morale 11, XP 650 ea. Special: Invisibility, spells, sleep arrows.

Treasure: Inside the tree is an ornate carved wooden box (25 gp). Inside the box is 225 gp, 74 pp and 3 rubies (50 gp ea). Scattered inside the tree are 5 **Potions: Delusion, Extra-Healing, Heroism, Polymorph Self, and Rainbow Hues.** There is also a **Scroll of Protection from Werewolves**, and a Clerical scroll of *Remove Disease*.



Artist: Dean Spencer

9. Fountain: Sounds of bubbling liquid can be heard through the brush. A root, forming a figure eight, stands 4 feet tall out of the mist. A jagged cut has severed the root and a foul dark viscous ichor pours out of the root like a fountain. A backpack lies next to it with two metal plated stars.



Artist: Dean Spencer

- Anyone touching the ichor receives an annoying rash on the exposed area; if someone drinks the fluid, they must save vs. poison or take 10 damage.
- Inside the backpack is a lantern, a jug of wine (45 gp), rotten foodstuffs, a gold armband of a cat claspng its own tail (150 gp), a sack with 54 gp, and four diamonds (75 gp ea). There is also a letter scroll addressed to Tilfur, requesting a sword practice and to visit his elven brethren soon.
- In 1d4 rounds, two gorgeous ladies and one muscular handsome man appear within the forest next to trees. They begin to beckon and flirtatiously call out to the party while giggling and laughing and retort promises of food and rest. They don't leave their position as they beckon towards the entrance of their home--an oval archway into the tree. These images disappear once someone enters or attacks.
- The imitators are a result of the seeping evil ichor from the fountain that is twisting the forest into evil. These imitators attempt to devour anyone who enters their mouths willingly.

Monster: (3) Imitators: AC 5, Move 0, HD 3, hp 22, 20, 17, THACO 17, Attack 1 or 2 (bite 3d8, 2 branches 1d8), Size L, Morale NA, XP 270 ea. Special: Mimic abilities, on a natural roll of 18 or higher, branch draws the target to the mouth the following round for a bite attack. The branches have a 20' reach.

Treasure: Inside the middle tree is the skeletal corpse of Tilfur, an elven swordsman. He carries a **Elven Longsword +1**, and **Elven Chain Mail +1**. NPC elves seeing either of these items want the items returned to the elven people, by any means necessary, unless worn/used by a elf PC.



Artist: Indi Marten

10. Hive: The forest opens up into an immense glade. Clearly visible on the far side is a fir tree with sagging branches supporting a half-built hive. Several giant wasps cling to the hive, working to expand its size.

- The wasps have stored a giant beetle carcass under their nest and occasionally fly down to feed.

Monster: (7) Giant Wasps: AC 4, Move 6, (fly 21, MC 2), HD 4, hp 23 ea, THACO 17, Attack 1 (bite 2d4 or sting 1d4+special), Size M, Morale 8-10, XP 420 ea. Special: Save vs poison or take additional 3d6 damage and be paralyzed for 1d4 turns.

Treasure: Wasp venom can be collected by each wasp and applied once for half the effects (1d2 turns paralyzation, 1d6+2 damage). The wasps store stolen honey from a nearby honey bee colony and use it to feed 3 harmless larvae (hp 1). Eating the honey cures 1d4 damage and there is a total of 8 doses.

11. Protected Pool: An opaque, ivory dome blocks vision in its 70' diameter. It is 30' high at its apex. Branches, trees, and even bits of vegetation poke out of the half bubble.

- Treat the bubble as magic cast from a 12th level wizard for *Dispel Magic* purposes.
- Entering the half-dome provides a prickly sensation but is harmless to those of good or neutral alignments. Evil characters may not enter through the barrier (except by using *Passwall*, *Teleport*, or other magic).
- Inside the dome lies a beautiful and welcoming grove of healthy, lush vegetation surrounding a sparkling pool of clear water devoid of mist. Flowers release sweet scents and fern fronds wave gently from a refreshing breeze. Waist deep in the pool, a woman hums as she frolics in the water.
- The woman is a nymph and warns the party not to look upon her! She continues to keep her back towards them.
- Varalia, the Nymph, is excited to have adventurers in her 'prison'. She explains that the dome keeps evil creatures out; it is made of a strange magic cast by her druid lover to protect her before he went mad. She has been too frightened to leave since that day.
- Varalia can provide a wealth of information to the party if they treat her with respect. She can direct the party

to the druid's dwelling (**Area #17**), and the Thorn Dryad (**Area #14**). She also knows of Shayral the Banshee (**Appendix B, Area #4**), Larengos the Wendigo (**Area #1** and Wandering Encounters), and Yasha the statue (**Area #3**). She explains all were friends who were cursed or slain by Merizyl. Varalia allows the party to rest here with no interruptions.

Monster: Varalia, the Nymph: AC 9, Move 12, HD 3, hp 24, THACO 17, Attack 1 (by weapon), MR 50%, Size M, Morale 7, XP 1,400.



Artist: Jacob Blackmon

12. Centaur Statues: The trail opens into a narrow secluded glade. On either side of the glade are two rearing, armor-clad centaur statues holding lances and bucklers.

- Perceptive characters notice trampled grass between the statues through the mist.
- Anyone entering the glade causes the statues to move at a full gallop towards each other. Roll surprise. If not surprised, the party can get out of the path and to safety. If surprised, roll randomly for 2 characters in the glade. Each gets attacked by HD 10, THACO 11 statue by 50% the lance (2d8+2 damage) or 50% trampled (1d6+2 damage). The centaur statues violently crash into each other, exploding into stone debris and a cloud of dust.
- After one turn, the centaur statues reappear and reset.

13. Deer Glade: The woodlands open to a muddy field of grass and creeping vines. Through the mist, several mutated deer eat grass quietly, their mutations evident as they eat grass while scanning the field. Some have two heads, or extra eyes and mouths, or thicker racks of antlers with bizarre patterns. Along the western side of the forest hangs a set of humanoid skeletons, their bones clattering like wind chimes in the mild breeze.

- 25% chance that 3 Giant Wasps from **Area #10** begin attacking a deer.
- The deer are harmless and act like regular deer (freezing in place or fleeing).
- Near the hanging skeletons is a hollowed stump. Half-eaten deer carcasses in congealed blood puddles surround the stump and crude tools litter the floor inside. A pile of leaves serves as a bed. This is the lair of Larengos the Wendigo and has a 50% chance of being here if not slain earlier.

Monster: Wendigo

Treasure: Inside the stump is a rotten backpack bulging with 834 cp, 423 sp, 323 gp and 17 pp. A **Cloak of Elvinkind** is buried within the leaf bed. A crude necklace of deer teeth hangs on the wall.

14. Merizyl's Lair: Mist continues to weave through the vegetation with its tendrils, quietly billowing from a slight wind. A magnificent fallen tree forms a 10' high wooden wall with its trunk on the far side of the glade. Its jagged top stump stands 12' tall, covers a 10' diameter, and through the gnarly wood, offers several niches that serve as entrances to its hollow center. Giant bulbous roots sprawl from the stump, seeping blackish sap. Three fir trees squat around the perimeter of the stump.

- The fir trees are all Calamitous Trees and immediately attack anyone attempting to enter the stump.

- Inside the stump is an open pit covered with vines and roots climbing into the Thorn Dryad's Lair (refer to **Appendix D**).

Monster: (3) Young Calamitous Trees (Fir): AC 4 (tree) 8 (branches), Move 0 (20' reach), HD 3, hp 20 ea, THACO 17, Attack 2 (Branches 1d6+1 damage or pinecone attack 1d4), Size L, Morale 18, XP 175 ea.

15. The Mud Pit: A crumbled bridge leads into a pit of muck and bubbling mud. The bridge once spanned the gap to an island with a huge weeping willow tree and a massive gnarled stump, but now has a 10' chunk of the bridge missing.

- The once pristine lake is now mud that varies 5-15' deep. Characters falling in the mud have 1d6 rounds before sinking completely, much like quicksand. The Constitution score of the character determines the rounds before suffocation and death.
- 50% chance that the wyvern from **Area #16** observes the party from its perch and attacks as they attempt to cross to the island.

16. Snag Nest: A huge dead tree reaches to the sky with its dead branches while supporting a perch or nest. Several various bones and skulls litter the rocky crag island, mixed with sparkling coins.

- This is the temporary home of a wyvern while it searches for a cave.

Monster: (1) Wyvern: AC 3, Move 6 (fly 24, MC 5), HD 7+7, hp 46, THACO 13, Attack 1 or 2 (bite 2d8, sting 1d6, 2 talons 1d6), Size G, Morale 14, XP 4,000. Special: Poison. Save or die.

Treasure: In the nest area and mixed with the bones below are 2,544 cp, 1,800 gp, 200 pp, a matching malachite tiara and necklace with inset diamonds (500 gp), 2 jaspers (35 gp), a wizard scroll (9th level) of *Ice Storm*, *Confusion*, and *Levitate*. Tucked into a elk skull is the **Obelisk of the Third Circle** and under several bones is the **Totem of the Blue Shaman**.

Obelisk of the Third Circle

This item is an obelisk made of 4" amethyst with a tiny latch and silver chain. It's designed to hang from a staff or belt and allows a spellcaster to harness extra power. Once per day, the owner may focus on the obelisk for 1 full turn. After that turn, they gain the ability to cast one extra spell for the day. The spell level is rolled randomly 1d3 (1 = 1st level, 2 = 2nd, etc.). The extra spell must be one that the spellcaster knows and can be of the mage's choice, however, it must be determined immediately after focusing on the obelisk. If a higher level is rolled than a mage knows, then it reverts to the highest level spell available to that mage.

Totem of the Blue Shaman

The Blue Shaman of the Frog Clan is known by many for his good deeds and his claim of destroying the cursed and haunted Tower of Yeliote. However, he disappeared over 50 years ago.

The totem is about 1' long carving of a bullfrog, made of petrified wood. As the bullfrog rarely sleeps, the owner of this Totem is 90% resistant to sleep spells or abilities. The Totem may also be used to wake magical or normal sleeping companions in a 20' radius once a day. The owner of the **Totem of the Blue Shaman** also receives a +2 vs. paralyzation saving throws and hold spells (i.e. *Hold Person*, etc.).

17. The Mad Druid: The sizable island boasts several unhealthy trees and a grand weeping willow. A massive gnarled stump dominates the island with a weather-beaten door is set on the south side. An overgrown flagstone area lays before the door.

- The door is locked.
- Please refer to **Appendix E: The Mad Druid**.



Artist: Maciej Zagorski, The Forge

Appendix A: The Root Lair

GM's Notes: The Root Lair is Leptographium territory. They have been trying to expand their area to feed off the enormous trees of the grove and have befriended a group of giant badgers. They have a long-standing hatred for the Leaf Rustlers and attack them above all other foes.

The tunnels are composed of 70% roots, 20% earth, and 10% stone. Roots vary in size and thickness and several roots dangle from the ceiling, obstructing vision to 10' ahead. The passage floors are covered in uneven, slippery roots; characters move at 2/3 of their movement rate while in the Root Lair. Running or lacking precaution may cause characters to trip, lose their footing, or get tangled in dangling ceiling roots at the GM's discretion.

1. Entrances: Entrances to the Root Lair are dark and down steep, uneven steps made from roots.

- Perceptive characters notice tracks of 4-toed humanoids.

2. Recovery Room: Hanging roots dangle from the ceiling, blocking vision of the chamber, however it can be discerned a few Injured, short, bark-like creatures hover over a bleeding furry marmot. Loose earth is piled away from freshly dug, rough-hewn tunnels.

- The ceiling is only 5' tall, causing humans and other tall characters to suffer -1 to Attack Rolls.
- The Leptographium are adamant to protect their territory.

Monster: (3) Leptographium: AC 3, Move 6, HD 5, hp 26, 18, 14, THACO 15, Attack 1 (1d6+2), Size S, Morale 14, XP 975 ea. Special: Sap, spore form, double damage from fire.

(1) Giant Badger: AC 4, Move 6 (3 swimming), HD 3, hp 11 (20), THACO 17, Attack 3 (2 claws 1d3, bite 1d6), Size L, Morale 8, XP 120.

Treasure: One Leptographium has an electrum bracelet set with a dirty emerald (175 gp). Skinned badger pelts are worth 30 gp each.

3. Frost Roots: The eastern, curved rootwall is frosty and a noticeable coldness permeates the air. Slippery roots cover the floor and the halls are deathly silent.

- The cold emanates from **Appendix C: the Centaur Lair**.

4. Silver Curtain: Loose, moist earth raises the floor a foot and a muddy passage dead-ends at a shimmering ivory curtain to the northeast.

- The ceiling is 3' high and the tunnel newly dug.
- The shimmering curtain is harmless and is part of the barrier to **Grove Area #11**. Beyond is a regular dirt wall, although the soil is more vibrant, nutrient-rich, and full of earthworms.

5. Salty Pool: The moist chamber's ceiling rises to 10' tall. A tiny stream forms a mucky puddle that spans the chamber. Strange, silvery white lichen cling to the ground, some half-submerged in the shallow puddle.

- The water comes from the Weeping Statue (**Grove Area #3**).
- Drinking the water causes an overwhelming sense of sorrow for 1 full turn.
- Eating the lichen causes the imbiber's blood to turn silver with blue flecks. This effect is harmless, though may be disconcerting.

6. Mad Badgers: Hanging roots are nibbled down to nubs. Some of the root walls are shredded exposing soft fibrous strands with chunks missing. Four piles of unmoving worms are scattered about the root cavern. The stench of wet fur is overwhelming.

- Three giant badgers inhabit this room and 2 Leptographium supply them with worms (food).

Monster: (3) Giant Badgers: AC 4, Move 6 (3 swimming), HD 3, hp 24, 20, 19, THACO 17, Attack 3 (2 claws 1d3, bite 1d6), Size L, Morale 8, XP 120.

(2) Leptographium: AC 3, Move 6, HD 5, hp 26, 18, 14, THACO 15, Attack 1 (1d6+2), Size S, Morale 14, XP 975 ea. Special: Sap, spore form, double damage from fire.

Treasure: One Leptographium has a golden nose ring (35 gp); another has a garnet amulet, set with semi-precious stones (200 gp). Skinned badger pelts net 30 gp each.

7. The Lair: The massive chamber has a 8' high ceiling and some of the sinuous root walls are splattered with a strange black substance. Coins litter the southern corner of the chamber.

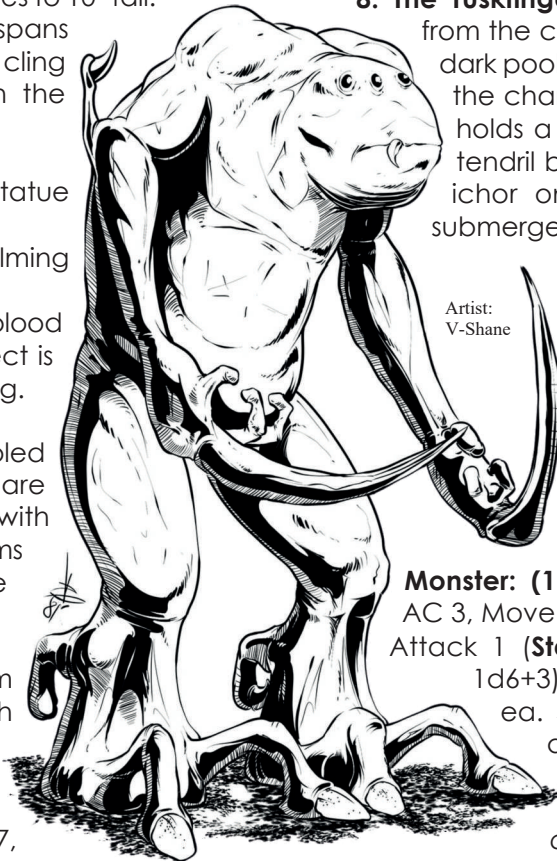
- 5 Leptographium feed on the roots in their spore form. They surprise opponent on a 1-4 on a d6.
- Any battle in here has a 75% chance of drawing the inhabitants of **Room #8** in 1d4+2 rounds.

Monster: (5) Leptographium: AC 3, Move 6, HD 5, hp 36, 34, 33, 28, 25, THACO 15, Attack 1 (1d6+2), Size S, Morale 14, XP 975 ea. Special: Sap, spore form, double damage from fire.

Treasure: Coins consist of 4,300 sp, 1,174 gp, a silver mirror inset with jade(200 gp), 2 beryls (45 gp ea), 3 topaz (75 gp ea), and a opal (100 gp). Buried in the coins is a **Tome of Clear Thought**.

8. The Tuskfinger: Jet black ichor oozes from the ceiling and walls, forming a dark pool that swallows all light from the chamber. A darker root figure holds a staff and uses a stiff root-tendrils brush and paints the black ichor onto a bigger form, half-submerged in the muck.

- Created to assist in digging and labor, the Tuskfinger rises from the muck, unleashing an agonizing howl, and attacks intruders in 1d3 rounds.



Artist:
V-Shane

Monster: (1) Leptographium Leader: AC 3, Move 6, HD 6, hp 44, THACO 15, Attack 1 (**Staff of the Withered Root**, 1d6+3), Size S, Morale 14, XP 975 ea. Special: Sap, spore form, double damage from fire.

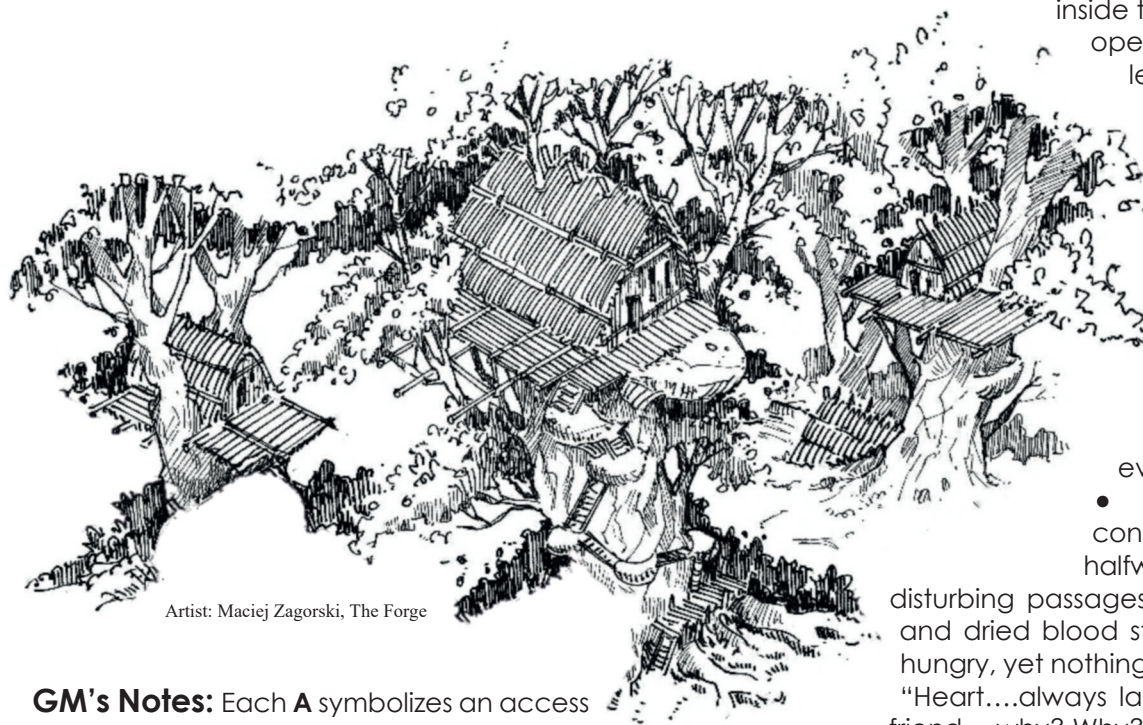
A weird creature made of hardened root and soaked with evil black ichor from the twisted roots of the Rootmaw, the Tuskfinger wields hardened 2' root spikes that extend from a finger appendage. Three beady, charcoal eyes sets on the enemy and it mindlessly lumbers to carry out its Master's bidding.

The Tuskfinger: AC 2, Move 6, HD 7, hp 46, THACO 13, Attack 1 or 2 (bite 1d6+2, 2 tusk fingers 1d8 +2), Size L, Morale 16, XP 650. The Tuskfinger is unique and follows the commands of its creator, the Leptographium Leader.

Staff of the Withered Root

This staff acts as a **Quarterstaff +1** and is similar to a **Staff of Withering**. Once per day, the wielder may expend a charge on a successful hit that ages the target 10 years and inflicts an additional 1d4 damage of negative energy. It has 22 charges.

Appendix B: Leaf Rustler Lair



Artist: Maciej Zagorski, The Forge

GM's Notes: Each **A** symbolizes an access point, consisting of a ladder climbing 40' high into the trees. On each circular platform, there are 1d6+1 Leaf Rustlers. Any fighting or loud noise has a 50% chance to alert each squad who move to attack in 1d6+2 rounds.

Monster: (1d6+1) Leaf Rustlers: AC 8, Move 12 (6 floating), HD 3, hp 19 ea, THACO 17, Attack 2 (Stem spike 1d6), Size M, Morale 11-12, XP 175 ea. Special: +1 weapons to hit, ½ damage pierce, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water.

Thick, wide, and mossy branches cover the area. Characters may travel from branch to branch to arrive at the different platforms without using the bridges, but they also have a 15% chance of falling 40' below if not proceeding cautiously.

1. Storage: *Stuck door, roll Open Doors.* Half-rotten crates, a chest, and a pile of decayed clothing are spread about the cramped room. A thick layer of dust covers the entire room.

- Inside the crates is a set of dining dishes shaped and painted like leaves (100 gp total for 4 piece set).
- The chest is locked, but can be easily bashed open due to rot. Bashing has 25% chance to break contents. Inside are 8 bottles of elvish wine (150 gp ea) from the Elder Tree Speaker's vineyards in far off Kalamecka.
- The clothing is elven, but decayed and rotting. A platinum cloak pin (125 gp) is buried in the clothing.

2. Larengos's Room: A collapsed cot lies against the south wall. Branches have pushed inside the room through window openings and have dropped leaves and detritus to the floor. A dry-rotted desk squats along the eastern wall, with two books atop it.

- Both books are journals, appearing to belong to an elf named Larengos.
- The first starts as a mundane journal of everyday life in the woods.
- The second is a continuation of the journal but halfway through descends into disturbing passages of barely legible scrawl and dried blood stains. "hungry...why am I hungry, yet nothing satisfies..." "I must FEED!" "Heart....always last. Tasty." "I ate my best friend....why? Why?!...but so delectable".

3. Bridge: Bridges with solid planks and moss-covered rope span from tree to tree, reaching the other major platforms. They are approximately 40' above the forest floor.

4. Banquet Hall: A pile of broken tables and chairs sag against the east wall. Bleached skulls from various creatures form a crude throne against the east wall. A pale woman lounges in the chair with both legs over the arm of the throne, cackling and flashing golden glowing eyes.

- Gorgeous, seductive, yet deadly with a touch of insanity, Shayral the banshee longs for conversation and is saddened about her death. Wildly jealous of those alive, one must be strategic in interesting banter for her entertainment, or face her wrath and wail of disappointment.
- Shayral longs to talk and hear of events outside the grove, greeting the party: "Well, what do we have here?! Don't get all violent; let's have a chat. It's been a long while since I've had any company."
- Shayral offers the party an alliance. She won't kill them, if they take out the "Root Men" (Leptographium) who have been moving in on her territory. To show her good will, she offers two Leaf Rustlers to accompany the party. For the reward, she offers a cure for the Mad Druid (**Mud of Gwaroom**).
- She gladly shares the location of the Thorn Dryad as Shayral despises the Dryad for killing her. However, she won't share this information until the "Root Men" have been destroyed.

- Attacking Shayral brings 3+1d4 Leaf Rustlers in 2d4 rounds.

Monster: (1) Shayral the Banshee: AC 0, Move 12, HD 7, hp 47, THACO 13 Attack 1 (touch 1d8), Size M, MR 50%, Morale 14, XP 3,000. Special: +1 weapon or better to hit, wail.

(3+1d4) Leaf Rustlers: AC 8, Move 12 (6 floating), HD 3, hp 20 ea, THACO 17, Attack 2 (stem spike 1d6), Size M, Morale 11-12, XP 175 ea. Special: +1 weapons to hit, 1/2 damage pierce, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water.

Treasure: Shayral wears a bedazzled silver choker with dangling chains of amethysts (600 gp) and silver raven earrings (100 gp). Inside a clay jar next to the throne is **Mud of Gwaroom**.

Mud of Gwaroom

When applied to a living being, this greyish mud seeps inside the skin and disappears. The mud has healing properties and is able to cure insanity, madness, disease, blindness, and deafness. The mud takes 1 full turn to take effect; Shayral's jar only contains one use of the mud.

5. Shayral's Quarters: A four-posted bed with a silky white canopy dominates the room. A 6' tall mirror leans against the north wall with a draped green sheet over it, and a pile of moldy woman's clothes lie in a few heaps about the room. Near the mirror is an elegant table with a box atop it and a chest lies against the west wall.

- **Trap:** The mirror is the **Mirror of the Doppelganger** and if gazed upon by any living creature, they must make a saving throw vs. Spells. Success and nothing happens. Failure, the character must roll a successful resurrection % or die. Survival means the character rolls on each table for the mirror's random changes. These changes take 1d4 rounds to complete and last for an entire day before the viewer must roll another resurrection survival % and reverts back to normal. The mirror's power works once a day per viewer and weights 40 lbs.
- The box on the table contains 3 electrum rings (50 ep ea), 3 silver armbands (25 gp ea), and 1 pair of pearl earrings (200 gp).
- **Trap:** The chest is locked (the key is under a pillow in the bed) and trapped by a poison needle. Anyone triggering the trap must save vs. Poison or take 10 damage and be paralyzed for 1 full day. Inside the chest is 200 cp, 22 sp, 437 gp, 34 pp, 2 emeralds (75 gp ea) a silver hair comb (50 gp) and a **Potion of Levitation**.

Mirror of the Doppelganger

Table 1. Race

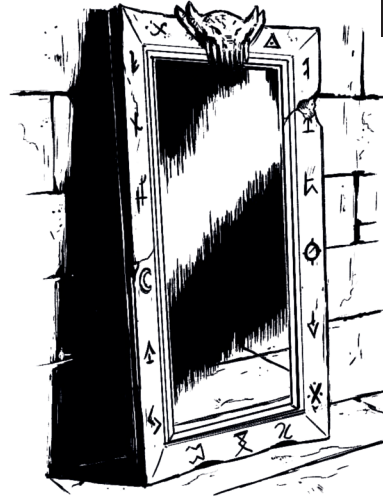
Roll	Race
1	Human
2	Halfling
3	Gnome
4	Dwarf
5	Elf
6	Opposite sex

Table 2. Weight

Roll	Weight
1	- 50 lbs.
2	+15 lbs
3	-25 lbs
4	+100 lbs
5	+10 lbs of pure muscle (add +1 to strength score while in this form)
6	-15 lbs.

Table 3. Hair Color

Roll	Hair Color
1	Blonde
2	Brown
3	Black
4	Red
5	White
6	Green
7	Violet
8	Blue



Artist: Dean Spencer

Table 4. Miscellaneous

Roll	Miscellaneous
1	Face scar (-1 to Charisma while in this form)
2	Gorgeous (+1 to Charisma while in this form)
3	Tattoo of a fiery phoenix on neck to left cheek
4	Mohawk hair
5	Long braided hair
6	Fingernails become 1" long
7	Big 'bull' nose earring
8	Skin color turns silver
9	Malfunction: Viewer gains a third eye
10	Malfunction: Viewer has a happy face on one side of head, and sad face on back of head, but can see in either direction
11	Viewer sprouts small horns
12	Viewer gains tusks and skin turns a red color
13	Viewer sprouts bat wings. Can fly awkwardly at full movement for short distances only (300 yards).
14	Viewer keeps same characteristics
15	Malfunction: Viewer gains a mouth on the palm of their hand
16	Face tattoo
17	Malfunction: Viewer gains a tail of a lizardman
18	Viewer's face is covered in a thick layer of make-up
19	Malfunction: tongue becomes like a frog. Can shoot out up to 5' long. Viewer has a tendency to aim for flies.
20	Malfunction: Viewer gains gills. Can breathe water as well as air.

6. Ambush: Two bridges attach to trees, eventually connecting to a different platform.

- Midway crossing the bridge, the party is attacked by Leaf Rustlers floating down upon them. Roll d6 with 1-4 the party surprised.

(7) Leaf Rustlers: AC 8, Move 12 (6 floating), HD 3, hp 17 ea, THACO 17, Attack 2 (Stem spike 1d6), Size M, Morale 11-12, XP 175 ea. Special: +1 weapons to hit, ½ damage pierce, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water.

7. Yasha's Room: A typical bedroom with furnishings covered by branches growing through the windows, creating a vegetated mess. An intricately carved walking stick sporting an eagle's head on the top leans against the wall. A duo of birds chirp angrily as they guard their nest.

- Squawking birds have a 25% chance to attract 4 Leaf Rustlers to investigate.
- Typical items--woman's rotting clothing, shiny stones, bone hairbrush, and a silver barrette (15 gp).
- The walking stick has a strange power of bird attraction. Birds are friendly and some follow the wielder chirping and singing, while braver ones may even land on the wielder's shoulders.

Appendix C: Centaur Burial Grounds

GM's Notes: There are no wandering encounters while in the Burial Grounds. The whole burial mound is unpleasantly cold.

1. Muraled Hall: Broad stairs lead down to a wide hallway that extends into darkness. Along the walls are murals of centaurs in victory over their enemies. Skulls of various humanoids and great beasts are mounted to the walls. The air is very cold and a thin layer of frost touches the floor.

- Bards or those with Ancient History may discern that this passage leads to the burial area of Droghan the Skyhorse, a legendary centaur chieftain. Legends say he was an incredible warrior that led his people to peace after the Dark Wars.

1. Guardsmen: *Successful Open Doors check required to enter.* This room has two great platforms, each bearing the skeletal remains of a centaur. Each centaur grips a spear and a bronze circular shield rests near their head.

- These Guardsmen rise as undead and help Droghan if engaged in **Area #4**. They reach **Area #4** in 3 rounds.

Monster: (4) Skeletal Centaurs: AC 4, Move 18, HD 4 hp 28 ea, THACO 17, Attack 3 (2 hooves 1d6, spear 1d6), Size L, Morale NA, XP 120 ea. Turned as 4 HD undead. Special: Cold immunity, Half damage from slashing and piercing weapons.



Artist: William McAusland

Appendix D: Thorn Dryad's Lair

3. Pool of Decadence: The dark pool is surrounded by engravings in the stone of centaurs jousting goblins and other evil humanoids. The water is deep blue with mesmerizing swirls of lighter blues and even whites.

- Imbibers of the pool's waters must make a save vs. Spells or become frozen stiff for 2 turns and take 2d12 damage. A successful save makes the imbiber immune to cold and cold effect magics for one full day. Water removed from the pool loses its power in two days.

4. Droghan: The sound of clomping hooves echoes down the hallway and braziers spring to life with blazing fire around a corner, casting a huge shadow against the far northern wall. A raspy hiss erupts into a howl of battle as the clomping noises get louder and the shadow looms bigger against the wall in the shape of a mounted opponent.

- Droghan clomps around the corner and charges the first character he sees.
- Stairs lead up to a stone platform with lit copper braziers (15 gp each) on either side. (If moved from the crypt, the braziers never light again).

Swaddling wraps cling to the powerful, half mummified Droghan. His skeletal bones glow a eerie blue, and the wrappings still hold together clinging horse and man flesh to its bones in sporadic areas. A bright, glowing, blue medallion bounces off his chest.

Monster: Droghan, Centaur Chief: AC 3, Move 18, HD 7 hp 50, THACO 13, Attack 3 (2 hooves 1d6+2, spear 1d6+2), Size L, Morale 13-14, XP 120 ea. Turned as 7 HD undead. Special: Cold immunity, Half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. Equipped with **Shield +1**.

Treasure: Droghan is equipped with a **Shield +1**, emblazoned with a bull skull. Droghan also wears the **Ice Sapphire of the Ancients**.

Ice Sapphire of the Ancients

This amulet is crafted from silver. In its center is a circle of centaurs holding a fiercely glowing sapphire in its center. A silver chain and clasp complete the amulet. The sapphire's hue, tone, and saturation can be classified by a jeweler to be very rare and reports of them being found underwater only in the half-frozen, cold seas of Vhargrim to the far north. When worn, the amulet imbues the wearer with a +1 to their wisdom score. The sapphire is worth 2,000 gp. The Ice Sapphire of the Ancients is an important part of the local centaur tribe's culture and history and they attempt to return it to their tribe by any means necessary.

GM's Notes: Vines and roots make a easy descent down 15' into the pit that leads to Merizyl's Lair.

1. Rootmaw: Tangled roots and vines descend into darkness, the pungent stench of damp earth is overpowering. A gnarled root mass covers the northwest and western walls. Slices and punctures in the roots release thick black ichor that streams along the floor and collects into a small pond to the southeast. Ribcages, skulls, and various bones are scattered about the floor and stick out from the cavern floor.

- The Rootmaw slides its root tentacles towards anything moving in this chamber and surprises opponents on a 1-4 on a d6. It attempts to drag victims to its mouth.
- In 1d4+2 rounds, Merizyl appears and attempts to charm party members.

Monster: (1) The Rootmaw: AC: 6 (mouth) or 4 (roots), Move 0, HD 8, hp 58, THACO 13, Attack: 5 or 6 (5 roots 1d6+1 or 1 bite 3d6 damage), Size L, Morale: 18, AL CE, XP 2,000.

Bathed in nature's embrace, her skin appears bark-like, her hair a wild mane of vines and tiny vibrant leaves. Only the glint of her red eyes betray her intentions.

Merizyl the Thorn Dryad: AC 8, Move 12, HD 5, hp 37, THACO 15, Attack 1 (by weapon), MR 50%, Size M, Morale 10, XP 975. Special: Charm, tree bound, thorn necklace. Merizyl wields **Nettle**.

Treasure: Littered about the floor are 2,432 cp, 1300 sp, 212 gp, 300 pp, silver hoop earrings (50 gp), a electrum bracelet (100 ep), **Nettle**, and an **Iridescent Spindle Ioun Stone**.

Nettle

Nettle is a twisted **Dagger +2** shaped like a root. Dark green 'veins' are interwoven with the root shape, glowing a hellish green. On a successful strike, the victim must save vs. Poison or take an additional 1d4 damage from a stinging rash. The wielder may also *Pass Without Trace*, per the spell, 2x per day.

2. Merizyl's Chamber: An elegant four poster bed made from twisted roots lies against the south wall, covered in furs and a colorful red blanket. A chest lies next to the bed, and a stout, flat-surfaced root serves as a table nearby.

Appendix E: The Mad Druid

GM's Notes: This stump dwelling is home to Naekos, the Mad Druid. Naekos has suffered from the effects of a **Thorn Necklace** and has Agoraphobia (fear of going outside).

1. Common Room: This comfortable chamber has chairs around a campfire, a pile of furs next to a chest, and typical furnishings of a livable hut. The wall has been peeled for shavings and a half-burnt bed frame lies in the low burning fire. Dried herbs hang from cords below the soot- stained ceiling.

- Naekos hurriedly enters the room from **Area #2**, screeching at the top of his lungs "Close the door!"
- Naekos is crazy, drifting from moment to moment between friendship and screeching hysteria.
- If cured (**bonus 500 XP**), Naekos regains his spells and comes to his senses after a day of rest. However, his health is horrid and ideally needs rest for a week. If taken with the party, his move is reduced to 3; however, he gladly heals wounds and aids the party as best he is able.
- Naekos explains his friendship with Shayral, Yasha, Larengos, Tilfur, and an elf named Morendis (who has since been cannibalized by Larengos) and how the Thorn Dryad twisted his friendship and his grove. He of course wants restore balance in his grove.

Screeching hysterics with mud stained hands, broken nails, and rat's nest for hair, Naekos acts like a complete madman when first encountered but has moments of clarity. Naekos fights an inner turmoil of crazy versus sanity and only his eyes give a clue to his struggle.

Monster: Naekos, the Mad Druid: S 12 | 14 W 16 D15 C 10 Ch 9, AC 9, Move 3 (12), Level 7 Druid, hp 38, THACO 16, Attack 1 (by weapon), Size M, XP 650. Special: Druid abilities, spells (determined by GM).

- **Trap:** Chest is locked. Opening the chest without the key causes envenomed thorns to shoot from the roof wall. A successful save vs. Poison dodges the thorns; otherwise the victim falls asleep for 2 full days. Waking the victim earlier than 2 days gives them a hungover feeling and inflicts a -2 to Attack Rolls for two days.
- Inside the chest is 200 gp, a platinum dragon-shaped hair brush (its back spines being the tines) worth 250 gp, and a **Medusa Dagger** wrapped in an oil cloth.
- The red blanket is an elven blanket embroidered with a city scene (240 gp).
- The table has thorns, leather thongs, and tools for making necklaces and jewelry. There are two complete **Thorn Necklaces**.

Medusa Dagger

The legendary **Medusa Daggers** are sought after weapons by assassins and those seeking revenge. It's rumored these weapons came to existence by Gahdra, a woman kicked out of her town for some forgotten reason. Their scorn for her fueled her hatred and she crafted seven of these daggers to take her revenge. Seven are known to exist.

These broad blade daggers have runes engraved on the blade, with a long-faced medusa for the handle and her snake hair forming the hilt. A successful hit causes the victim to save vs. Petrification or be turned to stone. The power of the dagger can only be used once before the hilt and handle crumble and the blade disintegrates to a puddle of metallic acid.

Thorn Necklaces

See **Appendix F: New Monsters** under the Thorn Dryad.

3. Pool: The pool is 6' deep full of fresh, refreshing water.



Artist: Maciej Zagorski, The Forge

Appendix F: New Monsters

Calamitous Tree

Climate/Terrain: Forests, bogs, meres, swamps, jungles

Frequency: Very rare

Number Appearing: 1d6

Organization: Solitary

Activity Cycle: Any

Intelligence: nil

Treasure: special

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Armor Class: 4 (tree) 8 (branches)

Movement: 0 (20' reach)

Hit Dice: 4

THACO: 17

Attack: Varies

Saving Throws: As fighter

Special Traits: 1/4 damage from piercing weapons, varies

Magic Resistance: none

Size: L

Morale: 18

Experience: 270

A Calamitous Tree is created when evil magic seeps into a wilderness area, making it unhallowed. The mix of evil and magic is sucked up through the tree's roots, bending the tree to a more perverted state over a period of time. The tree animates as a mindless creature that attacks anything that wanders within its reach, using the corpses of its victims as fertilizer. There are also rumors that dark, twisted druids and Thorn Dryads have learned to twist nature, creating Calamitous Trees around their groves.

All Calamitous Trees have the same special defense, taking only 1/4 damage from any piercing type weapons. However, there are several differences between the species of Calamitous Trees regarding special attacks and traits, as stated below:

Weeping Willow

On a natural attack roll of 18 or higher by the branches entangle their target and pull it towards their mouth in 1d2+1 rounds. After a target is dragged to the mouth, the mouth automatically hits each round for 2d6 damage. On a natural roll of 20 by the mouth, the target is swallowed by the tree and suffocates in the number of rounds determined by 1/3 their constitution score. Each Weeping Willow has between 2d6 branches that can be animated to attack, although they can only use two branches per round against one target. If there are multiple attackers, they can use all their branches, with each attacker receiving two attacks if there are enough branches. Branches can be lopped off after sustaining 8 hp of damage.

2. **Digging:** Cupboards line the walls and a stout chest lies against the south wall half buried by fresh dirt. A gaping hole leads down 8' deep with jagged and uneven edges near the center of the chamber.

- Cupboards hold dishware or are empty.
- The chest reeks. Inside is full of human waste.
- The hole is empty and have been dug by hand. Naeko's attempt to move elsewhere besides going outside.

Conclusion: Cleansing the grove of Merizyl and the Rootmaw gains the party an ally in Naekos, who welcomes them to his grove anytime.

Retrieving the **Ice Sapphire of the Ancients** for the 'merchant' may lead the encounter to an ambush set by the merchant so he doesn't have to keep to his word about the reward.

Reporting back to Jakora makes the party an ally who is willing to help the party clear the rest of the grove if needed, or may become an interesting NPC for the party to travel with.

The herbalist is true to her word with the reward. She even offers further work to take her psychedelic spices to a far off town called Lhurge for trade.

Finally, with the wyvern vanquished, the town sets forth a feast for the monster slayers in their honor. A visitor from a surrounding town may approach the party about a troublesome giant....



Artist: Jayaraj Paul

Fir

The Fir species of the Calamitous Tree has only two branches that can attack its enemies. On a natural attack roll of 18 or higher, the branches sweep their target's legs from under them. This causes the character to lose a round of action to regain their footing. Each branch does 1d6+1 damage. In addition, the Fir species can shake itself and propel 2d6 pine cones down towards attackers inflicting 1d4 points of damage to anyone under its canopy of branches. A Fir does not have a mouth.

Maple

A maple species of the Calamitous Tree has 1d4 branches that can attack its enemies. On a natural attack roll of 18 or higher, the branches sweep their target's legs from under them. This causes the character to lose a round of action to regain their footing. Each branch does 1d6+1 damage. A special defense of the maple tree is its abundance of sap. Each time the tree is struck, the attacker save vs Breath Weapon to avoid having their weapon stuck to the tree. On a natural attack roll of 18 or higher, the branches have pushed the character towards the tree, causing them to become stuck to the trunk. The tree focuses at least one of its branches on any stuck attackers and automatically hits for 1d6+1 points of damage. A maple does not have a mouth.

Pine

The dangerous pine species of the Calamitous Tree does not use its branches to attack, nor does it have a mouth. Instead, the pine tree will unleash its needles at anyone within 50 feet. Each barrage of needles consists of one attack roll for 1d12+1 points of damage. A pine species can attack twice every round.

Oak

The oak species of the Calamitous Tree is identical to the Fir species, except it uses acorns instead of pine cones.

It should be noted that there may be other tree species of Calamitous Trees that have not been reported. Their special abilities may be similar or different depending on the GM.

Treasure is usually items that have been left behind by their victims.

Phellinus/Leptographium (Inspired by Nathan Attebery's Fusaka creature)

Climate/Terrain: Rotting stumps and trees usually on steep slopes, underground

Frequency: Rare

Number Appearing: 1d12

Organization: Clan

Activity Cycle: Any

Intelligence: average to high

Treasure: W (lair + individual) D (lair, Leptographium only)

Alignment: Neutral (Neutral Evil-Leptographium)

Armor Class: 3

Movement: 6

Hit Dice: 5

THACO: 15

Attack: 1d6+2 or by weapon +2

Saving Throws: As 5th level Fighter

Special Traits: Sap, spore form, double damage from fire.

Magic Resistance: none

Size: S

Morale: 14

Experience: 975

The Phellinus and Leptographium both are a short, 3' humanoids that are a type of root fungus. It has a wooden or root-like body that has tiny roots emerging from anywhere on their body, but usually the head. Their head resembles a skull with deep eye sockets and slits for nostrils. They wear earth colored robes or tunics and sometimes wield daggers or staves. Phellinus are shy and shun outsiders unless the tree they feed upon is attacked. Leptographium, however, are very aggressive and attack on sight. Both have an affinity for gems and other sparkling treasure. They speak their own language through telepathy, although communication is possible through the use of *Speak with Plant* or other similar spells.

Phellinus and Leptographiums feed on trees and are responsible for their death and decay over time. Feeder trees are marked by great white conks or polypores on the outside trunk and a mass of white fibers in the heartwood and sapwood. Phellinus feed off trees for over 50-100 years before the tree dies. The darker cousin of the Phellinus, the Leptographium or 'Black rot' tend towards evil, devouring and twisting trees after only 15 years, then moving on to their next meal. Instead of white conks or fibers, their signature markings are black in color.

Both Phellinus and Leptographium have infravision of 30'. Both are hunted for their bark-like hide, which can be grounded into a fine dust used for spices. Rumors suggest that the created spice has psychedelic properties and can sell for a high price to the right collector.

Combat: Phellinus and Leptographium have the same abilities and employ the same tactics, although Leptographium are more aggressive. Phellinus are incredibly strong, delivering 1d6+2 with their fists. They sometimes wield weapons consisting of daggers or staves (+2 damage). When struck, Phellinus excrete a powerful sap that makes weapons stick to their wound. A character must save vs breath weapon to free their weapon, otherwise their weapon sticks to the Phellinus, rendering it useless. Phellinus have a strange, cone-shaped breath weapon (5' long x 90 degree horizontal arc from their mouth) that they can perform 3x per day. Those affected take 2d8 damage of acidic damage and after one month lose 1 point of Charisma per month from a rotting disease. A successful save vs. breath weapon takes half damage with no infection. The disease can only be removed by a *Remove Curse* or *Cure Disease* spell. Finally, Phellinus have an innate ability to transform into a spore cloud 3x per day, much like *Gaseous Form*, and can 'enter' any type of wooden surface, leaving a white mark (or black for Leptographium). This is how they feed and spread their disease throughout trees. However, Phellinus cannot move through wood in this form and may be damaged if the wood surface is chipped or burnt. Employing this tactic to ambush enemies gives them surprise on a 1-4 on a d6. Both Phellinus and Leptographium take double damage from fire attacks.

Phellinus and Leptographium hate each other. They attack each other on sight. There has been reports of them hating Leaf Rustlers, as they both seem to compete for the same characteristics in trees.



Artist: Nathan Attebery

Leaf Rustler

Climate/Terrain: Forests, Oak Woodlands, haunted or evil areas

Frequency: Very Rare

Number Appearing: 2d6

Organization: Tribe

Activity Cycle: Day

Intelligence: 5-7

Treasure: D (Lair only)

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Armor Class: 8

Movement: 12 (6 Floating)

Hit Dice: 3

THACO: 17

Attack: 2, Stem spike (1d6 damage)

Saving Throw: By Fighter 3

Special Traits: +1 weapons to hit, half damage from piercing, float, blind attack, climb, decay, weakness to fire, wind, and water.

Magic Resistance: None

Size: M (5' tall)

Morale: 11-12

Experience: 175 ea.

Leaf Rustlers are strange humanoids composed entirely of leaves. They have no facial features except a dull glow from the eye area. Leaf Rustlers are usually formed from fallen leaves, so are colored brown, red, orange, and yellowish instead of green. No one knows how they were created or came to be, but it's agreed that when Leaf Rustlers are encountered, it usually signifies that a forest is unhealthy.

Leaf Rustlers have been known to follow evil inhabitants of the forest, working in tandem with Needle-men, Shambling Mounds, and other plant based creatures, but also have been reported to fight alongside undead. However, Leaf Rustlers hate and despise Leptographium and Phellinus, attacking them on sight.

Combat: Leaf Rustlers can manipulate stems from leaves on their bodies and form spikes that deliver 1d6 damage. A natural '20' attack roll with a spike means that a decay toxin enters the wound. Victims must save vs poison at -2 or take an additional 3d6 damage and be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds from shock. Mundane weapons pass through Leaf Rustlers dealing no damage; the creatures are only damaged by +1 or higher magical weapons. Magical piercing weapons deal only half damage. Leaf Rustlers may also shoot leaves from their arms or chest at one opponent, blinding them for 1d3 rounds unless they save vs breath weapon.

Leaf Rustlers usually float down silently upon their targets and can surprise on a 1-4 on a d6. They have a 80% chance to climb trees. Finally, Leaf Rustlers take double damage from fire attacks. Spells such as *Gust of Wind* or *Wind Wall* disperses the Leaf Rustler and it takes 2d4 rounds to reform its shape. Water type attacks cause Leaf Rustlers to move at half their movement rate.

Leaf Rustlers never carry treasure although they often hoard it in their lair.

Thorn Dryad

Climate/Terrain: Temperate Forests
Frequency: Very Rare
Number Appearing: 1
Organization: Solitary
Activity Cycle: Any
Intelligence: 14-16
Treasure: Mx100, Qx10
Alignment: Chaotic or Neutral Evil
Armor Class: 8
Movement: 12
Hit Dice: 5
THACO: 15
Attack: by Weapon
Saving Throw: By Fighter 5 or by Class Level
Special Traits: Charm, tree bound, thorn necklace
Magic Resistance: 50%
Size: M
Morale: 10
Experience: 975



Artist: Patrick E. Pullen

A Thorn Dryad is very similar in all aspects to a regular dryad except for a few notable differences, such as vines, thorns, and/or fungus growing on them and glowing red or green eyes. Thorn Dryads are inherently evil and live in a corrupt tree, such as a Calamitous Tree, in a symbiotic relationship. A key difference between regular dryads and Thorn Dryads is that the latter may leave their tree for up to a week's time with no ill effects. If kept from its tree for longer than a week, the Thorn Dryad dies within 6d6 hours. Thorn Dryads retain the usual *Charm* ability as well as *Dimension Door* to their bound tree, but also have the ability to *Bestow Curse* twice a day, which lasts last 24 hours.

Thorn Dryads may also create a crude necklace made from weaved tree bark and silver-inscribed thorns. The **Thorn Necklace** is usually attuned or crafted for a specific person (usually a charmed victim) and given as a 'gift'. Over time, the necklace slowly (over 1d3 months) warps their alignment to a more evil bent. Lawful Good becomes Lawful Evil, Neutral Good

becomes Neutral Evil, etc. There is also a 25% chance that a random insanity that will befall the wearer as determined by the GM. Those who fall victim to a **Thorn Necklace** usually live out their days creating a corrupted area deep in a forest.

Discovered random **Thorn Necklaces** haunts the wearer with dreams of a woman in a forest crying for help or beckoning to them. The thorn begins to sprout roots and attach itself to the wearer after being worn for a week, harmlessly, and the wearer soon feels a 'pull' towards the creator of the necklace. The wearer receives a -4 to their saving throws vs. charm ability of the thorn dryad. Ripping the necklace off once attached delivers 1d4 damage.

Combat: Thorn Dryads use their *Charm* ability in the very beginning of combat to charm as many opponents as possible. They prefer to fight near her tree as the tree can help with its own attacks. Thorn Dryads use a variety of different weapons forged in nature (spears with rock tips, arrows with rock tips, etc.). Some are even rumored to be able to cast spells as a wizard.

Rootmaw

Climate/Terrain: Mostly forests, swamps, and/or places of evil
Frequency: Very Rare
Number Appearing: 1
Organization: Solitary
Activity Cycle: Any
Intelligence: 0
Treasure: C
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Armor Class: 6 (mouth) 4 (root tendrils)
Movement: 0
Hit Dice: 8+2
THACO: 13
Attack: 5 or 6. Root tendrils 1d6+1, or bite 3d6
Saving Throw: Fighter 8
Special Traits: Swallow whole, entangle. Half damage from fire attacks. *Dancing Lights* 3x a day. Up to 30 feet length roots. Root tendril regeneration.
Magic Resistance: None
Size: Large
Morale: 18
Experience: 2,000

Rootmaws dwell in places where evil magic has seeped into the stump of a slain Calamitous Tree or other evil tree. Sometimes the evil seeps to the deepest roots, where over time, it evolves and grows into a Rootmaw. Rootmaws are essentially the tap root of a stump that has evolved into a great maw with sharp roots for teeth. Only their wicked mouth is exposed, making it look like part of a cavern wall, and their root tendrils that surround their mouth are usually strewn about to capture prey.

Rootmaws can't move, though their root tendrils have been known to grow up to 30 feet in length. Rootmaws thrive in damp areas, granting them resistance to fire attacks.

Rootmaws have the innate ability to cast *Dancing Lights* three times a day with the noted difference that it can move the lights at 18' rather than 6' and with an extended range of a mile. It uses *Dancing Lights* to attract prey to enter its stump where it can attack and swallow their victim whole.

Dryads loathe Rootmaws and will attempt to destroy them whenever encountered.

Combat: Rootmaw's favorite tactic is to use its *Dancing Lights* ability to lure its prey closer to its mouth. Once the mouth can be used for attacks, it focuses its roots to either (50%) strike like a whip for 1d6+1 damage or (50%) attempt to entangle more opponents, intending to drag the target to the mouth. Once a successful entangle hit is scored, victims must make a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates to escape the entanglement or be dragged to the mouth in 1d4 rounds. Severing the root tendrils (hp 12) frees a victim, however, severing one root tendrils allows the Rootmaw to grow two new tendrils in 1d4 rounds to take its place. Once at the mouth, a roll to hit for the mouth attack is always successful. A successful 18 or higher attack roll for the mouth means the opponent is swallowed, dying in 1d10+1 rounds from suffocation and internal acids.



Wendigo

Climate/Terrain: Mostly forests and cold wastes

Frequency: Very Rare

Number Appearing: 1

Organization: Solitary

Activity Cycle: Any

Intelligence: 11-12

Treasure: W

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Armor Class: 4

Movement: 12

Hit Dice: 6

THACO: 15

Attack: 2 or 3 (2 claws 1d8+1 and gore 2d4+2)

Saving Throw: Fighter 6

Special Traits: Mimicry, Absorption

Magic Resistance: 90% resist to Sleep, Charm, and Hold spells.

Size: M to L

Morale: 12

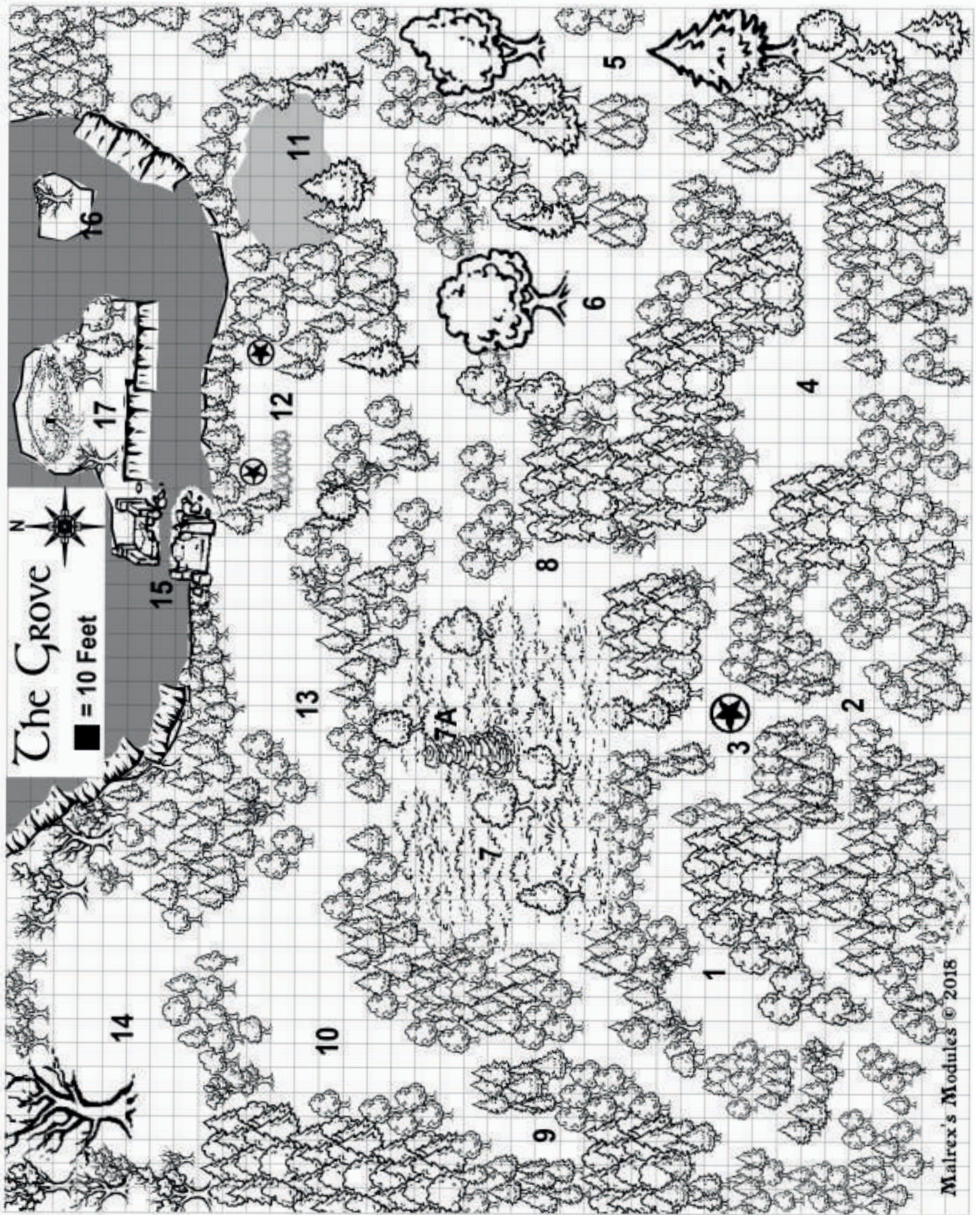
Experience: 650+

Gaunt and emaciated, the Wendigo has desiccated skin pulled tightly over its bones and features on the top half of its body. Its lower half has hooves and resembles a satyr. The Wendigo's head is elk-like, often looking like a bleached elk skull with antlers. The Wendigo smells of decay, death and corruption.

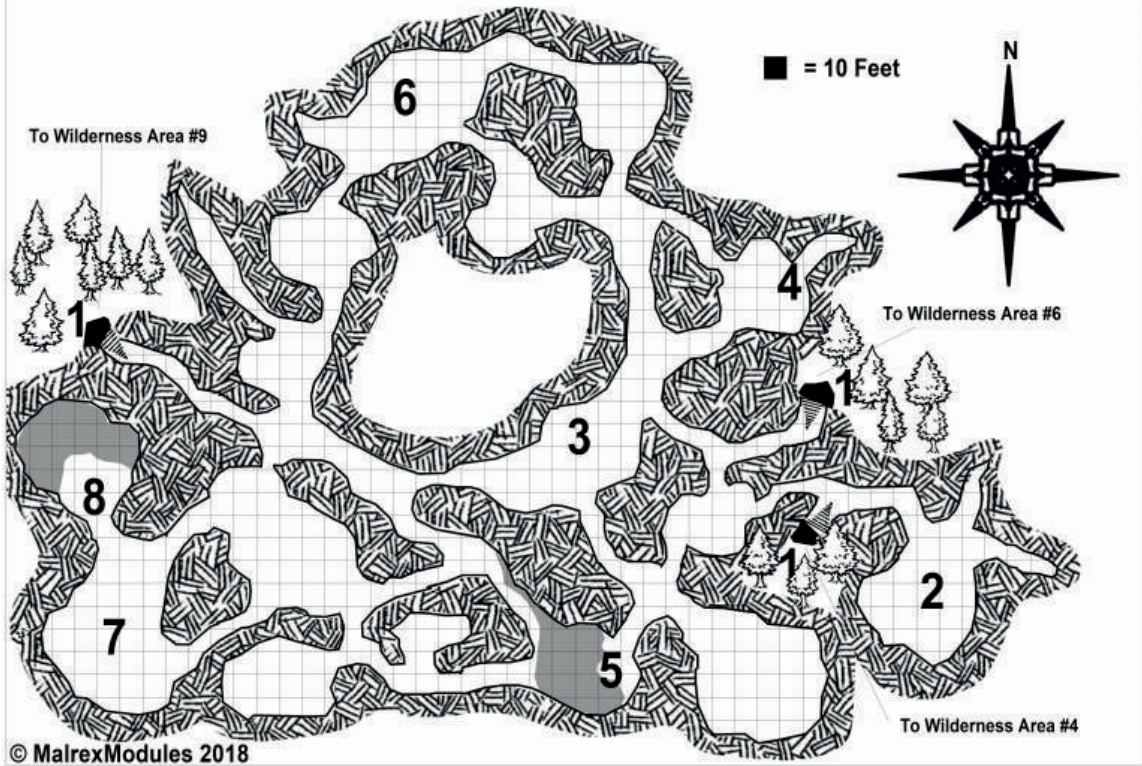
The Wendigo is created from the insane or those so hopelessly lost and maddened by hunger, that they resort to cannibalism to survive. The elation of survival contorts into the enjoyment of eating flesh and cannibalism of its own kind or similar humanoids. The Wendigo slowly transforms into a hideous creature, preying on its own past race to satiate its hunger and to grow in strength.

Combat: Attacking from ambush and surprise, the Wendigo uses its powerful claws, along side a combination of its antlers and bite. Those being gored by a Wendigo's antlers have a 5% to contract a disease similar to lycanthropy. In a month's time the afflicted feels an intense desire to devour flesh. Within the year, the creature becomes a Wendigo, unless it receives a *Cure Disease* or *Remove Curse*. After that time, no magic will cure the target. The Wendigo is 90% resistant to sleep, charm, and hold spells.

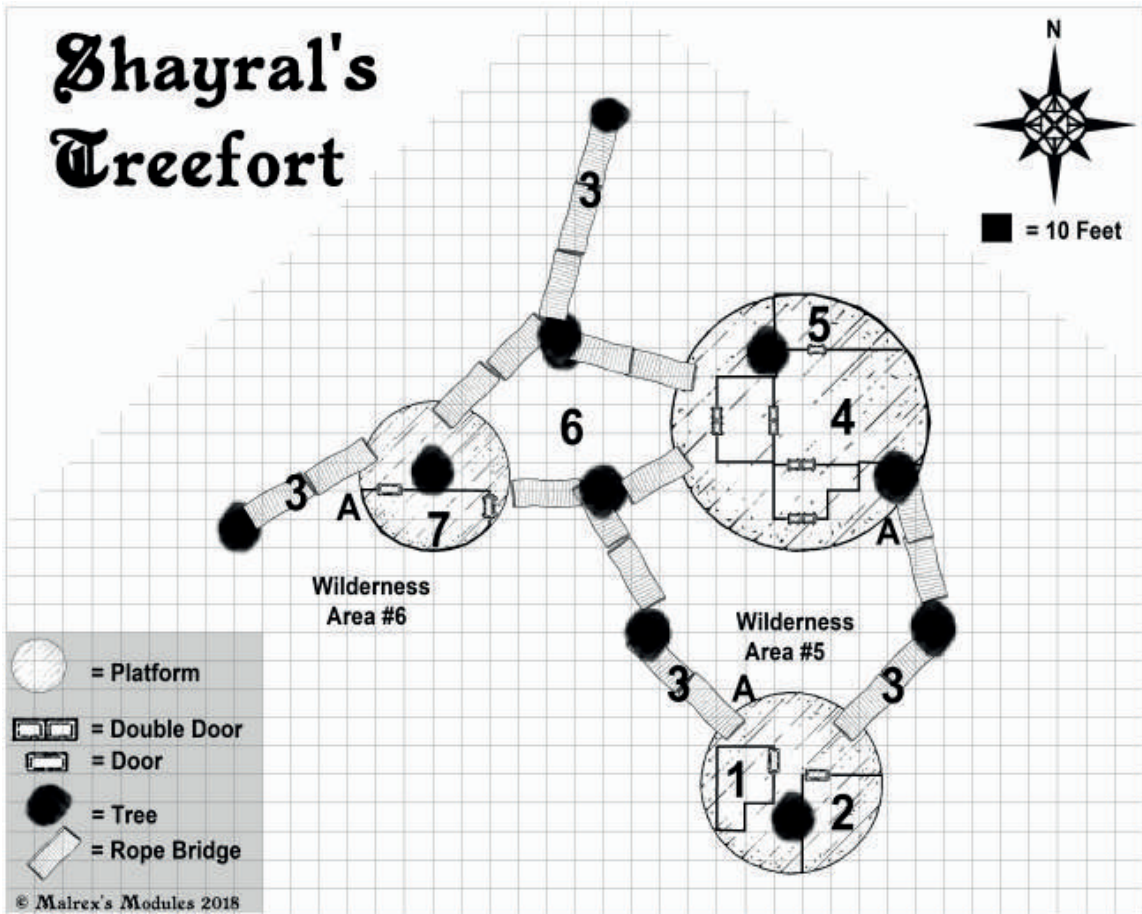
The Wendigo is a superb predator and master tracker. It uses its mimicry ability to lure its prey closer to a strategic ambush site or to confuse and separate larger groups. When a Wendigo indulges in cannibalism, it raises a HD and grows larger, increasing damage by +1 per HD gained. These additional HD last for a month before reverting back to normal size, unless the Wendigo continues to feed. There have been rumors of 20+' Wendigos in the far cold north, but they are such a rarity, that most believe they don't exist.

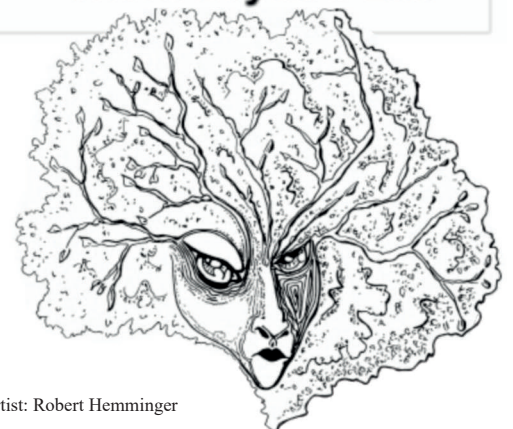
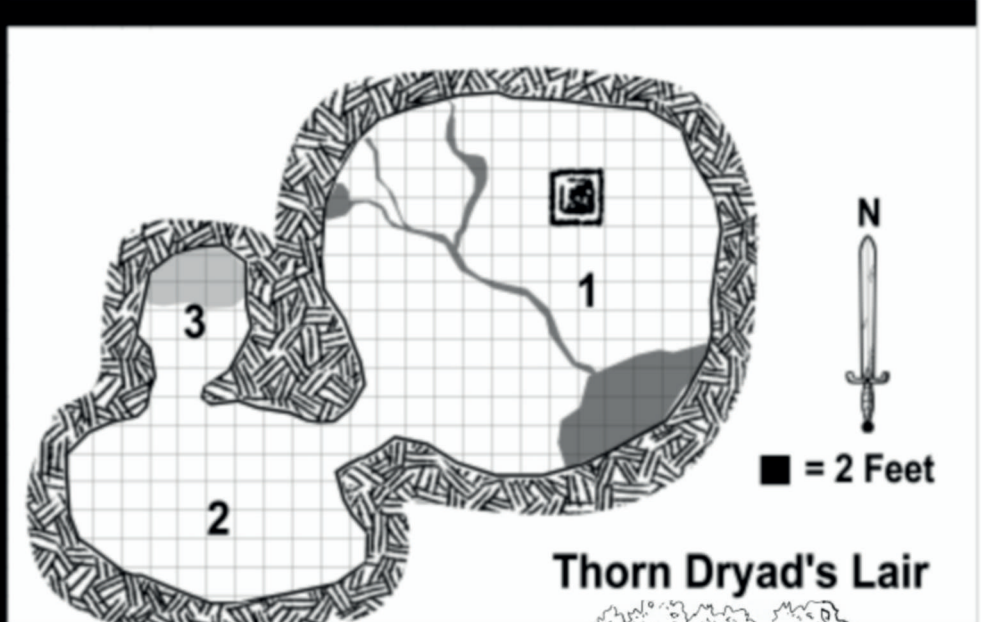
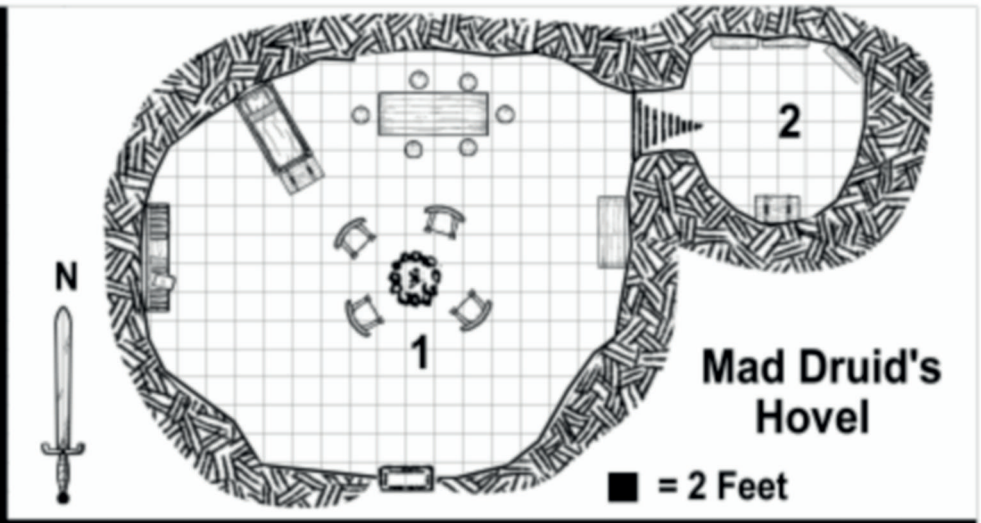
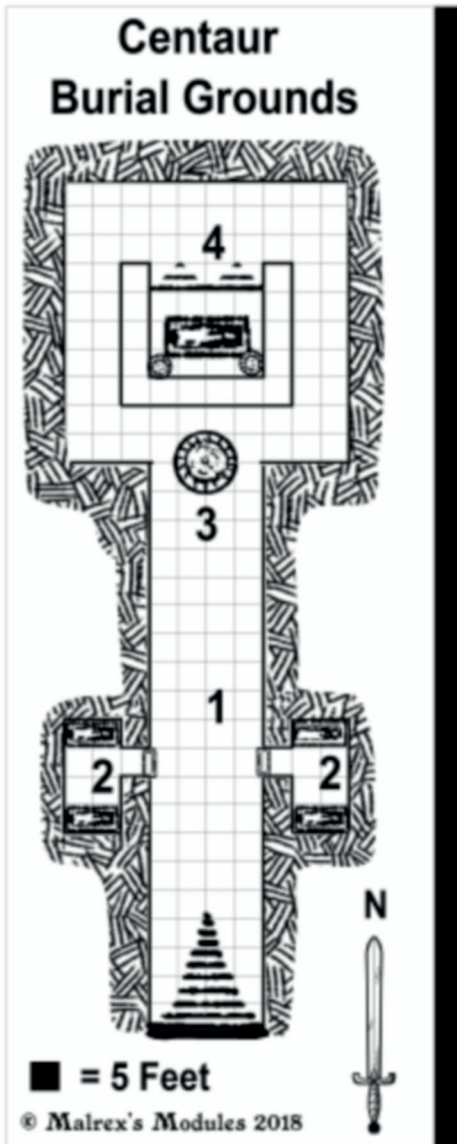
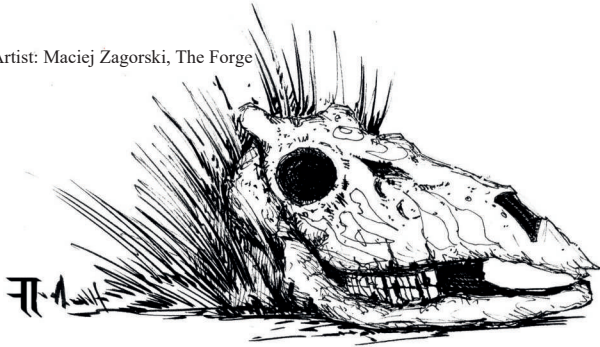


Root Lair



Shayral's Treefort





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