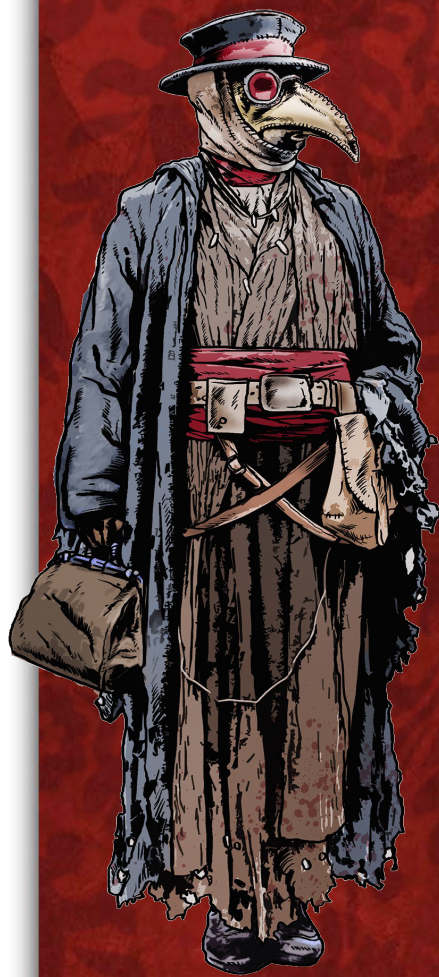


Gregorius' Notes:

On the Weird OSR Fantasy

Year 2020



LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
WEIRD FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING
COMPATIBLE PRODUCT

by Kai Pütz © 2021
Version 1.0

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Gregorius' Notes: On the Weird OSR Fantasy #Year 2020 is a collection of selected articles I wrote for **my blog** in said year. Inside you will find...

The Tree That Sees; an enchanted tree that lends visions and the powers of witchcraft

The Widsowsiren; a bizarre and hateful monster that hurts lovers.

Alms & Indulgence; rules for turning coin into XP for future PC.

Enchanted Black Powder Weapons

20 Uses of Vampire Blood

Chaotic Swap/Mix-Creatures; four in total

Rose, the Gardener's Daughter; a strange and magical NPC for your games.

20 Magical Statuettes, Idols and Figurines

The Maze of the Necromancer; a mini-dungeon.

The Shrine of the Future Self; a micro-dungeon.

20 pages of content in total (the other are cover and front matter)

Enjoy!

“Have you ever seen a crow picking out the eye from a corpse to then carry it away? Have you ever wondered what it does with it? There is so much meat on a corpse. Why the eye? Let me tell you a story, something I have been told by my grandmother, who learned it from her mother’s midwife...

The crows take the eyes to a forest, far away from here. Far for us, but not far for a bird. There, deep within the dark woods, there is one tree that is not like the others. Not at all. Some say that the devil had planted it on Samhain, a perversion of the tree in the Garden of Eden. The one that Eva took the apple from to gain wisdom, although she had been told not to. This tree in the dark of the forest, it has no apples. It bears no fruit at all. Fruit is brought to it. Strange fruit. That is what the crows do with the eyes: they bring them to the tree.

Crows are not the only birds that fly to that tree. Woodpeckers, too. Have you ever seen how a woodpecker prepares for winter? How they strike holes into a tree with their beak and later place acorns in it? How they press them deep into the hole with their beak, just like a carpenter would drive a wood tenon into a beam with his mallet? That is what the woodpeckers do with the eyes the crows bring. They meet on the branches, the crow gives the eye to the woodpecker, and the woodpecker drives it into the hole. There are always a few holes ready. The woodpeckers take care of that.

The moment the eye is set, it rolls in the hole and becomes one with this hellish tree. By now, there must be more than a hundred eyes on that tree. The trunk is studded with them, dozens and dozens, and some even glare at you down from heavy branches. Silently staring, unblinking dead eyes that roll to look at you when you look at them. At Samhain, witches come from near and from far to dance around that tree, and water it with the blood of infants they have stolen before they were baptized. Some will even give one of their own eyes to it. Never trust a one-eyed hag. Never do. But witches and warlocks are not the only damnable folk to pay reverence to this perversity. For when one sleeps under this horrible tree, one will be visited by spirits in the own dream and may ask them questions. But woe to those who want to know too much! Ask too many questions, and they will take your body, like the unclean spirits went into the swine, and stay for weeks and do as they please.

Why this tree is still there, even so I and others know about it? Because those who went out to find it and fell it never returned. More than one did in the years past, none was ever to be seen again. I tell you all of this as a warning. Do not stray into parts of a forest you do not know. There are dark and evil things deep inside of their wild, godforsaken hearts...”



The Tree That Sees

A non-chaotic character that looks at the eyes, any of the manifold eyes, must *Save vs. Magic* or will become victim to a 5th level *Chaos* spell.

A *Chaotic* character that sacrifices one of the own eyes to the tree will learn the following spells during the next sleep: *Augury* (although it is a *Cleric* spell), *Clairvoyance*, *Detect Invisible*, *Detect Magic*, *Glass Eye*.

A non-*Lawful* character that sleeps under the tree will be visited by strange spirits in the own dream, and may ask them questions according to the 5th level *Contact Outer Sphere* spell (as if contacting *Arcturus*). What a possessed character will do is up to the Referee.

Any character that swings a weapon at the tree or seeks to harm it in other ways will have a patch of its bark explode off it, with eyes and all, and shower it in a fountain of splinters and corrosive blood (see *Explosive Runes* spell; the tree may defend itself three times a day this way). The damaged trunk will be bleeding thick, dark blood.

The Tree That Sees is completely immune against fire of any kind.

Blame Ian Borchardt. And while you are at it, blame Samwise Seven as well. For it was Samwise that posted a picture of woodpecker on mewe.com that had put acorns into holes in a tree it had created itself, and it was Ian that then started talking about eyes and birds in a comment. I am unwilling to be blamed for what happens when a mind like mine is feed input like this. Mix the wrong substances, things happen. Things for Lamentations of the Flame Princess. Things about crows and eyes and woodpeckers and a tree and dark magic. It is not my fault ... it isn't..... is not... tell you...

The Widowsiren

The Widowsiren is a demonic creature that manifests as a monstrous spider, akin to a giant widow but with a body the size of a young bull. Its abdomen is covered with numerous faces of different woman. Depending on the monster's current occupation, these will be in silent agony, wailing, spiting, frothing or will sing a siren symphony of lust and longing. The Widowsiren is an adversary of faithful love, as its methods show.

It prefers to lair in a place that is secluded, but not too far away from a center of civilization or a well frequented path through the wilderness. When it senses men (and only men, not women or boys) in its domain, the faces on its body begin to sing the siren symphony. Women and children cannot hear it, but men in reach will, and have to muster all their strength of will to resist this call of seduction. Otherwise, they will abandon what they are doing and set out to find the source.

Often, they will wander for hours before they find finally the Widowsiren in its lair. The siren symphony will then stop, only to be replaced by the wailing, frothing and hating of all the faces on the abdomen while the monster itself moves into view to finish off and consume its victim. The dried out husks, its stores deep in its lair and spins them up into a divan which it rests on while waiting for its next victim.

If the victim was romantically loved by a woman, her poor soul will suddenly feel both the betrayal by and death of the man she had given her heart to. At the same time, the Widowsiren will immaterially pull at the woman's mind and soul, to tear it away from her while using the love to the man that by now has been hers as bait and hook. If the monster succeeds, the woman will turn catatonic and remain in this state, and a face like hers will appear on the monster's abdomen.

Slaying the monster will have those that fell prey to it in the aftermath of the death of those they loved recover from their catatonic state.

Move:	120'(40')
Hit Dice:	5 +5
Armor Class:	13 (Unarmored & Shield)
Attacks:	2x with the limbs; 1x bite (only if both limb attacks were successful)
Damage:	Limbs (non); bite (1d4 & poison)
Save:	as 7 th Level Magic-User
Moral:	12

Poison: after a successful bite attack, the victim must *Save vs Poison* to avoid instant paralysis/helplessness for 1d4 turns.

If unopposed after she paralyzed a victim, the Widowsiren will then bite into its crotch to inject digestive juices that liquefies the organs, then suck them out during the next turn.

Webbing: the whole of her lair will be covered in thick, sticky webbing that grows more dense towards the monster's sleeping place. Those who fight her there must *Save vs. Paralyze* every (3 +DEX bonus) rounds. A failed save means that the character became partially stuck and needs one action to free herself. Till then, all melee attacks against the character gain a +2 bonus.

Aware of Men: the Widowsiren senses the presence and number (but not direction or distance) of every man (but not woman or boy) within 3 miles of her. If demi-humans are included or not is up to the Referee (as it fits the own game world). After consuming prey, this power fades for 2d6 days.

Siren Symphony: the Widowsiren may evoke its Siren Symphony on every man she is able to sense. The victim must *Save vs. Magic*: on a success, the character may shake off the influence of the alluring voices in his mind. On a failure, the character will single-minded follow the lure and wander into the direction of the lair. He is not in a trance, but will act as under a potent *Charm* and will be unwilling to discuss his own motivation. As a side-effect, the character will always be *surprised* by an *Ambush*, and must roll against every other *Surprise* as if it would be an *Ambush*. The character will refuse to rest before he reaches the Widowsiren.

A character that resists the *Siren Symphony* once or has seen a Widowsiren with his own eyes will never fall for it again.

Size Mind & Soul of the Loved One: if a victim had somebody that was romantically in love with her, said person must *Save vs. Magic* or has mind and soul torn away. When this happens, the victim becomes catatonic and another face appears on the creature's abdomen (see above).

Alms & Indulgence

In LotFP, one method of awarding xp is by granting one of them for every sp (silver piece) worth of loot the characters liberated. Not for things they stole from peasants or other harmless folk, but for lost treasures that otherwise nobody would have profited from. Yes, of course they can gain it for slaying monsters, but that is a minor amount compared with what loot may bring. But how to liberate them of those riches once they have arms and armor? Well... how about letting them spend it on xp... for their next character..?

I thought about how alms giving could become attractive. Aside from hoping for clerical magic (which I treat as a scarce thing), it came to me that giving alms could be favorable for the afterlife. And what is the afterlife? The next PC, of course! Currently, I plan to provide my players with two ways of blowing up money: Giving alms, and indulging themselves between adventures.

Giving alms will generate 2xp for the character-to-come for every 1sp spend. This seems somewhat pseudo-logical to me: the character gives up wealth to gain a better after-life. Of course, not every character makes for a believable alms givers. Some will rather think of their own well-being, and the player would harm the own concept by doing otherwise.

Thereby, **indulging** themselves gives the characters a more immediate (but less economic) way of investing their silver pieces. For every 10sp they spend indulging themselves, they gain 2xp for their current character and 2xp for their character-to-come. Perhaps the soon-to-be-replacement will be an old drinking buddy, a former gambling partner or anyone else that came to know the PC through his over-boarding social life.



Enchanted Black Powder Weapons

Most magic items seem to be from old times, or at least decades old. After all, these are heirlooms, venerated weapons of ancient heroes or blades of lost races and kingdoms more often than not. Firearms with magical abilities are not heard of. Do you like this state of affairs? If you do, do NOT read further. If you do, you put your fine, cozy, things-as-expected game world into danger... who would like THAT to happen...? Especially as they could end up in the characters' hands. *Not cool*, is it...?



The Heartshot is flintlock pistol with very fine metal embellishments inlaid into the grip, and the symbol of a heart scrimshawed just behind the firing mechanism. It was the weapon of an Italian mercenary going by the name of Valentino. He was known to aim calmly at the enemy before firing, no matter if said opponent was closing the gap quickly or pointing a gun at him as well. The mercenary died in battle, not because he missed his mark, but because the charging enemy was not stopped by the impact but stumbled forward the final three steps and still stabbed Valentino through the heart. His pistol, which his awestruck comrades had already dubbed "Heartshot" during Valentino's lifetime, is said to have "learned" to hit square by Valentino's hand.

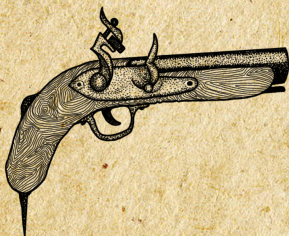
The rules are the same as for a regular pistol, but after a successful attack by a left-handed shooter (as Valentino was) that had spent a round to aim, the target must pass a *Save vs. Devices*. Otherwise, the shot will automatically kill every mundane character below the third level or monster with less than 3 HD.

The Roaring Beast is an Arquebus constructed by an English weapon smith in support of a regional peasant rebellion. He constructed it with a rather large muzzle. The busy end of the barrel he further adorned with metal ornaments that turned it into a dragon's maw. "They say that the Lord and the Law are on their side. If THAT is so, we can as well call on the Beast to roar for ours...". So he said before he handed the weapon to the head of the rebellion. Needless to say, the rebellion was put to an end before the change of season, but somehow the weapons was not destroyed...

This Arquebus was built to be loaded with scatter shot, and firing it with regular shot instead will penalize the attack by -2. It is a regular matchlock weapon, but the *Save vs. Breath Weapon* to halve the scattershot damage suffers from a -2 penalty. Furthermore, any non-chaotic enemy NPC that hears the roaring of the Beast and sees the flame tongue leaving its maw must pass a Moral check. Those who fail the test drop to Initiative 1. Last but not least, if the weapon is fired against a Lawful target, it will ignore the misfire rules unless it is used in wet conditions (damp conditions do not affect it then).

The Blackened Hatchet is a very heavy stocked flint-lock pistol with a hatchet blade attached under the barrel. This kind of weapons were not common, but far from unheard of: after the first volley, melee became likely. It was better to have a weapon already at hand than to have to draw one. This particular weapon belonged to an adventurer, one much like the characters (and might be introduced as loot found near a corpse). He kept the blade sharp but blackened it, so that it would not reflect light. Secrecy and stealth was important to said adventurer, as was having a quick way out of any situation. It is unknown if the powers the weapon now holds was something the adventurer bargained for, or if it is his very own legacy for other adventurers.

The Blackened Hatchet is a pistol that may be used as weapon in melee (1d4+1 damage). When the character shooting the pistol wills it so, she will be instantly surrounded by a zone of *Darkness* (centered on the character), as per the 1st Level spell. This effect may be used only once per day, between one midnight and the next.



The Faithful is a wheellock pistol that has a long tuft of maroon hair bound around the handle. The magic is in this tuft (and it will stop working as soon as it is removed or otherwise comes off). The pistol will never misfire, and its wearer will be immune to *Charm* spells and all similar effects as long as the character loves somebody and is faithful to said loved one. A legacy from the deep love of the one that gave the tuft as a token to the former owner.

The Wolf is a flintlock arquebus with a piece of a wolf pelt wrapped around and nailed to its stock. The weapon has been a family heirloom, handed down from father to son. The family is (or was) one of poachers. It is not sure if the magic comes from some strange, backwater ancestor worship, from the spirit of the wolf whose pelt was added to the weapon or if something more sinister is at work. No matter what the reason is, as soon as night has fallen, the character that carries the weapon while “outside” gets a +2 bonus on Stealth and a +1 bonus on Bushcraft, unless said character is lawful. No wolf will ever attack the wearer of this arquebus without provocation.

The Last Word is not single weapon but a pair of dueling pistols of fine craftsmanship, made of redwood and polished to finish. It belonged to a nobleman and notorious duelist. He was known to like to have the last word in every argument, but often prone to have it through slurs. While the magic imbued in the pair does work when they are used in a regular combat, the pair really were meant to “cheat” on dueling situations. When one of this pistols is used to shoot first in a duel (or any other combat situation), the shooter must pass a *Save vs. Device* or will automatically miss. When one of the pistols is used to shoot second in a duel (or any other combat), the shooter will hit automatically (as long as the target is within range).



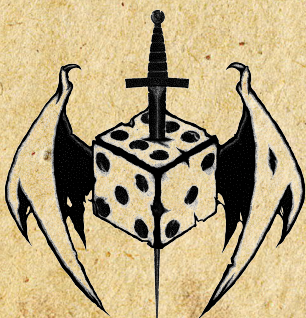
20 Uses of Vampire Blood

On *mewe.com*, **Mr. Jon Salway** had asked about potential uses for vampire blood in RPG. After I have churned out the first seven ideas, he showed approval to what I had brewed up. Doing that to a glory hound like me is like feeding a Mogwai after midnight. I was already working at more weird ideas to get the list to 20 before he had even asked... and here it is.

Unless mentioned otherwise, the creation of potions, lotions, etc based on sanguine substances takes a Cleric, Magic-User or Specialist 2d6 (minus Wisdom bonus) days, and requires additional expenses equal to what the creation of a potion would cost per day.

01# Sense of the Night: if a half a cup of vampire blood is mixed with a decoction of larkspur and mandrake, a mortal imbibing a spoon full of it will have better night vision, increased hearing ... and an olfactory boost in regard to determining another's health and to the general smell of blood that will rival that of the most acute animals on earth. But only after sundown. The effect starts immediately after imbibing, and will last for an hour for each spoon full imbibed. In regard to the mundane senses, the character now benefits from the same rules as the *Elf* character class, and is granted enhanced senses in other fields, as mentioned above.

02# Healing: a cup of vampire blood applied to an open wound will increase healing dramatically and fend off infection. It will also leave the character with an intolerance for bright daylight and prone to mood swings for the duration of the healing, and the days to come. Natural healing is increased by +1 hit point per day, and another +1 hit point if the character actually rests. During the same time the character will always end up surprised in bright daylight. Due to the mood swings, every reaction roll for a random encounter should be re-rolled once. Effects wear off when the wound it has been applied to has been healed.



03# Health Elixir: mixed with other substances and brewed up, it can be turned into an elixir that will increase vigor and resilience. For the effect to take hold, a spoon full must be taken each day at sunset. The effect will set in after about a week and last up to [1 day per week of regular intake] after the last spoon full is taken. Side effects include an aversion (and strong allergic reaction) to garlic, a fear of running water (similar to what is common to the victims of rabies) and sudden mood swings in the presence of virgins, priests and on holy ground. In turn, he character will recover from attribute damage to Constitution and Strength twice as fast, and gains a +3 bonus on all saving throws against disease, poison and death. Furthermore, the character must *Save vs. Device* whenever she wants to cross running water (one attempt per turn). The other side effects are a matter of roleplaying.

04# Blood Ink: from vampire blood, an ink may be made that will ~~force~~ any vampire to see the writing to read it (or: attempt to read it) at once (unless a saving throw is passed).

05# Sanguine Rouge: the blood may used to fabricate a rouge that, when worn, will rise carnal desire in anyone that the wearer flirts with lasciviously. Applied rouge loses its powers at dawn. The victim of such a flirt must *Save vs. Devices*, or will have a burning desire to have sex with the user of the Sanguine Rouge. The modifiers are the same as for the *Charm Person* spell.

06# Blood Arrow: witches and warlocks can turn the blood into a lotion to coat arrowheads with. The arrows will then haven an increased chance to strike the heart and/or to hit a target that is already bleeding. A cup of vampire blood is enough to coat 20 arrowheads. The coating will only lose its power after it has hit something, or after being washed with holy water. A character using such an arrow may decide to either roll the damage twice IF the attack is successful (and keep the better result), or to gain a +3 bonus on the roll for the attack on an already wounded, bleeding target.

07# Blood to Blood: putting an unguent made with some of the blood onto a pendulum will have the pendulum indicate the general direction of the vampire it has been taken from. The prepared pendulum now works in regard to the vampire like a *Find the Path* spell, with two major differences: it locates the vampire the blood belonged to (not a location), and whenever a correction of the direction is needed, the pendulum must be studied for a turn..

08# Hound Training: if vampire blood is feed to hounds by their master as part of a reward after a successful hunt, the hounds will not only react to the presence of vampires (as all dogs do), but do so with courage and an desire to hunt and attack. When the owner is with his dogs, the dogs get a bonus from their owners willpower against any mind control powers of the vampire, and the other way around. A lot of vampire hunters keep a large hounds around. The hounds will not shy away from a vampire in fear, and all Moral rolls in a fight or situation with a vampire may be re-rolled for them. When in the presence of their master, the hounds may use the characters saving throws to fend of magic effects of control or dominance. The character that is their master in turn gets a +1 bonus on saving throws to fend off such effects for each two hounds present that she had feed the vampire blood to, as described above.

09# Test of Holiness: a lot of charlatans try to sell „holy relics“ or items and weapons „blessed by a bishop“ that are in truth nothing but common goods. The application of a mere drop of vampire blood will reveal the truth, as only a holy or blessed item will have the drop go up in smoke.

10# Unquiet Grave: warlocks and witches know a ritual that allows them to raise the recently deceased by mixing a cup of vampire blood with the earth on the top of their grave. If no special precautions have been taken, the poor soul will rise as a revenant obliged to do the warlock's or witch's bidding. This allows for the creation of one HD:4 undead, as per the *Animate Dead* spell. HD may be exchanged for special powers, as detailed for the spell. Preparing the ritual is equal to creating 3rd level spell scroll.

11# Love Potion: Alchemists, witches and warlocks alike may mix the blood of a desperate suitor with vampire blood to create a love potion. The one that drinks the potion may hate the suitor, but will nevertheless love and crave him. The effect is equal to a *Charm Person* spell, but no saving throw of the victim will negate it (but will allow resistance to a request for a day).

12# Tainted Humors: Mixing a large quantity of vampire blood with wine is one part of a two component poison. The second component is a meal rich in garlic, to which the wine is drunk by the victim. After about an hour, the victim will suffer from swellings in face, throat and all the joints and a racing hard. After that, it is only minutes before the victim will die from a heart attack. If the victim is a PC or important NPC, it gets a *Save vs. Death*. In all other regards, it is treated like a deadly poison.

13# Sanguine Smelling Salts: if smelling salts are created with a bit of vampire blood, the resulting odor is something that will agitate those that have a taste for (or an addiction to) vampire blood, even when the open vial is up to a yard away from them. Vampire hunters use this trick to uncover human spies and minions of the blood-drinking devils. The salts hold the sanguine odor no longer than a week. If a character that has a taste for vampire blood or is addicted to it must *Save vs Devices* or will become notably agitated.

14# Ghoul Bane: mixing a cup of vampire blood with incenses that are dried again before burning creates a smoke that is said to keep ghouls at bay, as the subliminal smell of the more powerful beast of the night fills them with unease. If the smoke was able to linger in a place, the effect will last even hours after the smoke itself dispersed (an hour for for every 10 minutes that the smoke lingered). Ghouls will refrain from entering the protected area, as per *Protection from Evil*.

15# Bespoken Blood: vampires may use blood as mortals use letters among their own. One drop for a short sentence, two drops for a longer one. A small vial may carry message that only another vampire will ever be able to “read” (by consumption).



Chaotic Swap/Mix-Creatures

16# Two Components of Life: those that create golems sometimes mix the clay with vampire blood, instead of following the lawful traditions that involve the creation of this guardians. These tainted golems need to be washed in human blood once every full moon (which is then soaked in by the clay), but in turn have a feral cunning and bestial intellect that surpasses the meager mental capabilities of their "lawful" earthy brethren. The ritual creates a *Tainted Golem*. The potential HD depends on the amount of vampire blood that has been used. One HD for a cup, three for a quart, five if a vampire has been bleed out over the clay. HD may be exchanged for special abilities as per *Animate Dead*, but the Referee/GM has the last word in regard to the possible power and abilities.

17# Life Sight: vampire blood may be mixed with belladonna (nightshade) to create eye-drops that grant supernatural vision. It is like thermal vision, but instead of heat the pure life force of a being, animal or mortal, creates the shine that overlays the normal visions. Plants are seen as a light shade of gray while the undead are perceived as dark shadows in the form of their regular appearance, and ghosts (even when invisible to the mortal eyes) appear as smoke or fog. The effects last for a turn per drop.**18# Black Baptism:** if an infant is baptized in a black mass with vampire blood, a prior (*Lawful*) baptism is broken (if not more than 7 days have passed). Upon death, a person baptized this way has a slim chance to rise again as a vampire (if no special precautions having been taking in the burial; chance is equal to 1% per level of the character).

19# Lure of Vermin: take at least a cup of vampire blood, and mix it with not more than five pounds of flesh (preferable: minced meat). Divide the flesh into seven equal parts. Two parts, place into the cellar of the house of your enemy. The other five parts, put into five different places that are ripe with vermin, but not more than a mile away from the house of your enemy. Before seven days are up, swarms of vermin will invade the home marked by the lure

20# Protection from Lawful: if a (fallen) cleric has drunken a dram of vampire blood before casting *Protection from Lawful* and before the next sunrise, the level of the spell is increased by two.

I was playing a computer-adaption of one of the old "choose-your-own-adventure" books of my youth when I came across a picture of monsters that were, basically, to animals mixed up. Nostalgia hit me hard. In the old days, chaos was VERY random and mutations charts that simply changed a body part into that of an animal were common, as were such "swap-creature mixes". Found memories tickled my mind, and when my mind is tickled my finger tips get busy on the keyboard.

Gorilla with a Parrot's Head

Move:	90'(30')
Hit Dice:	6
AC:	Unarmored & Shield
Attacks:	2 Crushing blows (1d6+2); Bite (during Grapple; 1d4)
Save:	as Fighter
Moral:	9

The short, thick fur on its body is light gray, while its head is blood red, with orange spots on the cheeks and a yellow beak. The creature is able to mimic sounds, and may try to lure prey in by imitating a wounded herbivore, a desperate woman's pleas for help or the loud singing of a drunken sailor. The unnatural beast is vicious and murderous; not terribly smart and very impulsive. It will attack unprovoked. In fact, once it had lured prey into sight, its low cunning is quickly replaced by bloodlust, and the thing will attack a random target within sight each round, unless it initiated a grapple. During the first 1d4 rounds of combat, it may move 120' (and can sustain this speed during a chase if it may brachiate among trees).

When it successfully hits a human-sized target with both attacks, it automatically initiates a grapple. Beginning with the monster's next turn, the victim must *Save vs. Death* or will end with its head snapped or its rib cage crushed inward. Even when it escapes this fate, the beak will automatically deal 1d4 points of damage.

When failing a Morale check or after losing at least half of its hit points, the monster will use a piercing shriek instead of its other attacks. All within 10' must then pass a saving throw or will be stunned for 1d3 rounds. Afterwards, the creature will turn to flee.

There is a 4 in 6 chance that the creature may copy any spell used in its vicinity on the following round. If it does not, the spell formula leaves its bestial mind again.

Orang-Owl

Move:	90'(30') on the ground; 120' when brachiating
Hit Dice:	3
AC:	As Leather Armor
Attacks:	2 talon strikes (1d4; „4“ explodes)
Save:	as 5 th level Specialist
Moral:	7

In general appearance and build, the Orang-Owl resembles the common orang-utan: bulky, no neck, long arms, short legs, broad torso. It typically stands 5 feet high and weighs about 185 lbs. Instead of long, orange-red fur an Orang-Owl has a coat of small feathers in mottled dark green and gray, to better hide in the treetops that are its natural habitat. The face resembles that of an owl, with a short curved beak and two very large, cat-like yellow eyes. Their feet end in strong talon claws. Their hands lack thumbs, and the fingers are akin to an owl's talons. The claws are hooked, to help it brachiate. Orang-Owls are night-active, and either solitary (during their adolescents or in case of a non-mated adult), a pair mated for life (common), or a small family group (a mated pair with offspring that are able to leave the nest already, but have not reached adolescents yet). They build big nests in trees, lay large eggs from which their young hatch, raise them till adolescents, and drive them off afterwards.

An adult Orang-Owl is able to fix prey with a hypnotic glare, and usually approaches silently through the trees before it emits a cooing sound to gain the prey's attention. When the prey looks into the Orang-Owl's face, the creature will try to transfix it and then start a "surprise" attack. Mated pairs have a hunting technique where one transfixes the prey, and the other attacks from behind. The first one then joins the ensuing fight and helps in overwhelming the prey quickly. Orang-Owls try to tear out the throat of a victim with their beaks, or to at least cause enough bleeding wounds to overwhelm the victim later. This may be during the same or next night. While they are savage fighters, they are not overly courageous and rather give up a fight then risking the own death or severe wounds.

Transfixing Glare: Anyone that looks directly at a Orang-Owl not engaged in combat must *Save vs. Device* or is going to be transfixed. If the creature is able to attack a transfixed victim, it counts as a *surprise* attack. A victim that is attacked from behind while being transfixed by an Orang-Owl counts as helpless.

Stealth Predators: Orang-Owls count as having the Specialist skills Stealth: 3 and Sneak Attack: 3

Fierce Grappler: an Orang Owl gains a further +3 bonus while "wrestling" (see LotFP p62). When winning a contest, the Orang Owl will also deal 1 point of damage to its opponent. After it one two in a row, the victim must *Save vs Death* this and each following round (till it is able to break free). On a failure, the victim's throat has been torn out, and death is imminent. On a success, the victim suffers 1d4+2 points of damage.

Krakenbear

The Krakenbear resembles a brown bear in build and appearance, but where the brown bear is massive and bulky, the Krakenbear is lean like a greyhound. The fur is shaggy, and of brown-green colour. The latter comes from alga that grow within the fur, which has much in common with that of a beaver. The most distinctive difference between a regular bear and a Krakenbear is the head, which resembles nothing so much as an overgrown, gray kraken. The tentacles that grow from the head have a length of up to three feet. The claws are long, slightly hooked and webbed. The creature is home to forested swamps and swampy river deltas, and is an excellent swimmer and diver. It is not an amphibian creature, but has a large lung volume that allows it to stay submerged for a long time.

Its sight is bad, and while it is an omnivore, plants make up a huge part of its diet. When food is scarce, it will harvest the alga from its fur. The Krakenbear prefers meat, and will drive other predators from their kills to feast on the carcass. It hunts mostly fish and amphibians, but will go for any prey animal neither larger than itself nor fast enough to escape it. Men, being an easy prey compared to most other wild animals, are a welcome addition to its diet. In fact, men entering its territory have a good chance of sooner or later encountering it, just as if it would see in them a rival. When it strikes, it does so with a cunning, cleverness and ability to plan not known from mere beasts.

As if its size, strength and claws would not already make it a fearsome opponent, it has two further, uncanny abilities. The first is a paralytic secretion that it may deliver with the suckers of its grabbing tentacles. It is strong enough to instantly paralyze smaller prey, and may even render a grown man helpless within mere moments. The other is a mystic ability. The Krakenbear may summon a thick fog in its territory, that will reduce sight to mere feet and distort sound. Itself seems to be unhindered by it.

Little else is known about the creature. It has always been encountered alone so far. No young, nests or eggs have ever been found. There are no local legends about the beast, either. It is just like it appeared out of nowhere at some point, like it migrated from somewhere else to claim a new territory for itself.

Move:	120 (40') (land) # 180# (water)
Hit Dice:	4
AC:	Leather Armor & Shield
Attacks:	Claw (1d6) / Claw (1d6) / Bite (1d4)*
Save:	as 6 th Level Fighter
Moral:	9

Lean: The hit points of the Krakenbear are determined with 2d6+4, not with 4d8.

Grapple & Bite: Only when both claw attacks were successful is the Krakenbear able to deal a third bite attack. If this attack is successful, "wrestling" is initiated as well.

Paralytic Venom: The venomous bite calls for a *Save vs. Poison*. On a success, the paralytic poison sets in after 2d6+2 rounds of combat (modified by the Constitution bonus of the character), otherwise the poison will take effect withing 1d4 rounds. When the effect sets in, the victim will become limb (and thereby helpless), but stays fully aware otherwise.

Call the Fog: Krakenbear may call upon a thick fog in its territory for a total of 4 turns per day. It does so by emitting a howl that sounds like prolonged, hollow bellowing. The fog begins to rise then, and a turn later the sight is limited to a few feet. The Krakenbear is not hindered by this, and it profits from the rules for *Ambush* for every attack out of the fog.



Lord of the Forest

There is only one. Many have encountered it, in many places, some of them far away from another. Yet, there is only one. The dark hearts of the darkest forests are its domain, where its hooves step on ground men never claimed, and never shall. Where light is tolerated to send its fingers through the dark at best, where the mere eyes can never be trusted to reveal what is really there. This is its domain, its kingdom. Here, it is Lord, and no-one else is.

It is large, especially when it rises onto its hind legs. Much larger than a brown bear, and much more massive. Like an ogre. Raised up like this, the weights has the hooves on its bull-like legs press deep into the soft forest floor beneath them. Like a bear, it rather walks on all fours, and then spreads some of its weight to the monstrous paws on its forelegs. Paws that are bigger than a donkey's head, with broad and curved claws that can dig up the black soil or strip the bark of an hoary oak with the same ease as it might rip flesh asunder and snap bones in twain. Its body is like that of an colossal boar and that of a fat man alike, with four pairs of swollen teats running down in a row over its underside, right to down to its massive phallus. Its head is like that of a boar as well in the upper part, but the jaws and snot are more like that of a wolf, especial the teeth, but for the triple row of tusks that point sideways and back. Its eyes are like that of a cat, and most eerie. When you look at it from the front, it has the eyes at the front like a cat. If you look at it from the side, it has them placed like a boar. Look at it from any other angle, and they will be bulging like that of a frog. No matter where you see them, they are like that of a cat, but also golden in color and with black slits like a snake. The back of its hide is covered in coarse black fur like a sheep's coat, the stretch down the middle of its lower side is bare and like a toad's back. All else looks like the hide of a boar but for the fox coloured horse mane down the back of its head. A head that is crowned with antlers that have ends like thorns and will have your head become dizzy if you look to long at them. When it is displeased, its breath is biting smoke. Its roar deafens you before you can fully hear it, and it will never speak to you. When it wants you to know something, the wind will have the trees whisper of it to you.

Magic-User Spells

Move:	150'(50')
Hit Dice:	7
AC:	As Chain Mail
	2x Claws (1d8+2); or 1x bite (2d6) or antlers (only as a charge; 2d8).
Attacks:	
Save:	as 6 th level Dwarf
Moral:	10

Lord over the Forest: the monster may cast *Creation Major* and *Plant Growth*, but only in regard to what natural occurs in the forest it is in.

Before the Tongue: the monster understands all human languages of the humans, elves, dwarfs and halflings. It does not speak them, but may make the wind have the trees whisper its words to others, and those will understand.

In My Domain, Thy Lord: the monster may cast *Charm Person* on Elves that face it on its ground.

Magic: aside from those already mentioned, the monster may cast up to HD spells, each with a level up to its HD.

Detect Lie; Dig; Dispel Magic; Enlarge; Faerie Fire; Gust of Wind; Hold Person; Insect Plague; Speak with Animals; Speak with Plants, Speak with Monsters.

Favor of the Lord of the Forest: the monster may bestow any spell it is able to cast on a person, as per *Bestow Spell Ability*.

Bound By Laws Older Than Itself: within the heart of a dark wood, a Magic-User may summon the Lord of the Forest with a *Summon* spell that includes a sacrifice. The Magic-User, if able to Dominate, may then make use of its service or ask it to bestow a spell ability, but only one.



“Abominable blasphemy” is a good summary of the view of the Christian Church of the 15th and 17th in regard to warlocks and witch-craft. And not without reason, when it comes to the world of Lamentations of the Flame Princess. One of these reasons is the following spell. Not for its result, but how it is achieved. Some people really have no sense of humor...

Turn Word to Flesh

Magic-User Level 3

Duration: see text

Range: Touch

The Magic-User turns a book, booklet or scroll into a piece of cooked meat. Eating this meat will not only provide a meal, but the character will “learn” everything that was written in the book after a turn. This knowledge will fade from memory after 3 days. In case of a spellbook or scroll eaten by a Magic-User, the character may instantly decided to drop some (still) memorized spells in exchange for spells of equal or lower level from the eaten medium. Furthermore, the Magic-User may memorize the spells from the eaten medium till the end of the three day period just as if these would be part of the character’s own spellbook.

Changes for VAM spellcasting:

The number of days till the learned wisdom fades are equal to the level the spell is cast at.

The miscast table:

1: The Word becomes Flesh, but that’s it. No wisdom, no spells. But it is still nourishing and filling.

2: The Word is now Flesh, but the knowledge is tainted and thereby unwholesome. The character that eats it will lose 1 point of Wisdom per level of the spell. A *Save vs. Magic* decides if the loss is permanent or will regenerate at a rate of 1 point per day.

3: The Word is Flesh, but is has teeth and a dozen tentacles. Who is going to eat whom? HD:1 monster, AC:12, 1d4 damage, one attack.

4: The Word is Flesh, but after it has been eaten, it will eat the characters memory while also devouring itself. 2d6 Wisdom damage, at a rate of one point per turn. All knowledge gained is lost after the full Wisdom damage has been applied.

5: The touch is not turning the Word to Flesh, but turns the Magic-User into a paper golem! All Saving Throws are treated as if the character would be of level 1, and the hit points are reduced to 1d4. The effect can only be reversed by *Dispel Magic*.

6: The Word is Flesh, but it is poisonous. A *Save vs. Poison* decides if the character eating the Flesh dies or not.

7+: as per VAM



“Dark Deception Kills the Light” is an excerpt of the lyrics of “The Thing That Should Not Be”, a song by Metallica. It is one of this... phrases... that keeps popping up in my mind. At some point, it had to happen that I work it into something in an RPG. That “something” turned out to be a LotFP 3rd Level Magic-User spell.

Dark Deception Kills the Light

Magic-User Level 3

Duration: 3 rounds + 1 round/level

Range: 10'/level

The Magic-User works a nefarious illusion on a number of enemies: that the light source they carry has been darkened completely. The spell will affect a number of targets in range up to the level of the caster. Said targets will be “blind” to the light of a number of light sources up to the level of the caster. The light sources are not really darkened or extinguished: they are still there, but the target’s mind suffers the illusion that the light is -not- there. Targets that pass a *Save vs. Magic* are immune to the effect.

Both the light sources and the targets have to be in caster’s range. Thereby, it is impossible to “darken” the light of celestial bodies. When a target or a light source leaves the caster’s range, each target may re-roll the saving throw at the beginning of the own round. On a success, the spell is shaken off completely.

Rose, the Gardener’s Daughter

Once, there was a gardener that lived in a city. A city so big that the man who ruled it could effort himself a large garden for the pleasure of himself, his wife and those that came to visit. The gardener, naturally, was in charge of this garden, for he was the best gardener to be found within the city walls and for more than a day beyond them. This was so because he truly loved the plants he cared for. Not like one would love a fine wine or a good and loyal dog, but like they would be his own little children. He was a strange man indeed, and many said much to queer for a proper man with a proper mind. The gardener cared not for such sayings, for he was a happy man, and happily married.

He and his wife lived together in a beautiful small house, with a beautiful small garden behind a beautiful small wall, for the gardener wanted his garden to be a shrine he could recluse himself to if he wanted so. His wife found him odd for it, and she would have admitted that his love for the plants under his care was odd as well, to say the least, but she was happy in the marriage and decided to pay no heed to this queerness of her husband.

One day, while he watered the roses, the gardener heard a voice congratulating him for what he had achieved so far. Upon turning around, he found a woman in his garden he had never seen before, and was like no other woman he had ever seen before. Her hair was like the light of the setting sun, her lips like lavender in bloom, her skin like snow and her eyes as green as the grass she stood upon with bare feet. He asked who she was and how she came in, but the woman did not answer him. Instead, as her lips opened the next time, a few seeds dropped from them which she let fall into her hands, to place them in his. “Plant these in your garden, and in your garden only. For I want you to grow this flower, for you will give the love she will need to bloom”. The gardener looked at the peculiar seeds in his hand, for they looked like permute. As he looked up again, the woman was no longer there. The gardener planted the seeds, and from them a bush with thick leaves and beautiful flowers with petals like permute grew, and would bloom each and every day. This happened in the time that his wife was having their child.

The two were happy for the child they were to have, and all that new them were happy, and all was well. But when the night came as his wife was to give birth, she did so under great pain, and after long and exhausting labor and the loss of lots of blood, the midwife could only present a dead child to the gardener. The men was struck in grief, holding the stillborn child in his arms, bloody as it was. While the

midwife tended his wife, the gardener, shocked and pained, went into his garden, where he finally collapsed to his knees and cried with the dead child of his in his arms. This was when the wondrous plant he had raised began to speak to him in that moonlit night. "Grief not. Bury it at my roots. By dawn, you shall see that a child was given to you". The gardener did not believe his ears, but was strangely touched, and did as the wondrous plant had told him in the very same night. And as he returned the next morning, a living infant was happily cooing right beneath the soil, only face and arms and legs protruding from the ground. The gardener first did not believe his own eyes, but was overwhelmed with joy, and so was his wife, weak and feverish as she was after the strenuous and horrible night of birth. Their daughter was yet alive. The midwife could not believe it, but found the face of the little girl she had seen dead to be alive and well, and with the mother and the father. They called her Rose, and were happy again.

Happy, but for the fact that Rose was not a normal child. It had its naval on the back, not on the belly. Otherwise, little Rose was a perfectly normal baby. A wonderful child that cried rarely but smiled and laughed often, and otherwise made soft, cooing sounds. Later, she rose to be a beautiful little girl. She looked very much like her mother, but for her figure that was more lithe than that of every other girl in town, and for her eyes that were as green as the grass in summer. The older she grew, the more her father was enthralled by her, and the more her mother grew estranged to the child. When Rose became 14 years old, her mother hung herself. Rose did not shed a tear, and her father never married again. There had been talk about her eyes before, but after her mother hung herself, the midwife became sure again that the child that had been born 14 years ago had been born dead.

Rose & your Game

The characters will meet Rose when she is 16 years old. She will look like 20 then, and will be a lithe beauty with an otherworldly charm about her. She will be curious, unflinching, always happy, and eager to learn, see and experience. Upon meeting the characters, she will walk up to ask who they are and what they do, like it would be normal thing to do. She will then want to come with them, and will ask them to come to her father's house so that she can say goodbye. Her father will let her leave, with an ease as if she would have asked if she could go to church this Sunday.

Rose is the equivalent of a 1st Level Elf, with a Charisma of 16, a Constitution and Strength of 8 and a 12 in every other attribute. She needs to drink 8 quarts of water (or other consumable non-alcoholic liquid) each day, and can drink unclean (but not poisoned) water without any ill effect. For every quart less, she will begin to wither. This will look like very rapid aging, and she will lose 1 point of Charisma per quart missed. Aside from this special rules, the normal rules for thirst and starvation apply.

If Rose is used as an NPC, she will be one of the strange and weird things of the game world, but not one that will mean any harm. The spells she knows are *Charm Person* and *Detect Magic*. The Referee should treat her as a henchwomen instead of an retainer. As such, she will want (and gain) her share of loot (and experience points). At the end of each adventure, the character with the highest Charisma should make an Reaction roll (if the party wishes to keep her along). On a Reaction better than Indifferent, Rose will stay for another adventure.

Of course, in the case of a character death (or another player joining the group), Rose can be turned into a player character. Aside from the special rules mentioned above, Rose can be treated exactly like an Elf.



20 Magical Statuettes, Idols and Figurines

Magic items are welcome finds for every adventurer. Magic statues are a wonderful way to provide those. They do not reveal their "function" as easily as a different magic item would do, and their physical form naturally gives the implication that the wondrous might it grants is bestowed by "something bigger" that uses the statue merely as an avatar or an in-between.

01: A slate-like marble image of a rising eagle.

When a Magic-User meditates in front of it for at least an hour, the following spells will be treated as one level more potent if cast by the character before the next sunrise: *Detect Magic*; *Light*; *Detect Invisible*; *Light, Continual*; *Clairvoyance*; *Detect Illusion*; *Dispel Magic*;

02: A crude and fire-blackened stone statue of a sitting woman. It is an idol of a goddess worshiped as Keeper of the Fires. When placed in one, the fire will last 1/5 longer than it otherwise would have, and possible accidents including it are unlikely to set surrounding things on fire.

03: A statue of dark clay that depicts a three-headed serpent. When somebody smears the own blood onto the idol, she will not be the -first- to be attacked by a monster and will not be pursued if she turns and runs before drawing blood. The effects end after next midnight.

04: A two spans tall ivory statue of a lush woman. Somebody who kisses the idol in the hours of dawn, noon and dusk every day will receive a more favorable treatment of those she sleeps with afterwards (increase reaction by one step).

05: Round sandstone disk with a bas-relief of a one-eyed, bearded man with flowing hair. A character that puts this disk on his or her forehead while meditating for at least a turn will gain a re-roll on any Intellect or Wisdom based test till he or she speaks a word.

06: Figure carved from oak wood, in the likeness of man with a bears lower body, a boars head and the antlers of a stag. Those who leave this idol behind at the edge of a wood or forest they want to enter and place as many rations in front of it as there are people in the group they travel with will not to be attacked by wild animals (at least, not without provocation).

07: A cast copper statuette of a woman clad in a long, hooded gown. When somebody pleads to the "Lady of Healing" for help for somebody else with serious wounds, the Lady is likely (4 in 6 chance) to speed up the healing. The petitioner must, however, offer an oath that would please the Lady of Healing.

08: A golden figurine of a sitting, naked man. Fat, and with a shaved head. If the figurine is doused with scented oil at least once per day for at least a month, the believer has a 2 in 6 chance of getting the best possible price in every deal he or she makes.

09: A cast steel figure of a fully armored warrior. When somebody cuts the own left palm and smears the blood onto the idol, she may re-roll every damage roll result of "1" during the next battle. Cutting the own palm repeatedly without giving it the time to heal may result in infections and/or the loss of tactile sensation (in parts or the whole of the hand).

10: A partially blackened likeness of a coiled-up snake, carved from wood. When put into a fire in the hours of dusk, the believer will gain a +1 bonus on all saving throws against magical effects till the next dawn. Each uses includes a 1-in-6 chance that the idol will be consumed by the flames entirely, so that it cannot be used again.

11: The fist-sized likeness of a toad, made of serpentine. When a character vomits the last meal over the stone, she will gain a re-roll on all saves against disease or poison till the character eats again.

12: An irregular piece of limestone, painted too look like a grinning skull. When the believer throws this stone away, she may treat the next failed Save vs. Death as a pass. If somebody returns the stone to him or her, the character must Save vs. Death immediately or will die on the spot. Willfully destroying the own stone will have the same effect.

13: A heavy gray stone that has been chiseled and polished to depict many grimacing faces. When it is placed in the center of an encampment, it will protect every member of the camp that screamed and danced around it in a wild fashion (for at least a turn) from all evil spirits till the next dawn.

14: The two feet tall likeness of a bearded man with a scaled body, carved from blue soapstone. Those who prostrate themselves before it and are doused in sea water have a 3-in-6 chance that they will last another 2d6 minutes if they are about to drown.

The Maze of the Necromancer

15: An ivory statuette of a resting unicorn. Stroking its mane grants good luck for 1d4 days (all dice may be rolled twice, and the better result is kept). Each character may invoke the effect only once in a lifetime.

16: A finger long, delicate glass figurine that depicts a gamine character only clad in a long skirt. Those who whisper a different secret to it each time before they go to bed have a x in 100 chance of learning something important in their own dreams, where x is the number of secrets that already have been told to the idol. "Success" resets "x" to zero.

17: The span high ebony statuette of a faceless hooded figure. Those who sacrifice a finger in front of it may place a (random) vile curse on somebody they wish ill.

18: A two span high statuette carved from cherry wood, depicting a woman in a sleeveless gown, with a wreath of flower in her hair. Every day that a bouquet of hand-picked flowers is placed in front of it, the character has a 3-in-6 chance to re-roll the reaction of every newly met, non-hostile person. The effect may only be conjured in spring.

19: A relief carved into a plate sized slate of rose quartz, depicting the face of Bacchus (flowing beard and hair, tiny grape vines in the hair) with a laughing, open mouth. A character has a 3 in 6 chance of suffering only half the negative effects from drinking alcohol when he or she pours a goblet of wine over the Bacchus idol before starting the revel. A person that breaks it will be cursed in some way.

20: A two feet high cast bronze statuette that depicts a hero slaying a snake-like dragon. A character that sacrifices a venomous snake in front of it (that must have been caught by the character) will gain a +2 bonus on all attack rolls against any dragon and land-dwelling creature with scales till the next sunrise, as well as a +2 bonus on all saving throws against the attacks of those creatures.



Mazes are not places to live a life in. The only exception for this rule is the first (and according to Greek mythology: only) minotaur. Mazes are simply not made to live in, but to be a hindrance for those that seek to reach the entrance it was designed to protect: its „legit“ exit. Although „old school“ is back in style, I dare to say that the maze has not seen its revival yet. „Dungeons“ are still places monsters dwell in, instead of something that is just stocked with them as another method of defense. „Just stocking“ is even something frowned upon now, as the concept of the „dungeon ecology“ has come up. As much as I like (a bit of...) realism in gaming, sometimes the very simple concepts have their charm. The following *Maze of the Necromancer* is such a simple thing: a maze designed for the sole purpose of hindering (or better: killing) those that have not been told how to navigate it. It may be entered by a flight of stairs from the north, and ends (surprise!) at a doorway in the south. Take the doorway without fetching a certain amulet first, and you are likely to die. Take a wrong turn, and you are likely to run into a few skeletons or a pit trap. Ignore a puzzle along the way, and you will have to fight even more skeletons (than necessary). Enjoy.

The map has been made with **Dungeon Scrawl**, a free online tool. Numbers and letter were edited in later.

Of course, a maze alone does not make an adventure. Well, okay, some very large and fantastic (in both meanings of the word) OSR modules prove that they may, but I will take this as the exception of the rule. For what a maze usually does not have is something a good adventure should have: meaningful social interaction with other characters. Therefore, to make an adventure, a maze needs something else "before" and/or "after" it. My maze here is no different. It will not make a good adventure on its own.

General look of the maze: there are unlit torches near the entrance, as well as flint stone & a striking iron. The ground is covered in rectangular sandstone tiles. The doors are made of wood with simple iron locks, and not locked unless mentioned otherwise. The ceiling is 7 feet high and supported by wooden planks. Support beams can be found at the walls to the left and the right every 10 feet. A square is 5 feet.

A: A group of three animated HD:2 skeletons with spears. They have been ordered to stand guard till anybody but the necromancer walks into view. When this happens, they are to kill the intruder before returning to their positions.

B: A HD:3 Bonenknight (see below) with a mace. It has been ordered to stand guard till it sees anybody but the necromancer or when they hear the sounds of combat. In the latter case, they are to move and investigate, in the former case they are to kill the intruders before returning to their position.

C: A HD:3 Bonenknight (see below) with a sword. It has the same order as the one above.

+D+: Trapped fake door. When the handle is pressed down, a spring-driven poisoned needle is released through a hole in the escutcheon (the metal plate around handle and key hole) that will sting into the general area of the knuckles. *Save vs. Poison*, or the character will lose one hit point ever two turns.

Inspecting the door reveals that it sits extremely firm (in fact, it cannot be opened as it is fake), the small hole in the escutcheon (just next to where the handle is place) and that there is no real lock behind the key hole to manipulate. The amount of dust that has gathered in the corners of the door may come to a character's attention as well. Very heavy leather gloves may protect from the sting of the needle, just wearing regular gloves will not. Inspecting the needle after it was triggered may reveal an oily coating on it (the poison). Pulling down the handle with a tool (e.g. something with a hook) will bypass the trap.

E: A group of six HD: 2 skeletons, all armed with two hatchets each. When they hear any suspicious noise (e.g. the pit traps) they will investigate up to the next junction/corner before returning to their position. They have been ordered to kill anybody they encounter but the necromancer, and then return to their position. They will fight by first throwing one of their hatchets at an enemy before attacking in melee with the other.

X: Pit trap. A weight above 90lbs (more than even an armed skeleton weighs) will have the thin basal wood sticks the sandstone plate is placed on give. Below it is a 8 feet pit with small iron spikes at the bottom. The fall is unlikely to kill anybody, but likely to wound and cripple the feet and/or legs (1d6 damage; half movement, DEX bonus lowered to -2).

[1] A wooden plate with an inscription hangs from a nail at the wall of this dead end. The inscription has been enchanted with *Explosive Runes*.

[2] Five large barrels are lined against the walls, in a corner sit several large clay jugs and a few dirty old sacks. On a table, there are tools to open and seal a barrel as well as some bladed tools. The jugs are filled with concentrated vinegar, some are empty or partially empty. Two barrels are filled with hacked-up corpses and vinegar: when the flesh is softened enough, it may be easily scraped off. The bones are later used for more skeletons (the necromancer will take the skulls somewhere else to boil them out. That is what the sacks are for).

[3] **The door to this room is locked.** Inside, there is a table with a wooden tool tray and diverse craftsman tool. In a corner rest two buckets and three mobs, in another four spears have been placed. Along one of the walls, numerous sandstone tiles (like those that cover the ground) have been lined up. Next to them, several tools for digging. In general, this room holds the tools and materials to reset the traps and arm some new skeletons.

[4] Three peculiar, man-sized metal statues are lined up in the middle of this room, all of which face the door. To the left is a table with an oil can and some oily rags. All three statues are made of cast iron and have obviously been set together from several pieces. Each looks identical and depicts a fat, hairless, naked devil with a wide open mouth. The inside seems to be partial hollow, one may reach inside the throat and down with arm. The "back" of each statue is secured to the other parts with bolts that need a special device to fasten/unfasten them (the PC will not have a matching crank).

When a character reaches inside deep enough to have the own arm up to the shoulder in a devils mouth, she will feel a small object with a chain to it inside. In one of the statues, this is an amulet that is needed to path the final portal unharmed (see 7). The amulet is magnetic, and thereby needs a little pull to be removed from the "belly" of the statue. In the other two cases, pulling at the chain will have a device akin to a bear trap snap shut on the character's arm. The amulet is in the left statue.

To identify the trap, the characters need to feel around in each statue. While the chains all feel the same, the amulet is much smoother than the decoys used to trigger the traps. A character that triggers the trap will have the arm maimed beyond use till it is healed (and perhaps even thereafter if a *Save vs. Death* is failed).

[5] Along a wall hang eight simple wooden shields. Four are painted black, four are painted white. On a cupboard sit two large glass vials, both of which hold a clear liquid. On a stand in a corner rests a small leather folio with loose parchments in it.

The parchments are scribbled with dark poems, one of them has been enchanted with *Explosive Runes*.

One of the vials holds a slightly oily liquid that has no smell but a very bitter and metallic taste. The other has a bitter smell and bitter taste. The first one is the poison that is used for the needles in the door trap, the other is the anti-dote. If the characters are clever enough to assume that the antidote for the poison may be stored in dungeon (in case of mistakes by a minion or by handling it), checking the needle (again) will reveal that it is oily.

[6] Each of these rooms has eight simple wooden shields hang on a wall. Four are painted black, four are painted white.

[7] The exit of this room (and the maze) is a door frame made of bones and skulls of several men. The area around the doorstep has a nimbus of chilling cold, and faint whispers can be heard that urge any would-be-trespasser not to cross the doorstep. Any living mortal but the necromancer that passes the threshold without wearing the amulet from room [4] must pass a *Save vs. Magic* the moment they walk through. On a success, the character will suffer a heart attack and drop to zero hit points, on a failure the character will drop dead from it instead.

Boneknights are skeletons who wear an "armor" made of the bones of two other skeletons. Skulls act as shoulder pieces, fore- and underarms function as chest plates and ribs add layers of protections at other places. A Boneknight has AC:16 and +6 hit points, but the first two blows that deal 5+ damage to them will smash the bone armor (and thereby reduce its effectiveness from AC:16 to 15, and then from 15 to 14).

The Death Doorway is an excerpt from my Examples of the Dark Arts. The Boneknight is an excerpt from my Almanac of Animated Skeletons.

A word from the author: the maze itself is rather deadly compared to the undead it is staffed with, as the traps (magical or not) have the potential to kill a character that is not playing smart. Especially the *Explosive Runes* are mean and nasty, because they are not triggered by a wrong decision, but by a player being inquisitive. I still opted for this trap for two reasons: first and foremost, I wanted to use *Explosive Runes* at least once as a Referee, and traps like that are their only use. Second, it will teach the characters to take the magic the maze is protected with serious. This lesson becomes important by the time that they reach *the Death Doorway*...



Shrine of the Future Self

I had been scrabbling a dungeon based on my own first name. It is only three letters long, so I used their parts as the hallways and stairs, and added some rooms around them. Very early on, I knew that I wanted this to be a micro-dungeon with a shrine at its end. Inside that shrine, a magic mirror which would allow one to commune with "the desired future self", to learn what to do in upcoming situations. The rough sketch was resting on my desk at home for quiet a while...

Then, a fellow from mewe.com going by the nickname of Samwise Seven RPG pointed me towards a map-making tool named Dungeon Scrawl by Probable Train. This turned out to be one of the most marvelous free-to-use-even-for-commercial-stuff web-based map making tools I am aware of. Now, a bit of toying and tinkering later... I have a micro dungeon for LotFP.

Summary: *The Shrine of the Future Self* is very old. Its origin is centuries in the past (in a game like LotFP, it may be traced back to the Roman Empire or Ancient Greek). The heart of the shrine always was the Mirror. It allows those who step before it to commune with their desired future self, and to learn how to come closer to what they wish to be. A secret society formed around the Mirror, one that sought to use its powers for their own benefit while keeping it secret from any rivals.

Eventually, the society was found out, branded as heretic (or even as in league with the devil) and purged while the mirror was destroyed and the entrance buried. So it is written in old journals and diaries of that time. More than a decade ago, an ambitious warlock sought the place in hope of finding remains of the mirror. To his surprise, he found the mirror itself, whole, and the future self of the own desires, ready to give advice. The secret society was born anew...

Who exactly this "circle" is made up now, where the shrine exactly is located and how the PC come into contact with all of it is up to the Referee. Perhaps they are secret witch-hunters, perhaps they were hired by a rival of one of the members to find out something. Perhaps they learned about it and want to steal the mirror (in that case, the mission is doomed to fail).

General interior: A square equals 3 feet. Unless mentioned otherwise, everything in the dungeon is dark. The floor is made of packed dirt. In days past, the walls had been covered with painted plaster, but next to all of it has crumbled away by now. The remains are still piling up at the feet of every wall, as they were just swept aside. The walls themselves are lined by crude bricks of burned clay that form a vaulted ceiling. Depending on the area where the Referee places this dungeon, the architecture will either be Roman or Greek. The air is stale and has a tang of crumbled pottery, mixed with old sweat and a hint of smoke. While the dungeon itself is ancient, the doors are not. It is obvious that they have been added in the past three or six years, probably to replace old ones that have rotten away.

01) Stairs / Entrance

An ancient spiral stair made of stone leads down to this dark room. The characters will find a crude wooden door at the end that is definitively not as ancient as the stairs. Next to it, a wide hooded robe made from brown burlap and a simple *papier mâché* mask with a string (to fix it to the head) hang from separate iron hooks that were driven into the wall.

The door is locked. Every member of the secret circle has a key, as well as the guards. The lock itself is simple, and easy to overcome by those who have the skill to do so. The mask and the robe are means of the members of the circles to hide their own identity from the guards (who only know their employer). There is only one mask and robe, because the members come alone (see also [12]).

The door to room [02] opens into it, and has a copper chime dangling on the other side, suspended from a metal hook above the door frame. When the door is opened, the chime rings and signals to the guards [03] that somebody has entered the room. If the door is opened very, very slowly, the chime will not make enough noise to attract the guards attention.

02) Vestibule

The room has a very high ceiling, about 15 feet. The eastern wall has several very large window openings higher up in the wall (starting at about 9 feet), suggesting that there is an adjacent room above the level of this room. Soft light (of a lantern) shines from there into this room, and draws long shadows. To the south, a gate of wrought iron bars blocks the way into a long hallway, which lies in darkness. The room is empty but for a simple, angular wooden chest next to the western wall (which holds eight torches as well as a small burlap pouch with a large box of matches).

The gate is locked, but the lock is not especially complicated. Every member of the secret circle has a key (a different one than that to open the door between the stairs and the vestibule). A guard from the adjacent room [03] will call "Who is there" while coming to the window openings when the chimes draw their attention, but will not expect any trouble then. A PC that came in this way while wearing the mask and robe may try to stall for time or trick the guard. The presence of more than one person will put the guards on their toes (that has not happened before), and when weapons are raised they will not take chances. When nobody with a mask enters, the guard will know that something is wrong. The character/s will then be hailed with "hey, you there! Whatcha doing here?!", which will signal the two other guards (see [03]) to ready their weapons. The first guard will stall for time till the others come to his site, only then will he go down the stairs to alarm the others [06] before they try to apprehend and question the intruder/s. They have no problem to kill any prisoners if they think that nobody will miss those folks. In fact, they have done so before, kept the belongings and got away with it.

03) Guards room

The guard room is very spartan. Benches have been placed against all but the western wall, where a few large openings allow to watch the vestibule [02] below. A further, smaller bench and two stools are grouped around another, smaller, bench that doubles as a table. The room is lit by a lantern placed at the end of the bench at the eastern wall.

At least three guards (2-in-6 chance for a fourth) will be here any given time. They will sit on the stools or benches, play cards or dice, share whorehouse stories while passing a wineskin, polish boots or buckles, sharpen blades, clean their weapons or just idle around being bored by one another. Aside from what has already been mentioned, rations and oil flasks (for the lantern) will be present

In a "default" LotFP setting (early modern period, with gunpowder weapons and rapiers replacing older armament), the guards will be hired cutthroats and scoundrels that are paid a (for them) fine sum of money for staying down here three to four days at a time, before a second group of like background relieves them. They are unarmored (AC:12) Level 1 fighters with 5 hit points. Each will be armed with a pistol and a very large knife (small weapon; 1d6). They have apostels, powder horns, bags of shot and their own purses (5+5d6 sp & 5+3d6 cp) with them, as well as small knives (utility) and whatever the Referee would like them to have on person. One of the guards will have a key ring that

holds the two keys (those needed for each of the doors found in room [02]).

In a medieval setting, the guards are still little more than brutish sell-swords or bandits. They will be armed with a short sword or spear, shields will be ready in the guard room. Two crossbows with bolts will be available there as well.

04) The Upper Hallway is not lit, but there is a 1-in-6 chance that a little light shines from under the door leading to [06].

In the eastern wall there are recesses every 9 feet into which a torch may be placed. The doors leading to [06] and [07] are both made of wood and very simple. They have a handle, but no lock. Near the door to the Guard Quarters, a polearm leans against the eastern wall. It has been placed there to be "at the ready" if the guards have to defend the hallway against intruders.

05) Junction

Cracked stone stairs (really just rectangular stone blocks that have been placed as steps onto the worked ground) lead up (to [03]) and down (to 08).

06) Guard Quarters

The door leading inside is closed, but not locked. As mentioned in the entry for [04], there is a 1-in-6 chance that a little light shines from under the door. In this case, a guard in the room is awake, either getting ready for sleep or for the own shift in the guard room [03].

The room contains little for its size: there are five sleeping berths of the most simple kind (bedrolls, blankets, cushions of burlap stuffed with hay,), each of them with a small number of candles and a matchbox or tinderbox next to them, and three stools. On one of them sits a lantern (the source of the light, if any is lit). Supplies have been piled up against the southern wall. Four small barrels (water), two large sacks (with rations), a bundle of torches (tied together with strips of cloth), a leather satchel (with oil and tools to treat and re-set the traps in [08] as needed; not been used yet) and six wooden crates, two of which have been opened. One has been placed on the side, so that the straw inside of it spilled onto the floor. The other has loose lit resting on it, and contains two sealed flasks of lamp oil, packed in straw, and four unsealed, empty flasks. The other piled up boxes contain six flasks each, packed in straw as well.

One guard will always be here, and there is a 4-in-6 chance for two guards being present. Usually both will be asleep (see above for the change of a guard being awake). They keep their weapons on person, as well as what little personal belongings they took with them here. See [03] Guard Room for the details.

07) Abort

The room reeks as one should expect, but is free of flies. A board with a sandpapered opening has been placed over two roughly cut wood blocks, right above a large hole in the ground. A burlap sack with straw sits next to it.

08) Trap Level

Unlike the rest of the dungeon, the ground of this level is decked out with square stone tiles. Two traps wait in this level to harm any intruders that managed to fool the guards. The first comes in the form of a trench with iron spikes that is covered by the stone tiles. As soon as an adult man steps onto said tiles, they will swing down like a trap door and give way to the one-and-a-half foot trench below. The weight of the own body will provide enough momentum to have the spikes penetrate the sole of a regular boot, and pierce the foot. The wound will cause no hit point loss, but the Agility Bonus of the character will be reduced to (-2) and movement will be halved at least a day of rest, magical healing and/or visit to a physician have been had. Running will not be possible, either. As the spikes are not clean, a tetanus infection is possible (if the Referee likes to bother the players with such realism).

The other trap is of similar build, but comes as a classic trap door that is activated by pushing the handle of a fake door (see map). Only the character standing in front of the door will fall in.

Why are all these traps “non-deadly”? After visitors walked down to the shrine, two guards will wait for their return at the top of the stairs at the junction [05]. One will have a pistol (or crossbow) at the ready, the other the polearm. If they hear screams from below or see a visitor coming up the stairs limping, they know that they have been tricked. If possible, they will try to subdue an intruder instead of killing her, so that she can be put to question -before- their throats are cut.

09) Grand Stairs

While the stairs at the junction [05] have been rather crude affairs, this long and impressive flight was worked carefully and by a skilled craftsman. It is a long way down. The next-to-last step is trapped: a spring blade will be activated by those stepping on it, shooting out from under the step above it. The mechanism is not strong enough to sever a foot, but will be powerful enough cut in deep. While technically a different kind of wound, the Referee is encouraged to use the same game mechanics for the impaled foot described for the spike traps (see above).

10) Lower Hallway

The base of the stairs, as well as the floor of the lower hallway are covered with the same kind of square stone tiles as the trap level [08], but there are no further traps.

11) Area of Darkness

The lower hallway ends at a vast doorway. It is filled with what is best described as an opaque blackness that resist any penetration by light, but will turn out to be non-tangible never the less. It is a an area of *Permanent Darkness*, created by a 15th level Magic-User by a combination of the *Darkness* and *Permanency* spells. The players are unlikely to have the means to dispel it... and if they do, they rob themselves of a safety mechanism (see [12]).

12) Shrine of the Future Self

The chamber contains a large mirror, mounted to the wall opposite to the zone of darkness. It is 9 feet high, 4 feet wide and made of polished bronze. The very moment a character steps out of the darkness, a mirror-version of itself will step out of the mirror. This Mirror-Image will look like an idealized version of the character's own self, but a little older. It will greet the PC with a warm, welcoming smile and a “good to see that you finally found your way here. From now on, things can get better” and wait patiently for the original to enter a conversation.

The Mirror-Image will gladly explain what it is: a vision and embodiment of the potential future success of the character. It may offer guidance by answering questions about future events and goals, so that the character may eliminate choices that will not lead to success. This kind of self-revelation, however, puts a strain onto the fabric that keeps the universe under tidy wraps... to many questions between two full moons may change things in a way the character will not like a bit.

The Mirror and the Mirror-Image function like a modified version of the *Augury* spell. There is no time frame to how far in the future an action might be, but if the outcome is to unsure due to other circumstances for the Referee to make up his own mind, the Mirror-Image will say that there is no clear answer to this question at this point.

Every time a question is asked, the mirror on the wall will begin to blur and roll, like it would be a mirage in the heat of the desert. After each question regarding possible courses of action in the future, the GM rolls d10. If the result is equal or lower than the sum of questions that have been asked by the character since the last full moon, the Mirror-Image will suddenly change, and attack [*Surprise* when this happens the first time]. The Referee should add two or three appendages created by the table for the *Summon* spell (PCR. p. 135) and a random power from there for every second level of the character. Otherwise, this Mirror-Distortion is just like the character, but will try kill the original. For doing so, it will try to keep the character from stepping into the Darkness again, because the Mirror-Distortion will disappear as soon as it loses sight of the character for more(!) than one round.

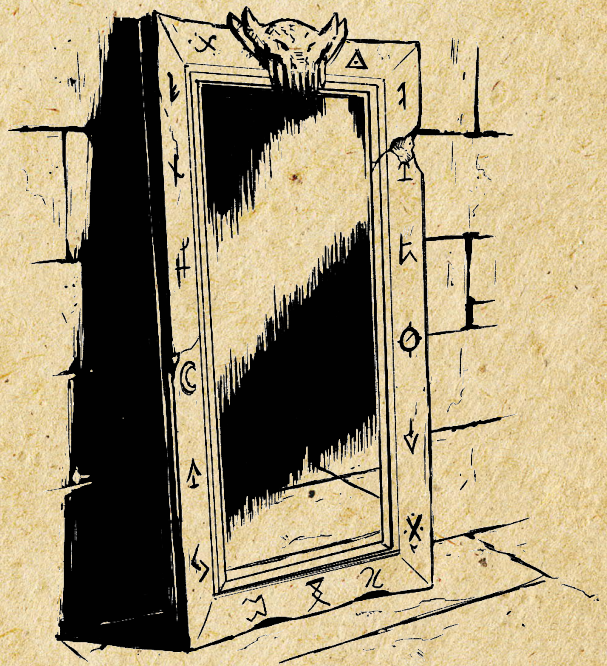
When a Mirror-Distortion appeared, it will continue to appear for the character (instead of the Mirror-Image) till the next full moon.

When a weapon is pointed at the Mirror-Image by the original character, the Mirror-Image will take half a step back while its expressions changes from benevolent to malevolent. "I am mirror image, you fool!" it will proclaim loudly while making likewise preparations for combat. If the weapons is put down by the original, so will the Mirror-Image. Asking questions with the weapon up will lead to an attack, as will not putting down the weapon after two rounds.

If more than one character enters the Shrine, the Mirror-Image will become a distorted amalgam of -all- the characters, just as if a mad magician would have somehow melted and molded them all together. This Mirror-Distortion will attack after a round of wailing and shivering, and will cause the effect of a *Confusion* spell on every of the involved characters for as long as it exists. It is a monster with HD and hit points equal to the COMBINED levels (HD) and hit points (hit points) of the characters that had it come into being.

The Mirror is mounted to the wall. It is impossible to remove it or to destroy it. Digging out the wall around it will open up a crack into a vast *Nothingness* behind the mirror. Every 2d6 rounds, a random creature will emerge from this *Nothingness* and enter the real world till the crack is sealed again. Any creature will have 1d4* HD (4 means that another 1d4 is rolled and added) and should be created with the *Summon* spell, or any other generator for bizarre chaotic monsters the Referee wishes to use.

When the Mirror is removed from this spot, it loses all its power. It acts like a burning glass for the energies of this gab in reality, and as a seal at the same time.



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