



RAVENOUS RECEPTION

A Shadow of the Demon Lord Adventure for Expert Characters



EXPERT

From the cloistered halls of the Library of Melphor to the smog-filled alleys of the City of Wonders, magic infuses nearly every shadow and footprint throughout the Empire. Yet those who possess the will to shape the world through magical means, do so for reasons entirely their own. Masters of forbidden and dark powers see the communities around them as nothing more than testing grounds, unleashing cruel and malicious experiments from the shadows and watching with sadistic delight as unsuspecting citizens fall to their horrid magics.



disciples
— of the —
demon lord

~CREDITS~

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Ravenous Reception is a *Shadow of the Demon Lord* adventure designed for a group of expert characters. In it, the characters are thrust into a series of horrific encounters with all-consuming threats capable of devouring the world. Even if the characters are able to defeat the immediate danger, the possibility of the danger continuing to spread unmolested must be dealt with or else one calamity will quickly envelop the world in a ravenous sludge of doom.

MAD ALCHEMIST

Inora Radjni has recently arrived in the town of Russellville. An orphan originally from Lij, the City of Wonders, she displayed a talent for magic while working as a lowly cleaner in a chemical warehouse and was taken in as an apprentice or “gog” in the clandestine Alchemist guild. Unknown to her teachers, when she was young and living on the streets, Inora witnessed an ooze come out of the sewers and devour a man alive. The experience stayed with her until she gained acceptance into the guild where she immediately began looking for clues into the nature of the creature, secretly desiring to summon or create her own. Inora’s mentors recognized this obsession fairly quickly, a path of study outside the guild purview. Despite warnings, she persisted until finally the guild was left with no other choice but to expel her.

Inora began advocating for admission to the other guilds of the city. Once expelled however, cast-out members are usually turned away by the other traditions. Finding she could not continue her experiments in Lij, she took to the surrounding areas, offering her services and the arcane abilities she knew to whomever needed the basic skills of an alchemist. Unfortunately, the guild’s reach extends far beyond Lij and she was turned away almost as soon as she set foot into the larger towns of the area.

Finally, on the verge of starvation reminiscent of her childhood, Inora came across an elderly, slightly inebriated merchant whom she befriended. Stating he was in need of her rudimentary skills, he offered to pay her handsomely. Unfortunately the merchant craved more than her magical abilities and when Inora refused his advances, the confrontation turned violent and Inora ended up killing the man. As it turned out, he was extremely wealthy and after disposing of the body, she wandered the region with greater freedom thanks to his hefty purse, finally wandered to the town of Russellville.

Formed largely due to a now defunct and barely mined lead pit, a potent substance in the workings of alchemy, Russellville turned out to be absent any touch of the Guilds. The twin lead pits, still



INORA RADJNI

containing enough of the untouched stone, was a huge attraction to Inora. Both lead pits were owned by Dorlek Gilmyn, and once Inora learned this fact, she inquired about a small plot on his estate that she might purchase. Unwilling to share the land on his personal manor, Dorlek instead offered Inora the abandoned lead site on the small island situated on the river adjacent to the town that was supposed to be his families next extraction site. Accepting the offer, Inora paid with nearly every stolen coin she had and set up her new home, happily continuing her experiments once more. Unfortunately for the citizens of Russellville, these experiments have recently been all too successful.

MOTHER OF OOZE

While at the Guild, Inora would secretly sneak into libraries and laboratories of its many members, using the skills she had learned growing up on the streets to gain entry to the locked rooms and halls. She eventually stumbled on a book of alchemical conjuration and transformation, a dual-traditioned tome called the *Disembodied Servant*, written by a long dead alchemist named Adabarin Radjni. Stealing the book and the author’s last name, when she left Lij, Inora was determined to unlock its secrets.

For the past month, Inora has been perfecting her experiments into the creation of oozes on the small island next to the village of Russellville. Despite her youth, her natural talent for magic and being free of guild restrictions and able to pursue her tradition whole-heartedly has also allowed her to quickly learn spells far beyond what most apprentices would

be equipped with. She stole a number of advanced tomes from the guild halls before she was kicked out, yet her experiments are the work of an untrained, obsessive mind. The fumes of her undertakings tinge the night air with unusual colors, drifting out over the river but her obsession makes her largely oblivious to these environmental effects. The townsfolk however, have noticed. Gilmyr, the island's recent owner, has a reputation as a drunkard with a quick temper which has kept any prying eyes from his estate or the alchemist's new home where the colored winds seem to originate from.

Along with the colors, the chemicals Inora has been creating, including the excavated lead, has slowly begun to affect her already tenuous sanity. Despite these issues, last night she finally had a breakthrough. She created her first ooze from an alchemical mixture, an achievement she celebrated by creating two more immediately afterwards. Though tiny, the oozes are highly dangerous and Inora quickly realized as their forms bubbled before her eyes that they had the potential to grow into the man-sized horror she saw as a child.

Thanks in no small part to the horrible chemicals she has been inhaling since working on the island, Inora thrilled at the idea of unleashing her creations on the unsuspecting residents of Russellville, starting with Dorlek, who vaguely reminded her of the merchant. In her chemically-induced madness, Inora hopes to create an entire army of the creatures, spreading them out into the world to replace the current beings whom she sees as unworthy of the world, especially members of the guild that once abandoned her, just the parents she never met and who cast her aside as an orphan so many years ago.

Crafting a crude, makeshift catapult (another idea she learned from her stolen books), Inora placed the three oozes into separate, hollowed out stones and hurled them across the river, aimed directly at the Gilmyr estate. Flying wide, they ultimately missed their mark, landing in the woods behind the residence. Watching through a spy glass, Inora was very disappointed to see she missed, but quickly set about creating more oozes, confident her 'children' would get to feasting straight away. Fortunately, the formulae for creating more oozes requires a good deal of lead shavings and she is several days away from having enough to conjure forth another ooze.

TIMELINE OF SLIME

The events that occur in Russellville happen over a very short amount of time. Based on the character's decisions and how quickly it takes for them to track down Inora's oozes, the threats the party faces can change over the course of the adventure.

SETTING IN OTHER LOCATIONS

While this adventure is set in the shadow of the City of Lij (for more information be sure to check out City of Wonder), there's nothing preventing you from moving the adventure to some other sufficiently backwater location. Just make sure that it's in a place in the distant shadow of a large city with a wizardly tradition, one that expels and reprimands those who would forsake their studies in pursuit of their own mad obsessions.

It is assumed that every scene in this adventure takes roughly an hour to complete from start to finish. Depending on the order that characters approach the adventure, the slimes they encounter in the later scenes may be larger, depending on how quickly they arrive to face each threat.

GETTING STARTED

Russellville should be placed somewhat near the City of Lij, but beyond that one recommendation, it can be placed anywhere you like, preferably near where the characters had their last adventure but relatively far from other large towns or other settlements.

The character's might have heard of the strange unnatural lights over the town of Russellville and come to investigate or simply have come to rest up, train or stop en route to someplace else, perhaps even the City of Wonders. However you decide to incorporate the town, it is important to establish that the characters arrive in the town after dark, well past suppertime, and quickly find their way to the Greasy Bunny Inn and Tavern where the adventure begins.

RUSSELLVILLE

The adventure takes place in a small town named Russellville. Home to about six hundred people, mostly human, the community is in an out-of-the-way area of the empire, some distance from a major trade route that connects directly to Lij, the City of Wonders. The town left much of the area's forest untouched, using the lumber as a source of wood and to shield themselves from the rest of the Empire. It is predominantly a farming community, with most buildings made of sturdy wood surrounded by tilled land of various crops.

Originally founded following the discovery of a large open-air lead pit, the remoteness of the town and the relatively limited amount of lead meant its mining profits were too small for it to become a major hub. While most of the families shifted to a life of



RUSSELLVILLE

- 1 - Gilmyn Isle
- 2 - Gilmyn Estate
- 3 - Geasy Bunny Inn & Tavern
- 4 - Squatter Camp
- 5 - Home of Catherine
- 6 - Storgaard Estate

agriculture, the Gilmyn family, one of the original founders and the owners of the land around the open pit have spent the three generations following its founding sowing infighting among the various families due to their failed attempts at creating a mining empire. Despite the infighting, most of the residents of Russellville are content to be left alone, far from the big city evils of the rest of the Empire.

Apart from the farms, a few main thoroughfares exist that have a half dozen shops split among them, all mostly selling farming goods. The notable locations where this adventure unfolds in town are described here.

Gilmyn Estate: A large plot of land in the western part of town owned by a local curmudgeon, Dorlek Gilmyn, whose family was one of the first settlers of the area but has since secluded himself on his enormous estate. He has a bitter rivalry with the Storgaards, the mayor and her family who were also founders of the town but who focused on farming where Dorlek and his family focused on the deposits of lead on his estate found in a large open pit which was quickly dried up. His grandfather searched the area for more deposits, finding small amount on an island in the adjacent river, setting up a small home

but the enterprise was largely unsuccessful and the bitterness drove the Gilmyn family into solitude. The estate consists of a large three story manor, several storehouses and a huge open lead pit. Dorlek's two grown sons, Ivan and Anton, live with their father and share his temperament.

Gilmyn Isle: A large island that sits in the nameless river beside the town. When the Gilmyn's, one of the founding families took over the land for their own mining pursuits, the other families abandoned the area. The stone foundations of a house and an accompanying storehouse are all that remain on the island next to beginnings of a small open-air lead pit.

Geasy Bunny Inn and Tavern: A comfortable inn in the center of town that has two stories, a thatched roof and a single large chimney. A large tavern takes up most of the first floor and there are ten rooms on the second floor, with enough beds for thirty people. A 24-hour kitchen is manned by one of the two cooks,

both of whom along with the staff work for Jesper the innkeeper and his family (wife and three small children). Though a sheltered community, the Greasy Bunny normally attracts nearby farmers from other communities for the food and relaxing nature of the Inn and tavern and it is nearly always full with patrons. For the evening however, many of the out-of-towners and most of the townspeople are at the Storgaard manor, attending the wedding reception.

Oakwood Forest: The entire community is split by timberlands collectively call the Oakwood Forest. While the townsfolk are not necessarily afraid of the woods, most do not generally venture too deep into them for fear of the various wild animals that call them home including foxes, wild boars and big cats. There are however some exceptions, including a few of the village residents who live in the wilderness and come to trade furs, and meat with their more domesticated villagers.

Storgaard Estate: A large plot of land and a huge manor sits in the north of the town. The Storgaards are a large and friendly family, presided over by Heather Storgaard, the matron of the family and the mayor of Russellville. The estate is surrounded by wooded area that shelters their vast fields of crops. Apart from Heather, her husband Heath and their two sons, Bernard and Johan live on the estate which is tended to by a dozen servants. The estate is currently hosting the wedding reception of the eldest son, Johan and many of the townsfolk are in attendance.

Squatter Camp: Some town residents have chosen to make their home among the various patches of timber in the Oakwood Forest, living free amongst nature while close enough to a community to still be a part of civilization. One such camp is shared by two forest hermits, Geoff and Rayford, cousins who have built a pair of crude wooden shacks. Somewhat hidden in the woods, the camp has a good deal of the cast away objects and furniture discarded by the town.

UNEXPECTED VISITOR

This scene takes about 1 hour.

The adventure starts just as the characters are getting settled into the Greasy Bunny. If the characters ask around, they may learn a few things about the town including any of the following:

- The town was founded by a few families that have since fallen into petty rivalries with the two main factions being the Storgaards whose matriarch, Heather, is the current mayor, and the Gilmyr's who are headed by Dorlek, a reclusive and a drunkard who deals primarily in lending money.
- The Gilmyr's were the primary founders of the

town after discovering an open air lead pit and sought to turn the area into a mining concern for a large city, such as Lij, but the remoteness, limited amount of deposits and the thick forest made this dream never come to fruition.

- There have been strange hazy lights over the nearby river, almost like mists that rise off the waters. The island belongs to the Gilmyr family and no one wants to draw their ire, so none of the townsfolk have bothered to investigate the sightings, but some are beginning to worry.
- The mayor's eldest son, Johan Storgaard, got married earlier today and most of the town is at the reception, happening on the estate right now.
- Hunfrey Straube (**commoner**), the town's middle-aged constable, is sipping a brew, despite being invited to the wedding and reception he only attended the wedding and not the reception, not being a particularly socialable partier, and because he has conflicted loyalties between the Gilmyr's and the Storgaards.

Allow the characters just enough time to get their bearings at the inn before the door bursts open and a screaming man enters, clutching his hand in pain.

The man is Geoff, a local resident who lives in the woods. He is known by the locals and his family was one of the founders but he fell to drinking and living in the forest after his farm went to ruin and he couldn't pay Gilmyr back. He now lives in the woods along with his cousin Rayford. The locals instantly recognize Geoff when he enters the. On Geoff's hand is a fleshy pink glob, an **alchemist ooze (tiny)**, that has completely engulfed his appendage. None of the

ALCHEMIST OOZE (TINY)

DIFFICULTY 1

Size 1/4 ooze

Perception 14 (+4); sightless

Defense 14; **Health** 7

Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 5 (-5), **Will** 13 (+3)

Speed 4; climber

Immune damage from acid; gaining Insanity; blinded, charmed, dazed, frightened, immobilized, prone, stunned, or any effect that would change the ooze's shape

Amorphous An ooze can move freely through openings wide enough to permit the passage of water, and it can move through spaces occupied by other creatures.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Pseudopod (melee) +4 (1d3 plus 1d3 from acid; no damage to metal or stone)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Swift Attack When a creature within 1 yard of the ooze moves, the ooze can use a triggered action to attack the triggering creature with its pseudopod.

Elude When a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against the ooze's Defense or Agility, the ooze can use a triggered action to retreat.

inn's staff or regulars are anxious to help except for Hunfrey who approaches Geoff but is completely dumbfounded by what he sees. Hunfrey tries to calm Geoff but the man is in too much pain. If the characters do not come to Hunfrey's aid by that point, the constable calls out to them for aid recognizing them as potential mercenaries from a big city by their dress or by a prior conversation they may have had.

If anyone tries to touch the thing on Geoff's hand it burns their flesh as if by acid, even as it grows bigger and bigger by the minute. Once the characters have engaged in helping Geoff you can have them make an Intelligence challenge roll to realize that it is actually a living creature, a tiny ooze. Any attempt to remove the ooze fails and only causes more pain to Geoff. The only way to remove it is to kill it outright which also, regrettably, will amputate his hand. Unless the characters act quickly, the ooze continues to devour his hand then moves up his arm one inch every minute that goes by, completely consuming him in about fifteen minutes from the time he enters the door, meaning that if the characters sit around to discuss the matter, Geoff is slowly consumed before their very eyes. Once he is completely consumed, the ooze instantly becomes a regular **alchemist ooze** and must be fought immediately.

Despite his pain, Geoff is able to explain he saw something fall from the sky, leaving a colorful trail in its wake. He talks in short, agonizing sentences, barely able to speak due to the pain, through clenched teeth:

IT- CAME FROM THE SKY, TRAILING COLORS.

THREE OF 'EM!

DIDNT WANNA TOUCH IT. RAYFORD MADE ME!

ONE OF THEM GOT HIM TOO!

LEFT HIM AT THE CAMP - HAD TO FIND HELP!

On hearing this, Hunfrey realizes there might be another one of the things and that it might devouring Rayford as they speak. He knows both men, not the best residents, but he is their constable and must help them if he is able to. He readily admits he's never actually had to scuffle with anything more dangerous than a drunken village and so is eager to turn to the characters and tells them that he will see to it that the mayor, who is currently at a wedding celebration, pays them 50 gp each if they accompany Hunfrey into the woods to find Rayford and make sure the man is okay. If the characters refuse, he is willing to go as high as 75 gold each. Once the characters agree, he immediately leads them outside and towards the nearby woods.



HUNFREY

The town constable is largely a nominal role, one that Hunfrey himself only grudgingly acknowledges. From a game standpoint, he exists primarily to give the characters a sense of urgency to finding the oozes and if possible, Inora. Every scene that calls for Hunfrey to interact with other NPCs should be done in a way that allows the characters to take command of the situation. Hunfrey may be a constable, but he knows real adventurers when he sees them.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES

It is entirely possible that the characters feel that a better approach to finding Rayford is to search among the nearby homes instead of following Hunfrey into the woods. If they question Hunfrey about where the man may be found outside of the woods, you can have him suggest they go to his old flames home, Catherine, Rayford's aunt. If this is the case, you can advance the story to "The Village Ooze".

The characters may also decide that the strange lights over the river hold the key to the ooze, in which case Hunfrey insists that before investigating the lights, they speak to Dorlek Gilmyrn who owns the island where the phenomena appears to be coming from. In this case, you can advance the story to "Gilmyrn Estate".



INTO THE WOODS

This scene takes about 1 hour.

Hunfrey is able to guide the characters to the edge of the woods where townsfolk normally see Geoff and Rayford coming and going from. He is initially extremely confident he can find the way to their ramshackle huts but after only a few minutes, quickly becomes disoriented in the night. He is visibly shaken at the idea of being lost in the woods and starts to nervously describe the sightings of the occasional bear or wolf that has been seen by townsfolk over the years, normal for the area but a frightful encounter that Hunfrey does not wish to have.

Though he is the constable, Hunfrey repeatedly reiterates that the most fearsome encounters he has had to deal with are the occasional drunken town member or petty family squabbles that occasionally descend into shouting matches. Despite his inexperience in 'adventure' he insists he can find the way to Geoff's hut, but any character that even casually tries to tell if he is lying realizes the man is completely lost, but too proud to admit it. For the remainder of their forest journey, Hunfrey is mostly silent and withdrawn, too ashamed to admit he is lost, and too frightened of the woods and his reputation to look like a fool. Needless to say, if the party is attacked in the woods, he stays far away from danger.

THE FOREST

The Oakwood Forest itself is a dark, largely silent stretch of wilderness scattered in patches throughout

the town that immediately seems to swallow up the characters as they move past any initial line of trees. Strange rustling sounds can occasionally be heard in the night, breaking this silence as some unseen animal moves away at the approach of the party. Moonlight filters through the canopy but for the most part, the forest is almost pitch black.

In order to find Geoff and Rayford's shack, you can have the players make a **Perception** challenge. If the characters do not have a source of light, feel free to add a bane to the roll. If the characters fail the initial roll, feel free to have the party ambushed by a pack of wild boars. The forest goes deathly quiet right before the attack and then 2 (1d4) boars charge out from the darkness to attack the party. You can use the stats of a **medium animal** for each boar. The encounter is not meant to be dangerous but should serve to convince Hunfrey that the party needs to be more cautious. From then on Hunfrey no longer travels at normal speed, constantly stopping to listen to any random sound in the darkness and trying to walk as silently as possible. This has the effect of adding an extra 1 hour or "1 scene" to this part of the adventure.

Once the players succeed on the Perception challenge, they are able to notice a faint path through the woods, without Hunfrey's help, that twists and turns, eventually leading to a pair of small wooden huts next to an open fire pit.

SQUATTER CAMP

The area where Geoff and Rayford set up camp is mostly empty, with dirty rabbit and fox furs thatched

to upright wooden trestles surrounded by white powderish lime that keeps the forest animals away from the carcasses. A large fire pit is dug right next to a pair of small and crude wooden shacks. Each shack is made of shoddy wooden panels and is roughly 10 feet long and 7 feet wide. The inside of each hut is mostly empty and consists of simple tables and chairs along with mounds of dirty clothes used by the men as separate beds. The fire pit embers are still glowing red, but there are otherwise no flames. Various durable goods and mundane items are found throughout the camp, but nothing of value lies anywhere in sight. Everything but the wooden panels used to built the shacks has been scrouged from the village, either through trade or rubbish salvaging.

OOZE ROCKS

Two of the rocks that each contained an ooze are next to the fire pit.

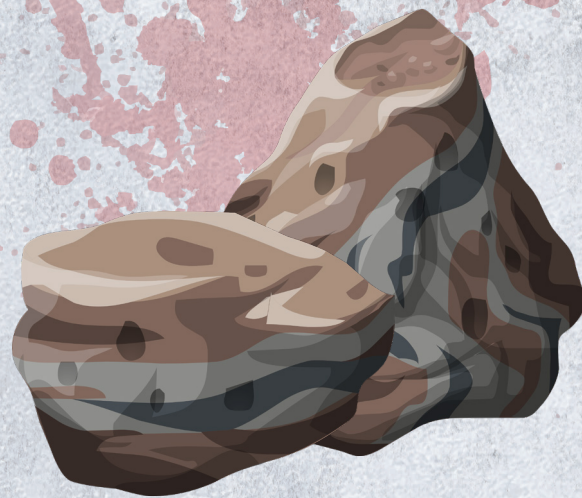
Characters can note that these rocks are about the size of a human head and seem oddly out of place. Inspecting the rocks reveals bits of blood on one and turning them over reveals large chiseled fist-sized holes in each of their centers that lead to their hollowed out cores. The ground each rock them is also splattered with blood. This was where the two men discovered the rocks contained holes and where Rayford foolishly stuck his hand into one of them, getting it immediately attacked by the ooze inside. As Geoff went to help his friend, the other ooze emerged from the second rock and latched onto his hand.

The men retrieved the rocks from just outside the grounds of the Gilmyrn estate. A forest trail of well traveled dirt and parting undergrowth from the campsite to the Gilmyrn estate can easily be seen leaving the camp from the opposite direction of where the characters entered, presumably from the East. Otherwise, the area around the camp is mostly untouched forest shrubbery and growth.

The characters can choose to follow the obvious trail however some of the shrubbery contains more blood to the North which is the direction Rayford fled to for help after Geoff left him to go to the Greasy Inn. You can have the characters make a Perception challenge to notice this small trail of blood leading away into the woods.

VARIOUS APPROACHES

Once the characters have investigated the camp, they essentially have three options: follow the obvious trail leading east and to the Gilmyrn estate, if they find the blood trail follow that trail which leads northeast, or search the forest around the campsite for more clues. If they choose to search the forest around the campsite, feel free to have them find the blood trail



if they haven't already done so after succeeding on a Perception challenge, otherwise they find nothing. If the characters do wander the forest, not having found the blood trail or simply looking for other clues and if the boar encounter to find the shack was not previously triggered, you may have the characters encounter it at this point, again increasing the time for this scene from 1 hour to 2.

If the characters choose to follow the obvious trail to the east, you can advance the story to "Gilmyrn Estate". If the character's decide to go back the way they came advance the story to "Village Ooze". If the character's choose to follow the blood-trail to the north-east, it quickly disappears in the forest, at which point Hunfrey realizes that Rayford is probably heading towards a particular home and you can advance the story to "Village Ooze" as well.

THE VILLAGE OOZE

This scene takes about 1 hour.

Depending on how the characters reach this part of the story, they may end up heading directly to a specific home in the village of Russellville, or need to search the various houses along the forest edge to begin their search for the village ooze.

If Hunfrey is leading the search, he will take the group immediately to the home of Catherine, an old flame of his from his youth. The woman lives alone in a small, one story modest house and is Rayford's aunt. Hunfrey will be very distressed once they reach her home, fearing the worst.

If Hunfrey is not leading the search, you can have the characters succeed on a Perception challenge to notice that from a distance, the candlelight from her windows looks to be flickering through apparently

shattered glass windows, causing the light to cast ominous glows into the night.

Investigating the area around her home turns up the broken glass below one of the windows lying in a section of incredibly damp earth, like a large amount of liquid was poured over the area.

Inside of Catherine's home is a scene of an obvious struggle, with the woman's den room in complete disarray. Unfortunately, Rayford made it to woman's home, almost entirely covered by the ooze where he fell to the ground and the ooze completely devouring the man, right before it crashed through Catherine's window and proceeded to chase her down and consume her as well. Various bits of slimey residue can be found all over Catherine's furniture, the result of the ooze consuming the unfortunate woman. In addition, tiny bits of flesh can be found on the shards of glass in the window, the remains of both Catherine and Rayford that got stuck as the ooze slithered into and out of the home. Hunfrey is incredibly distraught over the scene, barely able to control his grief but determined to find the cause of this calamity that has befallen his town.

At this point, the character's must find the ooze in one of the nearby homes. Characters who get a success on a Perception challenge can follow the damp trail of earth that leads to a nearby home, the next den of victims that the ooze went after. Each home is another scene of chaos, with the damage growing worse and worse as larger and larger furniture is destroyed and more and more slimey residue is left in the ooze's wake. Eventually, characters who succeed on a Perception challenge by 5 or more, are able to notice a particular house where there are candlelight shapes dashing about in the windows in what appears to be an obvious struggle, allowing the party to immediately head to the home. You can also have screams coming from a particular home to hurry this scene along if the party is pressed for time or is unable to perceive the flicking candlelight, forgoing a house-by-house search.

For each scene or 1 hour that occurred prior to this part of the adventure, the ooze is considered to have grown by 1 size, starting from size 1. For each scene that occurred, the ooze was able to travel to a new home and consume its inhabitants, which means the party may have to search house by house until they find the ooze. If the number of scenes that occurred prior to this part is four or greater, then the ooze has grown into gigantic proportions. With each new house and array of victims, all of whom Hunfrey knows, the constable grows steadily terrified and hysterical, causing him to make rash decisions once they encounter the town ooze.

THE FIRST OOZE

When the characters finally arrive at the house where the village ooze is currently hunting for new victims, it may have reached gigantic proportions. If that is the case, use the stats for **alchemist ooze (gigantic)**, otherwise use the stats for **alchemist ooze**. However the characters arrive at the home it is currently occupied by a family of three - a mother, father and small daughter. The characters will have to fight the ooze, while simultaneously trying to stop it from devouring the remaining members of this family - the father and daughter, both of whom Hunfrey will also try to save. You can have the ooze focus on the character's or the family, depending on how difficult or easy you wish the scene to be, but if the character's appear to be easily overcoming the ooze, feel free to make the creature focus more on the family, increasing the stakes for the characters, and for Hunfrey, whose primary concern should be to rescue the family.

If the ooze has grown to gigantic proportions, Hunfrey has seen enough of his neighbors consumed by the ooze to become filled with rage. If this is the case, he wildly attacks the ooze in anger. At the end of each round, you can have Hunfrey make an attack against the ooze. On a hit, the ooze forgoes attacking other characters on its next turn, choosing instead to attack the constable.



Once the ooze has been defeated, only a precious few minutes pass before the sound of screams can be heard in the distance. Hunfrey immediately rushes in the direction of the screams, fearful that they are coming from the mayor's wedding reception, presumably with the characters in tow. You can now advance the story to "Ravenous Reception".

ALCHEMIST OOZE

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1-4 ooze

Perception 14 (+4); sightless

Defense 8; **Health** 60

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 8 (-2), **Intellect** 5 (-5), **Will** 15 (+5)

Speed 4; climber

Immune damage from acid; gaining Insanity; blinded, charmed, dazed, frightened, immobilized, prone, stunned, or any effect that would change the ooze's shape

Amorphous An ooze can move freely through openings wide enough to permit the passage of water, and it can move through spaces occupied by other creatures.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Pseudopod (melee) +4 with 1 boon (2d6 plus 1d6 from acid; no damage to metal or stone)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Swift Attack When a creature within 1 yard of the ooze moves, the ooze can use a triggered action to attack the triggering creature with its pseudopod.

Elude When a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against the ooze's Defense or Agility, the ooze can use a triggered action to retreat.

GILMYN ESTATE

This scene takes about 1 hour.

The Gilmyrn estate consists of a large, 3-story tall home on a huge parcel of land. A giant, open air lead pit sits a short distance from the manor. A few of the windows on the third story are lit by candle light and the entire area sits in a hush silence. Every few minutes, faint sprinkling of odd colors drifts along the wind, high overhead, coming from the nearby river.

The long and winding forest trail that leads from the squatter came, ends near the open pit. Along the trail, spaced about every twenty feet leading up to the opening in the trees, are crudely built hunting snares. Some of the snares extend out a short distance onto the Gilmyrn estate itself, hidden by the high and overgrown grass that comes up to roughly knee height. The area around the Gilmyrn home is ripe with rabbits and weasels, a fact that makes it a favorite hunting spot for Geoff and Rayford. The Gilmyrn family is of course, none too happy with their property being used for game. Ivan and Anton, the two Gilmyrn heirs, are used to driving Geoff and Rayford off of their property, typically with a crossbow in hand. Like many in town, they are distant relatives, with Geoff being a second cousin to Ivan and Anton,

ROLEPLAYING OPTIONS

The Gilmyrn Estate is a scene devoted toward role-playing and is an excellent opportunity for less combat oriented players (and characters) to step into the spotlight. Depending on how well the characters are doing in the adventure up to this point and any other considerations (such as time), feel free to make the conversations with the brothers and the family patriarch, Dorlek, as difficult or easy, and as involved or as sparse, as you like. If things go sideways, feel free to run the encounter as you see fit to advance the story.

a fact that does little to stop the brothers from being overly threatening to the forest dwellers.

If the characters follow the trail through the woods, they eventually come onto the Gilmyrn estate, very close to the open air pit. The Gilmyrn brothers are hiding in the shadows of their large manor, having come out earlier in the night after witnessing through their second story window the three stones fired by Inora steaking across the sky. The brothers assumed they were sky rocks that landed somewhere on their property. Just as they were about to begin searching their estate for the stones, they saw two shapes in the dark, Geoff and Rayford, emerge from the treeline and dash across their land. Thinking, correctly, that it was their relatives again, they went back inside, grabbed a pair of crossbows and headed back outside, too late to see the forest hermits take off with two of the stones. When the brothers returned, they scanned their property, thinking Geoff and Rayford might still be somewhere in the dark, collecting snares. They decided to hide in the shadows of their home, waiting until they could see the trespassers once again and finally give them a scare that would keep them off their property for good and search for the sky rocks in the morning.

If the characters emerge from the forest trail, the brothers laying in wait can easily see them in the dark if they are holding any light sources. If not, they can just as easily be alerted by any noise the characters make. Either way, as soon as they emerge from the treeline, Hunfrey most likely knows they are on the Gilmyrn estate and would strongly suggest they leave, loudly. If the characters approach the Gilmyrn estate by some other means, for instance walking up to the home directly, one of the brothers, crossbow in hand, will immediately come to investigate.

Once the brothers are alerted to the presence of the characters, they will likely fire a warning crossbow bolt nearby, immediately calling out:

WE TOLD YOU COUSINS - STAY OFF OUR LAND!

Hunfrey will likely call out to the brothers, stating he is searching for Geoff and Rayford, introducing the

characters in the process. While Hunfrey works for the town, and by extension the mayor, he is used to having to come to the Gilmyn family's defense due to the nature of the lending business that the Gilmyn's engage in. He is therefore not very confident around the brothers, or their father, a fact Ivan and Anton are obvious in their treatment of the man. The pair will immediately begin questioning the other characters, demanding they explain who they are and why they are on their property, even if Hunfrey does a thorough explanation of the situation.

Assuming the character's are honest and candid with the situation, the brothers are equally open about what has happened so far. They explain they were sitting in their study with their father when three bright streaks of light streamed through the air and they heard three loud pops. Their father, who said it was obviously a sign of good fortune, ordered Anton and Ivan to investigate. Going downstairs and heading to the back of their home, they emerged into the night, only to see two shapes on their property. Thinking it was there cousins, hunting rabbits on their property, they went inside to get weapons, and came back, hoping to scare them off, but hadn't seen them since. They decided to wait until morning to find the sky rocks.

If the characters do a search of the area, with the Gilmyn's blessings, they find the remaining rock, hidden among the tall grass in a small crater as well as the craters from the other two rocks. The third rock has the same fist sized hole drilled into it core, but it empty of any ooze inside. This ooze immediately left the rock to hunt the nearby woods, eventually ending up at the wedding reception.

Assuming the encounter with the brothers ends well, the pair mention that occasionally Geoff comes over for a late dinner, but only when their father is already fast asleep. Geoff often talks about his gripe with their father and how he shouldn't haven't taken away his farm over a loan. The brothers feel sorry for their older cousin, but can't go against the will of their father. If pressed, they even admit that the only reason they are hostile to Geoff and Rayford hunting on their land is because their father pressures them to be that way. They also mention that Geoff mentions that if they are looking for Rayford, they might try his aunt Catherine's home, a fact easily confirmed by Hunfrey.

If asked about their father, they quickly get defensive, saying he is a good man, but has a temper.

If asked about the strange lights, the brothers grow cautious, acknowledging the family once owned the island in the river and that they have seen strange lights over the waters for the past month or so. If pressed about this, they reveal the fact that their father recently sold the island to a woman who arrived in town a month or so ago. They remember



she looked strange and had a city accent and was named Inora. Hunfrey would know scant few details about the woman, mostly from second-hand gossip, particularly about her few trips to the local supply stores to buy odd and ends.

Characters should now have enough information to either continue searching for Rayford or might decide to investigate the island where the strange lights appear to be coming from. If the character's press on looking for Rayford, which Hunfrey is in favor of, you can advance the story to "Village Ooze", allowing the character's to travel through the woods or through the streets of Russellville.

If the character's want to investigate the island, the brothers would likely pick up on these intentions even if they were not openly discussed in front of them. They would urge the characters to speak to their father first, who might be able to explain the situation better than them.

GILMYN PATRIARCH

If Ivan and Anton grow comfortable with the characters, they may be willing to introduce them to their father, Dorlek Gilmyn. Though they do not let them into their home, one of the pair will go inside and summon their father, a process that takes some time since the elder Gilmyn was asleep and is generally difficult to rouse. Once outside, Dorlek presents himself as a gruff, easily irritated patriarch.

Inebriated most of the time, including during his talk with the characers, Dorlek largely wallows in his family's past missteps, still never the less used to getting his way thanks to his father's shrewd money-

lending business. If asked about the island or who he sold the property to, he demands to know why. He is unmoved by tales of the ooze or the fact that the village may be in danger, instead he only opens up if offered some type of monetary compensation for the knowledge or some other means of increasing his families wealth or position. If the characters can successfully offer him something, Dorlek explains that he sold the island of his forefathers to Inora a month ago and already forgot about it. Like his sons and the rest of the townsfolk, he has seen the lights over the river. He assumed the woman was some sort of witch-- a fact he does not care about in the slightest, nor one he shared with his sons. He has dealt with many travellers over the years, many of whom practiced magic (including the brother's mother who died many years ago), and recognized her accent as likely from Lij, the City of Wonders. The coin she paid (feel free to come up with an exorbitant amount) was pricey and he hasn't concerned with her history or her intentions. Once he has relayed this information, he bids the characters good night and goes back into his home, unconcerned with the situation in the slightest.

Once their father retires, the brothers appear visibly ashamed of his callous behavior. They offer the characters a boat, used by their grandfather to ferry supplies between their estate and the island, if the characters wish to use it to investigate the island. The boat is tucked away in a small copse of trees on the edge of their land, right next to the river. Unfortunately, when they arrive, the boat they offered is gone (sold to Inora when she bought the island, a fact Dorlek doesn't bother to reveal) however, a small raft, also used by their grandfather is in the same vicinity as the boat. Much less water-worthy, they offer the characters its use as well. No matter how friendly they may be, the brothers refuse to go to the island with the characters.

The raft, large enough to hold six medium-sized humanoids must be carefully maneuvered across the river. You can force the characters to succeed on an Agility challenge in order to successfully make their way across the river. If less than a majority of the characters pass, the raft capsizes, spilling them all into the river and requiring a lengthy amount of time to swim back to shore and gather the raft after it floats far down stream. For subsequent attempts, feel free to allow each character a boon to their challenge roll as they have learned from prior mistakes. If the characters are unable to cross the river the first time, the overall failures add an extra 1 hour or "1 scene" to this part of the adventure regardless of the number of times it takes to make their way to the island. Throughout their ride, vague, shimmering colors appear overhead, drifting from off the island.

Once the characters make their way to the island you can advance the story to "Gilmyn Isle".

GILMYN ISLE

This scene takes about 1 hour.

Gilmyn Isle sits a long way from the coast that hugs the Gilmyn estate. In the night sky above, the shimmering glow of Inora's magical experiments can be seen every few minutes, drifting away from the rocky shoreline that surrounds the island. It may take some time to find a suitable bit of shore to land, and in fact, the most likely spot will invariably be right next to where Inora's own boat has been pulled ashore.

The island itself is of a slightly higher elevation than the town of Russellville, meaning that Inora's activities have been all but out of view from any townfolk who may have been curious to look across the river and investigate the strange lights coming from its higher plateau. On top of this plateau sits the abandoned open pit next to the rocky foundations of the equally abandoned Gilmyn mining outpost. This is where Inora has set up her small encampment.

In the abandoned foundations of the Gilmyn outpost are only barely started walls of a large house, with stone walls only 1-to-3 feet high meant to serve as the builder's envisioned idea of the completed structure. Inora has set up her 'laboratory' in the large, open den room of the structure. A half dozen large iron pots acting as cauldrons are positioned in the area, as are dozens of makeshift alchemical contraptions cobbled together from the simple glass and iron farming supply equipment she purchased in town. A simple tent is set up next to one 3-foot high wall, inside of which is a bedroll and her few bits of clothing. Also in the tent are a half dozen magical tomes and one mechanical handbook, the stolen works she took from various libraries of her guild.

A makeshift 'catapult' sits on one side of the encampment, a crude piece of equipment made from various farm equipment parts. Next to it is a pile of rocks that match the hollowed core ones found in the squatter camp and on the Gilmyn estate. Set up alongside the catapult is a very expensive, completely operation 2-foot long spyglass mounted on a tripod; another item stolen from her former guildmates. Any character who peeks through the spyglass can see a close-up view of the Gilmyn home.

Whenever the characters arrive, Inora is no doubt focused on concocting her latest mixture of chemical sludge she hopes to turn into another trio of oozes. She is hunched over one of the various iron pots, singing softly about her 'children' and stirring various ingredients she purchased from town or excavated from the lead pit or the various minerals excavated from the island itself. Much of what she has set up in her encampment are heating and transmutive processes of turning the lead into the required

INORA RADJNI

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 1 human

Perception 14 (+4)
Defense 13; **Health** 50
Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 8 (-2)
Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Long Knife (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Elude When a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against Inora's Defense or Agility, she can use a triggered action to retreat.

MAGIC

Power 2

Alchemy *acidic glob* (3), *brew potion* (2)(*Growth* potion - Inora's size becomes 2, she gains +7 health and deals an extra 1d6 with her Long Knife. Anything she drops returns to normal size. The potion wears off after 1d6 minutes)(*Invisibility* potion), *acid darts* (1)

† See the *Demon Lord's Companion*. If you don't have this supplement, replace these spells with *flame*, *fire blast* and *fire volley* from the Fire tradition.

chemicals she needs for her experiments. These transformative concoctions produces a dizzying array of colors, the cause of the nightly air colorations.

Because she is so focused, and since she has no reason to believe anyone would step foot on the island, Inora is completely unprepared for any type of visitors and is easily surprised. Once made aware of any intruders however, Inora immediately assumes they are hostile, the chemicals having given her an overly paranoid sense of the world. She fights to the death as soon as she is alerted to the presence of the characters, regardless of any peaceful intentions or diplomatic overtures made. Inora's sense of preservation has largely been eroded and she sees herself now as nothing more than the mother of her 'Ooze children'. If by some chance the characters manage to subdue her, Hunfrey takes the first opportunity to murder her outright - claiming he is doing so in defense of his community. If any character questions if Inora may have not been the culprit behind the oozes, Hunfrey points out the rocks as irrefutable proof of her guilt.

Once Inora is defeated, the characters are free to take any of her various equipment, including the mounted spyglass which can be taken from off the tripod and used as a two-handed telescopic lens that can see up to 1,000 feet away with relative ease, a simple leather pouch containing 33 gp and the alchemical tomes and journals. Each tome contains one each of the following spells within its pages: *acidic glob*, *identify substance*, *brew potion* and *acid darts*.

If this scene happened before both the "Ravenous Reception" and "The Village Ooze" parts of the adventure, then Hunfrey suggests going to the mayor's house so the characters can be compensated for their troubles, but only after investigating if Catherine is

alright. You can move the story to "The Village Ooze", with Hunfrey leading the search.

If this scene happened before only the "Ravenous Reception" then Hunfrey suggests going straight to the mayor's home to compensate the characters. You can move the story directly to the "Ravenous Reception".

If this scene happened after all other scenes in the adventure, you can move the story to its Conclusion.

RAVENOUS RECEPTION

This scene takes about 1 hour.

The Storgaard Estate sits in the north-eastern part of Russellville. It consists of a pair of lavishly huge, 3-story houses surrounded by a well maintained open lawn that extends in every direction from the homes and ends in a 10-foot high gated stone wall that encircles the entire estate. Nestled into a thin treeline, the homes act as entranceways to a huge plot of wheat fields, sheltered by more woodlands. This is the home of Heather Storgaard, the mayor of Russellville, and her family. Earlier in the day, the family celebrated a wedding between Johan, the eldest son and Elyzabeth, a local and distant cousin to the Gilmyn family.

Unfortunately for the family, one of the oozes unleashed on the town of Russellville has found its way to the Storgaard Estate and stealthily begins consuming guests not long after its arrival. By the time the characters are ready to head towards the Estate, the entire wedding reception is in chaos as the ooze reveals itself to the terrified congregation, feasting on revellers left and right.

As the characters make their way to the Estate, lead by Hunfrey, screams of terror pierce the night air. The entire grounds is lit by torchlight, spaced evenly about the wall that surrounds the estate as well as scattered across the giant lawn of 6-foot tall wooden torch holders. Dozen's of wooden chairs, most now toppled over in the chaos of the marauding ooze surround a large area of bare earth that was used for both the wedding and as a dancing arena for the guests, including the bride and groom.

THE SECOND OOZE

Depending on how quickly the characters arrive at the estate, the ooze they encounter can be either an **alchemist ooze (gigantic)** or a regular **alchemist ooze**. If at least 4 scenes (or hours) have occurred since the adventure began, then the ooze has grown to gigantic proportions, otherwise, the characters arrive in time to only face a size 4, alchemist ooze.

The battle with the ooze should be chaotic as revellers dash about the scene, trying to get away from the flailing pseudopods. If Hunfrey has seen too many of his neighbors slain by the previous ooze, he is overcome with anger, rashly assaulting the ooze at the end of each round.

Each round, various revellers should dash past the ooze as well, triggering its Swift Attack against one of them, if it hasn't already used it on a character. At the beginning of the third round of combat, both the bride and groom should dash past the ooze in such a way, at which point the ooze uses its Swift Attack on one of them before any other actions happen in that round. If either of them are hit, both Hunfrey and Heather, the matron of the Storgaard family, rush to their aid at the end of the round, putting themselves in danger and becoming prime targets for the ooze.

Once the ooze is defeated, it takes several minutes for the chaos to die down and for Heather to calm the guests. If either the bride or groom are killed in the mayhem, she is deeply distraught, but manages to maintain her composure as mayor. When a moment of calm has finally settled over the scene, Hunfrey introduces the characters to the mayor, dealt with thanks to their help. As promised, he requests that the mayor pays them for their assistance, which she does, after asking about the events of the entire night. If characters have not visited the Gilmyr Estate or Gilmyr Isle, feel free to have Heather wonder aloud if the strange colorations over the river had anything

ALCHEMIST OOZE (GIGANTIC) DIFFICULTY 100

Size 5 ooze

Perception 16 (+6); sightless

Defense 8; **Health** 90

Strength 15 (+5), **Agility** 8 (-2), **Intellect** 5 (-5), **Will** 15 (+5)

Speed 6; climber

Immune damage from acid; gaining Insanity; blinded, charmed, dazed, frightened, immobilized, prone, stunned, or any effect that would change the ooze's shape

Amorphous An ooze can move freely through openings wide enough to permit the passage of water, and it can move through spaces occupied by other creatures.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Pseudopod (melee) +5 with 1 boon (2d6 plus 2d6 from acid; no damage to metal or stone, plus Feeding Grab on attack roll 20+)

Feeding Grab The target is grabbed. If it was already grabbed, the target instead takes 2d6 damage plus Swallow.

Swallow If the target is smaller than the ooze, it must make an Agility challenge roll with 2 banes. On a failure, the target is swallowed. A swallowed creature is defenseless, moves with the ooze, and cannot perceive anything outside the ooze's body. At the end of each round, the swallowed creature takes 2d6 damage from the ooze's digestive juices. If the ooze becomes incapacitated, it vomits forth any creatures it has swallowed. Each lands prone in an open space within 1 yard of the ooze. The ooze can have up to two living creatures swallowed at one time. A creature that drops to 0 hit points inside the ooze must immediately make a sanity roll.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Swift Attack When a creature within 1 yard of the ooze moves, the ooze can use a triggered action to attack the triggering creature with its pseudopod.

Elude When a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against the ooze's Defense or Agility, the ooze can use a triggered action to retreat.



to do with the tragic events explaining that the threat to the town has been of the evening. While she doesn't offer any more compensation, she does express interest in hearing the details of any encounter the characters might have if they investigate Gilmyrn, if they haven't done so already. If the character's do decide to go to the Gilmyrn estate, advance the story to "Gilmyrn Estate" otherwise, at this point, the adventure is over and you can advance the story to its Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

If the characters encountered Inora and defeated her, it is assumed that she is murdered by Hunfrey whenever he gets the first opportunity to do so. If on the off chance she manages to live after they defeated her, Heather, the mayor of Russellville, demands the characters turn over the alchemist to her, at which point she is held long enough for the characters to leave and is subsequently murdered all the same.

If Inora is not encountered or manages to escape somehow, she returns to her island a week later,

continuing to create more and more of her oozes, sending wave after wave of the creatures into the town until it is eventually consumed in a devouring mass of ooze spawn. The area around Russellville is quickly overrun by the slimy creatures until finally, a contingent of mercenaries from a nearby city (most likely Lij) is called into the area to quell the disturbance, but not before many, many more innocent people have died.



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